REDISTRIBUTING UNION POWER TO WOMEN:

THE EXPERIENCES OF TWO WOMEN'S COMMITTEES

by

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Abstract:

This study examined women's committees in two public sector unions in British Columbia with predominantly female memberships over a twenty year period. The question addressed was how and under what circumstances the committees could secure gains for women, given a context where women remain at a power disadvantage relative to men.

Gains sought were of three types: 1) improvements in contract clauses particularly beneficial to women; 2) increased female participation in union governance; and 3) structural changes conducive to future increases in female participation in union governance. Structures as defined included both formal structures and other regularized procedures, including processes of communication, decision making and resource distribution.

Based on literatures from several disciplines, a power model was developed that guided data collection. Data were collected via archival research and semi-structured interviews, and analyzed qualitatively.

The study found that the structures governing how the committees operated were significant factors in committee effectiveness and that the active cooperation of the leadership and/or the membership ensured that structures conducive to committee effectiveness existed. The committees' major challenge was to align their goals with those of the leadership or the membership in order to generate the level of support that would permit them to achieve their goals. The degree of alignment between committee and membership goals affected to what extent the committee could secure goals not supported by the leadership and was the major variable affecting committee power. However, committee power was not necessarily associated with the level of gains achieved for women

because both leadership and membership actions and existing union structures could induce outcomes for women not orchestrated by the committees.

As a result of this research, the initial power model was refined and the restrictions on the committees' and leaderships' use of power were clarified. The utility of crossing the disciplinary boundaries between organizational theory, industrial relations, and political science to explore how power is exercised in unions was demonstrated. Support for the political model of organizations was generated, suggesting that insights gained from the study of unions might advance organizational theorizing.

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Chapter 1. Introduction To The Study

Women face many challenges in the labour market that are partially related to the stereotypes that exist about women and women's work (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990; Burton, 1992; Kanter, 1977). Some important aspects of these stereotypes pertain to women's lack of suitability for high-pressured, high authority positions, and their lack of commitment to the workforce because of home and family responsibilities (Ghiloni, 1987; Mills, 1992). These stereotypes <u>can</u> lead to discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, and it is difficult to refute the evidence suggesting that discrimination occurs[1].

Efforts have been made to change this situation. Governments have passed affirmative action and pay equity legislation, made efforts to improve training opportunities for women, and increased the number of daycare spaces available. Nevertheless, the male-female wage gap persists (Gunderson and Robb, 1991). A more effective solution may involve collective action in the workplace (Acker, 1992; Ostrander, 1987; Steinberg and Cook, 1988; Stevensen, 1988).

Unionization is one form of collective action that could help Canadian women (Gunderson, 1989; Craig, 1986), because Canadian unions are reputed to be ideologically committed to improving the condition of <u>all</u> working people (Morton, 1989). Consequently, women's concerns should gain prominence as more and more women enter the labour force

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[1] For example, working women tend to be found in the lower ranks of organizational hierarchies (Hearn and Parkin, 1992; O'Leary and Ickovics, 1992) and two-thirds of Canadian working women occupy clerical, sales, and support service positions where pay is low, jobs are routine, and opportunities for advancement are restricted (Grant and Tancred, 1992).

and join unions. However, the outcomes to date of unionization for women have been mixed.

Unionized female workers do tend to enjoy better wages and working conditions, and have greater protection against arbitrary management actions than do non-unionized female workers (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1984; Berheide, 1988; Gunderson, 1989; Gutek, 1988; O'Farrell, 1988). But even within unionized workforces, the pattern of occupational segregation by sex and the male-female wage gap persist. Also, while some progress has been made, in general contract improvements in areas of special significance to female workers, such as better access to childcare, elimination of sexual harassment, improved training opportunities, and improved benefits for part-time workers, have been slow to materialize. Similarly, female participation in union governance is low, particularly at higher levels in the union (Briskin, 1990; Christensen, 1988; Hearn and Parkin, 1992; Heery and Fosh, 1990; Rees, 1990).

Consequently, the question of whether or not unions are truly committed to improving the lot of working women has arisen. They have been charged with purposely promoting the interests of the male membership at the expense of the female membership. The fact that problems persist that have long been identified as particularly troublesome for women gives some support for this claim. Two of these problems are the timing and location of union meetings, and the lack of encouragement given to female members to speak out at union meetings and to run for office (Acker, 1992; Rees, 1990). These problems have contributed to the under-representation of women on union executives, particularly at the vice presidential and presidential levels, and on influential committees

such as bargaining committees (Dickens and Colling, 1990). Consequently, women's interests have been easier to overlook in decision making (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990; Coverman, 1988; Heery and Fosh, 1990; O'Farrell, 1988; Rees, 1990).

Despite these charges, there is evidence that at least some unions have historically made efforts to promote women's concerns. For example, the United Auto Workers established a women's department in 1944, and in 1962 mandated the establishment of women's committees in union locals. Similarly, the Confederation of National Trade Unions established a women's committee in 1953 (Guberman, 1983). However, these formally-created and leadership-controlled women's committees in unions, union federations, and union confederations have only been in place in Canada and Quebec since the mid-1970's. They arose with the reemergence of the women's movement in the early 1970's, and their stated purpose was to force their unions to fight aggressively for women's rights (Field, 1983). Their role has been to convey women's concerns to the executive, to educate the membership about issues of particular significance to women, and to initiate training and other programs to address women's concerns and prepare them for leadership roles.

They have enjoyed a measure of success. Due to their efforts, some unions are currently providing daycare facilities to enable women to more easily attend union meetings and conventions, and special initiatives are being undertaken to better ensure that female concerns get onto the decision making and collective bargaining agendas. In some cases, vice-presidential positions to be held only by women are being created, and efforts are being

made to encourage women to seek union office. Some increases in female participation in union affairs have been noted (Briskin, 1990).

However, the existence of women's committees has not guaranteed their success (Field, 1983). The status quo, the union bureaucracy, the close connections to the leadership and member apathy and resistance have impaired their effectiveness (Briskin, 1990; Briskin and Yanz, 1983). In some cases, the establishment of women's committees by union executives has been seen as a mere attempt to appease female members by making it <u>appear</u> that unions are concerned with their welfare when in reality they are not. It has been noted that the creation of special committees to address women's issues marginalizes these issues, making change unlikely (Briskin, 1991; Chaison and Rose, 1989; Dickens and Colling, 1990; Grant and Tancred, 1992; Wine and Ristock, 1991). It has been further noted that these committees are not very powerful in any event, which diminishes their ability to bring about significant improvements for women (Dickens and Colling, 1990; Ackers, 1992).

The Problem:

Given the controversy regarding women's committees' ability to bring about changes beneficial to working women, and the tendency for the female membership to be outnumbered and outranked in the union, the problem I explore in this study is, how and under what circumstances can women's committees secure tangible gains for women, given a context where women have traditionally been, and continue to be, at a power disadvantage relative to men.

Purpose of the Study:

The major purposes of this study are: 1) to gain a better understanding of how gains for women are achieved and obstructed; 2) to attempt to validate a theoretical model of power applicable to women's committees; and 3) to understand the processes through which power is acquired and maintained.

Relevant Literature:

The problem described above is not adequately addressed in the organizational theory, industrial relations, political science, or feminist literatures, although each literature offers some insights. The organizational literature identifies power resources arising from organizational structures that might be applicable to women's committees in unions and a number of factors that impact upon committee effectiveness.

An extensive literature in industrial relations discusses how democratic unions are inevitably transformed into leadership-controlled unions as union affairs become more complex and specialized. As power increasingly becomes centralized in the hands of the leadership, leadership support for women's issues may affect how successfully women's committees can influence outcomes. Hence, the factors contributing to the centralization of power within unions may be important in determining the level of support the women's committee enjoys inside the union.

The political science literature is useful in that it identifies forces conducive to changing political systems, and addresses social movement phenomena. Since women's committees, like social movement organizations, must exert political pressure in order to

change the status quo, the social movement literature potentially provides insight into the preconditions for the success of these movements. Also, since women's committees have connections with the women's movement, the strategies and tactics employed by the latter may be relevant to women's committees as well.

Finally, since the need for women to work collectively within organizations to advance their interests would not arise in a non-patriarchal society, this study is most fundamentally informed by the feminist critique of the structures and processes of patriarchal society, reproduced within bureaucratic organizations, which disadvantage women. The feminist literature shaped my interest in and my approach to, this research topic. In particular, it indicated that women's voice has been submerged in dominant societal discourses, and consequently dictated that a primarily exploratory qualitative approach should be taken in addressing the research problem. Of course, since there has been little research in the academic literature with respect to women's committees, an exploratory approach was necessary in any event.

Need for the Study:

First, the need to find ways to equalize women's status in the labour market in itself made the study worthwhile. Second, there was also a need for additional empirical research on power: 1) to contribute to our understanding of the concept of power (March, 1966), its utilization, and its consequences (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1977) for all types of organizations, including unions; and 2) to overcome the paucity of extant research that reveals how power is retained in the hands of leadership groups, allowing them to maintain control over

privileged positions and opportunities (Martin, 1992). This study proposed to study power by examining how it was constituted and exercised within unions, and how it affected outcomes for women. Third, this study provided an opportunity to integrate the many different perspectives on power that have been advanced in the different disciplines to arrive at a more complete model of how structures and processes affect power.

Finally, there is a need for unions to understand how their own structures and internal dynamics may be undermining their future survival, which rests upon their ability to show currently unorganized groups in the labour market, such as female and other minority group workers, that unionization will benefit them. Clarifying the obstacles to the successful functioning of women's committees should be helpful.

Limitations:

The major limitation of this study is that, since it involved intensive examination of only two women's committees in B.C.-based unions in the public sector, generalizations from the findings must be treated with caution. This was unavoidable, for it was an exploratory study of a largely unresearched topic area, and time and resource considerations restricted my choices. Another limitation was a substantial dependence on materials available from archival sources which were occasionally missing or otherwise unavailable, not comparable between the two cases, and not amenable to quantification to back up statements made in interviews. Furthermore, the interview data was perceptual and hard to verify across respondents, and there is the possibility that not all respondents were completely candid with me. However, these problems were minimized as much as possible.

A more serious limitation is that I may have been a source of bias in the interviews, although I guarded against the latter during the interviews and the case write-ups. Nevertheless, ideally this research would have been done with a research team so that perceptual biases and blind spots could have been overcome.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction:

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the problem addressed in this study was how and under what circumstances women's committees in unions were able to secure gains for women. The literature that is relevant to this problem extends beyond the boundaries of organizational theory, to incorporate the literatures in industrial relations, feminist theory and political science. There are a number of reasons for this, but among them are the following: 1) organizational theorists have demonstrated little interest in the internal dynamics of unions, so the applicability of the power literature to union organizations has not been established; 2) attention has been directed to the internal politics of unions in the industrial relations and political science literatures, so these literature must be considered; 3) gender issues are central to this problem, and while the organizational literature has begun to address these issues, historically it has been gender-blind and a gendered theory of power has yet to be developed; finally, 4) the feminist literature addressing the women's movement is more pertinent to the activities of women's committees, since their aims and constituencies are similar.

My intention was to integrate those aspects of the organizational, industrial relations, and the social movement/women's movement literature found in political science that pertained to my problem in providing a theoretical framework for this study. There were some difficulties to overcome in doing so, because the social movement/women's movement literature generally addresses inter-organizational rather than intra-organizational behaviour,

and identifies inter-organizational rather than intra-organizational structures, processes and power resource deficiencies impeding the advancement of women. Therefore, the ideas arising from that literature were examined critically.

My strategy was: 1) to examine <u>each</u> literature separately, in order to identify structures, processes, strategies and tactics, and power resources conducive to advancing special interests; 2) to determine which of them might be relevant to women's committees; and 3) to incorporate those that were relevant into a theoretical model of power applicable to women's committees. Before discussing the literature bearing on the theoretical model, I will review the links between women's committees and the women's movement in order to explain why the women's movement has special relevance for this study.

Women's Committees

<u>Women's Committees and the Women's Movement</u>:

Since the late 1970's, the women's movement has attempted to broaden its support base to make greater strides towards women's equality (Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, 1988; Briskin and Yanz, 1983; Dumont, 1986; Wine and Ristock, 1991). Part of its strategy has been to form alliances with associated movements, such as the peace movement and the labour movement. Consequently, female activists unaffiliated with organized labour have supported job action, have participated in demonstrations, and in other ways have demonstrated solidarity with the organized labour movement, in order to help secure benefits for women. Furthermore, women active within the labour movement have sought out other experienced activists within the labour movement and from the women's

movement in an effort to promote advances for women. The experience of the women's movement has shown that women must stand together if gains are to be made, because there are formidable barriers to success (Briskin and Yanz, 1983; Wine and Ristock, 1991). Therefore, it is extremely likely that female activists within unions will have connections with female activists in the women's movement.

Women's Committees as Social Movements:

A social movement is generally seen as "a collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group of which it is a part" (Turner and Killian, 1972, p.246). It is distinct from a special interest group in that it attempts to gain a permanent power position and pursues goals that extend beyond the special interests of its membership (Wilson, 1973). Since the social movement literature has been applied to the analysis of the women's movement (Costain, 1992), it may also be useful in the analysis of women's committees. Within that literature, the women's movement is considered a social movement, and the organizations through which social movement goals are realized are labelled social movement organizations.

Since there is a great diversity of women's committees, it is difficult to situate any one of them in either the interest group or social movement category without knowing its specific goals. However, since the growth of women's committees was inspired by a social movement (ie. the women's movement), I initially assumed that women's committees pursue concerns that extend beyond the employment situation[2], and should therefore be seen as

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[2] One example is the mandate of the women's committee in the Confederation of National Trade Unions, which included fighting for free and accessible contraception and abortion (Guberman, 1983).

social movement organizations.

Envisioning women's committees as social movement organizations has two advantages. First, it helps to explain female unionists' willingness to serve on women's committees, which is otherwise problematic. The odds against their success may be very high because they threaten male privilege, and women's committees are unlikely to be powerful enough to succeed without the support of a male-dominated leadership cadre. Their involvement is difficult to explain in terms of self-interest, which is the explanation that would be invoked in the organizational power and politics literature in the case of special interest group formation, because the emotional and the physical costs of involvement are enormous[3]. Second, it legitimates the incorporation of insights about collective behaviour found in political science into the study of women's committees. I will now examine that literature.

Social Movement Theory

Since the early 1970's, the dominant theory in the social movement literature has been the resource mobilization theory. It has three variants, the rational actor approach, the organizational-entrepreneurial approach, and the political process approach, but they share the following set of beliefs (Morris and Herring, 1987, p.157):

> There is no fundamental difference between movement behaviour and institutionalized behaviour; movement participants and their actions are rational; social movements pursue interests; movement mobilization occurs through an infrastructure or power base; outcomes of collective action are central, and they are products of strategic choices made by participants; either support or repression by

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[3] Based on personal conversation with a past-chairperson of a women's committee.

elite groups can affect the outcomes of movements.

The variant that has been most useful in analyzing the women's movement is the political process model (Costain, 1992), while the organizational-entrepreneurial model is the dominant approach within resource mobilization theory. The ensuing discussion will focus on these two models.

The political process approach focuses on the study of the political process and collective behaviour, and sees the latter's central dynamic as the struggle between insurgents and authorities (Gamson, 1975; Tilly, 1978). In contrast, the organizational-entrepreneurial model sees social movements as orchestrated by professional social movement leaders and activists, and dependent for success on the ability to attract and maintain a flow of resources (Zald and McCarthy, 1987).

The resources identified as important in the organizational-entrepreneurial approach include tangible assets such as money and office space, specialized resources such as experienced leadership, access to communication networks, and access to decision makers, and unspecialized resources such as membership commitment (Freeman, 1979). Political process theorists do not dispute the need for such resources, but emphasize the need for a favourable "structure of political opportunity" (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988)[4]. Since these theorists see social movement groups as challenger groups lacking legitimacy in the eyes of the authorities, they see them as locked into a power struggle with authorities who have the resources to destroy them, which forces them to seek powerful supporters from within the system.

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[4] This refers to the group's ability to gain a receptive hearing within the political system.

It should be noted that <u>having</u> the resources needed to achieve certain outcomes does not necessarily imply a willingness to <u>use</u> them to that end (Freeman, 1979). This applies to both the challenger group and the authority. Values, past experience, reference groups, anticipated consequences, and relationships with the other group can act as constraints on resource use. In the case of the authorities, indications are that they will avoid using their power to destroy social movement organizations when: 1) the goals of the challenger groups and the authorities are aligned; 2) the authority wishes to form an alliance with such groups to promote its political interests; or 3) its legitimacy might be damaged by using repressive tactics against the challenger group when the latter enjoys a measure of public support (Zald and Berger, 1987). But the threat of repressive action is always a possibility for a challenger group, which forces them into a power struggle.

Political process theorists try to determine what social structures and processes enable challengers to succeed at their task. The first requirement is to attract supporters and develop the organizations through which collective action can be launched. Then, resources must be amassed to make collective action possible. In addition, the membership must be activated and the threat posed by the authorities neutralized, to bring the social movement into existence. If the authorities are <u>not</u> neutralized, the social movement can die before it is born. Once the movement is successfully launched, a great deal of effort is required to keep it alive. It is this aspect of the theory that is most pertinent to my study (McAdam et al., 1988; Morris and Herring, 1987; Turner and Killian, 1972).

The literature indicates that as they grow, social movements face four crucial challenges (Wilson, 1973). The first is to reconcile the need to change the system with the

need to work within the system in order to survive. The second is to make progress toward goal achievement in order to maintain member commitment, but never quite reach it, in order to keep the social movement vital (Zald and Ash, 1966). The third is to prevent splits from occurring within the membership, so that solidarity can be maintained. The fourth is to set up an organizational structure that will facilitate goal attainment. Each of these challenges deserves comment.

The first challenge is extremely difficult to meet, because the two goals are quite contradictory. A social movement is dedicated to changing the status quo, and it is difficult to do so because established authorities are bound to resist if they can. Operating in a manner that will not threaten the authority's interests is likely to result in an inability to bring about change, a loss of legitimacy in the eyes of supporters, and possibly a loss of members. But acting too aggressively can alienate not only the authorities whose support is needed to effect the desired changes, but also the general public and possibly some of the membership. To neutralize a challenge, the authorities are likely to attempt to coopt or incorporate social movement organizations into the political establishment, or to cut off the social movement's access to resources. Where the social movement organization is unable to neutralize these threats, it is forced to abandon its pursuit of social change.

The social movement organization may succumb to the authority's influence for a number of reasons. Cooptation is particularly likely if the leader is vulnerable to material incentives and more concerned about the movement's continued existence than its effectiveness. The greater concern for continuity in turn is most likely when the movement

becomes becalmed (Zald and Ash, 1966)[5]. This is most likely to happen once it has been institutionalized, meaning that the government has set up official structures to address the movement's demands. At that point, the social movement's goals shift to societal accommodation rather than change, and the members' goals shift to those derived from belonging to a group. If leaders align themselves with authorities, they ensure their continued leadership and the social movement's continued existence because of the resources that the authorities will then make available to the movement. If leaders refuse to align themselves with the authorities, they put the movement at risk of marginalization, that is of never getting the authorities to take its demands seriously. Researchers have noted that both marginalization and institutionalization are detrimental to change (Adamson et al., 1988; Briskin and Yanz, 1983; Dumont, 1986; Turner and Killian, 1972) but hard to avoid.

The second challenge is to make some progress with respect to goal achievement, but to never actually succeed. Once success is achieved, there is no longer a need for the social movement. Too much success can lead supporters to abandon a movement in favour of another, more needy, movement. Too little success results in low morale and apathy, because there is no pay-off for the members' efforts. It can ultimately lead to reduced membership and even social movement failure. So social movements walk a very tenuous line between vibrancy and failure.

In some senses, the dictate to succeed but only within certain limits is less of a problem than many social activists would wish, because success is rare unless it is defined

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[5] This means it has created a niche for itself but its growth has slowed or stopped, members no longer expect to achieve goals, and morale is low.

in terms of very small victories. The women's movement, for instance, acknowledges that some gains have been made, but nevertheless asserts that progress has been minimal (Briskin and Yanz, 1983) and that, as with other social movements, structural and attitudinal change are necessary to true goal achievement. Too little success is more likely to be the problem for social movements because of the power of the established order.

The third challenge is to ward off the possibility of dissension within the ranks of supporters. Social movement organizations can ensure an ongoing flow of resources by following one of two strategies (McAdam et al., 1988). The first is to restrict membership to the movement's natural constituency, which may be small and poor, and therefore unable to provide necessary resources. The second is to allow open recruitment. In the latter case, there is a high probability of schisms developing within the membership. Activists agree that group cohesiveness is crucial to the success of a social movement organization, because the leader must be able to control the membership, particularly when emotions are running high. But the mobilization of large numbers of people is also crucial, so again the leader is faced with a dilemma. Both approaches to securing resources are risky.

Finally, there is the issue of organization, to which a great deal of attention has been paid. While social movements often originate in friendship groups and other loose, unstructured groups, organization must become more formalized to allow a social movement to grow. Some activists associate centralization of power and the development of bureaucratic structures with social movement success (Gamson, 1975; Wilson, 1973). But other groups, including women's groups, are vehemently opposed to such structures, partly on ideological grounds (Adamson et al., 1988; Ferguson, 1984; Piven and Cloward, 1977;

Wilson, 1973). In general, the women's movement has tended toward decentralization and informality rather than bureaucracy and centralization, but its experience has indicated that different organization structures are appropriate at different stages in a movement's growth.

Initially, the organizational form introduced within the women's movement was the small, egalitarian, consciousness-raising group. The close, intimate relationships that developed within these groups were extremely conducive to group mobilization, and undoubtedly contributed to the initial success of the movement. However, as the movement grew, alternative forms of organization had to be introduced, to allow the movement to make important decisions about what issues to pursue, how resources should be allocated, how to respond effectively to challenges from the authorities and the general public, how to maintain solidarity and commitment within the ranks, and how to ensure that the necessary tasks were performed (Costain, 1982).

In some cases, a modified bureaucratic structure was adopted, with traditional hierarchical structures but higher levels of membership participation and leadership accountability, and membership education to encourage leadership skill development (Adamson et al., 1988). In other cases, non-hierarchical and decentralized structures were adopted, with rotating leadership positions and consensus decision making processes. Movement activists found that the alternative structures only worked well when groups were small and homogeneous. In particular, they found that the lack of a formally recognized leader merely forced leadership underground. The informal leader still shaped the agenda, but her power was seen as illegitimate, which caused resentment within the membership (Costain, 1992).

The experience of the women's movement suggests that there is no structure for a social movement organization that is inherently superior. Group ideology, the age of the movement and the requirements of growth, the skills and resources available within the organization, and constraints imposed by authorities (Wilson, 1973) are certainly factors to consider, along with the goals pursued, the strategies employed, the nature of the membership, and the tactics that the authorities employ, among others (Morris and Herring, 1987). But meeting the challenge of organization can have a major impact on the movement's success, because how the social movement is organized affects how well the other three challenges can be met.

For example, too much formalization can impede member support and solidarity. Alienation from the organization develops as leadership cadres form, the division of labour intensifies, and rules proliferate. This alienation makes it more difficult for the movement to mobilize its members, which places it at a disadvantage in the power struggle with the authority, reducing its legitimacy, increasing the authority's efforts to eliminate it, and making goal attainment less likely. Too little formality similarly affects ability to adapt to the environment, maintain solidarity within the membership, and achieve goals. Conflict over leadership threatens the solidarity necessary for success, and the lack of a formal leader is detrimental to goal achievement. Therefore, organizational issues are extremely important to the long-term success of social movements.

Other factors of central importance to the movement's success are the goals pursued and the strategies and tactics employed by the social movement organization. With respect to goals, a movement's goals can be radical or conservative, and the nature of goals will

affect the probability of hostile intervention by authorities. Research has shown that the more modest the goals, the fewer the goals, and the less the goals challenge the established order, the more likely it is that social movements will gain acceptance and some measure of success (Ash, 1972; Gamson, 1975). With respect to strategies and tactics, movement activists know that if they provoke opposition from the authorities, at best their resource flow (of potential supporters as well as money and other tangible resources) will be threatened. The outcome is the same if they provoke the antagonism of the general public and/or thereby give impetus to the growth of countermovements.

Antagonizing their own members is no less risky because in doing so they lose one of their most significant resources. This is not only because they perform the bulk of the work within the organization and are the source of the group's legitimacy, but also because their ex-members may join and subsequently strengthen rival social movement organizations. Consequently, membership and member commitment must be maintained at high levels.

However, because a social movement lacks political legitimacy, it does not have easy access to resources controlled by government, and thus cannot serve its interests solely through reliance on politically acceptable means. One of the important decisions the organization must therefore make is whether to use tactics acceptable or unacceptable to authorities in attempting to meet its goals. In the latter case, it must decide whether it should be only "mildly unruly" by engaging in boycotts and strikes or more extreme by engaging in mass demonstrations and violence (Gamson, 1975).

Research indicates that the appropriate tactics to use depends on: 1) the relationship between the authorities and the challenger group; 2) the degree of goal consensus between

the two bodies; 3) the amount of trust existing between them; 4) the relevant resources controlled by the authorities (Zald and Berger, 1987). Under some circumstances, the authority can be educated or persuaded to become more sympathetic to the movement (Wilson, 1973). If the authority comes to share the world view of the social movement organization, the organization will not have to take more direct action.

Where direct action becomes unavoidable, a number of principles should be followed (Turner and Killian, 1972): 1) use the minimum amount of power possible; 2) accurately assess the resources available to the movement and to the opposition; 3) accurately assess the leader's control of the membership; 4) accurately predict the backlash that will result from the use of power. Morris and Herring (1987) emphasize the need for accuracy as well, pointing out that the more accurately the social movement group can forecast how to minimize the costs and maximize the effectiveness of various strategies and tactics, the more likely it is to succeed.

Unfortunately, although there is general agreement that strategic choices do affect outcomes, there is little empirical evidence regarding the outcomes of the use of various strategies and tactics (Morris and Herring, 1987). One exception is Gamson (1975) whose research indicated that the use of violence and other unruly tactics was positively associated with the success of challenger groups.

Costain (1992), who used the political process model to analyze the women's movement, identifies the role played by political opportunity, goals, and tactics. She asserts that the women's movement succeeded in part because it emphasized non-threatening, incremental goals and appeared politically innocuous. Also, the political climate was

favourable because the government was increasingly willing to respond to new interests and was in need of a larger support base within the populace. As the political costs to the government of allowing a women's movement to exist and the political costs to potential supporters of joining the movement fell, they became low enough to allow the movement to develop and grow. The government itself became an important source of resources for the women's movement. It provided funding for women's groups, women's shelters, research on women, etc., established status of women committees, and appointed Royal Commissions on the status of women. Government support was a significant source of strength for the women's movement.

Having now examined some of the insights the social movement literature offers with respect to the issues that a social movement must address in order to survive (such as goals, strategies and tactics, recruitment mode, and organization), I will now examine the power resources that are considered particularly significant to movement success. By "power resource" I am referring to assets that a movement can draw upon to strengthen its position vis-a-vis authorities. Since some of these assets (such as appropriate strategies and organization and the availability of necessary tangible resources) have already been discussed, they will be left out of the ensuing discussion to avoid redundancy.

One additional resource that is clearly identified in the literature is support, both from membership and from outside the organization (Ackelsberg, 1988; Adamson et al., 1988; Morris and Herring, 1987; Wilson, 1973; Zald and Berger, 1987;). Membership strength is important because the mobilization of large numbers of people is much more likely to influence authorities. This is partly because it increases the group's legitimacy and

increases the likelihood that sympathetic groups or individuals with access to the authority will bring pressure to bear in support of the movement, and also because big demonstrations attract media attention and can give the movement direct access to the public, which would otherwise be difficult to attain. Outside support is deemed necessary because it may be a source of expert assistance, it reinforces the legitimacy of the movement's cause, by preventing the movement's isolation from other related causes it can sustain greater activism, and it can provide encouragement when things are not going very well.

The other power resource that is repeatedly mentioned in the social movement literature is the ability to shape social reality for movement participants and others (Gamson, 1968; Garson, 1978; Klandermans, 1992; Michels, 1959). Those who can impose a definition of a situation, set the terms in which events are understood and issues discussed, and define what to strive for, can control the actions of others (Connell, 1987). Ideology is a weapon that social movement organizations can use as well, as long as they have access to communication technology. They must try to challenge the version of reality promoted by authorities, rival organizations, and the media (McAdam et al., 1988) and bring their own ideological message to their various constituencies. They can also try to bring the distorted communication strategies that may be employed by the authorities to the attention of the public, and undertake actions designed to make the authorities look ridiculous, to discredit them and hurt their image. Successful use of such tactics is a power resource.

To summarize, the social movement literature identifies issues pertaining to organizational structures, recruitment procedures, goals, strategies and tactics, member solidarity and activism, and power resources that impact on a social movement's growth and

success. My next task is to identify how much of this literature is applicable to women's committees.

Applicability of Social Movement Literature to Women's Committees:

As was mentioned earlier, one of the commonalities between the various approaches within resource mobilization theory is that movement behaviour and institutionalized political behaviour are two ends of a continuum (Morris and Herring, 1987). Within the political process model, challenger groups are those whose goals are not supported by the authority, and consequently, unions are recognized as challenger groups vis-a-vis employers.

This does not eliminate the possibility that challenger groups vis-a-vis the union leadership might arise within unions. It has been noted that subgroups within unions may provide a basis for mobilization independent of the broader union context (McAdam et al., 1988). There is no reason why the challenge cannot be launched against the union itself rather than against external authorities. Particularly in the case of undemocratic, authoritarian unions with an entrenched leadership cadre, the presence of excluded interests is likely. If these interests coalesce and unifying structures develop, resources are accumulated, and the membership mobilizes to fight for change, all the prerequisites for presenting a challenge to the authorities are in place.

The problem is that the challenger group must rely on the leadership for financial resources, space, and legitimacy within the union structure if it is to achieve change, and this weakens the degree to which it can mount a challenge. In addition, in order for members to even contemplate mounting a challenge against their union, fear, duty to the leadership, loyalty, habit, propaganda, and cooptation must all be overcome (Weinstein,

1979). This is made even more difficult because:

> to engage in oppositional activity one must first penetrate the facade of ideological neutrality that administrative structures claim for themselves and see them as political arenas in which domination, manipulation, and the denial of conflict are standard operating procedures (Ferguson, 1984, p.17).

However, once the challenger group announces itself, the leadership will probably acknowledge it and make some minor concessions. In the case of women's mobilization to fight for women's rights, the union would be in a politically difficult position if it refused to acknowledge women's special interests, given its role as defender of members' interests. This would be particularly the case where there was a sizeable female contingent within the union. But since the emergence of such a group would constitute a threat to the male establishment in unions, covert resistance might be anticipated. Therefore, the conceptualization of social movements as essentially power struggles between challenger groups and authorities would seem to be applicable to women's committees within unions.

There is a minimal literature that addresses bureaucratic challenges arising within organizations (Ferguson, 1984; Weinstein, 1979; Zald and Berger, 1987). It indicates that internal struggles can affect major organizational priorities, the control of organizational resources, and organization survival and growth, but are most likely to leave the bureaucratic order intact. Zald and Berger (1987) define "bureaucratic insurgencies" as attempts by members to implement goals that the legitimate authority has refused to support, or is not acting upon. Weinstein defines "bureaucratic oppositions" as "attempts to change organizations from within by those who lack the authority to make such changes" (Weinstein, 1979, p.7). Both Weinstein and Ferguson draw analogies between intra-bureaucratic challenges and oppositions arising in authoritarian states, which suggests that

intra-bureaucratic challenges could qualify as social movement activity or as institutionalized politics.

Zald and Berger suggest it is appropriate to subject organizational conflict occurring outside conventional channels to social movement analysis. Hence, most conflict occurring in non-union settings should qualify for social movement analysis because institutionalized procedures to deal with intra-bureaucratic challenges do not exist. The same is true if procedures do exist, but do not work, with the result that efforts by organizational participants to bring about change occur outside conventional channels.

Bureaucratic oppositions occurring within unions are harder to classify, because when a women's committee is established in response to a challenge launched against the leadership, an institutionalized procedure is created to address the conflict. The women's committee is authorized to work for changes for women. However, if the committee's mandate or resources are too limited to allow substantive change to occur, the women's committee may be forced to operate outside its mandate[6]. In this case, presumably it should be seen as a social movement organization, and its activities can be appropriately subjected to social movement analysis, as the conflict is being handled outside institutionalized channels.

In addition to positioning at least some women's committees within the social movement category, these articles identify structural features, strategies, and power

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[6] Weinstein mentions that "Internally created groups ... are only as effective as their top echelon allows them to be..." (p.74). She specifically addresses the nominal democracy and the excluded interests found in unions, commenting that " It does not follow, simply because the 'machinery' of democracy is present, that those in power will allow it to be used" (Weinstein, 1979, p.30).

resources conducive to bringing about change within bureaucracies. Ferguson makes a particularly strong case against bureaucratic hierarchies which implicitly enters into the other discussions, so it will be reviewed briefly.

Ferguson believes that the hierarchical power structures found in bureaucracies are the primary source of oppression in society today. She maintains they silence female discourse, make workers dependent on management, force alternative organizations to assume bureaucratic properties, and enable organizational superiors to shape reality for other organizational participants and to restrict advancement to those willing to accept their version of reality. In short, they allow those at higher levels of the organization to control worker behaviour, suppress opposition, and reproduce dominance relations. Ferguson cautions that bureaucratic power structures are extremely resistant to change.

Ferguson's arguments have been supported by others. Hall (1972) agrees with Ferguson's critique of bureaucracies, saying bureaucratism in unions means the repression of rank and file opposition and has become the "prime menace to unionism". Weinstein (1979) agrees that ideology is an effective way to minimize challenges to authority and thereby uphold the status quo. She states that:

> Attempts to make things seems as through they are routine or that they are determined by 'objective standards of efficiency or productivity' are essentially rhetorical strategies which, like the managerial viewpoint, have the political impact of minimizing challenges to authority (Weinstein, 1979, p.7).

This suggests that a possible way to promote change in bureaucratic structures would be to have challenger groups deconstruct ideological messages and convey alternative interpretive frames to organizational participants. But to do so effectively, the challenger group must be powerful.

Weinstein outlines the difficulty associated with maintaining the opposition group. She stresses the benefits of face-to-face interaction, and suggests that a group size of 12-15 is optimal. Her specific advice is that challengers should interact with and form alliances with the maximum possible number of like-minded individuals inside and outside the organization, to get more ideas, knowledge and social support. She indicates that power resources can come from outside the organization in the form of resources available from national groups, laws against discriminatory practice, and external social norms and values. Within the organization, power resources in part derive from the size of the opposition group and its status.

In the case of intra-bureaucratic oppositions, the strength of the opposition group and its relationship with the authority determine the strategies and tactics most conducive to success. If the group's relationship with the authority is amiable, and the latter shares the group's commitment to bringing about the desired change, informing the proper authority about the obstacles in its path may eliminate the obstacles. The ability to identify the proper authority and the best way to approach him/her is a power resource for the opposition group. This entails knowledge of the actual hierarchy of influence within the organization, and of "proper procedure", which if violated may result in no hearing.

It is quite likely that the group's purpose will be at odds with that of the leadership. Since persuasion is not feasible given that the opposition group is outranked vis-a-vis the leadership, more direct action must be contemplated. Weinstein suggests staging events that discredit the authorities, publicizing wrong-doings, seeking the help of allies with access to and influence over the leadership, and drumming up support within the organization.

She warns that the authorities are likely to resist the efforts of opposition groups to bring about change, and indicates that they may try to "get the oppositional forces identified and formalized, so they avoid having to deal with individuals" (p.50) and can more easily coopt or force them into compromises. Cooptation suppresses future conflict because it removes the leadership that the opposition group depends upon for effective operation, and destroys trust within the group.

The alternative to cooptation is reprisals against opposition group members or the group itself. For individuals these might be in the form of lost opportunities, loss of acceptance, even expulsion from the union on the grounds of disloyalty. In the case of the group, budgets might be cut, it might be cut off from information, or procedures might be created or enforced that make it difficult for the group to accomplish its task. Another alternative would be to allow change, but instead it may be made to appear unnecessary. Zald and Berger identify a number of power resources for challenger groups as well. Picking up on the difficulty mentioned above of the challenger group's dependence on the leadership for financial resources, they associate the group's ownership and control of physical facilities with its ability to launch effective attacks against authorities. They also identify the loyalty and commitment of the members to the group and to the cause as power resources.

They indicate that factional splits within the leadership may be a source of strength for the group, because one of the factions may ally itself with the insurgents to increase support for its own leadership bid. Another source of strength may be the leadership's inability to act against the challenger because of the moral rightness of the challenger's

cause in the eyes of other organizational members and the general public. So the authority must carefully assess the ramifications of overt attack before acting.

The foregoing review of oppositions occurring <u>within</u> organizations indicates that intra-organizational opposition can be more risky for participants, and therefore more difficult to mobilize, than opposition against an external authority. But once it develops, there is nothing that inherently distinguishes intra-organizational opposition from the inter-organizational oppositions that characterize social movements. While inter-organizational oppositions have been subjected to greater study, intra-organizational oppositions are similar with respect to the difficulties to be faced and the recommended strategies and power resources to be utilized. This suggests that the social movement literature is applicable to my study.

While the social movement literature is useful, it cannot give any definitive answers to the central question in this study, how women's committees can achieve gains for women. This literature does, however, provide some clues as to the variables to consider. It suggests that the optimal approach is contingent on the situation, on how the authority responds to a particular challenge, and on the external environment with its prevailing norms and values. It is up to the social movement group's leadership to correctly analyze these factors and decide on a course of action that the membership will enthusiastically support, and that will not alienate its audience or its target. So one variable of extreme importance is the calibre of the leadership, particularly its ability to command the allegiance of its members either through creation of meaning or achievement of results. This comes through clearly in the literature addressing both inter- and intra-organizational oppositions.

Other variables of considerable importance are the factors governing the response of the authority to a challenge. A major consideration is how much power the authority has to control the opposition, which in turn is affected in part by organizational structures and the authority's control over the resource flow to the challenger. To the extent that union structures centralize power, control over both resources and opposition groups may be virtually assured. But even when this is not the case, a politically astute authority may be able to get around or change democratic structures and thus control the opposition group without suffering a backlash. Similarly, a politically skilled opposition group may be able to manipulate situations to afford itself greater autonomy than the leadership grants to it. So political expertise and union structures are also important variables in this study.

Industrial Relations Theory:

The critique of bureaucratic structures presented above has left unspecified how bureaucratic, hierarchical structures affect intra-organizational opposition groups' outcomes. In the case of unions, this has been addressed in the industrial relations literature, which has had a long-standing interest in how union structures[7] encourage or discourage democracy, and thereby contribute to or detract from the representation of member interests. We will now turn to that literature.

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[7] In this literature, structures are those relatively permanent arrangements set out in the union constitution, the bylaws or the regulations that govern how the union carries out its business. An example of a structure would be the power and duties granted to elected leaders and union staff representatives. Committee format and responsibilities are also considered structure as are regularized procedures, such as those pertaining to running conventions or elections. Areas where autonomous decision making is possible are excluded from structure.

The general belief, based on Michels' study of socialist parties in Italy, France, and Belgium, is that over time, in any large, bureaucratic organization, a small group of people will come to dominate the leadership and to control resource flows. Growth creates an increasingly acute need for specialized knowledge and expertise, which can only develop over a reasonably long tenure in office. But the specialized knowledge gained and the perks of office isolate the office-holders from the rest of the organization. The power of the office-holders enables them to fill vacant positions in the leadership cadre with political allies, loyal to the leadership, which makes the leadership even more powerful. Because of the resources they control, they can control organizational participants and the organizational agenda. The longer the incumbents are in office the more knowledge and power they accumulate, the more allies they acquire, and the more difficult they are to unseat.

This process is evident in unions where power becomes increasingly centralized in the leadership's hands. As this occurs, the leadership becomes more determined to stay in power, and may engage in all sorts of unsavoury practices to ensure this (Hall, 1972; Michels, 1959; Lipset, Trow and Coleman, 1956). Since the leadership controls all union resources, it can ensure that leadership rivals have a difficult time getting a hearing from the membership. In addition, it can control all the information conveyed to the membership, thereby discrediting the rivals. Consequently, it becomes increasingly secure in its ability to maintain power and has less incentive to respond to interests other than its own. The membership supports a strong leadership, believing it to be better able to protect the members' interests, and therefore exerts little pressure for change. Increased tenure strengthens the incumbents' position and only a total insensitivity on their part to the

economic realities facing the membership can threaten them.

Social movement researchers have observed this process in social movement organizations as well, particularly those which have become institutionalized.

> As a result of the extension and elaboration of the administrative staff and the emergence of finer status distinctions within the movement, together with the more complex problems of adaptation that an institutionalizing movement experiences, great expertise and considerable amounts of time are needed to fulfil the movement's administrative needs. The greater the differentiation, the more sophisticated these skills must be. The experience and the information which the administrator needs and, incidentally, helps to create in the operation of his office...makes the senior bureaucratic office virtually unassailable, providing it has a secure financial base (Wilson, 1973, p.342).

Michels insists only that the leadership cadre will control the organization, not that it will necessarily ignore the wishes of its members. This study seeks to discover what circumstances are most conducive to keeping union leaders attentive to these wishes. Michels' study and the study by Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956) of the International Typographical Union, provide some insight. Michels' study shows that a political party can employ ideological control and cooptation to stay in power[8]. The study of the typographical union shows how an active membership can ensure leadership accountability. Together these studies demonstrate the dangers inherent in a bureaucratic, hierarchical structure, and how they can be minimized. The typographical union provides a model of the type of structure that promotes membership representation by the leadership, so its two-party system and its supporting norms will now be described and contrasted with the typical one-party structure.

In the typographical union, in part because organizational norms supported and

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[8] Michels (1959) suggests that another group's values can be shaped either by cooptation or by controlling freedom of speech, conveying self-serving messages, and covering them up with appeals to loftier motives.

legitimated opposition and the leadership changed hands frequently, great status differences never developed between the membership and the leaders. Also, opposition groups had regular access to communication channels which allowed them to challenge the incumbents' communications to the membership, and ensure that members were well-informed. This, along with the availability of numerous opportunities for would-be leaders to develop the political skills necessary to gain access to leadership positions, allowed them to take an active role in the union, either in support of or in opposition to the incumbent administration. Procedures existed to ensure that disciplinary action would not be taken against those challenging the incumbents, which ensured that the opposition was vocal.

Union meetings were one locale where political skills could be honed. Vigorous debate between the incumbents and the leaders of the opposition occurred during the meetings, and the incumbents would be quickly taken to task if their actions displeased the membership or the formal opposition, which forced them to be accountable. Because the opposition was organized, membership dissatisfaction with the incumbents' actions could be channelled effectively to bring about desired changes.

In a one-party system, in contrast, there is no opportunity for member involvement except in support of the incumbents because internal political activity is normally prohibited by constitution. This prevents dissenters from having any legitimate role to play, reduces the number of first-line training opportunities available to would-be leaders, makes the membership completely dependent on whatever information the leadership chooses to convey to them, and ensures that no real debate can take place during union meetings, which encourages non-attendance and strengthens the membership's dependence on the leadership.

Under the one-party system, there may be no recourse against the incumbents' actions, short of voting them out of office at the next election. But voting them out may be fairly difficult. In the first place, they may be able to eliminate any contenders for leadership and any opposition support through discretionary control over hiring, firing, training, and discipline. Another advantage is that they control the union communication resources. Thus they can convey self-serving messages through official union communication channels, while denying the opposition any equivalent way to respond, unless the latter has independent access to alternative communication channels, such as those available from allies outside the union[9]. They also control the election machinery itself, and may be able to force through election procedures that strengthen the probability of their continued incumbency or reduce the frequency of elections, for seemingly legitimate reasons. Similarly, the incumbents' superior knowledge of parliamentary procedure may allow them to manipulate convention proceedings to ensure their reelection. Finally, they have a monopoly on knowledge of how the union is run, which makes them virtually irreplaceable.

