NEW RIGHT, OLD CANADA:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTIVITIES OF SELECTED CONTEMPORARY RIGHT-WING ORGANIZATIONS

by

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This thesis is an examination of a moral, cultural and political movement referred to as the New Right. Its specific focus is on three Canadian right-wing organizations, each of which exhibits particular characteristics while at the same time sharing the basic ideological assumptions of the others. These organizations and their particular characteristics are: i) the prolife/profamily REAL Women of Canada and moral conservatism, ii) the anti-bilingualism and anti-Charter Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC) and cultural conservatism, and iii) what was arguably the dominant New Right organization during its time -- and as I show, among the weaker links in the New Right chain -- the Reform Party of Canada and conservative populism.

Though Reform was a relatively successful federal political party and the other two are pressure groups, the members in each nevertheless conceive of their respective organizations as vehicles for the authentic views of "the people." In other words, of these organizations see themselves as the true representatives of the majority of citizens in English-speaking Canada who, they allege, have been deliberately denied political influence commensurate with their numbers since the era of left-leaning, "special interest" politics, policies and moral-cultural values took hold beginning in the late 1960s.

By analyzing the New Right phenomenon in general and the three Canadian groups in particular, this project seeks to a) understand the ideological perspective of the movement; b) assess whatever tension, be it normative, policy-driven or strategic, existed between the groups examined herein; and c) determine whether or not such tension was indicative of a fundamental weakness in the Canadian New Right. I also draw upon three basic questions to frame the
analysis presented herein:

1. Is the Canadian New Right ideologically coherent?

2. What explains the New Right's relative lack of success in Canadian politics?

3. Is there a future for the New Right in Canadian politics?

I keep these questions in mind throughout the thesis and reconsider them specifically in the concluding chapter.
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the following: my parents, Priscilla and Gordon Foster, who provided a splendid environment and gentle encouragement while I was teaching at the University of Victoria; to my in-laws, Violet and Melville Barrett, for their encouragement and support. To my three wonderful children, Chris, Nick, and Jen, for their forbearance and understanding. They have grown into adulthood during this undertaking. Above all, I dedicate this thesis to my lovely and remarkably patient wife, Gwen. She never doubted, even during the trying times.
CHAPTER ONE
NEW RIGHT, OLD CANADA
What happened to my country, anyhow?
-- frequently-heard lament of right-wingers
The conservative impulse [is] aimed at rekindling the harmony of the traditional community.
-- Cooper, et. al. (1988:6)

INTRODUCTION

This bulk of this thesis is an examination of three Canadian organizations usually described as possessing a conservative or right wing political ideology. These organizations are a part of what is often referred to as the "New Right," a rather amorphous designation analysts have given to all manner of right-leaning organizations and activists during the last quarter of the twentieth century. In setting out to explore its ideological contours and activities, and to determine what influence, if any, these New Right organizations have had on Canadian politics and political institutions, I have also sought to understand the nature of the relationships between them.

Viewed from the perspective of Canada as a modern (or to some, a "postmodern") western liberal-democracy, possessing a vibrant, pluralistic, largely secularized population, and one of the world's more accommodating polities in terms of the political, social, economic, and cultural freedoms of its citizens, the New Right as a whole and the organizations under scrutiny here may seem at first glance to be profoundly out of step with the rest of the country, if not outright subversive. At the very least, what it wishes to accomplish, both in the legislative arena and in society at large, is controversial. The Canadian New Right seeks to reform -- others would say alter radically -- the political, social, economic and cultural institutions of the country in such a way as to reflect their values. And what values are these? Briefly, they consist of the conservation of a) traditional moral, ie. Judeo-Christian, values as they relate to sex and/or gender
roles, sexual orientation, abortion, family life, and the like; b) the historical traditions of anglophone political, cultural, linguistic and social dominance, the supremacy of Parliament, including an emphatic rejection of constitutionally-protected (or positive) rights as provided for by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and c) the primacy of the free market and accordingly, fiscal prudence in government, and the populist-driven right of "the people" to influence directly the reform of existing institutions, the behaviour of politicians and much of the policy output of government.

The three categories sketched above relate directly to the three organizations examined herein. Following that order, the organizations are: a) REAL Women of Canada, b) the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC), and c) the Reform Party of Canada. This is not to suggest that each group and the causes it champions are discrete and marked-off from each other, for that is not the case. As we shall see as the thesis progresses, there is much that these organizations share in common. In particular, they share an unshakeable conviction that "the people" of Canada, that is to say, the conservative-minded majority, have virtually had their political influence and by extension, their country, virtually taken away from them by a generation of "new class" politicians, judges, and bureaucrats and especially by an influential coterie of left-leaning "special interest" lobby groups that include feminists, homosexuals, francophones, ethnic and other minorities. That these organizations share many of the same political, social, and cultural perspectives, in short a shared "worldview," does not mean that are no ideological tensions or policy disagreements between them. In fact, as we see, there has been a fair amount of tension between them.

The hypothetical thrust of this analysis is a) to assess the shared ideological perspectives
of these New Right groups; b) to ascertain whatever tensions, normative as well as practical, exist between them; and c) to determine whether or not said tensions pose a threat to ideological coherence and to intra-movement cooperation. The thesis also examines the demands of the interest lobbies (REAL Women and APEC) and the extent to which a fairly successful right-wing political party (Reform) could accommodate them. In so doing, the thesis attempts to answer the following three questions:

1. Is the Canadian New Right ideologically coherent?

2. What explains the New Right's relative lack of success in federal politics?

3. Is there a future for the New Right in Canadian politics?

I return to address and reconsider these questions in the concluding chapter.

THE THREE GROUPS EXAMINED IN THIS THESIS

To reiterate, in order to provide evidence which will either confirm or challenge the questions posed above, this thesis examines three right-wing organizations whose members are convinced that "their country" has been taken away from them by a powerful, institutionalized "new class" and a number of left-leaning "special interests." Though there are many right-wing groups from which to choose (particularly those whose primary concerns are the free-market economy and the role of government), I settled on three that, in my view, embody the aspects of New Right thought and practice I find most compelling, the most interesting, and in terms of the overall scholarly interest directed at the first two groups, the most under-developed.

- *REAL Women of Canada and moral conservatism*

"REAL" is an acronym for "Realistic, Equal, Active for Life." The group's slogan is
"Women's rights, but not at the expense of human rights." Formed in Toronto in 1983, REAL Women is Canada's largest prolife, profamily lobby/pressure group. Its objective, whether it takes the form of street level opposition to such issues as abortion, pornography, and homosexual rights, or engaging extensively in litigation, or making presentations to legislative committees, attending conferences, producing newsletters, briefs, and pamphlets, or making media appearances, is to convince governments to help return Canadian society to what the majority of "the people" apparently desire: traditional Judeo-Christian moral principles.

The organization challenges what its members regard as "special interest" attacks on traditional moral values and social norms. Like the other organizations under scrutiny here, REAL Women is convinced that the institutions of state and the compliant politicians, judges and bureaucrats who work within them have been taken over by these special interests organizations. It is REAL Women's view that the pathologies of contemporary society are the direct result of what the organization's chief legal counsel and national vice-president calls the "moral decay of the Sixties revolution."

- *The Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada and cultural conservatism.*

The Alliance is better known by its acronym, APEC. In contrast to REAL Women, APEC's concerns are primarily cultural, that is to say, secular-conservative, rather than moral and/or religious. Its two most frequently-employed slogans are: "One Official Language, English" and "Constitutions are for People, not Politicians." Formed in Halifax in 1977, APEC is the oldest of the three organizations studied here. It may also be the most inherently contradictory: APEC's principal objective is to pressure the federal government to repeal two of

---

1Personal interview with C. Gwendolyn Landolt, 26 October, 1999.
Canada's contemporary nation-defining instruments, the Official Languages Act (OLA) and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, while at the same time, as its newsletter's masthead proclaims, it seeks to preserve Canada as "one nation, one people."

APEC's president, Ron Leitch, argues that the implementation of official bilingualism and the Charter is the antithesis of the intentions of the Fathers of Confederation and the Constitution Act, 1867. Neither bilingualism nor the Charter fits at all well with parliamentary traditions or the common law, Leitch argues. In fact, both have made major contributions to the fragmentation of the country and the continued maintenance of a demonstrably unfair political system. Moreover, says Leitch, national unity has been seriously threatened by a generation of francophone politicians and a newer generation of "special interests," or "gimme groups" as he calls them. According to APEC, English-speaking Canada is suffering from a deep cultural crisis brought on "by years of government social engineering, which attacks the individual freedoms of the people."²

For many, the idea that national unity and social-cultural cohesion are best maintained by repealing the OLA and the Charter seems absurd. But for APEC and indeed for much of the New Right, it makes perfect sense because both are seen to have institutionalized diversity and this in turn, has marginalized "the people," that is to say, English-speaking, Anglo-Saxon Canadians. The principal element of national unity as APEC sees it is commonality, not diversity. Unity is properly what the majority, that is to say, what "the people," say it is. As a result of such policies as the OLA and constitutional amendments like the Charter, a plethora of radical groups that would not have otherwise attracted much notice from either society or the

²Personal interview, 26 September, 1999.
state have become embedded so firmly within public institutions that they now wield tremendous influence.

- *The Reform Party of Canada: the conservative broker*

  The Reform Party was arguably the country's bellwether New Right organization. Formed in two stages, first, at a meeting in Vancouver in the spring of 1987 and then officially launched in Winnipeg later that year, the party's rise and its success were dramatic. Six years after its founding, 52 of its candidates (all save one from western Canada) were elected to Parliament. Four years after that, it won enough seats to form the Official Opposition. Three years later, it was folded into a new party vehicle, the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance (Canadian Alliance for short).

  Preston Manning, the party's only leader, characterized Reform as a populist party dedicated to reforming national political institutions and to enacting policies which more accurately reflected "the common sense of the common people" (Manning, 1992:25). The catalyst for Reform's birth was a deep sense, prevalent among westerners, particularly in Alberta and British Columbia, that the national government was not only geographically but ideologically distant, too. "Ottawa," as westerners call the federal government, was insensitive to the needs of the region, unsympathetic to its conservative sensibilities and unmindful of its legitimate aspirations. In their view, the federal government remained fixated solely on central Canada, especially Quebec; so much so that westerners felt excluded from national politics.

  Reform provided an entry point for and subsequently brokered a number of New Right positions. It supported many of the moral and cultural aspects of conservatism, embraced the free market and a concomitant reduction in the role of the state in the provision of social (or
welfare) services. Significantly, as a self-described populist party, Reform ostensibly allowed for a degree of control by constituents in the making of party policy and in the votes of its MPs in Parliament. As we see in Chapter Five, there is some evidence to suggest that this "triangulated" combination of ideas and influences in the party -- right-conservatism, right-liberalism, and right-populism -- may have been the party's Achilles' Heel. As I argue in that chapter, for all its high status in the movement, Reform was one the weaker links in the New Right chain.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis is in part an effort to shed some light on a comparatively unsuccessful component of New Right politics: the relationship between moral and cultural conservatives and the right-populist Reform Party of Canada. As to the inevitable question of why an analysis that sets out to examine contemporary right-wing political activities more or less minimizes the considerable influence of economic factors and organizations like the Fraser Institute or the National Citizens' Coalition, my response is that that particular aspect of right-wing thought and activity has been quite extensively documented already (see for example, Magnussen, et. al., 1984; Warnock, 1988; McBride and Shields, 1997). By comparison, the conservative lobbies featured here and the nature of their interplay with the Reform Party have been relatively under-analyzed.

There are three major themes this research attempts to satisfy. First, in Chapter Two, it seeks to shed some light on the New Right phenomenon in general by employing a comparative framework that examines the "mentor" movements in the United States and Britain and utilizes them as conceptual-ideological templates for a noerview of the rise of Canada's New Right.
Second, the research seeks to advance our understanding of the moral and cultural aspects of right-wing activism in Canada. This is undertaken by an examination of REAL Women in Chapter Three and APEC in Chapter Four. The third objective is to examine the reasons for the rise, the successes, and the problems of the Reform Party. Of particular interest to me is the disjunction between ideological principles and majoritarian populism. I also examine the difficulties and controversies associated with Preston Manning’s leadership of the party and assess whether the party was in fact among the New Right's weaker links. These are the principal concerns of Chapter Five.

Though it does demonstrate many of the same features of its larger British and American cousins, the Canadian New Right is a hybrid creature, nestled somewhere between the institutional traditions of the UK and the populist dynamism of the USA. Contemporary Canadian conservatism "has many feathers," as one commentator put it.\(^3\) In some ways, this makes the Canadian movement a more difficult subject for study. Furthermore, the Canadian New Right has arguably been less successful in meeting its objectives compared with the larger, older movements in the two "mentor countries" noted above. With the exception of having some influence on fiscal and economic matters of state (which in any case have been thoroughly co-opted by mainstream parties like the ruling Liberals) and perhaps some claim in encouraging the federal government's attitude of "getting tough" with the sovereignty movement in Quebec, the right's political successes have been meagre.

Conducting interviews

In order to become more familiar with the movement and people I would later interview, I purchased memberships in REAL Women and APEC and attended a number of Reform Party functions in and around BC's Lower Mainland. This made it easier for me to approach certain individuals and to conduct either in-person or telephone interviews later on. That I was quite familiar with the aims, objectives, and the literature of these organizations opened a number of doors to me that might otherwise have been shut.4

While some on the right display a marked aversion to outsiders "doing research" -- due most likely to the fact that so many studies of them are highly negative and polemical -- I soon discovered that most were quite eager and willing to explain their views, even to one who, as they were well aware, shared few if any of their convictions. Erwin (1994:15) said much the same when she was conducting research on the profamily right. Her experiences are instructive:

The interviews I conducted [with REAL Women and other profamily organizations] provided me with a different 'take' on a group of people I would previously have dismissed as religious fanatics. I could not escape the fact that they were nice towards me, that they did their utmost to assist my research and that they rather poignantly expressed gratitude that 'at least someone is interested in what we have to say'. At the same time, I also knew that the interviewees were utterly opposed to everything I believed in. Their passion for and dedication to "the cause" is every bit as meaningful for them as it is for their opponents on the

4I conducted personal interviews with the following people: Jan Brown, former Reform MP for Calgary Southeast; Tom Flanagan former Director of Research for the Reform Party and faculty member of the University of Calgary's Political Science department; Stephen Harper, former Reform MP for Calgary West and currently President of the National Citizens' Coalition; Elmer Knutson, the founder of the Confederation of Regions (CoR) Party; Gwendolyn Landolt, chief legal counsel and national Vice-President of REAL Women; Ron Leitch, President of APEC; Preston Manning, former leader of the Reform Party and currently, a leadership candidate for the Canadian Alliance; F.L. (Ted) Morton, founder of the Alberta Civil Society Association and faculty member of the University of Calgary's Political Science department; Peggy Steacy, President of the BC chapter of REAL Women.
left. However, such passion and other deep emotions often prove to be the enemy of political success and public acceptance. In the case of the New Right, its members are so frequently in states of agitation, frustration, and anger, that far-fetched conspiracy theories about the left-liberal-secular revolution to dismantle the nuclear family, Judeo-Christian values, indeed all traditional social norms and moral-ethical standards, are treated as the unvarnished, if not wholly evident, truth.

Despite the lack of hard evidence to substantiate their conviction that the world (or at least western civilization) is going to hell-in-a-handbasket at the hands of their opponents, it is impossible to study the right without at least some personal acknowledgment that for them "the world" has indeed been turned upside-down during the course of their lifetime.

Such convictions, I suspect, are strongly but not exclusively correlated to age. Although in-house statistical data for REAL Women and APEC are scant (not unusual for organizations with limited resources), we know that in most right-wing organizations (with the possible exception of the neo-fascist right), the majority of members are over the age of forty-five and more likely to support what Nevitte (1996:38-41) calls the "general principle of deference" vis-à-vis traditional forms of authority and social compliance.

This was also the generation that relied far less on state provision of social services, and where the virtues of thrift, self-sacrifice and self-initiative were encouraged. For many of these people (but not limited to them by any means), contemporary society and governments appear to have turned those nation-defining traditional norms and values into objects of scorn and derision, such that the "ideal type" of yesteryear, namely, the white, Christian, nuclear family with a working father and a full-time housewife and mother, has come to be regarded as the primary source of all things detestable to contemporary (or postmodern) sensibilities. Not

\footnote{Erwin (1993:407) reports that 62 percent of respondents to her survey of the profamily right were 45 years of age and older.}
surprisingly then, what conservatives see as the profound "decay of the social bond" (Himmelstein, 1990:105) fuels their anxiety and animates their activism.

Indeed, many right wingers insist that behaviours and attitudes (once) regarded as unacceptable or deviant have now been elevated to equal status with traditional norms and values. Included among them are: feminism, gay-lesbian rights, sexual permissiveness, largely unfettered access to abortion, climbing rates of divorce and the birth of out-of-wedlock children, sexually explicit and violent films and music aimed at youth, the rejection of traditional religious observances, and respect for authority. That these have become largely accepted, fashionable, even valorized, is deeply disconcerting to the New Right. Thus it came as no real surprise that one of the most frequent laments I heard during the course of research was conveyed by the question: "What happened to my country, anyhow?" So it was with some feeling of sympathy for those now somewhat adrift in a world that has in their view demonized their values -- values which were once upheld as dominant social norms, no less -- that I approached these organizations and their members.

* * * * * * * * * * 

Ted Byfield, publisher of the Report chain of western-based newsmagazines, one of the stalwarts of Canadian social conservatism, and a vocal supporter of the three organizations studied here, has been thundering away on the same New Right themes for well over 25 years. In a recent on-line edition of his British Columbia Report, he has reiterated that view with particular clarity (and a little humour) and effectively conveys the frustrations of right-wingers like himself:

...from the very first we [conservatives] have been scourged, deplored, denounced and debunked by virtually every ostensibly respectable quarter. To the Ottawa
establishment we are disruptive to the point of treason. To the gays we represent bigotry, to the feminists patriarchy, the socialists the commercial oligarchy, to the commercial oligarchs an excessive religiosity and to the bureaucrats simple anarchy.

That we accomplished this by saying substantially the same thing year after year may seem perplexing, but it is not. For while we have remained the same, the world has been transformed. Go back 50 years and very little of what we say would have met any disapproval at all. Our view would have pretty much been the Establishment view.

But then the nation turned increasingly, almost violently, against the very values upon which it was founded, and people who hold our views discovered themselves devolving. First we were merely old-fashioned. Then we were obstinate and intransigent. Next we became an "embarrassment" [...] — the aging and flatulent uncle who you wish would remain upstairs, but who keeps coming down to intrude upon the garden party. Finally we descended to outright appalling, the position we enjoy today. And all for keeping on saying the same thing.6

Whether actual or imagined, it is clear that the sense of losing social, moral, and political control is deeply felt throughout the movement. That so many critics of the right often tend to dismiss this concern as merely the intolerant rants of justifiably marginalized crackpots is both unfortunate and from an analytical standpoint, unproductive.

For their part, while the right's habit for "saying the same thing," as Byfield puts it, may demonstrate a penchant for consistency, it does not, as this thesis shows, fit at all well with the social and political realities of modern, complex liberal-democracies. For better or for worse, the Canadian New Right remains deeply perplexed by the riotously diverse society they see before them and frustrated by the enabling role the state performs in support of contemporary norms and values. Though it never was really the right's to begin with, it is clear that today Canada is no longer -- if ever it was -- "their country" alone.

CHAPTER TWO
THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW RIGHT
IN A COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK

Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself.
-- Walt Whitman, Songs of Myself

The theorist who interrogates instead of using his theoretic equipment catches no fish.
-- Michael Oakeshott, On Human Conduct

INTRODUCTION

Before examining the particular aspects and activities of the three Canadian organizations, this chapter explores the ideological characteristics of the New Right phenomenon in general. This involves investigation along three paths: assessing some of the better-known scholarly interpretations of New Right development; brief examinations showing how New Right movements took root in the "mentor countries," the United States and Britain; and the factors influencing the movement's development in Canada. A brief conclusion considers the issue of the movement's theoretical consistency.

A central aspect of (or fault line in) New Right thought and practice is said to be problems relating to ideological coherence. This is apparently the result of friction caused by the movement's two primary ideological components: social-moral conservatism and economic liberalism (for example, see Crawford, 1980; Bosanquet, 1983; Levitas, 1986; Green, 1987; Gamble, 1988; Hoover and Plant, 1989; Gray, 1993; Devigne, 1994; Diamond, 1995). As we also shall see, there is one other important feature to consider as well: populism. In Canada at any rate, the movement can be more accurately characterized by a triangulated, rather than a dualist, ideological structure. One point or node on the structure encloses the obscurantist, pessimistic, elitist, and ethnocentric aspects of conservatism. Another features the classical liberal belief in methodological individualism and the superiority of free market economies. The third point, populism, vests considerable decision-making power and political control in the hands of "the people." As I show in later chapters, the right-populist insistence that "the people" are
naturally conservative, both in temper and in matters of policy, is a mainstay of the movement.

One feature of the right that is not often explicated is that many of the organizations are less hostile to the institutions of state than has frequently been assumed. There are of course factions within contemporary right-wing movements whose all-consuming embrace of the free market requires a retrenchment of state coercion, perhaps something along the lines of the "ultraminimal" institution promoted by libertarian philosophers like Nozick (1974:26-28). But for the most part right-wingers are not ideologically hostile to governments per se. They are hostile to those who, in their view, currently exert a disproportionate influence on the institutions of government and in turn, have thwarted the will of "the people." These include the "special ineterests": feminists, ethnic and linguistic minorities, homosexuals, the "new class" of left-wing, secularist bureaucrats who shape public policy, judges whose interpretations of the law and of constitutional provisions are questionable, and the like.

The members of the three organizations under scrutiny in this thesis seem quite mindful of the potential for harm implicit in state power; but to reiterate, they do not wish to dismantle it -- all things considered, what would be the point of that? -- they seek instead to either influence those in power in order to achieve their objectives, or as was the case with Reform, to win the power of the state. So, while right-wingers can certainly be hostile to any number of government policies and the "special interests" these policies supposedly cater to, they are not opposed to either governments or (if one insists on such a distinction) the state.

EXPLAINING THE NEW RIGHT

There is an impressive amount of scholarly literature on contemporary right-wing thought and practice, not to mention a wealth of contributions from the media and of course material from right-wing groups, parties and individuals themselves. The student will find access to a varied
range of resources from which to launch his/her own analysis of the movement. The literature is diverse and cross-disciplinary, ranging from normative political theory (Levitas, 1986; Gray, 1993; Devigne, 1994), to political economy (Bosanquet, 1983; Gamble, 1988; Hoover and Plant, 1989), to interest-group sociology (Peele, 1984; Diamond, 1995), to empirical analyses of political parties and voting (Kreiger, 1986; Green, 1987; Kitschelt, 1995), to public policy (Harris, 1987; King, 1987; Pitsula and Rasmussen, 1990), to religious studies (Hill and Owen, 1982; Liebman and Wuthnow, 1983), to ethnocultural analysis (Bibby, 1990; Globerman, 1992), to feminist perspectives (Johnston Canover and Gray, 1983; Klatch, 1987), and so on.

Given the variety of analytical approaches, the different historical, cultural, economic and other circumstances peculiar to each country or region and the context-dependent meanings of "conservative," "liberal," and "populist," there is no universal theory or model that adequately accounts for all manner of right-wing mobilizations across different political and/or cultural boundaries. Consider: after reviewing no fewer than eight hypotheses and an equal number of rival hypotheses to explain radical-right politics in Europe, Kitschelt (1995:44) declares that even with respect to basic left-right ideological positioning,

"[t]he problems of historicity and multidimensionality make it impossible to fashion an "essentialist" definition of left and right that would provide a strict and invariant conceptual linkage between substantive issue positions and the spatial imagery. Instead, concrete historical configurations of social order and political institutions shape the cognitive process by which actors construct the linkage between issue positions and project them onto the left/right metaphorical space...[T]he critical question, then, is to develop a theory that explains the use of left and right in varying historical contexts.

Kitschelt (ibid.:44-45) argues further that there can be no "invariant" meaning that explains all contemporary manifestations of right-wing mobilization, because such attempts at theory-making are a) ahistorical and acontextual, and b) the myriad features found in different political movements defeat conceptual and ideological unity. This is especially the case if we compare
across international boundaries. Kitschelt's warning is a valid one, as some analysts, by attempting to fit New Right politics into a predetermined, reductionist theoretical niche, often end up ignoring history, context, and ideological variability.

As suggested by Johnston Canover and Gray (1983:78-81), here are the principal factors that explain New Right mobilization:

- Ideological self-interest and policy incentives
- Solidarity with others who share similar views
- Normative appeals to restore traditional values of "the people"
- A sense of urgency, i.e. political action is required now
- Outside influences (pro and con), including the church, government, and media

The existence of multiple ideologies in right-wing movements invariably brings with it the observation that they are theoretically incoherent. Certainly, though the "push-pull" of competing ideas is a consistent feature of contemporary right-wing movements, we ought not jump to the related observation that such incoherence or friction is a serious impediment to coordinated action, efficient mobilization, or political success. King (1987:26-27) argues the point very well:

Despite the internal incoherence and inconsistencies of New Right ideas...they have been a major intellectual and political force during the 1980s in Britain and the United States, even though many New Right policy objectives remain unrealised and many New Right supporters consequently are disillusioned. Be that as it may, the force of New Right advocates has been sufficient to displace effectively the post-war Keynesian consensus and to redefine the political agenda. The Thatcher and Reagan governments may not have destroyed the welfare state but they have succeeded in politicising a set of issues (for example, privatisation versus nationalisation, the role of the markets and inadequacy of public welfare services) long dormant in national political life. The evident failure of New Right-influenced economic policies in Britain has not resulted in a renewed statement of Keynesian principles: rather, the Labour and the Alliance of Liberal and Social Democratic parties have adopted many New Right assumptions, if only implicitly. New Right ideas will shape political debate and public policy long after the demise of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations. This makes a study of their ideas important...

Analytically, the New Right is best considered as a coalition whose force has not been undermined by the diversity of its bases of support, intellectual and political. Further, any adequate conception of the New Right must be capable of moving between ideology and political practice since both are essential to a full understanding of its potency.
As skilfully argued as this is, there is minor contradiction within it that is somewhat confusing. On the one hand, King calls New Right economic policies an "evident failure." Yet on the other, he acknowledges that the right's political party rivals have adopted many of the same economic assumptions. Presumably, the point King is making is that while the New Right market-model economy has proven corrosive to the provision of public services normally associated with the welfare state, its principles have nonetheless been adopted (or coopted) by parties of the centre and in Britain the centre-left. This is an important observation, and one that has implications for Canada's New Right; I return to it in Chapter Five.

The theoretical complexity that accompanies the study of the New Right stems not from its ideological inconsistencies or by extension, its sometimes incongruent policy ideas, for those are at least transparent; rather, it lies in determining what unites the movement, and what keeps them involved (not always successfully) in the political arena. Once again, King (ibid.:27) is instructive:

New Right arguments about the superiority of market mechanisms are based on classical economics. In contrast, many New Right arguments about the detrimental economic consequences of the welfare state both for individuals and for economic activity are less grounded in theory than in rhetoric. Similarly, many of the morally conservative positions of leading New Right politicians can hardly be traced to testable hypotheses but rather derive from strongly held beliefs or prejudices. Definition and discussion of the New Right must take account of these elements and attempt to include them within a single study in a way which illustrates their connections, even if these do not cohere theoretically.

Put another way, one must be prepared to sift through a number of cross-disciplinary, cross-cutting analyses (and a fair amount of polemical writing, too) before attempting to convey his or her own basic sense of, let alone construct a testable hypothesis of, the movement. This is made all the more difficult because while inaccuracies and questionable premises do crop up from time to time in the literature, New Right movements are themselves internally diverse and subject to particular influences of time, place, and political culture.
O'Sullivan (1989:168) points out that one reason for the difficulty in achieving analytical consistency is the controversial nature of New Right movements themselves. This in turn often hampers objectivity:

What is mainly lacking in [the available] literature is a clear perspective from which to evaluate [the New Right]. What we find amongst the critics are vague and emotional charges of obscurantism, fascism, racism, nationalism and totalitarianism; and what we find amongst the defenders are equally vague and emotional references to the need for rolling back the frontiers of the state, reinvigorating capitalism and ending a culture of moral dependency.

This is a valid point, but O'Sullivan may inadvertently be contributing to the very problem he wishes to surmount. The cause of the difficulty in achieving a clear(er) perspective on the New Right is not so much the result of a clash of personalized, impressionistic narratives between its critics and supporters, though this certainly does occur from time to time. Rather, the lack of perspective is more likely due to the variable ideological nature of New Right movements themselves. This has tended to generate analyses which, while often models of dispassionate, objective scholarship, vary considerably in their hypotheses, approach, discipline, methodology, scope, interpretation, and conclusion. Studies of the contemporary right are indeed all over the board, but this is not necessarily the result of partisan bickering or impassioned rhetoric. Rather, it is symptomatic of a movement that defies facile definitions. The sometimes inchoate nature of New Right ideas assures that it does not fit easily into any single analytical framework. Strong state and weak government? Socio-cultural conformity and individual rights? Moral authoritarianism and market freedoms? Political elitism and majoritarian populism? The New Right is a contradiction wrapped inside a hive of opposites.

This array of ideological and practical political contradictions ensures that comprehending the contours of New Right thinking is never an easy task. One must be willing to conceive of a movement where, say, socio-moral authoritarianism coexists with market freedoms; where
political elitism coexists with populist impulses; where potentially virulent strains of national and cultural chauvinism coexist with "rugged" individualism and personal agency; and where regionalism coexists with heightened fears about national disunity.

We must also be attentive to the added organizational complexities and tensions that mark the New Right as a movement containing a number of lobby organizations seeking to influence policy-making with specific demands (see Pross, 1992:Ch.6; Phillips, 1994:188-194) and as a political party that must attract broad enough support to win an election or at the very least enough seats to remain a viable enterprise. As Young (1992:230-231) usefully reminds us, a party characterized by a distinct ideological perspective is for all intents and purposes, a movement:

The party with an ideology is also a movement; its goals are more than the mere acquisition of power. The parties without such an ideology [i.e. traditional brokerage parties] in this sense are mechanisms for achieving power; the party-movement is a mechanism for propagating and enacting beliefs through power.