Therefore, these case studies show that to promote the representation of members' interests, the union constitution should safeguard free election procedures, protect freedom of speech, restrict the discretionary power of the union governing body particularly with respect to resource allocations, protect member rights to due process with respect to

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[9] Having allies outside the union is important for at least two other reasons. First, they can launch challenges against the leadership that members may be reluctant to launch. Second, belonging to such outside groups can provide the membership with the opportunity to develop the political and parliamentary skills needed to act as an effective opposition group.

discipline, hiring and job assignments, and minimize status differentials between union leaders and members. Furthermore, members should be encouraged to participate in union affairs, and trained so that they can do so comfortably.

These arrangements would increase the likelihood that majority group interests would be considered in decision making. It is unclear that they would necessarily promote minority group interests. It has been documented that intervention by the leadership has been necessary in some cases to protect minority rights in the face of majority group intolerance (Leiserson, 1959). Therefore, the leadership's willingness to use its power to force through gains for women in the face of opposition from the bulk of the membership might be crucial to securing gains for women.

The issue of power has been implicit in the foregoing discussion of the structural factors contributing to the representation of members' interests, because the incumbents' monopoly power over union resources and their ability to change structures that interfere with their accumulation of power make opposition attempts almost futile. Similarly, when the social movement literature examines the factors allowing a challenger group to mount an effective attack on an authority, the power bases of the two groups are at issue. They determine whether or not the movement survives and what types of strategies and tactics can be utilized. We now turn to the organizational literature to examine three structural models of power that have been proposed by organizational theorists, to see how they supplement the insights gained through the social movement and industrial relations literatures, to arrive at a model of power applicable to women's committees.

Organizational Theory

<u>Power:</u>

The organizational literature offers several perspectives on power that may be helpful in this study. The first defines power in terms of relationships between individuals (Dahl, 1957), the second in terms of resource control, particularly the control of communication structures, channels, networks and rules (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck and Pennings, 1971; Mintzberg, 1983; Morgan, 1986; Pfeffer, 1981). A third perspective focuses specifically on power acquired through the ability to shape meaning (Clegg, 1989; Frost, 1987; Mumby, 1988; Spruill, 1983). The feminist organizational theorists offer a fourth perspective that derives from post-modernist roots. The first two models offer a surface level analysis of power, examining decision making and non-decision making. The focus of the third and fourth models is on deeper structure power phenomena. The non-feminist models will be examined first.

Dahl (1957) is credited with advancing the view of power inherent in the first model. His intuitive idea of power was this: " A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (p.203). Critics pointed out that his model was inadequate because it failed to incorporate actors' intentions and the significance of outcomes (Clegg, 1989). An important additional critique was advanced by Bachrach and Baratz (1962), who noted that ensuring B's non-action through the indirect (rather than the direct) exercise of power was also important.

Bachrach and Baratz indicated that powerful groups could mobilize bias to protect their interests. That is, they could invoke a set of values, beliefs, rituals and institutional

procedures that would enable them to control decision making by affecting the behaviour of opposition groups in one of the following ways: 1) making them keep silent, in the realization that their beliefs would be unacceptable; 2) making them remove themselves from the decision making setting; or 3) keeping them from becoming aware that an issue concerned them in the first place (Spruill, 1983; Deetz, 1992). The ability to mobilize bias, however, was based on resource control, so through their critique they introduced a number of resource considerations excluded from Dahl's model. A more structural model of power emerged which continues to dominate the organizational literature.

The structural view conceptualizes power as arising from the division of labour within organizations, which puts a premium on certain resources, skills, and knowledge, and makes certain tasks and departments more crucial than others. For example, departments with the capacity to reduce organizational uncertainty, which perform specialized and critical functions, which are irreplaceable, and upon which other departments depend, are more powerful than are departments that are less crucial to the organization. Similarly, individuals who hold central positions in information networks are more powerful than those on the periphery of such networks.

Morgan (1986, p.159), who integrated much of the previous organizational power literature, compiled a list of 14 determinants of power, the bulk of which derived from position in organizational hierarchy in some fashion. Power could originate in: 1) formal authority; 2) the use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations to gain political control; 3) ability to cope with uncertainty; 4) control of scarce resources; 5) control of decision processes; 6) control of knowledge and information; 7) control of boundaries; 8)

control of technology; and 9) control of the interpretive frames used in the organization. Power could also originate in certain personal characteristics, such as need and willingness to expend energy to achieve goals, and the ability to develop valuable alliances throughout the organization (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck and Pennings, 1971; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981).

One resource within the resource control approach that has been singled out for special attention is the ability to control communication structures, channels, networks, and rules. The ability to control communications allows individual organizational actors to manipulate who gets what information, when, and also to control how day-to-day situations are understood and acted upon. As such, it is a potent medium of power (Astley and Sachdeva, 1984; Frost, 1987).

However, there are limits to this power, because meaning has to be negotiated among organizational actors and is restricted by organizational frames of reference. Morgan (1986) has noted the paradox that even though a great deal of energy is expended in the search for power, few organizational participants feel powerful. He suggests that the overt as well as the covert activities engaged in by organizational actors in order to control decision outcomes can be seen as the exercise of power at the surface level of the organization, but that surface level power is limited by a number of uncontrollable deeper level power structures that shape opportunities facing organizational actors. He refers to economic factors, the structures of capitalist society, socialization, and education, but deep structures that shape opportunity can originate within as well as outside organizations.

Deep structure power is embedded in organizational structures and interpretive frameworks, and is so much a part of the taken-for-granted organizational scene that it is invisible. It will be "virtually impossible for some of the actors to recognize that their interests are not being met, that the sectarian interests of those with power are disguised as universal interests serving all the members of the organization..." (Frost, 1987, p.506). It originates in "earlier struggles, movements and maneuvers" to resolve resource dependency problems "that settle, for a time, the way things come to be perceived, valued, and acted out" (Frost and Egri, 1989). Out of such maneuvering, systems of influence and "appropriate" ways to understand organizational realities develop that bestow special advantage, for now and into the future, on those who prevailed. It takes the form of an invisible source of power that allows the victors to control organizational outcomes without encountering resistance. The capacity to embed power in this fashion is felt to be based upon the ability to control symbolic and signifying systems, which arises from the ability to control communication.

The post-structuralists, who have presented the most recent critiques of existing organizational theories of power (Clegg, 1989; Deetz, 1992; Mumby, 1988), also link communication and power. In their view, human consciousness is forged, and systems of domination obscured, through communication. Power is exercised when communication is used strategically in order to frame the interests of other groups in terms of the dominant group's interests, and thereby close down discussion of important issues.

Several strategies can be employed to eliminate discussion. These include: 1) naturalization, where the particular interests of a group are represented as inviolate, not

subject to change; 2) neutralization, where positions favouring the privileged group are presented as value free; 3) legitimation, where higher-order values are invoked to justify and sustain the self-interests of the privileged group; 4) socialization, through which organizational members' values, beliefs, and actions are shaped to suit the interests of the privileged group; 5) topical avoidance, where controversial topics are kept off the agenda, possibly by restricting access to public forums; and 6) pacification, where apparent efforts are made to consider the interests of non-privileged groups but the will to accommodate them is non-existent (Deetz, 1992). Post-structuralists feel that power lies in controlling organizational discourses, which are defined as: "historically specific, socially situated, signifying practices...the communicative frames in which speakers interact by exchanging speech acts" (Fraser and Bartky, 1992, p.185). They believe power relations can be identified by analyzing language situations.

Feminist organizational theorists also take a critical approach to the power models introduced in the organizational literature, because the models treat as unproblematic the distinctly gendered nature of power distributions in Western societies. They are in agreement with the post-structuralists that controlling discourse is the path to power, but note that the controllers have tended to be men (Chafetz, 1990; Hawkesworth, 1990), so women's voice has been lost. As a consequence, unfounded gender stereotypes, gender ideologies, and gender norms that oppress women are part of our societal belief systems, and ensure that women remain unable to access positions of power. These stereotypes, ideologies, and norms exist because: 1) men have more control over women's lives and actions than do women, and also the means to enforce their will; 2) men occupy

institutionalized positions of social decision making from which women are excluded, but not vice versa; 3) men benefit more from women's labor and other activity than vice versa (Hawkesworth, 1990). The feminists' approach is to view knowledge as a social construction which serves the interests of the powerful. They recommend discourse analysis as one means of identifying how the cultural hegemony[10] of dominant societal groups is secured and contested (Fraser, 1992).

The major contribution to the view that knowledge and power are related comes from the post-modernist literature, based on the work of Foucault (Fraser, 1992; Hawkesworth, 1990; Malson, O'Barr, Westphal-Wihl, and Wyer, 1989). Foucault believes the social field is a myriad of unstable and heterogeneous relations of power (Sawicki, 1991). Power is exercised in a chain-like fashion, and everyone simultaneously undergoes and exercises power. Foucault's message is that power comes from submerging discourses which would challenge the authority of the power-holders, and from defining in self-serving terms what constitutes knowledge and truth[11]. The ability to make laws and to determine how they are enforced is the key to domination. But since any exercise of power invites resistance, the self-serving nature of law and the unscientific bases of knowledge and truth must be hidden.

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[10] Cultural hegemony refers to the power to establish the fund of common sense, self-evident truths that tend to be accepted unquestioningly in society, that privilege dominant social groups.

[11] Chomsky's work (1987; 1989) is very reflective of Foucault's commentary on how knowledge and truth are constituted. He accuses national governments of lying to the public, with the willing complicity of the intellectuals and the media. He finds no scientific bases for accepted thought in contemporary society. Nor does he find evidence that the United States is a democratic society, despite citizens' protection against state coercion. He points out that coercion is unnecessary when the government can control the information made available to them and therefore "manufacture consent".

Consequently, he maintains that a whole set of knowledges primarily concerned with struggles and hostile encounters between authorities and others have been overlooked.

He believes the tendency to focus on centralized forms of power has obscured other, more visible forms of power that can be found at the periphery of the power network. Since such forms of power are more visible and have immediate effects, they can be more easily contested (Gordon, 1980).

Foucault's argument supports the notion that power can exist in the deep structures of organizations, and that submerged texts can be brought to light to reshape knowledge, which is in line with feminists' general aim. But some feminists are opposed to the exclusive emphasis on the analysis of text found in post-modernism because "The world is more than a text...There is a modicum of permanence...traditions, practices, relationships, institutions, and structures persist and can have profound consequences..." (Hawkesworth, 1990, p.147). The combined message from the feminists and the post-modernists then would be to look widely for power sources, to be sensitive to hidden organizational discourses, but also to be aware that structures and regularized procedures can be potent sources of power.

Committee Effectiveness:

A final contribution to this study from the organizational literature is the guidelines developed for effective committee operation. The available literature largely deals with the dynamics of running meetings rather than with the structural aspects of committee formation. One notable exception is Hackman (1987;1990), who examined several types of groups to identify aspects of organization and process that were preconditions for effectiveness. He defined effective groups as those that met the output standards of their

users, enhanced group members' ability to work together in the future, and enhanced member growth and need satisfaction. Process criteria for effectiveness included the exertion of sufficient effort to achieve results, sufficient knowledge and skill to carry out the group task, and use of appropriate strategies. The important organizational prerequisites of effectiveness were group structures that promoted task accomplishment, a supportive organizational context, and access to a process expert if required. These factors might contribute to women's committee's ability to secure gains for women. In the following chapter, the theoretical model arising from these disparate literatures will be described.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Model and Methodology

Theoretical Model

Having completed the literature review, my next task is to integrate those aspects of the organizational, industrial relations, and social movement literatures pertinent to my problem to arrive at a model of power applicable to women's committees. The model, reproduced in Figure 1 below, identifies the variables of primary interest in this study. Definitions of the variables in the model follow.

FIGURE 1 PRELIMINARY MODEL OF POWER
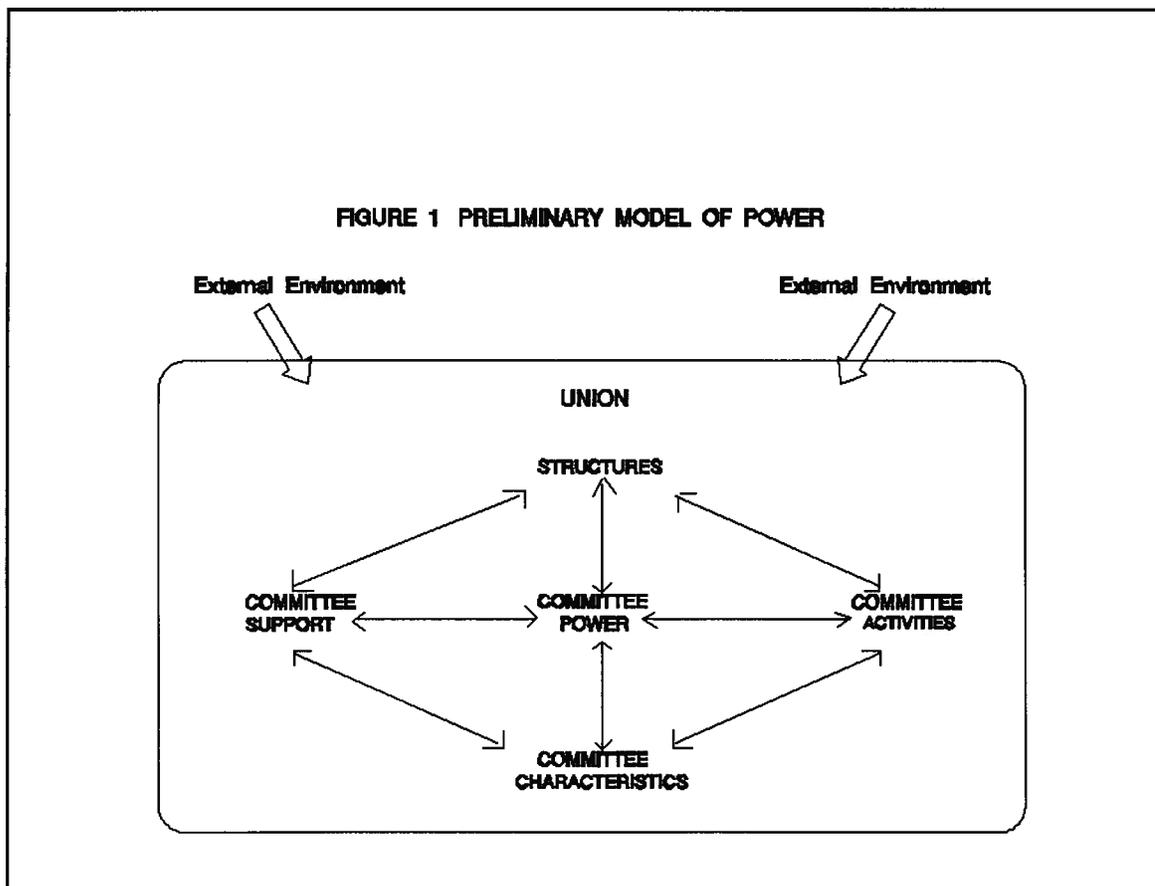
<u>Definitions:</u>

Environment:

> Refers to the economic, legal and social environment within which the union operates.

Structures:

> Include union and women's committee structures as defined below.

> <u>Union structures:</u> Formal structures and procedures set out in the union constitution, by-laws, policy manuals, etc. that determine how union business is to be conducted, which can only be changed at convention. Other regularized procedures and processes (such as decision making and communication processes and procedures for resource distribution), which can be changed by the leadership without recourse to convention procedures, are also considered aspects of structure.

> <u>Women's Committee structures:</u> Formal arrangements made by the union that authorize the women's committee to pursue a specified mandate and make committee members accountable for how that mandate is pursued. Resource allocations to the women's committee are aspects of women's committee structure. Regularized procedures and processes that develop within the women's committee through the actions of its members are also considered aspects of structure.

Committee Support:

> Includes leadership support and membership support as defined below.

> <u>Leadership Support:</u> The proportion of the leadership who support the women's committee's mandate and could potentially be mobilized to support its actions.

Membership Support: The proportion of the membership who support the women's committee's mandate and could potentially be mobilized to support its actions.

Committee Characteristics:

Include group cohesiveness, commitment to change, leadership and political skill as defined below.

Group Cohesiveness: The perception among committee members, the membership, and the leadership that the group sees itself as something more than a collection of individuals, which enhances its ability to work cooperatively to achieve its common goals.

Commitment to Change: The perception among committee members, the membership, and the leadership that the women's committee is willing to expend considerable amounts of energy and withstand considerable amounts of resistance from the membership and/or the leadership in attempting to bring about changes beneficial to women.

Leadership Skill: The perception among committee members, the membership, and the union leadership that the leadership available to the committee, supplied by committee members, the women's committee chair and the staff representative assigned to the committee facilitates goal accomplishment.

Political Skill: The perception among committee members, the membership, and the leadership that the political expertise of the women's committee facilitates goal accomplishment.

Committee Actions:

Refer to the choices made by the women's committee with respect to how it pursues its mandate, given the restraints within which it operates.

Committee Power:

The perception among the committee members themselves, the membership, and the leadership regarding the women's committee's potential for achieving three categories of gain for women: 1) changes in contract clauses beneficial to women; 2) changes in union and committee structures that make future gains for women more likely; 3) changes in female participation in the union, such as the number of women in the governing body, on local executives, etc.

Explanation of the Theoretical Model:

The model derives solely from my attempt to bring together in some reasonable fashion the variables identified in the literature review. There are no guidelines in the literature on how to accomplish this, but the actual positioning of the variables is of secondary importance. The primary importance of the model is that it provides a framework for investigating the research problem. It was anticipated that the relationship between the variables would become clearer as the study progressed, but initially it was assumed that all variables affected and were affected by the others. For example, in keeping with the structural power models, union structures were seen as a potential power resource for the women's committee. But the perceived power of the women's committee was seen as an independent as well as a dependent variable, in the true Foucauldian spirit. Hence, not only

could union structures affect the perceived power of the women's committee, but the perceived power of the women's committee could also affect union structures. The other relationships depicted in the model followed the same pattern.

The aim of this research was to trace these interrelationships over a prolonged period in order to acquire some understanding of how they contributed to power over time.

Variables and Operationalizations:

Environment:

The relative favourableness of the external environment was determined from archival sources as well as interviews with past and present committee members, chairs and staff representatives, and past and present members of the leadership. Archival sources included convention reports prepared by the leadership, descriptions of environmental factors in union publications, resolutions and incidences of strike action.

Union structures:

Were determined through examination of union constitutions, by-laws, and policy and procedure manuals, as well as through examination of convention minutes, reports to convention and to the union governing body, meeting minutes, newsletters, and journals. The perceived favourableness of these union structures with respect to women's committees was identified through interviews with past and present committee members, chairs, and staff representatives, and past and present members of the leadership.

Women's committee structures:

> Were determined through examination of union constitutions, by-laws, and policy and procedure manuals, as well as through examination of leadership and committee meeting minutes. The perceived favourableness of these structures was determined through interviews with past and present committee members, chairs and staff representatives, and past and present members of the leadership.

Committee Support:

> Membership support: Indicators of membership support over the committees' history were obtained from archival sources and also from interviews with past and present committee members, chairs and staff representatives and past and present members of the leadership. Indicators of membership support determined from the archives included vote counts at conventions for and against resolutions dealing with women's issues, the percentage of resolutions dealing with women's issues that were approved, membership turnouts for committee-sponsored events, letters supporting or protesting the committee's actions in union publications.
>
> Leadership support: Indicators of leadership support over the committee's history were obtained from archival sources as well as from interviews with past and present committee members, chairs and staff representatives and past and present members of the leadership. Indicators of leadership support included changes to committee structures that enhanced their effectiveness, proportion of recommendations made by the committee to the leadership that were approved and comments in reports, speeches, and newspaper articles that pertained to women's issues.

Committee Characteristics:

Were ascertained from both archival sources and interviews. The primary archival source was committee meeting minutes.

Group cohesiveness: Archival indicators of group cohesiveness included number of committee meetings held compared with number mandated by the leadership, evidence of agreement about goals and strategies, level of attendance at committee meetings.

Commitment to change: Archival indicators of commitment to change were found in speeches made by committee members at workshops and women's conferences, in references made to feminist principles, in number of committee members identifying themselves as feminists.

Leadership skill: Archival indicators of leadership skill included attempts made to facilitate group processes via training, group discussion, also attempts to promote alignment of goals through week-end retreats or goal-setting meetings.

Political skill: Archival indicators of political skill included proportion of resolutions to convention that were approved, whether attempts to pressure the leadership succeeded, whether efforts were made to build alliances and membership support inside the union.

Committee Actions:

Committee actions were ascertained from archival sources and interviews. The archival sources examined included committee meeting minutes, committee and leadership reports to convention, and committee newsletters and journals. Where

possible, committee tactics were categorized as political, educational, directed to groups internal or external to the union, and employing pressure toward the leadership or not.

Committee Power:

The degree of favourableness of all the variables in the model was assumed to predict potential committee power. Perceptions about actual committee power over time were ascertained via interviews with past and present committee members, chairs, staff representatives, and past and present members of the leadership. The level and types of gains achieved for women were considered outcomes of actual committee power.

Methodology

Introduction:

Methodologists have indicated that the appropriate methodology for addressing "how" questions relating to a contemporary set of events over which the researcher has little or no experimental control, is the use of case studies[12] (Gummeson, 1993; Yin, 1984; 1989, 1994). They also maintain that relatively unstructured approaches are appropriate for exploratory studies (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Filstead, 1970). Feminists agree that information should be gathered in an unstructured way prior to quantification, to ensure that the questions asked and the knowledge sought reflect women's reality (Hawkesworth, 1990;

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[12]   Yin (1994) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that: a) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life setting; when b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are blurred; and in which c) multiple sources of evidence are used.

Tomm, 1989). This study involved case studies of women's committees in two unions since their inception in the 1970's. The intent of this research was to refine the theoretical model of women's committee power derived from the pertinent academic literature by referring to the actual experiences of women's committees.

Data were collected in two phases. Initially, through archival research, the relevance of the variables in the model and their relationships were examined over the history of the women's committees. The second phase involved interviews with informed union sources regarding significant events which affected the committee during its history. This phase provided additional information about the relationships between the variables in the model, identified those that were most important in securing gains for women, and illustrated how power interacted with other variables to produce outcomes.

Individual case reports were conveyed to all persons interviewed in this study prior to finalizing them to solicit comments and feedback, and ascertain whether the essence of the committees' struggles to achieve gains for women had been portrayed accurately.

Population and Sample:

For the purpose of minimizing variation in the political, social and economic environment, the population was restricted to women's committees within B.C. unions. Within this population there were several constraints on the feasible sample. First, since I wanted to study power, the sample had to include those women's committees most likely to be powerful. I assumed committees in unions with a substantial female membership would meet this criterion. Second, since much of my data would come from union archives, the unions had to be Vancouver-based unions. Consequently, my potential sample was

restricted to women's committees in the B.C. Government and Service Employees Union (BCGEU), the B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF), the College-Institute Educators Association (CIEA), the Health Sciences Association (HSA), the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) and the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union (VMREU). Preliminary checking indicated that archival data was sketchy in the latter three unions, so they were eliminated.

A final constraint was that I thought it advisable to eliminate as many of the dissimilarities between the three remaining unions as possible. Fortunately, they were homogeneous in certain respects. In all cases, the proportion of females in the membership was in excess of 50%, all three unions could be categorized as public sector unions[13], and similarities existed within their bargaining and administrative structures. The BCGEU and BCTF were similar in that both had in excess of 40,000 members (52,000 and 41,000 respectively), and as the largest unions in B.C., played important leadership roles within the labour movement. Also, their provincial women's committees were established during the mid-1970's. CIEA was similar to the BCTF in that its membership too was comprised of educational faculty and it shared a number of the BCTF's concerns with respect to education, albeit at a different level (primary and secondary versus post-secondary). CIEA was also similar to the BCGEU in that some of the BCGEU's members were community college instructors.

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[13] The BCGEU was affected by the Social Credit government's privatization campaign during the 1980's which transferred the jobs of many of its members from the public to the private sector. Currently, the private sector employees, 22,000 strong, are included in one of the union's 11 components.

There were differences however. A major one was that they were subject to different labour legislation. In the BCGEU, public sector members are covered under the Public Service Labour Relations Act while private sector members are covered by the B.C. Labour Code. The membership of the BCTF is governed by the Schools Act as well as by the provincial labour code, and CIEA is covered by the provincial labour code. In addition, there was much more heterogeneity within the membership of the BCGEU than within the membership of either the BCTF or CIEA. For instance, one of the components is almost entirely clerical workers, while another is almost entirely tradespeople. Naturally, the membership of the first of these components is almost entirely female, while that of the other is almost entirely male. Another major difference was size, because relative to the other two unions, CIEA is tiny, with only 5000 members in 1992. Additionally, its women's committee had only been in existence since 1983. For the latter two reasons, the College-Institute Educators' Association was eliminated, and the final sample consisted of the BCGEU and the BCTF. I will now describe the two unions in more detail.

The B.C. Government and Service Employees Union:

As of June, 1993, the BCGEU had a total membership of 52,000 split between the public and private sector, and among 11 components (10 public sector components, and one private sector component). The eleven components are organized on the basis of type of work performed, and a number of locals exist within each component, based on 12 geographic areas covering the province. The union is governed via a biennial convention, where membership delegates from all the locals join with members of the provincial

executive to pass resolutions bearing upon union concerns, and to elect officers for the next two years. Resolutions can be initiated by the locals and by the provincial executive.

The provincial executive is made up of the president, who chairs the convention, four vice-presidents, and a secretary-treasurer (all elected at convention), plus the chairpersons of each component. Between conventions, the provincial executive is the governing body of the union. The provincial executive receives advice from the executive committee, which consists of the table officers and the senior staff of the union, in regards to general policy and union operation. The president chairs the executive committee.

The major activity engaged in by the union is collective bargaining on behalf of its members. A master agreement sets service-wide terms and conditions of employment for all public service employees. In addition, each component negotiates a component agreement. The master bargaining committee consists of the union president and the chairs of the 10 public service components. Senior staff persons and executive committee members can be assigned by the president to the master bargaining committee. The president chairs the master bargaining committee.

Component agreements address terms and conditions of employment specific to that component, and any other matters delegated to them by the master bargaining committee. The president is a member ex-officio of all component bargaining teams. Where members are not covered under the Public Service Labour Relations Act, collective bargaining to determine all terms and conditions of employment is conducted at component or bargaining unit level, subject to the relevant labour legislation.

Among the provincial executive's powers is the power to appoint committees to carry out the business of the union. At a Women's Conference sponsored by the BCGEU for International Women's Day in May, 1975, a recommendation was made to the provincial executive that a women's committee should be established to deal with women's issues and policies. The provincial executive endorsed the recommendation and a committee was established. Its mandate was to advise the provincial executive on issues related to women in the workplace, union, and society. Its goals were to overcome sexism and discrimination in the union and the workplace, and to encourage women to assume union leadership positions. The women's committee meets four times per year at the BCGEU headquarters. The components send representatives to the provincial committee. A staff representative acts as secretary to the women's committee, and she reports to the president after each meeting. The chair of the committee and all committee representatives are appointed by the president following each biennial convention.

The committee maintains close ties with the women's committees in the B.C. Federation of Labour, the National Union of Public and General Employees, and the Canadian Labour Congress, as well as ties to the New Democratic Party. Support for the committee has varied widely over the years, as has the committee's ability to secure gains for women and its power. I turn now to a description of union and women's committee structures within the BCTF.

The B.C. Teachers' Federation:

As of 1993, the BCTF had 41,000 members spread over 75 school districts across

the province. Locals are set up at school district level. There are three governing bodies within the federation: the annual general meeting, the representative assembly, and the executive committee. Delegates to the annual meeting include elected representatives from each local, members of the representative assembly and the executive committee. The annual meeting handles resolutions and adopts policy recommendations put forward by locals, standing committees, the executive committee, and the representative assembly. Policy amendments can only be passed with a three-quarter majority. The annual meeting also elects the executive committee which consists of the president, the immediate past-president, the first and second vice-presidents, and 7 members-at-large, all nominated by the representative assembly or from the floor of the convention.

One or more representatives are elected by each local to sit on the representative assembly, which approves the operating budget and advises the executive committee on federation policy issues. The representative assembly can veto executive committee actions and policy recommendations. In turn, the executive committee can order a review of the assembly at the instigation of the locals. The executive committee sits on the assembly, but as a non-voting body. Additional duties can be assigned to the assembly at the annual meeting. Apart from the duties delegated to the representative assembly, the executive committee is responsible for the governance of the union between conventions.

Collective bargaining is completely decentralized within the BCTF, with each local responsible for negotiating with the local school board. The locals make general recommendations on bargaining matters to the federation, which promotes these issues to

the appropriate external bodies, i.e. the Department of Education. The BCTF's primary function is as an advocacy group for teachers and students.

The executive committee has the authority to appoint advisory committees, and the BCTF's provincial Status of Women Committee arose from a four-person task force appointed by the executive committee following the release of the 1970 Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The task force's mandate was to investigate the involvement of women in education, both as students and as employees. It made an initial report to the 1973 annual meeting, which documented discriminatory practices and recommended the appointment of a full-time BCTF staff person to improve the status of women in the government of the federation and in education in B.C. The task force also recommended that a status of women contact be established in each local to work closely with the staff person, to encourage female participation in federation and local governance, and to eliminate discriminatory contract clauses.

The Status of Women Program established three major areas of endeavour: the elimination of sexism in schools, leadership skill development for women, and bargaining for equality. Women interested in sitting on the Status of Women committee were appointed by the executive committee and given authority to choose the chair of the committee. As with the BCGEU, the primary strategy adopted was education, to raise awareness of the degree of sexism in the school system, and to dispel concern that the major program objective was to get more women into administration. In reality, the program's concerns pertained to textbooks, curriculum, teacher attitudes, and the structure and philosophy of schools which perpetuated sexist attitudes. The transition from task force to standing

committee occurred after the 1977 Annual General Meeting. As with the BCGEU's committee, the Status of Women committee is a leadership advisory group so the executive committee can exercise a great deal of control over its activities. Since 1987, the committee has met three times annually.

Unlike the BCGEU, the BCTF has been successful in getting status of women committees established at the local level. The nine women appointed to the provincial status of women committee are responsible for facilitating and coordinating status of women programs in nine zones established across the province. Zones encompass several school districts and zone meetings are held twice a year, which ensures networking goes on regularly between the local committees, the local contacts, and the provincial committee. Much of the impetus for the grassroots participation in status of women initiatives comes from teacher contacts with students.

Procedures and Overview of Research Design:

Preliminary contact was made with both unions to ascertain their willingness to cooperate with this research study and to ensure that the necessary information was available in their archives. This was followed by a two-phased exploration of the research problem. Phase one consisted of archival research, and phase two involved informant interviewing. The general strategy was first to acquire a thorough understanding of the environment within which the unions functioned and how it changed over time, how the unions and women's committees operated to achieve goals, and to identify factors other than those in the theoretical model that affected the women's committee's ability to secure gains for women.

In phase two, the focus was on <u>how</u> causal variables contributed to outcomes. Information was gained through semi-structured interviews with past and present committee members and staff and leadership representatives.

The general analytic strategy followed was based on Yin (1994) but was modified to be congruent with the exploratory nature of this study. I relied on the theoretical model and four general guidelines in determining to which data to attend, in organizing my approach to the cases, and in defining alternative explanations to be examined.

The guidelines were based on each of the literatures examined, and were as follows: 1) the power dynamics that are manifested may be rooted in deep structures, so unearthing hidden assumptions and values is desirable; 2) the degree of institutionalization of the committee may affect the relationships between the variables in the model; 3) the level of membership participation in union affairs may affect committee goals and outcomes achieved for women; 4) the degree to which goals sought challenge the status quo may affect how easily they can be achieved. However, a conscious effort was made to remain open to emergent insights and unexpected relationships through the data collection process, and my approach was modified to maximize data collected. In analyzing the data collected, I made comparisons <u>within</u> unions and <u>between</u> unions over time to discover patterns within the data and possible explanations for outcomes, and to determine whether these patterns and/or explanations held for both unions studied.

<u>Data Collection Procedures</u>:

Yin (1994) recommends a number of principles to follow in collecting data to

enhance reliability and validity: 1) multiple sources of evidence should be used to obtain multiple measures of the same phenomenon; 2) a case study data or evidentiary base should be maintained, separate from the report, to give other researchers access to the data and permit replicability; 3) a chain of evidence should be maintained so that links between the research questions and case study conclusions can be traced; 4) key informants should review the draft case study report to corroborate the facts and evidence presented.

I satisfied these requirements by: 1) collecting data from multiple archival records as well as from informant interviews; 2) retaining a hard copy of all interview transcripts and archival records bearing upon the research question; 3) ensuring that my interpretations of the data were clearly differentiated from the factual data collected, and where disagreement existed that the full range of opinion as well as the predominant opinion of informants was presented; 4) giving every informant an opportunity to examine the report and provide feedback. The main factual data were collected from the archives and from supplementary information gained from staff representatives attached to the women's committees or other informed union sources.

The archival search which preceded the interviews was essential for a number of reasons. Most obviously, what the interviews should focus on had to be identified, and had to be situated in the wider context of events occurring within and outside the union to allow me to better understand the informants' comments and to prompt them to discuss explanations for committee outcomes other than those supplied by the theoretical model. In addition, the archival research suggested some issues to consider during the interviews that the theoretical model overlooked. Also, for purposes of making comparisons over time

within and between unions it was necessary to compile statistics on the variables in the model throughout the period.

The archival records that were considered included: meeting minutes of the committee and union leadership; newsletters and journals published by the committee or the union; reports submitted to the leadership by the women's committee; leadership reports to convention; committee reports to convention; convention minutes with respect to resolutions handled; union constitutions and bylaws.

Hence, the following purposes were achieved through archival research: 1) some quantitative measures of the variables in the theoretical model were developed; 2) important aspects of the changing internal environment of the union were quantified, such as changes in membership size and composition, changes in the level of female participation in the union, changes in committee activities, changes in strategies employed by the committee; 3) the relationships in the model were clarified; 4) a chronology of significant events arising internally and externally that affected the union and the committee over time was compiled.

. The statistics compiled were necessarily limited by the data available but primarily addressed: 1) changes in female participation in union leadership and staff positions, in bargaining, and as delegates to policy-setting conventions; 2) the number of structural changes achieved and the proportion that were social change oriented[14]; 3) the numbers and kinds of resolutions pertaining to women's issues that were brought to convention.

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[14] To qualify as social change oriented the primary beneficiaries of the resolution had to be external to the union membership and had to be implementable by the union rather than an outside group.

It should be noted that in the BCTF case, unlike in the BCGEU case, it was possible to analyze the committee's activities from committee minutes and other documentation available. A list of all the actions undertaken by the committee was compiled, which identified that basically two types of activities, political or educational, were undertaken. Political activities consisted of efforts made to directly influence one of three influential groups: 1) the BCTF leadership, 2) others with influence within the BCTF such as local executives, administrators, other committees, and 3) others influential outside the BCTF who affected the BCTF, such as government, school boards, students. Educational activities consisted of efforts to educate the same three groups. The activities that fell into these six categories were determined and three research confederates assisted with running reliability checks on the categorizations. Agreement rates were between 76 and 90%. The results of this analysis can be found in Table 1.

Upon completion of the archival research, the interview phase of the research commenced. Key incidents in the history of the women's committee were initially identified by contacting two informants identified by the staff person attached to the committee who gave me an overview of the committee's history, its power over time, its achievements, and the obstacles it faced at various times. This provided the background used in determining my interview questions and identified important informants to contact.

Prospective informants were initially contacted by telephone, told about the study and who had referred me to them, and asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. There was no problem arranging these interviews which generally took place in their homes at whatever time was convenient for them. The interviews were tape-recorded, generally lasted

two hours, and began with my assurance that they would be given the opportunity to review the draft of the report before it was finalized, and that none of their comments would be quoted in the final report without their consent. The format of the interviews was first to determine the history of the informant's personal involvement in the union and the committee. Then I asked about significant events in the committee's history, when it was more or less powerful, and why. Probing questions were utilized constantly to understand the rationale behind their comments. Afterwards, I introduced explanations provided by other informants and asked for their comments, to develop alternative explanations, identify patterns, and resolve contradictions emerging from the data.

At the end of the interview I asked for suggestions about other people to contact. I was most interested in maximizing the range of opinions solicited, so I purposely sought to interview representatives of the committee, staff assigned to the committee, and leadership representatives covering the full range of the committees' histories. Ultimately I interviewed 16 people at the BCTF and 17 at the BCGEU. Informant feedback on the case write-ups confirmed their accuracy and validity.

Data Analysis:

Miles and Huberman (1984) state that "the ideal model for data collection and analysis is one that interweaves them from the beginning" (p.49). This is the approach that was taken in this study. An initial classification system based on the variables in the theoretical model and the three categories of gains for women that were of concern was set up to record and analyze data. All archival records of interest were photocopied so that they

could be easily consulted during data analysis and report preparation. Hard copies were made of the interview transcripts which were stored as computer records.

As data collection proceeded, close attention was paid to regularities emerging from the data that rounded out the theoretical underpinnings of the study and suggested new avenues of inquiry to pursue during the interviews. Three general modes of data analysis were applied to the data, pattern-matching, non-statistical time series analysis, and explanation building (Yin, 1994). Pattern-matching involved locating patterns in the data for each case, seeing if these were observable across the sample, and comparing them with predictions based on theory. Time series analysis involved placing these patterns into historical context so that their evolution could be traced, and key factors in their development analyzed. Explanation-building involved developing possible explanations for the data obtained and seeing which ones were supportable once all data was collected.

Efforts were made throughout the data collection and analysis phases to increase study reliability and validity. Throughout the study, the researcher's and informants' proposed explanations for outcomes were checked in subsequent interviews to enhance both reliability and validity. Records were kept of the analytical procedures and decision rules used, as recommended by methodologists (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The researcher continuously questioned all phases of the research to promote internal validity. Research confederates were utilized to run reliability checks on researcher-developed categories. Actual gains achieved were not assessed until after predictions based on the theoretical model were established to avoid biasing the analysis. Conclusions reached were based on data collected from multiple sources which similarly helped to eliminate researcher bias.

Finally, informants' feedback on the draft reports was sought to correct factual errors and affirm the validity of the conclusions reached.

A number of other factors were built into the research design to enhance reliability and validity. They were previously mentioned but will be reviewed here. The first was the use of <u>multiple</u> case studies, which afforded the opportunity to discover what generalizations could be made across the sample, and hence provided a basis for possibly generalizing these findings beyond the women's committees in the sample. The contextual analysis that derived from the archival phase of this research grounded the findings and indicated what factors might affect such generalizations. These study features promoted the external validity of the study.

Other factors promoting the internal validity and reliability of the study were also built into the research design. For instance, the use of relatively unstructured informant interviews where the informant could query the researcher about the meaning of the questions and the researcher could clarity the informants' comments helped to ensure that accurate information was obtained. Since multiple informants with different perspectives were interviewed in regard to the same event, many biases and inaccuracies were captured by the researcher. The contextual analysis and the quantification of the variables promoted internal validity by establishing baseline data against which changes could be measured. The preliminary archival work also provided an opportunity to generate many plausible explanations for the outcomes observed, which could be investigated as the study proceeded.

Unfortunately, there are limits to how well threats to internal and external validity can be ruled out, particularly in the case of naturalistic inquiry conducted under

circumstances that do not lend themselves to experimental control or variable manipulation. Also, ideally this project would have been conducted by a research team to ensure that the researcher's own biases and preconceptions did not skew results. However, informants' comments suggest that there were enough controls built into the research design and procedures to ensure the credibility of research findings. These will be presented in the next three chapters.

Chapter 4. Case Study of the B.C. Teachers' Federation

Introduction

When I undertook to determine how and under what circumstances women's committees were able to secure gains for women, one theoretical point of departure was the structural model of power presented in the organizational literature. It identified organizational structures as well as level and quality of effort exerted to achieve goals, as major sources of power. This model suggested that favourable organizational and committee structures would facilitate women's committees' efforts, and that higher levels of politically astute activity on behalf of women would be accompanied by greater gains for women.

As I examined the data collected at the BCTF, it became apparent that a second explanatory framework would be helpful. Based on the social movement literature, it depicted women's committees as social movement organizations committed to social change, that were housed within unions, seen as larger social movement organizations. The union governing bodies controlled committee budgets, resources, and governing structures, were not necessarily sympathetic to their social change objectives, and had the power to destroy them.

This theoretical model upheld the importance of structures and activity levels in women's committee power. But it also emphasized the need to consider the women's committees' actions within the context of the structures governing their actions and the responses of their governing bodies to them. Furthermore, since both structures and the typical behaviour of both the governing bodies and the committees changed over time,

consideration had to be given to time period.

Consequently, I identified four periods over the committee's history during which the structures of both the BCTF and the committee remained relatively stable. These periods were: 1) 1973-1977; 2) 1977-1981; 3) 1981-1988; and 4) 1988 to the present. During the first period, the status of women program was born, and it was in this period that the organizational structures that would govern its operations until 1988 were formed.

At the end of the first period, the status of women task force became a standing committee, achieving a position of permanence which it had not had previously. During the second period, it strengthened its network and refined its existing organizational structures. In the third period, the BCTF became committed to securing full bargaining rights and changed its zonal structure to facilitate that process. The Status of Women Committee (SWC) adopted that structure to support the bargaining initiative, but all other aspects of its structure were maintained. In the final period, in response to a leadership change, many of the structures governing the committee were also changed. This had a substantial impact on how the committee functioned in the future.

Within these periods, I tried to determine how goals, actions, and outcomes for women were linked. The study indicated that the internal characteristics of the committee seemed less deterministic of outcomes in the fourth period than in the previous three. This appeared to be a byproduct of the increasing institutionalization of the committee over time. The variables that retained their importance throughout the committee's history were the external environment, levels of leadership and membership support within the BCTF, committee and BCTF structures, and the committee's own actions. These variables and their

interactions created the women's committee's potential ability to secure gains for women during particular periods.

Whether or not this potential was realized proved to depend on the existing structures as well as on the women's committee's ability to influence structures as well as the other variables, which was time-bound and dependent on the leadership's willingness to listen. So for example, a period generally favourable for securing gains for women could be negated if the leadership imposed unfavourable structural changes onto the committee, perhaps in response to actions it did not support.

In the next four sections, following a short summary of how the BCTF's Status of Women Program (SWP) came into existence, the variables in the theoretical model will be examined individually and collectively over each of the four periods using documentary and interview sources to determine what potential for securing gains existed each period. Actual gains achieved will then be examined, and any gaps between anticipated and actual outcomes will be discussed.

Background to the Establishment of the Task Force:

The context of the early 1970's in B.C. was encouraging for groups interested in promoting the status of women in education. An NDP government had been elected in 1972, the Minister of Education was female and in favour of women's rights, and a provincial advisor on sexual discrimination had been appointed. At the federal level, the newly-released Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women had revealed that a substantial disparity existed between men and women, partly due to the educational system.

Within the BCTF, a small group of feminist teachers known as Women In Teaching (WIT) had been meeting since 1969. The members were already aware of and concerned about sexual discrimination in schools, but had found little support for their concerns. The Royal Commission report was the catalyst that drove them to urge the BCTF executive to look into the status of female teachers and students in B.C. The executive agreed, and a task force was set up in 1971 which was chaired by a member of that feminist group. The first task force was succeeded by a second one, which eventually came up with 46 recommendations for change. Seven of the recommendations were taken to the 1973 Annual General Meeting and despite very stormy debate, all but one were passed by the delegates (See Appendix A).

As a result, instead of disbanding the task force, a status of women program was established and a full-time coordinator was hired to work with the task force to improve the status of women in the government of the BCTF and in education in B.C.

Examination of the Status of Women Program, 1973-1977

Discussion of the Theoretical Model:

1. Environment:

Initially this was a fairly calm period for the BCTF. It supported the NDP government elected in 1972, school budgets were adequate, and the country as a whole was enjoying fairly prosperous times. The second phase of the women's movement had begun, but women in general had not yet developed the level of awareness necessary for militancy.

This period of calm came to an end when the teacher-friendly NDP government was replaced by the Social Credit party in 1975 and a federal anti-inflation program was introduced in 1976. The provincial government passed a bill to place teachers under the federal program, which caused teacher salary roll backs. As a consequence the BCTF became more militant in defence of its members' interests and in defence of public education, and eager to acquire the right to strike.

On the bargaining front, under the School Act BCTF locals were restricted to negotiating pay and benefits, and compulsory arbitration was imposed if the local and the local school boards could not reach agreement. Maternity benefits were governed by the provincial Maternity Protection Act, which afforded 17 weeks of paid maternity leave. Leaves beyond that period were uncommon in collective agreements, and paternity or parenthood leaves did not exist. Similarly, contract language protecting women against sexual harassment and discrimination was non-existent since only money items could be negotiated.

Female involvement in the governance of the BCTF at the local or provincial level was low. Despite the fact that females constituted 54% of the members of the BCTF in 1973, at that time only one of the 11 executive committee members was female. If females sat on their local executives, it was likely to be as the secretary (in 48 of the 75 locals) rather than the president (in 8 of the locals). Even in terms of the federation's administrative staff, only 10% was female.

2. Levels of Support For The SWP:

Membership - According to informants, male and female attitudes toward status of women

issues were largely negative at the start of the period. The Women in Teaching group, committed to the eradication of sex discrimination in education, had fewer than 9 regular members in 1970. One of its members at the time commented at that, "it seemed like the whole world was unaware of sex discrimination and particularly the teaching body in the educational system was still laughing about 'women's lib'..."

The situation seemingly changed little between 1969 and 1973, despite the report produced by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. According to a member of the BCTF task force that was set up in 1971 to examine sex discrimination in education, most of its members "were not convinced that there was a problem..." There was also a reluctance on that task force to rock the boat. I was told,

> We couldn't say anything about counsellors because that would offend counsellors, and we could't say anything about textbooks because that was the purview of the government, and the only thing we could talk about was women in administration, but we had to be very careful, we wouldn't want to offend anyone.

The people I spoke with felt that the recommendations brought forward to the 1973 Annual General Meeting (AGM) regarding the establishment of a Status of Women task force might not have been passed if the predominantly male delegation had not been shamed into it. A member of the Status of Women Task Force reported:

> They were making jokes, sexist comments in the middle of our report and during the debate on the recommendations. A woman got up and chastised the meeting....It was embarrassing for them, so they passed the recommendations.

The first status of women coordinator reported that a man bearing a placard proclaiming that "Eve was God's first mistake" disrupted a meeting where she was discussing status of women issues. Informants maintained that there were repeated attacks on the SWP's budget from the Representative Assembly (RA) which represented the locals, and was heavily male-

dominated with less than 15% of the representatives female.

There was evidence of resistance to the SWP in some of the resolutions brought before the executive committee in 1975. One of the locals opposed having a section of the Members' Guide entitled "Status of Women", wanting it replaced by "Status of Women and Men". It also proposed, "That a serious review be made of the need for the Status of Women Program". Also, while contacts were quickly established in each local, informants reported that it was rare to find status of women issues being discussed at that level.

However, the situation improved over the period. Later in the period, according to informants, "those who spoke out against women's issues were being slammed, and there was a backlash in our favour, so there was more momentum for the program." The majority of members did not support attempts to scuttle the program, and all 14 of the resolutions the SWC presented to the AGM's between 1974 and 1977 were passed[15]. Resolutions that supported the aims of the SWP were brought forward from the locals. Also, some of the female members of the locals began pressuring the male members to develop more progressive attitudes. As reported by the first coordinator of the SWP, following the placard-bearing incident female members of the local convinced their local executive of the need to devote professional development time to the discussion of women's issues.

Leadership Support - Prior to the establishment of the status of women task force, only one of the executive members was female. According to one of the members of Women In Teaching, the executive's reaction when it had heard of WIT's establishment had been,

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[15] This was perhaps because the SWC was successful in increasing the female delegation to the AGM's over that period to approximately 50%.

"huge guffaws and carryings on. They said, 'I've heard of twits and I've heard of witches, but I've never heard of WIT!" Nevertheless, the executive committee agreed unanimously in 1973 to appoint a full-time coordinator and to work toward improving the status of women in education and within the BCTF to "demonstrate the concern of the BCTF for the rights and responsibilities of women." Furthermore, in 1975 it agreed to continue the program and to extend the coordinator position for another two years. One informant noted:

> I don't think they saw it as a big deal. Their attitude was, the damn thing passed at the AGM so now we're going to have to spend some money on it. I don't think they saw a threat here. It was a fairly long time before that happened.

The situation was not completely rosy however. Executive committee minutes show that there was some dissent regarding the 1975 decisions. Also, in 1977 when the executive committee voted to change the status of women task force into a standing committee, an effort was made to convert it into an "Equality of Opportunity" committee instead. While the committee was established, again there was one dissenting vote.

Nevertheless, despite the dissent, overall leadership support for the program was quite strong. In its reports to the AGM between 1973 and 1977 the executive supported the need for the program and spoke favourably about the progress being made. Their desire was to meld status of women concerns into existing BCTF programs so that the SWP could eventually be eliminated as a discrete program[16], but they noted the "continuing need to devote a special portion of BCTF resources to the goal of eliminating sex discrimination in every aspect of education". The executive committee also made the establishment of an affirmative action program a priority in 1976/77. So leadership support for the SWP

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[16] That was one of their stated priorities for 1974/75.

remained strong throughout the period.

According to informants, some of this support had its roots in a secret leftist caucus which included feminist activists and members of WIT and the SWC. This caucus called itself "Teachers' Viewpoint" when it went public in 1977. Its platform was described in a BCTF newsletter. Among other things it was committed to "taking positions on social and political issues of the day", "curricula and school practices which are non-sexist, non-racist, and reflect the reality of working people", and working for "equal status for men and women, for teachers and principals, for minority groups, and for equality of opportunity for all students." Once formally established in 1977, Viewpoint published its own newspaper, held regional meetings, and met regularly prior to meetings of the BCTF's governing bodies to develop strategies that would promote the group's interests.

However, according to informants, even within period one the SWC members within this left caucus found themselves having to choose between doing what they believed was best for the SWP and what was best for Viewpoint. Three controversial resolutions regarding school athletics programs that the SWC had advanced had to be withdrawn at the 1976 AGM to ensure that a Viewpoint candidate running for a BCTF executive position would be elected. Subsequently SWC members decided that Viewpoint's interests would never again take precedence over the SWP's. This had a long-term impact on leadership support for the SWP which will become evident in later periods.

3. Structures:

BCTF - The BCTF went through a reorganization exercise just prior to the establishment of the Status of Women task force. The executive committee's report to the 1974 AGM

stated that members had overwhelmingly approved existing structures and democratic processes. Consequently, no notable structural changes were introduced in period one.

SWP - During period one, few changes occurred in the structures first established to govern the Status of Women Committee. These consisted of a 5-person task force, a network of local contacts, and a zonal structure to maintain links between the provincial task force and the local contacts. The number of meetings to be held annually was not stipulated, but since most of the committee members came from the Lower Mainland, both formal and informal meetings occurred frequently. The task force was meant to be an advisory committee to the executive, hence all resolutions proposed by the task force had to be approved by the executive before they could be taken to the membership.

Formal terms of reference for the task force were not specified until 1977 when it was transformed into a standing committee with 7 members and 6 scheduled meetings annually (see Appendices B and C for original and current committee terms of reference). The program's initial objectives were: 1) to encourage more female participation in Federation activities; 2) to bring about the elimination from teaching contracts of any provisions discriminating against women; 3) to encourage women to qualify for and apply for administrative positions in education; 4) to eliminate prejudices against the employment of women teachers to administrative posts; 5) to create an awareness of the degree of sex stereotyping and sexist discrimination at all levels in the school system.

Of the resolutions proposed by the committee during this period, only one that was brought forward and passed at the 1977 AGM had formal structural implications. It encouraged local executives to make local contacts voting members of the executive.

Implementation was left to the discretion of the local, but by the end of the period, the local

chairpersons of 22 SWC's were voting members of their executives.

It was during this period that the SWC initiated a two day contacts' training

conference, and started developing and delivering workshops on status of women issues

around the province. It was also during this period that the status of women newsletter was

established, to help the provincial committee educate and stay in touch with the contacts.

It was published approximately five times per year and distributed to contacts, the table

officers, the RA and to BCTF staff. The contacts were to ensure it was accessible to local

members. It contained information about status of women initiatives being undertaken at

local and provincial level, discussed status of women issues around the world, and provided

curricular resources that would be useful to classroom teachers.

4. SWC Activities and Characteristics:

From the beginning, the people involved in the SWP viewed it a means to an end,

that end being the improvement of society for everyone. In an eloquent expression of that

philosophy, an early SWP coordinator declared:

> We must always look toward the issues that will further the development of the program, not for its own sake, but for that goal that we must always keep in mind of improving the society for all people...the enemy is the entire society and the structures of it because that is what causes the problem for all oppressed groups.

As another former committee member succinctly put it, "We wanted a revolution in how

things were done."

My informants were clear on their target, which was not to get more women into

administration, but rather to eliminate hierarchical structures altogether and introduce

feminist processes. "Feminists" were defined for me as people "who understand that the

world is structured in powerful ways, and that some people have power while others don't. A feminist approach to power is to collect a base of people to challenge the power structure." This was to be accomplished using feminist processes which were described as, "You set your own agenda and you involve the grassroots, and they determine what's to be done. Also the rotating leadership was something we believed in."

Once the SWP had been established, the task force and coordinator agreed that their first task was to establish a network of contacts across the province to support the work of the provincial task force. In line with their socialist and feminist philosophy, the program was to develop from a grassroots base of support. Feminist processes were to be followed in building the program. Input to guide the program would be sought from the grassroots and consensus decision making would be achieved through open and egalitarian discussion. The committee would have a rotating chair, group support would be a central part of the program, and the objective would be to empower women.

However, before that could be accomplished, the membership had to be convinced of the need for the program. The first SWP coordinator reported on her activities in the first year.

> I travelled extensively, made contact with as many people as I could, and I begged for opportunities to attend general meetings and RA meetings. I developed speeches that were designed to get at the real issues and to get away from the idea that this was just a bunch of crazy women who wanted to burn bras...I talked about economic issues...we could show that 2/3 of people on welfare were women, we could show that average salaries for male and female teachers were substantially different, that women teachers were much worse qualified ... then there were children and maternity leaves, and how come women should be penalized. So it was very easy to make our points logically... I did everything I could to get people to buy this as a valid program that was significant and important to teachers who cared about children.

The task force members and the contacts were also extensively involved in outreach activities during this period. Their efforts were directed toward influencing the government with respect to non-sexist curriculum changes and to working with other women's groups to raise awareness in the communities that there was a need for change.

Despite these outreach activities, most of their efforts were directed toward the BCTF. They forged liaisons with potential allies on the administrative staff and other committees, opened up information links internally, and maintained a presence at meetings of the executive committee to address any status of women issues that might come up. They made a point of using their contact network to influence decisions made by the executive committee, and to influence events at the AGM's. The task force members also ran 81 workshops on women's issues in 1977 and visited up to 27 locals annually in period one.

An examination of the tactics used during the period indicated that during this period, 76% of the SWC's strategies were geared to political or educational ends (See Table 1.2). Political tactics included things like sending delegations of SWC members to meetings of the RA and the executive committee to lobby for desired actions, controlling the AGM's by planning floor strategies and mobilizing contacts to support status of women resolutions, and running SWC members as candidates for election. The proportion of total tactics that was political was 41%. Sixteen percent of tactics were geared to pressuring the executive committee or the RA (See Table 1.1). In terms of outreach, 20% of the committee's efforts were geared to groups or individuals outside the BCTF See Table 1.3).

In terms of resolutions proposed to the AGM's over the period (See Table 2), almost all (15/16) sought to pressure some group or individual inside or outside the BCTF to

pursue an initiative that would promote the status of women. Of these, 9 sought to pressure the BCTF. Thirteen of them qualified as social change oriented, meaning that the resolutions sought action by the BCTF <u>and</u> the primary beneficiaries were external to the BCTF's membership. The content of these resolutions will be examined in a later section of this paper. To summarize the SWC's actions for the period, it was a very busy time for the committee during which its political nature and social change orientation were very apparent.

5. Potential For Gains:

Informants agreed that the early years were heady ones for the SWP, and the committee perceived itself as successful during this period. Because of the excitement stimulated by the women's movement, the external social environment supported the committee's mandate. Despite lack of support from the more conservative members, public denigration of the program was unacceptable to much of the membership, and membership support was growing. Leadership support was high as well, and the political astuteness and energy of the committee had been well demonstrated. As a then-current committee member commented, "We were just so energetic and excited, and societal conditions were right. We couldn't lose. We couldn't not go ahead."

The analysis suggests that this should have been a period during which gains for women could have been achieved, because all of the power resources identified in the theoretical model were positive. It might be recalled that the gains that were to be examined in this research were: 1) improvements in female participation in the governance of the BCTF; 2) improvements in structures governing the SWC that would make future social

change more likely; 3) improvements in contract clauses favourable toward women. Actual gains in these areas will now be discussed.

Examination of Gains Achieved Over the Period:

Gains achieved in three areas through the efforts of the status of women task force were considered. Statistics gathered from documentary sources indicate that gains were made with respect to increases in female involvement in the governance of the BCTF during this period (See Table 3.1). Whereas the proportion of the membership that was female remained constant at 54% over the period, the proportion of females on the executive committee increased from 9% to 27%, and on the RA the increase was from 14% to 25%. However, the proportion of local presidents that was female stood at only 17% at the end of the period, increased from 11% in 1973, and the proportion of female administrative staff remained unchanged at approximately 19%.

Structural changes achieved over period one were substantial. The statistics indicate that ten policies and six procedures were directly generated by the SWC over the period (See Table 3.2). All of the policies and three of the procedure statements could be considered social change oriented, although all but one referred strictly to educational matters.

By the end of period one, policies existed that stated that sexist curricula should be replaced, teachers should become more aware of the effects of discrimination, school boards should examine the status of female students and teachers, the federal government should eliminate programs and advertisements derogatory to women, and affirmative action

programs should be implemented by federal and provincial governments. On the local scene, integrated sports and open enrolment were to be encouraged, and counsellors were no longer to be assigned on the basis of sex.

Procedural statements committed the BCTF to non-sexist language, the encouragement of female applicants to administrative posts, consideration of women's history and status of women issues in revised curricula, and the development of in-service programs to enhance general awareness of sex stereotyping as well as negotiation of parenthood leaves. Structural changes directly applicable to the SWP included the establishment of the contact network and the placement of contacts on local executive committees. The contact network was quickly established, and as mentioned, 22 locals complied with the directive to have contacts as voting members of the executive by the end of the period.

Bargaining gains were not remarkable over the period (See Table 3.3), but to some extent this is because until 1987, the School Act restricted teachers' right to negotiate non-monetary benefits. School boards could quite legitimately refuse to negotiate many of the items of interest to the SWP. Nevertheless, some school boards did negotiate extended maternity benefits. Between 1973 and 1977, the number of contracts with this provision increased from 11 to 15 out of a maximum of 75, and parenthood leave was negotiated in three locals. Paid paternity leave was negotiated in two contracts, while unpaid paternity leave existed in three contracts. But there was relatively little evidence that the SWP had made inroads on the bargaining front.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that four years was not a very long period over which to start a program and amass gains, and gains reported acquire greater significance when contrasted with those achieved in later periods. In the next section, the second period in the SWC's history will be examined.

Examination of the Status of Women Program, 1977-1981

Discussion of the Theoretical Model:

1. Environment:

The provincial government's adoption of federal wage control guidelines imposed under the anti-inflation program continued to aggravate the BCTF. The cap on wage increases was 6% after October, 1977 and resulted in additional salary roll backs for B.C. teachers. The BCTF decided to fight the program, lobbying the government and liaising with labour to develop joint action plans. One of the strategies implemented was a one day withdrawal of teaching services. In 1980/81, the BCTF was involved in a major fight with the government with respect to pension indexing, which was marked by periodic rotating strikes and demonstrations. This contributed to the pressure which continued to grow within the BCTF to acquire expanded bargaining rights, and it became the federation's priority at the 1981 AGM. Other BCTF concerns during this period were declining public support for public education and declining enrolment.

On the bargaining front, a court ruling upholding an arbitration decision that declared the negotiation of extended maternity benefits to be outside the jurisdiction of the BCTF hampered progress in that area, but some boards expressed a willingness to consider

negotiation of noon hour supervision and additional preparation time in future negotiations.

2. Levels of Support For The SWP:

Membership - Since membership delegates voted to have standing status of women committees established in the locals at the 1977 AGM, membership support at the start of the period appeared high. Throughout the period the locals brought forward resolutions supporting the aims of the SWP. Also, all of the resolutions recommended by the SWC prior to the 1981 AGM were passed, although one, dealing with preferential hiring of females to administrative positions until a representative balance of males and females was achieved, was modified before passing.

The SWC's perception was that member support was high. As a then-current committee member stated, "The program was growing, gaining support from women in the field, we were abiding by the rules and winning non-feminists and men over to our cause". However, there was a sense that focusing on improving the lot of students was more acceptable to the membership than focusing on issues affecting female staff directly. As one informant put it, "...many of the members are the martyrs, and would find it more acceptable to deal with motherhood-type issues [because] maybe they couldn't even see that there was a need [for changes for themselves]."

Much of the support for the SWC was seen to arise from the SWP network. Representative comments on this topic included: "The SWP's support was always strongly embedded among an activist group within most locals..."; "...we wanted to be aware of how we could keep building that support. We always came back to our grassroots network out there across the province."

Despite the strength of the network, there were elements within the membership during this period, as in period one, who did not support the SWC. In November, 1978, a member proposed that the SWC should be renamed the Status of Feminists Committee. Committee members recalled, "we had to always stay alert to who could stab us in the back, because people did...". One informant recalled, in reference to the late 1970's and early 1980's, "When I first became involved in my local, women who were involved in the SWP were labelled, they weren't acceptable to the membership as a whole. They were seen as whiny, cranky women."

There was disagreement among my informants about what proportion of the membership supported the SWP's aims at that time. Two comments are representative: "I'd say there was a very significant minority, maybe 25%, who would not support women's programs but fewer than that who would speak out..."; "...We have historically been sensitive to the fact that we are not supported from the vast majority of people out there." So there was evidence of a lack of support for the SWC during the second period.

Despite the potential for backlash among the members, at the 1981 AGM the SWC introduced two controversial resolutions supporting women's right to choose at a time when abortion was considered an offence under the Criminal Code. The first recommendation was, "That the BCTF support the right of women regardless of age, marital status, income or geographical location to: a) have access to a full range of information, counselling, and medical services with respect to their health and well-being; b) decide whether or when to have children. The second recommended, "That the [Canadian Teachers' Federation] should seek to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code of Canada."

Their rationale was, "It was basically there to protect counsellors, although it was also to raise the issue and give it focus, give counsellors and teachers the protection of the union if they disseminated information about birth control, etc." The resolutions created a great deal of strife within the BCTF, pitting the pro-choicers, which included SWC supporters, against the pro-lifers, and solidifying the negative attitudes toward the SWC of those members opposed to BCTF involvement in "non-educational issues".

Specific arguments made against the recommendations, as reported in the BCTF news publication, included arguments about the supremacy of life, that abortion was a personal issue upon which "we can all take a stand at our own time and at our own expense", and that "I cannot morally accept my fees being used to promote something that is against my conscience." Predictions were made that there would be a split within the federation if these recommendations were passed. Nevertheless, the resolutions passed with a 60 to 70% majority of the delegates to the 1981 convention.

The immediate response was an outpouring of letters of protest to the BCTF Newsletter. The SWC was charged with blatantly manipulating the delegates by means of a "technically legitimate but totally immoral procedure" which was described as:

> There were runners going from mike to mike to give instructions to those who had jammed the line-ups...a "negative" speaker was able to advance from mid-line to the front so that "both sides" of the issue had been heard from after only two speakers...[a] hand signal [was] given to the third speaker to bring the debate to a halt by moving the question after just those two speakers...

In response, committee supporters wrote letters charging that, "The use of parliamentary technicalities to stall and obfuscate debate was employed by those who opposed the recommendations and not, as many would suggest, by the supporters of the motions."

Another supporter wrote, "It didn't matter that I never reached the microphone, because the debate which took place clearly indicated the right and necessity of such a choice."

My informants admitted that they stacked the microphones on the AGM floor, but they did not see anything wrong with their strategy, which they described as, "we lobbied, organized, spoke and won". Over the abortion issue, the SWC demonstrated its strength and raised the ire of a lot of members, but also demonstrated that its social change orientation was supported by the bulk of the delegates who were supposedly representing their locals.

Leadership - Leadership support appeared to be high through much of the period. The SWC's recommendations to establish standing status of women committees in the locals and to convert the task force into a standing committee were approved by the executive committee. In 1979 a former SWC chair was elected to the executive, and the following year, three other status of women activists joined her, so there was a very strong feminist presence on the executive committee in period two, particularly in 1980/81.

Other indicators of leadership support were found in the archives. In November, 1977 the executive endorsed a brief produced by the committee on equalizing learning and working opportunities for female teachers and students. The brief identified some initiatives that could be undertaken at the local level to redress the unbalanced distribution of male and female teachers in elementary and secondary schools. The executive also agreed to the distribution of a questionnaire querying all candidates running for election at the 1978 AGM about their stance on various status of women issues. Finally, all the recommendations proposed by the SWC from 1977-1980 were forwarded to the AGM, with the exception of those that the executive either passed on its own authority, or directed elsewhere within the

federation for handling.

From 1979-1981, Viewpoint controlled the executive and in 1979 the committee was expanded from a seven to a nine-person committee, a strong demonstration of support. But according to informants, some of the executive committee members were disturbed by the pro-choice resolutions. "The right to choose resolutions were brought forward to the chagrin of the men on the left. They disagreed with what was going on but it was beyond their control." The committee was reputed to be excessively strong in some eyes, and committee members began to suspect that the SWP was being used as a pawn by some of the male leaders who had their own agenda. One informant suggested that, "They saw us as an ally to what their bigger ante might be", and as such, "their support was conditional on the SWC's doing what it was told to do." Another informant maintained that, "The progressives on the executive committee supported us as long as we stayed within the framework of their power. But the key was to stay within that framework." When they refused to do so in the aftermath of the 1976 AGM, they no longer enjoyed full support from Viewpoint. As one informant explained, "When we got so strong that we began to question more of what they were proposing, a whole different level of operation began." The long-term consequences became evident at the end of the next period.

3. Structures:

BCTF - In response to the provincial government's adoption of the federal anti-inflation program, two new committees were established within the BCTF which had some impact on the SWP. The Political Action Committee was formed to make recommendations on political action initiatives to be undertaken to fight the program, and the Labour Liaison

Committee encouraged the development of linkages between the BCTF and organized labour. The establishment of these committees foreshadowed the increasingly political agenda the BCTF was to pursue in the future, and the eventual transformation of the BCTF into a more militant federation of unions.

SWP - Many of the structural changes that occurred over this period have already been mentioned. The task force was transformed into a standing committee, and its terms of reference (See Appendix B) gave some guarantee of continuity to the thrust to eliminate sex discrimination in education. This was reinforced by the executive committee's expansion of the committee in 1979 to a nine-person from a seven-person committee. Committee members played an active role in determining appointments to the committee. The committee began to operate with co-chairs, partly to give more members the experience of holding the chair but also to lighten the chair's workload which was getting onerous. The only other change that occurred during the period is that a resolution was passed at the AGM that recommended that locals establish status of women standing committees with appropriate funding. By the end of the period, 57 of the 75 locals had established these committees.

Throughout this period six meetings were held per year. The status of women newsletter continued to be published five or six times a year, but upon request it was distributed to groups outside the BCTF. The program budget more than doubled during period two to approximately $168,000.

4. SWC Activities and Characteristics:

The types of activities the committee engaged in over the second period were similar

to those of the earlier period. Networking with other women's groups, including the Vancouver Status of Women, had been emphasized right from the task force's beginnings. The network was expanded in period two, in that the committee started to forge ties with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. The committee gained a higher profile in the BCTF by setting up displays and presenting to various BCTF conferences and meetings. It also organized a student conference on sexism in schools and began to make presentations to school boards to convince them to discontinue discriminatory policies and practices. In addition, it began to attend RA meetings to influence decisions made in that venue, and to train workshop facilitators.

It made additional efforts to mobilize the contacts, encouraging them to write articles for the newsletter, to get involved on curriculum advisory committees and to attend regional political action meetings. Meeting minutes indicated that it also made additional efforts to remind contacts of the feminist philosophy underlying the program, and of the history of the committee to that point.

Through the contact network and its workshops, the SWC tried to identify areas of concern to the membership, which determined what resolutions it brought forward at the AGM. "We listened to what people in the field said concerned them, worked on resolutions, did our research, and did our homework, and then put those resolutions forward." The committee also used the contact network to work the AGM's in order to influence who was elected to the executive, and to get SWP resolutions passed. "Since they originally came from the grassroots, [the contacts] would speak in favour of them."

The pre-AGM meetings were an important means of accomplishing their objectives:

> We always had pre-AGM meetings to talk about the issues, and suggest delegates to be supported. We usually had a keynote speaker, discussed what the SWC had accomplished and wanted to accomplish, and round table discussions on issues affecting women that were coming up at the AGM. We would encourage women to become more active in the federation.

Outside the contact network, the committee also maintained contact with local women's groups, organized labour, and various government bodies, and delivered between 70 and 100 workshops each year across the province.

Similar to period one (See Table 1.2), 75% of the SWC's tactics were geared to political or educational ends this period, and the proportion of their political strategies directed to either the executive committee or the RA stayed approximately the same at 17% (See Table 1.1). The proportion of their political and educational tactics that were geared to groups or individuals outside the BCTF fell from 20% to 16% (See Table 1.3).

In terms of the 13 resolutions proposed to the AGM's (See Table 2), all sought to exert pressure on some person or group, with the pressure directed at the BCTF authorities in 5 of the cases. Eleven of them qualified as social change oriented.

To summarize the changes in SWC activities between the first and second periods, the SWC remained extremely active and became even more oriented toward pressuring the authorities during the latter period, although fewer of its activities were directed externally. The social change orientation of the resolutions proposed to the AGM remained apparent.

5. Potential For Gains:

At the end of the period, the committee felt powerful. One member who had joined in 1980 recalled, "When I joined the committee, part of the discussion always was how to

keep power. We felt powerful...". The committee was aware that to stay powerful, it

needed more workers. All the work of the committee from 1977-1981 was done by 16

people, some of whom had been serving prior to that period. The SWC's report to the 1978

AGM stated:

> The BCTF Status of Women Program has shown remarkable growth since its
> introduction in 1973. At present, demands on staff and committee members are
> excessive. In order to meet increasing demands for services from the membership,
> additional support for the program will be required in the near future.

The leadership's willingness to increase committee size created structural conditions

conducive to gains for women, and demonstrated leadership support for the program.

Available indicators of membership support suggested that the grassroots-based strategy

employed helped to keep the committee in touch with the membership's needs. Based on

these indicators, potential for gains for women during this period should have been high.

The one counter-indicator was the decline in the proportion of committee efforts

directed externally, which became the future trend (See Table 1.3). This might have

signalled a change in the committee's philosophical orientation away from achieving society-

wide change and a narrowing of its focus to educational issues only. Because all but one of

the early task force members were off the task force by 1977, it is feasible that the radical

structural feminist philosophy that had characterized the earlier task force members had

softened somewhat. If that was the case, potential for gains of a social movement nature

might have been lower than expected for this period, although the effect might not be

discernible until period three.

Another possible explanation for the reduced external focus is that the committee

might have decided that given the time pressures it was under, internally-directed efforts

such as negotiating model contract clauses pertaining to parenthood or educational leaves,

and having the BCTF model affirmative action hiring, might have the greatest pay-off. By

the end of period two it may have become apparent that many of the issues needing to be

addressed to eliminate sex discrimination in schools were curricular issues over which the

government, not the BCTF, had jurisdiction. This could have caused the committee to

refocus its attention in areas where it was most likely to succeed - those with an educational

focus that the BCTF could influence.

Examination of Gains Achieved Over the Period:

Gains in three areas were considered. The statistics indicate that the second period

did bring some gains for women (See Table 3.1). The proportion of females in the

membership declined slightly over the period from 54% to 52%, but female involvement

in the governance of the BCTF still improved in all areas except administration. The

proportion of females on the executive committee rose to 36% from 27% over the period.

The proportion of females on the RA increased from 25% to 30%. While local presidents

were still overwhelmingly male, the proportion of presidents who were female rose from

17% to 30% in period two. The proportion of females on the administrative staff stayed

constant at approximately 18%.

Substantial structural changes were achieved during this period through the SWC's

efforts, although unlike in period one, not all of them appeared within the Status of Women

section of the Members' Guide. The statistics indicate that 10 policies and 2 procedures

were instituted over the period (See Table 3.2). Nine of the former and one of the latter

were oriented to social change. Indicative of the committee's continued radical feminist philosophy at this point, three of the policies as well as the procedure extended beyond educational concerns.

Among the policies introduced were those recommending that school boards, the government, and teachers should develop Practical Life Skills and women's studies courses, and family life and sex education programs to educate students about rape and sexual assault. Government-funded daycare centres should be provided, and the BCTF should take steps to protect members from sexual harassment in schools.

The new procedures committed the BCTF to affirmative action hiring for administrative positions, to reimbursing members for child care expenses incurred while on BCTF business, and to negotiating various clauses of interest to the membership. These included 36 month paid parenthood leaves, continuation of pension fund contributions for teachers on maternity or parenthood leave, and educational leaves to obtain first degrees.

Some of the procedures put in place were retained under the Status of Women section. In this area, the BCTF committed itself to equalizing working and learning opportunities for students and staff by encouraging locals to develop affirmative action programs and establish status of women standing committees. It also committed itself to defending women's right to non-discriminatory hiring. There were no additional policy statements added to this section. As mentioned earlier, 57 locals elected to establish local status of women committees, largely through the efforts of the local contacts.

Regarding bargaining gains (See Table 3.3), despite the 1975 recommendation that locals should negotiate paid parenthood leave, only three more contracts included that

provision at the end of the second period, bringing the total contracts with that provision to six out of a possible 75 contracts. The number of contracts with paid paternity leave increased from two to eight. Unpaid paternity benefits were negotiated in three more contracts, bringing the total to six contracts with that provision by the end of the period. The number of contracts with extended maternity leave increased from 15 to 21. But there were still no provisions for non-sexist environments or sexual harassment protection clauses, or for no discrimination clauses. So bargaining gains continued to materialize slowly.

Discussion:

Overall, the SWC's excitement and enthusiasm produced steady but not outstanding gains for women over this period. The committee succeeded in increasing female involvement in governance in all areas but administration, and in initiating a number of structural changes through the resolutions proposed to the AGM's. Regarding the latter, implementation was an issue. Getting policies into the Members' Guide did not necessarily translate into gains because of the BCTF's inability to implement these policies without the cooperation of other external groups. There was a similar problem with respect to the implementation of procedures. The BCTF had the authority to change its hiring practices and to pay for child care expenses, but the implementation of the other procedures was in the hands of the locals, many of which chose not to comply. In any event, the rate of gain in the areas of governance and structural change slowed considerably in period two relative to period one. In the bargaining area, gains were even scarcer, again because the locals could not legally negotiate non-monetary issues.

A possible explanation may be that the early gains came more easily because there were a number of women waiting in the wings, eager to get involved in BCTF affairs and to fight for women's rights, and it became more difficult to mobilize the rest as time went on. It is also possible that some members were frightened and even turned off by the SWC's increasingly political approach. In addition, by this time some overt resistance to the initiatives being presented by the SWC within the locals had appeared. That 18 locals chose not to establish standing status of women committees despite the urgings of the federation leadership was one indication. Complaints periodically appeared in BCTF publications stating that what went on at AGM's did not reflect the will of the locals. Ultimately it was the locals that had to negotiate bargaining clauses and implement the structural changes recommended by the executive or the AGM. It was also the local membership that determined whether or not the president of the executive would be male or female. A final explanation offered by the social movement literature is that the federation and the committee were unable to sustain the momentum for change because insufficient numbers within the locals supported change.

However, lack of local support is not the only possible explanation for the relatively few gains achieved over the period. The outcome may have been the result of the diversion of attention to fighting wage controls, which were possibly of more concern to the general membership than were status of women issues.

Another explanation might be that the external environment had become less supportive of the women's movement, and that therefore support within the BCTF was also weaker. The women's movement and the aim of restructuring society may have become less

compelling in the late 1970's and early 1980's as economic conditions worsened. One of my informants believed that by then the tide had turned and "there was less desire to equalize opportunities for everyone". Instead the focus turned to "getting women into positions of power in the existing hierarchies", which was something to which the earlier SWC members had been totally opposed, and which continues to be an unresolved issue for feminists in the BCTF. There is some support for her analysis in that the SWC developed a workshop on Women In Leadership during this period. Also, her analysis could explain why outreach activities fell off somewhat during this period. However, future developments clarify which of these explanations should be supported, so the theoretical model will now be examined for period three.

Examination of the Status of Women Program, 1981-1988

Discussion of the Theoretical Model:

1. Environment:

Over the period pressure was increasingly exerted by the BCTF on local associations and school boards, to expand the scope of bargaining to include learning and working conditions in addition to economic benefits. The 1981 AGM had approved a motion making the acquisition of full bargaining rights a priority, and bargaining matters dominated the BCTF scene for much of the period. Efforts were made to persuade the government to change the legislation regarding negotiation jurisdiction. These culminated in 1984 in the launching of a challenge against the School Act under the Charter of Rights, proclaiming that one fundamental right was the right to collective bargaining.

The membership was not 100% supportive of this bargaining thrust, particularly with respect to securing the right to strike. A letter appearing in the BCTF Newsletter charged that the motion passed authorizing the BCTF to seek the right to strike did not reflect the will of the majority of BCTF members. A referendum held in February, 1982 confirmed that this was the case, when 58% of the voting membership voted "no" to gaining this right. They wanted binding arbitration to continue to be their contract dispute mechanism.

On the economic front, matters continued to deteriorate throughout the period. In February, 1982, the provincial government announced a public sector restraint scheme that restricted school board budgets and wage increases, resulting in teacher layoffs and an increase in the pupil-teacher ratio. The BCTF undertook initiatives jointly with organized labour to fight the restraint program by lobbying the government, appealing to the public and seeking to influence the upcoming provincial elections. Further school board funding cutbacks materialized in September of that year followed by the introduction of a number of government bills attacking the public sector.

Teachers and other organized public sector groups responded through job action, which escalated throughout the ensuing year and resulted in a three day province-wide strike in October, 1983. It was "an exhausting and emotionally and psychologically bruising campaign for all members, particularly activists." The strike created schisms between the BCTF and organized labour, and within the BCTF which at that time included school administrators as well as teachers.

Through much of the period, school boards were announcing plans for teacher layoffs, increased class sizes, and elimination of programs. According to an audit conducted

by the BCTF executive, between 1981 and 1986 approximately 3200 teaching jobs were lost and teachers' real incomes fell by 10.5%. The executive committee report to the 1987 AGM noted that by 1987 B.C. had the largest class sizes and the lowest funding in Canada. The BCTF committed itself to ousting the Social Credit government at the next election, but once again was unsuccessful. The relatively unceasing government attacks on education, accompanied by the BCTF's efforts to show the public the damage being done to students finally made an impression on the public, and led to demands for higher education funding by the end of the period.

The government attacks renewed the BCTF's commitment to winning full bargaining rights. This was finally achieved in 1987, but was accompanied by a number of other undesirable changes. The Compensation Stabilization Program was extended to July, 1988. A College of Teachers was established to govern certifications, discipline and professional development. As of January, 1988 the administrators could no longer belong to the BCTF, resulting in a revenue loss to the BCTF of $120,000 per month. Compulsory membership to the BCTF was eliminated, which necessitated the launching of a certification drive to sign up members. It also raised the threat of a permanent membership loss should members choose not to sign up, or reduced bargaining effectiveness should they choose non-certification. According to documentary sources, the cost of the certification drive and of the efforts to fight the legislative change was over three million dollars.

A more permanent result of the certification campaign was that the split that had been brewing in Viewpoint for years finally coalesced over whether or not the BCTF's membership should include both certified and non-certified locals. Viewpoint's position was

that if locals chose not to sign up they should be excluded, and it was able to muster up enough support to prevent the proposed constitutional amendment from going through. Viewpoint's popularity suffered because of its stance. The majority of the members had been willing to have both groups under the BCTF umbrella, and they felt that Viewpoint should have allowed the will of the majority to prevail.

According to estimates provided by Viewpoint informants, approximately 15-20% of the incumbent members of Viewpoint were unable to support the position Viewpoint adopted regarding non-certified locals. The disenchanted leaders left Viewpoint to form a new group called Teachers For A United Federation (TUF), a coalition with the more conservative elements in the BCTF which gained control of the BCTF executive at the 1988 AGM. The newly-elected president was the same woman who had been fielded as a Viewpoint candidate in 1986 and her executive committee included only two Viewpoint members. The new executive committed itself to eradicating the budget deficit the BCTF had run up over the past three to four years in its struggle with the government, and to developing a leadership style more responsive to the will of the people. This signalled the start of tough times for all BCTF programs and advisory committees, particularly those involved in social responsibility initiatives such as the SWP.

2. Levels of Support For the SWP:

Membership - Membership support for the SWP eroded somewhat after the 1981 AGM at least partly because of the number of members opposed to the SWC's stance on abortion. The immediate response was described previously, but the following year, a resolution came forward from one of the locals recommending that funding to the SWP should be

discontinued. That same year, and every year thereafter, resolutions came forward and letters were written to BCTF publications to get the abortion policies eliminated because they were outside the mandate of the BCTF. Objections were directed not only to the SWP but also to the Program Against Racism, which was labelled "superfluous". The move to replace their local status of women committees with human rights committees continued, generally unsuccessfully. There were never more than 6 such committees established.

The theme that the SWC was political and controlling was a recurring one over the period. Said one committee member, "We were accused of being a big red machine by some people who didn't like us". One informant who had joined the committee in the early 1980's stated that, "The perception of the committee being too powerful and political was always there". Another recalled that in the early 1980's. "There was certainly a perception that the women were running things and they were very much too powerful and too much on the left, and bringing forward their own issues at the expense of everyone else." One informant was more specific:

> They were a formidable group politically. The status of women network had become quite powerful and quite scary too. You never criticized it. I remember being told as a new delegate to the AGM that if the contacts in the network didn't like you, you were dead. They could get people elected, and they could get them un-elected too.

Despite the conflict that the committee's "overly-political" approach seemed to generate in certain areas, some of the attacks originated in a position held by some of the members, that the BCTF had no business getting involved in social responsibility matters which were held to be irrelevant to education. Since every year such resolutions were overturned, presumably this view was held by a minority of the membership if the delegates were representative, which as mentioned was a contentious point. But it is possible that over

the period the SWP's opponents grew for this reason and also because of the committee's decision to get involved in bargaining.

It was reported to me that many of the people attracted to the SWP were left cold at the idea of involving themselves in collective bargaining. "The women were terrified of doing it, and didn't accept that women's issues were all bargaining issues." The decision was controversial even within the committee:

> We spent a lot of time talking about pushing [the contacts] out to the bargaining table, knowing how tough that would be, what a male model that was, how vicious that was, knowing you had to be pretty tough, pretty strong to negotiate, and how we could support and help them.

The question of support was a touchy one, because with the limited time available to carry out its mandate, the time the committee would normally have devoted to development and support activities for women would be largely diverted to women involved in bargaining.

There were other factors aligned against the committee's decision to get involved in bargaining. Given that some of the members were displeased with political behaviour, the SWC's decision to get heavily involved in bargaining, a political activity, may have caused further displeasure. There was also resistance within the locals to being pressured to bring women's issues to the bargaining table, and to having women on the bargaining team.

Also, despite the leadership's interest in having the committee refocus on bargaining gains, the provincial Bargaining Committee, which in the early years included only one woman, did not really welcome the representatives from the SWP when they began to attend bargaining committee meetings in 1982. "When we first started going to the bargaining committee, it was so horrible, so male-dominated, and they really didn't want us there." A committee member recalled:

The provincial bargaining committee seemed very much a domain of male power and privilege and old boys' network, and hierarchical in nature, and not welcoming to women. I remember [the then current SWC rep. to the bargaining committee] coming back from those meetings in tears because they were so hard, and we were trying to fight for things like sexual harassment clauses and paid maternity leave, and often just trying to convince our own members that those things were important was quite a struggle. I became the rep after her and I remember going to those meetings and trying to get them to discuss women's issues or think about them and having some of the bargaining committee members refuse to do the things I suggested, so I felt on occasion there was some hostility there. It seemed that women's issues were always the first to be discarded from the bargaining objectives.

Despite the resistance, the committee members felt that getting a foothold in bargaining, which was a political decision making forum in their view, was necessary to bring about meaningful change for women. The committee prepared and distributed a package about bargaining that was presented in workshop form at the 1982 summer bargaining conference. Contacts were subsequently urged to get involved in bargaining and to attend bargaining conferences and bargaining meetings in their locals. Recommended contract clauses on topics such as seniority, sexual harassment, leaves of absence for maternity, paternity, parenthood and adoption, and benefits for part-time teachers were disseminated. Facilitators from across the province were trained to deliver bargaining workshops. Eventually the committee's efforts were rewarded, because resistance to negotiating status of women concerns gradually fell, and women's issues began to be treated more seriously at the bargaining table. The 1982 AGM endorsed the SWC recommendation that locals should negotiate sexual harassment protection clauses. The 1987 AGM endorsed the establishment of affirmative action programs for students and staff in all school districts.

But one resolution came forward maintaining that, just as women should have the right to information regarding birth control, so too should men. Another in 1987 that

committed the BCTF to rectifying the male/female imbalance on the administrative staff passed by a margin of only 5 votes. Hence it is possible that the membership was wishful of an approach more cognizant of the rights of both males and females, and that the SWC's focus on gains for women only became less popular this period.

The latter possibility was voiced by some informants. One suggested that while the SWC was influential among activists, "it still hadn't reached out to the members." This view was endorsed by one of the early committee members who had kept track of the committee's progress over time. Her view was that the peak time for the committee "in terms of the membership and the strength of the network was 1975-1980."

There is little doubt that the SWC's close ties with Viewpoint which was becoming increasingly unpopular throughout this period was one factor in the decreasing support for the committee. While Viewpoint had gone public in 1977, BCTF publications indicated that its goals and methods became the focus of a lot of criticism beginning in 1981. The BCTF's decision to make full collective bargaining rights a priority was seen as a Viewpoint decision, because that was part of its platform. The decision did not sit well with some portion of the membership, and letters complaining about efforts to turn the BCTF into a union poured in. The BCTF's involvement in social responsibility areas, another point of controversy, was also attributed to Viewpoint's social change orientation. Furthermore, the membership did not approve of BCTF business being discussed and strategies developed, in a forum that did not represent the entire membership. This was clearly stated in letters published in the BCTF news publications.

One letter written in 1982 accused Viewpoint of being a "divisive force within the BCTF", and that judgement was reinforced later in the period when it held its stand against an inclusive BCTF despite a majority favouring that option during the certification drive. Since the SWP was accused of being merely "a vehicle to get Viewpoint candidates elected", according to informants, it is easy to see that the negative attitude within the membership to the politicization of the BCTF that was led by Viewpoint, might have spilled over onto the SWC. The political means the SWC employed, utilizing its contact network and its connections with Viewpoint to get its resolutions passed at the AGM's, would have fuelled the anger directed at both Viewpoint and the SWP by the more conservative elements of the BCTF. Finally, since Viewpoint split over the issue of an inclusive BCTF, support for the SWP was fundamentally affected into the future.

Leadership Support - For most of the period, the SWC and the executive committee were essentially on the same wavelength. According to SWC informants: "We could dovetail our efforts with what they were doing and still keep our feminist focus..."; "...We managed to convince them for the most part that what we were doing was crucial to the federation." But relations between the executive committee and the SWC were often quite stormy during this period. Said a then-current member of the executive committee, "The committee was quite willing at times to take on the executive, not attack them, but criticize them, if it was in disagreement with it." Another committee member mentioned that, "One of the strengths of the committee up to the mid-1980's was that the SWC was willing to take on the executive, was prepared to go to the membership if they felt the executive was doing something that was antithetical to the program." Such tactics were undoubtedly

uncomfortable to the executive. "I can remember being angry with the SWC...", said a former member of the executive committee. However, it did not cause them to abandon the program's objectives until the certification drive in 1987.