In his analysis of right-wing protest movements in Quebec, Stein (1973:10) points out that while it shares a number of features with other political structures, "[a] political movement is one form of social movement, namely one directed at change in the political order." Furthermore, movements are characterized by three features not usually found in other forms of political organization:

[First] political movements have broader goals than most other structures of political competition. They do not seek merely to win power or obtain concessions for their members from government authorities. Their goals generally involve education on a broad scale, mass mobilization, and a variety of other modes of action designed to promote social change. Second, political movements are generally organized around a set of utopian beliefs or goals which are embodied in a political ideology. This ideology is intended to act as a solidifying force and a means of propelling the members of the movement towards the attainment of their goals....Third, political movements involve a structuring or ordering of political roles and a distribution of power, influence, and authority among its members which differ from that of other political structures [ibid.:10-11].
With respect to the New Right groups examined here, Stein's explication of the differences between a movement and (in this thesis) a party provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding the tensions that develop between these organizations. The chapters that follow also show that the Reform Party and its leader added another layer of complexity to the movement-party thesis, especially where it concerned relations with the two lobby/pressure groups examined here. While Reform was by most measures an ideological vehicle, especially when compared with the Liberals and Conservatives, and one with clear sympathies and connections to right-wing lobbies, its leader was neither comfortable inhabiting a specific ideological niche, nor content to have the party exist merely for the propagation of particular beliefs.

Like its counterparts in the US and in Britain, the Canadian New Right can at times appear to be a rather blunt instrument. But for all its frequent displays of self-assurance, the fact remains that, apart from government commitments to economic and fiscal conservatism (a "victory" far from being exclusively theirs as we shall see), New Right policy wins -- rather than indirect influence -- have been few and far between.

_Different labels, same movement_

The term used frequently (but not exclusively) in this thesis, "New Right," is said to have been coined by American conservative journalist Kevin Phillips in 1975 (Medcalf and Dolbeare, 1985:168). It is not the only descriptive term used to identify contemporary conservative movements, but it is probably the most widely used. Many others prefer to use "neoconservatism," though by informal consensus, that term refers to a distinct era and a distinctive variant of American right-wing thought in the 1950s and 60s.

These days neoconservatism is synonymous with New Right" (so too is "neoliberalism"). The blurring of whatever distinctions were once evident between the terms increased after the
electoral victories of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan.

Neoconservatism...invokes individualism against collectivism, and repudiates the principle of equality (both of opportunity and condition). It rejects the redistributionist ethic of the welfare state and the interventionist role of government. It evokes populism and traditional morality in defending the social order of capitalism. It claims to be more democratic than its liberal or social democratic rivals. In various combinations, these ideas have contributed to the electoral victories of the New Right in the U.S., Britain and Canada [Resnick, 1984:138].

The description of neoconservatives offered by Gottfried and Fleming (1988:65-6) seems quite an appropriate fit for the rational, systematic approach to policy-making that characterizes Preston Manning's leadership of the Reform Party:

The neoconservatives...revel in statistics and computerized information. They believe that social problems are amenable to rigorous investigation that can throw light on them and thereby contribute to their solution...[T]heir position is not entirely incompatible with modern state planning. Almost all neoconservatives, and certainly the distinguished academics among them, remain qualified defenders of the welfare state. This loyalty is understandable in light of their study of society as sets of problems, which may or may not call for state action.

Minkenberg's (1993:2-3) comparative analysis of contemporary right-wing movements in the USA and Germany sees the New Right defined as a radicalizing force within neoconservatism:

Here, New Right is not understood in terms of a single political party or a collection of parties. Rather, it is conceptualized as populist-neoconservative reactions to fundamental change in culture and values in Western societies. Neoconservatism, as defined here, reflects a new cleavage based on values change. It is not simply the revival of traditional conservatism in the Old Politics sense -- i.e. opposition to the welfare state and to the redistribution of income -- but a new coalition of forces which see their common enemy in the post-materialist New Left and its political agenda. Neoconservatism combines members of the Old Left who felt challenged by the New Left and traditional conservative groups. This orientation is expressed by a heightened concern with sociocultural values and issues (nationalism and ethnocentrism, law and order, family, religion and bourgeois morality), by support for basic values of capitalism, particularly the idea of progress (even in its Social Darwinist version), and by a general acceptance of basic welfare state accomplishments. The New Right radicalizes this neoconservative reaction and fuses its tenets with a populist, anti-establishment and anti-party thrust. Thus, the New Right is not simply the extension of conservatism towards the extreme right but the product of a restructuring of the political system in which constituencies of established parties tend to realign.
according to the New Politics cleavage rather than the Old Politics cleavage. While I would argue that right-wing movements are not as anti-party as Minkenberg insists, his description of the New Right-neoconservative dynamic draws out the strands of its thought effectively. When we think of the Canadian New Right movement, especially the Reform Party and now the Canadian Alliance, Minkenberg's model of movement realignment to "New Politics" is compelling.

Gollner and Sallee (1988:16) have argued that whatever differences exist between "neoconservatives" and "neoliberals," they are relatively minor when considered against the larger canvas of the movement's ultimate objective:

Between neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism, there is hardly more than a variation in degree and nuance as to how to achieve the reforms that the proponents of each strand think are needed to face up to what they see as the abuses [brought about by] the Welfare state and Keynesian economics. While neo-conservatives will tend to insist more on traditional moral values and social ethics, and may even consider state intervention to insure that a modicum of conventional morality be imposed on society (e.g. legislation against abortion, compulsory prayer in the schools), they are just as likely as their neo-liberal counterparts to assert the paramountcy of the market and of individualism, though the neo-liberal will tend to favour a more minimalist state...The so-called New Right blends these two tendencies into its socioeconomic project.

Hoover and Plant's (1989:12) political economy analysis of the Thatcher and Reagan governments rejects common labels entirely, especially the "New Right," which, in their view,

...conceals...the sense in which belief in moral restraint is finally inconsistent with a programme of unrestrained economic liberty -- a contradiction which is left open for consideration by [our preferred] phrase 'conservative capitalism'. Thus we find the phrase 'New Right' contributes little to clarifying what in fact is being advanced by way of policy by conservatives and so [we] have avoided [using] it.

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1The term "neoliberal," although a useful and legitimate description of the corporate-capitalist aspects of the movement, is rarely invoked. See for example, Rothenberg (1984), Betz (1993), Sargent (1993), McBride and Shields (1993).
Hoover also provides the following figure:²

**Figure 2.1: Divisions within Conservative Capitalism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEOLOGY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditionalist</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customary institutions as basis: establishment church, family, wealth in property</td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ESTABLISHMENT CONSERVATISM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-Lower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical church as basis: fundamentalist, nativist, patriotic</td>
<td>Middle-Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MORALIST CONSERVATISM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate banking sector as basis: elitist, internationalist, oriented to economic development</td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CORPORATE CONSERVATISM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is one of the more innovative attempts to draw out the ideological dynamics of contemporary right-wing movements. However, despite directing our attention to the differentiated bases of support and class distinctions, these four divisions, at least in as much as they might connect with the "real world" of political activism, cannot always be marked-off so clearly from one another. Indeed, the problem here — apart from the conspicuous omission of the role of the state — is that a number of these distinctions are not really divisive at all, and in fact, can be found in more than one category. For example, individual entrepreneurship ("populist conservatism") and family ("establishment conservatism") easily transcend their respective divisions; so too does wealth in property ("establishment"). Furthermore, in the

²Prof. Hoover distributed this figure at the Annual Meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, held at the University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, May, 1990.
"moralist" conservative quadrant, support for the free market, which many in the right regard as an important expression of the Judeo-Christian tradition, is not mentioned.

Eatwell (1989:7) also insists that we take into account the various distinctive strands in contemporary right-wing politics:

Firstly, there is a small, but intellectually assertive, libertarian strand, which believes in the minimal state. Secondly, there is a laissez-faire strand, which is more concerned with reversing the 'ratchet effect', whereby in the post-war world the state continued to grow, regardless of the political complexion of the government. This group accepts some form of state activity within the economic and social realms. A positive role for the state is also accepted by the third strand: namely, the traditionalist wing. This strand is worried by the individualist aspects of the previous strands. It especially seeks to stress the continued importance of institutions such as religion and the family. Fourthly, there is what might be termed a mythical wing, which is more specifically concerned with securing support for the right, especially through ideas such as nation and race, or eulogizing the 'will of the people'.

The point to bear in mind through all of this is that New Right or neoconservative movements are complex clusters of ideas and policies. To label the movement as single-minded or ideologically linear is to underestimate seriously its breadth.

A SURVEY OF RECENT SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINING CONTEMPORARY RIGHT-WING MOBILIZATIONS

My objective here is to flesh out a more comprehensive picture of New Right movements by examining a variety of scholarly analyses. Much of the scholarship on right-wing movements is American and British in origin. Though there are obvious adjustments to be made when situating the right in a Canadian context, the source of the scholarship and its focus are not usually problematic.

We begin with Belsey's (1986:173) theoretical examination of the British New Right. Belsey contends that the movement is an uncomfortable, if not an incoherent, jumble of two distinct ideological "sides." One side "draws on the conservative discourse of authority and
discipline and the other [on] a liberal discourse of freedom and justice." I have modified the table that accompanies Belsey's analysis in order to show how each side prioritizes certain fundamental principles:

Table 2.1: Ideological divisions within the New Right

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neoliberalism</th>
<th>Neoconservatism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. the individual</td>
<td>1. the nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. freedom of choice</td>
<td>2. hierarchy and subordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. market society</td>
<td>3. disciplined society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. laissez-faire</td>
<td>4. social authoritarianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. minimal government</td>
<td>5. strong government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For all the clarity and insight such classifications bring to our understanding of the New Right, we must always keep in mind that while providing evidence of distinctive classes and/or ideological sides is helpful and valuable, there are few if any explicit normative divisions within the New Right. The lines of ideological differentiation are frequently more blurred than they are marked-off from each other.

Kitschelt's (1995) comparative study of "radical right" activity in Britain and on the Continent provides a comprehensive quantitative approach to the formation of contemporary right-wing political parties and to the social-occupational bases of their support. Echoing Gamble's (1988) "free economy, strong state" thesis, Kitschelt (ibid.:2) writes:

...the New Right constitutes the mirror image and opposite political pole of a New Left that began to mobilize in the 1960s...On the one hand, the New Left stands for "leftist" income redistribution by way of encompassing social policies in the economic sphere and "libertarian" democratic participation and maximum individual autonomy in politics and the cultural sphere. The New Radical Right...on the other hand, advocates rightist free market economics and "authoritarian" hierarchical arrangements in politics, together with a limitation of diversity and individual autonomy in cultural expressions. In other words, postindustrialist politics is characterized by a main ideological cleavage dividing left-libertarians from right-authoritarians.
Kitschelt thus sees the New Right as something of a "mirror image" of its New Left opponent. This analysis suggests an interesting political and policy dialectic, though it has yet to be tested and proven conclusively. Where the New Left envisions a central role for the state with respect to social and economic policy -- while at the same time insisting on individual autonomy in politics and culture -- the New Right remains hostile to state intervention in social and economic policy, yet supports almost any interventionist policy that restricts individual autonomy in politics and culture. Following this, it appears that while the means and motivations may differ, both sides along this ideological-policy divide seek the same populist-driven end: a will to power, i.e. the capture of government in the name of "the people." One other interesting difference suggested here is this: the left seeks to "liberate" the state from the capitalist agenda, and "the people" from many of the traditional moral constraints imposed by social conservatism. The right meanwhile seeks to "free" the market from state control, and "the people" from the self-centred moral-ethical relativism of contemporary left-liberalism.

In an interesting rejoinder to the view held by some analysts (mostly those on the right-populist side themselves) that the contemporary right's embrace of capitalism is evidence of its egalitarian and/or communitarian foundations, Diamond (1995:8) contends that "most rightists have supported de facto state intervention to the advantage of the upper classes." She argues further that the American right's historically "dominant motif," anticommunism,

...was about preserving economic inequality [which is] the libertarian strain in right-wing thinking. At a more mass level, anticommunism was about obedience to authority and repression of domestic political dissent and deviant tendencies in the broader culture... [Thus a] pattern is evident. To be right-wing means to support the state in its capacity as enforcer of order and to oppose the state as distributor of wealth and power downward and more equitably in society [p. 9].

For all the political aggressiveness they have been known to exhibit, New Right groups as a whole have not been especially successful in their endeavours. Throughout much of the 1980s, in the
USA and Britain at any rate, this lack of success might have been regarded as a touch paradoxical, especially considering that the man occupying the American presidency and the woman serving as Britain's prime minister were so strongly identified with right-wing politics and ideas.

On the social issues front in the United States for example, such programs as the busing of schoolchildren and affirmative action provisions remained more or less intact; so too did the banning of prayers in public schools, limited acceptance of institutional bilingualism and multiculturalism, the legal right to abortion, and growing acceptance of equal rights for gays and lesbians. Even with respect to those issues on the so-called "profamily agenda," Reagan's record of achievement is spotty (Diamond, op. cit.:231). In Britain, while Thatcher's policy aims found more legislative support (as one would expect with a parliamentary majority), she came nowhere close to ushering in the garantiste liberal constitutional order many had anticipated (Devigne, 1994:24-5).

In Canada, the right's first successes were at the level of provincial politics. In 1982-83 in BC, the Social Credit government of Bill Bennett brought in a broad policy of spending "restraints" that included significant public-sector layoffs and right-to-work legislation. The resulting mass protests against these plans brought the province to the brink of a general strike and for the first time in Canada, the term "right-wing agenda" appeared in the popular lexicon (see especially, Magnusson, et. al., 1984). In Saskatchewan, the Progressive Conservative government of Grant Devine embarked on a similar program of government cutbacks and privatization. In contrast to BC's Bennett, who rarely focussed on matters of personal morality, Devine openly embraced the "family values" agenda of the right (see Pitsula and Rasmussen, 3

3Though his Social Credit successor, William Vander Zalm, a charismatic Catholic, most certainly would.
And of course, Alberta has had an unbroken line of right-wing governments since 1935.

At the federal level, and before the 1984 victory of the Conservatives would usher in an era of neoconservative economic policies, right-wing influence was at best tepid. Mulroney's predecessors, the Trudeau Liberals, were pan-Canadianist, statist-oriented, and convinced that the federal government had a central role to play in the economy and in the social-cultural life of citizens. The Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA), the establishment of Petro-Canada and the National Energy Program (NEP), the Official Languages Act (OLA), the Multiculturalism Act, the entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to name only the most prominent, were effective breakwaters against the New Right wave gathering strength elsewhere.

The Joe Clark-led Conservative interregnum of 1979-80, brief though it was, might have appeared as an ideal opportunity to establish a platform of New Right principles along the lines of Thatcher in Britain. While Clark did flirt with some of these ideas (privatizing Petro-Canada, for example), he was only slightly more comfortable with the right-wing agenda than was Trudeau. As former Reform MP Stephen Harper sees it, the Clark Tories actually pushed the party away from the New Right at precisely the same time that right-of-centre parties in the US and in Britain were being pulled toward it. Whatever chance a right-wing platform had at the federal level would have to wait until 1984 and the electoral victory of the Mulroney Conservatives. However, and as we see in the chapters that follow, Mulroney's time in office would prove to be deeply disappointing to most right-wingers.

Economic issues are of crucial importance to the New Right and the movement has been

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4 As well, Devine's wife, Chantal, publicly supported REAL Women.

5 Personal interview with the author, 25 May, 2000. For a different view of Clark's ideological position, see Campbell and Christian (1996:45-48).
the principal political vehicle for such macroeconomic prescriptions as monetarism and supply-side economics (Bosanquet, 1983:5; Green, 1987:11-20). Harris (1987:7) argues that the very essence of the New Right can be grasped solely through an appreciation of their market-liberal, middle-class opposition to increases in taxation and public spending. King (1988a:794) concurs, citing "[l]iberal economic and tenets [as] the core of New Right arguments." McBride and Shields (op. cit.:Ch.1) have offered an interesting critique of "neo-liberal" economics and their impact on the Canadian state. More so than in the US or in Britain they argue, the Canadian identity, or what they refer to as the country's "uniquely political nationality" (p. 33), is intimately bound up with and defined by projects undertaken by the federal government. For English-speaking Canada especially, "central government projects like the national railway, the CBC and, more recently, regional and social security programs" (p. 32) have helped to define the Canadian nationality. In fact, the authors argue that "the state pre-dates the very development of the nation" (ibid.). The upshot of this view is that right-wing economic policies, and especially free trade agreements, are central to New Right ideology but corrosive to the national identity. Other analysts contend that the market is not the central organizing principle of New Right ideas. Rather, as Abbott and Wallace (1992:7) argue, the deepest concern is over the "moral decay of society." Such decay does however, exhibit a "clear relationship [with] economic decline" (also see Johnston Canover and Gray, 1983:69-73).

THE RISE OF THE NEW RIGHT IN THE USA, BRITAIN, AND CANADA

In what follows, I examine the mobilization of contemporary right-wing interests in the United States, Britain and Canada, as well as a number of scholarly interpretations that have contributed to our understanding of these developments. It is not my intention here to engage in an exhaustive survey; rather, the aim is to provide a useful theoretical foundation for my subsequent
examination of the three Canadian organizations.

The right in the USA

As Medcalf and Dolbeare (1985:165-76) tell it, by 1974 a new right-wing coalition appeared on the American political scene. Its members were drawn from eclectic sources: conservative intellectuals, assorted political activists, and a large coterie of traditionalist Christian and prolife groups. Their stated purpose? To oppose President Gerald Ford's selection of Nelson Rockefeller as his Vice-President.

Actually, there were far more contentious matters than the choice of Vice-President: America's role in Vietnam, the ongoing threat of communism, the challenges to the political and social status quo by feminists and an assortment of other equality-seeking, "special interest" groups, the issue of abortion, the secularization of society, the growth of government, and a general sense of moral malaise, to name some of them. Against this backdrop of hot-button issues, it seems rather odd that this nascent right-wing movement would focus initially on Nelson Rockefeller, the former Republican Governor of New York state, whose family name was synonymous with aggressive capitalism and wealth. Rockefeller's misfortune as it were, was to be an apparently "soft," that is to say, a moderate, small-c, conservative and thus far too liberal for this new coalition's liking.

In practical terms, the aim of these newly-mobilized conservatives was to wrest control of the party away from the elite. Ultimately, all of this enmity directed towards the Vice-President served as a catalyst for a larger, more important project: a multi-faceted attack against those forces that had come to signify all that had "gone wrong" with contemporary American society, culture, politics, institutions, and political parties (also see Gottfried and Fleming, 1988:77).

With this initial burst of aggressive activism, the American New Right quickly
distinguished itself from its more circumspect and cautious old-line conservative parents. At the core of New Right activity lies an action-oriented and competitive spirit; a willingness, indeed a desire, to take on all opponents, large and small. To borrow William F. Buckley's famous editorial prescription for *National Review*, the cutting edge of this new American conservatism no longer was resigned to merely "stand athwart history yelling Stop!" It was now characterized by a penchant for rapid, large-scale mobilization and aggressive, even dirty, political trench warfare.

*The roots of the new American conservatism*

The rise of the contemporary right occurred along two interrelated fronts: at the programmatic and theoretical level by conservative intellectuals, and the day-to-day activities of political activists, secular as well as religious. At the level of ideas, publication of Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944 and Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* in 1953 were seminal events in the development of contemporary right-wing thought.

Hayek's polemic against all centralized state planning as leading inexorably to totalitarian collectivism and thus to serfdom, provided a powerful intellectual weapon against the Keynesian economic prescriptions embraced by post-Depression and postwar governments. Though all but ignored at the time of its release, Hayek's passionate defence of free markets made enough of an impact to be published in abridged form by *Reader's Digest*. Hayek would expand upon the interrelated themes of free markets, spontaneous evolution, the limits to human knowledge, and of course, the "fatal conceit" of socialism in his later efforts, among them, *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960) and the three volumes of *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* (1973, 1976, 1979). Though his ideas were relegated to the intellectual and political margins for a good deal of his
academic life, after receiving the Nobel prize for economics in 1974, after the electoral victories of Thatcher and Reagan, and after that, the collapse of communism throughout eastern Europe, he was thrust more into the spotlight.

At about the same time Hayek’s *Serfdom* was being published by Reader’s Digest, American moral traditionalist Russell Kirk’s *The Conservative Mind* was warning readers that the preeminent danger of modern American society was its tendency to slip into corrosive egalitarianism which, it was argued, would eventually undermine the established moral order and political hierarchy upon which a proper (conservative) state and civil society depend. Joining Kirk was University of Chicago philosopher Leo Strauss, whose own anti-democratic ideas would exert a considerable influence on some of his students, including Irving Kristol and Allan Bloom (see Devigne, 1994:Ch.2; Diamond, 1995:29).

During the 1940s and 50s, a number of popular (though not populist) conservative publications also appeared on the scene. In 1944, the conservative-isolationist pamphlet *Human Events* made its debut. With start-up capital supplied by a Sun Oil Company executive (Diamond, op. cit.:24), the publication found a small, but intensely loyal, audience.

Though soon to be eclipsed by the popularity of Buckley’s own *National Review* newsmagazine, *Human Events* was part of a panoply of small, but influential right-wing publications, *Commentary, The Freeman, American Mercury, The Public Interest,* and *Modern Age* prominent among them. While some publications dealt with domestic issues concerning individual rights and the growth of the technocratic state (especially *The Freeman*), most of them focussed on foreign policy issues, specifically "the development of a militantly anti-communist posture" (Hoover and Plant, 1989:94). Assisted on the home front by such grassroots church

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6An award he shared with left-wing economist Gunnar Myrdal.
groups as Billy James Hargis' Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, the vast majority of American conservatives and their literature were supportive of Senator Joseph McCarthy's efforts to ferret out those suspected of harbouring communist sympathies. The McCarthy era shifted the right's focus somewhat away from foreign policy concerns and more towards domestic issues. By the mid 1950s the right had become more committed to the domestic scene than ever before, vowing to defeat communism at home and to dismantle "New Deal" welfare programs (and later Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" legislation). In the minds of right-wingers, the welfare state was as "un-American" as communism.

The more activist the right wing became, the more aware its intellectuals and other influential members of the growing ideological cleavage within. It now appeared self-evident that libertarian demands for individual freedom and an unfettered market were not entirely compatible with conservative arguments for rigid social order and moral virtue. From the standpoint of this clash of ideas at least, it would appear that Friedrich Hayek and Russell Kirk -- or Ayn Rand and William Buckley for that matter -- had little in common with each other.

As Will and Williams (1986:161) note, what constitutes the ideological divide in the US right was more likely framed within context-dependent appeals for collectivism or individualism, rather than the class antagonisms common in Europe and Britain. They provide the following table to illustrate (ibid.):
TABLE 2.2: Basic ideological dimensions in American politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MORAL/CULTURAL</th>
<th>ECONOMIC/RESOURCE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Right</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collectivist</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individualist</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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It was the desire for political power that led the American right to a "fusion" of its libertarian and conservative elements (see Gottfried, 1994:26; Diamond 1995:31). The catalyst for fusion came about by way of a libertarian critique of conservative social values. In 1955, *The Freeman* published an article by libertarian (formerly socialist) journalist Frank Meyer, the gist of which was to criticize Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* for favouring communitarian values over individual rights. Coming from a libertarian, such criticism was not exactly unexpected. But there was more, and as Diamond (ibid.) tells it,

> [f]rom both a practical and philosophical standpoint, Frank Meyer proposed what he called a "dialectical" synthesis of traditionalism and libertarianism. Meyer argued that advocates of "both implicitly accept, and to a large degree, the ends of the other." His logic ran like this: without a basis in moral values, personal freedom is meaningless; and without freedom of choice, society's pursuit of virtue and order would lead to "totalitarian authority"...

Fusionism represented the maturity of intellectuals who were willing to hold in mind two seemingly contradictory ideas, libertarianism and traditionalism. They were willing to see their nascent movement as broad enough to contain diversity and willing to acknowledge that no single person or small group had "the answer."

For all its newfound intellectual maturity and theoretical unity, the following decade would not be especially kind to the right. The continued growth of the state, the blunders made during Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign for the Republican Party, the civil rights movement, the growing unpopularity of the Vietnam war, the rise of the so-called "youth counterculture" — whatever unifying internal adjustments the movement had accomplished, it seemed that modern society was set squarely against it.

In 1968 most conservatives fell into line as expected and supported Richard Nixon's
successful bid for the presidency, though American Independent candidate George Wallace, with the editorial support of both the National Review and Human Events, did manage to obtain 13.5 percent of the vote (Gottfried and Fleming, 1988:33). Apart from expanding American military involvement in Southeast Asia into Cambodia in 1970 and giving a rather tepid nod to "community standards" in the fight against pornography, little else Nixon undertook met with the right's approval. On the foreign policy front -- still of high interest to the right -- neither his historic trip to China in 1972 (paralleled by a deep distrust of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger), nor the administration's negotiation of the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) with the Soviet Union that same year were causes for celebration. The country's continuing economic problems, which critics insisted was sustained by Nixon's "shallow consensus Keynesianism" contained in the New Economic Policy (NEP) of late 1971 (Krieger, 1986:128), did little to assuage right-wing frustration. Still, only a minority of conservatives -- mostly those who swung behind George Wallace once more in 1972 -- were willing to abandon the two-party dominant system of American politics. Like it or not, the GOP was the only legitimate vehicle for the conservative cause.

The 1970s was a pivotal decade for the right, conservative Christians especially. Their moral values, once confidently trumpeted by them as the definitive values of the American people, appeared under attack from every quarter. As a result, this "radicalization of liberal politics...what appeared to many [conservatives as an] assault on patriotism, educational standards, and family values[,] was already...generating a new wave of antiliberal activism" (Gottfried and Fleming, 1988:35). Of the 1970s, Liebman (1983:227) writes:

Against the backdrop of pro-abortion legislation, movements for gay and women's rights, and the national trauma of Watergate, the sharp line between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Caesar began to blur...Some [conservatives] connected moral decline with the widely perceived failure of public education. Others argued that the call for gay and women's rights threatened the eventual demise of
the family. Still others argued that a lack of moral leadership was responsible for America's diminished international prestige.

The social changes ushered in during this time were indeed worst-case scenarios for American conservatism's moral sensibilities: a proposed Equal Rights Amendment in 1972, the Supreme Court's ruling liberalizing access to abortion in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, the resignation of President Nixon in 1974 in light of the Watergate scandal, the ignominious withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975, growing calls for recognition of gay and lesbian rights, and continued increases in taxation and government spending. To top it all off, the presidential election of 1976 was won by Democrat Jimmy Carter. To say that there was little in the first half of the 1970s for the American right to cheer about is to understate the situation considerably. These and other events pushed the right into action. During the second half of the decade their public visibility increased significantly. As Krieger (1986:134) puts it, for right-wing activists, the mid-to-late 1970s marked a time when "[i]deologies were back, fears were tapped, organizations were being built[,] and a [new] President was being created."

Throughout much of the late 1970s, what Diamond (op. cit.:131) calls the "accelerated organizational development" of the right was occurring on several fronts. There were the "political action committees" (PACs) like the National Congressional Club, founded in 1973 by North Carolina Republican stalwart Senator Jesse Helms. There were scholarly "think-tank" operations, most prominent of which was the Heritage Foundation, founded by former John Bircher Paul Weyrich and brewing magnate Joseph Coors in 1974. There was a plethora of conservative Christian/prolife lobby groups, starting with the Moral Majority, founded in May 1979 by Virginia preacher Jerry Falwell and Paul Weyrich (who gave the organization its name).

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8As McKay (1987:46) points out, by 1975, total government spending account for 35 percent of GNP, whereas in 1959, it had been 26.9 percent.
Preceding these organizational developments, but essential to the mobilization of the American New Right was the Richard A. Viguerie Company (RAVCO). Established in 1965, RAVCO revolutionized political mobilization through its extensive, systematic use of computerized mailing lists which targeted (some would say bombarded) numerous right-wing organizations and individuals with appeals for support. Like many conservatives, Viguerie was angered by Gerald Ford's selection of Nelson Rockefeller as Vice-President. Sufficiently motivated, he set out to make RAVCO the unofficial nexus of American right-wing activism in the early 1980s. In addition Viguerie wrote a popular (and populist) book about the movement, *The New Right: We're Ready to Lead* (1981) and published two periodicals (now defunct): *Conservative Digest* and *The New Right Report* (also see Young, 1982:27; Gottfried and Fleming, 1988:78-83; Diamond, 1995:172-176).

By the early 1980s the Republican Party was dominated by an assortment of New Right operatives, from supply-side economic libertarians to social and religious conservatives. Here now was the opportunity these people had been looking for: a chance to influence, if not define outright, the party's platform, and with it, the chance to revive at the highest political levels those "traditional" American values. With any kind of luck, they could ride that wave right into the White House. By 1980 the chances for such success seemed all the more favourable after the GOP membership chose Ronald Reagan as their party's leader and presidential candidate.

*Ronald Reagan and the New Right*

Whether or not Reagan's success was due primarily to a sophisticated ideological disposition that was tailor-made for New Right sensibilities, to wit, a right-of-centre combination of "populist anti-state, anti-welfarist rhetoric [accompanied by a] Manichean cast of foreign policy [especially in light of the Americans held hostage in Tehran at the time], and the no-pain promises of supply-side economics" (Krieger, 1986:135). Or whether his appearance was simply
the combination of fortuitous circumstances akin to Beatles' drummer Ringo Starr's declaration that he was just "happy to be here," has been the subject of some debate.

Vagaries of virtù and fortuna aside, Reagan was no stranger to elective office, and his affinity for social conservatism and economic liberalism was certainly well known. Just as importantly, after years of tepid, "last-resort" support for such leaders as Nixon and Ford, candidate Reagan inspired the GOP membership. His three decades as a Hollywood actor had honed both his communications skills and personal appeal to a sharp edge. Not surprisingly, most conservatives, including Christian groups, were enthusiastically supportive of his candidacy (also see Soileau, 1985; Shriver, 1985; Wilcox, 1989, 1990). Mobilized by such determined Christian lobbies as the Moral Majority, Christian Voice, a number of conservative-Christian PACs and prolife organizations, the "Religious Right's" support for Reagan was an integral component of his electoral success.

It is no secret that many of Reagan's public appearances and speeches were scripted performances, right down to the last homespun anecdote, moral homily, or empathetic tilt of the head; and they were in any case masterfully executed. Arguably not a man of great intellectual depth, Reagan was at least able to manipulate simple language to considerable political effect. If the minutiae of policy-making appeared to hold little attraction for him, and if at times he seemed prone to confusing Hollywood fiction with reality, he was nonetheless able to capitalize very effectively on two of major objectives sought by the right: controlling communism and rolling back the state.