At that time, as reported in letters from members and by informants, the pro-choice issue became one that was going to prevent the sign-up of some locals, which was not considered to be in the BCTF's best interests. The threat had been apparent for several years, expressed in the BCTF Newsletter. One example was the following comment, published in December, 1985.

> The BCTF has gone outside its jurisdiction as our union in speaking on behalf of its members' moral values on a highly controversial issue. The inclusion of [two pro-abortion] policies makes it very difficult for many teachers to continue the support of the BCTF we are required to give as a condition of our employment. Making policy on moral issues will alienate much of the BCTF membership...

Another published in 1986 stated:

> I had always felt that compulsory membership was desirable and essential because the whole membership benefitted. But now that the executive takes it upon itself to advocate the right of choice to kill another human being before birth, I feel that the teachers in favor of life should not be forced to pay fees to bring this about...Please leave life and death issues out of the BCTF. Then compulsory membership would be fine with me.

Although other correspondence indicated that an independent poll conducted in B.C. in 1986 had shown that 80% of the population supported the pro-choice position, the threat was taken seriously. Former Viewpoint members on the executive tried to downplay their past support for that issue, for the SWC, and for social issues in general to build the Teachers For A United Federation (TUF) coalition that took over the executive in 1988.

3. Structures:

BCTF - A cross-committee task force on sexual harassment was formed during this period

which included representatives from the Teacher Personnel advisory committee, the SWP, and Childrens' Rights. In order to support the achievement of full bargaining rights, representatives from a number of committees including the SWC established a new regional organization to facilitate the coordination of bargaining activities throughout the province. In March, 1982 the SWP was placed under the auspices of the Professional Development division, and given voting status on a new joint bargaining committee, which included representatives from Working and Learning Conditions, the Professional Development advisory committee, and the Teacher Personnel advisory committee. Its job was to advise the executive committee on bargaining priorities.

During this period, the local presidents' manuals were updated to include a section on status of women issues. Also, the BCTF encouraged networking with external groups, particularly those who could influence public attitudes toward education. Beginning in 1984, the BCTF president began to meet with the SWC to suggest how the SWP could support the federation's general thrust. Also, for the third time in the BCTF's history, a woman was elected to the presidency in 1986. She remained in power until 1989.

SWP - Small budget cuts which affected the length of zone meetings and publication budgets were experienced during the period, but in general the SWC's budget increased steadily. The status of women newsletter was transformed into a new journal format, but fewer issues were published toward the end of the period. During the period, the distribution of the journal achieved a peak circulation of 1000 copies to women's groups across the country and the U.S., and even overseas. The number of zone meetings increased to two in each zone in 1983, and the SWC started to supplement its other communications with the contacts

by starting to distribute a contact memo at regular intervals. Links with external groups were also maintained.

As reported in the SWC reports to the AGM, the focus of the program for 1982/83 onward was political action and skill building to support the BCTF's fight against government cutbacks and their effect on women, and increased female involvement in bargaining. In support of the bargaining initiative, the SWC reorganized its zone structure and began sending two representatives to the Bargaining Committee, one with voting rights and one as an observer, to develop negotiation skills. The co-chair responsibilities were divided so that one co-chair could concentrate solely on bargaining issues.

Time pressure once again became an issue for the committee during this period. To ameliorate it and to provide maximum service to the members, a sub-committee structure was introduced in 1982/83 to address the three foci of the program: bargaining, curriculum, and skill development. In future, part of each meeting was devoted to sub-committee meeting time. This structure was maintained throughout the period. Also in 1983, as part of a continuing effort to maintain morale and free up time for other activities, the committee delegated all future workshop delivery to facilitators, rather than committee members. In 1984 the committee devoted part of its efforts to articulating the role of the SWC, the contacts, the SWC chair, and the program coordinator, for inclusion in the contacts' procedure manual. For the first time, that year the committee presented no resolutions to the AGM. Other structural changes did not emerge until July, 1988.

4. SWC Activities and Characteristics:

Informants and reports to the AGM indicated that the SWC developed a number of

new workshops early in the period, including time and stress management, females and microtechnology, surviving the cutbacks, and sexual harassment. Subsequently, workshops on thinking globally about women's issues, financial planning for women, violence against women, and women and the law were developed. A workshop to demystify collective bargaining was also developed, along with an "Equality=Freedom" workshop and one on non-sexist child-rearing practices.

In addition, as previously described, a number of new initiatives were undertaken to support the bargaining thrust. These included sending SWP representatives to the bargaining planning sessions, encouraging the contacts to attend zone bargaining meetings and get involved in bargaining, having the SWC attend bargaining training sessions, arranging meetings with local associations to develop strategies for negotiating status of women issues, and seeking an increased incidence of females on local negotiating teams. The latter culminated in the establishment in 1986 of a Women In Bargaining sub-committee, consisting of two members from the Bargaining Committee, and two from the SWC. Its aim was to increase female participation in all areas of bargaining. The contacts were also encouraged to get involved with workshop delivery and the certification drive, and to chair local status of women committees.

Liaison was maintained with the BCTF administrative staff, other committees and task forces. Instead of meeting with school board representatives this period to try to raise consciousness about status of women concerns and to eliminate sexist policies and procedures, the committee began to lobby the government to establish a full-time committee to deal with these issues. It also lobbied the government to try to get women's studies onto

the curriculum as an elective. External links with organized labour and women's groups were maintained as well.

The status of women journal was circulated more widely during the period. Between four and six issues were published annually, and the committee held six meetings annually. It presented up to 98 workshops in 36 locals during the period, and increased zone meetings from one to two per zone. The committee continued its attempt to raise awareness of status of women issues inside the BCTF by arranging displays at AGM's and BCTF conferences. It mounted a display as well in the education faculty at University of British Columbia. The effort to keep the contacts aware of the committee's feminist roots and in touch with earlier SWP participants was also maintained as was the effort to influence appointments to the committee:

> We always influenced the appointments. It was all carefully planned in a way...We weren't trying to be exclusive, but we were really clear about the kinds of people who should be on the committee...We encouraged all contacts to apply for vacancies [on the SWC]. We encouraged particularly people who we thought would be strong and effective spokespersons on that committee. We also lobbied executive members and told them who we wanted on the committee.

The committee continued to seek political means to its ends during this period, as informants' comments have already established. The analysis (See Table 1.2) shows that the average proportion of political or educational strategies employed during this period increased from 75% to 81%, with political tactics accounting for 47% of the total, compared with 40% in the previous period. Twenty percent of the political tactics were directed toward the executive committee and the RA, up from 17% in the previous period (See Table 1.1). The proportion of political and educational tactics directed externally fell to 14% from 16% (See Table 1.3), despite the executive committee's encouragement of

networking to fight the government restraint program.

An examination of the resolutions (See Table 2) shows that the number of resolutions proposed to the AGM increased to 16 from 13 the previous period. Of these, 14 (88%) sought to exert pressure, compared to 92% the previous period, but 5/16 rather than 5/13 directed that pressure to the BCTF, down from the previous period. All but one of the resolutions qualified as social change oriented and compared with the previous period, a higher proportion were oriented to extra-educational issues (7/16 vs. 4/13).

To summarize the changes in SWC activities between the second and third period, the SWC concentrated its efforts on collective bargaining, strengthening its network and developing workshops. It reduced its external focus, and tried to raise its profile within the BCTF. The committee's feminist roots and its social change orientation became more apparent during the period. The difference was that additional BCTF structures had emerged through which it partially funnelled its efforts, and its major focus over the period reflected BCTF priorities, which were in line with some of their own. Consequently, it was less necessary for the committee to pressure the executive this period.

5. Potential For Gains:

In this period, it is difficult to assess the variables in the model as positive or negative. Many of the informants' comments suggested that the SWP network was very strong during this period, but that strength made the committee a threat in some quarters. Therefore it is difficult to equate strong support from contacts with strong membership support overall, and in general it is difficult to assess membership support. Certainly some of the members felt that the committee was pursuing goals not properly within the BCTF's

mandate. In addition, leadership support was uncertain, for some of the federation's leaders felt that the SWC was no longer controllable, although they did not withdraw their support until the end of the period.

The changes in the BCTF's structures which affected the SWC, in particular the establishment of a bargaining committee with one spot reserved for the SWC, should have been helpful in getting status of women issues onto the bargaining agenda, despite the initial resistance encountered. But the changes in the committee's internal structures, such as the decision to no longer have SWC members involved in workshop delivery may have cut off communication between the SWC and the greater membership, hurting its ability to address membership concerns not found within the contact network.

The other change in the committee's internal structure, the establishment of sub-committees to deal with different aspects of the committee's concerns, would have had the positive aspect that it allowed the committee to pursue gains on various fronts, but also the potential negative aspect that inevitably one of those fronts would become more important than the others. The outcome would be the creation of the hierarchy that the SWC had tried to avoid from the beginning, which would also have impaired communication, destroying the internal harmony of the committee, and hurting the committee's ability to utilize its limited time as effectively as it otherwise could have. The SWC minutes did reveal that the committee's internal process was frequently under discussion during this period, and that the committee employed conflict resolution exercises periodically.

The decision to become wholeheartedly involved in the bargaining was a divisive one, which might also have been detrimental to the SWC's ability to secure gains during this

period. "It set up two classes within the committee - those who could bargain and those who could not." While the committee continued to do much of its work together, and everyone was kept informed of everyone else's activities, "...there was more of an ownership of those things rather than the whole collective group owning it all." Also, the bargaining initiative took up so much time that despite the SWC's attempt to continue to address curriculum issues and personal development initiatives, of necessity they became secondary concerns. "There was more to it than bargaining, but with the limited amount of strength that you have, something has to go." One structural change that might have alleviated some of the problem during the period was another increase in committee size, but perhaps because of the government restraint program it was never requested.

The situation is unclear as well with regard to whether the SWC's activities would have stimulated positive or negative results. Their political expertise cannot be denied, but given the negative reaction out in the membership to political actions and the apparent resistance to BCTF involvement in "non-educational issues", a greater focus on education may have been less threatening. It is also likely that during this period the committee members were fatigued, not only because gains for women might have been more difficult to achieve than they wished, but also due to the attacks on public education that were ongoing during this period. This was confirmed by a long-time committee member. "You can't [give up] but you do give up. You do get tired of it. Battle fatigue affected our analysis of whether we could be better." Certainly the committee was very active in this period, but the membership's attention may have been diverted to the attack on education.

Also, the committee may not have been alert enough to identify changing trends affecting it that should have redirected its efforts.

Finally, the external environment was less supportive of potential gains this period. A major part of the BCTF's attention was directed toward survival during this time, and women's issues might have been seen as low priority. In addition, the waning popularity of the women's movement might have detracted from the BCTF's commitment to fight for women's rights, particularly in the isolated locals where the contacts depended on community support to legitimize their actions.

In conclusion, it is difficult to assess how much potential for gain might have existed during this period. Despite the noise made by the SWP's opponents, the BCTF's membership and leadership in general seemed supportive of the SWP, and saw social and educational issues as linked. Given the effort the SWC directed into bargaining and the BCTF's acknowledgement of the need to get more females involved, it may be anticipated that this would be the major area of gains. On the downside, external environmental factors mitigated against excessively positive gains.

Examination of the Gains Achieved Over The Period:

The statistics indicate that substantial gains for women did materialize during this period (See Table 3.1). In terms of BCTF governance, for the first time a female majority prevailed on the executive committee, and the average proportion female on the executive committee went from 29% to 45%. The average proportion of female representatives on the RA remained constant at approximately 26%. The proportion of local association presidents

who were female varied widely over the period. It fell from 30% to 16% after the 1981 AGM, rose to 27% by 1985, and ended the period at 16%. The proportion of females on the administrative staff increased to 32% from 18% at the start of the period.

The structural gains achieved over the period were substantial (See Table 3.2). Thirteen policies and three procedures were instituted. Fifteen of them qualified as social change oriented, and just under half were oriented to extra-educational change. Policies were instituted acknowledging women's right to choose and to have access to birth control and other information relating to their health and well-being. A number of policies were introduced defining sexual harassment and declaring women's right to protection from it, and condemning the manufacture, distribution, sale, and public display of pornographic material. In addition, policy encouraging the participation of female students in technological areas was also instituted. Policies chastising the government for its elimination of some post-secondary education programs and supporting guaranteed annual incomes, universal social programs, and academic freedom were introduced, along with others demanding funding of women's studies, Native Studies and university transfer programs.

In terms of procedures, the BCTF committed itself to the negotiation of sexual harassment protection clauses, to giving priority to the hiring of women until a representative balance of males and females existed on the administrative staff, and to having affirmative action programs for students and staff established in the locals.

Bargaining gains during this period were also significant (See Table 3.3). The local associations' insistence on expanded scope of bargaining resulted in a doubling of the number of contracts with extended maternity leave clauses to 43 out of 75 from 21 at the

start of the period. Supplementary unemployment benefits for maternity were achieved in six contracts. The number of parenthood leave clauses increased from 6 to 23. The number of paid paternity leaves increased from 8 to 38. For the first time, contract language pertaining to non-sexist environments and protection from sexual harassment was negotiated in 26 contracts. No discrimination clauses were negotiated in 15 contracts. The SWC was jubilant about the bargaining progress achieved.

> It was amazing to see the short time it took to get sexual harassment clauses into the contracts...That moved pretty fast, so that was a really good feeling. The same was true about...maternity clauses. We made inroads quickly on topping up the supplementary unemployment benefits plan for the two week waiting period before benefits began.

But as mentioned earlier, it was achieved at the expense of the other facets of the program.

Discussion:

Outcomes for the period indicate that the negative external environment did not prevent gains for women from occurring. This suggests that, in terms of the internal environment, there was substantial support for the SWC's bargaining priorities in the locals, and overall support for the other social change oriented initiatives pursued by the SWC over the period. The fact that many of the committee's resolutions could not be implemented by the BCTF does not detract from their intent, although it somewhat reduces their practical value.

Results also suggest that the mix of political and educational tactics employed by the committee was acceptable to the bulk of membership as well as the leadership. The alignment of the SWC's and the leadership's goals of getting more women involved in

bargaining, and of negotiating clauses with particular relevance for women, and the leadership's willingness to establish formal structures to support those goals, was important to the progress made at the bargaining table regarding status of women priorities. The changes made to some of the SWC's internal arrangements, such as delegating bargaining issues to one of the SWC's co-chairs, and using sub-committees to develop expertise in certain areas, contributed to the achievement of the gains. In retrospect, it appears that the committee made good decisions over this period, that the variables in the theoretical model were favourable for this period, and that the variable of importance was actually the leadership's support of the SWC's goals.

The picture painted above does however provide some evidence that the committee was becoming institutionalized. Institutionalization is defined in the social movement literature as: "a process whereby the change-oriented goals of social movement organizations are transformed into goals oriented to societal accommodation and their major activities become organizational maintenance and the provision of routine services to members." Some indicators of institutionalization were that the committee began to adopt BCTF priorities and to direct its network to work to achieve them. This was the case with the bargaining initiatives, but also with the certification drive and the battle against government cutbacks. At the same time, its external focus lessened. It also altered its zonal structure to coincide with that of other divisions to facilitate bargaining. The feminist processes described previously, such as the commitment to consensual decision making and lack of hierarchy, slowly ebbed away as the SWC directed its attention away from personal development and support initiatives directed toward women, and allowed a bargaining/non-bargaining

hierarchy to develop. Its sub-committee structure promoted the development of specialized knowledge and skills which was antithetical to feminist egalitarian principles.

The committee also displayed a great deal of concern with organizational issues over the period. It developed procedures to be followed in setting co-chairs' terms of office, electing the bargaining committee representative, handling funding and other requests from external groups, determining how zone activities were to be monitored, and outlining how locals should request workshops, as well as many others. It even made a decision on how many breaks there should be at their meetings. The development of such routines is one of the characteristics of institutionalization. The committee must have appeared to be well-established, because a suggestion was made that a men's committee should be set up under the SWC to join the fight against sexism and sex-role stereotyping.

One of the chief means by which institutionalization typically occurs is through cooptation of the social movement group by the authorities. The executive committee demonstrated clearly this period that it wanted the committee to share its priorities, and the committee duly made upholding federation priorities its major priority. The pay-off was that the BCTF then made it easier for the committee to achieve some of its objectives, committing itself to hiring female administrative staff, to legitimating negotiation of contract clauses affecting the status of women concerns, and to establishing structures to facilitate the process. It also willingly complied with the SWC's request for increased budget to expand distribution of the status of women journal in order to strengthen the SWP's network.

There was much evidence this period that the executive committee saw the SWC and the SWP network as its tools. The most obvious of these was the president's visits to the committee, commencing in 1984, to discuss how the SWC could support federation objectives, and to present the executive committee's position on various issues in order to foster the committee's acceptance of these positions. Other indicators were that it was the executive committee's decision that there should be status of women representatives on both the sexual harassment and bargaining committees, that the SWP should be housed within the Professional Development division rather than the Learning and Working Conditions division which the committee preferred. It was also the executive that decided that the SWC should liaise with representatives from the professional development division because they did training out in the locals, and would then be able to present status of women positions at the same time. A more subtle indicator was that between 1986 and 1988, the executive committee authorized the redeployment of many status of women policy and procedure statements to other sections of the Members' Guide.

However, there was also evidence that institutionalization was not complete at the end of the period. For example, although fewer of the resolutions proposed demanded action by the executive, there was no reduction in the SWC's proclivity to use pressure tactics on the executive and the RA during the period. In fact, informants reported that fireworks often erupted because the SWC would not relax a position it held that differed from theirs. Two examples that arose during the period pertained to child care and to replacing discrete programs to deal with racism, sexism, and children's rights with an umbrella social responsibility program.

In addition, there was an increase rather than a decrease in the number of social change oriented resolutions proposed during the period compared with the previous one. The committee was still coming up with a healthy number of new initiatives, and continued to honour its feminist roots, although the links with the program's founders had grown weaker. All this changed dramatically in the next period. How it happened will now be described.

Examination of the Theoretical Model, 1988 - Present

Discussion of the Theoretical Model:

1.Environment:

As a result of legislation passed by the Social Credit government in 1987, the BCTF entered the period with a fully certified membership, full bargaining rights, and the certainty that things were never going to be the same. Disenchanted locals could at any time choose to leave the BCTF, and the BCTF would in future have to work with the College of Teachers on matters governing certification, discipline, and professional development. Due to a substantial loss of membership fees from school principals and vice-principals, it was also facing a financial crunch. Consequently, a great deal of attention was directed this period to organizational restructuring, and the executive committee started visiting locals to hear their concerns and encourage them to support BCTF priorities.

Relations with government, which had improved temporarily when it had implemented educational policy reforms approved by the BCTF, deteriorated again. In 1991, a fight was launched against the Social Credit government who wanted to introduce a further round of public sector wage controls. In the ensuing election the New Democrats, believed

to be education-friendly, were elected. Funding levels were nevertheless maintained below

a level the BCTF deemed appropriate. The BCTF also had to offset the pressure to replace

local bargaining with provincial bargaining for teachers that had been generated by the

Korbin Commission.

The BCTF's influence with the locals waned over the period, and a major bone of

contention was union dues. A question being repeatedly asked in the locals was what were

the locals getting for their fees. One of my informants told me,

> Now, since 1989, the local bargains for everything. Now...the people don't give a
> shit what's happening in the BCTF. It is of no concern to them except that they have
> to pay too many dues...The classroom teacher's only connection is with their local.
> They don't know anything about the BCTF. It is increasingly insignificant to them.

In addition, the membership's willingness to support various BCTF priorities waned, in part

because of the executive's continued support of social responsibility issues many members

believed were outside the federation's jurisdiction. A Task Force on Social Responsibility

was established in 1990 to hear members' concerns on this issue. Findings as reported in

the BCTF news publication were that "virtually all members supported some degree of

BCTF involvement in social responsibility areas" although there was disagreement on

"which aspects of particular social programs should be supported". Also, members would

accept BCTF decisions on these matters "if those decisions are democratically made and if,

as individual citizens, they are not forced to agree."

Nevertheless, an article in a 1992 edition of the BCTF news publication maintained

that funding for the SWP as well as several other social responsibility programs should be

changed so that "the individuals who choose to support the program pay for them." In the

article, members were urged "to make it clear that we do not want the BCTF to take any

public positions on issues unless the issues relate directly to education."

Other objections raised over the period were that the BCTF was not doing enough to protect teachers from "teacher bashing" in the media, and that the AGM needed to be restructured so that major federation decisions could be decided by a vote of all the members rather than by delegates who were not representative of the membership as a whole. The two-party system also came under fire in a 1993 article because candidates for election did not identify their party affiliations, preventing inexperienced AGM delegates from understanding the party platforms they endorsed when they cast their ballots. Informants reported that an additional bone of contention was that locals wanted to retain a higher proportion of their dues in order to undertake initiatives particularly relevant to their own interests. Thus it appears that there was a great deal of restiveness within the membership in the latter part of the period.

2. Level of Support For the SWP:

Membership - As mentioned earlier, by the end of period three the SWP was out of favour with some portion of the membership partly as a result of its pro-choice stance and partly out of a general disenchantment with Viewpoint which to some extent was seen as its sponsor. A long-time supporter of Viewpoint reported that by Viewpoint's own calculations, at the time of the 1988 AGM it had the support of only one-third of the membership. There had also been an indication that the pursuit of gains for women had generated concerns in some quarters about whether this was fair to men, and several of the local status of women committees had been converted into human rights committees or were inactive. The anti-social responsibility feeling within the BCTF and in particular the two pro-choice policies

continued to generate anger, as recorded in the BCTF newsletter.

Probably the most significant indication that the SWC had lost much of its following within the membership by the end of the third period was that the only group that protested the SWP program cuts introduced in 1988 were past and present members of the contact network and the SWC. The women who had been involved in the committee in the early years were prominent during the fight. The protesters sent letters to the executive committee and held meetings to discuss what could be done. They attended meetings of the RA until 1992, to try to have the SWP's budget and the full-time coordinator for the program restored. Despite the RA's unanimous affirmation of its commitment to the SWP at its September, 1988 meeting, the resolution introduced, "that the SWP budget be amended to the level approved by the spring RA" was defeated by a vote of 308:190. The only budget increases that were forthcoming over the period were earmarked for bargaining training and for contact training on topics approved by the executive. The coordinator position was further cut later in the period, rather than restored to a full-time position.

After the initial protesting, things quieted down. Once the journal was no longer being published, and once links with strong contacts had been broken, which also cut off links with the classroom teacher, the committee's ability to stimulate membership support fell. Even had the network existed, there is still the possibility that the membership would not have supported the SWP. The membership's silence when the program cuts were occurring points either to lack of information or lack of support, lending credence to the charge made against the committee at the time that outside the network, there was little membership support for the program.

However, there are indicators that membership support recovered during the period. While the pro-choice clauses continued to generate controversy, women's right to choose was upheld at the 1989 AGM by a vote of 371:258. The thirteen resolutions that were forwarded to the AGM's over the period were either passed or referred back to committees for additional work. There was no acrimonious debate over any of them, and a delegate's comment on the most controversial of them was merely why had the committee not done more. One other indication of membership support was that workshop demand remained high throughout the period, and between 60 and 91 workshops were delivered in up to 38 locals each year over the period.

My informants believe that support for the SWC increased during the period. One stated:

> ... there are perhaps more people who would support the program who wouldn't have before, because it's not seen as too powerful. It's not a threat any more. When it was controversial and abortion came up almost every year, it was more difficult...

Another informant expressed the view that the laid-back tactics presently employed by the SWC are appropriate for today and therefore enhance support for the committee, for "...not everybody responds to being lectured to, to being coerced by words."

Leadership - Overall, the executive committee's support of the SWP fell over the period. Based on budget information supplied by the BCTF, the SWC's budget was reduced by $5000 between 1987/88 and 1988/89 while budgets for the RA, the executive committee, the bargaining committee, and the Program Against Racism (PAR) were increased. The latter program's budget was increased by $37,000 and the executive committee's by $29,000. Between 1987/88 and 1992/93, the SWC's budget increased $16,000, PAR's

increased $56,000, the executive committee's increased $214,000, and the RA's increased $64,000.

In non-financial areas, at the 1991 AGM the executive committee introduced a resolution that was passed that revoked the pro-choice policy introduced by the SWC that encouraged the Canadian Teachers' Federation to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code. Federal legislation to that end had been enacted earlier, but the SWC was not consulted or informed. Former SWC members that I spoke to were uniformly upset about it, because they said they had fought hard for that policy, and there was no guarantee that the federal legislation would not be changed in the future.

The revocation of this policy without consultation was one indication that the SWC's wishes were not a major concern to the new leadership. Others included the executive's unwillingness to discuss the proposed changes to the SWP until after they had been passed and its continued refusal to make other than minor changes despite the efforts of the SWC and its supporters on the executive committee.

One of my informants indicated that she had argued vehemently against the changes introduced in 1988, which she was informed had been intended to "shore up shaky status of women programs in the locals." She pointed out to the executive that rather than making "a top-down decision [to invite] local association presidents to status of women zone meetings in order to improve local programs", which the committee strongly opposed, the more appropriate course of action would have been "not to remove financial and structural support...[but to] shore up areas requiring support...[and] to request input from the provincial status of women committee." Nevertheless, her arguments had no effect.

Another informant who had been on the executive committee when the program cuts were made assured me that the executive's decision to rationalize all the committees did not indicate the belief that the SWC or any other committee was unimportant. It was merely the executive's view that these committees could and should operate differently in the future and that the changes were necessary in order to reach the classroom teachers and to bolster membership support. While the executive was willing to support the SWC's bargaining initiative for this reason, it was unwilling to consider reinstating its budget, its full-time coordinator, or its autonomy, despite repeated requests from the committee.

The executive committee also demonstrated its determination to control the SWC's actions this period. Apart from insisting that the committee's training objectives, goals and priorities had to be approved, it also maintained tighter control over resolutions to the AGM proposed over the period. In 1989, it forwarded none of the 7 resolutions proposed. In 1991, of the six resolutions proposed by the SWC only two went forward. The following year, only three of the six resolutions proposed went forward. On one resolution dealing with child care, the executive forwarded its own wording, not the wording recommended by the SWC. It did the same thing with the SWP's budget, rejecting the one proposed by the committee for 1991/1992 and substituting its own.

There is some indication that the executive is somewhat disappointed that the current SWC has not displayed more focus and greater leadership with respect to status of women issues."What the executive was hoping they would do was to supply more materials that could be used by classroom teachers." One TUF informant, upon being asked why the committee today does not seem to be as strong as it used to be, commented:

There has been a change in the flavour of the SWC. But going to things like numbers of meetings and so forth is going back to looking back at what had transpired before, rather than looking at what kinds of initiatives did they come up with, what kind of suggestions and programs did they come up with, what have they brought to the executive. Now maybe the committee hasn't been effective in terms of leadership in respect to doing that. That could be a fair criticism.

Another executive member said that what was wrong with the committee today was that it was not making people "uncomfortable" any more.

The informants I interviewed from the present committee indicated that they think current support from the leadership is "pretty good". "If they haven't always given us more money, neither have they singled us out...they've always supported over-expending our budget for workshops." So there are some factors restraining the elimination of the program at the present time, the main one being that the executive believes the SWP is valuable. But support from the leadership seems somewhat conditional on whether the committee continues to pursue initiatives that support BCTF priorities.

In contrast, Viewpoint's support for the provincial committee has never been lower. Previously, Viewpoint always brought the SWP budget up for debate on the floor of the RA, and encouraged its members to apply to the SWC. Last year, for the first time, it did not do so. "We gave up pushing actually, we just couldn't continue, we weren't getting anywhere...there were so few people [on the committee] and they didn't have the time." A more elaborate rationale was:

> [Viewpoint] decided they didn't have confidence in the coordinator, the committee, and until that changed they were not going to make any further efforts. We lacked confidence because they weren't dealing with the issues they should be dealing with, they weren't showing up to fight for things they wanted, they weren't participating in the political process. They weren't showing up at the executive committee to tell us how bad we were, they weren't willing to fight for themselves, so we weren't willing to fight for them.

Since only twenty votes kept Viewpoint from controlling the executive at the 1993 AGM, Viewpoint's feelings about the SWC could have important consequences in the future.

3. Structures:

BCTF - As a result of the loss of statutory membership, the unrest in the locals, and the instability of the newly-formed TUF coalition, which one informant reported had little holding it together except its opposition to Viewpoint, a proliferation of task forces and a Local Presidents Advisory Committee came into existence during this period. As mentioned previously, one of these was the Task Force on Social Responsibility. This reflected the executive's concerns about membership support. The BC Newsmagazine became the only official publication of the BCTF and publication budgets in all other areas were eliminated.

Over the period, the administrative structure of the BCTF was changed as well. The incumbent executive director retired, to be replaced by the former president in 1989, and an assistant executive director position was created. The Bargaining Committee became the Bargaining Advisory Committee and the number of members was reduced to 14 from 19, eliminating all but zonal representatives on the committee. An Expanded Bargaining Advisory Committee was created that met once or twice a year, which included representation from a number of committees, including the SWC, to formulate strategy for bargaining and bargaining training, and training in contract administration.

All BCTF committees were examined over the period to ensure they supported the federation's goals and to ensure consistency of operation in terms of meeting time. Terms of reference and appointment procedures were examined as well and changed as required. The rationale was:

The organization was overdue for looking at itself and how it operated. It had become quite complacent because of this statutory membership and the fact that it didn't need to be responsive. That complacency was beginning to hurt us in terms of membership support, and we needed to shake ourselves out of that. The legislative change of 1987 was a wonderful opportunity to do that...and we also needed to show some financial accountability.

SWP - The structural changes invoked over the period resulted in fundamental changes to the way the SWP was delivered. The staff coordinator's position was cut to 85% in 1988 with the other 15% allocated to the professional development division. Part of her job became training the representatives within that division to take status of women issues out to the locals when they did their training. The SWC attempted to point out the superiority of the contacts' over the professional development representatives' ability to disseminate status of women information with any degree of conviction, stating, "They have neither the personal feminist commitment nor the expertise necessary to affect significant changes or to effectively raise awareness about the equality of female students or female teachers." But their objections were ignored.

The committee's terms of reference were changed and the revised terms stressed the advisory rather than the action-oriented responsibilities of the SWC (See Appendices B and C for both original and revised terms of reference). The SWC had strong objections to the revised terms because they deleted the "specifics of our former terms of reference" and there was no longer any mention of "curriculum development, awareness of sex discrimination, local program support, female participation in the federation and education system, and equitable distribution of male/female teachers in education."

The executive overruled these objections, and insisted that in future the objectives of the contacts' fall training conference and the pre-AGM contacts' meeting, as well as the

SWC's priorities and program objectives and its activities, would have to be approved. In addition the number of committee meetings was reduced from six to three and conference calls were initiated between meetings to deal with status of women matters. The number of zone meeting days was halved to two, the publication of the status of women journal was suspended, except for an annual International Women's Day issue, and funds available for training workshop facilitators were reduced.

The committee also lost its ability to influence appointments to the coordinator position and to the committee. For the first time, appointees came to the committee from outside the contact network. The executive rationalized this as part of its effort to increase the representativeness of the membership, and flatly denied that it had appointed people who would be liabilities to the program.

Nevertheless, there was a general belief among my Viewpoint informants that the appointments both to the committee and to the coordinator's position were made on a political basis. A number of representative comments were: "Only those who would kowtow to the executive were appointed..."; "...They appointed people who weren't necessarily the best qualified and who the committee chairs hadn't recommended, and in some cases appointed people who hadn't served as local contacts which was completely unheard of before."

Not only were they inexperienced, they were also politically naive, and unwilling to rock the boat. Representative comments on this issue included: "They were really not very experienced politically and many were new and didn't have the history to know where we had come from."; "They weren't people who would have spoken out like we would have."

One of the newly-appointed coordinators confirmed that she had to contend with a great deal of negative sentiment when she first joined the committee. She said, " I was viewed as somebody's appointee and therefore I had to be the enemy and therefore I had to be a traitor to feminism and a traitor to the movement in the federation, and I was treated as such." Nevertheless, when the announcement was made in 1991 that the coordinator's position was to be cut from 85% to 67%, she protested strongly to the executive: "I can't see how this can be other than disastrous for the SWP" which in her opinion was still reeling from the earlier change. She maintained that under the current arrangement there was already "a reduced level of service to contacts" and more work for committee members, particularly the co-chairs. She mentioned specifically that:

> ...maintenance tasks [had] taken precedence over the developmental, professional outreach of the program and inhibited the committee from giving advice to the executive committee that [was] based on a level of debate and consideration satisfactory to the members.

The change went through regardless.

A positive structural change occurred in only one area. In 1987, the executive committee approved a recommendation made by the Women in Bargaining sub-committee to reserve ten spots at the 1988 bargaining training for women interested in but not yet involved in bargaining. This initiative was a continuing one, and in 1990 and 1992 the number of women sent to this training increased to 30.

4. SWC Activities and Characteristics:

There has been a major change in how the committee conducts itself since the structural changes were invoked, primarily in terms of level of activity. Informants told me that the overall number of initiatives undertaken by the committee has declined, initially due

to the committee's shock level, "...the core of the committee and the active contacts...were dumbstruck...", and then inevitably because of the reduced number of meetings. Table 1.1 confirms this, showing that in the fourth period, the number of tactics employed fell to 285 from 439 in period three.

There has been a change in the kind of initiatives undertaken as well: "Instead of pushing at the limits and coming up with strong policies...they say, 'Oh God, we have a conference to plan!'" The number of new initiatives undertaken by the committee has also fallen dramatically. The three committee meetings are dominated by routine tasks.

> At least one of those meetings is devoted to planning the fall [contacts'] training conference. That might take up 1 1/2 days of a two-day meeting...Another meeting is devoted to coming up with recommendations for the AGM. Then there is a whole lot of responsive stuff, documents coming in about status of women that must be responded to, or there will be some questions raised about some issue that he SWC deals with, so there will be some key documents or key questions to respond to, or initiatives to comment on. Usually, they have sub-committees looking at things like the journal or the workshops, or something like that, so they try to have part of the meeting to work on sub-committee stuff.

My informants agree that the current committee bears little resemblance to the old committee. It is still seen as powerful, but as less focused, and while it continues to operate "primarily in the political realm", the level of political expertise on the committee is quite low. A TUF informant reported, "They're definitely not as dynamic as they used to be, in terms of clear direction and how to get there, how to organize to get to a certain place." A former committee member commented that they do not understand "how you could influence others, or network, or the key kinds of groups you'd have to have involved to get support for the things you wanted to support."

The committee no longer appears at meetings of the RA and the executive. Even when the SWC's budget is being presented, only the coordinator attends. It takes its advisory role quite seriously, whereas previously, "we'd always initiated projects and determined the specifics of how our budget would be spent, we had a lot more leeway prior to the change."

It does not bring forward controversial issues to the AGM. As one informant put it, "Everything that comes out of the SWP now is pablum. It's already been approved before it even hits the floor." It no longer has the energy or the will to pursue reinstatement of the coordinator's position and it operates much more through existing BCTF structures to achieve its objectives.

Apart from the changes in the way the SWC exercises power, it has also changed its networking focus. It no longer has time or the inclination to network with external groups or students, unless they are immediately relevant to an initiative being pursued. I was told this was because "we feel our money and our priorities should be directed at teachers." Since the cutting of the journal, maintaining contact with the network and even the committee members has also become a problem. "It takes four calls to get them, then you get their machine." "[Conference calls] are all right if there is only one item on the agenda, but not if you're trying to do something significant...you don't get any of the body language..."

The contacts' training reflects a less radical philosophy than previously, and also the recognition that they are generally quite inexperienced. There is high turnover among the contacts, and "they are all in different places" in terms of their understanding of BCTF

So to summarize the changes in the kinds of activities the SWC engaged in over the period, the committee's initiatives were less radical and less externally-oriented, and its new initiatives were less numerous in period four compared with period three. Its use of political strategies continued, but less pressure was exerted, because the SWC increasingly worked through legitimate BCTF structures and pursued initiatives supported by the executive committee that were directed toward pacifying the membership.

Nevertheless, the committee did continue to develop and update workshops that were delivered 60 to 91 times in up to 37 locals annually. It also proposed 13 resolutions to the AGM (See Table 2), 10 of which exerted some pressure on a group or individual, somewhat fewer than previous periods. In five of the cases (38%), the target of the pressure was the BCTF, an increase from 31% in the previous period. While all of the resolutions were oriented to social change, only 2/13 were oriented to social change outside education.

5. Potential For Gains:

Potential for gains of a circumscribed nature existed over the period because once the SWC adjusted to the new regime, it worked through BCTF structures to achieve goals that were aligned with those of the leadership and acceptable to the membership. This made the loss of the network less of a problem than it would have been if more radical goals had been pursued. For example, the professional development representatives were made aware of status of women issues, and since their network extended into all the locals instead of the more limited number of locals accessed by the SWP, increased potential for raising membership support existed. The SWC retained a seat on the Expanded Bargaining Advisory Committee, and an additional number of women received bargaining training

through the joint efforts of the SWC and the Bargaining Committee, which ensured that women's concerns would not be ignored at the bargaining table. In addition, the use of less forceful tactics in combination with less radical goals lowered resistance in some locals to status of women issues over the period.

The biggest problem over the period was an inability to foster strong local status of women programs because of the dearth of training and support available to contacts from the SWC and the staff coordinator. Also, the potential to achieve social change oriented goals was almost eliminated, unless they related to educational concerns. However, given the executive committee's immediate fiscal concerns and the lack of support among the membership for social responsibility initiatives, these were not recognized as problems. Since executive priorities guided the SWC over the period and the executive had the will to enforce its priorities, gains in areas that did not meet with the executive's approval were unlikely to emerge this period. Actual gains achieved over the period will now be examined.

Examination of Gains Achieved Over the Period:

The statistics show that substantial gains for women did materialize during this period (See Table 3.1). In terms of BCTF governance, the proportion of females on the RA increased from 30% in period three to 45%. The proportion of local association presidents who were female increased from 16% at the end of the period to 43% currently. The proportion of females on the administrative staff is up to 49% currently compared with 32% at the end of the previous period. However, there was no recurrence of a female majority on the executive committee over the period, and female representation on the executive

committee stayed constant at 45% for most of the period.

In terms of changes in policies and procedures beneficial to women achieved over the period, some progress was made (See Table 3.2). Eight policies and three procedures were implemented, all oriented to social change, but only 2/11 compared with 7/15 were oriented to extra-educational social change. However, policies were drawn up to strengthen the affirmative action policies already on the books and to promote gender equity within the government and post-secondary institutions, in recognition that attitudes and stereotypes had to be changed to ensure equality between males and females. Additional policies supportive of teen-agers' access to birth control in the schools and teen parents' ability to complete their schooling by providing appropriate programs and child-care facilities were approved, as were policies opposing homophobia, and sexual harassment of students. On the downside, through an executive committee motion, the policy endorsing the Canadian Teachers Federation to seek to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code, which had been fought over since the 1981 AGM, was finally deleted from the Members' Guide in 1991.

In terms of resolutions, the BCTF committed itself to negotiating gender equity/affirmative action programs for students and staff, opposing violence against women, and strengthening existing procedures promoting non-sexist environments and outlining how incidents of sexual harassment were to be handled.

Bargaining gains continued to materialize throughout the period (See Table 3.3). By the end of the period, the number of collective agreements with extended maternity provisions had increased from 43 to 65. Supplementary unemployment insurance benefit plans to improve maternity benefits had been negotiated in an additional 54 collective

agreements, bringing the total to 60. Parenthood leave and sexual harassment or non-sexist environment clauses existed in virtually every collective agreement, where previously only 23 and 26 such clauses had existed. Non-discrimination clauses also existed in virtually all contracts, an increase from 15 previously.

Overall, substantial improvements for women did materialize during the period. The work of the SWC resulted in modified policies and procedures in a limited number of areas, which in some cases were achieved by influencing the work of other BCTF committees. The committee's inability to challenge the executive over the period, partly due to the loss of a means to mobilize the membership to support actions against the executive, but also to a disinclination to rock the boat and insufficient time to plan strategy, resulted in the complete restriction of the SWC's activities to those supporting BCTF goals. Consequently, the primary areas of gain were in terms of female involvement in BCTF governance and contract clauses.

Discussion:

The major change of note this period is that the SWC lost command of its agenda, and lost its missionary zeal as well, which was hardly surprising given how little autonomy it was permitted. What is significant from a social movement perspective is that conditions were right at the end of period three for the authority to move against the challenging group. The executive committee wrought havoc on the SWC because it was not going in a direction the executive deemed would ensure its ability to retain power. The SWC was too controversial, too divisive, and therefore too threatening to the fragile alliance that gave the

Teachers For A United Federation control of the executive. The membership decision to oust Viewpoint from the leadership chair also gave the executive a mandate for change.

In losing command of its agenda, the SWC also lost its independent base of power, which had arisen from the tight links the SWC had assiduously developed with grassroots feminists in many of the locals, and maintained through the journal and contacts' memos and training. Inevitably, the committee was then forced to rely on existing BCTF structures to achieve its objectives, and those structures were limited to those set up by the BCTF to promote general objectives, rather than those specific to the status of women. The futility of fighting for things the BCTF did not want to give them became apparent as repeated attempts to influence the executive committee's decisions about program budgets, terms of reference, SWP objectives and priorities, and the allocation of staff time to the SWP were ignored.

Since there was no indication that members were opposed to the executive's agenda, the committee was unable to change the situation. TUF solidified its power base by getting its supporters onto the SWC and into the coordinator position. This enabled the executive to control the committee through cooptation. Eventually the transformation of the committee from a social movement organization pursuing change oriented goals to a bureaucratized committee pursuing the goals deemed appropriate by the governing body occurred. "Non-educational" goals were no longer on the agenda.

There was no shortage of indicators of institutionalization during this period, many of them present since the previous period. Of particular note were the executive's increased efforts to control the program through the approval of training objectives, goals, and

priorities, its refusal to change its decisions despite vehement objections from the SWC and the coordinators, its refusal to submit the SWC's proposed budget, or to accept SWC-generated wording over the wording it favoured on the child care resolution.

The committee's actions also bespoke institutionalization, with its major focus on routine administrative tasks, its failure to generate many new initiatives, its failure to take anything controversial to the AGM, its internalization of the executive's edicts about what issues could and could not be addressed, the lack of a radical feminist orientation, the care taken not to offend the executive. A new indicator of institutionalization this period is that the SWC was given formal representation on a government advisory committee regarding gender equity. While sizeable gains were achieved, they were not radical gains. One of the informants who aspired to transformational social change said she had been heavily involved in bargaining, but that the return was probably not worth the effort:

> You don't just deal with your own women's issues, but with a lot of other stuff that's not connected...that makes work lives a little easier for some women but doesn't alter in any iota the situation for the massive majority of women.

Other indicators of institutionalization over the period were that bargaining gains continued to materialize, as did increases in female participation in the governance of the BCTF, without much effort exerted by the committee. In the final section, the committee's 20-year history and its achievements will be reviewed and conclusions arising from it will be presented.

Summary and Conclusions

Summary:

To determine what we learned about the theoretical model from this case study, we need to review the theoretical model in the context of the four periods and see to what extent the model was upheld, what variables under what circumstances were particularly significant to committee power, and what accounted for outcomes achieved.

Periods one and two (1973 - 1981) were characterized by high levels of leadership support and appropriate and effective committee effort directed toward 1) increasing female participation in union governance and 2) inducing structural changes intended to empower women as a class. Other characteristics were increasing levels of activist and membership support for the committee, deteriorating relations with government, and perceptions by committee members that the committee's power was growing. Most of the committee's efforts to exercise influence this period were directed at the leadership.

At the end of period two, the committee pulled off what it considered a major coup in successfully getting pro-choice resolutions passed by activists at the 1981 convention over the objections of a minority. This supports the committee's perceptions that it was powerful at this time but perhaps as a result of leadership and activist rather than full membership support.

Since all the variables in the power model with the exception of the external environment were increasingly positive during period two, it is difficult to reach any conclusions about which ones figured most prominently in committee power. However, since committee power increased as conditions in the external environment deteriorated, the

external environment appears of little significance to committee power, at least when all the other variables are positive. Also, since major gains materialized in all areas but bargaining, committee power does appear to be associated with positive outcomes in regard to increased female participation in the union and securing structural changes that empower women.