On other issues of concern to the right however, it often seemed that the President could not deliver. Despite his cathedral performances in conveying empathy and vision for "traditional values" Americans, it soon came apparent to many of his supporters that while he might have said all the correct things (for example see Woodrum, 1988:193), the policy outcomes didn't
always match the comforting script. Diamond (op. cit.:214) writes:

Early in Reagan's first term, the conservative movement issued vocal protests of administration policy on numerous scores. In the summer of 1981, a coalition of New Right groups opposed Reagan's nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor to the Supreme Court on the grounds that she was insufficiently "pro-life." The cover story of Conservative Digest's July 1982 issue, headlined "Has Reagan Deserted the Conservatives?", featured a laundry list of policy complaints, commentaries from a range of New Right and neoconservative leaders, and an open letter from 43 right-wing Congressmembers. Topping the Conservative Digest list of criticisms was the administration's proposed tax increases and failure to balance the budget. Beyond that, critics protested Reagan's failure to enact constitutional amendments on school prayer and abortion. On specific foreign policy issues, critics charged Reagan with weakness toward the Soviet bloc.

These policy miscues were not entirely Reagan's fault. In the American system, Congress can prove to be stubbornly obstructionist with respect to what the president wants. However, and whatever may be said of the mutual admiration between the Reagan administration and the New Right, it was not a particularly successful political relationship, at least from the standpoint of meeting the latter's myriad policy objectives.10

1980 marked the beginning of a dozen years with a Republican president at the helm, the first eight of which were Reagan's. Yet, in taking stock of the state of the union in the mid 1990s, conservative Catholic and staunch Reaganite Michael Novak (1994:19) could only lament that

[i]n contemporary America, the weakest part is the moral and cultural. Politically

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9For example, the percentage of Congressional overrides of presidential vetoes of public bills not including "pocket vetoes" (bills the president does not sign before the end of a session) during Reagan's first term in office was higher than any other president since the end of World War Two: 23.5 percent of Reagan's regular vetoes -- 4 of 17 -- were overridden by Congress. The next highest was Gerald Ford at 22.8 percent, and then Richard Nixon at 20.8 percent. Source: McKay (1987:106).

10Upon Reagan's first presidential victory, the Heritage Foundation produced an enormous policy blueprint for the new administration, Mandate for Leadership. While it was enthusiastically received by Reagan and his cabinet secretaries, it ended up being more honoured in the breach than the observance. Also see Gottfried and Fleming (1988:81).
and economically, the nation is the strongest on earth. Morally and culturally, it is without question suffering from precipitous decline...[T]he moral culture of the United States is so repulsive to people in other cultures that it is gravely weakening our international role. The assault on traditional morality and basic standards of decency in movies, television shows, and video rock is, to much of the world, a scandal. Seen in combination with the statistics of crime, drug usage, and other dissolute habits so abundantly reported in the media, this assault on traditional decencies is a national disgrace. Our people are losing virtue; that is why we are losing self-government.

Krieger (1986:145) remarks that a key objective of New Right operatives (whom he describes, unfortunately, as "rednecks and rubes") during the Reagan years was to keep party power to themselves, and away from the "preppies and elitists" -- old-line men of privilege and patrician bearing, including Reagan's Vice President George Bush and pundits like William Buckley. Krieger (ibid.) further asserts that:

Even more significant is the fact that the dichotomy in cultural ethos and class style which separates the Bushes and Buckleys from the Falwells and Vigueries represents a considerable division in world view and policy imperatives. The New Right grounds its policies in social life and family, moving to economic issues and questions of foreign policy only, in a sense, inferentially...

New Right politics [also] includes a "privatization" impulse which legitimizes the anti-integrative, anti-welfarist edge to their politics and the strident plea to save the family as the bastion of male privilege.

By the time George Bush was elected President in 1988, the Republican-New Right partnership would be tested once more. Not only was Bush incapable of articulating his "vision thing" in the simple though compelling manner of his predecessor, his patrician roots had, in some New Right circles, marked him as an old-line defender of oligarchy and privilege. As Vice-President, Bush bore the brunt of criticism for his liberal-leaning "establishment Republican" views, and was in fact derided as a "counterfeit conservative" (Baker, 1985:150). Moreover, Bush's 1990 tax hikes (after his famous "Read my lips, no new taxes") and his support for such allegedly arch-liberal institutions as the National Endowment for the Arts upset the right wing of the GOP.

Bush lost the 1992 presidential elections to Democratic challenger Bill Clinton, though
by the midterm elections (1994), Republicans would hold the majority of seats in both houses of Congress. Such is the legislative power of Congress that, despite a Democratic President with strong reform-liberal leanings, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his Republican colleagues, with conspicuous financial and lobbying support from New Right groups like Christian Coalition,\textsuperscript{11} could usher in a tax and services slashing "Contract with America."

Despite Republican legislative majorities in the 1990s, the right spent much of the decade mired in factional bickering over ideological correctness and policy. While many conservatives continued to rest on their mostly modest policy laurels of the Reagan years -- increased military spending, tax cuts, supply-side economic policies, a renewed sense of patriotism and nationalism -- by late 1992, as conservative commentator David Frum (1994:77) writes, "The nation was going to hell. Something must be done. But what? As the Bush administration petered out, that question would divide conservatives into three bitter and mutually contemptuous factions." Frum identifies the three factions as "optimists" (influential GOP politicians like Jack Kemp and Newt Gingrich); "moralists" (writers and intellectuals like Kristol and Buckley); and "nationalists" (columnist, GOP populist, and anti-NAFTA crusader Patrick Buchanan and Senator Jesse Helms).

Whether factional divisions can be demarcated as precisely as Frum suggests is questionable, since all three overlap considerably. Nevertheless, after Reagan's retirement and the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the American right wrestled with the possibility of an uncertain political future and started to experience something like existential angst.

\textsuperscript{11}Christian Coalition, formed in the wake of evangelist Pat Robertson's failed 1988 bid for the Republican nomination for president, is currently the nucleus of the Christian Right in America. Run by former director of the national Republican student committee Ralph Reed, the Coalition coordinates the lobbying efforts a number of Christian-based activist groups, among them Focus on the Family and the radical prolife organization, Operation Rescue. By 1995, the Coalition had 1.6 million supporters and an annual budget of $25 million. See Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "The Gospel According to Ralph." \textit{Time}, May 15 1995, pp. 18-27; also see Diamond (1995:249-255).
The populist challenge of Texas billionaire H. Ross Perot appeared to indicate that the GOP and by extension the activist New Right, were in disarray. As it turned out, Perot and other outsiders to the established party system never mounted a serious challenge to the Republicans. Indeed, the old party remains the principal vehicle for most right-wing activists. It was clear nonetheless that the New Right had suffered something of a setback, both in political influence and in popular support. A reassessment and a rebuilding was in order.

A recent strategy of the right has been to shift (if only for the time being) its focus and lobbying efforts away from congressional and presidential campaigns and more on to local politics. Embracing as mantra the maxim "all politics is local," many right-wing activists, particularly the prolife, profamily conservative Christian groups, are waging battles further down the chain, as it were. This is particularly evident at the school-board level, where controversies over pedagogy, curricula, and discussion of socio-moral issues (especially sex education) have become commonplace. The twist to this strategy is that national right-wing organizations, still big guns in the American lobbying universe, are now drawn into local campaigns, usually to help oust "liberal" incumbents. Where a targeted municipal incumbent of limited means and minimal organizational support faces the "national megastructure" of the right (Stan, 1995:42), the effect is not unlike using a sledgehammer to stop a mosquito. To no one's surprise, the right has often emerged victorious in the aftermath of these local skirmishes.

This tactical shift was not entirely unexpected. For as Devigne (1994:77) points out, "[c]ontemporary conservatism advocates a polity that establishes local democracy as preponderant around issues of social morality and community, complemented by an executive branch that is preponderant around national security." Accordingly, and because local issues resonate with

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12 As is shown in the chapter on APEC, they have taken their political battles over bilingualism down to the local level as well.
precisely the same moral and political imperatives, the New Right regards battling local school
board officials over textbooks, curricula and the like as nearly important as issues pertaining to
national security and foreign policy.

To critics this focus on "low politics," this nitpicking about what they see as relatively
minor issues, is both curious and frustrating, yet it is consistent with right-wing objectives. If
issues and problems are ultimately questions of principle, then the level at which an issue is
identified and subsequently contested matters little. What does matter is confronting problems
whenever and wherever they occur. Such dedication also sends a clear signal to opponents:
despite controversies and numerous setbacks and whatever the level, be it national, regional or
municipal, right-wing activists relish the chance to wage heated political battles.

_The right in Britain_

Much has been made of the ideological affinity between contemporary American and British
conservatism and the personal friendship between its chief standard bearers, Ronald Reagan and
Margaret Thatcher (for example see Krieger, 1986; Green, 1987; Hoover and Plant, 1988). In
policy terms, their affinity was more evident in economic and fiscal matters. As Gray (1993:277)
points out, both leaders reminded their respective publics constantly about "the manifest failure
of both post-War microeconomic management and of socialist command economies [in order]
to sustain the electoral support needed for neo-liberal economic policies." In similar fashion,
Krieger (op. cit.:14-15) looks at the two leaders this way:

The arrival of Thatcher and Reagan signalled new strategies to resolve the
tensions which followed the eclipse of Keynesianism and the welfare state: the
decomposition of the working class, and the upsurge of internecine warfare within
the Labour and Democratic constituencies; the precipitous decline of UK fortunes
and the notable reduction of US prerogatives in the international order...
Thatcher and Reagan...break the mold. They are not normal Tories or
Republicans; they reject the verities of the welfare state and Keynesian economics.
In their free-market maxims and in some actual economic programs --
deregulation and privatization, "cash limit" financing and tax reform -- they offer
an export package of resurgent pro-capitalist economic policies. So part of the significance of Thatcher and Reagan lies in their conscious and widely heralded departure from the norm of mainstream non-ideological governments and centrist politics.

Rose's (1980:18) declaration that "[h]istory constrains any British government" might better be framed by the Scottish legal verdict of "not proven" after the Thatcher Conservatives took office in 1979. "The public philosophy that furnished the basis for the British welfare state [viz.] a social democratic consensus that combined Keynesian economics, Fabian socialism, and Tory pragmatism" (Thomas, 1988:112) was to pretty much disappear during Margaret Thatcher's tenure as Prime Minister. And so too would many of the constraints of history.

There were clues that change was coming before Thatcher took over in 1979. A combination of growing disenchantment with traditional "middle way" public policies. What came to be known as the "British disease," the symptoms of which were high government spending combined with economic decline via stagflation (high unemployment and high inflation exacerbated in part by large wage settlements to unionized labour), had forced the Labour government of Harold Wilson to seek assistance from the International Monetary Fund in late 1976 (also see Devigne, op. cit.:13; Thomas, 1988:115; Krieger, op. cit.:6).

While the IMF loan did not in itself constitute a mortal blow to the postwar consensus (also see Hoover and Plant, 1989:155), it did force the Labour government into adopting a modified form of monetarism (Thomas, op. cit.:104-115). Monetarism is the policy whereby governments control the supply of money in order to reduce the rate of inflation and encourage large-scale economic growth. Such growth would, ostensibly, be fuelled by the "supply-side" principle of sharply-reduced taxes -- as opposed to the traditional Keynesian "demand-side" practice of direct government intervention during periods of market slump. While such anti-Keynesian, anti-"consensus" theories have long had their proponents from within the dismal
science and of course from within the private sector, their full impact as national policy was not felt until the election victory of the Thatcher Conservatives.

Having won the leadership of the party over Edward Heath in 1975, Thatcher's embrace of monetarism and her unshakeable conviction that free markets bring both greater affluence and valuable (not to mention often harsh) social lessons heralded the demise of Britain's postwar consensus. Her victory ushered in "a qualitatively new stage in postwar British politics" (Jessop, et. al., 1984:33). In a prescient analysis tracking the rise of what for lack of a common term, was then referred to as the "liberal-conservative alternative to the middle way," O'Sullivan (1976:140) identifies these three aspirations as characteristic of a Tory government under Thatcher should it come to power:

Firstly...society should be based upon an acceptance of free-market mechanisms, instead of upon political control over all important areas of life. Secondly, it should reduce government planning as may be considered necessary to an absolute minimum. And finally, the welfare state should be dismantled, in its present 'cradle to grave' form at least, in order to restore to the individual a sense of moral responsibility and initiative.

Despite Thatcher's self-assurance, the road ahead for her government was difficult. On the first anniversary of her electoral victory, the country's annual rate of inflation was running over 20 percent, with national economic growth declining by 2.3 percent (Thomas, op. cit.:117). Not unexpectedly, there was intense opposition to just about every Tory policy, especially from organized labour, the women's movement and assorted minority groups.

Thatcher's economic platform was to fulfil three primary objectives: to reduce inflation by controlling the money supply and cutting back on public sector borrowing, to reduce income taxes in order to restore investment incentives, and to limit government spending (ibid.). In a speech given at Cambridge University shortly after her 1979 victory, Thatcher declared that while economic renewal was vital, it was not to be the only -- nor necessarily the most important --
prescription of her government:

The extent of our decline with other countries may show up most clearly in economic statistics. But that does not mean that the remedy lies only in economics. The mission of this Government is much more than the promotion of economic progress. It is to renew the spirit and solidarity of the nation...At the heart of a new mood in the nation must be a recovery of our self-confidence and our self-respect [reprinted in Smith, 1994:4].

Economic policy has always been the most visible manifestation of "Thatcherism." Yet embedded in her "nation of shopkeepers" and "sound money" platform was a strong devotion to social conservatism and an accompanying "moral revolution" (Smith, 1994:3). In this respect, Gray (1993:276) sees close connections between the British New Right and its New World cousin: "Thatcherite conservatism...established affinities with American neo-conservatism, by its reiterated emphasis on the familiar and religious values that legitimated capitalist institutions in their Victorian heyday."

It has also been argued that the connection between Thatcherism and the British New Right as a whole was more intertwined and robust than movements and political party linkages elsewhere. Compared with the American New Right and perhaps the Canadian version as well, this does appear to be the case. As one observer (Hall, quoted in King, 1987:20) notes, Thatcherite populism is a particularly rich mix. It combines the resonant themes of organic Toryism -- nation, family, duty, authority, standards, traditionalism -- with the aggressive themes of a revived neo-liberalism -- self-interest, competitive individualism, anti-statism. Some of these elements had been secured in earlier times through the grand themes of one-Nation popular Conservatism: the means by which Toryism circumnavigated democracy, lodged itself in the hearts of people...Other elements derived from the anachronistic vocabulary of political economy and possessive individualism.

While those themes identified in the quote above help to draw out the more salient aspects of Thatcherism, they are not in themselves new to British politics (just as the themes peculiar to the US right are not new to Americans, nor those of the Canadian right new to their supporters). They are in fact drawn from long-standing, even ancient national traditions, as well as from
various points across the ideological spectrum (also see Bosanquet, 1983:1-4). However, such was the influence of her leadership that anything undertaken by the Conservative government bore the handle "Thatcherism."

An important feature of Thatcher's leadership was her talent for articulating policies and moral sensibilities with a slight touch of populism, ie. with "a set of simple common-sense maxims about how the economy worked and how it should be organized" (Gamble, 1986:48). Though critics preferred to call this her "authoritarian populism" (Jessop, et. al., 1984), it was clearly a potent combination of two right-wing verities: moral self-discipline and economic self-help. Kitschelt (1997:248) remarks that

Unlike the political philosophy espoused by her predecessor [Edward Heath], Thatcher brought to the fore a tradition of conservatism that is not mildly paternalistic and socially oriented, but that emphasizes free enterprise, moral discipline, and statecraft...Her approach included elements of what some observers have called a "right-wing populism." This populism combines resolute support for the free market with an authoritarian appeal to a small but strong state.

With opposition parties in some disarray during the 1980s, the Thatcher Conservatives were the only coherent alternative to the postwar status quo of British politics. The Keynesian consensus was now out of fashion and would remain so for the foreseeable future. New approaches to governing and new ideas about the role of the state -- or perhaps more accurately, not-so-new approaches and ideas, but ones heretofore left largely ignored by all other postwar governments -- became the modus operandi of Thatcherism and by extension, a chief characteristic of this new "leaner and meaner" state.

Thatcher's abrasive style and her unshakeable belief in the correctness of her convictions eventually alienated most of her own colleagues. Weary of discord and controversy -- caused in part by such hot-button issues as an attempt to bring in a poll tax and her near-xenophobic opposition to the European Community -- Thatcher's leadership was challenged in late 1990. The
new leader, John Major (who was Thatcher's personal choice for successor), steered the
government party onto a more moderate path and was subsequently rewarded with a national
election victory in 1992. Major was something of a kinder, gentler Thatcherite. Even so, the
Conservatives were still viewed by many as a mean-spirited lot and Major was suspected of
taking his marching orders from Thatcher herself.

In 1997 voters swung back to a Labour Party reinvigorated by new leader Tony Blair.
These were not the Labourites of old, however. Gone was the thunderous anti-market class-based
rhetoric of the past. In its place was the moderate, capitalism-with-a-heart outlook of a new
"third way" social democracy. Thatcher's conservative revolution may well have moved off the
centre screen of British electoral politics, but its influence, even with the Labour Party as
government, remains considerable.

The right in Canada

The Canadian New Right borrows elements from both its American and British
counterparts. From the Americans, Canadian right-wingers have drawn from its egalitarian,
populist, and to a limited extent, its moral concerns. From the British, comes the opposition to
the post-war Keynesian consensus and to socialism, concerns about parliamentary democracy and
the peculiarities of a multi-party system. For all of that though, there are important structural
and institutional differences that sets the Canadian model apart from the others — linguistic
divisions, Quebec, national unity, and the Charter of Rights, to name only the obvious. In
addition, the Canadian right, at least at the level of federal politics, has evolved along a path
somewhat distinct from its older, larger counterparts. Whereas the Anglo-American movements
were both at the very centres of state power, the Canadian right was not. In the main, its
evolution and development took place on the outside as it were, away from the centre of power
and very much in opposition to it. Thus, in contrast to the intellectual-roots-to-the-halls-of-power
pattern I followed to trace the rise of the American and British New Right movements, for Canada, as we shall see below, I take a different, three-phase approach to track its development.

Most analysts agree that the New Right appeared in Canada somewhat later than it did in the United States or Britain. They also agree that the success of Brian Mulroney's Conservatives in 1984, though widely touted shortly after the election to be the domestic equivalent of a Thatcherite or Reaganite triumph, did not so much signal a sea change in Canadian politics and public policy, but rather and as it turned out, a continuance of the same amidst considerable voter volatility (see Cooper, et. al., 1988:Ch.1; Mishler, et. al., 1988:55, 86). With Mulroney there was no sharp ideological break with statism, nor with such Liberal Party principles as official bilingualism, multiculturalism, and open immigration. Some have argued that the character of the Mulroney government was nonideological and its style conciliatory (Cooper, et. al.:17). To be sure, the Conservatives set out and did in fact alter the economic and fiscal policy landscape more to the right's thinking, but as Banting (1990:16) argues with respect to social policy:

...[in] the politics of national integration and social rights [Mulroney] remain[ed] supportive; and the national government was controlled by ambivalent centrism for the first half of the 1980s and tempered conservatism thereafter. This is hardly the stuff from which revolutions are made. No-one in Canada refers to a 'Mulroney Revolution' comparable to the Reagan and Thatcher administrations. Rather, Canada has experienced a neoconservative drift in social policy.

That the Mulroney government did not turn out to be the harbinger of a New Right "revolution," but was more the purveyor of cautious "drift," was a major factor in the disconnection between right-wingers and the party. It was also a factor in the rise of Reform as the more receptive party vehicle for their ideas.

Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s the right-wing in Canada remained a disparate collection of advocacy organizations, think-tanks, a few elder statesmen, and other
activists. The start of a more coherent right-wing movement can be traced to late 1980, when the Trudeau government implemented its National Energy Program (NEP). The NEP was the catalyst for right-wing opposition in western Canada, including the brief rise of a separatist movement and the election of a separatist politician to the Alberta legislature.

*The right comes together, phase one: the Mulroney era and the rise of the Reform Party*

In 1984 when the federal Progressive Conservatives under Brian Mulroney won their huge electoral victory, western right-wing separatism was nearly a spent force. It even appeared that western alienation was on its last legs as well. With so many westerners now in the governing party's caucus, the understanding was that the West would be in a position to exert a considerable amount of influence where it really counted, in cabinet. But the Mulroney caucus was not a naturally cohesive group; rather it was an artificial coalition joining together three major regional blocs: francophone Quebeckers, some of whom harboured sovereigntist leanings, southern Ontario Tories with strong links to the corporate world of Bay Street, and western Canadian right-populists.

Apart from APEC, whose members condemn any government that does not repeal the Official Languages Act, among the first right-wing organizations critical of the Mulroney government was the Toronto-based prolife lobby, REAL Women. When he was opposition leader, Mulroney was applauded by REAL Women for expressing the view that abortion ought...
to remain in the Criminal Code.\(^{14}\) Shortly after taking office as Prime Minister however, REAL Women's view of Mulroney changed quickly. The issue was not abortion, it was public funding. Assuming that they had a much better chance to receive funding from the Secretary of State with the Tories in office than the Liberals, REAL Women was unpleasantly surprised when funding for a February 1985 conference failed to materialize. From that time on, the relationship between REAL Women and the Tories grew steadily worse.

Not surprisingly, the West was the first region to exhibit widespread disappointment with the Tory government. Westerners perhaps expected far too much too soon from a governing party with plenty of seats in every region. By October 1986, the first serious strain in relationship between Tories and right-wing westerners came with the government's awarding of a jet fighter maintenance contract to a Montreal firm over an apparently superior and cheaper bid from a Winnipeg operation. Known as the "CF-18 affair," the controversy reignited old feelings of western alienation similar to those surrounding the NEP. Motivated in large part by this affair, a collection of influential westerners began discussing the possibility of breaking away from the Conservatives. A year after the affair, the Reform Party was officially launched in Winnipeg. In six years' time, the Tories would be all but wiped out electorally and Reform, by now the right's bellwether organization, would win a majority of the West's federal seats. Four years after that, it would form the Official Opposition. Three years later, largely at the urging of its leader, who had long sought to build a national "united alternative" incorporating conservative ideas and populist principles, Reform would be dismantled and a new right-wing party, one anchored principally in the three "have" provinces of BC, Alberta, and Ontario, and called the Canadian Alliance, emerged.

As noted above, many westerners and a number of right-wing organizations, like APEC and REAL Women, were disenchanted with the Mulroney government. Yet, if there was any semblance of a right-wing movement in Canada, about the only common thread throughout it was an intense dislike of the federal Tories. Apart from this, there was no real thematic or intellectual unity within the right.

That situation would change starting in 1986 with the publication of Peter Brimelow's *The Patriot Game*. Brimelow, an expatriate Briton who at the time was writing for the *Financial Post*, argued that English-speaking Canada was a bogus nation, a non-entity whose inhabitants had been led to believe by their political masters in Ottawa that they shared little in common with their American neighbours and that any outburst of English-Canadian nationalism was inherently threatening to francophones, other ethnolinguistic minorities and ultimately, to national unity. The problem, as Brimelow saw it, was that francophones -- Quebeckers -- and other ethnic minorities were encouraged by the federal government to develop their own cultures. Quebec was even emerging as a true nation-state. English Canada, Brimelow (1990:24) wrote, seemed susceptible to a "particular malaise which has overcome other parts of the English-speaking world: the conviction that the only legitimate expression of its identity lies in subordinating itself to others."

Brimelow (1986:287-289) predicted that, despite federal government efforts to prevent it, English Canada would eventually discover its true identity as a North American culture, but in doing so would deliver a series of hard shocks to the political status quo. He predicted, for example, that English Canada's newly-found assertiveness and collective self-assurance would encourage Quebec to separate. However, English Canada, post-Quebec separation, may then run the risk of fracturing into several regional blocs. If English Canada could manage to stay
together, westerners would likely demand a radical transfer of power to their region. On a less speculative note, Brimelow said that the most likely scenario would be the emergence of new splinter parties from both Quebec and western Canada. Their emergence would be a reflection of each region's impatience with a Tory coalition that could not meet expectations. Brimelow appears to have predicted the rise of the Reform Party and the Bloc québécois. All of this struck a chord with Preston Manning who, like many other conservatives in English Canada, was familiar with *The Patriot Game*. The following spring at Reform's 1987 Vancouver Assembly, Brimelow was a featured guest speaker.

If Brimelow set out to topple the institutional and policy verities of Ottawa's national unity strategy, William Gairdner (who also highly approved of *The Patriot Game*) would provide an unending assault against what he saw as the erosion of English Canada's moral and cultural virtue at the hands of the federal government. Gairdner's *The Trouble with Canada* (1990) -- the title was gleaned from an earlier work by a French politician called *The Trouble with France* -- was a curious mixture of ideological polemic, Hayekian-style economic and epistemological theory, and conservative moralizing. A lapsed academic from a wealthy Ontario family, Gairdner's book assaults the reader with facile assessments of complex economic, social, and cultural policies, all animated by a relentless torrent of attacks on bilingualism, multiculturalism, non-white immigration, feminism, socialized medicine, abortion, the Charter, the criminal justice system, and so on.

The basic thesis of *Trouble* is that the Anglo-Saxon, Judeo-Christian tradition is based on the discovery process of spontaneous evolution. This "bottom-up" or "English style" system, clearly expressed in English Common Law and the evolution of the free market, is where "[n]atural differences are nurtured and allowed to flourish, and self-fulfilment through the striving
for excellence is encouraged and rewarded..." (p. 13). The antithesis of the English system -- and here Gairdner rather cleverly juxtaposes Canada's linguistic and cultural duality to serve as epistemological opposites -- is the "French style" or "handicap system." Under the French style, all rules and plans are imposed from the "top-down" by an elite political class. "It is therefore a 'managerial' concept of society that rests on a utopian vision bent on social perfection -- by force, if necessary...At bottom, it is a collectivist, authoritarian vision that gives rise to a New Class, based on tax money and political power...who feed on the body politic and who will do everything they can to preserve and enlarge their privileges" (pp. 10-11).

The trouble with Canada then, as Gairdner sees it, is that both styles have been present within the country since Confederation. The result is an endless clash of bipolar ideologies, policies, visions, and moral values. On the one side we have those who prefer the "bottom-up" English style: these are usually moral and cultural conservatives, supporters of free enterprise and small government. On the other side are the "top-down" French authoritarians: these people are generally amoral, hostile to capitalism, and supporters of large, coercive governments which in turn, do the bidding of "special interests."

Trouble found an enthusiastic audience in the English-Canadian right; the book became a best-seller, and Gairdner found himself very much in demand at right-wing functions across the country, including those sponsored by APEC and REAL Women. (As well, both organizations promoted and sold Trouble.) As APEC president Ron Leitch put it, "Bill Gairdner is one of the outstanding thinkers on the right. He's very scholarly. I agree with him all the time."15 The book was also popular with Reformers, including Preston Manning. When the two met in Vancouver in 1991, Manning invited Gairdner to speak at the party's upcoming Assembly

15Personal interview.
in Saskatoon. Shortly after his well-received speech at that Assembly, Gairdner became something of a fixture at Reform gatherings, particularly in Ontario, as the party had adopted a resolution at Saskatoon to expand its operations into that province.

In June 1991, just before Manning would attend a large Toronto rally, the CBC had aired a feature report on Gairdner and his connection with Reform. The report quoted some of the more questionable assertions contained in *Trouble*, among them, that Ottawa's bilingualism, multiculturalism, and immigration policies contributed to "the silent destruction of English Canada" (p. 389) and that given current immigrant patterns, "[i]n 250 years, Canada could be a Chinese nation" (p. 413). Though the quotes were lifted slightly from their overall context, they were damning all the same. Manning was concerned that the party's association with the author would bring more charges that the party was intolerant. On that basis he severed the party's links with Gairdner.

Despite the controversy, the release of *The Trouble with Canada* and *The Patriot Game* provided the New Right in Canada with policy and ideological roadmaps as well as rich sources of pointed arguments condemning the ills of secular society and the modern state. Shortly after a revised edition of *The Patriot Game* was released in 1988, Brimelow would relocate to New York City as a senior editor with Forbes magazine. Gairdner continued to publish. His next book *The War Against the Family*, invoked the same bipolar conceptualizations of "bottom up" and "top down" rule and argued in support of the moral conservative position that the secular "top down" state was invariably destructive to the nuclear family, Judeo-Christian traditions and western civilization in general. Shortly after that book's release, Gairdner was featured in a *Report* magazine's cover story. Throughout the 1990s, Gairdner was closely involved in right-wing activities across the country, from delivering speeches to APEC and REAL Women
functions, to attending the Winds of Change in Calgary in 1996 and shortly thereafter, to serving as the founding president of the conservative umbrella group, Civitas.\(^\text{16}\) He continues to publish on a number of subjects, from constitution-making to left-liberalism, always keeping close to his thesis on the dangers of "French style" government.

*The right comes together, phase three: the scholarly community*

One facet in the development and consolidation of the right in Canada that has become particularly interesting is the increasing public contributions by conservatives from within the academic community. Scholars have always contributed to ideological, policy, and cultural debates, professionally and privately (on the old right, one thinks of Michael Oakeshott in Britain, Gertrude Himmelfarb in the USA, and W.L. Morton in Canada). With respect to the New Right in Canada, it appears that academics were somewhat more cautious about being personally identified with that movement. By the early 1990s, things were beginning to change. Though much of the material produced by supportive academics was more scholarly and detached than polemical and personal, the appeal to conservative ideas, values and concerns came through clearly enough. A short list of the more notable contributors and their work includes the following.

Rainer Knopff's *Human Rights & Social Technology: The New War on Discrimination* (1990), examined the contemporary language of rights and the policies of anti-discrimination and affirmative action from within a classical liberal-Hayekian framework. In his view, the contemporary approach to eradicating unwanted forms of discrimination, ie. "social technology," obscured the meaning of rights and a meaningful context from which to discuss them.

David Bercuson and Barry Cooper's *Deconfederation: Canada Without Quebec* (1991)

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\(^{16}\)In the spring of 2000, Civitas would serve as launching pad for Stockwell Day's candidacy for leader of the Canadian Alliance.
and Derailed: The Betrayal of the National Dream (1994), were intended for popular, rather than academic, consumption. The first book mapped out contingency plans for the separation of Quebec. The bulk of the critique was directed towards the governments of Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney both of whom, in the authors' estimation, let their obsession with pleasing Quebec develop into a unresolvable unity crisis. The second book was more of a New Right attack against big government, social engineering and the two more recent (and failed) attempts at constitution-making, the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords.