In the third period (1981 - 1988), the context changed. The committee's major focus this period was supporting the leadership's bargaining initiative rather than pursuing structural changes advantageous to women. Disagreements over this focus and the introduction of the sub-committee structure which created a hierarchy within the committee strained internal committee relations. Furthermore, membership support had been negatively affected by the abortion debate, and committee-sponsored resolutions this period retained their social change orientation, which did little to win back this lost support. The result was that membership support slipped this period relative to the previous period.

Leadership support however, remained high, and was reflected in increasingly favourable committee structures. It continued to be seemingly unaffected by the BCTF's unsatisfactory relations with government this period. Activist support also remained high enough to allow the passage of many social change-oriented resolutions pertaining to women's issues, so outcomes achieved this period supported the committee's perception that it was powerful. Further improvements in female participation in union governance and in structures supporting the committee's goals materialized. These gains could be attributed to the committee's own efforts.

The experiences of period three prior to the leadership change suggested that leadership and activist support made membership support irrelevant to outcomes and

committee power. While the committee had to compromise its goals to some extent in order to retain leadership favour, results achieved suggested that the trade-off the committee made yielded net positive benefits, supporting the notion that institutionalization can have beneficial effects in terms of outcomes. So this period served to highlight the significance to committee power of leadership support, the alignment of leadership and committee goals, and committee goals, characteristics and effort, and downplayed the role played by the membership. However, events later in the period showed just how crucial membership support could in fact be.

Late in the period, the membership expressed its disenchantment with the incumbent leadership's social change agenda and its commitment to militant unionism by removing it from office. This greatly affected the context within which the committee functioned in period four (1988 to the present) for leadership goals came to be governed by the membership which was already out of patience with the committee.

The facilitative structures that had existed prior to the leadership change and the leeway the committee had previously been given to pursue committee-defined goals were eliminated. Leadership support became conditional on the committee's pursuit of initiatives directly relevant to teachers. Also, the leadership's willingness to be swayed by the committee disappeared. Committee operating funds and administrative support were cut back, and committee actions were severely constrained. The contact network was destroyed and the role of the contacts was taken over by the staff in the professional development department. According to informants, member support recovered somewhat as the committee became less controversial and less exclusive. But committee cohesiveness,

activity levels and apparent commitment to structural change fell as it became increasingly involved in handling administrative details. The committee is still seen as powerful, but less powerful than it was.

Conclusions Regarding the Theoretical Model:

A number of observations can be made about this case. Despite the committee's limited power in period four, substantial gains for women were realized. This indicates there may be a lag effect that should be incorporated into the power model because committee efforts this period cannot account for them. In addition or alternatively, it may be that committee efforts are no longer relevant to outcomes once the leadership starts directing committee activities.

There is substantiation for this possibility in that the sizeable increase in the proportion of female administrators over period four (see Table 3.1) arose from a leadership decision to make this a priority. Similarly, the sizeable increase in the proportion of female local presidents (who are automatically local bargaining committee chairs) and the substantial improvements in contract clauses achieved in period four arose in part from the leadership's decision to make training available to women interested in but not yet involved in bargaining. While this was suggested by the committee, implementation was at leadership level, and it is reasonable to assume that had the leadership not supported this venture it would not have materialized.

It is significant that this was the first period where outcomes for women were primarily attributable to union structures rather than to committee efforts. It is notable as

well that the structural changes introduced in period four were substantively different from those of previous periods in that only 18% of them, compared with 47% in the previous period (See Table 3.2), were oriented to extra-educational social change.

The implications for the power model are that it is unwise for a committee to rely on leadership support for its strength, because ultimately the membership controls who sits in the leadership chair. Also, although it did not become evident until the end of period three, much of a committee's power comes from facilitating structures which are largely an outcome of leadership support. Leadership support in turn can be affected by the leadership's sensitivity to perceived threats in the internal and external environment. A potent threat is the membership's ability to vote the leadership out of office.

Ideological commitment to structural change also appears to be a factor in leadership support. The Viewpoint leadership was reported to have had that commitment but the newly installed leadership appears to have been driven by more practical considerations. It needed to pacify the membership and strengthen the leadership's control of the federation, so committee goals were adjusted to reflect these concerns.

Additional implications arise from this analysis. When a committee is weak, leadership goals will prevail because the only structures that will be established will be those that support approved goals. If approved goals do not include those oriented to social change, such goals will only be achievable by a strong committee. By default, then, such a committee would have to have the membership behind them.

To summarize, this case provides evidence for the following tentative conclusions:

1)   The most important variable contributing to committee power is leadership support

which creates structures that help or hinder the committee's pursuit of its goals.

2) Leadership support is affected by the alignment of committee and leadership goals.

3) Leadership goals are conditioned by perceptions of threat in the environment, membership support for the committee, and ideological commitment to social change.

4) Membership support is affected by the structures established to create linkages between the membership and the committee, as well as by committee goals, actions, characteristics and power.

5) Outcomes derive from membership and leadership support, and union and committee structures, as well as committee power.

6) Committee power is not essential to the achievement of gains for women as long as union structures exist that support achieving gains for women. However it does appear to be essential for the achievement of goals that the leadership does not support.

Hence there appears to be a need to correct the assumption implied by the theoretical model that all outcomes achieved for women are linked to committee power. Also, some of the variables should be accorded higher status because they are more relevant to committee power. These implications will be revisited once both cases have been examined.

Other Conclusions:

From a more general theoretical stance, this case supports the applicability of both the resource dependency and Foucauldian power models to social movement as well as

traditional organizations. In the latter case, the "spider web" of power relations existed in the contacts network, and once the means of maintaining the network were removed, a great deal of power was lost to the committee.

In the former case, if it is true that structures determine outcomes in the institutionalized phase of a social movement organization, then structures are a major source of power. They do arise from a form of division of labour in that at different times, different union functions gain prominence in ensuring the union's continued strength. The prioritizing process allocates power. Therefore the ability to influence that process is a source of power. That is why the department that controls strategic uncertainties is the department with power in a typical bureaucratic hierarchy. It can demonstrate why its functions should be given high priority, thus influencing the process.

In the BCTF committee's case, in period three it could demonstrate that there was danger in tampering with the status of women program because of the strength of the contact network. Therefore it could influence the priority the executive gave to the program. Once the contacts were replaced by federation staff, the executive was able to lower the priority given to the program. Changing the contact network eliminated the committee's source of power, which arose from its ability to influence the executive's priorities.

If there is merit in the thinking outlined above, it represents an elaboration of resource dependency theory, and suggests that attention should be paid to where Foucauldian power originates. Ultimately, it may be traceable to its spider web structure, which would suggest that while power resides in the web, it originates in the groups or individuals who are able to influence where the nodes and inter-linkages between them are located.

From a more practical stance, this case suggests the future of the BCTF's committee is in peril if the leadership's attitude does not change. In creating a committee with such a heavy workload of routine tasks to accomplish, with so little time to meet, with so little support from the coordinator or the BCTF, and so few successes that can be attributed to its own efforts, the executive has made it sufficiently unattractive that members are no longer interested in serving on the committee. Without new blood, the provincial program will die. Local programs that can survive without the support of the coordinator and the committee are likely to be those only in large locals with committed feminist members. If the BCTF is sincerely interested in promoting the welfare of its membership, which at this point is 64% female, committee structures will have to be reexamined.

TABLE 1 ANALYSIS OF TACTICS

1.1 Total Tactics Employed By Period

Period	1		2		3		4	
Category*	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	14	16	30	17	86	20	49	17
2	16	18	32	18	88	20	63	22
3	11	13	25	14	74	17	41	14
4	8	9	17	10	44	10	28	10
5	11	13	15	9	44	10	19	7
6	6	7	12	7	19	4	7	2
Other	21	24	43	25	84	19	78	28
TOTAL	87	100	174	100	439	100	285	100

* Category   1: political pressure directed toward BCTF provincial authorities.
                2: educational tactics directed toward BCTF membership.
                3: political pressure directed toward non-provincial authorities in BCTF.
                4: educational tactics directed toward SWC allies only.
                5: political pressure directed outside the BCTF, i.e. to government.
                6: educational tactics directed externally
                Other: consisted of all tactics not included in categories 1-6.

1.2 Total Political and Educational Tactics Employed By Period

Period	1		2		3		4	
Category*	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Political	36	41	70	40	204	47	109	38
Education	30	35	61	35	151	34	98	35
Other	21	24	43	25	84	19	78	27
TOTAL	87	100	174	100	439	100	285	100

* Category: Political tactics include categories 1, 3, and 5 from Table 1.1.
Educational tactics include categories 2, 4 and 6 from Table 1.1.

Note: Any discrepancies with Table 1.1 are attributable to rounding error.

1.3 Total Externally- and Internally-Directed Tactics

Period	1		2		3		4	
Category*	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
External	17	20	27	16	63	14	26	9
Internal	49	56	104	60	292	67	181	64
Other	21	24	43	24	84	19	78	27
TOTAL	87	100	174	100	439	100	285	100

* Category: External consists of categories 5 and 6 from Table 1.1.
Internal consists of categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 from Table 1.1.

Note: Any discrepancies with Table 1.1 are attributable to rounding error.

TABLE 2 ANALYSIS OF RESOLUTIONS TO AGM

Period	1	2	3	4
# Resolutions Proposed	16	13	16	13
# Resolutions Passed	16	12	16	11
# Resolutions Exerting Pressure	15	12	14	10
# Pressuring BCTF	9	5	5	5
# Education Only Resolutions	15	9	9	11
# Oriented to Social Change	13	11	15	13
# Oriented to Extra-Educational Social Change	1	4	7	2

TABLE 3 GAINS REALIZED BY CATEGORY BY PERIOD

3.1 Governance Improvements

Period	1		2		3		4		
	Start	Average	Start	Average	Start	Average	Start	End	Average
%F on Exec.	9	25	27	29	36	45	45	45	43
%F on RA	14	18	25	26	30	27	30	45	37
%F Local Pres.	11	19	17	22	30	20	16	43	33
%F Admin.	18	20	19	18	18	24	32	49	41

3.2 Structural Change

Period	1	2	3	4
# Policies Instituted	10	10	13	8
# Procedures Instituted	6	2	3	3
Total	16	12	16	11
# Oriented to Social Change	13	10	15	11
# Oriented to Change Within Education	12	6	8	9
# Oriented to Extra-Educational Change	1	4	7	2

3.3 Bargaining Gains

Period	1		2		3		4		
	Start	Change	Start	Change	Start	%Change	Start	End	Change
# Ext. Maternity	11	4	15	6	21	22	43	65	22
# Maternity SUB	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	60	54
# Parenthood	0	3	3	3	6	17	23	74	51
# Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	26	26	73	47
# No Discrim.	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	74	59
# Paid Parenthood	0	2	2	6	8	30	38	32	70

Chapter 5. Case Study of the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union

Introduction

I commenced my study of the BCGEU's women's committee with some tentative insights based on my previous study and an expectation that my approach would be similar to that used in examining the BCTF's Status of Women Committee. As before, I began with archival research. This was eventually supplemented by interviews with male and female staff people, female activists who had either been on the provincial executive or involved with the women's committee, most of the chairs of the women's committee, and the former general secretary of the union. I never did interview the president of the BCGEU due to scheduling problems. Instead I spoke to the Secretary-Treasurer of the union, a long-time chair of the women's committee and the BCGEU's liaison with the national and international labour bodies' women's committees.

I soon discovered that the plan of attack that had worked at the BCTF was not appropriate for the BCGEU. A major problem was that the women's committee acted as an arm of the leadership and was primarily administrative rather than entrepreneurial and action-oriented, and isolated from the membership. It made little effort until the mid-1980's to influence leadership actions with respect to women's issues or to stimulate support for them within the union.

It was clear from documentary evidence and from discussions with members that the women's committee and all other leadership advisory committees worked collaboratively toward leadership-defined goals. For example, education linked to women's issues was done

primarily through staff and was instigated by the women's committee in collaboration with the education committee. Bargaining for the public sector units, which this study is restricted to, was the responsibility of the master bargaining team, which consisted exclusively of elected component chairs, table officers and staff. In general, women's committee members were not involved in bargaining, although they did occasionally develop bargaining resolutions. When the union was involved in political battles with the government, which occurred through much of the 1980's, all non-bargaining committees basically ceased to meet as attention was diverted to the then current crisis.

Consequently, for much of the 1980's the BCGEU's women's committee did not meet. Attendants at committee meetings were predominantly female staff representatives. The women's committee's meeting minutes were not very descriptive, thus providing little information about the committee's strategies. Partitioning the 20-year history of the women's committee on the basis of structural change was infeasible since these structures were so slow to change.

However, all the previously enumerated obstacles to utilizing the same analytic approach to study the BCGEU as was used with the BCTF paled to insignificance when I noted the surprise, confusion or concern generated by my inquiries into changes in the committee's power over time that might be traceable to variables in the theoretical model. My informants were willing to say that potentially the committee was powerful because of the size of the female contingent within the union, and that it had recently become more powerful, but they essentially felt it was not very powerful at all, and never had been. Also, the majority seemed relatively accepting of this state of affairs, based on the BCGEU's

overall record with respect to women's issues, especially since the female-dominated components could organize at component level to seek gains for women and so were not compelled to go through the women's committee.

As a result of this combination of factors, I broadened the research problem to encompass the efforts of all feminist activists within the union to achieve gains for women rather than restricting inquiry to the women's committee itself. I also introduced new measures to handle the interpretation problems in this study. In the next section, I will outline my analytical structure.

Analytical Framework Employed:

Given the complexity of this study, I will begin with a general discussion of the BCGEU's structures including the component structure, which centralized power in the hands of the president and his top advisors, and the role that devolved to activists and members as a result. The origins of these structures in the traditions of organized labour will be elaborated. Next, the women's committee's structures will be shown to have reflected this tradition, and to have caused problems with committee effectiveness and for female activism in general.

Female activism in the union from the time the women's committee was first established in 1975 will then be considered. Since this activism seems to have gone through two major cycles, with a substantial increase in its level from about 1987 on, the periods over which the theoretical model will be studied will be 1975-1987, and 1987 on. Gaps between potential for gains and gains achieved will be noted for both periods.

I will supply as much objective evidence in support of my claims as possible, but my primary evidence will come from former and current activists. The latter were willing to be interviewed only on the condition that their identities would be protected while the former were willing to "tell it to me straight" because their disclosures could no longer affect them. Unfortunately, since accounts often disagree even within these two categories, I will attempt to show the range and frequency of opinion encountered so that this study reflects their reality rather than my own.

Union Structures

Governance Structures:

The BCGEU membership in 1975 was distributed by occupation among 14 components, 13 of which were in the public sector. The public service components were: corrections; hospital and allied services; marine services; retail stores and warehouse; social and health; education and scientific; environment, resources and conservation; trades and crafts; operational services; engineering, technical and inspectional; administrative support; and administrative, fiscal and regulatory services. Component size varied from 700 to 6600 members.

Each component was made up of locals which were run by elected local executives. The chairs of the locals sat on the component executive and ran component business. Dues were collected by headquarters and allocated to cover component operating costs, based on component size. The components were responsible for negotiating component agreements, but components were also governed by the master agreement. Component chairs sat on the

master bargaining committee, on the provincial executive, on certain local committees according to their bylaws, and on provincial executive committees as assigned by the union president.

In addition to component chairs, the provincial executive included the table officers which in 1975 consisted of a part-time president, two vice-presidents and a treasurer, as well as five regional vice-presidents. Between biennial conventions, held in odd-numbered years, the executive authority of the union resided in the provincial executive. All of these were elected positions, and at that time, only one of the table officers and one of the regional vice presidents were female.

Administrative functions were the responsibility of the general secretary of the union who was a full-time staff person. He reported to the provincial executive and sat on the provincial executive without voting status. The 26-member staff reported to him. The staff's job was to service the components, act as secretaries of provincial executive committees, support the elected officers on the provincial executive, and run the union's internal departments. The general secretary and all but five of the staff in 1975 were male.

The administrative set-up changed slightly in 1976, when the staff were organized into three departments: membership services, administrative services, and technical services. Each of these was overseen by an assistant general secretary. In 1979 the assistant general secretaries became directors, and the department names changed somewhat, but essentially the administrative structure remained unchanged until 1985 when a department of organizing and planning was added to the previous three. This changed again in period two, when the four departments were reorganized into three in 1989, reverted to two in 1991, contract and

resource services and organization and field services, and expanded into three again in 1993 when a special projects department was added.

In 1983 the position of general secretary was eliminated, and for the first time there was a full-time president who chaired the executive and administrative committees and reported to the provincial executive. The executive committee members were the table officers, and the administrative committee members the departmental directors. Regularly scheduled joint meetings of the executive and administrative committees were held to ensure coordination of their actions. The entire provincial executive met approximately 8 times per year, and in between times, the executive committee ran the union. In 1985, one of the four members of the executive committee was a woman, and two of the three members of the administrative committee were women.

Centralization of Union Structures:

As the previous section indicated, governance structures centralized a great deal of power in the general secretary's hands prior to 1983 and in the president's hands thereafter, since he was in charge of executive and administrative functions. Apart from the president, the most powerful influencers over union operations were the departmental directors, because they along with the president were the only people in authority whose full-time responsibilities were to the union. In 1987, when the secretary-treasurer position was created, that position also became one of great influence within the union. In addition, while long service was more the norm on the executive and administrative committees, turnover was frequent among the component chairs and regional vice presidents which promoted the

centralization of power within the union.

This centralized control was well-documented in the union constitution and bylaws, and confirmed by informants. The president was empowered to appoint all committee members and interpret the constitution, which he did with input from top staff and table officers. He also chaired the various structural review committees established by successive conventions in period two. Structures that reinforced centralized power were evident in all phases of union operations and at all levels of the union. For example, the component executives could refuse to forward resolutions to convention that were approved by the locals, and could amend them as well. The resolutions committee which collected these resolutions and organized them for presentation to convention could similarly turn back resolutions approved by the components, as well as determine which ones got to the floor, in what form, and in what order. All resolutions not voted on at conventions were referred to the provincial executive for disposition after convention.

The same sort of procedure was used to determine bargaining priorities. Locals submitted proposals approved by their components to the collective bargaining department at headquarters, which organized and "packaged" them for presentation to the bargaining conferences. Occasionally local resolutions became part of a composite or a substitute proposal based on resolutions received from a number of different locals. Once consensus on bargaining priorities emerged from the conferences, the staff refined them, cost them, etc. prior to commencement of bargaining. The president controlled all staff.

Negotiations too were centralized for the president was the chief negotiator of the master agreement after 1983. The component chairs along with the assigned staff made up

the master bargaining committee. The president as chair of the Collective Agreement Review Committee also approved all component agreements.

Conversely, forces that would have decentralized power were strictly controlled. For example, it was alleged by several respondents that headquarters staff would be deployed to neutralize any threats to the president's power or to control activists who might be getting out of hand. "I do hear rumours about certain staff getting assigned just to get to one person or another...if there is a rumour that someone is going to run against the president, there's some pressure placed on the staff to settle that or dilute it, or whatever...". The assertion was made by several others that staff could have some impact on who got elected to the vice-president positions, and that the staff definitely played a major role in identifying and grooming future activists. Since the staff reported to the general secretary or the president, they could be disciplined if they could not control the components they were assigned to or did not display sufficient loyalty to the leadership. They could also be kept in line by sanctions that included "barrelling" which involved social ostracism for wrongdoing, and perks such as being delegated to various conventions, conferences, etc. or not, depending on their demonstrated allegiance to the "team".

Other ploys were allegedly used to control existing and would-be activists. These included biased communications, leadership conferences used to align them with leadership positions on issues, marginalization of positions when the incumbents were seen as threats to the president, controlling committee appointments and assigned duties, and hiring onto staff "loose cannons" who would otherwise have won component elections and would therefore have ended up on the provincial executive. Finally, activists' ability to move into

"cushy" union staff jobs, progress upward in the union hierarchy, or to maintain a presence on important provincial executive committees, was governed by their willingness to be team players.

The rationale given for the highly centralized structures was that there was always a concern within the BCGEU about the potential divisiveness that could occur within its occupationally differentiated and geographically dispersed membership. Unity was important for union strength in dealing with the provincial government, so fragmentation was abhorred by leadership and membership alike. Policies were put in place to control it, not the least of which was an oath of office that had to be taken by all elected representatives. That oath bound them to commit no actions that would adversely affect other members or the union itself, and to uphold the principles and policies of the union at all times. An attempt was made at the 1979 convention to extend this pledge to the whole membership, but the resolution was voted down. However, at the previous convention a resolution was passed that bound all BCGEU delegates to conventions of other labour bodies to caucus solidarity. They were to "support and maintain at all times the policies, practices of the BCGEU and/or any other body to which we are affiliated." Caucus decisions were binding, and caucus discipline was to be maintained on threat of disciplinary action. The president determined who represented the union at these conventions.

Disciplinary considerations aside, many of my respondents mentioned that the returns to activism were great, particularly for those in low-paying, low-skilled jobs who otherwise received no recognition and few, if any, perks. One commented that "...there were hooks that lured people...into the fold...Once you reach the point of being an activist at a certain

level within an organization...you have a lot more power than you would have otherwise in your life and certainly in your workplace. As a union activist, people listen to you a lot more than to a clerk-typist. So it feels pretty good...to have people actually listen to what you're saying, particularly your employer..."

Thus, the team-playing requirement did not seem of much concern to the activists to whom I spoke. In fact, one of them emphatically stated that neither the oath nor caucus solidarity were a problem. Another mentioned that authorized interferences in "so-called free elections" was not that much of a concern either. "There was probably interference [in elections]. I was never involved in it myself from staff, but in that way it was controlled as best as possible. I didn't feel totally at odds with it. I didn't disagree with the kinds of stands the union was taking". So in general, none of my informants seemed particularly distressed by the centralization of power within the union, and the general membership, by its silence, also facilitated the maintenance of strong centralized control.

Finally, the one-component, one-vote rule on the provincial executive resulted in each of the components acting as checks on the others, and prevented any one component from having a dominant voice on the provincial executive. The commitment to act in the best interests of the union at all times, under the Oath of Allegiance, also warded off inter-component power struggles. Hence there was no incentive for any component to try to dominate the union agenda, which again facilitated centralized control of the union agenda. Furthermore, the provincial executive members were so over-extended in trying to handle their component and provincial executive responsibilities in addition to their responsibilities to their homes and families that there was a great deal of incentive to follow the path of

least resistance, which was that set by the executive committee. This also contributed to the centralization of power in the hands of the leadership. When the women's committee was established in 1975, its structures reflected the union's commitment to centralized power. These will now be discussed.

Women's Committee Structures:

When the women's committee was established its self-defined mandate was "the development of leadership and awareness in our female members, the removal of the inequalities that exist within the BCGEU and the development of policy..." All female provincial executive members, all female staff representatives, and one representative per component, at the component's volition, were to sit on the committee. The costs associated with having provincial executive members attend the meetings were to be borne by headquarters, while the components were to bear the costs of their own component representative's attendance. The representatives were to report back to the component executives after each meeting.

The women's committee's structures reflected the centralized power structures within the union. The women's committee was a policy recommending body that reported to the provincial executive. The provincial executive could veto all committee recommendations regarding changes to policy and administrative practises, any of its program activities, and any resolutions to be forwarded to conventions of the BCGEU or its affiliates. All committee expenditures had to be authorized. Committee meetings were held at the call of the chair, who was appointed by the president. Until 1988 the chair was a female table

officer. One of the staff representatives, the recording secretary, took minutes and kept the general secretary of the union and the provincial executive informed about what went on at each meeting.

The committee was expected to work through other provincial executive standing committees, such as the education and communications committees and the master bargaining committee. Committee members were to act as liaisons with women's committees in other labour organizations, acting as delegates, guest speakers, workshop leaders, etc. at BCGEU conventions as well as those of the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Union of Public and General Employees and the B.C. Federation of Labour. However, no provision was made for the committee to establish a presence provincially. Nor was there any attempt in period one to ensure component representatives' attendance at the women's committee's meetings.

Over the years, these structures changed very little. Eventually the president insisted that each component name two possible representatives to the committee, one of whom was then appointed to the committee by the president, and headquarters shouldered the costs of the component representatives' attendance at the meetings, but that did not happen until period two. Female staff representatives were forbidden to attend committee meetings from 1984-1989, with the exception of the recording secretary. A former table officer admitted that the leadership came to realize it had been wrong, but the staff women were removed from the committee "because they'd just get together and rehash it, and there'd be disagreements..." Furthermore, in 1985 it was made optional for female provincial executive members to attend women's committee meetings.

In 1987, the women's committee was allocated a budget to cover the costs of four meetings per year, the regional conferences, and commemorative ribbons for International Women's Day. In 1991, one of the two vice-president positions was designated for a woman. In 1993, a number of structural changes were achieved, which will be discussed later. But efforts to eliminate the process whereby the president appointed committee representatives and the committee chair were unsuccessful.

With this discussion of BCGEU structures serving as background, we turn now to an examination of feminist activism in the union for period one, and assess the women's committee's power based on the theoretical model.

Examination of Feminist Activism, 1975-1987

Discussion of the Theoretical Model for Period One:

1. Environment:

Following the passage of the Public Service Labour Relations Act by an NDP government in the fall of 1973, the Public Service Commission was designated bargaining agent of the government. When the BCGEU demonstrated convincingly that it represented the majority of government employees, it was designated their bargaining agent in March, 1974. The BCGEU then proceeded to negotiate its fist master agreement and 14 component agreements, all of which were ratified by April, 1975 and resulted in substantial gains for the membership.

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One of my interviewees who had worked for the government since 1952 thought the first master agreement was "fabulous". With cordial relations existing between the union and

the government, and the membership and the union, the union's attention turned to its internal affairs. The former general secretary reported that he looked around, noted that the BCGEU's membership base was "a mixture of blue and white collar, and roughly 50/50 in terms of membership distribution", and decided that "leadership structures should be broadly reflective of that", which at the time they were not.

According to published statistics (McLean, 1979), in 1976, females made up 36% of the public service bargaining unit, but only 17% of the provincial executive was female. At the component level, including the private sector bargaining unit, 11.5% of elected officers were female. At the local level, this percentage increased only to 21%. Additional sources indicated that most of these women were recording secretaries. Only 21 of the 137 local chairpersons were female. One of the table officers described how women's issues became part of the union's main agenda: "... we had an informed understanding [of women's issues], and a pretty politically smart general secretary who looked at the figures and said, 'Hmmmm, over 50% of the members here are women, we've got to pay attention to this stuff', and who also wanted to see a union that was leading and was socially responsible...and you couldn't be socially responsible unless you dealt up front with the issues that women were facing". So it was considered necessary, out of a mixture of concerns for public image, for proper member representation, and acting socially responsible, that something be done for women.

As a consequence, the BCGEU celebrated International Women's Year by sponsoring a province-wide women's conference in conjunction with its regular biennial convention to discuss two questions: 1) Was the BCGEU responding to the needs and bargaining goals of

its women members? 2) How could the union encourage women to play more active roles

in the union?

The delegates to the women's leadership conference consisted of 52 female members

who were either on their local or component executives, or were delegates to the 1975

convention. The sole male in attendance was the then part-time president of the union,

Norm Richards. The conference arranger was Nancy Hamilton, the union treasurer and the

only female table officer of the union. The conference was a great success in her mind,

based on the number of women brave enough to come to the microphones and speak. "I

didn't care what they said, I just wanted them to say it. They were hesitant..."

A number of recommendations were made that addressed issues of concern to

women, including discriminatory government hiring and promotion policies, lack of job

sharing opportunities, no paid leave for maternity, inadequate 24-hour child care facilities,

no child care at union meetings, lack of knowledge about union structures, parliamentary

procedure etc. that inhibited female participation at union meetings, and the dearth of

females on staff. The conference recommended "that the union establish women's

committees through the provincial executive and area councils to study policies on women's

issues." This was approved at the 1975 convention, where "[t]he tone of the convention

made it clear that the feminist movement had established a beachhead in the B.C.

Government Employees' Union" (McLean, 1979, p.135). The women's committee was

formally established in November, 1975.

Two years later, a second women's conference with 81 delegates was held to review

the policies adopted at the previous convention and address current concerns of the female

membership. The conference reaffirmed bargaining goals in the areas of family leave, paid

maternity benefits, extended maternity benefits, and paternity leave.

The keynote address at this conference, given by a female staff member on the

women's committee, proved quite informative about the atmosphere surrounding the

women's committee in its early years. There was a high level of controversy over the need

for a women's committee, even among the female membership, and having a women's

committee was seen as "segregating ourselves off into a closed, exclusive circle." The

speaker's response to this sentiment was emphatic.

> It's true that there are two women on the executive. Two women out of hundreds
> of talented and contributing members...Women are not full participants in the
> decision making and executive function of the BCGEU. Legitimate women's
> concerns and issues are not adequately served by the simple presence of women on
> the executive...Only concern converted to active policies has any effect on the day-
> to-day problems of working women...There is a need for a women's committee
> because there are women's needs.

She added that many men had a problem understanding this, and that there was a tendency

"for women's concerns to be tacked on to a list of proposals [at the bargaining table], not

included as essential points within the package."

While there seemed to be a feminist fervour behind her comments, the women's

committee's goals and the methods that were to be used to achieve them, were not radical.

The desire for a permanent power position for the committee was never articulated, and in

fact the committee was not expected to be permanent. As part of the same address, the

woman opined that once "women were working effectively in all locals and half of the

provincial executive members were female" the committee could be disbanded.

The committee wanted the concerns of women in the government service to be noticed, understood and corrected, and to increase female involvement in the union and the trade union movement at all levels in order to acquire for women "the power to act, to be effective, to get things done." Another extract from the 1977 keynote address indicated that these goals were to be accomplished not by establishing a "permanent, separate, feminist front within the BCGEU" but rather by operating through existing structures and utilizing the BCGEU's power and resources. The optimal role of the committee was seen "not...as a separate political lobby group within the union, but...[as] a vehicle to encourage the full involvement of women within the structure."

The feeling was that acting as an independent policy-making body would be "very destructive", and acting in isolation of the union's existing structures out of the question. "We would be both foolish and finally irresponsible to ignore or repudiate this available source of power." The preferred strategy was to have women take their rightful place in the existing power structure of the union.

So despite the fact that less than 20% of the delegates at the 1975 convention were female, and despite the already documented low levels of female participation in union governance at the start of period one, environmental conditions were initially conducive to the achievement of strong gains for women. However, this was short-lived. A federal anti-inflation program was imposed in 1976 for three years, and the NDP government was defeated in 1975.

The incoming Social Credit government took a tougher stance against the BCGEU which led to modest skirmishing through the latter 1970's and stronger confrontation

beginning in 1979. At issue were the definition of essential services, pension indexing, the two-tier bargaining structure, and regulation of public sector wages. In the early 1980's, the provincial government committed itself to downsizing the public sector, and in 1983, 10,000 public sector employees were fired. The BCGEU then reorganized them as private sector bargaining units, and directed much of its resources to fighting the government. One of the executive committee officers reported:

> ...in the 1980's during restraint and restructuring and privatization, all of the union's resources focused on fighting back. All of the committees were pretty much suspended at the decision of the provincial executive, we just had to dedicate the total resources of the union to the fight back...I would say that the early 1980's, for almost all of the decade, we had a hard time.

As a consequence, the officer continued, "We really didn't do a lot of things on women's issues because we were just fighting to survive, to continue to represent our members."

Hence, the early momentum enjoyed by the feminist lobby slowed substantially over the remainder of period one, although progress on women's issues continued to be made. Gains achieved will be discussed in a later section. For now, we will continue to examine the variables in the theoretical model by examining levels of leadership and membership support.

2. Levels of Support for the Women's Committee:

Leadership Support: As the foregoing section made plain, the general secretary of the union was fully supportive of women's issues, and he made it abundantly plain to the membership. In an article in The Provincial in January, 1975, he expressed his hope that International Women's Year would lead to genuine advances toward equality for women in the BCGEU. He said in order for them to materialize there would have to be "changes in discriminatory

attitudes, held by both men and women", and he exhorted "you jokers in the back row, keep those sexist wisecracks to yourself." He continued, "If you have nothing constructive to offer, listen awhile. You might learn something and help the BCGEU to become the union that it should be, a union offering equality to all of its members." He also stated in his interview that "he spoke privately at interminable length, and publicly at some length, about the fact that the union must give more recognition and credibility to clerical workers as the core membership of the future. And sometimes articulating, sometimes expecting the audience to figure out, that that meant women because 90% of that membership is female."

The leadership set up internal structures to promote the hiring of female staff, and brought women along deliberately. Again, the former general secretary noted:

> ...we groomed them, we gave them mentors, we moved them ahead in the structure...We solicited applications from people, female applications got more carefully looked at than male applications, we made absolutely sure that we interviewed some of these women so that we got some kinds of idea what sort of people this produces. It meant that we made sure that when staff reps went to local meetings they kept an eye out for female possibilities and they talked to them and got to know them, and got a read on them, and then when the elections came they went to those people and asked them if they'd like to run for office.

However, the general secretary became the president of the National Union of Provincial Government Employees (NUPGE) in December, 1980 while continuing as general secretary of the BCGEU. In 1983, he took a leave of absence from the BCGEU. The president then took over the duties of general secretary. In 1985, when he retired, John Shields became president and he has held that position ever since. He too appeared to be fully supportive of women's issues, but this issue will be discussed more fully in a later section of this paper.

Several of the activists I spoke to questioned the leadership's true commitment to

women's issues. One member of the women's committee during period one said:

> The fact that the committee never had a budget is a very good indication to me that the senior leadership of the union didn't have - well the kindest way of describing it is that they didn't have a vision of that group doing anything in particular to change the status of women, or the ability to formally participate in the union...

The prevailing view however was that it was exceedingly difficult to draw the line between "talking the talk and walking the walk" as one of my informants put it. However, as a matter of practicality, the elected leadership had to be seen as supportive of women's issues if they wanted to be re-elected, particularly as women became more predominant within the membership. More ardent leadership supporters pointed to things like establishing the committee, sponsoring two leadership conferences, and negotiating women's issues as proof of leadership support. Also, the provincial executive was a major source of resolutions to convention dealing with women's issues, which suggests some degree of support.

However, if the question was posed, "Was there any effort made to adapt a system that by its "male", "adversarial" nature was uncomfortable for women, or to realistically take into account female activists' domestic responsibilities", the answer would have to be no. Again, this was well articulated by the former general secretary who stated:

> ...my view was that women had to be completely assimilated into the structures of the union. And they would make it their union, and in time would impact the system itself. But you weren't going to change the system, wave the magic wand and get the ... system changed...

Later he stated, "All I knew was that if our women were going to play a key role in the union they had to come up through the normal channels." He added:

> ...we were real abusers of people's personal lives, but part of the demonstration of your loyalty was that you put your commitment to the cause ahead of your personal life...I'm just trying to think if there were any marriages that I know of that survived. They don't come to mind.

The level of support at other than the top leadership levels was even less discernible. At the provincial executive level the general secretary noted that "in the 70's and 80's, to be on the leadership team you did have to take an implicit, if not explicit, loyalty oath", and as the previous discussion of structures indicated, infractions were punished. Thus the leadership team would have to have supported women's issues, as that was the union stance.

But the same concern about appearance versus reality with respect to support at the provincial executive level was expressed by the people I interviewed. Half of the people interviewed who commented on this issue felt the majority of the provincial executive were supportive of women's issues, and by definition of the committee. Representative comments were, "...we've come a long way, and we've had marvellous support from the majority of the men". "The majority of [the provincial executive members] were very progressive, intelligent people". "My recollection is that...certainly amongst the executive of the union, with maybe a couple of exceptions of people who were in totally male-occupied components, support existed". One pointed out that the provincial executive members really had very little choice, "The provincial executive was behind the women's committee. They didn't dare not to be. Some didn't like it, but if they wanted to stay on the provincial executive, they had to".

At the other extreme, a typical comment was, "The committee was not very popular among the male components. The male-dominated components - the trades, forestry, corrections - they had to pay to have a rep attend the women's committee and that really got to them because it was a waste of time, they didn't believe in [women's issues]...[one component] tore a strip off [their rep]" when she reported back. They thought women's

issues were 'stupid', and sending a rep to the committee was 'a waste of money'..." Another comment was that the chair of the committee needed to be powerful because, "you would have to go to the provincial executive and explain what the committee wanted. Well, you got jumped on...everything you got you had to fight for." The regional vice-presidents were generally seen as non-supportive. The comment made was, "when it came to women's issues, they just banded together as men and just made it very difficult to get anything".

Conclusive evidence on this issue was also difficult to obtain from archival sources. There is evidence that many of the initiatives the women's committee contemplated during period one never materialized, although the reasons involved inadequate allocations of time and money to the committee, and lack of meetings. However, these may not have been attributable to lack of support, particularly since the environment confronting the union for much of the period was hostile. The female staff who were the mainstay of the committee given that the components refused to send representatives, were particularly hard-pressed because of their regular duties, especially during the fight-back campaign through the 1980's and while master agreement or component bargaining was in process.

Efforts <u>could</u> have been made to alleviate these problems, for example if the provincial executive had been more willing to grant committee members paid leave to work on committee business, to absorb the costs of component representation on the committee, and to launch local and regional women's committees. Unwillingness to fund the few local and component women's committees that were operating was also a problem. The dilemma facing these committees was well-expressed by one woman who had chaired her component's women's committee for a year. Explaining that it met only once, she said,

"What can they do? We met a couple of times then we asked ourselves what are we meeting for? We have no budget, how are we actually going to do anything?"

One of the rationalizations that my informants came up with to explain this situation was that by no means would the executive have been fully supportive of a grassroots mobilization in the locals and components around women's issues, but they would not have opposed it outright if it did not cost them anything. Another disagreed, stating, "I would say the majority of [the provincial executive] are not the least bit interested in [having women grassroots members organized and actively supporting issues of importance to women]". On the contrary, "there's an interest...in the status quo...I'm an elected component executive official and I have some power and I like it that way so I'll tell them what I think they need to know". In support of this position, another informant said that except for "a couple of them" empowering women sat low on their priority list. The situation appears not to have improved substantially over the period, for at the end of the first period, the committee identified inadequate levels of consciousness regarding women's issues within the provincial executive as an obstacle to goal attainment.

Membership Support - If the component executives were representative of the groups that elected them, it follows that member support for women's issues, at least among the male-dominated components, was lacking. Since at no time during period one were more than one-third of the public service components female-dominated, there may have been a substantial lack of membership support for the women's committee and for women's issues. Certainly this was the opinion of the majority of my informants. One reported, "...it seems silly now but in those days you went through why are there no men on the women's

committee, why isn't this a human rights committee..." Sexual harassment within the membership was reported to be pervasive. The comment made was, "Regarding the members, all you had to do was attend one convention and try to wend your way across the room, or the restaurant. Oh my God, the harassment! and the shenanigans!" Another informant commented, "The women's committee was always fighting the common garden variety prejudices of the average person against women's issues".

One extreme expression of that prejudice equated the women's committee's members with "men-hating lesbians that were going to trash men". With regard to this comment, my informants did not recall how they had become aware of this label. One said she did not actually recall hearing this comment, but she was pretty suspicious when she was first appointed to the committee. Pay equity was not on the bargaining table in period one, but as another indication of lack of membership support, there was the sense that it would not have been countenanced. "[The men] could not see their pay cheques diminishing in order to help a woman's pay cheque increase".

The situation was not that much more positive among the female membership, for solidarity seemed to be lacking. A former chair of the female-dominated Administrative Services component reported that women in her component voted down a maternity supplementary insurance benefit plan because "they just weren't ready. You know, I didn't have child care when I had my kids, why should you have it now?"

A couple of informants attributed low levels of membership support to inadequate education by the union, others to the committee's low profile. "There certainly was no general awareness among the members that the women's committee existed", said one.

Another said that once she left the committee, she heard nothing about women's committee-sponsored events other than the area conferences. Thus it seems that informants felt membership support was generally quite low, but this could have been a reflection of the membership's general apathy to union affairs.

It is difficult to gain evidence from the archives about levels of membership support in period one. Convention minutes indicate that prior to the 1989 convention, only 36 resolutions dealing with women's issues were put forward (See Table 4.1), 14 of them in 1987, and 11 of those 14 were put forward by Administrative Services. Through the period resolutions were introduced by five components in total. Component 6, the Social, Education and Health component, introduced four resolutions, while Component 12 introduced twelve resolutions. The remainder were introduced by male-dominated components. The resolutions introduced pertained to the need for the union to help women move into non-traditional jobs, promoting the hiring of the disabled, and providing child care at conventions and educational seminars, providing sexual harassment protection and improving daycare for members.

The feedback from the earliest regional women's conferences, which began in 1976, confirmed that solidarity within the female membership regarding women's issues was lacking. The women's committee minutes noted that some of the older women at those conferences evinced small interest in talking about family rights. Turnouts among the female membership for women's committee-sponsored events seemed quite low. For example, area conferences were cancelled in 1980 and 1981 for poor attendance. A conference in Victoria in 1981 brought out only 35 members. The 1985 conference in the same area was attended

by 30 members. Yet these turnouts were considered "excellent" despite the fact that this was one of the areas where an area women's committee was set up in 1985, and a regional committee had operated previously.

Some of the components consistently refused to send representatives to the committee despite the pressure brought to bear by the provincial executive. It was not until 1984 that the women's committee's minutes noted that all component representatives were in attendance. Also, the allegation that sexual harassment was a continuing problem at organized labour-sponsored events including conventions of the BCGEU was supported in the documentation, because in period two action was taken to contain it.

The committee's consciousness-raising and educational efforts did create some supporters, and serving on the committee seemed to encourage future activism which ultimately created a pool of supporters, but the numbers were small. However, whether due to the influence of the external labour movement's priorities which included advances for women, or because of genuine levels of support among the membership, over the first period, of the 36 resolutions introduced at BCGEU conventions pertaining to women's issues, only two were turned down (See Table 5). However 10 of them were referred to another committee or to the provincial executive for further discussion.

3. Structures:

Since structures have already been discussed, in this section I will merely touch on those directly linked to the power of the committee and the effectiveness of the female lobby. The main indicators of structural deficiencies came from activists' comments, which identified BCGEU structures as the major deterrent to successful female lobbying in general,

and to the success of the women's committee in particular. The major problem, the female activists agreed, was that the time commitment the union demanded left little energy to deal with domestic affairs, which made activism virtually impossible for married women with children, and for most other ordinary mortals. A childless woman said:

> At one point I was on something like 13 different committees. Those hours would be put in on evenings and weekends, there were frequent times when I went two or three weeks without a break. I didn't have children, so it was a lot easier for me.

Other informants stated: "I was very tired when I left [union activism]. It took me a good year and a half to get over being exhausted - I was burned out."; "I was so wasted by the time I got out of there that I couldn't even face the place again."; "I figured I was holding down four full-time jobs".

Union meetings were held after work or in the evenings, and union business, educational programs and conferences occurred in the evenings or on week-ends, often in venues where women felt uncomfortable. There was a sense that efforts to accommodate women via daycare arrangements did not go far enough, and no effort was made to integrate families into union activities. The essence of these activists' comments was captured in the following passage.

> My whole involvement with the union was pre-children. Up until I had my first child, I had been working 6 or 7 days a week and 12 or 14 hours a day, some days, and that was just part of the culture, the expectation, that's what people did, both staff and elected people. Elected people would work at their jobs all day and then they would be at the union in the evenings.

This woman thought that providing daycare to attend week-end conventions was an empty gesture because, she said, "I'm not going to abandon my kid for a whole week-end. I'm a

mother. You just can't do it. And you don't leave them every evening so you can go off to meetings".

While this woman maintained she always found the union "a very warm, welcoming place to be", others felt the opposite. One woman who had coordinated a Women's Centre for 8 years said, "... for many women, belonging in an organization is a problem in that it rarely happens that women really feel they belong because the systems and the structures are not really friendly. They don't feel as comfortable to us as they do perhaps for men." She also felt public speaking was more of a problem for women particularly those in low-status positions, and prevented women from speaking out at conventions. "To tell a clerk-typist who has spent the greatest portion of her life with little if any power that the way for her to communicate within her union is to stand up in front of a microphone in front of 500 people is, at best, unrealistic".

A couple of activists indicated that women were not naturally inclined to work through structures and hierarchies. They tended to be more inclined to collaboration, "to sharing information and putting certain things aside to get something done..." Nevertheless, to have credibility with the membership, male and female, it was incumbent upon female activists to earn the respect of their fellow activists by being able "to give as good as they got, hold their own" and to adapt to situations they were "absolutely terrified of" because "they had to learn how to handle them" in order to survive in an essentially adversarial system.

Since an additional assignment for these female activists was sitting on the women's committee, the structural problems identified to this point affected how energetically the

women's committee pursued its objectives. Centralized structures were a problem for the committee in a number of areas. First, since the sole female table officer chaired the women's committee for all of period one, and until 1984 the staff represented the bulk of the committee members in attendance at meetings, when the union commandeered their time to fight the government, the committee came to a standstill.

Even when the committee was meeting, some of my informants felt that the table officer and the staff controlled the initiatives the women's committee pursued. Speaking about the chair and the staff person assigned to the committee, one mentioned, "We didn't meet without one or both of them. They were a control, clearly...it was fairly obvious that here were certain things that just wouldn't fly.,...with certain members of the provincial executive". Consequently, because the provincial executive controlled the purse-strings the committee was unable to do some of the things it wanted to do. The infrequency of committee meetings, the spottiness of component attendance at those meetings, the frequent turnover on the committee because appointments were only for a two-year period, and the failure to initiate committee activity in the locals and regions in between meetings, were additional structural problems that interfered with committee effectiveness in period one. An examination of the committee's activity levels will reveal the impact of these structural deficiencies.

4. Women's Committee's Activities and Characteristics:

The first meeting of the women's committee took place January 29, 1976, with eight members in attendance, three of them staff. While 9 of the 14 components had named representatives to the women's committee, only four were in attendance at the meeting. The

provincial executive at its January 29 meeting approved the following initiatives to be pursued by the committee: 1) research activities to support negotiations on women's issues; 2) developing education courses beneficial to women; and 3) providing resource people to discuss women's issues at local meetings. These kinds of initiatives were much in evidence during period one.

The committee soon developed a routine at their meetings which involved 1) keeping abreast of organized labour's position on women's issues by reporting on conferences attended by committee members, 2) dealing with correspondence, 3) discussing issues pertaining to women that were raised in the components, 4) addressing issues referred to the committee by the provincial executive and writing position papers on them, 5) developing resolutions for forwarding to their own conference or those of the CLC, NUPGE, or the BCFL, 6) preparing bargaining recommendations, 7) celebrating International Women's Day, 8) honouring the history of women's involvement in the labour movement, 9) writing occasional articles to The Provincial or to Sisterhood, the BCFL's regular publication.

Much of its time in the earliest years were devoted to establishing a library of audio-visual resources dealing with women's issues that could be shown in local meetings or elsewhere, and developing pamphlets for distribution to the membership on topics like "Women in the BCGEU", "The BCGEU's Women's Committee", or sexual harassment. Preparing women's calendars and posters, or holding photo contests to celebrate women's history or to encourage women to go into non-traditional occupations were also popular activities, as was producing buttons to remind women that "A woman's place is in her

union". A major initiative undertaken by the committee was planning and facilitating regional conferences to be held throughout the province. The conferences were intended to encourage women to get more informed about the union, develop public speaking skills, become more assertive, learn Robert's Rules of Order, etc. to encourage them to become more actively involved in the BCGEU. Attempts to get local and regional women's committees established were ongoing.

Political action was externally rather than internally directed. For example, in 1983 the committee resolved to make contact with the Ministry of Labour's women's programs department, and a letter writing campaign to persuade the federal government not to fund the women's group known as Realistic Equal and Active for Life (REAL) Women was launched in 1985. Committee meetings were irregular. They were suspended in 1982 for 6 months due to pending strike action, and in 1983 the committee met only once. From September, 1985 to November, 1986 the committee did not meet due to master bargaining. Then it met in November and in March, 1987, but not again until April, 1988. The topic of the last meeting held in period one involved the committee's goals for 1987/88.

The feminist activists I interviewed felt these initiatives were inadequate. One of the more outspoken said there were lots of important issues the women's committee should have been addressing, such as tackling the structural deficiencies already noted. An internal document identified establishing a grassroots presence for the women's committee "essential" to carrying out its mandate. But, "rather than deal with important issues, the women's committee did other things...not that the things they were doing were wrong, but that they really didn't go far enough and they were sort of token".

By 1987, "there were a lot of feminists worried about the women's committee" and about the lack of progress made with respect to equalizing women's participation in the union. A number of them showed up at a women's caucus at the 1987 convention to express their concerns. This unleashed a series of events that will be discussed in a later section of this paper, that ultimately resulted in some structural reforms. But at this point, we will go on to a discussion of the potential for gains during period one.

5. Potential For Gains During Period One:

How the committee operated and what it did during period one can be summarized as follows: 1) it focused primarily on educating female members to facilitate their involvement in the union; 2) it met only when other union priorities were not taking precedence; 3) it operated strictly through existing union structures rather than seeking to establish its own power base; 4) it was chaired by a table officer who intentionally or not controlled committee proceedings; 5) it made no real attempt to combat the resistance to women's issues that it was aware existed even on the provincial executive.

There was a lack of money to do many of the things the committee wanted to do. "Before 1987 we were told repeatedly that...the women's committee couldn't have any more money." In some informants' views, it was not dealing with the "important issues". The committee did not take a critical stance toward the union's way of operating. "There was often an absence of any analysis that took the information, reflected on what the union did, and reflected on what the union could be, and then start to develop a vision of what that would be and how to get there..." Anyone who attempted to criticize what was happening merely got into trouble for "shitting on the union". In short, the committee's activities

would generally not have been predicted to enhance its ability to achieve gains for women other than those mandated by the union leadership, which focused on bargaining gains.

Nor were committee structures particularly conducive to committee effectiveness. Committee members had no assigned responsibilities other than attending the meetings. "The extent of their duties was pretty much just to attend meetings. They weren't expected particularly to get anything going in their components." Appointment procedures and enforcement of component attendance were major problems that made it impossible for the committee to meet regularly, develop a sense of belonging to a group with a mission, and thereby develop some momentum. The heavy staff influence within the committee over most of the first period probably reinforced the committee's proclivity to trust in existing union structures and to not challenge the true level of support on the provincial executive. The lack of a budget which the committee could expend as it deemed desirable increased the level of control the provincial executive exercised over the committee.

The committee was also quite fragmented, without a uniform goal. "You couldn't ever just walk into the women's committee and say I think we should do this or this, and my bargaining unit and my local thinks so too...You would have to have gone behind the scenes and lobbied key people on the committee long before that." An additional problem was that some of the committee members had little "gut level commitment to women's issues", and some "had no idea about what women's issues were." They were activists, not necessarily feminist activists. "A lot of the women were there because they were activists generally, not necessarily interested in women, not feminist...Many of them were learning...To them often [women's issues] were the periphery..."

There were obvious problems associated with the need for provincial executive approval of all committee actions, but as with the BCTF's status of women committee in period four, it made few recommendations that were not virtually assured of being supported. The funding formula which made components bear the cost of sending their representatives to the committee and contributed to the low component representation on the committee, emphasized the fact that it was a provincial executive rather than a membership committee, and possibly reduced levels of support for the committee.

The degree of centralization characteristic of overall union structures ensured that if the provincial executive wanted to constrain the committee's effectiveness for fear of upsetting the status quo, it could do so. Therefore levels of leadership and membership support were very important, and leadership support might have been illusory. There were definitely problems with the level of membership support, but unfortunately, it is difficult to determine how big the problems were. Since membership apathy and a propensity to follow the provincial executive's dictates were prevalent, presumably deficits in leadership support were more serious. However, given the hostile environment that faced the union for much of the first period, it is difficult to assert that women's issues should have been given a higher profile during the period.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that my respondents found my inquiries about the committee's power inane. A typical response was:

> I certainly didn't notice anybody taking tremendous note of us...there always seemed to be a wincing and a reluctance on the committee to offend the men...there was the concern that if the committee did too much and had too much of a profile that it would make the men uncomfortable.

They were unable to attribute any advances achieved for women to the committee itself.

"Gains can only occur at the bargaining table" was one of the comments made. "I don't know that the committee itself has effected any structural change, or any real change in negotiation strategies." But the former general secretary of the union suggested that looking for power within the committee itself might be misleading.

> I wouldn't have seen the world through committees myself. Did the women have power in the union? The answer is yes. Were women's issues front and centre on the union's broader agenda? The answer is yes. Was I negotiating sexual harassment clauses when I could have been negotiating long-term disability clauses? The answer is yes...Power is not wielded through committee structures per se in the union.

We will now examine actual gains achieved in period one.

Actual Gains Achieved in Period One:

In terms of statistics, at conventions occurring between 1975 and 1987 inclusive, a total of 36 resolutions pertaining to issues of concern to the women's committee were introduced, 24 of which were passed, two turned down, and 10 referred to various committees (See Table 5). Nine of the referrals occurred in 1987, all to the provincial executive. But one substitute for 10 other resolutions concerned with structural reforms was introduced, which resulted in the establishment of the Structural Review Committee.

The resolutions passed in period one that were geared to the women's committee's first objective, which was to secure structural changes that would promote female equality within the union, ensured there would be no further references in the constitution and bylaws to "chairman" - the referral would be to "chairperson" instead. BCGEU policy was amended to provide child care at union conventions and education sessions. Discrimination in pension plans was to be addressed. Improved working conditions for auxiliary workers,

protection from technological change, and additional government-funded daycare were to be sought at the bargaining table, sexual harassment protection was to be negotiated, additional efforts were to be made to move females into non-traditional jobs via educational initiatives and affirmative action programs, and to increase access to jobs for the disabled, and pay equity was to be investigated.

Many of the 1987 resolutions geared to structural reform were referred to the provincial executive and subsequently passed. Some of these were: 1) more comprehensive postings of BCGEU openings; 2) enactment of legislation to achieve pay equity; 3) BCGEU endorsement of a pro-choice position on abortion; 4) the establishment of Women's Reproductive Health Clinics; and 5) stated opposition to federal funding of "anti-women, anti-feminist, and anti-union" women's groups like Realistic, Equal and Active for Life (REAL) Women of Canada; and 6) sex education program in schools.

While these were changes that were advantageous to women it should be noted that only one of them involved <u>formal</u> structural change in terms of a constitutional amendment, and that was the 1977 resolution calling for the substitution of "chairperson" for all references to "chairman" in the constitution and bylaws. Many of the policies on the books required the collaboration of the government or organized labour for implementation to occur. The policies that the BCGEU could enact unilaterally, such as establishing a provincial women's committee, holding women's conferences, publishing information of concern to women and paying child care costs, could not have been construed as threats to the rest of the membership or to the union's welfare.

The second category of gain of concern to women was level of participation in union governance (See Table 6.1). The average proportion of females on staff was 34% in period one, and it ranged from 19% in 1975 to 38% in 1987. The average proportion of females on the provincial executive was 17% in period one and the range was from 9% to 26%. The average proportion of female delegates at the convention prior to 1989 was 32%, and the range was from 18% to 41%. Finally, the female presence on the master bargaining committee increased from two to three members. The average proportion of females on the master bargaining committee was 15% in period one (including the first master agreement in 1973) and the range was from 7% for the first master agreement to 23% for the sixth and seventh master agreements. In contrast, the proportion of the membership that was female increased from 35% in 1975 to 52% in 1987.

The third category of gain of concern to women was gains achieved at the bargaining table. Since only the master agreement is considered in this case study, changes in local agreements were not tracked. For purposes of this section, I limited my attention to the master agreement, and considered 15 issues the women's committee was fighting to achieve. These included: protection from sexual and other forms of harassment, seniority protection when leaves such as maternity leave were taken, availability of leaves for special occasions or for family illness, maternity or paternity and adoption, level of compensation during such leaves and their length, protection from job loss due to technological change, existence of employee assistance programs, equal pay provisions, telephone allowances for employees on travel status, employer-paid child care, employer-funded child care facilities, and provisions for auxiliary workers.

When this category of gain for women is considered, the results are positive. The first collective agreement, which was negotiated before the women's committee came into being, made provision for bereavement leave, paid 1/2 to 3-day leaves for marriage, funerals, domestic emergency and birth or adoption of a child, 6-month maternity leave without pay which could be extended 6 months for medical reasons, 6-month unpaid adoption leave, equal pay for workers doing substantially the same job, regardless of their sex, establishment of a joint committee to investigate the establishment of child care facilities and maintenance of a seniority list for auxiliary employees. The second agreement, effective in 1975, clarified the special leave provision, entitled employees to 2-day paid leaves to look after sick children to a maximum of 10 days per year, improved and clarified seniority and loss of seniority provisions for auxiliary workers. The maternity provision was weakened however, for no longer was the employee guaranteed return to her original position or one of equal rank and salary at the end of her maternity leave, and no longer did the employer have to pay the employer's share of medical, extended health, dental and group life insurance premiums while the employee was on such leave.

The third agreement, effective 1977, added to the special leave provisions, restored the maternity benefits lost in 1975, entitled employees on travel status to claim for a 3-minute telephone call home for every three night away from home, and further clarified seniority provisions for auxiliary workers. The fourth agreement, effective 1979, made provision for retention of seniority for employees terminating service for no more than 6 months to raise children, lifting of the 10 day maximum on use of paid leave to look after sick children, and formation of a joint committee to explore establishing a joint alcohol and

drug abuse program. Seniority provisions for auxiliary employees were extended to include periods during which workers compensation benefits were being collected.

In the fifth agreement, effective 1982, a sexual harassment protection clause was negotiated which included actions to be taken when sexual harassment was alleged. The provisions regarding commencement of maternity leave were improved and if an employee prior to commencement of leave for maternity became eligible for short-term illness or injury benefits, she could not be forced to start maternity leave. Also, her vacation credits would continue to accrue. A guarantee of return to a former position or one of equal rank and pay was extended to employees taking 6-month adoption leave. A joint employee assistance program was established, and an arrangement was made for a child care facility to be established in Vancouver, which was duly opened in June, 1983.

In the sixth agreement, effective 1984, there were no changes to the clauses being examined in this section. In the seventh, effective 1986, a technological change clause was introduced which called for 60-day notice and provided for a joint committee to determine its impact. Training to work with the new technology was arranged and the agreement reached that displaced employees were to be absorbed somewhere within the ministry, or offered severance pay or early retirement.

Looking at these results in contrast to the resolutions brought forward to conventions over the years, a slightly different picture emerges. Without detracting from the progress made, it should be noted that resolutions pertaining to government-provided or government-funded daycare were initially brought forward in 1981, and then again in 1983, 1985, and 1987. Similarly, pay equity issues were first broached as possible negotiation items in 1981

and again in 1983 and 1987 without much progress made. Proposals discouraging discriminatory hiring of women and the disabled were initiated in 1981 and 1983. Pensions that discriminated against women were a source of concern in 1985 and 1987.

Affirmative action in the union was recommended in 1987 and again in 1989, suggesting that discrimination against women was an internal problem as well. An internal union document revealed that in the public sector as of November, 1984 the average male salary was $1837 monthly while the average monthly female salary was $1452. There were more female than male auxiliary workers, and they too had a lower average wage than did the male workers ($1066 versus $1220 respectively.) The male/female wage differential existed in each of the components, with males in Social, Education and Health Services earning the most, and women in Operational Services earning the least ($2279 versus $905).

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that bargaining gains did materialize, but how aggressively women's issues were pursued is unclear, although several of my respondents stated that women's issues were the first issues off the table. Also unclear is the level of government resistance to the negotiation of women's issues. It is true that BCGEU had to strike to achieve settlements in 1982, 1983, and 1986, but it is safe to assume that women's issues were not the major items in dispute.

In retrospect, significant bargaining gains for women were achieved in period one, despite the tough opposition from the government throughout the 1980's. The gains did reflect the bargaining goals of the women's committee, but it is difficult to say that these gains were a direct result of the women's committee's efforts due to the centralized way bargaining was handled at the BCGEU. It seems more accurate to say that the bargaining

gains reflected the union's priorities and the government's resistance to negotiating gains for women. There was also some improvement in union structures affecting the female membership and in the level of female involvement in union governance. Presumably this was at least in part attributable to committee efforts.

Discussion:

The comment referred to earlier, that "power is not wielded through committee structures per se in the union", pointed out the folly of concentrating on the women's committee in trying to ascertain under what conditions feminist activists could achieve gains for women in the BCGEU. The committee's activities were not so important because of what they did but rather because so much of what had to be done was left up to others who may have been much less committed to women's issues than were at least some of the members of the women's committee. The committee nevertheless demonstrated its faith throughout period one that success would eventually be achieved.

This faith seems to have been somewhat unfounded. The advances made at the bargaining table cannot be overlooked, but improvements in female participation in union governance were modest, and at the end of period one, despite the fact that females were a majority in the union, they held one-quarter of the table officer and provincial executive positions, and the same proportion of the master bargaining committee positions. Nor is it easy to overlook the fact that the major structural changes achieved were in terms of policy rather than constitutional change. This was the case even though there was discussion within the committee of the need for constitutional changes to deal with problems arising from the

centralized structures such as the difficulties of reconciling activist and domestic responsibilities, and the urgent need to reach out to the grassroots. Recalling from the literature that fear, duty to the leadership, loyalty, habit, propaganda, and cooptation must all be overcome before oppositional activity can even be contemplated (Weinstein, 1979), it was clear that the women's committee members were not yet at this point.

Nevertheless it was predictable that rhetoric might outweigh performance as far as overcoming women's inequality in the union was concerned. Given the disjuncture in the external environment between progressive interests wanting to promote female advancement and conservative interests wanting to maintain the status quo, which would have been reflected inside the union, the forces for change were not particularly strong. Since the BCGEU was a large union with a diverse membership inclined toward fragmentation, the stage was set for a situation where public relations considerations necessitated establishing a women's committee, but pragmatics dictated that it could not be allowed to be overly successful because that would upset the male membership.

Thus the committee was duly established, but there may still have been only a minimal commitment to increasing women's equality in the union. Leadership and membership support for the committee's performance of anything other than routine, administrative activities may have been quite low and may therefore have been subtly discouraged by the leadership. This would explain: 1) why the primary gains in period one were achieved in bargaining, which was considered a routine union function, 2) why internal staffing did not better reflect the make-up of the membership, 3) why the type of structural reforms the women's committee deemed necessary, although fairly obvious, were not

articulated until late in the period, and 4) why the structural deficiencies that impeded female participation in union affairs were not rectified.

It is debatable whether the union was unaware of the problem structures posed for female union activism, since there was an articulated rationale provided for them by the former general secretary of the union. The rationale was based on the membership's scepticism about giving women "the ultimate authority over their livelihoods," and its lack of conviction regarding women's ability to "face all the relatively tough decisions when you get to the point of determining whether or not [to] strike". Similarly, there must have been some level of awareness that requiring women to place their union responsibilities ahead of their domestic responsibilities was unrealistic for many women and that the union was not very supportive of aspiring or existing female activists.

One respondent reported:

When I used to go to union meetings, the men always felt they couldn't get anything done if there were too many women [at the meetings] because women wouldn't go on strike, they wouldn't attend meetings.

Another said:

I used to sit in meetings where smart cracks and cheap shots were made, particularly by men, that the women who miss meeting after meeting are really not too committed to the union. Excuse me, they have three children at home, and often husbands are involved in the union too.

So it seems that a deep-seated suspicion of women's ability to make positive contributions to the union were pervasive, which perhaps led some of the male leaders to privately discount both the desirability of increasing female involvement in the union and females' potential contribution to the governance of the union, and the work of the women's committee. The need for political correctness ensured this was not voiced publicly, but to

the extent this attitude existed, it provided justification for maintaining existing structures on the grounds of union survival. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that female involvement in the union in the mid-70's to mid-80's was quite low, despite the union's apparent commitment to women's issues and to women's advancement in the union.

Feminist activists did continue to recommend union policy changes, and in 1987, more policy recommendations came forward than at any previous convention. They were not that shocking, for one related to membership education about the impact of technological change, another to considering establishment of an additional union-run child care facility, and one referred to a new distribution system for the ribbons distributed each year for International Women's Day. However, two referred to changing how wage levels should be determined for workers seconded temporarily to area offices, or booked off to canvas, train, etc. for the union, and a third to practising positive affirmative action in the union.

Nevertheless, when it became apparent in 1987 that any of the recommendations that could result in structural reforms were going to be delegated to a structural review committee chaired by the president, where initially only two of the seven members were women, the feminist activists became convinced that they must take matters into their own hands. The mobilization of the Administrative Services component was a major factor in the rise of militancy because it was the largest component in the BCGEU, with a membership in 1987 that was 83% female, most of whom were in low-paid, low-status clerical positions. Feminist activism in period two will now be examined.

Examination of Feminist Activism After 1987

<u>The Rise of Militancy in Component 12</u>:

Component 12, the Administrative Services component, currently has in excess of 13000 members, 85% of whom are female, with the majority employed in low-paid clerical positions. It characterizes itself as "a bunch of people who have suffered for quite a long time with low pay and no respect...", although major advances have been made toward pay equity in recent years. In the mid-1980's when the militancy started to percolate, the component executive decided to overthrow its "good girl" image, develop a component identity, and acquire some power. The executive members decided "they were going to take the power, they were not going to wait for someone to give it to them." They wanted the rest of the membership to realize that their component "had the bulk of the members and paid the bulk of the dues, even though they made relatively low wages", and that their low wages contributed to their inability to participate equally in the union.

> We were going to be brats if that's what it took to get ourselves on the map. Because we knew after all these years of sitting back and being the good children we just weren't getting anywhere as far as getting our component some sort of priority...we brought in the bulk of the money and we got the least amount of return...we wanted some power.

Specifically, they wanted structural reforms that would empower women.

The 1987 convention authorized the establishment of a structural review committee to collect recommendations on enhancing membership involvement and servicing. Component 12 locals made a number of submissions. These included recommendations for changes to the women's committee's structures as well as recommendations more specific to its own interests. The latter included representation by population on the provincial

executive, reserving one of the two vice-president positions for a female, having the women's committee representatives elected by the components rather than appointed by the president, having the women's committee elect the chair of the women's committee, and allowing the women's committee chair a vote on the provincial executive. According to one of my informants, these recommendations were "not exactly welcomed" and were not taken seriously at first, even by the women's committee.

However, the 1989 convention directed the provincial executive to bring to the 1991 convention a proposal to achieve gender equity through affirmative action within the union structure. The executive committee asked the women's committee to recommend a plan of action to achieve this end, so submissions were again solicited from the components. Component 12 advanced the recommendations it had advanced previously since only one of them had been achieved, and some of them were dealt with at the 1991 convention, although not nearly to the extent desired by the component.

As a result of its battle over structural reform, Component 12 which had been judged "not sophisticated enough to know how to act in their own best interests, and not willing to challenge the leadership of the union" by several former members of the component executive, started to become political. Eventually the component came to a consensus that fair representation on the provincial executive was its first priority and that having vice-president positions designated for women was a step in the right direction. They were decided they were going to fight for what they wanted.

Structures Affecting Militancy Early In Period Two:

As mentioned, a number of feminist activists articulated concerns about the lack of progress made with respect to equalizing women's participation in the union at a women's caucus at the 1987 convention. This came to the provincial executive's attention, which charged the committee with making recommendations to deal with the problem At the same time, a more general concern with union structures was expressed by convention delegates, and 10 resolutions recommending structural revisions were brought forward.

The 1987 convention mandated the establishment of a Structural Review Committee to examine the union's component and local structure, its constitution, and any recommendations on structural changes that would improve membership involvement or service levels, seeking out as much input as possible. The committee was chaired by the president and consisted of 7 members appointed by the president. As a result, over the next two years, the issue of structural reform was at the forefront of the union's consciousness, and since many of the issues the feminist activists were concerned about were also within the purview of the Structural Review Committee, in many cases dual submissions were made to the women's committee and to the Structural Review Committee. Feminist activists felt there was a need for structural reform both with respect to women's committee structures and overall union structures because they prevented the women's committee from being 100% effective in promoting female involvement in the union itself, and restricted its ability to support efforts to promote female participation in the union arising elsewhere in the membership.

In terms of the women's committee's structures, the activists felt that the existing

restrictions on the committee's ability to put forward its own resolutions to convention needed to be lifted so that the delegates rather than the provincial executive would decide whether or not they had merit. They believed the committee chair should be elected by the members of the committee, who in turn should be elected by their components rather than appointed. Also, an effective means of getting active regional women's committees set up was needed, which meant the provincial executive had to allocate a larger budget to the women's committee and give it autonomy to determine how it was spent. Furthermore, there was consensus that committee members needed to be liaisons to these regional women's committees in a true sense and to be given work-leave to carry out their regional responsibilities. Finally, it was considered essential that a full-time coordinator for women's issues be designated to support the committee's efforts.

Changes in the larger union's structures were also needed, for many of them suppressed female activism. As was mentioned, a particularly large problem was the grid of interlocking responsibilities taken on by a component chairperson. Not only did component chairpersons sit on the provincial executive and on provincial executive committees to which they were assigned, they also chaired their own component or bargaining unit bargaining teams. Those in the public sector sat on the master bargaining committee as well. Bargaining at either level could go on for many months. They were also responsible for the operation of their components including chairing meetings, handling grievances, looking after component finances, handling occupational safety and health issues, and for vetting resolutions from the locals intended for presentation to a BCGEU or affiliated labour body convention.

Since the leadership believed that there should be a female presence on all committees, the relatively few female provincial executive members were overloaded with multiple committee appointments. In addition, component chairs did not automatically get time off work to handle union business, which therefore had to be done outside regular working hours and was particularly burdensome for the female provincial executive members who had family responsibilities. The major problem to rectify, however, was the disenfranchisement of the female membership which arose from two major structural features: 1) the fact that each component, regardless of size, had equal say on the provincial executive and 2) the component structure itself, which ensured that large numbers of female members were found in a minority of the components and dominated only a few of them.

As was alluded to previously, the rationale for the "one component, one vote" rule was first that it protected the interests of the smaller components. Under this arrangement, their concerns could not be subsumed by those of the larger components, nor could disagreements among representatives from the same component occur. This rule was also intended to encourage each component to place the interests of the union ahead of its own, so that overall a balance could be achieved between size and voting power on the one hand and protection of minority interests on the other. The fact that due to occupational groupings the number of male-dominated components outnumbered the female-dominated components, which made it possible for the former to block initiatives introduced by the latter, was seemingly overlooked or not considered important.

Another subtle factor that disenfranchised women was that the status and benefits associated with belonging to the provincial executive necessitated being a team player, and

since the team was largely male, there was no assurance that female issues would be considered important. The key problem with being a team player however was that special interests, such as the interests of women, could not be pursued to any great extent unless the men could be persuaded to support them. Evidence of lack of team playing resulted in sanctions, whereas team playing was rewarded. The sanctioning, positive or negative, took many forms as described by informants. But for example being appointed to certain committees or being chosen as a delegate to a CLC, NUPGE or BCFL convention, were seen as rewards for team playing, whereas the sanctions included ostracism, subjection to snide comments, and exclusion from desired committee appointments. These were the issues that figured prominently in the submissions made to the women's committee and to the Structural Review Committee between the 1987 and the 1989 conventions. They also were the substance of the 1991 discussion paper on female participation in the union that became known as the "White Paper".

Discussion of the Theoretical Model For Period Two:

1. Environment:

The general rise in female militancy was a significant environmental factor facing the union in period two. That so much attention was diverted to structural issues during this period was attributable to the fact that after 1988 the Social Credit government moderated its stance toward government employees and even initiated pay equity discussions. The concern generated by the imposition of another set of wage controls in 1991 was short-lived because the NDP, re-elected later that year, made haste to introduce fairer labour

legislation, with substantial input from the BCGEU. Organized labour had also made pay equity a priority, and this raised the profile of women's issues as well. Hence, without any major, enduring negative forces confronting the union in period two, the union was prepared to devote more time to its internal affairs.

High on its list of concerns was the level of female participation in the union because submissions to the Structural Review Committee had indicated that there was a problem. The decision of the 1989 convention to charge the executive with making recommendations to the 1991 convention on achieving gender equity within the union had indicated that token solutions such as designating one vice-president position for a female would no longer satisfy some members. This was most particularly the case with Component 12 which, as mentioned, produced a high proportion of the union's revenues.

The increased militancy of the female membership created awareness of the issues Component 12 was fighting for. This was especially true once consensus developed within the component on what its priorities were during period two and the members of the component started to demonstrate political sophistication, a shared vision, and commitment to its goals. The women's committee's subsequent adoption of these goals boded well for the likelihood of achieving them in period two. In terms of the theoretical model, then, environmental factors were favourable for achieving greater gains for women and increasing the committee's power in period two.

2. Support for Feminist Activism:

Leadership Support - The leadership gave every indication this period that they were trying to deal responsibly with women's issues. The leadership's goals in 1987 had included

greater rank and file ownership and direction of the union, and one of its priorities for 1989 was achieving pay equity at the bargaining table. Gender equity and creating greater opportunities for female participation in the union were on its priority list from 1990 on. The archives indicated that the provincial executive did allocate additional resources to the committee and to supporting women's issues this period. For example, it did authorize a budget to allow the committee to hold four meetings each year in 1987, and late in the period it began to fund component representatives' attendance at women's committee meetings. In 1993 it assumed responsibility for the costs of sending women to the area conferences to equalize access to these conferences for members from smaller or poorer components.

The provincial executive as a whole seemed whole-heartedly behind the White Paper. The entire provincial executive and the women's committee stood at the pro-speaker microphones when the White Paper was being debated, and when it did not go through the provincial executive authorized the education program involving follow-up discussions in the components as well as a publicity campaign, partly stage-managed by the women's committee, to promote gender equity within the union. According to one of my informants the president expressed his conviction that the White Paper recommendations had to be passed at the 1993 convention or the union would be set back decades in terms of promoting female involvement in the union.

Some of the male provincial executive members were pro-actively supportive of the White Paper's aims. One of the male-dominated components started bringing women into component meetings which would otherwise have had no female presence, to try to

encourage them to run for local and component leadership positions. This initiative was successful. The higher overall proportion of females on the executive in period two compared with period one may also have increased the level of support for the women's committee itself and for the recommendations in the White Paper.

However, it is safe to say that not all members of the provincial executive truly supported the White Paper or women's issues in general. I received a range of comments on that issue. Several of my respondents said they had the sense that the leadership was less than fully supportive of women's issues. A representative comment was, "The leadership is willing to be progressive, but only as long as they're in control of how things go". Additional respondents felt that leadership support was an illusion. One said, "The men on the provincial executive are not interested...in actually supporting issues of importance to women". Another opined, "Their activity is externally driven. There continues to be a big gap between what they say they believe in and what they are willing to model". A former regional vice-president admitted she was "ambivalent" about the union's concern for women.

There were complaints from some of my informants that the provincial executive stonewalled the committee during this period, and then blamed committee members for not doing anything. The regional vice-presidents were also seen as a major obstacle before these positions were eliminated because as previously noted, "...when it came to women's issues, they just banded together as men and just made it very difficult to get anything...they had a vote on the provincial executive and they were opposed to anything that women ever did." The elimination of these positions was a joint endeavour of the women's committee and Component 12, so there was some agreement that they were a problem. It was also reported

that a certain amount of pressure was exerted on the provincial executive members most supportive of women's issues to be less so. "...we have a man in one of the male-dominated components who is a very strong supporter, and he suffers...he does not get the kind of support that others do at the top level..[he] will stand up...and rock the status quo, and he isn't favoured..."

Even some of the female provincial executive members appeared not to be fully supportive of women's issues. Comments made about some of them by other feminist activists were, "...she used to think women whimpered too much, women should just go out there and get things done, and if others get in your way, step on their faces." "She wasn't a feminist. She didn't believe in that, she would hardly even come to the women's committee. She was a union activist, a mover and shaker, but women's issues and equality things weren't a concern." There was a general awareness of the distinction between feminist activists and other female activists among those I interviewed.

But on the other end of the scale, many respondents were convinced that the leadership's commitment to women's issues was genuine. Representative comments to this end were, "I think the leadership thought the women's committee and women's issues were important". "The leadership supports most things [that go forward from the women's committee]. They certainly don't laugh. They may reword some resolution, providing a very complete explanation of why, but that was never a problem. I can't remember any resolution that the women's committee was committed to that was turned down by the executive" except, she noted, some of the recommendations in the White Paper.

Finally, there were problems with staff support for women's issues in period two, because some of the male staff were opposed to affirmative action in regard to filling staff positions. The female staff who were promoting it were "always having to fight" the male staff who "didn't want women hired", and in fact were jeopardizing their jobs by being too outspoken about women's issues.

The only conclusion that can be reached here is that the level of true leadership support was indeterminable in period two, but was probably better at the end of the period than at the beginning. This conclusion is based on the fact that the number of female members on the provincial executive increased from 5 in 1987 to 9 in 1994, so females were holding 50% of the provincial executive positions by the end of the period. Some of them were known to be feminist activists, and two of them were from Component 12, where militancy was strong.

Membership Support - Few objective measures of membership support for the committee or of support for the White Paper or women's issues are available for period two. Attendance at the area conferences was generally the same in both periods, except it was noted in the committee minutes that the 1992 conferences arranged around the theme "A Woman's Place Is In Her Union" were noticeably more poorly attended than those in previous years, possibly indicative of the high levels of rancour this issue generated. Component representation at committee meetings remained spotty throughout the period, although it was better overall than it had been in the previous period. It is evident from the Structural Reform Committee's decision not to pursue representation by population and from the forced tabling of the White Paper in 1991 that there was a high degree of resistance to

the proposed changes. Also, both women and men spoke out against affirmative action at the vice-presidential level.

There was disagreement among my informants about whether or not membership support was a problem in period two. At one extreme, in answer to a query about whether the union's overall attitude towards women's issues had improved since period one, the emphatic response was, "No, I think we pretend there's a different attitude. There may be a little less resistance, a little more tolerance, but it's really just tolerance, it's not an interest or support of women's issues". A further comment was, "I think to a large extent the elected women still largely feel they are being thrown to the wolves and don't have a support base". At the other extreme, the progressiveness of the membership was stressed. "They are much more progressive as a group than is the norm in other unions because of their social, educational and cultural backgrounds...Because of membership support within the BCGEU, the women's committee is much stronger - it doesn't have to do everything itself."

Unfortunately, the latter comment provides no objective evidence for the level of support, and the general consensus was that membership support was a problem. There was definitely a perception that election outcomes could be affected by whether or not your platform focused too much on women's issues. Said one woman who had run for a table officer position, "when I was writing up the campaign literature...I got guys to help me write my speech, and they were saying, 'No,no it sounds like you're too much on women's issues, you know that will turn men off'..."

Regarding the failure of the White Paper, one respondent said she was not at all

surprised it did not go through. Another explained that it was left to the local leadership in every component and area of the province to communicate the rationale behind the positions presented, but "it just didn't happen. It was mostly men in those positions, they felt very threatened and upset about the paper because one of the resolutions was that one of the two existing vice-president positions should be held by a woman. This would have displaced one of the two male incumbents, so that was a problem..." The attitude of the men toward female contenders for vice president positions was, "We'll vote for you if you're good enough, but until that point, forget it". They were deaf to the problem the women expressed which was if they did not get elected they would never get the necessary experience to do the job well.

Nevertheless, resolutions pertaining to women's issues were forwarded by 7 different components during period two (See Table 4.2), one of them male-dominated, which suggests that pockets of support were widespread within the union. Now we will examine women's committee structures and how the committee's alliance with Component 12 facilitated feminist activism in period two.

3. Structures:

While there was a great deal of activity directed toward structural reform in period two, little was actually accomplished prior to the 1993 convention. The 1987 Structural Review Committee ended up recommending no changes to the local/component make-up, and that the "one component-one person-one vote remain as a key element in the structure of the provincial executive" for the sake of "the union's strength and purpose" and to "not risk having the union divided along individual occupational lines."

The extensive recommendations put forward to the executive committee by the women's committee, designed to achieve affirmative action in union structures, had little impact. The executive committee recommended, and the provincial executive approved, a decision to refer the women's committee's recommendations to the finance, education, constitution and structure, communication, and child care committees, and to appropriate bargaining committees, and also to the president to address affirmative action on staff. The committees were given total autonomy to "revise, combine or otherwise amend [the women's committees recommendations] in developing policy recommendations for the provincial executive...[and] not to approve specific recommendations" if they wished. They were to report back to the provincial executive at its April meeting. The executive committee approved only one of the recommendations in the women's committee's report, that a constitutional amendment that "at least one Provincial Vice-President shall be a woman" should be introduced.

The outcome of the referral process was a discussion paper produced by the women's committee, the executive committee, and staff entitled "Women in the BCGEU", known informally as the White Paper. It was to be presented to the 1991 convention and a Special Convention was planned for 1992 to follow up on progress made and consider additional initiatives. But the 1991 convention was not supportive of the ideas contained in the discussion paper, even though what was proposed was "a watered down version of the work that the women's committee and the locals had put forward", according to a few of my informants.

Ultimately the report was tabled but the convention nevertheless handled a number

of resolutions addressing women's issues. These included the elimination of regional vice-presidents, the election rather than the appointment of committee members, locals' right to introduce resolutions to convention without having them approved by their components, increasing representation on the provincial executive for larger components, and the creation of a full-time women's advocate position to coordinate activities pertaining to women. The first was passed, the second and third turned down, and the others were referred to the provincial executive. However, in implementing the resolution about the women's advocate, the provincial executive merely added those responsibilities to those already borne by the secretary of the women's committee who also had a department to supervise and so could not give 100% of her time to the designated task.

Few structural changes occurred within the women's committee itself during period two. A budget was allocated but the committee still had to have the executive approve how it was spent. It permitted four meetings per year but not all of them materialized because other union priorities like elections took precedence. The area women's conferences were held each year, but "they were always pulled together at the last minute because you couldn't...book members off to do it because there was no money in our budget... with each of the components having to pay to have their members come down, the thing was just set up to fail" although they generally did turn out quite well. There was no organization, support or resources to get the regional or area women's committees off the ground, and therefore no way to really determine what the grassroots membership wanted from the women's committee "...the idea of trying to get something up at the cross-component level needed someone...going into that area and getting people enthused, getting them involved

in some issues, and guiding them through..."

The committee's resolutions and bargaining proposals still had to be approved, and resolutions regarding women's issues that were introduced at local meetings which continued to draw a largely male crowd were often voted down if they were even "lucky" enough to be discussed. The committee's terms of reference were changed in 1991 at the committee's instigation, but overall structural improvements which would have increased the committee's potential to secure gains for women were absent.

There were a few exceptions. According to my informants, one was that the committee for most of period two was not chaired by a table officer, which may have liberated discussion within the committee and allowed unsanctioned strategies to be employed. Instead, for most of the period women from Component 12 were in the chair. Another was that once again, female staff were allowed to attend committee meetings. Since one of the BCGEU's internal issues was affirmative action with respect to filling staff positions, the staff's input may have given the committee additional momentum to pursue the White Paper recommendations.

However, there is little doubt that the major structural advantage gained in period two arose from the alliance that developed between the women's committee and Component 12. The component structure had certain advantages over women's committee structures that enhanced the likelihood that gains for women could be attained. A major one was that, unlike the committee, components were entitled to submit resolutions to convention without having them approved first by the provincial executive. Also, since the women's committee was not even mentioned in the constitution until the 1993 convention, the committee had a

very low profile within the membership and was "seen as a side bar committee [without] the strength and recognition it deserves". In contrast, the Administrative Services component had a high profile by virtue of its size, and also because of the pay equity initiatives introduced by the government in the early 1990's. The fact that some of the members felt threatened by Component 12's aspirations regarding representation on the provincial executive gave them additional notoriety. "...our component is seen as having all the power and people are afraid that we're going to take over". Also, unlike the provincial executive women's committee, the component had a lot of money to allocate to the promotion of its interests due to the size of the component's budget.

Another important advantage for the component was that it had a vote on the provincial executive where, as a representative of a large component, it could plead its own case with conviction. In contrast with many of the other components, in speaking up for women Component 12 was not treading on the rights of the majority of its members. Similarly, the exhortation to uphold union solidarity was less compelling to Component 12, given its sense that it had received less than its due up to that point. Consequently it gained support from other components, including some of the male-dominated ones, in its bid for representation by population on the provincial executive. The women's committee, in contrast, did not have a comparable direct, partisan voice on the provincial executive, although effort was directed to changing that situation.

A further advantage Component 12 had compared with the women's committee was that if the component chair was not seen to be fairly representing the component's interests, the chair could be replaced via election. In contrast, while the members of the women's

committee that I spoke with felt the appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer to the chair of the committee was not ideal, their efforts to have the chair elected by the committee members rather than appointed by the president were unsuccessful.

Similarly, the appointment rather than election of the representatives to the women's committee was felt to be problematic because it reduced their sense of accountability and responsibility for strongly representing their components' female members, which was not a problem for Component 12. So in that sense, Component 12 executives elected on a platform calling for increased component power were better-positioned to achieve their goals than was the women's committee.

The final advantage that will be mentioned here is that components service locals, so the executive of Component 12 had already-established communication networks and formal structures in place to give them ready access to the membership and to grassroots concerns, which was lacking in the women's committee. The women's committee had to rely on committee representatives to keep up-to-date on what were current membership concerns, but since they were not necessarily committed to identifying these issues and there was no structure in place to automatically create an interface between them and the grassroots, they may have had little ability to represent these to the committee, which would have made the committee somewhat irrelevant to the membership.

Hence, with Component 12 mobilized, opportunities to secure gains for women were multiplied. In addition, the changes to the union's internal policies that had occurred during period one, for example, providing child care for convention and educational seminars, had somewhat eased female activism in period two. Further progress was made during the

period which will be discussed after the activities of the women's committee are described. But to conclude this section, the structural advantages arising from the component structure which supplemented women's committee structures boded well for gains this period. We will now turn to an examination of the women's committee's activities in period two.

4. Women's Committee's Activities and Characteristics:

The committee's report to the 1987 convention indicated that its major goal for the upcoming year was increasing female participation in the union. However, only one meeting was held each year in 1987 and 1988, both goal-setting meetings for the upcoming year. The committee's increasing frustration was evident in its goals, which for the first time included political action. The committee also affirmed previously-stated goals of four meetings per year, having its own budget, establishing component and local women's committees, and educating the female membership on how to lobby. Similar to the first period, attendance at the April, 1988 meeting was poor with only 5 components represented at the meeting. In contrast to the first period, a female regional vice-president rather than a table officer was in the chair. The committee passed a motion at that meeting to have the provincial executive approve an annual budget that was to be administered by the chair and secretary of the committee.

This was approved by the executive and at the next meeting in March, 1989, 10 component representatives were in attendance. Four meetings were held in 1989, for the first time since 1985. Also for the first time, the committee developed an action plan to achieve its goals for the upcoming year. The committee secured additional space in union publications devoted to women's presence in the union, developed an education program

supporting pay equity, requested that the components establish an agenda item at their meeting for the report from the women's committee representative and also establish internal women's committees, developed a lengthy internal sexual harassment policy for inclusion in the policy manual which made violators subject to disciplinary action by the union, and also developed strategies to support upcoming convention resolutions on issues of concern to women which included holding a women's caucus during the 1989 convention.

Nevertheless, the committee's report to the 1989 convention acknowledged the committee's lack of success in increasing female participation in the union since the last convention. It announced its priorities remained increasing women's participation in the union, achieving pay equity and other bargaining gains for women, and seeking out women willing to serve in leadership positions.

After the election, the new female vice-president from Component 12 was appointed chair of the women's committee. During the remainder of 1989, the committee voted to invite female staff to future meetings and to start sending out information bulletins to the membership on women's concerns and the need for women to run for leadership positions. A questionnaire to seek out membership views on the committee's purpose and usefulness was discussed, and the committee decided to establish a mentorship program for activists and would-be activists. Component representation fell again, with only 7 or 8 representatives in attendance.

The committee continued its regular activities in 1990, planning area conferences, celebrating International Women's Day, developing resolutions and 38 bargaining proposals. In addition, the committee was heavily involved in soliciting input from components

regarding how to increase female participation in the union and preparing a report for the executive committee. New initiatives included planning a newsletter for distribution to the members that would include articles on political action and getting women elected. It proposed new terms of reference, which were approved, which included the elimination of systemic barriers to participation and promoting gender equity in the union. It decided to keep in touch with women who attended the area conference to keep them active and interested in the union. At the September and October meetings, representatives from 10 components, two or three staff representatives and the committee secretary were in attendance. The chair of Component 12 was appointed chair of the women's committee after July, 1990 because the former chair found she had too many obligations to fulfil. The four committee meetings that year were supplemented by two conference calls.