Knopff and F.L. Morton's Charter Politics (1992), was among the first scholarly analyses to suggest that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms had empowered a socially-activist judiciary at the same time that it was disempowering elected politicians. The book also introduced what is now a staple in right-wing political thought and discourse, the "court party" thesis: left-wing "special interests" who invoke the Charter to pursue their controversial rights claims through the courts rather than through the legislatures.

Brian Lee Crowley's The Road to Equity: Gender, Ethnicity, and Language, Impolitic Essays (1994), bore some contextual resemblance to Knopff's Human Rights. Crowley is an admirer of Hayek and shares his hostility towards collectivism and especially, the idea of collective rights.

Tom Flanagan's Waiting for the Wave: The Reform Party and Preston Manning (1995), straddles both popular and scholarly audiences. Though the book for the most part presents an objective examination of Reform and its leader, Flanagan, who spent a brief period in the early 1990s as Reform's Director of Strategy, is clearly sympathetic to New Right policies and ideas.

It is perhaps of some significance that, with the exception of Crowley, all those mentioned above are faculty at the University of Calgary and, with the exception of Bercuson, who is an
historian, they are all political scientists. Not surprisingly, the city that is famous for its unabashed celebration of free enterprise and the rugged individualism associated with "cowboy culture" was the home of the Reform Party (now the Alliance) and the National Citizens' Coalition. Calgary has become the intellectual hub of New Right politics in Canada.

Though certainly not a seamless web of interaction and cooperation, but rather more like a gradual bonding of ideas, organizations and individuals, the Canadian right developed differently than its Anglo-American cousins; and unlike the other two, could never claim to have a grip on the levers of national power. While the Mulroney Tories harboured some right-wing tendencies with respect to economic and fiscal policy and while there were members of the caucus who by any reasonable definition were ideological conservatives, there was little change in the way government went about its business, especially with respect to broad moral, social and cultural areas like women's issues, bilingualism, multiculturalism, immigration, the Charter, Quebec, and so on. In Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, the British and the American right could claim the allegiance of those occupying the highest political offices in the land. This the Canadian movement could never do. Be that as it may, by the end of the 1990s the Canadian New Right was as organizationally coherent as it had ever been.

CONCLUSION

We return then to one of the central preoccupations of this chapter: Ideologically speaking, is the New Right incoherent? If so, is this a problem for the movement? Arguing from a dualist framework, King (1987a:797) has determined that while the ideological contradictions within the New Right are "illustrated most starkly in [terms of the] preferred roles for the state and their notions of progress," the two sides can and do coexist symbiotically. By engaging in a process of "borrowing" features from each other, each side achieves an element of sustainability which,
in the absence of such borrowing, neither could survive on its own as a coherent political entity. The outcome of this symbiotic process is a limited consistency to be sure, but consistency nonetheless. King (ibid.) explains:

Conservatives are precapitalist, whereas liberals consider capitalism and industrialisation to hold the possibility of greater happiness and freedom. Thus liberals' esteem for freedom and progress shares little with the conservative obsession for order, an organic notion of the state and fear of economic change. What is the link between these two doctrines? In the context of the New Right ideology influencing the Reagan and Thatcher administrations, each strand gains from association with the other. Liberal economic and political theories are the source of New Right policy aims; conservative principles represent secondary arguments available to justify the unpleasant social and political consequences of liberal economic policy. The liberal goal of retrenching the social welfare implies a traditional conception of the role of women and the family; conservative arguments about social order and traditional values provide a legitimating ideology for such policy outcomes. In addition, conservatism offers a coherent theory of state to liberals, something that liberal theory lacks. Finally, conservatives and liberals are united in their attack upon the social rights of citizenship bound up in the welfare state.

King (1987:25) argues elsewhere that the political objective of this peculiar ideological relationship is a "strong government...in conjunction with a reduced state" (emphasis added).

Now King's argument does for the most part bear up under scrutiny. From the standpoint of the dualist ideological model he employs, it is self-evident that the New Right is awash in internal contradictions. And so far as he has determined, in all practical ways such contradictions may indeed be occasionally problematic, but they have not been insurmountable. At least not yet. By limiting an otherwise fine analysis to a two-fold framework -- conservatism and liberalism -- King's argument in some ways becomes self-fulfilling. While one can make allowances for the fact that there are some differences in British analyses of right-wing politics,\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{17}For example, analysts of British right-wing, particularly "Thatcherite" politics, will often fit the "authoritarian populism" associated with her regime into the larger conservative ideological framework, rather than treating it as a discrete (but related) function. See for example, Jessop, et. al. (1984), Kitschelt (op. cit.:242 and \textit{passim}).
for the Canadian right, particularly at the political party level, it is necessary to draw out the principles and methodology of populism. As we shall see in the chapter on the Reform Party, the populist dimension heightens the normative tensions between organizations.

The answers to the questions posed above are not easily found, nor are they likely to find unanimous agreement. The movement is ostensibly an ideological/normative contradiction. This becomes all the more clear when we add populist principles to the dualist lay-out of social-cultural-moral conservatism and market liberalism. Yet for all that the right-wing still exists, it is still "out there," as it were. What keeps the movement at least nominally united are common objectives like support for the free market, fiscal responsibility in government, an end to state-support of "special interests," more citizen input into decision-making, and support for traditional social structures, particularly the family.

However I would not go so far as to argue that the New Right's internal variability and each group's focus on different issues is evidence of a source of internal strength or flexibility. What I would argue instead is that within New Right organizations (as there is in every organization) there is a hierarchy of ideas and issues. As we shall see in the next three chapters, what makes it to the top of an organization's agenda depends on a) the type of organization it is, and b) the type of issue(s) it supports or opposes. So, for the prolife, profamily lobby group REAL Women, the primary issues are moral-conservative: abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, family values, and so on. Secondary issues include the immigration, multiculturalism, bilingualism, national unity, and the economy. For APEC, the primary issues are cultural-conservative: repeal of both the Official Languages Act and the Charter of Rights, restoring the cultural and political hegemony of the English language and Anglo-Saxon values, and (ironically) concerns over national unity. Secondary issues include reducing the size of government and addressing the constitutional division of powers.
For the Reform Party, the range of issues was both more extensive and, as was pointed out earlier in the chapter, of a more complex strategic nature, due for the most part to Preston Manning’s refusal to allow the party to become a vehicle for rigid ideological beliefs. And in any case, as a political party, Reform was bound to be motivated by different demands, objectives, and organizational concerns than were the lobby groups. While it certainly did have a set of identifiable right-wing principles as its foundation, it also sought votes and by extension, political power. As Tom Flanagan put it,

The really large right-wing organizations [like Reform] have put their emphases elsewhere. And while they haven’t been hostile to cultural-moral conservatism, they’ve tended to want to emphasize other issues. If we go back [for example] to Manning’s original formulation of the Reform Party in the late eighties and early nineties, he talked about three types of reform: political reform, constitutional reform, and economic reform. The maintenance of the traditional family became a fourth pillar in the late nineties, but it was quite late to arrive [on the agenda].

In Chapter Five, I show just how disruptive one so-called "moral issue" was with respect to the Reform caucus and Preston Manning’s leadership.

What makes focussing on these three groups interesting is that it allows us to gain some insight to not only the ideological variety and the different issue agendas of each, but also the interaction between what at one time was the country's premier right-wing organization and two smaller, issue-oriented groups. From the standpoint of ideological principle versus electoral politics, it is perhaps noteworthy that the two smaller organizations have survived pretty much intact while the largest, the Reform Party, no longer exists.

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18Personal interview.
CHAPTER THREE
THE PROLIFE/PROFAMILY RIGHT: REAL WOMEN, THE STATE, AND TRADITIONAL MORALITY

Morality is constant. Morality does not change with the tide.
-- Anti-gay rights crusader and former Liberal MP Roseanne Skoke, 1994

The tomorrow for Canadian society depends on what we do today...stand up for traditional heterosexual family values!
-- Cecilia Forsyth, National President, REAL Women, 1994

INTRODUCTION

This chapter marks the start of examinations conducted of three New Right organizations. The analyses offered in this chapter and the two that follow are the result of incorporating scholarly interpretations and data with my own personal interviews of members and attendance at a number of events organized by the groups themselves.

The organization under scrutiny here is REAL Women of Canada, "REAL" being an acronym for "Realistic, Equal, Active, for Life." Formed in 1983 and publicly launched in 1984, REAL Women is Canada's largest prolife/profamily pressure group, with a membership estimated between 45,000 and 50,000. Like most organizations of this type, funding comes primarily from membership dues; hence a great deal of the organization's activities -- and by any measure, it is remarkably active -- depends on volunteer labour. As well, the organization depends on a small cadre of executive members to carry out many of its technical and public-relations functions, from participating in litigation (usually as an intervener), to making submissions to parliamentary committees, to attending conferences, and giving interviews.

For the most part, much of that burden falls to REAL Women's co-founder and currently its legal counsel and national Vice-President, C. Gwendolyn Landolt. Mrs. Landolt, a lawyer by

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1 Based on the organization's own estimates. Also see footnote 22 below. Erwin (1993:409) estimates their national membership at 100,000, though that figure cannot be substantiated.
trade, is frequently REAL Women's designated spokeswoman and arguably is the heart of the entire organization. As with many of the top people in the New Right, Landolt is a virtual torrent of activity and dedication to the cause. Indeed, the term "activist" is a particularly apt description of her.

Landolt also shares with others in the movement and of course her organization an unshakeable conviction in the correctness of her views and ideas. Though some may equate this with being unnecessarily inflexible, rigid, or even obscurantist, it soon becomes clear that, for pressure groups especially, be they right- or left-oriented, there is little to be gained by being accommodative on matters of principle. If that were the case, the organization would either cease to exist, or at the very least, it would begin to resemble what for the right is a much-despised mainstay of Canadian politics, the old-line brokerage party. Indeed, the old-line parties are the primary source of most of society's troubles, Landolt argues. They have allowed themselves to be co-opted by radical "special interests" whose ideas were nurtured in the 1960s.

REAL Women casts its ideological net in many of the same places as APEC and Reform when it comes to assign blame for what they see as the dangerous decay of Canadian society. "Pierre Trudeau [for example] knew he was fundamentally altering Canada," says Landolt. "He wanted control over the entire social and political agenda, and this meant control and funding of groups. The trouble was, the people never had a say in any of it." As for Brian Mulroney,

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2 Although compared with APEC and to a degree, the Reform Party, REAL Women is less leader-centred. A number of its executive members perform vital roles, including making public appearances.

3 Personal interview with the author, 26 October, 1999. Hereafter "personal interview."

4 Personal interview.
Landolt maintains that "he got co-opted by the exact same bunch of special interests. His
government was a coalition that had no strong social or moral conscience. It was a tax-and-
spend government the same as Trudeau's."

With respect to the Reform Party, Landolt is at best mildly supportive. Like other social
and moral conservatives, Reform's policy of deciding moral issues by populist mechanisms such
as plebiscites and referenda is a concern, especially with respect to abortion and gay rights. Still,
REAL Women appears frequently with Reform MPs before parliamentary committees. "Perhaps
with a new Reform leader," says Landolt, inferring that Preston Manning is too accommodating
and too much wedded to populist principles, "social conservatives can get their act together. It's
just a matter of time before the right person and the right party comes along."\(^5\)

THE ROOTS OF THE PROLIFE/PROFAMILY MOVEMENT IN CANADA

*Abortion and related issues*

If foetuses are not persons, why should not the state decide that a week old, a two
year old, a seventy or eighty year old is not a person 'in the whole sense'? On
what basis do we draw the line? Why are the retarded, the criminal or the
mentally ill persons? What is it which divides adults from foetuses when the
latter have only to cross the bridge of time to catch up with the former? Is the
decision saying that what makes an individual a person, and therefore the
possessor of rights, is the ability to calculate and assent to contracts? What has
happened to the stern demands of equal justice when it sacrifices the right to
existence of the inarticulate to the convenience of the articulate? But thought
cannot rest in these particular questionings about justice. Through them we are
given the fundamental questions. What is it, if anything, about human beings that
makes the rights of equal justice their due?

Thus did Canada's eminent conservative philosopher George Grant (1985:172) assail the 1973

\(^5\)Personal interview.
US Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade*. With that decision the majority of the court determined that a pregnant woman's constitutional right to privacy outweighed all other considerations with respect to bringing the pregnancy to term. The abortion issue is arguably the ultimate moral-ethical conundrum, encompassing a wide range of fundamental and contentious issues: the sanctity of life and when it begins, the reproductive and privacy rights of women, the rights of the unborn, the teachings of religion versus the secularized reasoning of the law, and so on. Politicians have usually been loathe to grapple with issue, realizing the that whatever legislation is enacted will likely bring about a chorus of vehement disapproval from one side or the other.

Legally and politically, prolife advocates have been on the losing side of the issue. In Canada this was made explicit on 21 January 1988, when the majority of the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC), after hearing the appeal in *Morgentaler et. al. v. the Queen*, struck down the Criminal Code's provisions on abortion as inconsistent with the procedural fairness guarantees as per section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Briefly, the court's 5-2 decision to scrap the existing law was a complicated one. Four of the 5 judges who formed the majority argued with respect to section 7 of the Charter, pointing out that section's "security of the person" guarantees. The other judge, Madame Justice Bertha Wilson, eschewed arguments from the standpoint of procedural fairness and reasoned instead from the feminist perspective that women have a substantive right to liberty and security under the Charter. Contrary to popular opinion, the *Roe v. Wade* decision handed down by the US Supreme court some 15 years earlier had only a limited influence on the Canadian decision. The two dissenting judges in *Morgentaler*, McIntyre and LaForest, argued that as the Charter was intentionally silent on the abortion issue,
judges have no power to create new rights for either the mother or the fetus (also see Morton, 1992:232).

To add to prolifers' woes, the SCC's decision in Morgentaler forced Parliament into drafting a new abortion law, one that had to be consistent with the court's interpretation of the Charter. While the Conservatives' Bill C-43 (first under Doug Lewis, then under new Justice Minister Kim Campbell) was an attempt to appease both sides -- an impossibility in any case -- it barely passed the House of Commons in a free vote (140-131) in May, 1990 (also see Campbell and Pal, 1991:62). However, when the bill came before the Senate, it was defeated by virtue of a 43-43 split. Since that time, Canada has had no substantive federal law on abortion, a situation that suits prochoice advocates just fine, but naturally angers prolifers.

For prolife advocates the abortion issue functions as a springboard, a "take-off point," to the full spectrum of issues concerning sexuality and reproduction: changing sex roles, parenting, birth control, daycare, sex education, pornography, sexual orientation -- in short, any issue which is seen to impact in some way on the sanctity of the traditional (heterosexual) family. At the centre of this activism is a tripartite, mutually supportive framework made up of family, religion, and the state.

In their study of the profamily right in Britain and the US, Abbott and Wallace (1992:37) argue that

...the moral New Right has been concerned with the need for state action to monitor and reinforce traditional moral values and especially those associated with the patriarchal nuclear family. While not all those who stress what they see as the moral decay of modern society are Christians, Christians form the most vocal element. In the United States the main group politically active in pushing for state

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6In the Senate, a tie vote defeats a bill.
policies in 'moral' areas is the Christian New Right, consisting primarily of fundamentalist Protestant but also including other Christian groups such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Mormons. Similarly, in Britain the most vocal on moral issues are self-identified Christians -- for example, members of the Conservative Family Campaign and the Festival of Light. Central to their concern with 'moral' issues is the family -- specifically the heterosexual patriarchal family -- which they see as being under threat from a decline in traditional morality and from state policies and especially welfare measures.

Canadian prolife/profamily advocates attempt to meet the same objectives. They too seek to turn the tide against moral decay and to preserve the dominance of heterosexual "family values." The principal targets of their actions are much the same for the New Right overall: those identified loosely as postmodern "new social movements" and the "new class" of leftist politicians, bureaucrats and judges who validate their "identity-based politics."  

Phillips (1994) has written extensively on new social movements (NSMs) in Canada. Using her analysis, we can draw out the following characteristics which help define NSMs. We start first with social movements generally, which she (ibid.:189) describes as

...(a) an informal network of organizations and individuals who (b) on the basis of a collective identity and shared values (c) engage in political and/or cultural struggle intended to expand the boundaries of the existing system and (d) undertake collective action designed to affect both state and society.

On the basis of this definition, the New Right is clearly a social movement. However, despite being a relatively recent phenomenon, the right does not quality as a new social movement:

As a reflection of the changing aspirations of contemporary post-industrial societies...the NSMs are also post-materialist, although of course many of their

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7Knopff and Morton (1992:79) use the term "court party" to identify these new social movements (which the right usually refers to as "special interests"). Briefly, the "court party" is any left-wing interest group which employs Charter-based litigation to advance their agenda (also see Morton, 1988). Cairns (1988, 1992 and passim) has explored extensively the relationship between the Charter and "Charter groups," ie. various interest communities and movements that "work" the Charter to their advantage.
interests have economic implications. In contrast to material movements, such as labour, farm workers, and land reform movements, they reject the central premise of modernity: that the guarantee of social progress derives from economic growth, productivity, and material acquisition. Instead, they seek to forge new relationships to work, consumption, the environment, or the opposite sex... Although there is general consensus on the existence of four core NSMs -- the student, women's, peace, and ecology movements -- the term probably could be expanded to include disabled persons, gay and lesbian movements, and an emerging mobilization of senior citizens among others [ibid.:197-198].

While issues that have their roots in the abortion controversy remain a central concern to the prolife/profamily right, they have not limited their activism to those issues. Starting with the entrenchment of the Charter of Rights in 1982, many groups, including of course REAL Women, have engaged in a wide variety of activities, from constitutional issues to health issues to education. Granted, family values and all issues connected principally to sexuality consume most of their time and money and determine how they frame their activist strategies; but they are not limited to those. For instance, the advent of the Charter has contributed centrally to their view that constitutionally-entrenched rights and subsequent judicial activism have had a corrosive impact on Canadian society.

Morton (1995:281) argues that REAL Women could be pro-Charter "so long as it is the correct (that is, their) version of the Charter...Their goal is not to maximize Charter values, but to use (judicial interpretation of) the Charter to maximize their values." While Morton does not make a clear distinction between "Charter values" and the maximization of "their values" by way of judicial decision-making, his argument, viz. that, should a decision or two go their way, REAL

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8REAL Women actively supports an organization called Citizens United for Responsible Education (CURE) whose major aim is stop the infusion of "homosexual propaganda" in public schools. There is also a closely affiliated Alberta offshoot called Alberta Federation of Women United for Families (AFWUF).
Women (and other right-wing groups) would be favourably disposed towards the Charter, is contentious. It is misleading to make a distinction between judicial interpretations of the Charter and so-called "Charter values" as if the latter exists (objectively) outside the ambit of the former. For when judges make decisions under the auspices of the Charter, they are in fact defining "Charter values." Thus, the Charter stands as something of a challenge to Diamond's (1995) well-argued thesis that the right is fundamentally "system supportive," that is to say at its base, supportive of the state. As we will see in the next chapter, the anti-bilingual lobby APEC now devotes much of its energy and resources to a "repeal the Charter" campaign, a view also shared by the leadership of REAL Women (also see Herman, 1994:105).

Conservative author, activist, and REAL Women ally William Gairdner (1994) has gone so far as to publish a monograph which in part argues for the repeal of the Charter because a) it is inconsistent with the English common law, b) inconsistent with the practice of parliamentary supremacy, c) it enforces the dubious equality of minorities at the expense of Canada's traditional (anglo) majority, and d) it was primarily the brainchild of Pierre Trudeau who, alleges Gairdner, is an elitist, left-wing social engineer. So, while Morton's argument has its strengths, I contend that with but few exceptions, 9 "Charter-phobia" runs quite deeply throughout the entire movement -- in fact it is among the most salient of their characteristics (also see Sigurdson, 1993).

Though they hold similar views and objectives, there are several significant differences between prolife/profamily movements in Canada and the US. For example, with respect to Canadians' and Americans' views of the welfare state, Erwin (op. cit.:402) has found that,

不像他们的美国对手，加拿大的反女权主义力量 -- 美国
family movement -- were not initially hostile to the welfare state. In the early and mid-'80s when REAL...Women and a handful of kindred organizations arose to denounce feminist influences on the schools, the courts, the media, and even the governments of the day, there was little attempt in the pro-family defense of the traditional housewife to tie feminists to the alleged excesses of 'runaway' social spending or 'confiscatory' taxation. While in the United States, the very emergence of a 'New Right' during the Carter and Reagan presidencies was predicated on the fusion of a cultural politics of family, sexuality, and reproduction with a backlash against welfare and government spending, the leaders and publication of Canadian anti-feminism paid little attention to state programs per se. And even when they opposed new initiatives, as they consistently have in the case of a national daycare program, they eschewed neoconservative rhetoric.

Erwin's argument that Canada's pro-family advocates were not necessarily hostile to the welfare state is not shared by all scholars and some argue that a major goal of the right is to dismantle or at least reduce substantially the social-service role of the state. Finbow (1993:695) for example, writes that

...recent trends suggest that Canadians are not wedded to a more active state. Conservative regimes since 1984 have consciously copied American models. Cutbacks to social programmes, privatization of crown companies and limits to collective bargaining have reduced policy distinctions. The comparative data on political values is [sic] mixed. But studies have found little evidence of dissimilar attitudes towards the state in general, though support for specific programmes does vary. The new right in both countries has focused on institutional changes to discourage welfare state intervention permanently, through deregulation, privatization, downsizing bureaucracies and decentralization of powers and revenues in federalism. This approach in Canada may be limited, since the active state created more service providers and clienteles resistant to retrenchment.

While some hostility to the state with respect to social programs, especially the funding of left-wing "special interest" groups,\(^{10}\) is certainly heard within the prolife/profamily movement, Erwin's contention that the movement is not inherently hostile to the state *per se* is, I believe, correct.

While Finbow prudently warns that the comparative data offer mixed results with regard to

\(^{10}\)I examine the issue of funding in more detail below.
political values and the downsizing of the state, Erwin's thesis is the more compelling.

Table 3.1: Canadian pro-family views on government intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>More effort needed</th>
<th>About right</th>
<th>Less effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fighting pornography</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the poor</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime prevention</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting the unemployed</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting rights of the disabled</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting rights of Aboriginals</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing equal pay for work of equal value</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminating sexism</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting homosexuals from employment discrimination</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As the data suggest, the crux of the matter is not state funding itself, but rather who or what group receives it and to what ends the funds serve. Recall also Diamond's (1992:6) theory which sees the New Right as "state enforcers" and "system supportive," where "[d]epending on the policy issue, movements hold predictable positions on what they believe government agencies and elected officials ought to accomplish" and the common perception of the right as intractably
anti-state loses its appeal. New Right groups can and do engage in fiercely negative critiques of government, but this does not indicate a desire to dismantle or otherwise reduce to a bare minimum the activities of state. On the contrary, a strong state and government are vital to their ultimate objective of "rescuing" society from "special interests."

The roots of Canadian prolife/profamily activism are found first, with the dramatic changes to sexual behaviours made possible by the availability of "the pill" in the early 1960s; second, in the 1968 reforms to the divorce laws; third, in the decriminalization of adult homosexual relations. Fourth and most significantly for socio-moral conservatives during that time was the easing of the abortion law in 1969. With such changes mandated by legislation, the structural and political challenges facing these early activists were formidable. Not only were they a disparate and unorganized lot (although the Roman Catholic church was always a significant presence), an effective combination of politicians and bureaucrats, interest groups, media organs, and the medical and legal professions were their opposition.

Morton (1992:19) points out, that as the "Canadian feminist movement [was] still in its infancy," women's groups were virtually inconsequential to the debate. Among the self-interested professional lobbies were the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Bar Association. The strongest support from within the Fourth Estate came from Chatelaine magazine, which had criticized the severity of Canada's abortion laws as early as 1959 (Dubinsky, 1985:8). Editorial support also came from The Globe and Mail which incidentally and despite its probusiness neoconservatism and frequent support for Reform Party economic policies, has long been the bane of moral conservatives, both for its stand on abortion and for its unequivocal defence of the rights of sexual minorities. Another ally of the pro-choice side in the early going was the United
Proposals for abortion reform took shape nearly several years prior to the drafting of the legislation. Well aware of the controversial nature of the proposals, then-Justice Minister Trudeau had them buried within a 72-page, 104-clause Omnibus Criminal Code Report, which he tabled in December 1967. The bill would become law on 14 May 1969, a day prolifers still mark by protest as "Canada's Day of Infamy." Meanwhile in 1968, Canada's first national prolife lobby, the Alliance for Life, a largely middle-class, though politically ambivalent vehicle for stay-at-home Roman Catholic women opposed to abortion, appeared on the scene (Herman, 1994:269).

On 9 May 1969, five days before the legislation was passed and in what by any measure was a Machiavellian master stroke, Trudeau, sensing division within his own party and wary of the taunting by the conservative Catholics in the Ralliement Créditiste rump in Parliament, allowed for a free vote on a motion to expunge the Eighteenth Clause from the Omnibus Bill, namely, the abortion provisions. As Morton (1992:26-27) tells it,

[i]n a classic display of political cowardice, sixty-eight of the 155 Liberal members of Parliament somehow managed to be absent from Parliament when the vote was taken. Only two Liberals voted for the motion. The Conservatives were no better. Of the seventy-two members, forty were absent. Indeed, in the vote that was to determine Canada's new abortion law, the 'absents' outnumbered both the 'ayes' and the 'nays'. The motion was thus defeated, paving the way for adoption of the bill.

Abortion was the most contentious issue for conservatives at the time\textsuperscript{11} and by extension, Pierre

\textsuperscript{11}As examined later in this chapter, by the late 1980s and into the mid 1990s however, the most contentious issues amongst the many taken up by the prolife/profamily movement (including abortion) were homosexual rights and government funding of left-wing ("special interest") groups, especially feminist organizations. The reason for this slight shift in priorities can be attributed directly to the entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and of course, judicial decisions stemming from its provisions. Of course, the 1969 Omnibus Bill did decriminalize homosexual acts between consenting adults (recall Trudeau's famous declaration that "the state
Trudeau, first as Justice Minister and then as Prime Minister, became the primary target of their anger. By today's standards (or lack thereof) the changes mandated in 1969 appear moderate. Abortion still remained an offence via section 251 of the Criminal Code, but was legal if specified conditions were met: the procedure had to be approved by a hospital's therapeutic abortion committee (TAC) in which three doctors would have to concur that continuing the pregnancy would likely put the mother at risk. In addition the procedure could only be performed at an accredited hospital (Herman, ibid.:269; Morton, op. cit.:27; Dubinsky, 1985:8).

The legislation was an attempt at compromise and each side, so it was hoped, could at least claim something. Doctors were provided with legal safeguards; those favouring liberalization would be pleased with broader legal rights in accessing the procedure; and those opposed on principle to abortion might be palliated with the news that abortion still remained in the Criminal Code (also see Morton, op. cit.). For the latter group especially however, a satisfactory compromise was unlikely. The very fact that the laws had been liberalized, "sparked the birth of a movement which was to have an increasingly high profile in Canadian politics" (Herman, op. cit.). After failing to stop passage of the federal government's legislation, the aforementioned Alliance for Life changed its name to the Coalition for Life in 1973 and began

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12 Abortions have long been accessible to mothers whose pregnancy put their own lives at risk. Furthermore by 1937, in the British case of *R. v. Bourne*, abortions were made legally available if the pregnancy came about as a result of rape. As Morton (1992:17-19) points out, in those days, changes made to Canadian laws often followed precedents set in British courts.
to take a less explicitly religious and more politically aggressive and strategic-minded stance than its predecessor.\textsuperscript{13}

The year 1973 began and ended as among the most contentious in the abortion struggle. In January and as noted above, the US Supreme Court handed down its landmark decision in the case of \textit{Roe v. Wade}. The immediate effect of the decision on Canada was to re-energize activists in the prochoice movement, none more so than Montreal obstetrician Henry Morgentaler. In February, prochoicers organized a rally on Parliament Hill with Dr. Morgentaler as the featured speaker (Morton, op. cit.:36). Buoyed by such demonstrations of support, at another rally held at the University of Toronto the following month, Morgentaler initiated what would become a very public 15-year campaign of civil disobedience to repeal section 251 of the Criminal Code: he announced to the crowd that he had personally performed over 5,000 abortions (ibid.).\textsuperscript{14} Morgentaler and his supporters were of course deliberately seeking confrontation with the authorities in order to challenge what they saw as indefensible legal restrictions on a woman's right to choose. After the Toronto rally, his tactics became more audacious. Among the most controversial was the CTV network's broadcast of a documentary — on Mother's Day no less — showing Morgentaler performing an abortion at his clinic.

On 18 October 1973, Morgentaler was brought to trial in Montreal. The Crown's case against him was straightforward and he did not dispute the fact that abortions were being performed at his clinic in contravention of the Criminal Code. But as Morton (ibid.:49-55) tells

\textsuperscript{13} The establishment of this "political wing" was also undertaken in order to retain tax-exempt status. See Herman (op. cit.).

\textsuperscript{14} The illegality of these abortions stemmed mostly from the fact that they were performed at Morgentaler's own clinic and not in an accredited hospital.
it, the prosecution misjudged the jurors and, in calling a number of dogmatic, doctrinaire pro-life advocates as witnesses, some of whom were unilingual Americans (the trial was in French), the Crown's case slowly unravelled.

Morgentaler's defence team was more astute. They played to the jurors' sympathies (the women who had the abortion in which Morgentaler was charged was a single, young woman from Africa). Morgentaler's team invoked two longstanding legal principles to justify his actions: the defence of necessity and the "section 45" defence. The former has its roots in English common law and is designed to bring some flexibility and compassion to criminal trial proceedings by impressing upon the bench (and the jury) the special circumstances of the crime. The latter, also known as the "Good Samaritan" defence, is designed to protect those who perform emergency (usually non-consensual) measures so as to save a victim's life. While the young woman from Africa did indeed consent to the operation at Morgentaler's clinic, the defence argued that, had the procedure not been performed, her health, perhaps even her life, might have been jeopardized. On 13 November, the jury found Morgentaler not guilty. This was by no means the end of Morgentaler's legal battles however, as they would continue amidst considerable publicity for years to come.