In 1991, the committee continued to attend to routine business. Component representation at committee meetings was higher overall than it had ever been. The committee's 1991 goals included assisting the union to establish working relationships with government women's programs and ministry women's committees and developing a provincial election pamphlet supporting the NDP. Some of the area conferences were held, with the rest postponed until the following spring due to a number of conflicting events sponsored by the BCGEU's affiliates and also the provincial election. For the balance of 1991, the committee developed training modules from the area conference for delivery by cross-component committees and trained facilitators to deliver the workshops. A women's forum, open to men, was held instead of a women' caucus, because of the negative reaction to the caucus held at the previous convention.

At the committee meeting following the convention, the committee decided that "the convention's disposition of the white paper and designating one vice-president position for a female doesn't go far enough...further action is necessary". Necessary action was identified as education, publicity, lobbying, women's conferences, running female candidates at local elections, and establishing a support network for female activists and potential activists. The committee decided to embark on an educational program on diversity to "prepare our members to understand and address current equality issues: a) positive action within the union; b) employment equity at the workplace; c) barriers to equality such as sexual harassment, racial harassment, and homophobia."

At the December, 1991 meeting, the committee established its 1992 action plan which included area conferences, diversity training, training on "balancing it all" to be offered through the cross-component committees, and commemorative projects for International Women's Day and December 6, the anniversary of the massacre of the female engineering students in Montreal. The committee members began making regular reports on follow-up action on the White Paper that was occurring in their components. The theme of the 1992 area women's conference was "The Participation of Women in the BCGEU".

The Component 12 chair was replaced in 1992 by an appointee from Component 4, the second largest female-dominated component, representing the private sector. The first two-day committee meeting was held in October, but only three meetings occurred in 1992. The committee invited a representative from the Ministry of Women's Equality to their meeting to emphasize the need for the ministries to send a clear message to managers and staff that no harassment would be tolerated. It also decided to invite male provincial

executive members to attend the women's conferences as a consciousness-raising effort. A women's caucus was held at the fall leadership conference.

For 1992/93, in addition to its regular duties the committee worked on a new educational initiative to combat violence against women and children, prepared a pamphlet on sexual harassment, recommended that additional trained staff be available to handle sexual harassment complaints, and planned a 1994 women's calendar and a women's history project.

In 1993, the Secretary-Treasurer of the union resumed the chair of the women's committee. The committee prepared a workshop on handling sexual harassment complaints, forwarded three convention resolutions to the provincial executive, held a women's caucus at the convention, and reported to the convention that "to achieve gender equity requires a fundamental change in the structure and culture of our union." Committee activities were temporarily suspended in the fall due to the upcoming federal elections, and area conferences for 1994 were postponed from the spring to the fall because the conference plans could not be approved in the absence of the committee chair.

Comparing the women's committee's activities in periods one and two it is clear that meetings were held on a more regular basis in the second period, although there were exceptions. In both periods, the committee's emphasis was largely educational rather than political, but in the second period it started to use creative strategies to achieve its goals. For example, believing it was necessary for the female membership to become more exposed to women's issues, the committee members started to pass off their credentials to attend various conventions and conferences to other women in their components, to facilitate

their education. A chair of the committee sought a vice-presidential position in 1989 so that she could devote her efforts full-time to the women's committee, and she had men help her write up her campaign literature to ensure she appealed to the broadest membership base possible, and not solely to those members interested in women's issues.

The committee chairs also became more strategic when they had to ask the provincial executive for anything. Since they were going to be "jumped on" by the same component chairs who were jumping on their committee representatives, they "always [had] to plan very carefully how we presented everything. You couldn't just go to a meeting and make a report. You would have to couch it so that it would get passed without straining too much."

The committee directed some of its efforts to raising the consciousness of the male provincial executive members by inviting them to the women's conferences. The committee made some effort to influence component executives directly by proposing the establishment of internal committees and including women's committee reports as an agenda item at component meetings. It also formed alliances with other committees to make a greater impression on the provincial executive, and got influential men to raise their issues at convention, to ensure they would be attended to.

> We'd have to get the likes of [Cliff Andstein] and John Shields to stand up at convention to speak on women's issues…Some of the women didn't like to have men speak for them. But those of us who didn't give a shit how it got in front of everyone as long as it did, were happy. We would use any vehicle to get a hearing.

Therefore, there was a stronger political flavour to the committee's activities in period two.

The committee also made some additional efforts to reach the membership in period two through union publications, maintaining contact with and lending support to activists,

making reports to convention, and holding women's caucuses and forums at conventions and leadership conferences. It also started to pursue some issues increasingly relevant to the membership, such as valuing diversity and combatting violence against women and children which were seen by the male membership as not exclusively women's issues, and therefore enhanced receptivity to these issues within the membership.

However, there were differences of opinion within the committee as to whether or not men should be allowed to attend the area women's conferences, and whether or not men should be allowed to sit on the committee. There were obvious differences among the members regarding their feminist philosophies (or the lack thereof), because "a lot of the women around the table don't believe in a lot of things that the women's committee does, they're not there as feminists for the most part. Some of them don't believe in true equality for all women...[and]they are afraid of challenging [the power hierarchy in the union]". Also, the committee members, at least at the start of the period, had no sense of belonging to a group, "nobody had any sense of belonging to it, probably because they came from all over the province. There really wasn't anything in between their meetings to make them feel there really was something." That and the committee's isolation from the membership were strong deterrents to committee effectiveness.

According to one of my informants, there was a genuine attempt within the women's committee "to address issues, to be more progressive, to get to the provincial executive in a more assertive way" in period two. Therefore, potential for additional gains for women might have existed even without the mobilization of Component 12 to fight for the empowerment of women in the union. The joint commitment of the committee and the

component to do whatever was necessary to get the White Paper recommendations passed made the prognosis for success this period even more pronounced. We will now discuss the potential for gains this period.

5. Potential For Gains In Period Two:

One of my informants, who had sat on the women's committee in 1986 and then again from 1992 on, recalled how different the feeling on the committee was in the later period.

> The big change was that [the table officer who had chaired the committee since 1977] wasn't there...it had opened up some and it was possible to have discussion and have other people pick up on the discussion. People were open to making motions and actually discussing motions, not just following the dictates of what was coming from wherever on the [union] agenda... People... were there, who [were] apt to discuss issues and actually pass motions that meant that actual things had to happen. I was feeling quite positive about it.

Her comment and the previous discussion of how the women's committee acted in period two compared with period one indicates that the women's committee actions in the second period were conducive to achieving gains for women. While women's committee structures had changed little, there were improvements in the later period. The elimination of the regional vice-presidents in 1991 was seen as a significant improvement in union structures as well. There were strong indications of leader support in period two, although the membership continued to display ambivalence with respect to women's issues. Overall, the acceptance of the legitimacy of women's issues appeared higher in period two. Finally, environmental factors internal and external to the union favoured progress for women. In particular, the mobilization of the Component 12 membership was very significant.

To summarize, the combined efforts of Component 12 and the women's committee increased the pressure exerted upon the membership and the leadership to get the structural change recommendations contained in the White Paper satisfactorily addressed. The additional resources allocated to educating the membership this period about women's concerns probably increased member support for the kinds of initiatives being pursued and indicated that leadership support existed for these recommendations.

A major structural advantage materialized when Component 12 and the women's committee started working together to achieve their joint objectives. Component 12 had the autonomy, the influence, and the means the women's committee lacked to enable it successfully to present the case for the White Paper recommendations to the membership at large as well as to its own members, and thereby reduce resistance to them. Therefore, the probability that structural improvements for women would materialize was high at the end of the second period.

There was additional pressure on the union in period two to gender balance all committees, including the provincial executive and the local and component executives, and to ensure women were fairly represented on staff as well. So again, by the end of the period the probability was high that improvements in female involvement in union governance would occur.

Finally, there was no reason to suppose that progress at the bargaining table would be stonewalled. Achieving gains for its members at the bargaining table was integral to the union's goals, and for all of period two females were an increasing majority of the membership. So overall, the theoretical model predicted that gains for women would be

higher in period two than in period one. Actual progress made in period two will now be described. Resolutions to convention pertaining to women's issues will be considered first.

Actual Gains Achieved in Period Two:

The first category of gain to be considered are gains regarding women's committee and union structures. In terms of statistics (See Table 5.2), in the second period 41 resolutions pertaining to women's issues were introduced, 23 of which were passed, 12 referred, and 6 turned down. The proportion of total resolutions proposed that was passed was 66% in period one and 56% in period two, while the proportion not passed in period two was almost three times what it had been in period one (15% instead of 5.5%). The volume of resolutions handled increased substantially, for in none of the years prior to the 1987 convention were more than 6 resolutions introduced while subsequently, 10-16 resolutions were introduced at each convention. Also, the social change orientation of the resolutions dealing with women's issues that were brought to convention in period two was much more apparent (See Tables 7 and 8). Compared with period one when only 3/22 of these resolutions were categorized as social change oriented prior to 1987, subsequently 16/55 could be so classified.

In 1989 the resolutions committed the union to achieving pay equity, establishing a training program for activists and making such training a priority, and orienting the new membership to the BCGEU's history. The provincial executive was charged with bringing recommendations to the 1991 convention on how to achieve affirmative action within the union structure, and how to encourage the involvement and participation of women in the

union. Among the referrals to the provincial executive were recommendations calling for the elimination of regional vice-president positions, replacement of regional councils with cross-component committees charged with coordinating community-based educational and social initiatives, the election of table officers by all the membership rather than just delegates to convention to promote "membership involvement and union democracy".

On issues of concern to women, there were recommendations regarding full funding for abortion clinics, non-discriminatory hiring by the employer, gender equity on the executive committee, and the establishment of awareness and educational programs on the values and skills of the low-paid workers in the union.

In 1991, a Constitutional Structural Revisions committee was established to recommend structural revisions to the next convention, and some progress was made. Cross-component committees were established to be used as a "forum for education on issues". The constitutional amendment requiring that at least one vice-president be female went through. Regional vice-presidents were eliminated, the union committed itself to changing its internal policy to provide daycare during and after union educational, conference or convention activities, to pressuring the government to enact pay equity legislation, and to actively supporting reduced violence against women and children. It also resolved to negotiate affirmative action programs with the employer and made ending wage discrimination against women a priority.

No referrals back to the provincial executive or the executive committee on non-structural issues occurred. The structural revisions that were referred were introduced by Component 12 and included increasing the number of representatives on the provincial

executive for larger components and creating a Women's Coordinator position to deal solely with women's issues. An additional referral involved extending the financial policy regarding child care to looking after physically or mentally disabled or elderly people. The resolutions that were turned down were also introduced by Component 12. They dealt with electing rather than appointing committee members and allowing locals the power to submit resolutions directly to convention, rather than having to go through their component executives.

At the 1993 convention, 4 resolutions were forwarded to another newly-appointed, gender-balanced task force. Several resolutions of a structural nature were passed. Resolutions came in from nine of the components supporting increasing the number of vice-president positions from two to four, and designating two of them for women, and this was passed. Component 12 was temporarily granted one extra representative on the provincial executive until after the 1995 convention. The administrative committee was eliminated and the executive committee was given the additional duty of overseeing the ongoing operation of the union. The BCGEU resolved to remove systemic barriers to women's full participation through scheduling of activities at times when women with family responsibilities could still attend.

It also committed to giving the public stronger protection against all persons accused of sexual offenses, rejecting discrimination within the union on any grounds, undertaking an extensive education program to combat harassment and violence against women and children, and making the union "a more accessible and inclusive organization to the full range of our membership", including the gay/lesbian faction of the union.

Overall, in period two more resolutions and particularly those of a structural nature that favoured the interests of women were introduced and acted upon, although many others were turned back for further consideration. The most important outstanding issue other than representation by population is giving the women's committee chair a voting position on the provincial executive.

The second category of gain of concern to women was level of participation in union governance (Refer to Table 6.2). There is evidence of improvement in period two in terms of proportion of female on staff, which increased from an average of 34% in period one to 40% in period two, however even in 1993 only one of the three directors and only one of the 8 coordinators were female. It was at the staff representative level that the gains were made. Substantial improvement in the average proportion of females on the provincial executive occurred as well, from 17% in period one to 36% in period two. In 1994, it reached 50%. An important improvement came in the increase in the proportion of female delegates at the convention. Prior to 1989, the average was 32%. The average for 1989-1993 was 47%, and in 1993 for the first time 53% of the voting delegates (compared to 62% of the membership) were female. Finally, the make-up of the master bargaining committee changed over the years as well. The average proportion of females on the master bargaining committee was 15% in period one whereas in period two approximately 31% of the master bargaining committee was female.

The third category of gain to be considered is improvement in contract language. There is little point in comparing the number of contract clauses negotiated for women in period one and two for a couple of reasons. First, the initial master agreement was not

negotiated until 1974 so the union was starting from scratch with respect to women's issues in period one. Second, six master agreements were negotiated in period one whereas only three have been negotiated since then. But I will try to capture the nature of the gains achieved by each master agreement in period two.

The first agreement negotiated in period two took effect in 1988. The adoption leave clause was expanded to include continuation of employer coverage of medical, extended health, dental, group life or long-term disability premiums during the leave period, and accumulation of vacation entitlements as well. The second agreement, effective 1991, introduced contract language promoting a harassment and discrimination-free work environment, the sexual harassment language and procedures to deal with complaints were tightened, and employees who terminated service to raise children were granted in-service status and accumulated seniority upon application for re-employment. A deferral of maternity leave commencement, parental leave for birth/adoption of 75% pay for 10 weeks and paid maternity leave of 85% pay for 17 weeks were negotiated. Maternity, parental and adoption leaves were made extendable for 6 months with medical certificate, during which time the employer premiums for all health and dental benefits were paid, and vacation entitlements accrued. Procedures for the operation of the employee assistance program were clarified and a joint education program to increase awareness of the program was arranged. The telephone allowance for employees in travel status was improved, and the employer's liability for child care expenses was extended to those incurred by employees attending employer-sponsored courses away from home or outside regular working hours.

The 1994 agreement replaced the sexual harassment protection clause with a discrimination and harassment protection clause. A personal harassment protection clause was negotiated. The bridging of service clause for employees temporarily terminating service to bring up children was extended to employees with responsibilities for dependent parents and spouses. The bereavement leave provision was changed to take into consideration established ethno-cultural or religious practices, the proviso of a 6-month return to service following maternity, paternal or adoption leave in order to qualify for accrued vacation credits while on leave was modified to consider employees unable to put in 6 months service due to re-qualifying for maternity, paternity or adoption leave. The telephone allowance for employees in travel status was further liberalized. The employer was made liable for child care expenses incurred by employees attending employer-endorsed educational, training and career development activities or employer-sponsored activities not normally within the employee's job duties, or away from their homes. Another substantial achievement in period two was the successful negotiation of pay equity arrangements, although this was not on the table in period one.

In retrospect, significant bargaining gains for women were achieved in both periods, as were improvements in the level of female involvement in the governance of the union. Improvements in union and women's committee structures did not materialize to any great extent until period two, but by 1994, they had had a major effect on the structure of the provincial executive, which went from 26% female at the start of the period to 50% female after the 1993 convention.

Summary and Conclusions

<u>Summary</u>

As with the previous case, to determine what we learned from this case study, we need to review the theoretical model in the context of the two periods to see to what extent the model was upheld, what variables were particularly significant to committee power under what circumstances, and what accounted for outcomes achieved.

The two periods were very different. In the first period (1975 - 1987), the committee's goals were to increase female participation in union governance and remove the inequalities facing women by working through union structures and adapting their priorities to those of the leadership. Union and committee structures allowed the committee to carry out routine activities such as attending to correspondence from other women's groups and producing recommendations regarding women's issues to the executive. They did <u>not</u> allow the committee to establish a base of support for women's issues within the membership, develop momentum towards goal achievement, or achieve cohesiveness within the committee. These problems arose from the lack of connections with the grassroots, the inconsistent scheduling of meetings, poor meeting attendance, and lack of follow-up between meetings.

The leadership appeared reluctant to modify structures to facilitate female activism such as paying for representatives from the various components to attend women's committee meetings. It was unwilling to allocate additional resources to committee operations so committee members could have time off to build local and regional women's committees. This suggests that leadership support may have been deficient for much of the

period, despite rhetoric to the contrary, and seemingly extended only to the negotiation of women's issues. This may have been because most of the leadership's energy was diverted into the union's battle with the government during this period. An alternative explanation is that the leadership may not have been that interested in fostering increased female participation in union governance by encouraging female activism.

Since membership support for women's issues within the union was weak throughout period one, overall the variables in the power model were negative. The committee was certainly not powerful. However it had never expressed a desire to be powerful, or demonstrated a commitment to developing power. Informal union structures which defined appropriate behaviour as doing what the leadership willed may have largely been responsible for this. Nevertheless, there was evidence this period that the committee was somewhat frustrated with the lack of progress made for women. The major gains achieved were at the bargaining table where the committee's role was limited to making recommendations on contract clauses. Therefore, outcomes were as predicted by the model, given the lack of committee power.

The major change that occurred in period two (1987 to the present) is that feminist activists within the membership articulated their desire for power in order to change the status of women within the union, and took action to secure it by mobilizing a large segment of the membership to fight for structural changes. This was done despite lack of precedent for such action within the union and without leadership authorization. Fortunately, the external environment was more settled this period which allowed the activists on the

women's committee to meet on a more regular basis and commit themselves to eliminating systemic barriers to female participation in the union and promoting gender equity.

The contrast in the committee's orientation in the two periods was startling, and seemed to reflect a transition from institutionalization back to activism. The social change orientation of the resolutions dealing with women's issues that were brought to convention in period two was much more apparent (See Tables 7 and 8). Although the committee continued to carry out its administrative functions, it appeared to operate more independently than previously. This was indicated by its use of political strategies to raise the provincial executive members' level of consciousness regarding women's issues, such as inviting them to women's conferences and getting powerful men on the executive to front their issues at conventions. There was also a willingness to upset the male membership that had not been present previously. The most telling illustrations of the latter were comments from Component 12 chairs (who sat on the women's committee), committing themselves to being "brats" and abandoning their "good girl" image if that's what it would take to gain power for themselves.

Component 12 joined forces with the committee to fight for structural change. The leadership eventually backed them as well, and the committee began to acquire power, as the theoretical model predicted it would. Outcomes in period two revealed strong gains with respect to female participation in the union, contract clauses favourable to women, and union structures. The committee shared credit with Component 12 for non-bargaining gains achieved.

Conclusions Regarding the Theoretical Model:

A number of observations can be made about this case. In period one when the committee was relatively powerless, the major gains for women were made with respect to contract clauses, which were negotiated by the leadership. Also, substantial gains were made with respect to increasing the female presence on the staff, another goal of the leadership. However, resources necessary to achieve grassroots support for women's issues, which the committee deemed a priority, were not made available.

A number of possible conclusions can be drawn from this:

1) where committee and leadership goals are aligned, facilitative structures will be created, and vice versa.

2) when a committee lacks power, structures and leadership goals will shape outcomes.

3) there are other sources of gains for women besides committee power - in this case, union structures.

In period two, the increase in committee power had little to do with leadership support. The first of two major contributors to committee power was the increased militancy of the membership arising from the campaign spear-headed by Component 12, aimed at eliminating systemic barriers to female participation in the union and promoting gender equity. Although the leadership endorsed these goals by approving new terms of reference for the committee, overall it remained non-committal with respect to the radical structural changes being sought until it spoke out in favour of the White Paper at the 1991 convention. Subsequently, it increased resource allocations to the committee.

The second contributor was changes in the way the committee functioned. It became

more political and more assertive, as well as more cohesive and committed. It also became more active. This suggests some additional tentative conclusions:

4) membership support can be a major factor in committee power, so structures that allow a committee to foster membership support are valuable.

5) membership wishes can affect leadership goals once the mobilized membership reaches a critical mass. Leadership perceptions play some role in determining what constitutes a critical mass, because it is obvious that in period one, while there were feminist activists agitating about lack of progress for women, their concerns were not taken seriously by the leadership.

6) committee characteristics, goals and actions are an important source of committee power because they affect levels of leadership and membership support. Desirable committee characteristics are cohesion, focus, use of unruly tactics, and persistence. High activity levels are also favoured.

In period two, structural reform became the focus of committee efforts. Existing component structures enhanced the ability of Component 12 and the committee to achieve these reforms. But without the persistent efforts of feminist activists and widespread membership support, these reforms would not have materialized. The conclusion to be drawn from this is:

7) militancy, membership support, and facilitative structures are needed to achieve structural reform in the absence of aligned leadership and committee goals.

These three factors would be associated with committee power, but this case suggests that the structural reforms achieved were more closely associated with membership militancy

than committee power, which again decouples committee power and gains achieved for women. Both union structures and membership militancy appear to figure prominently in outcomes.

Again these conclusions suggest that the model should be redrawn to highlight the importance of the alignment of committee and membership goals, union and committee structures, and membership support. The irrelevance of committee power to certain outcomes under certain circumstances should also be clarified.

Other Conclusions:

Other generalizations are suggested by this case. To the extent that the BCGEU's formal structures and regularized procedures are typical of those of organized labour, they do not lend themselves to addressing the needs of non-traditional members. The many obstacles to female activism already enumerated, such as the need to devote evenings and week-ends to union business at the expense of family obligations, are cases in point. The union's way of doing things tends to reinforce the existing power distributions and is extremely resistant to change. Also, the process of institutionalization is reversible, as was demonstrated here. However, it requires an investment of huge amounts of energy by a committed group of feminist activists and a great deal of perseverance.

A major insight I gained as I studied this committee's evolution was that perhaps it is inevitable that an institutionalized committee committed to fundamental change which does not materialize will eventually chafe at the structures governing its actions and discover that having its own power is essential to achieving those goals. A shared awareness certainly

developed within the BCGEU's women's committee at the start of period two and resulted in a heightened determination to correct the situation. Although the social movement literature suggests that social movement organizations tend toward institutionalization in the long-term unless they redefine their goals, this study provides evidence that the institutionalization process is reversible. De-institutionalization can occur not only as a result of newly defined goals but also because of a rebirth of commitment to previously-defined but as yet unattained goals. This constitutes an extension of the social movement literature, because there has been little elucidation of how social movement organizations evolve beyond the institutionalized phase.

Probably the major contribution of this study has been the elaboration of how power is retained by leadership groups. Many of the means of retaining power that were listed in the structural power literature in organizational theory and in the industrial relations literature, such as utilizing strategic communications, cutting off resource flows, and centralizing power in the hands of the leadership, were in evidence or were averred in this study. The use of tactics predicted in the social movement literature, such as cooptation and effective immobilization of challenger groups, was also evident.

However the case also showed that power holders can be pressured into spreading power more widely through the articulation of a commitment to change, the mobilization of support for that change, persistence, and the use of creative tactics to create awareness of the need for change. Hence the study shows that Michel's (1956) Iron Law of Oligarchy is not absolute, even in a union that is highly bureaucratized and centrally controlled, with a largely complacent membership.

This study upheld the resource dependency model found in the organizational literature. In this case, the most potentially powerful group was the membership, because it ultimately elects the leadership. Alienating Component 12 would have been ill-advised given its size, so although the component's demands went against tradition, they had to be addressed, particularly when they were supported by other components.

Support was found as well for the Foucauldian power model. Part of the reason Component 12 was able to influence so many people was because of the presence of Component 12 members in all regions of the province and the existence of structures to facilitate contact with them. Similarly, the constitutional make-up of the provincial executive provided access into all the components, as did the women's committee's structure. Component 12's executive members activated the provincial network and became very powerful change agents. But the structures themselves were the base of their power. This suggests that Component 12's focus on structural reform was appropriate for the propagation of its power. As it becomes increasingly influential in determining structures in future, its power should continue to grow.

From a more practical perspective, this study suggests that the BCGEU's centralized structures are an impediment to union responsiveness to emergent membership issues, regardless of their utility on other dimensions. Since it is not in the union's long-term interests to try to suppress these issues, and since in fact they cannot be suppressed indefinitely, it would seem advisable for the BCGEU to consider modifying its highly centralized structures to encourage greater membership input. Special efforts to create

appropriate vehicles for such input appear necessary, given the disparities within the membership in regard to education and willingness to speak out in front of large audiences.

In regard to the women's committee, provincial committee members should be given the mandate and resources to develop local and regional women's committees whose operations will have to be centrally-funded. The union should consider extending the committee's mandate beyond women's issues, or creating additional committees to address other emergent interests. While a silent membership in some ways facilitates leadership, it also constitutes a latent threat.

Encouraging members to come forward with their issues in a non-threatening environment is one way to ward off that threat and strengthen the union in the long run. In the next chapter, the findings of this and the previous study will be compared, and final conclusions regarding their theoretical significance will be discussed.

TABLE 4 ORIGIN OF WOMEN'S RESOLUTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD

4.1 Period One:

Year	Women's Conf.	Prov. Exec.	Substi-tute	#6	#11	#12	Marine Serv.	Environment	Total
1975	6								6
1977		1	1	1					3
1981		3	1	1	1				6
1983		1				1	1		3
1985		1		2	1				4
1987		1				11		2	14
Total	6	7	2	4	2	12	1	2	36

4.2 Period Two:

Year	Prov. Exec.	Subst.	#1	#4	#5	#7	#10	#12	#17	Total
1989	1		1					7	1	10
1991	3	1		2	2	1	1	5		15
1993	7				3	2		3	1	16
Total	11	1	1	2	5	3	1	15	2	41

TABLE 5 DISPOSITIONS OF WOMEN'S RESOLUTIONS

5.1 Period One:

Year	Passed	Not Passed	Referred	Total
1975	6			6
1977	2	1		3
1981	6			6
1983	3			3
1985	3		1	4
1987	4	1	9	14
Total	24	2	10	36

5.2 Period Two:

Year	Passed	Not Passed	Referred	Total
1989	6		4	10
1991	8	3	4	15
1993	9	3	4	16
Total	23	6	12	41

TABLE 6 FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN BCGEU

VS. TOTAL PARTICIPATION

6.1 Period One

Year	Table Officer	Director of Staff	Staff	Prov. Exec.	Conv. Delegate	Master Barg'g	Members
1975	2/4	0/1	5/26	2/22	18%	1/15	35%
1977	2/4	1/3	7/26	2/21	23%	2/18	41%
1979	1/4	1/3	15/39	3/19	31%	2/18	51%
1981	1/4	1/3	16/39	3/20	36%	2/14	51%
1983	1/4	1/3	15/41	5/19	37%	2/13	51%
1985	1/4	2/3	17/45	3/19	41%	3/13	50%
1987	1/4	2/4	21/56	5/19	38%	3/13	52%
Ave.	-	-	34%	17%	32%	15%	47%

6.2 Period Two

Year	Table Officer	Director of Staff	Staff	Prov. Exec.	Conv. Delegate	Master Barg'g	Members
1989	2/4	1/3	22/58	5/19	40%	4/12	N/A
1991	1/4	1/2	26/65	6/20	47%	4/13	57%
1993	3/6	1/3	27/65	6/16	53%	3/10	62%
1994	3/6	1/3	N/A	9/18	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ave.	-	-	40%	36%	47%	31%	N/A

TABLE 7 WOMEN'S RESOLUTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD

Year	Structural Change		Social Change	Other	Total
	Other	Formal Structure			
1975	4	0	1	1	6
1977	1	1	0	1	3
1979	0	0	0	0	0
1981	0	0	1	5	6
1983	0	0	1	2	3
1985	2	0	0	2	4
1987	6	0	8	0	14
1989	6	0	4	0	10
1991	6	6	2	1	15
1993	5	9	2	0	16

TABLE 8 GAINS REALIZED BY CATEGORY BY PERIOD

8.1 Governance Improvements:

Period	1		2		
	Start	Average	Start	End	Average
% F on Exec.	9	17	26	38*	31*
% F Delegates	18	32	38	53	46
% F Staff	19	34	38	42	40

* Increased to 50% in 1994 following component elections which made the average 38%.

8.2 Structural Change:

Period	1	2
# Structural Policies/ Procedures	12	18
# Social Change	11	18
# Other	10	1
TOTAL	**33**	**27**

Chapter 6. Summary and Conclusions

Summary of Research Project:

This study was motivated by a desire to better understand the role women's committees in unions could play in eradicating the persistent inequalities facing women in the labour market. Women's committees were instituted to advance women's interests in recognition of the increasing proportion of unionized workers who were female. Nevertheless, their successes over the past 20 years have been limited.

The objective of this research was to determine how and under what circumstances could women's committees secure gains for women, given a context where women have historically been and continue to be at a power disadvantage relative to men. The research question was explored within the two largest public sector unions in B.C., the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, and the B.C. Teachers' Federation.

Based on literatures from organization theory and industrial relations, and insights gained from the social movement and feminist literatures, a theoretical model to explain committee power was developed (See Figure 1). This model and a number of guiding principles that arose from the various literatures guided data collection. Data were collected over the entire 20-year histories of these committees via archival research and semi-structured interviews. Interviewees included past and present members of the committees, staff involved with the committees, and members of the leadership groups. The principal strategies for data analysis were pattern-matching, non-statistical time series analysis, and explanation building.

Framework of This Chapter:

The case studies revealed a number of anomalies that will be explored in this chapter. Some pertained to the theoretical model, others to the differences in the operation of the two unions and their women's committees over time. Case findings will be further analyzed in this chapter by comparing the two cases over time. Subsequently, all the findings pertaining to the theoretical model will be synthesized and analyzed and a revised theoretical model presented. Propositions that define the limits of that model will be developed. Following that, other conclusions arising from the analysis will be discussed. Finally, future directions for this research will be presented. We will begin with a summary of the two cases and their findings.

Conclusions Regarding the Theoretical Model

<u>Summary of Research Findings</u>:

From its inception, the BCTF's committee operated with a great deal more autonomy than did the BCGEU committee. The teachers' committee sought to reform societal structures that disempowered women as a class and to increase female participation in union governance. It was closely tied to the locals through its contact network and enjoyed active leadership support until 1987. Subsequently, external and internal environmental conditions destabilized as a result of legislative changes and a split that developed within the membership. As a result, lower priority was given to the committee's social reform goals and structural changes were introduced that produced a leadership-run committee with

reduced power and vitality. Nevertheless, substantial gains for women materialized at the bargaining table after 1987.

A number of questions emerged from this case analysis. Why was the committee granted so much autonomy in the early years, and then restrained in period four? If the committee really was powerful in period three, why did it not prevent the destruction of the contact network which was believed to be the base of its power? Why did deteriorating environmental conditions in period four trigger actions that dissipated the committee's power, when in previous periods deteriorating environmental conditions were accompanied by steady increases in committee power? Why were outcomes achieved seemingly independent of committee power in period three and four? Why had the need for membership support been so seriously underestimated in period three?

An underlying explanation for these anomalies was that leadership and activist support were strong enough in the first three periods to ensure that committee and union structures facilitated committee goal achievement. A further factor seems to have been the Viewpoint leadership's ideological commitment to social change which to some extent may have coloured its assessment of threat in the internal and external environment. Outcomes and committee power arose from existing structures and committee activity, and lack of membership support was not really an issue until the 1988 election. But then it quickly became evident that committee power depended on both leadership and membership support which affected structures. The committee's acceptance of leadership goals after its initial protest allowed it to retain some leadership favour and regain member support, but not to regain its power or its external focus.

From this analysis, a number of tentative conclusions were reached which clarify the importance of certain variables in the model and indicate how the variables might be connected (See Figure 2). These conclusions will be examined after the second case is reviewed.

The BCGEU's women's committee from its inception was committed to working through union structures to achieve its goals, which were to increase female participation in union governance and reduce the inequalities facing women. These structures were highly centralized and did not particularly facilitate committee goal achievement except in the bargaining area, which was one area in which the union's commitment to gains for women was apparent. In particular, 1) structures prevented the committee from developing a grassroots base of support and from meeting on a consistent basis until the late 1980's; 2) forced components to bear the cost of sending representatives to women's committee meeting; 3) created more male-dominated than female-dominated components; and 4) segregated the membership by education level and socio-economic status.

In the mid-1980's, feminist activists started agitating for the structural reforms essential to making progress on women's issues. Despite leadership resistance, through energetic and persistent effort the movement spread. Eventually enough support was generated at grassroots levels to achieve major structural reforms which significantly affected the level of female participation in the union. This movement arose largely outside the women's committee, but the committee supported it.

A number of key questions arose from this case. Why did the committee not try harder to make the leadership attend to women's issues in the first period and establish

structures that would facilitate committee goal achievement? Why did the leadership resist modifying structures that made female activism difficult, when it professed to want more female participation in the union? Why was the membership less supportive of women's issues than was the BCTF membership? Was committee power really irrelevant to outcomes achieved for women? What did account for outcomes?

Again, an underlying explanation for these anomalies lay in formal and informal structures in the BCGEU which were resistant to change until overwhelming pressure was brought to bear to change them. The formal structures have already been mentioned. Less formal structures were apparent in the way things were done at the BCGEU. For instance, members and activists to a great extent did what the leadership wanted, acted as team players and put the union's welfare ahead of all other considerations. On the women's committee, appropriate behaviours included letting leadership goals determine committee activities, going through proper channels, and not upsetting the men. None of these informal structures were conducive to militancy or to developing committee power.

Because power was centralized in the top leadership, the leadership could have brought pressure to bear that would have resulted in quicker structural reform. Since women's issues were divisive and gains for the female members may have meant fewer gains for the male members, the leadership did not want to risk alienating the male membership by taking decisive action. The structures then ensured that the status quo was maintained. Until the feminist activists displayed their determination to fight for change using available structures to mobilize widescale membership support, little was achieved except as provided for by existing structures. Hence in period one, structures determined

outcomes and bargaining gains occurred.

In period two, feminist efforts, member support, and eventually leader support combined to produce outcomes. The committee itself played a small role because committee structures had not changed and were still not conducive to committee power. Nevertheless, the committee was more active, more cohesive, and more inclined to pursue its own agenda this period, which positively affected committee power. It also enjoyed much higher membership support, access to component structures to pursue its goals, and greater support on the provincial executive because of the progress made in getting more women to chair components.

From this analysis a number of tentative conclusions were reached (See Figure 3) that particularly pertained to the impact of leader goals on structures and outcomes and the role the membership could play in affecting structures, outcomes and committee power in the face of leader resistance.

Both case analyses indicated that the theoretical model could be improved by giving greater consideration to the factors that appeared to be most significant to committee power. They also decoupled committee power and outcomes by showing that leadership structures and membership goals could affect outcomes independent of committee power. A cross-case analysis will now be undertaken to determine what further insights may be gained through this research.

Cross-Case Analysis:

Because of data limitations only a limited number of comparisons can be made. Also, the BCTF's data from the first three periods must be collapsed into one period to make

cross-case comparisons possible. Fortunately, those three periods were similar in that leadership and committee goals were aligned, committee structures were favourable, and the committee's commitment, drive, and strategies were comparable.

In both cases a natural break occurred in 1987. This is when the leadership changeover took place at the BCTF, and when the militancy of feminist activists at the BCGEU became apparent. The pre-1987 period for the BCTF was like the post-1987 period at the BCGEU in that committee power was most apparent. The fact that period one covered 12 years while period two covered only 7 years will be considered as committee outcomes are compared.

So that the types and numbers of resolutions each union brought forward in periods one and two could be compared, a table similar to Table 7 was developed for the BCTF. A new table was then developed that allowed comparisons to be made between the two committees over time (See Table 9). Table 9 addresses three issues: 1) types of resolutions brought to convention; 2) types of resolutions passed; 3) female participation achieved. The three categories of resolutions referred to in Tables 9.1 and 9.2 are: 1) changes in policies and procedures (i.e. structures) that are fully implementable internally; 2) social changes, which are externally-directed and are not fully implementable internally; and 3) other resolutions, which tended to be definitional.

Table 9.1 shows that the BCTF brought forward more resolutions in period one than period 2 (45 vs. 13), whereas the BCGEU did the opposite (36 vs. 41). Comparing the two unions for period one, the BCTF's committee brought forward more resolutions in period one than did the BCGEU (45 vs. 36), and a much higher proportion of them (62% vs. 31%)

was oriented to social change. In period two, feminist activists at the BCGEU brought forward more resolutions than did the BCTF (41 vs. 13) and most of them (78%) were oriented to changing BCGEU structures.

Looking at both periods together, the BCGEU brought forward more resolutions than did the BCTF (77 vs. 58). More of the BCGEU's than the BCTF's resolutions were oriented to changing policies and procedures (60% vs. 31%) than were oriented to social change (25% vs. 62%). Resolutions oriented to social change were dominant in the BCTF both periods, whereas structural change resolutions were dominant in the BCGEU in both periods.

Table 9.2 shows the types of resolutions passed each period and overall in the two unions. In absolute terms, far fewer resolutions were passed in period one than period two (77 vs. 38). Comparing internally, a lower proportion of total resolutions was passed at the BCTF in period two compared with period one (11/13 or 85% vs. 44/45 or 98%). The same trend was in evidence for the BCGEU, which passed 33/36 (92%) of the resolutions proposed in period one but only 27/41 (66%) in period two. In both unions, resolutions addressed to implementable structural change had the lowest success rates, but this was most evident in period two. At the BCGEU, 86% of the structural change resolutions were passed in period one while the comparable figure for period two was 56%. At the BCTF, all of them were passed in period one while only 75% were passed in period two.

Comparing the unions, the BCTF had a higher overall success rate each period than did the BCGEU (98% in period one and 95% in period two, vs. 92% in period one and 78% in period two). It was also more successful getting its structural change resolutions

passed each period than was the BCGEU (100% in period one and 75% in period two vs. 86% in period one and 56% in period two.) However it is noteworthy that far more structural change resolutions were passed at the BCGEU than were passed at the BCTF in period two (18 vs. 3). Also, the BCGEU was more successful with its social change resolutions in period two than was the BCTF (100% vs. 88%) although over both periods far fewer of them were introduced at the BCGEU than the BCTF (19 vs. 34).

Looking at both periods together, the table shows that the BCGEU got more resolutions passed (60 vs. 55) but was proportionately less successful overall and on all dimensions except social change resolutions than was the BCTF. The BCGEU was much less active in this area than was the BCTF.

Table 9.3 examines improvements in the proportion of females on staff and in provincial leadership. Within the BCTF, female representation on staff improved 78% (from 3/17 to 9/28) in period one while female representation on the provincial leadership increased 300% (from 1/11 to 4/11) by the end of the period. It should be noted that while only 36% of the provincial leadership was female at the end of period one, it had peaked at 54% in 1984 and 1985. During period two the improvement with respect to staff was 53%, while the improvement with respect to leadership was 25%. Considering both periods together, the female presence on staff and in leadership improved 172% (from 3/17 to 17/35) and 400% (from 1/11 to 5/11) respectively.

Within the BCGEU, in period one female representation on staff and in provincial leadership improved 100% (from 5/26 to 21/56) and 189% (from 2/22 to 5/19) respectively. In period two, the improvements were 11% (from 21/56 to 27/65) and 92% (from 5/19 to

9/18) respectively. Over both periods, female representation on staff increased 121% (from 5/26 to 27/65) and on the leadership 456% (from 2/22 to 9/18).

By the end of period two, 49% of the BCTF's staff and 45% of the BCTF's provincial leadership was female while females currently constitute 64% of the membership. At the BCGEU at the end of period two, 42% of staff and 50% of the provincial leadership is female, while females constitute 62% of the membership currently. In chalking up gains of 121% with respect to increasing female representation on staff and of 456% with respect to leadership, the BCGEU matched the performance of the BCTF, which racked up gains of 172% and 400% overall.

Some general observations can be made from this table:

1) There was more activity at the BCTF than the BCGEU in period one, with the reverse holding true in period two. Activity levels then appear to be related to strength of female activism which was highest at the BCTF in period one and at the BCGEU in period two. However, since the BCTF committee was strong for a longer period than was the BCGEU, it is interesting that overall activity levels were higher at the BCGEU.

2) The BCTF focused on social change both periods while the BCGEU focused on structural change. The explanation for these different strategies is not explained by the power model.

3) There was more resistance to resolutions proposed in period two than period one as evidenced by the lower proportion of resolutions proposed that was passed. This was particularly the case at the BCGEU.

Two observations arise from the last point. First, resistance levels are not necessarily related to the level of activity, although the BCGEU case suggested the opposite. At the

BCTF less resistance was encountered in period one when the committee was more active. Second, resistance levels are not necessarily associated with committee power. Again, the BCTF passed 44 of the 45 (98%) resolutions proposed in period one when it was strong, but only 11 of the 13 (85%) resolutions proposed in period two when it was less so. In contrast, the BCGEU passed 33 of 36 (92%) of resolutions proposed in period one when it was weak, and 30 of 41 (73%) resolutions proposed in period two when it was stronger. The BCTF example makes sense according to the theoretical model, but the BCGEU example contradicts the model.

4) The BCTF's committee was overall more successful at getting its resolutions passed than was the BCGEU, but improvements in female participation in union governance over both periods were about the same in both unions. This was despite the fact that the feminist activism apparent at the BCTF from the inception of the committee until the mid-1980's was not a factor in evidence at the BCGEU until the mid-1980's.

The link between activist power and improvements in union governance was contradictory in the two unions. If only the BCTF experience is considered, then gains in both areas fell as committee power fell, upholding the power model. If the BCGEU situation is considered by itself, the absence of committee strength and activism in period one still yielded quite substantial improvements in the proportion of females on staff and in the leadership. Conversely, the increase in the committee's strength and activism in period two yielded lower gains in both areas. Gains in period one of 100% and 189% regarding female representation on staff and in the union leadership were replaced by gains of 11% and 92% respectively in period two.

These observations imply that activist goals and their alignment with leadership goals affect resistance levels and need to receive greater consideration in the theoretical model. Also, responsibility for outcomes cannot be attributed solely to committee and feminist activists' efforts - union structures can have an independent effect. Furthermore, it seems irrelevant whether a committee focuses on structural reform or on social reform, although the former seems to lead to higher levels of resistance, if the BCGEU's experience is typical.

Synthesis of Research Findings:

The conclusions reached in each case and in the cross-case analysis are summarized in Figure 4. A number of commonalities are evident in these conclusions. With regard to sources of committee power, both cases agree that union and committee structures, committee characteristics, and membership support are all important. Membership support may affect power indirectly by affecting leadership goals, or directly by supporting committee goals. The BCTF case showed that the alignment of committee and leader goals was demonstrably important. This was never really an issue at the BCGEU because committee power was relatively insignificant until period two, and arose from the alignment of committee and membership goals rather than committee and leadership goals. Factors that affected structures and leadership goals were indirect sources of committee power.

For example, both cases revealed that the membership could force the leadership to change its goals as long as sufficient numbers of members were mobilized. In the absence of such pressure, formal and informal structures appeared to reflect leadership goals.

However, both cases also revealed that perceptions of threat in the internal or external environment could affect leadership goals, and a membership mobilized behind goals not shared by the leadership might be just one example of an internal environmental threat that would affect leadership goals.

The evidence is mixed with respect to factors affecting outcomes for women. Both cases make the point that whether the challenger group's goals (be it a women's committee or a feminist lobby) are aligned with those of the leadership is an important consideration. Where goal alignment exists, outcomes are affected by the nature of those goals and the structures put in place to achieve them, provided there is no major schism between leadership and membership goals. Otherwise, membership goals can affect leadership goals, change existing structures, and bring about different outcomes. The BCTF case portrayed this situation.

The BCGEU case presented the situation where challenger and leadership group goals were opposed, making desired goals more difficult to achieve. The case showed that aligning committee and membership goals could be an effective alternative, as long as it was accompanied by the mobilization of the membership. The underlying requirement may just be that committees need the support of an influential group within the union to affect outcomes and that whether this is the leadership or the membership, the committee must ensure its goals are shared.

Both cases associated committee power with positive outcomes, but the BCGEU case clearly revealed that committee power by itself did not have much impact on outcomes achieved. The factors identified to this point that affect outcomes also feature in committee

power, so the gains attributed to committee power in the case analysis may actually have been attributable to other factors such as leadership goals, membership goals and existing structures. Furthermore, internal and external environmental factors can affect goals and therefore outcomes. Where the committee operates under highly favourable conditions, as did the BCTF's committee until the mid-1980's, outcomes appear to be attributable to committee power. When conditions are less favourable, it is easier to discern the limited degree to which committee power determines outcomes. Therefore factors contributing to outcomes rather than committee power should be the focus of the theoretical model if the research question is to be addressed.

Despite these commonalities, some unresolved issues must still be addressed:

1) <u>Why were formal and informal structures in the two unions so different?</u> We saw that the BCTF membership was more receptive to the women's committee's efforts than was the BCGEU's, that both formal and informal structures were much more rigid at the BCGEU, and that the membership had a greater say in union affairs at the BCTF. The committee was granted much more autonomy at the BCTF as well.

2) <u>Why was the BCTF consistently more concerned with social change than was the BCGEU?</u> This was shown in the cross-case comparison.

3) <u>Why was the BCTF's 9-person committee able to generate more resolutions in period one than did the much larger BCGEU committee in either of the two periods?</u>

These inter-union differences were not anticipated since both the BCGEU and the BCTF were public sector unions, comparable in terms of size, geographic location, and the proportion of the membership that was female. Both were also subject to the same

legislative, social and economic environment. The women's committees were both established as advisory committees to the leadership, had been established at approximately the same time, and had similar mandates. However, there were obvious differences between the unions which in retrospect appear to have been important.

For example:

1) The BCTF was a loose federation of unions with strong locals operating autonomously throughout the province, each responsible for its own bargaining. The BCGEU on the other hand was a strong, centralized union with relatively weak locals. Bargaining was the responsibility of the top leadership and the component executives and was done _for_ the locals.

2) There was much greater variability within the BCGEU's membership with respect to education and socio-economic status than there was at the BCTF, which perhaps encouraged the membership to develop a hierarchical world view which legitimated and facilitated top leadership control and discouraged membership participation. At the BCTF on the other hand all of the members were teachers and hence enjoyed the same middle class status. While there was some occupational segregation in that the female teachers tended to be concentrated in the lower grades, male and female teachers were paid strictly in accordance with length of service and professional qualification. The pronounced occupational segregation by sex and the wide disparities in pay and education found at the BCGEU did not exist at the BCTF. In addition, there was little status gap between the members and the leadership because the leadership changed frequently and former leaders merely resumed their teaching duties. So the BCTF membership may have held a much

more egalitarian world view, which challenged the federation executive's right to make decisions unilaterally.

3) Union traditions were very different between the unions as well, in particular because at the BCTF voicing opposition to the leadership was completely legitimate. This was fortified by the constitutional conventions, held annually, which membership delegates attended, and the BCTF's two-party system that ensured that a well-organized official opposition party was always waiting in the wings to take over. This is in stark contrast to the solidarity rule, the oath of allegiance and the alleged efforts to control leadership succession at the BCGEU which basically ensured that the leadership presented a unified front at all times and changed infrequently. Also, the BCGEU had been a trade union since the early 1970's whereas the BCTF only acquired full union status in 1987. So while the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Union of Public and General Employees, and the B.C.Federation of Labour were important reference groups for the BCGEU, that was not the case for the BCTF members. Their reference group was the teaching profession so maintaining professional standards was more important than upholding union standards.

These contextual factors help to explain the first anomaly noted earlier. Formal and informal structures may have been different because of the socio-economic status of the membership and the unions' reference groups and traditions which combined to legitimate different approaches to power sharing between the leadership and the members. It also partially explains why the BCTF was consistently more concerned with social change and why there was less resistance to the promotion of women's issues there. The teachers were in a position of fiduciary responsibility vis-a-vis students according to their professional

code. They were duty-bound to promote equality for female students regardless of their personal views about promoting the status of women in general. Also, since many of the people who served on the committee until 1989 were members of Teachers' Viewpoint, Viewpoint's ideological commitment to social change was reflected in the type of resolutions brought to convention.

Finally, the reason why the BCTF's small committee was able to generate more resolutions in period one than did the BCGEU's much larger committee in either of the two periods may be linked to several variables in the theoretical model. Since the resolutions were generated by the committee itself, member support should not have been a factor. Leader support might have been a factor since resolutions not approved by the executive could not be forwarded to the AGM. But there was no evidence in either case that the leaders of the two unions were actively suppressing resolutions proposed by the committees in period one. This suggests that a more likely explanation may lie with committee structures, activities, and characteristics.

The teachers' committee structures were superior in that they provided a full-time coordinator to deal with status of women concerns, greater continuity on the committee because members could serve two consecutive 3-year terms, committee input into appointments of new committee members and contacts, links to the grassroots via the establishment of contacts in each of the locals, a budget that the committee controlled, and independent access to the membership via the newsletter/journal the committee published.

The BCGEU's committee enjoyed none of these benefits until it formed an alliance with Component 12 in period two. The lack of enabling structures constrained committee

actions and had a negative impact on committee characteristics throughout period one. There was evidence that the committee suffered from lack of group cohesiveness, the inability to generate sustained momentum toward goals, or even to target goals that the leadership did not support such as the establishment of regional women's committees, and was unable to generate membership support for women's issues. In period two, the situation changed somewhat as a few structural changes materialized and the committee gained access to Component 12 support, communication structures and discretionary funds. This indicates there may be a link between structures and committee characteristics and activities.

A further or alternative explanation might be the exclusive or inclusive nature of the committee (Zald and Ash, 1966) which affected unanimity about goals and the degree of support and commitment that could be elicited from members as long as they received adequate rewards for their contributions. The exclusive nature of the BCTF's committee in period one arose from the committee's strategy of hand-picking new members and contacts. Since during period one goals were shared and the committee made progress toward attaining them, the committee was able to provide its members and contacts with value fulfilment, the highest reward possible (p.329). Hence the committee's exclusiveness, combined with high reward levels and success, may have been major factors in the committee's high activity level in period one.

It is notable that one of the structural changes introduced by the new leadership in 1988 in its effort to redefine the committee's role was the appointment of committee members from outside the contact network. This effectively destroyed the committee's exclusivity and was accompanied by a great deal of conflict over goals and lower activity

levels. Table 9.1 indicates that only 13 resolutions were proposed by the BCTF's committee in period two compared with 45 in period one. Success rates fell as well in terms of the proportion of resolutions proposed that were passed (See Table 9.2), and improvements in female participation in governance and administration (See Table 9.3). This would have made it difficult to offer new members value fulfilment or even the satisfaction of ego or affiliation needs. The reward deficit for members might have explained why informants reported that it was increasingly difficult to fill vacancies on the committee in period two, and at least partially why activity levels fell so dramatically that period. The committee was unable to elicit the same level of support and commitment from members because rewards were too low.

The situation described above in period two had some parallels at the BCGEU. The BCGEU's committee was not an exclusive committee since all female staff and provincial executive members automatically belonged to it, and component representatives were appointed by the president. Committee members' obligations between meetings were negligible. Nor did the committee achieve much success in the first period in trying to rectify existing imbalances in female involvement in union governance. Bargaining gains materialized but the committee had a limited role in their achievement, so the members did not experience much value fulfilment.

For most of period one the committee could have been characterized as a "becalmed social movement organization" (Zald and Ash, 1966), one that had achieved some measure of growth and stability and whose goals were still relevant but unlikely to be attained. The social movement literature indicates that membership in such movements is less likely to be

motivated by a desire for value fulfilment. Instead, people join to gain material advantages or friends.

There was evidence that becoming known as an activist was part of the motivation for joining the BCGEU's committee, particularly in period two when the committee had a higher profile. Informants commented that few of the committee members were committed to social reform, and the alliance that was forged sought internal structural reform rather than social reform, which supports this argument. However value fulfilment was increasingly possible later in the period as the Component 12 membership became determined to gain fair wages and structural changes to empower women. While success did not really materialize until 1993, the expectations of future success were sufficient to increase activity levels (See Table 7). Had the committee been involved in the pursuit of routine administrative goals, or goals to which committee members were not committed, it is unlikely that comparable efforts would have been elicited.

I now present a revised theoretical model and propositions to summarize these findings.

The Revised Theoretical Model

The revised model is depicted in Figure 5. This model differs from the original model (See Figure 1) in that committee power and outcomes have been separated as committee power does not appear to be the only determinant of outcomes. "Support" has been replaced with "goals" because the latter term seems more precise and also because it allows ideological differences to be taken into account. Both membership and leadership

goals are identified in the new model. Also, "committee activities" have been incorporated into "committee characteristics", which also incorporates committee goals. The model remains fully recursive, as that seems to most accurately represent the relationships between the variables.

The model shows that the external environment can have an impact on committee power and outcomes by affecting all the variables in the model. The previous analysis showed that much of its impact is affected by leadership perceptions which determine leadership goals. However, membership and committee goals may also be somewhat affected by their perceptions of the external environment. It was reported that in the early 1980's when both unions were faced with punitive provincial legislation aimed at destroying collective bargaining within the public sector and reducing funding to education, membership attention in both unions was focused on union survival rather than on women's issues. In response, the BCGEU's committee's goals were completely subsumed into union goals and the committee ceased to meet. At the BCTF, the committee adopted goals aimed at supporting the leadership's desire for full bargaining rights.

According to the model, leadership goals can affect and be affected by all the internal variables in the model as well. Leadership goals can affect outcomes achieved for women via their direct impact on union and committee structures, and their indirect impact on membership goals and committee characteristics. One example of the latter effect was that at the BCTF the leadership successfully generated consensus within the membership on the need to fight for bargaining rights despite initial resistance to the idea. However, the committee's decision to support the bargaining initiative changed the committee's activities

and strained its cohesiveness.

Furthermore, leadership goals can be affected by membership goals as was indicated by the BCGEU executive's reluctant support for creating two vice-president positions for women. Leadership goals can also be affected by union and committee structures because they create the framework within which the leadership can be subjected to influence attempts. Committee characteristics such as amount of effort exerted to influence leadership goals can have an impact on leadership goals. Also, the more powerful the committee, the greater its impact on leadership goals. Finally, outcomes themselves can affect leadership goals. For example, the divisiveness created within the BCTF over the abortion issue probably contributed to the new leadership's stance on retaining non-certified locals within the federation.

Besides being affected by leadership goals, outcomes can also be affected by membership goals, committee characteristics, committee power, and union and committee structures. In turn outcomes can affect committee power and characteristics (for example by increasing morale and activity levels), membership goals (for example by increasing resistance to committee goals), and union and committee structures (which for example were changed at the BCGEU as a greater female presence on the executive was achieved). It should be noted that membership and committee goals will not necessarily coincide, nor will membership or committee and leadership goals.

Committee power can be affected by level of experienced success in achieving favourable outcomes for women, membership goals (which figure into what is considered "favourable"), committee characteristics such as enthusiasm and effectiveness, union and

committee structures, and degree of alignment of committee and leadership goals. In turn, committee power can affect outcomes, membership goals, committee characteristics, union and committee structures, and leadership goals.

Of necessity the preceding relationships have been expressed in general terms only. They are set out below as formal propositions to enhance clarity and generalizability.

Propositions:

1. Union structures will have a greater impact on outcomes the less powerful the committee and the less involved the union membership.

2. Optimal outcomes for women will be secured when committee, membership and leadership goals are aligned, oriented to changes that will yield value fulfilment for members, and the membership is mobilized. The entire membership need not be mobilized, but there must be significant numbers so that leadership perceives it as an important consideration in defining its goals.

3. The more active the committee, the more positive the outcomes for women, provided committee goals are aligned with either leadership or membership goals. Higher activity levels are encouraged when the committee members share values, are committed to changes that will bring value fulfilment, and succeed in their efforts.

4. The less secure is leadership incumbency, the greater the leadership's sensitivity to factors in the internal and external environment. Security in office is enhanced by centralized structures, lack of official opposition, and an inactive membership.

5. The more unruly the tactics employed by the committee, the greater the impact on leadership and membership goals. Leadership goals will become more aligned with

committee goals the greater the alignment of committee and membership goals.

6. The more differentiated the membership in terms of education and socio-economic status, the greater the effort required to align membership and committee goals.

7. The more likely is leadership succession, the greater the committee's need to align membership and committee goals for committee power in the long-run.

8. The less likely is leadership succession, the safer it is for a committee to base its power on the alignment of committee and leadership goals.

In the next section, conclusions other than those pertaining to the theoretical model that were supported in both case studies are presented.

Other Conclusions

Substantiation was found for many of the concepts in the theoretical literature upon which this study was based, and in some areas the theoretical formulations were extended through this study. My study broke new ground as well in establishing the applicability of several of these concepts to unions. These issues will now be addressed.

Conclusions Drawn From Social Movement Theory:

There was some doubt at the outset of this study as to whether women's committees could properly be considered social movement organizations, and therefore whether or not the social movement literature was applicable to my study. That literature proved to be extremely useful in explaining committee evolution and change, how powerless groups exercise power, and what gives them power. The political process model which identified

the power struggle between challenger groups and insurgents as the central dynamic in collective behaviour (Gamson, 1975; 1990; Piven and Cloward, 1977; Tilly, 1978) was supported in this study. Both committees did appear to be locked in a power struggle with the union leaderships, although the struggle was apparent only when leadership and committee goals diverged and pressures to conform were exerted. Divergent goals reduced the committee's ability to gain a receptive hearing, indicating that supporters of the political process model are wise to identify "the structure of political opportunity" as an important movement resource (Gamson, 1975; 1990; McAdam et al., 1988; Tilly, 1978).

This study also supported Wilson's (1973) identification of the four crucial challenges facing social movements. The first was to reconcile the need to change the system with the need to work within the system in order to survive. Both committees struggled with this, and it influenced their structures and tactics. The BCGEU's committee had to fundamentally change its initial strategy which had been to work within existing union structures to achieve change, by resorting to higher levels of militancy and more unruly tactics when it discovered that change was not going to materialize under those conditions. Its ability to use this strategy in safety may have rested on the high level of membership support (Freeman, 1979). It should be noted that Gamson (1975) suggested the instrumentality of the use of unruly tactics to secure change.

The BCTF committee in the long-term was less successful in this respect, because it seems to have alienated a crucial faction within the membership and the leadership in striving to achieve non-educational goals through the use of powerful tactics that aroused resistance. The outcome was that the BCGEU committee built a solid coalition of support

and made steady progress toward goal achievement, which included structural reforms that would further facilitate goal achievement, satisfactorily meeting the remaining three challenges. In contrast, the BCTF committee met none of the remaining challenges successfully. It became fragmented, lost its support base within the membership, and in the second period (post-1987), once its power was reduced, was forced to accept the reversal of one of its hard-won abortion policies.

The inability to preserve past gains and influence future ones in the absence of power was noted in the literature (Piven and Cloward, 1977; Sztompka, 1994), which maintained that mass insurgency is the only means of wrenching concessions from authorities. But since mass insurgency cannot be maintained indefinitely, once it dies down insurgents lose their influence with political leaders and face growing hostility because of concessions previously granted.

The study also supported the predicted responses of authorities to challenger groups. Piven and Cloward (1977) noted that there are three typical governmental responses to institutional disruption: to ignore it, punish the disruptors, or be conciliatory. Unless central institutions are affected, the disruptors are likely to be ignored. Otherwise, disruptors will be punished unless 1) they have political leverage, or 2) political leaders are vulnerable, which is typically the case during periods of social upheaval. Under these circumstances, conciliation is the preferred mode of dealing with disruptions.

There was evidence at the BCGEU late in period one that a small isolated group of feminists concerned about the lack of progress being made with respect to women's issues was ignored by the provincial executive because other concerns had priority. The BCTF

committee provides examples of the other strategies. For instance, it certainly appears to have been punished when the new leadership took over in 1988 and introduced new committee operating structures, at a time when the committee was unable to muster enough support to fight the changes. The continued willingness to allow the committee to function with few constraints prior to that was an example of a conciliatory strategy by the leadership, because some of the leaders were just as disturbed by the abortion debate as were some of the members.

The tendency to coopt challenger groups was identified by several social theorists as a preferred strategy of authority groups (Costain, 1993; Wilson, 1973; Zald and Ash, 1966) and was well-demonstrated in this study. For example, after the abortion policies came under fire the leadership exhibited some desire to increase the alignment of committee and leadership goals and the committee was partially coopted into supporting the federation's bargaining thrust.

Both committees exhibited institutionalization over their histories. The BCTF committee became institutionalized over time, whereas the BCGEU's committee had to break out of its institutionalization in period two. The literature predicted that institutionalization would be more likely in a becalmed social movement with an inclusive membership, most characteristic of the BCTF's committee in period two (post-1987) and in the BCGEU's committee in period one (pre-1987). This was borne out. In the non-institutionalized phase, goals were noticeably more radical and elicited greater resistance in both unions, reiterating a common theme in the social movement literature (Gamson, 1990;

Piven and Cloward, 1977; McAdam et al., 1988; Sztompka, 1994; Zald and McCarthy, 1979).

The social movement literature was advanced to some extent in this study because I was able to ascertain that the concepts applicable to inter-organizational social movements were also applicable to intra-organizational social movements, and that women's committees constituted a good example of the latter. I was also able to show that the institutionalization process that was perceived in the literature as a natural phase in a social movement's life cycle was also reversible, and not necessarily as a result of newly defined goals, contrary to what was implied in the literature (Zald and Ash, 1966). Furthermore, I supported a claim in the literature regarding the viability of a challenger group's use of unruly tactics to secure outcomes not favoured by the authority (Gamson, 1975; Piven and Cloward, 1977). Gentler tactics were found adequate in securing authority-supported goals.

Conclusions Drawn From Organizational Theory and Industrial Relations:

My study differs from many others in the area of organizational power and politics in exploring how power is acquired and exercised by powerful and less powerful organizational groups over an extended time period. My methods allowed a rich understanding to develop of how contextual factors contribute to power and outcomes, and conclusions reached on that topic were summarized earlier as propositions. Here I will consider only the insights my study holds for the ongoing debate in feminist and non-feminist organizational theory regarding the relative contributions of individual and structural factors to organizational power.

In the literature review reference was made to four models of power currently found in the organizational literature. The first defined power in relational terms (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1957), attributing power primarily to individual factors. Other models defined power in more structural terms, presenting power as being centrally-controlled, originating in the ability of organizational sub-units to alleviate uncertainty, and in their substitutability and workflow centrality (Hickson et al., 1971; Pfeffer, 1981; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1977). Power arising from resource control was also identified (Astley and Sachdeva, 1984; Deetz, 1992; Krackhardt, 1990; Mumby, 1988), as was power arising from the ability to control interpretive networks, which operated invisibly (Clegg, 1989; Frost, 1987; Frost and Egri, 1991). An alternative to the centrally-controlled conception of power was also advanced (Gordon, 1980; Hawkesworth, 1990; Malson et al., 1989), which maintained that power was widely held and widely used, and "instantiated in mundane social practices and relations" (Fraser, 1992).

Many organizational power theorists today accept that both structural and individual determinants affect power, and current theories of gender inequity attribute women's continued powerlessness to both coercive and voluntary factors (Chafetz, 1990; Cockburn, 1991; Jackman, 1994; Tong, 1989). So there does appear to be consensus developing that both must be considered in identifying sources of power and my study supports this conclusion.

The initial impression gained from discussions with committee informants at the BCGEU was that there was an extreme bond of loyalty and affection linking many of the early committee members and the leadership of the BCGEU, and an absolute belief that the

leadership was fully supportive of women's interests throughout period one despite evidence to the contrary. It was evident that the committee did not push the leadership very much during the entire first period to carry through on its promises regarding increased female participation in the union, and that it was concerned about being "good" and "not upsetting the men" and forwarding to the leadership only items that "would fly". By accepting the leadership's interpretive framework and its inaction on women's issues, the committee actively contributed to its own powerlessness and lack of results, while its continuing regard for the leadership dampened any tendencies to protest.

This behaviour can be explained in the following terms (Jackman, 1994). Where long-term inequality exists, it rests on the dominant group's ability to develop an ideology that makes the benefits they enjoy reasonable. The preferred mode of persuasion is the "ideology of paternalism" where "Good children...comply with and defer to the wishes of their fathers..." (p. 10). To make their actions appear benevolent, dominant groups try to ensure that affection exists between them and the subordinated group. In this way,

> Conflict is obviated because those who must initiate it...are bound emotionally and cognitively in a framework that is of the dominant group's definition...the expression of affection for subordinates thus strengthens the dominant group's control. (p. 16)

This passage explains the committee actions noted above and supports the relational theories of power originally introduced by Dahl (1956) and elaborated on by Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Emerson (1962) and French and Raven (1968). In particular this example demonstrates how the hidden exercise of power can lead to non-decision making and the mobilization of bias.

However, it also demonstrates that conceptualizing power as deriving solely from individual bases is shortsighted. As Clegg (1989) expressed it, "...behind any episode of power which occurred in an organized setting there was a structure which prefigured the concrete exchange..." (p. 12). The previous example demonstrated several aspects of structurally-based power. It illustrated how the ability to control interpretive frameworks through controlling communications could create deep structure power (Frost, 1987; Morgan, 1986; Mumby, 1988). It also illustrated how the leadership's basic dependence on member support affects its strategies, supporting the resource dependency model of organizational power (Hickson et al., 1971; Pfeffer, 1981; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1977).

This study provided some elaboration of the workings of resource dependence, indicating that dependency problems are to some degree created in the leadership's mind. The ability to influence these perceptions as well as the dependencies themselves figure into how programs, departments, etc. are prioritized, which affects their power. For example, despite the BCTF membership's rising disenchantment with the committee in period three, the leadership remained willing to be convinced that the status of women program should be given high priority, which enhanced the committee's power. In period four, although the basic dependency had not changed, a different leadership viewed it differently. The leadership saw the program as a threat to its ability to stay in office, so it lowered the program's priority and refused to be influenced by others' demands that its priority should be higher. As a result of the committee's inability to influence the leadership, the committee became less powerful.

The leadership's basic dependence on the membership also supports Foucault's assertion that power is exercised at the periphery as well as at the centre. This is why women's committees in the long-run are predicted to be more successful if they enhance membership support by aligning their goals with membership goals. The limitation on members' power is that structures must exist that effectively permit membership input. This again supports the general notion that structures are an important source of power and more specifically, Foucault's notion that power resides in the inter-linkages between all the people who constitute the power network, or in other words, in the network itself. This reflects a theme found in the organizational literature (Astley and Sachdeva, 1984; Krackhardt, 1990).

At the BCTF, for the first three periods a web-like structure linked the provincial committee to contacts in each of the locals and encouraged widespread membership support for the women's committee's actions. This was an important source of committee power. The BCGEU's women's committee in contrast lacked such linkages until Component 12, which did have linkages in all the locals, was mobilized to support structural reform. The committee's isolation from the membership contributed to its relative powerlessness until then. This strongly suggests that women's committees will be more successful where structures giving them easy access to the membership exists.

The insight gained with respect to Foucault's power model was that while power might reside in the web, greater attention should be paid to how the web is structured, who's involved in its structuring, and who holds influential positions within the web. In other words, it is necessary to attend to who influences where the nodes and linkages lie within the web, and who determines how the central positions within the web are filled.

How the web is constructed can have a major impact on who has power.

This again was well-illustrated in this study. At the BCTF, the committee heavily influenced the structure of the contact network and the choice of the contacts, so the committee controlled the network which gave it power. When the contacts were replaced by staff from the professional development department, control of the network passed over to that department, which was an administrative arm of the leadership. Thus leadership power was enhanced.

At the BCGEU the leadership effectively blocked the creation of a local women's committee network via inadequate resource allocations. However, the women's committee and Component 12 created a network in period two that was under the control of feminist activists, even though it was based on existing structures. This substantially enhanced their power, and their ability to secure desired structural reforms.

The cross-case comparison provided additional support for the link between structures and power. It showed that resistance was highest when the target of change was existing structures, which was predicted in both the feminist organizational literature and the social movement literature. Resistance was also more successful in the more bureaucratic of the two unions, substantiating feminists' denunciation of bureaucratic structures as the primary source of oppression in society today (Ferguson, 1984; Kanter, 1977). Finally, resistance was widespread, supporting Foucault's assertion that each exercise of power gives rise to resistance, and power is exercised widely.

Feminist prescriptions for enhancing female equality generally stress the need to get women into elite positions because without equal access to elite roles, "all other

improvements in women's relative status remain incomplete, fragile, and easily lost" (Cockburn, 1990, p. 221). The BCGEU case showed that bureaucratic structures that are controlled by leaders who wish to empower women can be very powerful tools of female emancipation. It was not until two female vice-president positions were created at the BCGEU in 1993 that Component 12 was reluctantly granted an extra seat on the provincial executive. By 1994, 50% of the provincial executive was female, compared with 26% as recently as 1989 (See Table 6.2).

The theme that structures contribute to power has been apparent within the industrial relations literature since the 1950's. Since Michels formulated the Iron Law of Oligarchy (Michels, 1956), which maintains that over time in all organizations power tends to become centralized in the hands of elite groups which control resource allocations, factors affecting union democracy have been studied (Edelstein and Warner, 1976; Lipset et al., 1956; Regalia, 1988).

Sociologists have also paid some attention to the rise of elite-dominated organizations. Collins (1975) in developing his conflict theory of organizations devoted some attention specifically to membership-controlled organizations and called Michels' Law "the basic theory of power" in such organizations (p. 329). He established propositions to explain the degree of oligarchy in such organizations and the kinds of policies pursued by their leaders. He maintained that oligarchy would tend to be higher the older and larger the organization, the more dispersed the membership, the greater the resources controlled by the leadership, the greater the gap between rewards of office and the alternative career possibilities of the leader, and the fewer the external crises impacting on the membership.

So Collins (1975) would have predicted that the BCGEU would have been more subject to Michels' Law than the BCTF.

Other students of union democracy would have made the same prediction for many of the other factors identified in the industrial relations literature as promoting union democracy were in evidence at the BCTF (Edelstein and Warner, 1976). For example, membership input was much higher and leadership succession much more frequent and less painful at the BCTF than at the BCGEU. Leadership opposition was legitimate and a two-party system existed that promoted membership involvement in union affairs, similar to that found at the International Typographical Union (Lipset et al., 1956), the classic example of a democratic union. Under these conditions, the literature predicted that oligarchical tendencies would be less pronounced. Since it was apparent that the BCTF membership had much greater influence on the leadership than was the case at the BCGEU, Collins' propositions and the general literature on union democracy were supported.

However it should be noted that while the BCGEU was the prototypical example of an elite-controlled union as it was large, well-established, and highly centralized with well-defined rules and regulations, a pronounced hierarchy and extensive division of labour, feminist activists were nevertheless able to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the leadership to make it change its agenda via the mobilization of a significant portion of the membership. This indicates one of the limits to the Iron Law of Oligarchy is membership mobilization.

The second issue Collins (1975) addressed was, what factors affect leaders' policies. This question is directly related to the central issue in this study. That is, how do leaders exercise their power in a way that maximizes their decision making autonomy without

harming their legitimacy in the eyes of the membership. The literature in this area maintains that it is inadequate to conceptualize the internal dynamics in unions solely in terms of a power struggle between leaders and the rank-and-file because the latter is itself divided on grounds of ideology, occupation, age, sex etc. This makes reconciling conflicting agendas difficult for even the most democratically-minded leadership, so there is a recognition in the literature that union leaders are constrained in their actions (Heery and Fosh, 1990; Hyman, 1975; Regalia, 1988)

According to Collins, leaders' militancy and idealism will be lower the more involved they are in political bargaining within or across organizations. The need for political bargaining is more acute the more heterogeneous are contacts with their organizations, which implies that where schisms exist within the membership the leadership will tend to be conservative and pragmatic. Conservative tendencies will be enhanced the greater the union's material resources, which will in turn enhance the leaders' tendencies to pursue their own material interests. Also, the leadership will be more attentive to members' desires where leaders need members' active support to carry out their agendas. This need for active support will be most pressing when other groups are competing for it.

Evidence from the cases is that in general, the BCTF membership was more homogeneous until the mid-1980's than was the BCGEU at any time in its history, and the leadership changed frequently. This should have enhanced the militancy and idealism of the BCTF's leaders until the mid-1980's while subsequently encouraging the use of practical and conservative strategies. Both of these predictions were supported. For example, the BCTF leadership sought the transformation of the professional teachers' association to a militant

union with the right to strike in the early 1980's despite strong membership resistance initially, while in 1987 it sought to keep the federation intact by allowing non-certified locals to retain membership rights, thereby weakening the federation. It also began to seriously cultivate membership support at that point.

Collins predicts that the later tactics employed at the BCTF should also have been in evidence at the BCGEU throughout its history. The BCGEU's lack of support for the changes being promoted by the women's committee and Component 12 in the late 1980's can be analyzed within Collins' framework as a practical necessity because of the high resistance they induced or because the leadership's security in office made attentiveness to membership desires relatively unnecessary. But it is difficult to separate self-interested from pragmatic behaviour in either case, particularly when organizational leaders at least partially enact the environment they respond to (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978; Weick, 1979), and "Whatever makes the organization safe, secure and wealthy, benefits its leaders" (Collins, 1994, p. 100). It seems difficult to consider the BCGEU's historical resistance to changing the union's male culture to adapt to its increasingly female membership as an example of anything other than political behaviour, despite the pragmatic rationale advanced to justify it. Similarly, many of my BCTF informants were of the opinion that the structural changes imposed on the committee in 1988 by the new leadership were intended to bring the committee under its control, although the rationale advanced was that these changes were necessary for budgetary reasons.

Since both leadership actions reduced committee effectiveness, I think it would be naive to accept arguments about practicality at face value. I agree with Feldberg (1987) that

unions have tended to ignore "the additional barriers women face from the structure of union activities and the attitudes of its male leadership" (p. 304) and thus have systematically "prevented their concerns from becoming an established part of every union agenda...women's departments have remained political backwaters isolated from the power bases of the union, and continue to serve a useful but limited function" (p. 313).

I do not believe it is coincidental that the status quo continues to serve predominantly male interests and agree with those feminists who maintain that the way to increase women's equality in unions is to get more women into decision making positions (Briskin and McDermott, 1993; Chafetz, 1990; Cockburn, 1991; Mills and Tancred, 1992; Rees, 1990).

Limitations of This Study

As this was a case study, legitimate concerns can be voiced about how generalizable these findings might be beyond the two women's committees studied. Despite my expectations, the two cases proved to be very different in terms of structure, committee evolution, leadership and membership receptivity to women's issues. Nevertheless, a number of commonalities were found in the two cases, as discussed. This suggests that my findings might be widely generalizable to other women's committee.

There is the additional possibility that my results could be generalizable to interactions between other powerful and powerless groups, whether or not they are situated within an organization. Factors contributing to "a favourable structure of political opportunity (Gamson, 1975; 1990; McAdam et al., 1988) which allow powerless groups to

press for change are not organizationally bounded. Hence my conclusions might apply to all types of minority group struggles at organizational or societal levels.

One of the strengths of the study is that my analysis seems to have struck a chord with most of the people I interviewed, which suggests that it has face validity, and it has certainly stimulated some debate that may contribute to the future success of the women's committees studied. So the conclusions reached seem fairly solid.

Contributions of This Study

In general, this research on how power is exercised in organizations, based on longitudinal data, suggests that a useful direction for future organizational research might involve defining "organizations" more broadly and studying them from a more inter-disciplinary perspective.

First, since the social movement literature proved so helpful in explaining the nature of the interactions occurring between the committees and the union leaderships studied, as well as the conditions affecting committee power, there may be an advantage in having organizational theorists increasingly draw on this literature in explaining other organizational phenomena. Specifically, were organizational researchers to take a social movement perspective on organizational life, perhaps other groups that operate like social movement organizations might be identified. Likely candidates are groups currently labelled interest groups and other visible organizational coalitions. The discovery of such social movement-like organizations within organizational boundaries might provide a new perspective on organizational conflict.

Furthermore, the social movement literature might be helpful in reconceptualizing the determinants of organizational change. My study demonstrated how two intra-organizational social movement groups affected union policies and procedures. Just as social movements bring about societal change, so might internal social movements bring about organizational change, and this possibility should be explored.

My study also demonstrated 1) the utility of crossing the disciplinary boundaries between organizational theory, industrial relations, and even sociology to explore structural sources of organizational power and learn how power is exercised in unions, and 2) the political nature of unions. I would argue that insights gained from studying unions might better inform the organizational literature. Their political nature is evident so they cannot be mistaken for rational economic entities.

Although unions differ from non-voluntary organizations in some ways, for example with regard to goals pursued, I question whether there is much justification for continuing to conceptualize any contemporary organization in predominantly rational terms. While unions in the past may have had a stronger political orientation than many other organizations, the turbulence of the past two decades has generated higher levels of uncertainty for all organizations and increased the vulnerability of organizational leaders to stakeholder pressures. According to the organizational literature, this should have stimulated higher levels of political behaviour. So an understanding of how unions operate, since they are extremely political and vulnerable to swings in membership and public support, might be predictive of how these beleaguered organizations will respond.

Furthermore, by developing a theoretical model of power for women's committees I have made a contribution to the development of a much-needed theory of power for women (Hartsock, 1990), "which begin[s] from the experience and point of view of the dominated...[and] give[s] attention not only to the ways women are dominated, but also to their capacities, abilities, and strengths" (p. 158) which can help to empower women.

Future Research Directions:

This research produced a number of insights about factors affecting the power of two large, public sector unions in B.C. with predominantly female memberships, over a 20-year period. But as mentioned, case studies may not be generalizable to other contexts. So the most obvious future research direction is to investigate other women's committees in the public and private sector to see whether the same power dynamics found in this research study are found elsewhere. Also, since the committees studied were both provincial advisory committees to the top union leadership, women's committees in locals could also be examined to see whether the same degree of leadership domination exists where only local members will be affected by the committee, and greater goal alignment can be presumed to exist between the committee, the membership, and the local executive.

It would also be interesting to do additional structural comparisons between older and younger unions, unions that survived and those that did not, unions with more and less heterogeneous memberships, different proportions of female members, and different affiliations with central labour bodies. The reason would be to determine how similar are structural forms across different types of unions, which might indicate that institutional

pressures are exerted on unions which force them to assume certain structures for reasons of legitimacy and survival. This would provide another perspective on why structural reforms are so difficult to achieve.

Turning away from women's committees, since the social movement literature proved very useful in conceptualizing the relationship between the union leadership and the committees, it would be interesting to see whether the model of power and outcomes developed through this research might extend to other intra-organizational social movement organizations such as environmental movements, and to other inter-organizational social movement organizations or advocacy groups such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and Greenpeace.

As some of the theoretical background for this study came from the literature on mass movements involving powerless groups and much of the literature in organizational theory and industrial relations overlaps with respect to where power originates and how powerful groups exercise power, there should be no obvious difficulties encountered in adapting the theoretical framework to these other groups.

To summarize, future research could extend this research to other similar contexts to enhance its perceived generalizability. It could extend this research to different contexts to assess the theoretical model's robustness. Alternatively, it could focus on developing more complete understanding of certain facets of the model, such as union structures. Any of these approaches might ultimately generate testable hypotheses pertaining to the operation of power dynamics in organizations facing pressures to change.

FIGURE 2

<u>BCTF Conclusions</u>:

1) The most important variable contributing to committee power is leadership support which creates structures that help or hinder the committee's pursuit of its goals.

2) Leadership support is affected by the alignment of committee and leadership goals.

3) Leadership goals are conditioned by perceptions of threat in the environment, membership support for the committee, and ideological commitment to social change.

4) Membership support is affected by the structures established to create linkages between the membership and the committee, as well as by committee goals, actions, characteristics and power.

5) Outcomes derive from membership and leadership support, and union and committee structures, as well as committee power.

6) Committee power is not essential for achieving gains for women as long as union structures exist that support achieving such gains. However, it does appear to be essential for achieving goals that the leadership does not support.

FIGURE 3

BCGEU Conclusions:

1) Where committee and leadership goals are aligned, facilitative structures will be created, and vice versa.

2) When a committee lacks power, structures and leadership goals will shape outcomes.

3) There are other sources of gains for women besides committee power - in this case, union structures.

4) Membership support can be a major factor in committee power, so structures that allow a committee to foster membership support are valuable.

5) Membership wishes can affect leadership goals once the mobilized membership reaches a critical mass. Leadership perceptions play some role in determining what constitutes a critical mass.

6) Committee characteristics, goals and actions are an important source of committee power because they affect levels of leadership and membership support. Desirable committee characteristics are cohesion, focus, use of unruly tactics, and persistence. High activity levels are also favoured.

7) Militancy, membership support, and facilitative structures are needed to achieve structural reform in the absence of aligned leadership and committee goals.

FIGURE 4

BCTF Conclusions:

1) The most important variable contributing to committee power is leadership support which creates structures that help or hinder the committee's pursuit of its goals.

2) Leadership support is affected by the alignment of committee and leadership goals.

3) Leadership goals are conditioned by perceptions of threat in the environment, membership support for the committee, and ideological commitment to social change.

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6) Committee characteristics, goals and actions are an important source of committee power because they affect levels of leadership and membership support. Committees should be cohesive, focused, persistent, highly active, and use unruly tactics.

7) Militancy, membership support, and facilitative structures are needed to achieve structural reform in the absence of aligned leadership and committee goals.

FIGURE 5 REVISED POWER MODEL
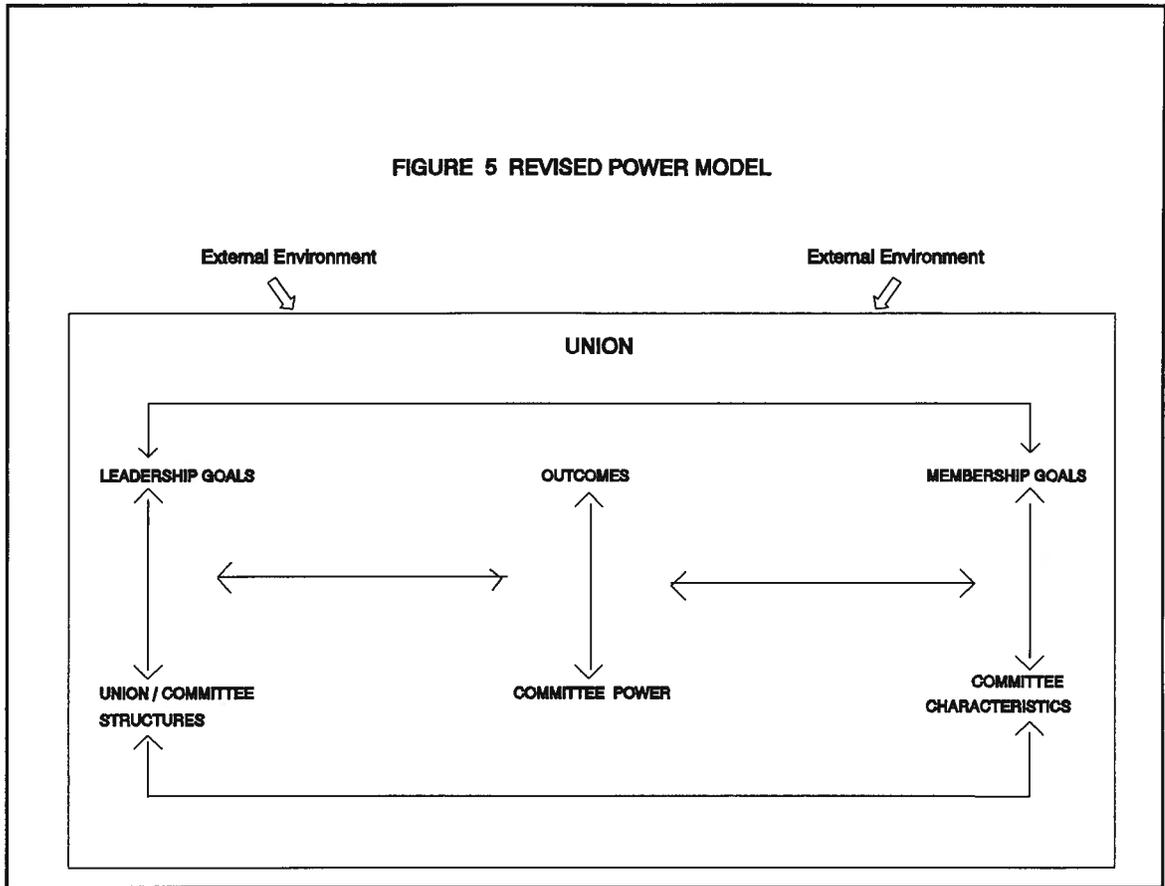
Table 9 Cross-Case Comparison

9.1 Types of Resolutions Brought to Convention

PERIOD	1				2				Both			
UNION	BCTF		BCGEU		BCTF		BCGEU		BCTF		BCGEU	
RESOLU-TION TYPE	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Structural	14	31	14	38	4	37	32	78	18	31	46	60
Social Change	28	62	11	31	8	60	8	20	36	62	19	25
Other	3	7	11	31	1	3	1	2	4	7	12	15
Totals	45	100	36	100	13	100	41	100	58	100	77	100

9.2 Types of Resolutions Passed *

PERIOD	1				2				Both			
UNION	BCTF		BCGEU		BCTF		BCGEU		BCTF		BCGEU	
RESOLU-TION TYPE	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Structural	14	100	12	86	3	75	18	56	17	94	30	65
Social Change	27	96	11	100	7	88	8	100	34	94	19	100
Other	3	100	10	91	1	100	1	100	4	100	11	92
Totals	44	98	33	92	11	85	27	66	55	95	60	78

* Includes previously referred resolutions that were later passed. Compare with Table 9.1.

| 2 | | | | | | Both | | | | | |
| BCTF | | | BCGEU | | | BCTF | | | BCGEU | | |
987	1993	%Chg.	1987	1994	%Chg.	1973	1993	%Chg.	1975	1994	%Chg.
/28	17/35	-	21/56	27/65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32	49	53	38	42	11	18	49	172	19	42	121
/11	5/11	-	5/19	9/18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36	45	25	26	50	92	9	45	400	9	50	456

35, and fell to 36% by the end of the period.

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APPENDIX A

Status of Women Program Recommendations Passed
at the 1973 Annual General Meeting

1. That textbooks and all of the resource materials that consistently show women and men in stereotype roles should not be condoned and should be replaced by more realistic materials in curriculum areas where such deficiencies are detrimental to the optimum development of young people.

2. That the Executive Committee initiate a program in conjunction with all post-secondary institutions to ensure that in the training of all teachers, guidance counsellors and librarians, the problem of social and sex stereotyping, prevalent in our society, is identified and examined.

3. That each school board in the province should examine the status of female students and teachers in its school district, particularly in relation to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.

4. That wherever the third person singular pronoun occurs in BCTF minutes and in present and future policies and procedures, and where the pronoun may refer to both sexes, both male and female forms of the pronoun should be used.

5. That each local association be encouraged to elect one person to act as a contact with the Task Force on the Status of Women in Education and the BCTF staff member, and to assist them in working toward an improvement in the status of women in the government of the BCTF and in education in B.C.

6. That the BCTF encourage women to apply for administrative posts, and that the BCTF reiterates its intention to investigate any cases of indicated discrimination.

APPENDIX B

Original Status of Women Committee Terms of Reference

1. To make recommendations to the Executive Committee on matters affecting the status of women.

2. To create awareness of sex discrimination within schools and society.

3. To initiate, develop and maintain local programs.

4. To develop and implement non-sexist curricula and resource materials.

5. To integrate the goals and objectives of the Status of Women Program into other relevant programs of the federation.

6. To implement provincial BCTF policy relevant to the Status of Women program at the local level.

7. To increase female participation in decision making bodies of the federation and the education system.

8. To ensure a more equitable distribution of male/female teachers throughout the education system.

APPENDIX C

Current Status of Women Committee Terms of Reference

1. To advise the BCTF Executive Committee on policy and activities to promote the Status of Women.

2. To provide advice to the Executive Committee in its decisions regarding the Status of Women program.

3. To assist in research and policy development which will be used to support the overall BCTF effort to influence provincial education policy.

4. To support field services to local associations.

5. To provide a specialized resource to assist local associations or PSA's, on request, in developing and implementing plans or in training matters.

6. To advise the BCTF Executive Committee on federation strategies to provide social leadership in efforts to promote the Status of Women.