So Morgentaler was exonerated, though only temporarily. After his first acquittal (there would be two more jury acquittals after this), the number of prolife organizations ballooned across the country: from 75 at the start of the decade to 230 by 1975 (ibid.:125). In May of that year, the Winnipeg-based Alliance for Life brought a petition to Parliament Hill containing one million signatures, the largest petition in Canadian history (ibid.). Public discussion of the abortion issue in general and the Morgentaler acquittal in particular prompted the federal
government to establish a Committee on the Operation of the Abortion Law in September 1975, headed by University of Toronto sociologist Dr. Robin Badgley. The committee released its recommendations in February 1977. The Badgley Report (cited in Dubinsky, op. cit.:13-14) confirmed what prochoicers had been arguing since the Morgentaler acquittal, specifically that,

- the abortion law was not applied equally;
- there was a huge geographic disparity within Canada regarding access to abortion, since hospitals were under no compulsion to establish abortion committees;
- the bureaucratic committee procedure caused delays which made abortions unnecessarily complicated; and
- the ambiguity of the criteria for granting abortion allowed for a very wide or very narrow interpretation depending on the political forces within each hospital across the country.

Instead of tying these various impediments directly to the abortion law and by extension to the Liberal government itself, the Report declared that the major problem was the increase in unwanted pregnancies exacerbated by a lack of pertinent information from Canada's health professions combined with the public's general ignorance of modern contraceptive methods. The Report's solution, much to the chagrin of prochoicers, was to allow not for more abortions or otherwise ease restrictions in the law, but rather to insist on the need for better family planning (Morton, op. cit.:126).

As it contained no recommendations whatever for limiting abortion, prolifers were also displeased with the Report. That displeasure turned to outrage when federal Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde suggested that, following the Report's recommendations, improved public education on contraception might also include the establishment of women's health clinics and that these might provide abortion services as well. Lalonde's public musings generated over half a million letters of protest to his department (ibid.:127). Sensing a political firestorm the government could not control, the health minister backed off and the Report lapsed into
In the meantime members of the Coalition for Life were contending with internal disputes over doctrine and strategy. On one side were those who insisted that a more conciliatory, flexible, less explicitly religious campaign against abortion might be more successful. On the other were conservative Christian activists for whom the whole issue was framed entirely in Manichean terms. As far as public opinion was concerned, a poll conducted by the Badgley Committee found that "there was no strong mandate either to 'tighten' or to 'reform' the existing legislation...[M]ost persons implicitly endorsed the status quo" (cited in ibid.:127). Polls have consistently indicated that most Canadians identify with a moderate prochoice position, ie. under specific circumstances, it is the woman's right to choose for herself. Where a majority of Canadians (and Americans too) draw the line is in having unrestricted access to abortions under any circumstances (also see Bibby, 1990:162-163). The Gallup poll for 20 June 1988 found that only 25 percent of Canadians favour unrestricted access to abortion. In the USA it was 17 percent (also see Gairdner, 1992:418; Goggin, 1993:9).

Abbott and Wallace (1992:12-13) report that "[p]ublic opinion polls in both Britain and the United States suggest that most people think that women should be able to have abortions if they choose. Nor is there strong opposition to homosexual and lesbian [sic] relationships." With respect to religious influences, a 1979 Gallup survey (cited in Gillespie and Lienesch, 1988:405) reports that only 51 percent of Canadians agreed that faith played any role in their lives. The American response rate was 80 percent. In the 1981 and 1990 World Values Surveys (cited in Nevitte, 1996:210), 55.1 and 50.6 percent of Canadians, respectively, said that God was important in their lives. Americans responded with rates of 73.4 and 70.1 percent, respectively.
Despite such beliefs, church attendance among Christians has been in marked decline for the last 30 years. It should be noted too that REAL Women has been highly critical of Gallup's Canadian arm, especially after the firm refused to conduct a poll for the prolife organization Citizens' Voice, in March of 1992.\(^\text{15}\) No matter that most polls and surveys indicated that a majority of Canadians thought that a pregnant woman should have the right to choose for herself, for prolifers, abortion was evil, an affront to Christian moral teachings; therefore no effort should be spared to put a stop to it.

Internal discord within the Coalition reached a critical juncture in 1977 when the brief it presented to a parliamentary committee was criticized by Christian activists for ignoring the religious/moral implications of abortion. The brief, which was both compromising and pragmatic in tone (Herman, op. cit.:270), angered conservative Christians so much that they broke with the Coalition and established a new pro-life organization built on unambiguously fundamentalist principles, Campaign Life. Herman (ibid.) says of the new organization:

Campaign Life clearly represented the 'anti-secular' ideological perspective within anti-abortion protest. Abortion was simply one abomination amongst many in a society that had lost its Christian way. The movement continued to be dominated by Catholic activists; by now, however, the Canadian Catholic hierarchy was identified [by non-Catholic Christians] as an enemy itself, viewed by lay activists as more interested in contributing to secularism than in fighting against it. In keeping with the politics and aspirations of the new right-wing leadership, dominant anti-abortion discourse began to shift.

Included in that shift of anti-abortion discourse was a heightened taste for public activism, controversial rhetoric, and if need be, civil disobedience; in other words, there was a new-found "confidence to be public Christian activists" (ibid.:271).

\(^{15}\) See Reality, Volume X, Issue No. 6, November/December 1992, p. 5.
The one who probably best personified the emerging aggressiveness of the prolife/profamily movement was former Manitoba nickel miner, union activist and provincial NDP cabinet minister Joe Borowski. A forceful, determined man, with a grade school education and a keen (some would say pathological) moral sense of right and wrong, Borowski would be at the centre of the prolife crusade in Canada -- and thus Morgentaler's arch-rival -- throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Appointed Minister of Transportation and Public Works in Manitoba NDP Premier Ed Schreyer's cabinet in 1969, Borowski, "the prototype male abortion warrior" as Herman (ibid.:271) calls him, was on the political left only with respect to labour issues (he was a union organizer in Thompson). On social and moral issues though he was a staunchly conservative Catholic. Such personal ideological dichotomies are not unusual -- much of the working class has traditionally been socially conservative -- but what set Borowski apart was that even as a cabinet minister, he was willing to bring down his own governing party on a matter of moral principle. As Morton (op. cit.:64) writes, "[t]his unbending sense of right and wrong had carried Borowski to power as the anti-politician of the sixties. In the 1970s it proved to be his undoing."

In September 1971 Borowski resigned from both cabinet and party. Though there were any number of issues over which Borowski could have left or been pushed out, it was the abortion issue which finally settled the matter. Stung by a doctor's accusation that the NDP government was engaging in hypocrisy because a Winnipeg clinic, jointly funded by the government and the United Way, was funding abortions obtained in the US by Manitoba women, Borowski launched a very public crusade condemning "this medieval act of barbarism" (ibid.:66). After giving him two chances to refrain from such public utterances (both refused), Premier
Schreyer accepted Borowski's resignation.

In the next provincial election, Borowski ran as an independent in the Winnipeg riding of Point Douglas, but was defeated quite handily by the NDP. His short career as an elected politician now over, Borowski turned all of his energies to a group he had started up just prior to the election, the Alliance Against Abortion. The Alliance reflected Borowski's own combative past as a former union organizer and hard-headed politician. There were few meetings; donations were not tax deductible, nor were there to be any educational activities which would have helped secure tax-exempt status for the group (ibid.:68). To borrow a term from the New Left, the Alliance was dedicated solely to taking "direct action" in opposing abortion. For Borowski himself, such action came mostly in the form of hunger strikes and a series of high-profile legal confrontations with Henry Morgentaler.

Borowski's tactics and aggressiveness emboldened other prolife organizations, the Catholic Foundation for Human Life, Toronto Right to Life, Choose Life Canada and Campaign Life prominent among them (also see Herman, op. cit.). Now that the more circumspect secular-liberal elements of the prolife movement had been pushed to the margins, activists seemed more inclined to follow Borowski's "in-your-face" tactics. They organized loud marches and rallies, set up "life chains" along busy thoroughfares, blocked entrances to health clinics where abortions were performed, and accosted women who were clinic patients (also see ibid.).

Although not as consistently aggressive in their actions as their counterparts in the US, the Canadian movement was showing the potential for much the same. Not only was there a

16Although in 1985, the Toronto Women's Bookstore -- which just so happened to be located directly beneath Morgentaler's clinic -- was fire-bombed. In 1992 the clinic was fire-bombed.
fundamentalist foundation upon which to ground and contextualize moral issues, there was also, concurrently, growing animosity towards "secular-left-liberal" forces -- forces which were surely conspiring to dismantle the Judeo-Christian foundations of the country.

Between Morgentaler's ultimate victory on appeal to the SCC in 1988 and the Senate's defeat of the new abortion bill, Joe Borowski launched one more appeal before the SCC in 1989 (REAL Women was an intervener in the case). Unfortunately for him and REAL Women, the court had already delivered its judgement on abortion in *Morgentaler*, thus the *Borowski* case had become moot.17

Though prolife activism would continue after this -- sometimes carried to extremes, as in the mid- and late 1990s, with the murder of one and attempted murders of doctors in both the US and Canada who provided abortion services -- the decade turned out rather bleak for their cause. Public opinion was largely content to have abortion remain as a private issue and to date, Canada still has no federal law on abortion, making access to the procedure both routine and fairly easy. In response, some prolifers, especially the fundamentalist Christians among them, ratcheted up the rhetoric substantially, chaining more of their members to clinic doors and referring to the clinics as "abortuaries." So intense and angry has the rhetoric become that in some cases, the clergy have attempted to distance themselves from the activists (also see Herman, op. cit.:272).18

17"Moot" or "the doctrine of mootness" means that the case before the court has been previously settled by other means. In the case of Borowski's appeal being moot, it was the *Morgentaler* decision that rendered it so.

18The former (now deceased) President of REAL Women of BC (and one of the national organization's earliest members), Peggy Steacy, told me that when she approached her Anglican pastor on the subject of showing an anti-abortion documentary in the church hall, she was refused
FRAMING PROLIFE/PROFAMILY ACTIVISM: THE ISSUES AND THE BEGINNING OF REAL WOMEN

If a political project is to obtain a hegemonic status, it must lose every trace of extremism. It must not appear to be just one alternative among many; it has to centre itself to the extent that there appears to be absolutely no other alternative. The intolerant always misrecognize themselves as 'tolerant'; they do so not only to legitimize their exclusions within a liberal-democratic framework, but also to transform their own violent exclusions into a reasonable discourse which would otherwise be unbearable to themselves. It is perhaps the case that the imaginary 'average' voter generally prefers to support a pragmatic and moderate agenda rather than an extremist one. I would insist, however, that a political figure or political project only appears to occupy the 'tolerant' 'centre' thanks to the effects of strategic representations. From different vantage points, that same 'centre' position might connote either a right-wing of left-wing extremism [Smith, 1994:19].

All of the members of REAL Women I had spoken with, whether fundamentalist or moderate Christian, maintained adamantly that they were the true moderates. Feminists, gays and lesbians and so on, those were the real radicals they insisted; they were the ones who sought to radically alter, in fact to dismantle, the traditional moral values of society. One edition of their newsletter proclaims that "REAL Women policies are supported by a majority of Canadian women."19 Evidence for this declaration is scant: it was made in reference to a Decima poll of July 1990, which reported that 66 percent of women do not consider themselves "feminist." That may be. However, merely rejecting the feminist label does not by extension indicate strong ties to the prolife/profamily crusade.

permission to do so. This angered her. "After all," she said, "I wasn't going to show Silent Scream." That film, shot by former prochoice activist and founder of the US National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), Dr. Bernard Nathanson, shows, through an ultrasound machine, a fetus' reactions to its own abortion. In any case said Steacy, "I didn't leave the church, the church left me." Personal interview with the author, 10 February 1992. Hereafter, Steacy interview.

Though many prolife/profamily groups framed their activism in more explicitly religious terms by the late 1970s, there were those who feared that such strong and public religious convictions might hinder rather than help the cause. For them, the logical option, at least in the public arena, was to tilt towards the secularized "centre" of politics.

The strategic aim (and the difficulty) in this slight move to the centre was to achieve a balance between preserving a group's strong religious connections while at the same time engage the larger public and political institutions in a discussion about abortion in a measured, less dogmatic way. The movement needed to frame the issues in such a way that it retained the support of its religious allies without completing turning off those whose opposition to abortion was grounded in more secular principles (also see Erwin, op. cit.:403).

Erwin (ibid.) points out that framing a set of issues successfully...involve[s] three interrelated but analytically distinct factors: 1/ empirical credibility; 2/ experiential commensurability; and 3/ narrative fidelity. Empirical credibility refers to the fit between the framing and events in the world. Are there events or occurrences that can be pointed to as legitimating evidence for the claims of the movement to its supporters? Experiential commensurability refers to the interpretive lens through which the 'evidence' is filtered, especially in light of the personal experiences of individuals, which usually act as an important screening mechanism. Do the framing efforts interpret threatening events and developments in ways that harmonize with the ways in which these events etc. are currently being experienced? Or are such framing efforts too abstract, too distant from the everyday existence of participants? To illustrate [consider]...that it was such a lack of experiential commensurability in the peace movement's 'doomsday campaign' in the United States that explains the difficulties American peace activists encountered, compared with European and Japanese activists, in concretizing the nuclear threat to their compatriots. Apparently a 'doomsday' frame did not resonate among Americans as it did among European and Japanese citizens, and, consequently was a weak prod to action. As for...narrative fidelity, this refers to the degree to which framings strike a responsive chord with the cultural heritage of movement supporters. In sum, the more credible, experientially commensurable, and culturally resonant, a leaderships' framing efforts are, the more likely mobilization will occur.
The framing of issues within an ostensibly "moderate" organization like REAL Women involved a careful balancing act between two worlds, one secular and political, the other religious and moral. It was prudent to appear in public as moderately secular, but it was also important to retain those "Christian" ideals which motivated a significant proportion of the pro-life cause.

At the same time those activists had also decided that the key to successful mobilization was to exploit a range of issues beyond abortion. Fortunately for them, a number of exploitable issues became available by the time REAL Women held their first news conference in 1984. There was now a Charter of Rights added to the country's constitution and within its provisions were sections guaranteeing sexual equality. To the great concern of REAL Women, it appeared that exclusively feminist ideas of sexual equality -- a Canadian version of America's Equal Rights Amendment -- had made it into the constitution.

A second issue, one that truly set the wheels rolling for the organization, was a 1983 federal government proposal (from cabinet minister Judy Erola) to withdraw the tax exemption for dependent spouses. To prolife/profamily advocates, this proposal appeared to put the government in lockstep with the feminist movement. Both seemed to be of the view that stay-at-home mothers and wives were of little economic and social benefit to society. By closing off the tax exemption, it was thought that the government was intent on reducing traditional domestic roles to second class status.

Already wary of what they regarded as a feminist bias to the new Charter of Rights and now, in light of the proposed tax changes, more and more convinced that the federal government was captured by left-wing "special interests," twelve conservative women met in Toronto on 3 September 1983 to share their concerns and map out strategies. Said one, "We decided [after the
government's tax proposals] to form our own group, one that would speak for the silent majority, the *real* women of Canada" (quoted in Erwin, op. cit.:406). The outcome of this first meeting laid the foundation for REAL Women of Canada. The organization was legally incorporated in late 1983 and publicly launched at a press conference at Toronto's Royal York Hotel in February 1984.

While there were obvious linkages to and affinities with Christian-based lobbies at that time, REAL Women deliberately muted those connections in their own literature and press releases. In their pamphlet *Who We Are* (n.d.:1), the purpose of which is to provide a synoptic view of the organization for prospective members, the group is portrayed as moderate, reasonable and non-confrontational:

R.E.A.L. Women of Canada...is a non-partisan, interdenominational organization of independent women incorporated in the fall of 1983. We come from all walks of life, occupations, social and economic backgrounds. Some members are employed full-time outside the home, some are employed in the home, some are both. We represent a broad spectrum of Canadian women who, until our formation, have not had a public forum in which to express their views. We promote equality for all women...One of our objects is to support policies for women that provide equal opportunity in education, employment and retirement. We believe that social and economic problems of women today should be resolved by taking into consideration on family and that of society as a whole. Hence our motto: "Women's rights, but not at the expense of human rights."

Our view is that the family, which is now undergoing serious strain, is the most important unit in Canadian society. We believe that the fragmentation of the Canadian family is one of the major causes of disorder in society today.

The pamphlet (ibid.:2) then outlines the group's five core objectives:

1. To reaffirm that the family\(^{20}\) is society's most important unit since the nurturing of its members is best accomplished in a family setting.
2. To promote equality, advancement and well-being of women and recognizing

\(^{20}\)REAL Women defines the family as "two or more people, living together, related by blood, heterosexual marriage or adoption" (ibid.).
women as interdependent members of society, whether in the family, workplace, or community.
3. To promote, secure and defend legislation which upholds the Judaeo-Christian values on marriage and family life.
4. To support government and policies to make home-making possible for the woman who, out of financial necessity, would otherwise have to take employment outside the home.
5. To support the right to life of all innocent individuals from conception to natural death.\textsuperscript{21}

By the end of its first decade REAL Women had a paid membership of approximately 45,000.\textsuperscript{22}

A recurring theme in both REAL Women's literature and its rank and file members is that the aims of the organization are consistent with the views of the majority of Canadians. As REAL Women of BC President and founding member Peggy Steacy put it,

Before joining REAL Women, I found myself listening to programs and saying [with respect to feminist organizations]: 'You're not speaking for me'. I think that's the one thing that everyone has said at one time or another in REAL Women. They've seen someone from NAC [National Action Committee on the Status of Women] talking [sic] and they've said, 'You're not speaking for me; not me you don't'. Feminists have had everything their own way for so long, and the idea that some upstart group is going to come along and say, 'no, you can't have it all your way'...we've really rattled their cage and they're furious...They [feminists] really felt like 'we've got it made, and no-one is ever really going to challenge us'.\textsuperscript{23}

REAL Women insists that it is their opponents who, while in the minority in terms of public support, have nonetheless managed to get the jump in influence and state support. As Gwen Landolt, the organization's legal counsel, declared:

\textsuperscript{21}Number 5 is quite similar to an item in American prolifer Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum Statement of Principles: "The right to life of all innocent persons from conception to natural death." Cited in Conover and Gray (1983:88).

\textsuperscript{22}Figure cited in Brief of REAL Women of Canada to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-49. May 19, 1992, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{23}Steacy interview.
radical feminists gained a great edge by 1973 [the establishment of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women], alleging that they represented the views of all Canadian women. Not until we were formed in 1983 was the point made that nobody speaks for "women" -- we are all individuals. They [feminists] have infiltrated the government and taken over the policy-making jobs in government ministries. They had a ten-year head start, now running the Women's Program of the Secretary of State. Without government funding, they would not exist.²⁴

For REAL Women, one way to challenge the feminist perspective is to draw upon (oddly enough) the classical liberal maxim that the individual and her rights are paramount. In strategic terms, this is meant to put the left on the defensive by demonstrating that it is they who have little faith in personal agency or even in accommodating differences of opinion that stray too far from feminist orthodoxy. Feminists, they aver, have no respect for the myriad moral, social, and cultural differences between individuals; theirs is a conformist, collectivist ideology, one that is fundamentally hostile to both "the nation and the foundation of individual well-being" (Erwin, op. cit.:407).

In truth, REAL Women's putative defence of individual rights is more a tactic used to draw distinctions between themselves and their opponents and a way to conceal their own conformist prescriptions. REAL Women is as collectivist-oriented as their opponents, arguably more so given the moral orthodoxy informing their ideas and activities. Indeed, if upholding individual rights also means a procedural commitment to democratic participation in defining the organization's goals, then groups like REAL Women would soon cease to exist.²⁵


²⁵As I discuss later in the chapter, REAL Women has misgivings about the Reform Party's policy of subjecting moral issues to a vote for the obvious reason that a majority might well favour the "wrong" side of an issue. Hence, though generally supportive of the direct participation of "the people" in most respects, many prolifers are wary of populist decision-
Erwin (ibid.:407-408) writes that such organizations are characteristically uniform not just in terms of their ideology, but also in their demographic features and particularly with respect to members' life experiences and religious viewpoints. Furthermore, she reports that a "solid majority" are middle-aged (45 years and older), with 69 percent of those surveyed raised in small towns or on farms, with 71 percent raised by a stay-at-home mother. Fifty-one percent of these women are full-time homemakers, with 74 percent in stable marriages, and 57 percent of those with three or more children. As a group (men and women) social-moral conservatives tended to be better educated than the general public: 35 percent of them having obtained a university degree (versus 10-15 percent for the general public). Their incomes were only nominally above the national average. In terms of religious affiliation, fully 95 percent of those surveyed were either Protestant fundamentalist or Catholic. Finally, Erwin reports that 72 percent of all respondents had never been politically active prior to joining a prolife/profamily organization (ibid.).

Such homogeneity allows for the core issues and concerns of the group to be identified fairly easily, as the following table shows:

making on moral issues.
Table 3.2: Concerns/issues leading to pro-family activism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opposition to:</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornography</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secularism</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay rights</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Ed.¹</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support for:

'Traditional values' | 67 | 22 | 11


¹ ie. sex education in public schools

The prolife/profamily right's critique of the state and its institutions obscures the fact that their own objectives would require coercive authoritarian agencies. A "New Right state" would by any measure likely be very large and intrusive. New Right groups are thus not "anti-government" in any literal meaning of the term. Rather, their hostility to government is fuelled solely by their insistence that it has fallen under the control of the "wrong" people, ie. the ubiquitous "special interests." Clearly, the state retains significant use-value for the right; the problem is in getting governments to act more effectively in their interests. Erwin (op. cit.:417) argues that in the case of Canadian prolifers,

...co-existing with the moral traditionalism and religious populism of movement supporters is a kind of political conservatism which, paradoxically enough, is supportive of Canada's long-standing public-enterprise traditions, especially as these traditions mandate collective provisions for basic needs. Hence, for example, their opposition to universal daycare, on the one hand, and their
acceptance of some public subsidization in this area, on the other. By the same
token, it is not government or the state per se that is distrusted or reviled, as it is
metropolitan elites and institutions: feminists above all, but also media and large
corporations.

Government *qua* government is not the enemy; it is the prize to be won in a struggle with
opponents to determine which side influences both the state and public opinion.

Though the vast majority of their "evidence" is anecdotal, fragmented and highly selective,
REAL Women insists (as do all New Right organizations) that governments in Canada, even
"Conservative" ones, have been instrumental in advancing the left-wing agenda. Governments
do so not so much because they are innately predisposed to left-wing ideas, but because "special
interest" groups have been so successful in penetrating those institutions, in obtaining funding,
and in influencing public policy. With respect to the feminist movement's influence, Gwen
Landolt has declared that

[r]adical feminists in Canada have gained remarkable power and influence in this
country. The media, the judiciary, constitutional reform, our churches, educational
establishments including our universities, all bear the stamp of radical feminism.
In many instances, the feminists are even determining our national agenda.
Radical feminism has become in Canada, the established orthodoxy or self-evident
truth, not to be disputed. This raises the question as to why feminists have gained
such influence in Canada -- more so than any other country in the world. *The
answer is that it is only in Canada that the feminist revolution is being funded by
the taxpayer.* Since 1973, many millions of dollars have been handed over to
what we know to be only a few hundred women who form the activist feminist
movement in Canada. This relative handful of women, with taxpayers' money
behind them, have become agents of change, proclaiming that they speak on
behalf of all Canadian women [emphasis original].

Note that the blame for bringing on this alleged "revolution" is directed not at the state, or at the
taxpayers, but at feminists. Both taxpayers -- the majority of whom constitute what the right

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calls "the people" -- and the state are thus the victims of feminist irredentism.

"EVERYTHING IS A MORAL ISSUE!": NETWORKING WITH REAL WOMEN

"The strength of any nation depends on the strength of the family; this why feminists and homosexuals want to attack the family." With this announcement, Landolt kicked off REAL Women's "Making a Difference" conference held in Surrey, BC in mid-May 1993. This meeting was of particular interest to me. Held one month before the Progressive Conservatives would choose Kim Campbell as Brian Mulroney's replacement and at a time when the call for a national election seemed imminent, this was a chance to assess REAL Women's political networking and preferences more interactively.

The guest speakers for the conference included Heather Stilwell of the Surrey School Board, Cathy Mickels from Bellingham, Washington, of Focus on the Family and KNTR, a Christian radio station popular with fundamentalists in the Lower Mainland, Cheryl Eckstein Sr., President of the Compassionate Healthcare Network, an organization opposed to euthanasia, and Pat Hansard from Abortion Outreach. Also attending were several political party candidates. Among those scheduled to address the conference were: John Carpay (Burnaby-Kingsway) of the Reform Party, William Stilwell (Surrey North) of the Christian Heritage Party (CHP), and

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27Focus on the Family (FOTF), headquartered in Colorado Springs, is run by Dr. James Dobson, a psychologist and well-known advocate for conservative Christian values, "family-centred" research, and sophisticated political activism. FOTF is among the wealthiest prolife/profamily organizations in the United States, with an annual budget of approximately $US150 million. The Byfield family's various weekly Report newsmagazines (British Columbia Report, Alberta Report and Western Report) often feature perspectives gleaned from that organization. The organization has a Canadian branch office in Vancouver. Incidentally, Mrs. Mickels was an aide to STOP-ERA and Eagle Forum founder Phyllis Schlafly; upon hearing this, many of those attending the conference seemed quite impressed.
candidate hopeful Don Knight (Surrey North) of the Progressive Conservatives. Candidates also
attending but not presenting were Franz Wilfing\(^{28}\) (Surrey North) and Sharon Hayes (Port Moody-
Coquitlam), both from Reform.

Gwen Landolt preceded the candidates' presentations with a sophisticated, though highly
partisan speech, touching on such diverse issues as the deviousness of "special interest" groups
("they wreak enormous damage on government and society"); Canada's tradition of deference
("we can no longer be deferential because governments no longer represent the majority"); \textit{and}
a critique of the (recently-defeated) Charlottetown Accord ("we've had enough of politicians and
left-wing groups"). She concluded by stating that REAL Women was studiously non-partisan
with respect to political party affiliations and urged fellow members to "vote for the candidate
who best represents our values; not for the party, not for the leader."

What followed was essentially a contest between candidates to grasp the mantle of family
values as defined by REAL Women. Reformer John Carpay began his speech on a note sure to
please those in attendance: a critique of REAL Women's arch-enemy, the National Action
Commitee of the Status of Women (NAC) and its president-designate, Tanzanian-born Sunera
Thobani of Vancouver.\(^{29}\) After mispronouncing Thobani's name several times, Carpay

\(^{28}\)Shortly thereafter, candidate Wilfing withdrew from the election campaign altogether. He
was replaced by Margaret Bridgman, who won the seat in the election of 25 October. Of the
election candidates attending the conference, only Sharon Hayes of Reform won her riding.

\(^{29}\)Thobani was chosen by acclamation in April 1993 and officially chosen to lead NAC the
following June after well-known leader Judy Rebick stepped down. Rebick, eager to see the
feminist movement move beyond "white, middle-class values," had urged NAC members to
choose a woman of colour as their new leader. Shortly thereafter, Thobani became the focus of
a minor controversy when it was revealed that she had been in Canada only four years prior to
acclimation (on a student visa to attend Simon Fraser University) and had been given landed
immigrant status only days before she was chosen to lead NAC. Tory backbencher John
apologized, explaining that he was "used to dealing with Canadian names" and that "radical feminists like her have always bothered me." He then launched into a critique of "special interest" group funding by government and the now-common occurrence of "reverse discrimination through affirmative action." All interest groups, he said, should be self-supporting. Carpay concluded by identifying himself as staunchly pro-life, "as are the majority of Reform candidates."

Where Carpay's presentation was devoid of direct references to Christian values, CHP candidate William Stilwell's talk was thoroughly infused with them. The only way to save this morally-ill nation, said Stilwell, was to govern from a "Christian perspective." Unlike Reformers, whose populist stand on moral issues like abortion, according to Stilwell, rendered it unprincipled and only weakly committed to family values, the CHP draws its moral foundation from the "Christian heritage of the country." Stilwell stated that what had once "made this country great" was its sense of justice based solely on Christian principles. As the "big three parties" (Liberals, Conservatives and New Democrats) are dedicated only to the principle of maintaining discipline within their ranks, people are beginning to consider small, morally-resolute parties as worthwhile

MacDougall (Timiskaming) seized on the issue quite clumsily, declaring in the House that Thobani was an illegal immigrant who should not even have a paying job. (NAC Presidents received $40,000 per annum at that time.) He added that he did not "think it's fair to Canadians that we're being represented by someone who is not a Canadian citizen." Thobani and NAC immediately accused MacDougall of "petty, crude racism," and demanded that the Prime Minister expel him from caucus. The controversy soon died down, and neither Thobani nor MacDougall lost their jobs. See "Incoming NAC president not an illegal immigrant, immigration official says." The Vancouver Sun, April 24, 1993, p. A3; and "New leader of women's group demands apology for 'racist' remarks." The Vancouver Sun, April 26, 1993, p. A3.

Mr. Stilwell is the husband of Surrey School Board trustee, REAL Women member, and CHP candidate for Surrey-White Rock-South Langley, Heather Stilwell.
alternatives. Abortion constituted the gravest moral issue Canadians had ever faced, Stilwell said, adding that it was clear that the courts, Parliament, and the "big three parties" were all held hostage by left-wing special interests. All the more reason he said, to support the CHP, a party based on Christian moral values.

Don Knight, seeking the PC nomination for Surrey North, was a thoroughly unpolished speaker and at best only marginally relevant to the debate. The cold reception given him by conference delegates was perhaps indicative of how low his party's reputation had sunk with prolife/profamily advocates. Nine years earlier the PCs were virtually the only serious national choice for the right-wing voter and Brian Mulroney's crushing victory in 1984 was greeted by a groundswell of optimism. At the end of the conference, it was clear that while practical considerations, ie. having a realistic chance of winning seats, would drive most REAL Women to the Reform camp, CHP candidate Stilwell was the clear favourite. If this conference was any indication, the Tories would lose the prolife/profamily vote in the upcoming election.

In a letter sent to the Conservative caucus just prior to their BC conference, REAL Women outlined their major concerns, particularly that the party had lost touch with its "natural" support base of moralist conservatives. The letter goes on to state:

We have tried many times during the past 8 years that your government has been in power to bring your attention to our concerns; however, your government has continued to virtually ignore them. We regard this as a betrayal of traditional family values and the disempowerment of all Canadian women who do not support the feminist agenda. We are also baffled, to say the least, that your government continues to hand out substantial subsidies to your political enemies, while alienating those women you might reasonably expect to support you... It is a tragedy that the so-called 'conservative' party has moved left of centre during your term in office. If Ms. [Kim] Campbell is elected party leader, this trend will be accelerated. This betrayal of our values cannot and will not be overlooked by the members of REAL Women and indeed, all conservative
REAL Women's anger towards the PC party bordered on the visceral. Many members told of how their initial flush of optimism in 1984 had so soon turned to disappointment, then to scepticism and finally to outright hostility by the time Mulroney announced his resignation from politics on 24 February 1993.

As the letter above makes clear, many felt betrayed by the Progressive Conservatives. Were they justified in feeling that way? Probably, given Mulroney's own tacit support for the prolife cause while he was Leader of the Opposition. Or were they mistaken in thinking that the massive Mulroney coalition which went to Ottawa in the fall of 1984 was a victory for their values? Probably as well, and for these reasons: the source of voter support for the PCs, and the clear lack of ideological fixity in both party and leader. As Gibbins (1988:334) says, "Mulroney [had] not moved to impose any particular ideological vision on his party, caucus, or cabinet, leaving conservative hard-liners, political moderates, and Red Tories to jockey for position and influence." The sheer size of the Tories' victory in 1984 confirmed that their support came from a broad cross-section of the voting public and from every region of the country. Paradoxically, the very breadth of that support likely acted as a restraint against acting rashly, as members of the new government realized that, if all went well, they could look forward to extended terms in office (Gibbins, 1988:348).

Mulroney was certainly intent on instituting reforms; he was not however, out to radically alter everything in the process. Though the size of the 1984 victory gave Mulroney the freedom

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32See *Reality*, Volume 2, Number 2, Fall 1984, p. 10.
to operate more or less unconstrained by party traditions (Gibbins, ibid.:344), the country's public enterprise tradition was never seriously at risk. As Thomas (1988:129-130) argues,

[the record of the Mulroney government to date does not provide convincing evidence that the Canadian policy agenda has been revolutionized or even profoundly altered. While there have been changes in emphasis, the government has yet to make its [ideological] mark. Many of the policy changes associated with the resurgence of conservatism such as monetarism, fiscal restraint, and a concern over governmental overload occurred during the previous Liberal governments headed by Pierre Trudeau... Whatever else Brian Mulroney may be, he is not an ideologue seeking to change the role of government in Canadian life and to redefine the policy agenda.

While the right clearly felt that they had been betrayed by the Tories, one could plausibly argue that they were not. Brian Mulroney never promised to bring in a right-wing moral agenda. In fact, had they listened more closely, right-wingers would have learned that Brian Mulroney was not really a moral conservative at all.

THE DECLINE OF PROFAMILY SUPPORT FOR THE CONSERVATIVES

The modern Conservative is embarrassed. So he hides his head. Unsure any longer of what he stands for, or against, he attaches the label 'progressive' to his party in order to win approval from an electorate even more confused than he about his purposes. For those with classical conservative sympathies, this is a great disgrace, for a true conservative is far more concerned with civilization, its morality and institutions, than with 'progress' for its own sake. At heart, he believes that nothing new under the sun has been invented in regard to basic human values, nor will it be. The fundamental things in human life, such as the need for honour, truth, decency, care for others, hard work, and so on, have been known for millennia. The problem, therefore, is, How should we properly order society around them? The linking of the terms 'progressive' and 'conservative' is an embarrassing contradiction because it implies that conservatives are mostly interested in changing what is. The day Canada's Conservative party changed its name to the Progressive Conservative party, it publicly acknowledged its philosophical weakness and its willingness to play prostitution politics. With that one stroke, it could abandon any true conservative vision of the world and do battle solely on the basis of out-promising the Liberals; two political parties hugging the centre to death from different sides...
Refreshingly, Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher...and President Ronald Reagan...have not acted in this contradictory fashion. While some conservatives will want to quibble with the purity of their political stances, these two people alone have done more to rehabilitate practical conservatism than anyone else in the entire half-century past...

With no philosophical centre to guide him, [Brian Mulroney] is driven more by the need to be popular than to offer a conservative vision of his country. In this respect, he is without any compass and has become a centre-hovering -- in many cases a left-of-centre -- politician, vying with the Liberals for much the same turf [Gairdner, 1990:148-149].

William Gairdner's musings on the Mulroney Tories' alleged drift to the ideological centre of Canadian politics echoed what many others in the New Right had said after the party's first few years in power. Unlike Margaret Thatcher in Britain or Ronald Reagan in the United States, Mulroney never established a comfortable "fit" with the activist right. He was not committed, personally or publicly, to a moral and/or social conservative agenda. In the eyes of many right-wing critics, Mulroney was a moral and social liberal and a constitutional reformist; in some ways more a "Red" than a "Blue" Tory. He was an aggressive advocate for bilingualism, of Quebec's right to self-determination, multiculturalism, and universal immigration -- issues that most right-wingers opposed.

Though no great friend of feminism nor of organizations like NAC, he bore no overt hostility to the women's movement. On moral issues like abortion, his government favoured compromise over inflexibility. Mulroney was a classic compromise politician, seemingly bereft of dogmatic ideological leanings and hard principles.

[Mulroney's] emphasis on cooperation and harmony provided the underpinning for all the pieces of the Tory platform. A conservative government would give the private sector more freedom to provide the impetus for economic growth, maintain the network of social programs to promote equality of opportunity, and facilitate effective action to deal with national problems by serving as a conciliator and broker among conflicting interests [Perlin, 1988:92].
It became increasingly evident to right-wingers that replacing the Trudeau Liberals with the Mulroney Conservatives did not result in significant changes in moral direction. Yes, the PCs were more committed to the market than were most Liberals and there were hints about getting social spending under control. But on important moral and cultural issues -- feminism, abortion, gay rights, universal immigration, multiculturalism, bilingualism, funding special interests, and so on -- the Conservatives were barely distinguishable from the Liberals.\footnote{Noël (1990:455) has similarly argued that the electoral successes of Thatcher, Reagan, Kohl of Germany and Mulroney were in the main due to their economic, rather than their social or moral views.}

\textit{Government funding of "the feminist joyride"}

Government policies to encourage women's access to the public sphere of economic and political life are comparatively recent in Canada. Beginning in 1954 with the creation of a Women's Bureau in the federal Ministry of Labour, the state took its first steps at ending women's marginalization (also see Burt, 1995:182). In 1967 the federal Liberal government established a Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission's \textit{Report}, released in 1970, "covered issues from employment equity to abortion and came to serve as a blueprint for social change. In effect [the Report]...firmly entrenched a focus among anglophone Canadian groups on the federal government as the protector of their interests" (Phillips, 1991:763).

Acting on the Report's recommendations, the government established an agency within the Privy Council Office, the purpose of which was to monitor the effect of public policies on women. This agency would later take on the additional role of advising government on women's concerns and would be renamed the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (also see O'Neil, 1993:318). In 1971 women from various organizations came together under the
National Ad Hoc Action Committee on the Status of Women. Shortly afterward in early 1972, it was renamed the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC); its initial purpose was to oversee the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. Over time, NAC evolved into a highly "mature, institutionalized umbrella interest group" (Bashevkin, 1991:138), with nearly 600 member groups and over three million women as members.  

The institutional maturation of this network of women's organizations continued apace throughout the 1980s. In addition, the entrenchment of the Charter in 1982 would become an important ally to women's movement. As Phillips (op. cit.:764) points out:

The 1980s were characterized by the rise of organizations of minority women. The emergent groups of [that] decade include the Congress of Black Women...[the] Inuit Women's Association...[the] DisAbled Women's network...and the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women. At the same time that the equality provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into effect in 1985, substantial financial assistance from the federal and Ontario governments supported the creation of the Women's Legal and Education Action Fund (LEAF) [officially launched in April, 1985] which is dedicated to taking litigation under the Charter to promote the status of women, and, in particular, to protect the interests of 'doubly disadvantaged' women.

In proportional terms, the Trudeau years were the most generous for funding the Women's Program. From its start in 1973 to the Liberal Party's defeat in 1984, the funding profile

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34Bashevkin (ibid.) says that there are 5 million members in NAC. NAC's own spokeswomen however, claim a membership of about 3.5 million. Both figures are somewhat misleading, for NAC has only 2,000 individual members, but calculates its total membership by adding all the members of its associates, some of which, like the YWCA, are more or less apolitical. Also see "NAC: strident radicals or female advocates?" The Vancouver Sun, June 18, 1994, p. A8. Additionally, Phillips' (ibid.:773) structural analysis of women's social movements, with NAC at the centre, has found that informally at least, "only 30 per cent of the members' linkages with NAC are strong ones."

35The nine-month Conservative government of Joe Clark during 1979-1980 had little impact in terms of funding.
displays some dramatic increases. Among them: a 46 percent increase for fiscal year 1980-81 ($876,000 to $1,286,500); a 116 percent increase in 1981-82 ($1,286,500 to $2,780,300); and a 119 percent increase in 1984-85 ($4,245,00 to $9,300,500) (figures cited in Pal, 1993:221).

When the Conservatives came to power in 1984, funding for the Women's Program was at first frozen, then reduced in a series of federal budget cuts.36 In 1989, the government once again froze Women's Program funding for three years (ibid.:147).37 For feminist activists, especially those in NAC, the timing of the freeze was suspicious. For not only had NAC and their allies actively opposed the reelection of the Conservatives in 1988, they had also campaigned against the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, which was a cornerstone of the PCs economic policy (also see Bashevkin, 1991:143).

To REAL Women the funding situation was absurd. As potential allies of the government, they received next to nothing, while sworn opponents of the government continued to be funded lavishly.

36Still, the sums involved were considerable: for fiscal year 1985-86, the total allotment was $12,538,000; for 1986-87, $12,426,900; and for 1987-88, $12,467,996. Figures cited in Pal (op. cit.).

37Though Bashevkin (1991:143) writes that by 1992, NAC's funding from the federal government was reduced by 50 percent to $300,000. Furthermore, "...in its February 1990 budget, the government eliminated an additional $1.6 million from the Secretary of State Women's Program, much of which would have gone to women's centres and periodicals, and [government ministers] again refused to participate in the [annual] NAC lobby [of the government on Parliament Hill]." In 1987-88, the federal government provided $618,701 in funds to NAC, which, at 12.8 percent of the total national grants to women's groups, made it the largest single recipient of Program funds (Pal, op. cit.:223-224).
Table 3.3: Comparison of funding between REAL Women and feminists\(^1\)

**a) National Action Committee on the Status of Women**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Justice Canada $s</th>
<th>Secretary of State $s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>630,678(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>621,897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>506,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>396,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>5,657.83</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**b) Women's Legal, Education and Action Fund (LEAF)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Justice Canada $s</th>
<th>Secretary of State $s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>276,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>19,250</td>
<td>273,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>26,859</td>
<td>257,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>257,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>18,112.62</td>
<td>232,248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**c) REAL Women of Canada**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Justice Canada $s</th>
<th>Secretary of State $s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>21,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>2,241.48</td>
<td>6,916.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Source: *Reality*, Volume XI, Issue Number 1, January/February, 1993, p. 15

\(^2\) The discrepancy between REAL Women's figure for 1987-88 and Pal's figure of $618,701 cannot be explained.

Since its inception REAL Women has had numerous confrontations with the federal government over funding. Yet, the very idea of state funding represents something of a Faustian bargain for them. Although the organization barely manages to hold on financially (mostly through annual
dues), members remain defiantly proud for having kept their organization together. However does not diminish their seething resentment that most federal government funding goes to organizations they consider immoral and politically radical, while they, representing the traditional family and the traditional values of "the people," are given but a fraction and grudgingly at that. Since its inception, REAL Women has been arguing that "radical feminist groups have had a monopoly on speaking for women" (cited in Pal, 1993:144). Prolife/profamily organizations they insist, also speak for women as well and are as deserving of funding as their opponents (more so in fact).

In August 1984 REAL Women submitted their first application for funding through the Women's Program. The total requested was $110,650. In November of 1984, the organization submitted a second application, this time for an annual grant of $185,000 to cover operations (ibid.). The Women's Program turned down both applications on the grounds that REAL Women's defence of traditional sex roles was inconsistent with the Program's principles. These principles are: 1) rights, responsibilities and opportunities are to be enjoyed equally irrespective of sex; 2) all adults are regarded as free to make lifestyle choices and therefore have the right to reject sex-role stereotyping; 3) with certain exceptions (like pregnancy) there can be no special

38Although the person's name has never been mentioned, one (anonymous) individual has been subsidizing REAL Women executives so that they may attend international conferences. For example, with respect to the United Nations World Conference on Housing in Istanbul in 1996, Reality (Volume XV, Issue Number 4, July/August, 1996, p.6) stated:

REAL Women President, Cecilia Forsyth and National Vice President, Gwen Landolt, attended yet another UN World Conference, this time in Istanbul, Turkey, in June. Again, their expenses were covered by an exceptionally generous member to whom we owe our deepest thanks for such magnificent and continued generosity.
treatment on the basis of sex (cited in ibid.). Although REAL Women responded to the rejection by arguing that they do indeed promote equality, but not feminist ideas of equality, it was clear that the organization could never satisfy the Program’s principles.

Women's Program director Lyse Blanchard further explained the reasons for the rejection in a letter to REAL Women's first president, Grace Petrasek:

The purpose of R.E.A.L. Women, as clearly stated in your constitution and newsletter, is the promotion of the nurturing role of women within the traditional family structure. Your organization is therefore dedicated to supporting a particular way of life as reflected in the traditional family model. While there is no doubt that women's work in the home certainly represents a worthy and valuable contribution to society, the promotion of a particular family model is not within the spirit of the objectives of the Program. The Program concentrates on supporting groups who are working to explore all options for women as they work toward equality in a society that is changing rapidly [cited in ibid.].

To REAL Women, the letter was more material to fuel their suspicion that the Women's Program was not opposed to supporting "a particular way of life" as a general principle -- after all, feminism supports a "particular way of life," too -- but more accurately, traditional ways of life. In any case and ironically, was not the feminist movement the sworn enemy of the government? Did they not oppose free trade and most other policies? How was it that these groups could receive massive injections of tax dollars, while REAL Women, which supported a good many of the government's initiatives -- including free trade -- was consistently shut out? By what perversion of logic could the government fund its political enemies and reject its potential allies?

For REAL Women, there was only one likely answer to those questions. The government, even one sporting the label "Conservative," had been so thoroughly infiltrated by left-wing interests that it had no choice but to fund them. Even a brief perusal of Reality's headlines show the degree to which REAL Women is convinced that the PC government had
been overrun with feminists: "Tax payers' nightmare (makes you weep)" (Summer 1991); "Feminists and an intimidated Conservative government" (Fall 1991); "Feminists put your tax dollars to work" and "Court Challenges Program funded abortion clinic" (September/October 1992); "Feminists gaining control of our political parties" (January/February 1993); "Feminist lawyers roll in the dough" (May/June 1993). Once the state starts to fund a particular interest -- even one that is ideologically its opposite -- it becomes difficult to put a stop to it. From the government's standpoint, however much recipient groups may bite the hand that feeds them, discontinuing funding may be even more problematic. With funding in place, there is at least some degree of "capturing" the group in question (also see Bashevkin, 1991:140), though NAC and its associates have proved stubbornly resistant to this.

Not to be deterred by its first round of rejections, REAL Women had come up with a ruse to "prove" that the Women's Program was ideologically biased against it and by extension, against the traditional family:

REAL Women tried many times in 1983 merely to obtain application forms for funding from the Women's Program. None were forwarded to us. This caused us considerable surprise (after all, the Women's Program was a government agency supposedly accessible and open to all Canadians). After months of frustration, we decided to test the actual policies of the Women's Program. Consequently, in February, 1984, we requested that the Women's Program send us funding application forms under another name -- 'The National Association of Lesbian Mothers'. Promptly, the application forms, together with funding guidelines, arrived, accompanied by a handwritten note on Women's Program letterhead, dated March 1, 1984, with the welcoming note:

*Here is the information as promised! Please feel free to contact me once you've had a chance to look over the material and discuss project ideas with your group.*

We filled out these forms using our true name and, of course, received yet another
rejection of our application.\textsuperscript{39}

Shortly after their rejection, REAL Women went public with the "lesbian mothers" story. The federal government, they said, was giving away tens of thousands of dollars to organizations promoting feminism and homosexuality while denying funding to organizations promoting traditional family values. "The resulting scandal produced a parliamentary investigation into the funding policies of the Women's Program and put NAC on the defensive for two years" (Morton, 1992:255).

Neither the frequency of applications for funding nor the amounts requested by REAL Women were insignificant. Pal (op. cit.:145-148) has traced the path of REAL Women's funding odyssey, from its first request in 1984 to the funding freeze of 1989. Converting text to table, REAL Women's efforts look something like this:

\textsuperscript{39}Reality, Volume XV, Issue Number 4, July/August 1996, p. 5. The bogus application requested a grant of $92,000.
Table 3.4: REAL Women's requests for funding, 1984-89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of application</th>
<th>Amount requested - $s</th>
<th>Request approved/denied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1984</td>
<td>110,650</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1984</td>
<td>185,000</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1985</td>
<td>Unknown¹</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1985</td>
<td>1,138,500</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1986</td>
<td>566,620</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1987</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1988</td>
<td>119,720</td>
<td>Denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1989</td>
<td>21,000²</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ No amount given
² REAL Women's own statements put the figure at 21,212

Subsequent years saw the approval of grants to REAL Women increase, but the amounts given were always significantly less than the January 1989 disbursement. The table below shows the amounts from the Women's Program to REAL Women, 1989-1996:

Table 3.5: Year and grant amounts, 1989-1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Amount granted - $s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>2,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>6,916.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>13,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>11,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Reality, Volume XV, Issue Number 4, July/August 1996, p. 5
Notwithstanding the fact that REAL Women is a national women's organization with chapters in every province and with many local city chapters, it has been treated with utter contempt by the Women's Program. Our organization would certainly prefer that there be no government funding of special interest groups at all. We must, nonetheless, deal with the reality that the federal government is continuing to make generous grants to feminist organizations with whom we must compete in public debate. As long as government makes these grants, it has an obligation, at the very least, to do so on a level playing field. Clearly this is not the case. 

REAL Women's dichotomous views with respect to state funding squares with the argument propounded in this thesis that much of the New Right's opposition to interest group funding is more focused on the issue (to borrow from Harold Lasswell) of who gets it, rather than the practice itself. Pal (1993:143-148) has shown that, contrary to the claims of REAL Women that the Women's Program fails even to acknowledge their applications for funding, the reverse is in fact true. Though funding has been scant, the lines of communication between the organization and the Women's Program have never been closed.

There is no denying that REAL Women have been consistently rebuffed in their requests for government funds over the years. Nor can it be denied that from their perspective, the Women's Program exhibits an ill-concealed bias against their principles. At the root of the funding dispute is a conflict over the meaning of "equality" that resonates throughout the New Right movement. For feminists, simple legal (or formal) equality, eg. "everyone is equal before the law," is insufficient. In their view equality that simply confers the same (negative) rights on everyone fails principally to address the systemic social, economic and political injustices

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41This theme is explored in Chapter Five as well. The issue discussed there is the Reform Party and federal legislation concerning equal rights for same-sex couples.
which beset many women. Simply declaring for instance, that "everyone has the right to participate in the political arena" is to ignore the fact that women as a group lack both the opportunities and the conditions to participate on equal terms with men. To state that "all are created equal" does not perforce make it so, especially when myriad inequalities are so much in evidence: are the poor equal to (or as free as) the wealthy? are ethnic minorities equal to the majority? are women equal to men? Feminists argue that equality cannot be achieved by simple declaration. What must be taken into consideration are the results, the outcomes of policies and legal measures. If everyone has the right to participate in politics, the only way to determine the efficacy of that right is to see that everyone indeed has an equal opportunity to do so. In order to partake as equals in political and other walks life, women must be extended certain considerations in order to achieve parity with men. As Razack (1992:244) puts it in her discussion of LEAF, "[k]ey to their approach was the notion that 'the aim is not to sex-neutralize all laws and pretend that one has thereby created equality: the aim is to positively accommodate sex specific situations'."

For REAL Women and the New Right as a whole, equality is generally limited to its formal and/or legal assumptions. Theirs is an essentially negative perspective, that is to say, it is premised on the view that equality (itself a notoriously slippery concept) is by definition the elimination of special privileges. Once this has been done, equality has been achieved. For example, following right-wing arguments, if women have the same political rights as men -- to vote, to run for office and so on -- then inequality in the political arena no longer exists, the "field" as it were is now level. To contend that equality must be concerned with results (opportunities) is to engineer via "social technology" (Knopff, 1990) an outcome that defeats the
very meaning of equality. If affirmative action provisions are invoked to ensure that women (or some other "marginalized" group) must have reserved for them a certain number of employment positions, then that is not equality, but rather special privileges extended to a particular group on the basis of some ascriptive, and/or biological, characteristics. Arguing in favour of such measures by insisting that women (for example) have been disadvantaged historically on account of their sex and therefore must be the beneficiaries of remedial measures designed to produce certain outcomes, is not equality but, de facto and de jure, discrimination. To have the state involved in such social engineering means that governments now view some citizens as more worthy than others. The likely outcome of that is not to reverse historical injustices, but to perpetuate them; only this time, the favoured groups have changed.

REAL Women argue that the substantive equality demanded by feminists (and the Women's Program) is itself discriminatory because it refuses to recognize that for some women (most women, according to prolife/profamily advocates), embracing traditional sex roles and moral values is the result of choice. That such women, say, stay at home mothers and/or spouses, choose to live their lives this way is the essence of equality. Much to REAL Women's dismay, the state has instead seen fit to acknowledge only feminists' conceptions of equality.

The next subsection looks at REAL Women's opposition to what it considers to be the most dangerous equality-seeking special interest of all: homosexuals.

"Not homophobia [but] homonausea"

REAL Women is neither a hate group nor anti-gay; in our political and personal dealings with homosexuals, we promote courtesy and respect. This means using balanced language and supporting our opinions with evidence; it does not mean, however, agreeing with the militant political agenda of
homosexuals.\textsuperscript{42}

As I pointed out earlier in the chapter, by the early 1990s REAL Women shifted the focus of its activism somewhat. Whereas before abortion and related matters concerning reproduction consumed most of their attention, after the SCC decisions in \textit{Morgentaler} and \textit{Borowski} 1988 and 1989, the issue of homosexuality, specifically, equal rights and benefits for gays and lesbians, commanded ever increasing amounts of the organization's time and energy.

The controversy over extending rights to homosexuals had been around at least since the Trudeau government's 1969 Omnibus Bill decriminalized same-sex activities among consenting adults. At that time however and for a number of years after the bill's passage, gays and lesbians were, for all intents and purposes, invisible. While homosexuals agitated for rights recognition throughout much of the 1970s, they did so largely out of the public eye and without much success. (One notable success was the amendment of Quebec's Human Rights Charter to prohibit discrimination against homosexuals in 1977.) By the 1980s as public opinion shifted to ending discrimination against homosexuals, governments started to make limited changes. In 1986 the Mulroney Tories promised to amend the Canadian Human Rights Code to ban discrimination against gays and lesbians, but due largely to opposition from backbenchers -- many of whom were lobbied intensively by REAL Women -- the government backed down.

In Ontario in 1986 the proposal to extend human rights protection to homosexuals drew out many opponents, including REAL Women, the Conference of Catholic Bishops and a number of evangelical organizations (Herman, 1994:272). After bitter debates both inside and outside the legislature, Bill 7: \textit{An Act to amend certain Ontario statutes to conform to section 15 of the}

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, passed into law. In time other provinces followed suit, though in one notable case, namely the province of Alberta in 1998, such changes to human rights codes were more or less forced on reluctant legislatures as a result of a judicial ruling. "Gradually, from municipal employment policies to inclusion within provincial human rights law and the national Charter of Rights, lesbian and gay rights were not only on the agenda, they were increasingly being extended" (ibid.).

Table 3.6: Changes in attitudes towards homosexuality, 1981 and 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>-5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>+5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>+11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table above shows that, on the issue of homosexuality, Canadians were somewhat more tolerant than their counterparts in Britain (which actually registered a decline in support) and the USA. For the most part, that trend has continued, though Canadians appear to draw the line

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42 Although Smith (1998) argues that in the case of the gay movement's activism and framing of issues in the pre-Charter era, i.e. in the 1960s and 1970s, its equality seeking strategies were already well established. "For some groups, equality seeking may indeed be an effect of Charter engagement; for others, such as the lesbian and gay rights movements, it is not" (p. 308).

44 As always, different surveys produce slightly different pictures. Bibby's (1990:67) survey data state that while "70 percent of Canadians do not approve of homosexual relations and about the same proportion say they are inclined to feel uncomfortable around homosexuals, 76 percent nonetheless assert that 'homosexuals are entitled to the same rights as other Canadians'." A Gallup poll published on in May 1992 indicated that "[f]ewer than one-in-four adult Canadians (24%) favor marriages between people of the same sex." Less than one-third (31%) felt that homosexuals should be permitted to adopt children (also see next footnote). However, 54 percent agreed that homosexuals should be accepted as teachers and 49 percent accepted the idea of gay-
Comparing attitudes to homosexuality and their impact on government policy (and vice-versa) in Britain, the USA and Canada, Rayside (1992:147-148) says that

[although the 1984 federal election brought to power a Progressive Conservative government claiming affinity to the policies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, its right-wing moral agenda was never very fully developed. In fact, a Conservative-dominated legislative committee recommended in 1985 that discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation be formally prohibited...Even more than in the US, governmental decentralization in Canada has prevented any one party from exerting as much influence as the British Conservatives have over the public agenda. The supposed permissiveness of the 1960s and 1970s has never provoked as strong a political backlash in Canada as in either Britain or the US, and with the enactment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 there was an expanded rights discourse rather than a contracted one in subsequent years. Sexual orientation was not explicitly included in the Charter, but there was growing legal opinion that the courts would interpret the equality rights provisions as implicitly including sexual orientation.

Notwithstanding that Rayside is supportive of equal rights claims made by gays and lesbians, the prolife/profamily right would have no quarrel with anything in the quotation above. But what fuels the intense animosity most in the prolife/profamily movement (indeed most in the New Right) harbour with respect to homosexuality? Religious views certainly and an accompanying lesbian clergy. Overall, 84 percent of respondents agreed that homosexuals were more accepted by mainstream society than they were 25 years ago. In addition, a 1993 Angus Reid poll reported that 55 percent of those surveyed said that homosexual activity is morally acceptable. See Douglas Todd, "Faith in statistics." The Vancouver Sun, June 12, 1993, p. C13.

An Angus Reid-Southam News survey, conducted between May 30 and June 1, 1994, reported that almost 60 percent of those surveyed opposed legislation giving spousal benefits and adoption rights to homosexual couples. See "Same-sex benefits get cold shoulder." The Vancouver Sun, June 8, 1994, p. A4.

I say "homosexuality" instead of "homosexuals" because the right (especially the Christian right) insists that while they hate homosexuality, they bear no hatred towards homosexuals themselves.
moral view that regards homosexuality as deviant, evil and a threat to the traditional family play a large role. Many right-wingers believe that homosexuality is the manifestation of psychological damage suffered in childhood or adolescence caused by adult pedophiles. One frequently-cited explanation for homosexuality is personal choice. To many moral conservatives, homosexuals are never born, they are made, usually because certain people choose that particular "preference" (not "orientation") or have been forced into it because of childhood abuse or because of the absence of a suitable male role model in the home. Homosexuality, like tobacco or alcohol addiction, is the result of bad personal choices, some of which stem from unforeseen factors like abuse, but more often than not, are directly traceable to lapses in personal moral judgement.

Probably the most vituperative of REAL Women's frequent condemnations of homosexuality came in February 1989 in the form of an "open letter" to openly gay NDP MP Svend Robinson. Written by Peggy Steacy of the BC branch of the organization and published in the far-right Christian newspaper Life Gazette, the letter was intended as a rejoinder to Robinson's declaration that REAL Women's strident opposition to the upcoming gay-lesbian sports-themed Celebration 1990 (also known as the "Gay Games") to be held in and around Greater Vancouver in the summer of 1990 was in fact "hate literature." Though the letter is less restrained and more vehement than is usual for REAL Women, the views expressed in it are fairly typical of the organization. The letter is quoted here at some length:

Dear Mr. Robinson,

When we first distributed our pamphlet on 'Sexual Orientation Legislation' you were quick to brand it 'hate literature' despite the fact that every word is documented. When did the truth become 'hate literature'? Since then, and since your 'coming out', we have become aware of statements you have made which are totally erroneous, with which you have preyed on the ignorance of the decent people of your riding, and which must be corrected...
Your assertion that one's sexual orientation is determined at a very early age for reasons still not fully understood merely means that an early experience was habit-forming, and in no way means that the habit cannot be broken. Those enslaved to bad habits deserve our compassion and help to 'cease and desist', whether alcoholics, drug addicts or homosexuals. Only a foolish society would tighten the habit's noose by designating victims of homosexual preferences as deserving special legal protection. We don't give special preference to alcoholics: they do a disservice to themselves and others. Special rights for a 'lifestyle' is not the Canadian way.

Homosexuality is not a human rights issue but a public health issue. When you speak of 'dignity' and 'integrity', one wonders how they fit the physical activities, the biologic horrors, in which homosexuals indulge...[H]ow can you justify these actions, causing as they do disease after disease?...

One hears the word 'homophobia' bandied about at a great rate these days. We 'straights' are accused of practising this form of discrimination against homosexual men and women...actually what most of us are suffering from is not 'homophobia' so much as 'homonausea' -- we are sick and tired of millions of our tax dollars going to provide for people ailing and dying of a mostly self-inflicted injury [ie. AIDS]...

We are tired of our beautiful province being depicted as a playground for any form of deviant behaviour in the book -- the days of 'live and let live' are gone and it is more than time for a return to decent living, for the decent people of this area...

Realwomen of Canada encourage homosexuals to abandon their unfortunate habit as have millions before them. Those who turn from homosexuality to productive chastity or responsible heterosexuality should be forgiven and welcomed.

Yours truly,

[signed] P. Steacy
(President, Realwomen B.C.)

REAL Women wasn't the only conservative group opposed to Celebration 1990, nor was its criticism of the event the most hostile. Fundamentalist and evangelical individuals and congregations throughout the region protested against what they referred to as the "Sodomite Invasion," with much of their outrage directed at MP Robinson.47

The controversy came to a head on 4 November 1989, when both The Vancouver Sun and

The Province newspapers ran an anonymous, full-page advertisement that denounced Celebration 1990 as a rebellion against God and called upon Christians to engage in "spiritual warfare" against gays and lesbians. The money to pay for the ad (about $15,000) was later traced to the 700-member evangelical Burnaby Christian Fellowship, a congregation in Robinson's riding. In the wake of reactions to the ad (which in true BC fashion meant a virtual torrent of "letters to the editor" and much discussion on "talk radio") where, on one side, the gay community, the mainstream churches and the BC Civil Liberties Association denounced it as bigotry and bordering on hate literature\(^48\) and on the other, where conservative Christians, including those in REAL Women, insisted that it was an accurate reflection of their belief that homosexuality was a sin against God, the whole controversy died abruptly.

The rapid dissolution of the controversy (and the games themselves later went off without much trouble) was discouraging to conservative (and especially to conservative Christian) organizations. To them, it all represented in microcosm what seemed to be occurring throughout society as a whole: homosexuals and other radicals had become so disproportionately influential throughout government institutions and the media that no cherished tradition or moral principle was safe, no venerable institution immune to radical change. Even some Christian churches (liberal ones) were beginning to allow for the ordination of openly homosexual clergy.\(^49\) For the right these and other incidents were episodes in a series of events wherein the line between normality and deviancy was becoming increasingly blurred.


\(^49\)The United Church of Canada (UCC), which was actively prochoice on abortion in the mid-1960s, allowed for the ordination of homosexuals in 1988.
This is not to say that prolife/profamily forces ever conceded the issue of homosexual rights to their opponents, far from it. Groups like REAL Women continued to engage in anti-gay activism, mostly through lobbying politicians, presenting briefs to legislative committees and appearing before the courts, mostly as interveners. However at about the same time the furore over the "gay games" was subsiding, it became increasingly clear that the battleground for family values and traditional morality was beginning to shift away from politicians and even from the voters themselves. Now, the stage was the courtroom and the "play" was the Charter of Rights.

**REAL Women v. the Courts and the Charter**

The Supreme Court has been anything but 'neutral' in its application and development of the Charter. According to the courts, the right to freedom of religion prohibits government policy from accommodating the beliefs of Christians, but requires it to accommodate the beliefs of non-Christians. Sunday-closing laws are declared unconstitutional, but Sikhs must be exempted from RCMP dress regulations. Freedom of expression does not prevent government prohibition of 'traditional' pornography, but does protect pornography targeted at gay and lesbian markets. Individual Canadians have been deprived of the protection against government discrimination unless they belong to a 'historically disadvantaged group' [Morton, 1998:54].

As the quote above indicates, right-wing analysts are as selective in their arguments against the Charter as their rivals are in support of it. Irrespective of one's ideological views, there is no denying that the Charter, perhaps more precisely judicial interpretations of its provisions, have had a remarkable impact on Canadian society. By any measure the Charter is a supremely powerful instrument and in turn the judiciary has itself become a powerfully influential institution with respect to the legalities of moral, social, cultural and political change.

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50 In the Canadian judicial system, appeals do allow for organizations not directly connected to the case to participate in the litigation. This is similar to the American judicial practice of allowing *amicus curiae* -- a friend of the court -- to partake of the process.
Each of the three organizations studied in this thesis have significant misgivings about the Charter. For the Reform Party, it is the conspicuous lack of protection for economic rights, particularly the right to property, that is their biggest concern (Manning, 1992:80-83). For APEC, arguably the most vociferous opponent of the three, it is the usurpation of parliamentary supremacy by unelected judges who have virtually hijacked public policy making from the elected politicians. For REAL Women and related organizations, it is the moral impact of Charter decisions which matters most, especially those decisions concerning abortion, homosexuality and other issues regarded as threatening to the traditional family.

In the early 1980s, REAL Women and associated organizations were for the most part nonpartisan with respect to the Charter of Rights. In fact, like many Canadians, right-wingers were initially willing to let the Charter "do its work." True, it was mainly Pierre Trudeau's project, it contained no provisions entrenching property rights, and there was some concern that feminists had succeeded in entrenching their views of equality in not one, but two sections, 15 and 28. Still, the Charter did at least contain an override clause which preserved parliamentary supremacy and at a minimum provided citizens with stronger protection for their rights against incursions by the state. Comfortingly, the override provisions in section 33 would function as an effective threat against overly-zealous courts deciding cases under the Charter.

In September of 1985 Justice Minister John Crosbie announced an expansion of the federal Court Challenges Program (CCP). First implemented by the Trudeau Liberals in 1977 to fight Quebec's Bill 101 language laws, the new, updated program "would help to fund court cases under the equality rights provisions of the Charter and various constitutional language rights guarantees" (Brodie, 1992:252). It was the equality rights panel of the CCP, authorized to fund
cases to challenge federal laws that were deemed inconsistent with Charter sections 15 (equality),
27 (multicultural heritage) and 28 (equality of sexes in the constitution) that attracted the right's
attention. In the Borowski appeal, the CCP provided the maximum allowable grant -- $35,000
-- to LEAF, the state-funded organization dedicated to "building feminist jurisprudence" (Razack,
1992:250) by litigating Charter cases. REAL Women, LEAF's intervening opponent in Borowski,
also applied for funds under the CCP. They were denied on the basis that their "case would
reduce the control that women exercised in their own lives and was therefore inimical to the
equality rights of women" (Brodie, op. cit.:254). Not unexpectedly, REAL Women immediately
accused the CCP of ideological bias and being under the influence of radical feminists. The
CCP, they argued, was not interested in litigation for its own sake, but more concerned with
advancing an unpopular agenda through the courts that it could not otherwise accomplish through
the legislature. That the decision to reject REAL Women's application in Borowski was handed
down at the very same time the Mulroney government was attempting to draft a new abortion
law in light of the Morgentaler decision reinforced the prolife/profamily view that the CCP was
transparently biased towards traditional values advocates (ibid.).

In addition to concerns over CCP funding, the court's decision in The Queen v. Big M
Drug Mart (1985), attracted REAL Women's attention as well. The case centred on a Calgary
pharmacy that opened its doors to Sunday shopping in violation of the federal Lord's Day Act.
The court decided that the act's purpose was essentially to reinforce the Christian observance of
the Sabbath. Although no-one was ever legally bound to attend Sunday religious services, the
act itself imposed a strictly Christian perspective on (what was now) a pluralistic, multi-religious
society. This, said the court, violated the guarantees of the right to freedom of conscience and
religion of section 2 of the Charter and to a lesser degree, the section 27 clause, which directs the courts to interpret the Charter "in a manner consistent with the...multicultural heritage of Canadians."

The SCC's decision did not settle the issue of Sunday shopping and in any case, they had no quarrel with Sunday closings *per se*. But with their decision the court had de-linked Sunday closings from any traditional Christian perspective concerning the Sabbath. Canada, at least in any official or legal sense (and irrespective of what the preamble to the Charter declares), could no longer be considered a "Christian nation" (ibid.:405).

On its face, the *Big M* ruling was not overly-intrusive jurisprudence, but the fact that the Charter was interpreted so as to challenge what most moral and cultural traditionalists see as the foundation of the country (and by extension, western civilization) was to them unnerving.

REAL Women argued that, under the Charter,

...the Judeo Christian ethic which is the underpinning of our societal structures has been replaced by the concept that all religions are to be treated equally and given equal recognition in Canada. As a result, religious teachings and exercises are banned from public schools, and Sunday observance legislation has been declared null and void with no adequate legal safeguards for Christian employees who do not wish to work on Sunday.\(^5^1\)

Still, nothing the court had done previously could have matched the outrage that greeted the *Morgentaler* decision in 1988. With that ruling and much else that would follow, right-wing "Charter-sceptics" were rapidly becoming full-blown "Charterphobes." After that case and after the SCC rendered moot Joe Borowski's appeal the year after, the Charter and the courts became enemies of the prolife/profamily right.

\(^{51}\text*{Reality, Volume XII, Issue Number 4, July/August 1993, p. 5.}\)
As the courts heard more cases under the Charter, and especially under the auspices of the equality guarantees provided for in section 15, something of a pattern began to emerge, one that has been of great concern to the right. Increasingly, the courts were willing to extend the guarantees of section 15 beyond the enumerated categories to include certain groups not recognized in the constitution. While the case of *Andrews v. The Law Society of BC* (1989) set the tone by including the "analogous ground" of non-citizens as one of those unenumerated, "historically disadvantaged" or "vulnerable" groups -- the issue there was whether Canadian citizenship was a reasonable requirement for practicing law -- (also see Mandel, 1994:349), the most contentious issue, so far as the right is concerned, was for the courts to "read in" to section 15 constitutional protection for homosexuals, a group deliberately excluded from the pre-Charter negotiations in 1980-81. This precedent was set by the Ontario Court of Appeal in August 1992 in the case of *Haig v. Canada*.

In *Haig*, the plaintiff argued successfully that the Canadian Human Rights Act was "constitutionally under-inclusive in excluding homosexuals from its protection" (Hogg, 1998:762). By reading in to section 15 provisions to include protection for "discreet and insular" groups like homosexuals, the Ontario court ruled that the Canadian Human Rights Act had to extend its prohibited grounds of discrimination to include gays and lesbians. Spurred on by the ruling, the

52One of the more publicized cases dealing with the concept of an "historically disadvantaged" group under section 15 was *Schachtschneider v. Canada* (1993). The claimants, married with children, had argued that the federal Income Tax Act, which gave common law spouses with children a tax advantage over married couples, was discriminatory on the bases of marital status and religion (they had married out of religious obligation). The Federal Court dismissed the claim on the grounds that married couples had not been historically disadvantaged "in the context of [their] place in the entire social, political and legal fabric of our society." Also see Mandel (1994:351).
remainder of 1992 saw a number of landmark decisions. In September, the Ontario Human Rights Code was changed to extend pension benefits to the partners in same-sex relationships;\(^{53}\) in October, the Canadian Armed Forces agreed to end discrimination against homosexuals after a lesbian won a court challenge;\(^{54}\) and in November, the Workers' Compensation Board of BC recognized a lesbian partner as a "spouse" with respect to a survivor-pension claim.\(^{55}\)

Of this flurry of litigation, REAL Women declared:

...the Courts have again "read-in" words to suit themselves -- this time to the Charter of Rights which does not include protection on the grounds of sexual orientation. In fact the latter was specifically excluded [from] the Charter... This...is another nail in the coffin of Parliamentary democracy in our country.\(^{56}\)

As the right saw it, the courts and human rights tribunals, using the Charter as their weapon, were by-passing the legislatures and by extension, the views of "the people" in expanding the rights of gays and lesbians. The politicians did not escape the right's anger either. Justice Minister Kim Campbell's "compromise" bill, tabled in December 1992, prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, but refused to recognize same-sex partnerships as legal marriages. Still, the bill was seen by REAL Women as typical of the minister's pandering to the left.\(^{57}\)


\(^{57}\)Reality, Volume XI, Issue Number 2, March/April, 1993, p. 2. As soon as rumours began circulating that Campbell was seeking to succeed Mulroney as PC party leader, REAL Women started its anti-Campbell campaign, warning others that the minister-cum-potential leadership
With more legal victories than setbacks for homosexual rights, REAL Women's disenchantedness with the judiciary and the Charter was profound. By the end of 1992, in a newsletter article titled "Canada: An Angry Nation," REAL Women presented their ultimate solution to the myriad problems facing the nation:

The most important recommendation of all would be the removal of the Charter of Rights from our constitution. Until it is removed, we will not have peace as a nation and there will continue to be a breakdown in our national consensus. Individuals' rights have trod over majority rights; special interest groups (with government funding) used the courts to bring about a new social order to reflect the image of the elites and special interest groups -- not that of the majority.58

If current legal and political trends are any indication, the frustration of the prolife/profamily right can only deepen.

CONCLUSION

It is perhaps more than a touch ironic that the story of a movement dedicated to preserving the traditional values of the nation and its people should be so much a chronicle of defeat. Indeed, the years since the passage of Trudeau's 1969 Omnibus Bill have been an uphill struggle for the moral-cultural right, both politically and legally. In the minds of REAL Women and other advocates, there is no question but that the institutions of the state have turned against them: the courts, the Charter, many politicians, not to mention much of the media and academia, have been critical, even dismissive, of their values and concerns. This leaves organizations like REAL Women truly baffled by the negative reactions they provoke from so many. "I don't know why hopeful was a Red Tory with a "profound contempt for ordinary Canadians" (ibid.).

[we are regarded negatively]; we're non-partisan," declared Peggy Steacy, "but we do stand up for what is right."59

Their unshakeable faith that not only is their cause morally just, but also that the "silent majority" of citizens (who presumably have been forced into silence by left-wing groups who are quick to condemn opponents as "racist, sexist and anti-gay") support them -- in their hearts if not their votes and pocketbooks -- sustains them in their struggle. So too does the belief that one day, voters, politicians, and judges will finally come to realize that the leftist grip on policy-making, education and jurisprudence over the last thirty or so years may have done plenty for feminists, homosexuals and the "new class" of bureaucrats and educators, but it has done precious little for "the people" or the nation as a whole. High rates of divorce, abortion, teenage promiscuity, widespread violence and crime, the virtual disappearance of deference to and respect for authority, an emphasis on children's self-esteem over their education resulting in an entire generation which views all desires as entitlements, the widespread abandoning of the principles of religious teachings, and of course, the breakdown in sexual norms and traditional family values -- these, the right insists, are the dubious benefits of secular left-liberalism.

Whatever initial glimmer of right-wing optimism greeted the election of the Mulroney Conservatives in 1984 turned, slowly at first but in time quite dramatically, to scepticism, anger and finally outright hostility. As Ted Byfield declared, the Tories had gone so far as to pervert the very meaning of the term "conservative." Ask most Tories the meaning of the term, he said, and they would likely respond like this:

I am what you would call a fiscal conservative and a social liberal. That is, I

59Steacy interview.
believe in a free-market system. Government spending is far higher than it should be and must be reduced until we once again live within our means. I believe we are depending on government for things we can better do for ourselves.

But at the same time I am socially liberal. I believe that matters of 'personal' morality are no affair of the state. Questions like abortion, sexual activity, the permanence of marriage, all such purely moral issues, should be left to the individual conscience. The government should stay out of it. Therefore I am pro-choice on the abortion question. And while I am not and wouldn't be a homosexual myself, I see no reason to oppose homosexuals. In short, I believe the state should not become the conscience of the nation.60

Unfortunately for the right, their search for allies amongst the old-line political parties had met with little success by the time the federal election was called for October 25, 1993. Yes, there were allies in the PC ranks and even amongst the Liberals, but few of them would come out publicly for the cause. Even fewer dared break party ranks and vote contrary to the wishes of their leader.

Among those who did was MP Tom Wappel (Scarborough West), who declared in 1994 that homosexuality was "statistically abnormal, physically abnormal and morally immoral." Wappel was the recipient of REAL Women's first "Annual Pro-Family Award" in 1995. Another was MP Roseanne Skoke of Nova Scotia (Central Nova). Skoke won the lasting admiration of REAL Women when, during a Commons debate on the Liberal government's proposed amendments to the Criminal Code to hand out stiffer sentences for crimes motivated by hate, including homophobia, she declared:

The references to sexual orientation in the [Criminal] code and its proposed inclusion in human rights legislation gives recognition to a faction in our society which is undermining and destroying our Canadian values and our Christian morality. Such a special recognition of sexual orientation in our federal legislation is an overt condonation of the practice of homosexuality which is being imposed

60Ted Byfield, "Why Torydom's social liberals are playing a losing game." British Columbia Report, March 15, 1993, p. 44.
on Canadians. It has the effect of legislating a morality that is not supported by our Canadian and Christian morals and values. Canadians do not have to accept homosexuality as being natural and moral. Homosexuality is not natural, it is immoral and it is undermining the inherent rights and values of our Canadian families and it must not and should not be condoned [Hansard, September 20, 1994, p. 5910].

While Prime Minister Chrétien later defended Skoke for exercising her right to free speech, there were no free votes on the bill.⁶¹ Ms. Skoke's subsequent declaration outside the House, viz. that "Morality is constant. Morality does not change with the tide" has since been turned into a REAL Women slogan. Skoke was not re-elected in 1997 and later that year, failed in her leadership bid for the Nova Scotia Liberal Party.

The outcome of the 1993 national election gave REAL Women and other prolife/profamily advocates more cause for optimism than they had experienced in some time. The virtual demolition of the PCs under new leader Kim Campbell and the 52 seats won by the Reform Party helped offset their concern over the Liberals' return to power.

Easily the most sympathetic of all parties in Parliament to the REAL Women's cause is the Reform Party. However, of all parties running in the 1993 election, REAL Women's first choice was the tiny Christian Heritage Party (CHP). Though well aware that no-one in the CHP had a even a slim chance of winning a seat and cognizant of the fact that splitting the right-wing vote between the CHP and the Reform Party might allow for another (unwanted) party to win, REAL Women nevertheless offered the party its moral support and declared that a vote for a

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CHP candidate "does register a public recognition of its Christian values."  

Regarded as something akin to a political Hobson's choice, Reform was nevertheless the only logical alternative for REAL Women: it was not the party they would choose under the best possible circumstances, but it was the only right-wing party that had any realistic chance of winning seats. Besides, a good number of Reformers, grassroots as well as candidates, were personally devoted to the prolife view. But what concerned REAL Women about Reform was the party's *Blue Book* commitment to submitting moral issues to referenda in order to determine policy direction. Though most Reform MPs were themselves conservative on moral issues, if the bulk of their constituents were not, they had little choice but to follow the wishes of the majority.

Organizations like REAL Women contend that moral issues are too important to be subjected to the whims of voters. In any case, in a repeat of what they did in 1984 with the PCs, many in REAL Women decided that the best way to influence party policy was to take out Reform memberships and work for change from the inside, starting at the local constituency level. No figures were ever available indicating how many REAL Women joined Reform or the influence they have had on policy. As we see in Chapter Five however, the problem for moral conservatives was not so much the party's policy on deciding moral issues by popular vote (though they certainly did not agree with that), nor did they have much trouble with the grassroots membership or individuals in caucus. The problem for most in REAL Women was

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62*Reality*, Volume XII, Issue Number 5, September/October, 1993, p. 3. Both the CHP's Heather Stilwell, running in the riding of Surrey-White Rock-South Langley and her husband William, running in Surrey North did very poorly: attracting only 1.2 and 1.5 percent of the popular vote, respectively. The highest popular vote for any CHP candidate went to Bob Dekraker in the Ontario riding of Elgin-Norfolk: he attracted 2.9 percent of the vote.
the leader of Reform, Preston Manning. Manning's handling -- or perhaps, his mishandling -- of his party's reaction to same-sex rights legislation in 1996 reinforced REAL Women's suspicions that the leader, more so than the party itself, was the major problem.

In her book exploring the legal struggles between homosexuals and their right-wing opponents, Herman (1994:125) makes the compelling observation that the prolife/profamily right shares with homosexuals the same feelings of persecution and marginalization, that both "share similar yet irreconcilable views of their social worlds. Each believes the other...controls society's major institutions," and each sees the institutional "centre," ie. Parliament and the courts, as inimical to their cause.

The next chapter examines a New Right organization whose members also are convinced that "the other" -- in this case, mostly francophones and supporters of the Charter -- have set out to undermine the very cultural fabric of English-speaking Canada, APEC.
CHAPTER FOUR
ONE CULTURE, ONE LANGUAGE, NO CHARTER:
APEC'S CRUSADE FOR NATIONAL UNITY

The type of people involved in APEC are those who oppose the bureaucracy of Canada being taken over by people from Quebec
-- Dorothy Sullivan, APEC member from Victoria, BC

In sounding the alarm [on official bilingualism], Ron Leitch and APEC could not serve their country better if they took up arms in its defence
-- Peter Brimelow, The Financial Post, June 7, 1988

You have to educate the people about the problems, then the solution becomes apparent
-- APEC president Ron Leitch

INTRODUCTION

Two of the more contentious matters for the Canadian New Right are institutional bilingualism as provided for in the federal Official Languages Act (OLA) and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Cultural conservatives of the right tend to regard both of these as variations on a "French theme." That is to say, they are part and parcel of what they insist is the French takeover of Canada. The OLA is the means by which the federal government can neutralize the political clout of "the people," i.e. the majority anglophone population, thus paving the way for a full takeover of the state by francophones. The OLA and the Charter are among the most powerful exponents of what the cultural conservatives like Gairdner (1990:10) refer to as "French-style" or "top-down" system: where legislated and/or codified rights are imposed on society in defiance of the majority and its common law system (also see Knopff, 1990).

This chapter focusses on one group's opposition to both official bilingualism and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms: the Ontario-based Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC). I chose APEC because the organization exhibits quite transparently the cultural conservatism associated with New Right thinking. In this case, the organization's strident opposition to official (institutional) bilingualism and the Charter highlights the movement's focus
on what it considers to be two of the more controversial "social engineering" prescriptions of contemporary Canadian political life and judicial decision-making: minority language rights (solely as they apply to francophones outside Quebec) and the alleged usurpation of parliamentary supremacy and legal traditionalism by the Charter. The one twist to APEC's thinking that distinguishes it from others lies in the somewhat critical view many of its members hold of groups that concentrate too much on economic issues. While they are entirely supportive of a free market economy (one of their frequent complaints about the Charter of Rights is that it did not contain provisions guaranteeing the right to private property) they are not what one might call enthusiastic market liberals. For the most part and much like classical conservatives, APEC prefers to disregard economic issues almost entirely and is somewhat exasperated by other right-wing organizations that focus too intently upon them.¹

APEC members take themselves quite seriously as acting on behalf of "the people" to repair the country's damaged cultural institutions. The practical objective of their activism (if we may call it that) is to force the federal government to repeal the OLA and to enlist the support of all provinces in order to force a repeal the of Charter of Rights. They also intend to wrest political, legal, and social institutions away from left-wing politicians, judges, minorities and special interest groups and in the process restore the authentic Anglo-American character of country.

¹APEC President Leitch declared that market-liberal (or neoconservative) organizations like the National Citizens' Coalition (NCC) do good work, but they're not "people organizations." Because they frame their arguments and objections from the lofty perch of economics, they lack the will to get "into the"nitty-gritty of politics," Leitch says. As for the Reform Party, Leitch criticizes leader Preston Manning for focussing too much on taxation and related issues, thus neglecting the party's social-conservative agenda. Personal interview with the author, 26 September, 1999. All subsequent references to this are referred to as "Personal interview."
THE ROOTS OF APEC

Since 1977, Ronald and Pauline Leitch and their growing numbers of supporters have worked to expose one of the most ingenious deceptions to have been practiced upon an unsuspecting people. In that wholly voluntary effort they have been subjected to unremitting abuse from Canada's political establishment and its hangers-on in academe and the media. Victims of their own love of country, they are vilified by social engineers who set out, as Jean Chrétien promised in 1980, to "change Canada" [McDonald in Leitch, 1991:v).

Toronto-area lawyer Ron Leitch and his wife Pauline first stepped into the arena of right-wing political activism and lobbying with the news that Irene Hilchie, an employee at the Canada Research Council in Halifax, had become so upset about the promotion of francophones over anglophones that she decided to "go public" as it were, with her concerns. As Leitch put it, "[s]he got the sense then that English people are [sic] being shafted here by the Official Languages Act."\(^2\) In 1977 Hilchie started APEC.

Also that same year, Leitch had read J.V. (Jock) Andrew's just-published polemic, *Bilingualism Today, French Tomorrow*. This small book, which by Canadian standards was not merely a national bestseller but a blockbuster,\(^3\) is basically a conspiracy theory about the "true agenda" of the Trudeau government and how the OLA was a first step in eventual takeover of English-speaking Canada by "the French." *Bilingual Today* is replete with ill-tempered anecdotes about the "French takeover" and *ad hominem* attacks on francophones in general. It is also devoid of any compelling evidence to reinforce such views. The book's opening salvos (Andrew, 1977:1-2) get to the heart of the conspiracy straight away:


\(^3\)A "bestseller" in Canada is in the 10,000 range for copies sold. *Bilingual Today* sold over 130,000 copies. APEC still sells the book.
In the ten years from 1968 to 1978, without firing a shot, Mr. Trudeau will have taken more of the earth's surface for his race than did Napoleon, Alexander the Great, and all the Roman Emperors combined. And with this achievement, Mr. Trudeau will have pulled the biggest swindle that has ever been pulled on a civilized country.

To give just a preliminary idea of the scope of Mr. Trudeau's success, he has, as of now (early 1975), legislated total and permanent French-Canadian control at all levels of the following:
- The Canadian Government Public (Civil) Service.
- All Canadian Government-owned Corporations, Commissions and Agencies.
- The Canadian Armed Forces.
- Canada's National Police Force, the RCMP.

Mr. Trudeau's goal at this minute is to secure French-Canadian control at all levels of Canada's ten-provincial governments. Having gained that, he will automatically have control of the municipal governments of every city, town, and village in Canada. From that moment on, the French language can be imposed at leisure on every Canadian, and on every aspect of Canadian life under a formula that has already been tested in Ottawa, in Northern Ontario, and in New Brunswick.

The book quickly achieved (and still retains) canonical status in anti-francophone right-wing circles in Canada.

Ron Leitch was convinced that Andrew's warning of a French takeover of Canada by the Trudeau Liberals was the real thing; so much so that he purchased an additional 100 copies of the book and mailed them to like-minded friends and associates. Along with the book he included a cover letter, which in part states: "The enclosed book puts it all together. Slowly but surely the control of our political framework is being transferred from the English to the French at the federal level. You may not agree with the conclusions of the author, but the facts speak for themselves."

The Leitches and their friends thus organized a Toronto-area branch of APEC in 1978. The organization was granted a charter as a non-profit group and Leitch was immediately selected as branch President with wife Pauline in charge of editing the fledgling organization's newsletters and pamphlets. Through their efforts, the Toronto branch quickly became the largest,
most active and influential in the entire organization. To no-one's surprise, in 1986 Ron was chosen by the membership to serve as president of the national organization, a post he occupies to this day. Pauline Leitch continues in her capacity as editor. Founder Irene Hilchie, now retired in Halifax, is the organization's secretary.

In contrast to REAL Women, where the lack of funding from the federal government remains a principal source of frustration, APEC explicitly foregoes funding from any level of government. Apart from a $1 million bequest from the estate of Arthur Child made to them in 1991, APEC is sustained solely by membership dues and whatever other private donations can be secured. Not that they would ever be seriously considered as potential recipients of public funding, but APEC boasts nonetheless that it "has never asked for nor received a government grant of any description" (Leitch, op. cit.:2). Though APEC members tend to share many of the same moral conservative views as those in REAL Women, the scope of the former's activism is on the whole much narrower. For the most part, APEC members limit their framing strategies to the pursuit of their primary objectives, the repeal of the Official Languages Act and the Charter and rarely if ever venture beyond those. APEC members are convinced that successive federal governments, from Pearson to Chrétien, have conspired to deny anglophones their heritage and their rightful place as the dominant group in Canadian society.

Membership and Organization

Membership in APEC reached a peak in the early 1990s. A combination of controversial Progressive Conservative policies (especially the new Official Languages Act), Quebec's language laws, Ontario's bilingualism legislation (Bill 8), the Meech and Charlottetown accords, the

4See APEC Newsletter, Volume XVII, Number 5, May, 1994, p. 1.
formation of the Bloc québécois, and before Reform's electoral breakthrough, the absence of a party to take on these issues in Parliament, drew a number of people to the organization. By 1993 the organization had over 42,000 members, the majority of them (30,000) in Ontario, with the rest mostly in BC and Alberta.

APEC tends to attract a membership that is mostly middle-aged and older (Leitch himself was born in 1920). Few Canadians under the age of 40 bear such unremitting hostility to the OLA, nor are most younger adults convinced that a government-led conspiracy to undermine the English language and culture is proceeding apace. Fewer still, if polls and surveys taken over the last 15 years are any indication, wish to repeal the Charter of Rights. Having a large number of retirees usually means a highly active volunteer corps for an organization and this is certainly true of APEC. On the other hand, an age gap such as this does not bode well for the organization, and APEC's membership will likely shrink rapidly in the near future.

If the scenario of a rapidly-aging membership and the concentration of power and policy ideas in one person bothers APEC members, they hide it quite well, usually arguing in response that age has little to do with the validity of one's ideas and that all of the membership is squarely behind Ron Leitch. He remains the undisputed leader, and the organization very much reflects his own personality. Though the members certainly recognize the need, Leitch, ergo the organization, appears to have no specific plans for attracting younger members to the cause.

On the surface, it appears that Leitch runs a tight, smoothly-running outfit. At the provincial and local levels however, APEC is somewhat disorganized and often seems to lack focus. In the absence of any particular controversy involving bilingualism at the local level, the membership has few activities to engage in apart from criticizing product labelling or stores that
make the mistake of displaying products with the French side facing out. Each location (city, town, village) that establishes a branch (sometimes referred to as a chapter) elects a president and an executive; these are then loosely confederated under a provincial committee which in turn is under the control of the national executive. Each branch is charged with the principal function of carrying out the initiatives and objectives of the "Corporation," which in effect means the National Office and ultimately, Ron Leitch.

APEC has no formal links to other organizations, but it does have a number of informal ones. One such link is with the Citizens for Foreign Aid Reform (C-FAR) of Etobicoke, Ontario. This group, a self-styled populist outfit formed in 1979, publishes a monthly *Canadian Immigration Hotline*, the only ostensible objective of which is to cast aspersions on all immigrants from non-western countries. C-FAR is headed by its founder and "research director" Paul Fromm of Toronto. Fromm is a former Separate School Board trustee, former high school teacher, and co-founder of other affiliated organizations like the Canadian Association for Free Expression (CAFE), the Edmund Burke Society, and Western Guard. He maintains extensive links to neo-fascist groups like the Heritage Front, Holocaust revisionists like Britain's David Irving, and Western Canada Concept founder Doug Christie. Christie, who has a law practice in Victoria, is defence counsel for Irving and for well-known neo-nazi Ernst Zundel of Toronto.

Leitch insists that Fromm, with whom he has shared speaking dates, is a victim of a smear campaign, apparently orchestrated by the Jewish humanitarian organization B'nai B'rith. "I've heard him speak on many occasions," says Leitch of Fromm, and "there's nothing offensive

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5A good deal of the local branches' activities involve remaining ever-attentive to minor miscues with bilingual labelling. The offending business usually receives a letter from an APEC member requesting that English be given prominence.
in what he says." Doug Christie, whom Leitch knows fairly well, is lauded as "a brilliant lawyer." He too is the victim of a smear campaign, one which attempts to paint him with the same ideological brush as the clients he defends, like Zundel, Irving, and anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist and former school teacher James Keegstra of Eckville, Alberta. "Doug is nothing like those people," says Leitch, adding that his sympathy for the political aspirations of western Canadian separatists is due in part to his association with Christie.

Though one ought not to assume guilt by association, as some critics of the right have done, Leitch's (and so APEC's) links with the extremist fringes of right-wing activism cannot be dismissed as inconsequential or coincidental. While some of these connections may indeed amount to little, others, given Leitch's spirited defence of some of the actors involved, may not.

Of REAL Women, Leitch said that he had "a lot of admiration for them." The one problem as far as Leitch was concerned was that REAL Women's co-founder and legal council Gwen Landolt, herself highly respected amongst anti-Charter activists, is reluctant to pool resources and work with other like-minded organizations (like APEC). "She's been invited to

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6Personal interview. Leitch also made it clear that while he disagrees with Zundel and his followers, they "do have a right to speak."

7Personal interview.

8Three writers have been particularly culpable in this regard. One is Murray Dobbin, whose 1991 book on Preston Manning makes numerous attempts (much of it without evidence) to link him with the entire spectrum of right-wing groups in Canada, from Alberta oil companies, to REAL Women, APEC, and finally to Toronto's neo-nazi Heritage Front. Another is University of Guelph sociologist Stanley Barrett, whose 1987 book on Canada's extreme right condemns all conservatism as inherently racist. Finally, there is Ken McVay of Nanaimo, BC. McVay is the webmaster of the internet's Nizkor Project, which tracks dozens of groups and hundreds of individuals associated with right-wing thought and activities. Unfortunately, Nizkor's net is cast so widely that all context is lost. Along with the Zundels and the Fromms, McVay's site lists the Fraser Institute, the Rand Corporation and a number of tenured faculty at Canadian universities as members of Canada's far-right network.
work with us," says Leitch, "but [has said] no." For their part, though they share some of the same concerns with respect to application and cost, REAL Women exhibits nowhere near the visceral objections to the OLA as does APEC. Nor do they believe bilingualism to be a conspiracy to turn the country into a francophone state. "We do have a chapter in Quebec," says Gwen Landolt. What's more, francophones "have made a great contribution to Canada." REAL Women supports territorial bilingualism, based on a "where numbers warrant" formula. REAL Women exhibits nowhere near the visceral objections to the OLA as does APEC. Nor do they believe bilingualism to be a conspiracy to turn the country into a francophone state. "We do have a chapter in Quebec," says Gwen Landolt. What's more, francophones "have made a great contribution to Canada." REAL

Conspiracies: Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney

The country in its entirety was developed by us [anglophones] and by our forebears. Those 96% of us who are English-speaking in nine of our ten provinces have absolutely nothing to gain by this legislated Frenchification of this nation. The French language is both redundant and unnecessary. Its adoption, at astronomical cost, serves only one purpose -- the scheduled Frenchification of this entire country and the imminent elimination of English-speaking Canada [Andrew, 1988:v].

It's hard to talk about what goes on in Canada today without talking about a conspiracy. Mostly, it's the fault of the francophones. But we're not against francophones; we're against what governments do for them.

It was Pierre Trudeau who was largely responsible for transforming the concept of bilingualism into a reality. For APEC, Trudeau remains the Machiavellian mastermind behind the rise of "French power" in government and the concomitant dismantling of the English-Canadian nation. Trudeau was the "cunning and clever schemer," as Leitch calls him.

As for Brian Mulroney, a palpable dislike of him and his party permeates everything

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9Personal interview.

10Personal interview with Gwen Landolt, 26 October 1999.

11Personal interview.

12Personal interview.
within APEC. It did not start out that way, however. After Mulroney's leadership victory in 1983, APEC had been assessing his views on a number of policy issues. Initially, the intelligence was cautious rather than critical, though there was some concern that he was overly sympathetic to francophones and to official bilingualism. In the aftermath of the 1984 election, APEC was still unsure of what to make of the new Prime Minister and his party's massive caucus, what with members from every region of the country, including Quebec.

One thing was certain: the Prime Minister's ethnic background was cause for suspicion. In "An Open Letter to Brian Mulroney" published just after the election, Leitch wrote:

Brian Mulroney has been hailed outside of Quebec as an Irish Canadian, but in Quebec as a French Canadian. Which is he? We wrote and asked about his French ancestors but Mr. Mulroney evaded the issue, stating only that his parents were of "Irish extraction." He did not deny that they were also of French extraction...

Many people may feel that Mr. Mulroney's background is of small importance. The point is, however, that he is either dissembling to the English-speaking people by portraying himself as Irish, or to the French-speaking people by calling himself one of their own.

Despite our very real concerns, we will make every effort to present the plight of English-speaking Canadians to Mr. Mulroney and his Progressive Conservative government.¹³

APEC's conspiratorial suspicions were, in the views of its members, confirmed: the election of the Tories did not signify a return to anglo-conservative cultural values, but apparently, their complete disappearance from the federal government's agenda.

APEC'S CULTURAL CONSERVATISM, PART I: OFFICIAL BILINGUALISM

The centre-piece of Trudeau's language reforms was the Official Languages Act, passed in 1969. The Act called for notices, regulations, decisions, and similar

materials to be published in both official languages; required departments, agencies, and Crown corporations to provide bilingual services in Ottawa-Hull, at its headquarters, in bilingual districts, and to the travelling public anywhere in Canada where demand warranted; stipulated the role of official languages in judicial proceedings; described the procedure for creating federal bilingual districts; and outlined the office, powers, and responsibilities of the commissioner of official languages [McRoberts, 1997:92].

In this section I examine the principal arguments of APEC with respect to official bilingualism. Irrespective of what one thinks of their objectives, the organization and its president are nothing if not well prepared to argue their case, though for the most part, their views are questionable. If anything, APEC proves that constitutions and statutes are rather like Scripture: they can be interpreted in any number of ways and used to support diametrically opposed arguments.

*English is the sole language of the nation because the constitution says so*

In order to substantiate their argument that the OLA is a divisive, discriminatory piece of social engineering legislation that a) sets out to undermine English language and culture, b) panders relentlessly to Quebec, and c) creates a need rather than serving a heretofore existing one, APEC relies on a combination of historical interpretation, constitutional exegesis, and cost/benefit arguments. Though there are instances where their arguments are nominally defensible, on the whole they are not especially convincing. This is not to say that the OLA as policy and the idea of official bilingualism are without fault or weakness, or that all of APEC's criticisms are without warrant, for there is much to be concerned about in terms of the act's cost, fairness, rationale and overall effectiveness with respect to national unity.

Leitch says that it was his love of democracy and parliamentary traditions that led him to research the constitution in order to determine (more to the point, refute) the legitimacy of
linguistic dualism in Canada.¹⁴ His research told him that historically speaking, constitutional provision for two languages was a fiction. "The truth of matter is that there never was any linguistic duality in Canada" (Leitch, op. cit.:12). This is completely misleading. For while there was no institutionalized linguistic measures undertaken until 1969, there were always two primary linguistic communities in existence.

Leitch (ibid.:13) claims that the ceding of French territory to the British led to a prohibition on the use of the French language. This too is a spurious argument, for there was no prohibition at all on the use of languages other than English. In fact, neither the Treaty of Paris (1763) nor the Quebec Act (1774) identified language or language rights or any restrictions thereupon. Surely it is logical to assume that if either the Treaty or the Act intended to stifle the French language, they would have contained explicit provisions to do so.

The fact is, though it did specify the dismantling of the power of the Roman Catholic church, ending the seigneurial system of land management, and replacing the French civil code with English common law, the Royal Proclamation was silent on language. Those assimilationist provisions mentioned above never came to pass either, as it soon became clear to the British that assimilating over 60,000 francophones and dismantling their institutions would likely be impossible to carry out (also see McRoberts and Posgate, 1980:26; McRoberts, 1997:4).

The Quebec Act subsequently overrode those inactive assimilationist provisions contained in the Proclamation and provided Canadiens with formal recognition. The Act re-established -- more accurately, reaffirmed -- the dominant role of the Church and gave recognition to both the seigneurial land system and the civil code of law. It is true that the Act did not specify language

rights of any kind, but neither did it explicitly prohibit the use of French. Given that the Crown had taken steps to give constitutional expression to the institutional and cultural uniqueness of Quebec, we can assume that the right to continue to use the French language was tacitly agreed to. As King George III and Parliament were eager to avoid a repeat of the troubles then convulsing the Thirteen Colonies, it would have made little sense for them to reaffirm certain aspects of Quebec's culture and institutions while at the same time prohibit the use of their primary language.

So, while it was silent on the language issue, did the Quebec Act provide a constitutional foundation for linguistic dualism? That it did so seems feasible. Siegfried (1966:107) writes that with the passage of the Act,

...English and French were put on equal footing, the use of our language [French] was sanctioned in official documents, and the guarantees already ceded to the Catholic Church were solemnly confirmed. It is true that electoral representation in any shape was postponed, but the two races sent members to sit side by side in the Legislative Council. England gave proof of a really large-minded and tolerant spirit, and it was manifest that instead of endeavouring to subjugate her new citizens by force she was anxious to win them over by sympathy.

Siegfried might have read more magnanimity into the Act than was evident in its provisions, but his overall assessment, namely, that it eschewed assimilation and subjugation of an entire people

15 Though some scholars interpret the Act as if it did so explicitly. Cf. Siegfried in the offset quote on this page. Also see Holloway (1992:531), who writes: "In return for loyalty to English rule, the colony [via the Quebec Act] was granted considerable cultural autonomy through the retention of traditional laws, schools, language, and the preservation of the power of the Catholic Church and traditional elites."

16 In other matters, specifically when it comes to the pre-Charter era, the issue of silence with respect to rights permitted under the Crown is of great importance to APEC. As we shall see shortly, silence implied the freedom to act. It is curious then, that the silence in the Quebec Act on language was not interpreted by Leitch in the same way.
in favour of tolerance and some degree of institutional and cultural autonomy for them, is, I believe, a plausible interpretation.

The Constitution Act of 1791 divided the colony into Upper and Lower Canada and established basic representative institutions -- governors and legislatures -- for each. Though the division was ostensibly for territorial reasons, the ultimate objective, since the new colonies were demarcated largely along linguistic lines, was to enshrine cultural dualism (McRoberts, op. cit:5). Thus, the creation of Lower Canada gave the majority francophones a political as well as a geographic legitimacy (also see ibid.). This institutional separation of anglophone and francophone colonies was instrumental in the rise of Canadien nationalism.

In 1837 armed rebellions had broken out in both colonies. In the case of Lower Canada, the demands for greater autonomy from Britain and control over the executive took on a more pronounced nationalist -- patriote -- dimension than did a parallel rebellion in Upper Canada. In any case both were put down by the British. Lord Durham, sent from England in 1838 to determine the cause of the rebellions, recommended in his Report that the colonies unite with a single legislature (with equal members from the former Upper and Lower Canada) and that responsible government be established, keeping the executive accountable to the legislature. The result of that recommendation was the Act of Union, 1840 which merged the two colonies and legislatures into one; an arrangement that would endure until Confederation in 1867.

Durham's proposal had another, somewhat darker, purpose. He believed that francophones would never survive as a viable culture in North America. The French, he said, are "an

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17 Nevertheless, the anglophone minority dominated the executive of the colony as well as its economy. Relations between them and the francophone majority were often strained.
uneducated and unprogressive people...with no history and no literature" (cited in LaSelva, 1993:701). To assimilate them into the more powerful and dynamic English culture would surely be preferable to witnessing their inevitable demise as a people.

It is perhaps a touch ironic that in Durham's recommendation of assimilation we find an acknowledgment of the French fact. In a critique of the British government's passage of the Constitution Act nearly a half-century before, he wrote:

Not only, however, did the Government adopt the unwise course of dividing Canada, and forming in one of its divisions a French community, speaking the French language, and retaining French institutions, but it did not even carry this consistently into effect, for at the same time the provision was made for encouraging the emigration of English into the very Province which was said to be assigned to the French [cited in Stevenson, 1989:95].

In time the political institutions of the United Province of Canada came to reflect cultural and linguistic dualism. By 1848 French was accorded status in the legislature. In 1849 the speech from the throne was read in both English and French.

The passage of the British North America Act of 1867 (BNA Act) formally ended the convention of linguistic dualism in the United Province. Now a dominion of four provinces, Canada was a federal union with a constitutionally-mandated division of powers between national and provincial governments. With respect to language, section 133 of the BNA Act (renamed the Constitution Act, 1867) stipulates that

Either the English or the French language may be used by any Person in the Debates of the Houses of Parliament of Canada and the Houses of the Legislature of Quebec; and both those Languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any Person or in any Pleading of Process in or issuing from any Court of Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the Courts of Quebec. The Acts of the Parliament of Canada and of the Legislature of Quebec shall be printed and published in both those languages.
It is puzzling that such a fundamental cultural-historical issue as language was given short shrift by the Fathers of Confederation (also see Hogg, 1998:1018). In fact the BNA Act and all other constitutional enactments from Britain were written in English only, with no official French language counterparts. Even today, in the event of a discrepancy between the English (official) and the French (unofficial) versions of the BNA Act, the only recourse yet available is to the legal supremacy of the former (ibid.). Still, legislation has been passed in both languages since Confederation and in 1935 the Supreme Court ruled that both English and French versions of bills are equally authoritative (also see ibid.:1020).

APEC's literalist interpretation of the constitution insists that the actual intent of section 133 was not to limit the use of French to certain national institutions and in the institutions of Quebec, but rather to limit the use of French in those institutions. "There is nothing in this section which says that legislation in either the Parliament of Canada or the province of Quebec shall be enacted in two languages; it says only that they shall be printed and published in both those languages" declares Leitch (op. cit.:14-15). That much is certain; but there is no evidence whatever to substantiate his claim that the intent of section 133 was to limit the institutional use of French.

The trouble with APEC's "Creighton'sque"18 view of the constitution, with its bare-bones language provisions, is not so much that they misinterpret what is written in the BNA Act, for that is not the case. Rather, it is more that the organization relies on a contentious interpretation of historical events and a "frozen concepts" approach to the constitution -- akin to those whom Cairns (1988c:44) calls "constitutional fundamentalists" -- to justify their opposition to official

18See especially Creighton (1972:Ch.5).
bilingualism. That there was no constitutionally prescribed linguistic duality in 1867 beyond what is stated in section 133, irrespective of how one might interpret it, did not foreclose on the possibility that statutory or constitutional recognition of two languages would materialize.

APEC's interpretation of the 1969 OLA is similar to its literalist view of the constitution, that is to say, they vet the provisions of the act carefully to spot any discrepancy between text and practice. Thus APEC argues that although the "alleged purpose" of the act, viz., that it permits citizens to access federal government services in either language regardless of where in the country they happened to be, sounds innocent enough, in practice, the OLA has proven to be a much more intrusive piece of social engineering than any of its written provisions imply. In their view, the act is both political treachery and a financial monstrosity, loaded with hidden agendas and "special schemes to give preference to Francophones" (Leitch, op. cit.:19), all at enormous cost to the English-speaking and largely unilingual majority. The most recent amendments to the Act, according to APEC, proved this beyond a doubt.

*Bill C-72: amendments to the Official Languages Act, 1988*

> Si vous ne pouvez pas lire ceci, vous ne pouvez pas travailler pour le gouvernement fédéral.

*Translation:* If you can't read this, you can't work for the federal government.

This was the bilingual title on the cover of the 1 February 1988 issue of *Alberta Report*. The cover was in response to the federal government's Bill C-72, which was given first reading in June, 1987. The bill came into force on 15 September, 1988. Compared with the original Official Languages Act, the new language legislation, said *Alberta Report*, "makes Trudeau look like an anglophone." Popular right-wing writer William Gairdner (1990:402-404) also took aim at the bill, charging that it was part of the Tory conspiracy to "francize" the country.
The focus of the new act was on the use of official languages in the federal public service. Its objective was to reinforce language equality in federal institutions by raising the number of bilingual positions. The Act also reinforced earlier (1977) amendments to the original OLA which identified specific regions where federal employees could use either official language. Though the act made it clear that unilinguals would not lose their jobs, opponents insisted that the act would prevent unilingual anglophones (no mention of unilingual francophones) from seeking employment in the federal government. For those unilinguals already in Ottawa's employ, they argued, there would be no chance for promotion in the future, unless one undertook to become bilingual. "To the opponents of state-sanctioned bilingualism," declared Alberta Report, "Bill C-72 is a fearsome monster, a document designed to extend the influence of francophones in every branch of government and the judiciary far beyond a scale proportionate to francophone representation in the general population."

In a manner reminiscent of the Alberta Report cover quoted above, APEC's newsletter proclaimed: "No French? No Job." One of their pamphlets assessed the act this way:

1988 -- Official Languages Act[.] New and vastly extended in scope and purpose to include the following:
Each individual civil servant permitted to work in the official language of his choice.
Section heads, supervisors and managers [of government departments] have to be bilingual to accommodate civil servants.
600,000 government related jobs could eventually be classified bilingual.
Federal Court judges required to be fluently bilingual; translations and interpreters

19 Those regions are: the National Capital Region, parts of Northern and Eastern Ontario, Montreal, parts of Quebec's eastern Townships, the Gaspé, West Quebec, and New Brunswick. See The Official Languages and You, Treasury Board Secretariat. n.d.

20 Alberta Report, February 1, 1988, p. 12.

21 APEC Newsletter, Volume XI, Number 8, November/December 1988, p. 3.
are eliminated.

All Criminal Courts across Canada require bilingual judges, prosecutors, clerks, juries.

Secretary of State obligated to promote minority languages in provinces, municipalities, business, labour, volunteer organizations and minority language communities, but English is restricted, not promoted, in Quebec.

Official Languages Commissioner is investigator, policeman, prosecutor, enforcer, witness and judge as and when he chooses.

All government legislation subject to the provisions of the Official Languages Act. Breaches of the Official Languages Act could result in a fine or imprisonment or both...

The Official Languages Act is not only racist in concept, it is divisive, destructive and discriminatory in its implementation. 22

Notwithstanding APEC's usual hyperbole on language legislation, the new OLA did contain some questionable provisions, one of which was the concept of "potential demand." The rationale behind this was to extend the federal government's official language minority services into areas where no actual demand existed but where one would be created once bilingual services were available. In other words, the provision of such services would stimulate demand by reactivating the use of a linguistic minority's mother tongue (see Reid, 1993:136). The Treasury Board eventually decided that the concept was unworkable in practice and so "potential demand" was dropped from the regulations in January 1992. In its place (and what amounted to much the same thing in practice), Ottawa expanded the number of bilingual districts to include most of the country's urban areas, including low-francophone cities like Toronto and Vancouver, and low-anglophone locations like Quebec City. The federal cabinet had the power to determine what "sufficient demand" for bilingual services was appropriate (ibid.:135).

In English-speaking Canada, local resentment over these new regulations had been muted, though in some smaller communities, puzzlement, if not resentment, over the regulations did

22"Bilingualism." APEC pamphlet number 7, n.d.
surface occasionally. Bilingualism among francophones outside Quebec is far higher than it is for the anglophone population in general: 84.7 to 6.3 percent (Reid, ibid.: 138). This means that federal government positions requiring bilingual staff inevitably hire francophones, even though their proportion of the local population may be as low as one percent or less. Adding to the resentment is the fact that the bulk of the costs of the regulations are borne primarily by the anglophone majority. The failure of the federal government to recognize the inherent one-sidedness of the Act was, according to Leitch, more evidence that "Mulroney was not a conservative. Like Trudeau, he lied to anglo Canadians — especially on language issues." Under the new Act Leitch says, "It's not enough to be bilingual. You have to be French."

Inflaming the language issue further was the Quebec government's decision in December 1988 to use the Charter of Right's notwithstanding clause to pass its own legislation restricting the language on outdoor signs to French. English signs were permitted indoors so long as the lettering was half the size of French and the colour of the letters was less vibrant. Dubbed the "inside-outside law," the legislation seemed to many in English Canada equal parts Draconian and silly. For APEC, it was thought to be part of a pattern that had been developing since the passage of the original OLA in 1969: Quebec was embracing unilingualism while the rest of the country was being force-fed bilingualism — an arrangement that appeared to have the support of the federal government. Were an English-speaking province to take the same legislative

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23Reid (ibid.: 139-140) provides the example of Vawn, Saskatchewan, a village of 65 residents, twenty of whom, according to the census of 1986, are francophone. Under the provisions of C-72, this entitled the Vawn post office to three bilingual employees. As Reid points out, three francophone federal employees in a village of 65 is rather high.

24Personal interview.

25British Columbia Report, March 5, 1990, p. 35.
measures in support of English, they aver, the howls of protest from Ottawa -- and Quebec --
would be deafening. 26

*APEC and local language issues*

Though the bulk of their energies and financial resources are committed to fighting federal
language legislation and assorted constitutional matters, including the Charter of Rights, APEC
has mounted campaigns against provincial and local issues. Whether the focus is on Ontario's
Bill 8 of 1986 (which provides provincial government bilingual services in specified areas,
including Toronto), or on New Brunswick's Bill 88 of 1992 (reinforcing the equality of both
languages in provincial institutions 27), or on French-language instruction (immersion) in public
schools, the gist of their opposition remains the same. State-driven bilingualism is a political
boondoggle and financial black hole that artificially creates demand and sows discontent amongst
a small minority that is already assimilated and thus fluent in English anyway.

On the whole, involvement in local language issues has not been good for APEC's
reputation. Though their resources are scarce and the vast majority of their members are at or

26 Indeed, the federal government, the Ontario government and francophones inside and
outside of Quebec were alarmed when, during the winter and spring of 1990, forty-two Ontario
municipalities, most notably Sault Ste. Marie, declared themselves to be officially English. The
Soo's resolution was declared void by an Ontario court on 1 July, 1994. The *Montreal Gazette*
suggested that the resolutions bore the handiwork of APEC. APEC, while fully supportive of
the resolutions (overjoyed, in fact), denied being actively involved in the decisions of those
municipal councils. See *Montreal Gazette*, April 14, 1990, p. A6. Also see Lise Bissonnette,
"The Soo's actions likely to reinforce Quebec's fears." *The Globe and Mail*, February 10, 1990,
p. D2.

27 Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, much of antibilingual activism in New
Brunswick was carried on by the one-time Official Opposition of the province, the Confederation
of Regions New Brunswick Party (CoR NB), which was an offshoot of Elmer Knutson's CoR
near retirement age, the organization's campaigns against French immersion classes for local schools for example, have the effect of making them seem like bullies and intolerant of minority-language instruction.\textsuperscript{28} When the public school board of BC's Sunshine Coast decided in February 1990 to begin a three-year phasing out of its French immersion program, John Cook, the local APEC branch president, took the credit and proclaimed with undisguised satisfaction, "We forced the board's hand."\textsuperscript{29}

Though the school board denied that APEC's activism had any bearing on their decision, few were convinced that that was the case, especially given that the organization mounted a very public campaign against the program. In a similar situation in the southern Vancouver Island school district of Sooke, APEC's activities met with no success. After two raucous public meetings between the school board, local parents and APEC members, the board, greatly angered by the aggressiveness of APEC's opposition, announced that it would proceed with the implementation of immersion programs.

A BRIEF COURTSHIP: APEC AND THE REFORM PARTY

The appearance of the Reform Party on the federal scene in 1988's national election brought no official reaction from APEC, though many of its members were well aware of the new western populist party and quite pleased with many of its policies. On official language policy, the provisions found in Reform's early Blue Books roughly paralleled those of APEC. Reform's

\textsuperscript{28}Of the federally-funded Canadian Parents for French, a pro-immersion organization, APEC says that they are a "well-meaning but severely deluded group of parents who have been sicked into the Federal government's net of promoting Official Bilingualism."

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{British Columbia Report}, February 26, 1990, p. 37.
position on official languages basically amounted to permitting linguistic duality in Parliament and the Supreme Court, and selected federal services (unspecified) on a "where numbers warrant" basis. For the rest of the country, Reform preferred the territoriality principle, where French remains the language of work and society in Quebec, with English performing the same functions elsewhere.

Despite these and other affinities, APEC did not support the Reform Party in any official capacity. In fact it would not be until after the 1993 national election that APEC would regularly mention the party by name in their literature. With the defeat of the Charlottetown accord in October 1992 and four months later, Brian Mulroney's announcement of his retirement, Ron Leitch editorialized at length on the pressing need for the next government to institute a variety of populist reforms, including the establishment of recall, referenda citizens' initiatives, an end to strict party discipline and of course the repeal of the OLA and the Charter. In order to keep the pressure up, APEC had flooded MPs' offices with petitions calling for referenda on a number of issues, particularly the OLA. As Reform had not broached the idea of a referendum on bilingualism, APEC did not endorse it or any other party going into the 1993 election campaign.

Reform won 52 seats in the 1993 election, all but one in western Canada. Now APEC was indulging in high praise, anticipating what was sure to be a fruitful partnership. In his first

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31In my interview with him, Leitch said that the Reform Party used APEC material to fine-tune their opposition to the Charlottetown accord. More on APEC's campaign against the accord below.


33Reform won a single seat in Ontario.
editorial after the election, Leitch wrote:

Think about it; fifty-two people sitting in parliament dedicated to its reform by allowing the people of this country the right, (a) to recall members, (b) to a people's initiative, and (c) to a referendum on national issues. In addition those fifty-two M.P.s espouse a language policy which is not too far off what APEC has been advocating for over fifteen years.

The media, in an attempt to down play the Reform Party's success, describes it as a regional party. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is truly a national party, because it garnered almost 1.2 million votes from Manitoba to Newfoundland, with almost one million of those votes in Ontario. In the process it had sixty-four second place finishes, fifty-six in Ontario, plus forty third place finishes. In addition it received approximately 20% of the national vote, second only to the Liberal party at 41%...

It is my belief that the people of Ontario were not as fully aware of Reform policies as were the Western provinces [sic], with the result that Mr. Manning's failure to emphasize the innovative reforms that he would bring about in parliament, recall, initiatives, and referendum, cost him not only the very prestigious position of Leader of the Official Opposition, but the privilege of representing the vast body of Ontario people who were searching for, and determined to have, change.34

The good feelings did not last long. The new year found APEC's initial praise for Reform giving way to a thinly-veiled rebuke on the issue of "perks" for parliamentarians. Reform's Blue Book (1991) directs the party to engage in a "re-examination" of all perks for MPs. But as Leitch writes,

...I do not find the question of perks generally being dealt with in their statement of Principles and Policies [ie. The Blue Book]. The foregoing statement dealing with costs of government and the provision of perks to members of Parliament is therefore a gratuitous statement, which hopefully the Reform Party will find instructive.

However, when a perk offered to Members of Parliament involves "Principle and Policies" of the Reform Party the remarks are no longer gratuitous but are made for serious consideration. The Reform Party Members of Parliament were elected on the basis of all their Principles and Policies and not merely the ones which were stressed in the election campaign. The acceptance of the perk of free language training for Members of Parliament, their families and staff, is in direct

34APEC Newsletter, Volume XVI, Number 9, November/December 1993, p. 1.
conflict with their policy on official languages [emphasis original].

As we saw in the previous chapter with respect to REAL Women and family values issues, for most pressure groups, maintaining principle outweighs most other considerations; exhibiting any flexibility on key issues is thus for the most part unthinkable. So when Reformers began showing signs of softening their hard-line stance on official bilingualism, APEC's support for the party began to dissolve. For Leitch and company, where maintaining the hard line on official bilingualism is the life-blood of their organization, any deviation from or tinkering with that is cause for alarm and tantamount to betrayal.

For all the re-thinking of their principles, Reform had not changed their position completely on bilingualism. In early 1994 BC Reform member Darrel Stinson introduced a private members' bill to repeal the OLA. Now on its face a bill such as that should be supported unreservedly by APEC. However, and upon close scrutiny by Leitch, what the bill (C-225) actually intended was to remove official bilingualism from federal jurisdiction and transfer the responsibility for its provisions to the provinces. The bill also called for the repeal of section 133 of the BNA Act.

With respect to transferring language jurisdiction to the provinces, APEC argued that provinces already have jurisdiction over language. How else, Leitch asked rhetorically, could Quebec pass its own language laws? APEC also insisted that simply changing jurisdictions would not necessarily weaken official bilingualism, it would only shift it to ten other governments, a fair number of which might just decide to keep the same regulations in place.

As for repealing section 133, Leitch responded: "Surely you must appreciate that the only

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protection the English-speaking people of the province of Quebec have with respect to language is in Section 133?"36 In any case, as with most private members' bills, C-225 sank into oblivion.

Reform's second undertaking on the language issue -- and second clash with APEC -- was played out in mid-April, 1994. The party's national unity critic, Bob Ringma, introduced a motion in the House to amend the OLA so as to reflect the principles of territorial, rather than institutional, bilingualism. The difference between the two principles is that the latter stipulates that official languages be used in federal institutions across the entire country; the former restricts their use to specific areas of the country where a sufficient demand exists for bilingual services. Once more, APEC issued an admonition to the party:

APEC could not support territorial bilingualism because it introduces a concept known as "where there is demonstrable local public demand." This is similar to the concept of "significant demand," which is provided for in the Official Languages Act and interpreted in the regulations. It should be apparent that it is possible to artificially create a demonstrable local public demand which does reflect either need or numbers.37

More than just disagreement over language policy soured APEC's relationship with Reform. According to Leitch, Reform is largely to blame for his organization's decline in membership after 1993. It seems that after the 1993 election, many APEC members joined the Reform Party, apparently convinced that a political party with ostensibly similar ideas could accomplish what their pressure group could not. Unfortunately for APEC most of these people let their memberships in the organization lapse. Although figures are unavailable, APEC had apparently lost thousands of members in Ontario, BC and Alberta at the same time that Reform's

membership rolls were swelling. By the mid-to-late 1990s, according to Leitch, APEC's total membership "was around 20,000." This is a far cry from the 42,000 members they claimed in the early 1990s. Though there is no hard evidence that Reform was solely or even largely responsible for the decline in APEC's numbers, Leitch remains convinced that the party is indeed the major culprit. Currently there is no national political party that APEC supports.

APEC'S CONSERVATIVE VALUES, PART II: THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS

The second major objective for APEC is to bring about the repeal of the Charter of the Rights and Freedoms. APEC is not the only right-wing organization that opposes the Charter; most New Right groups do, including REAL Women and to a limited extent, so did the Reform Party. Leitch however, was one of the country's first active, right-wing "Charterphobes," a term Sigurdson (1993) uses to describe the harshest of Charter critics.

Leitch's principal contention is that before 1982, rights were better protected by the common law and by the constitutional convention of parliamentary supremacy. At an APEC rally held at Queen's Park in Toronto on 17 April 1982 -- the very time Queen Elizabeth was proclaiming the Constitution Act 1982 into force at an elaborate ceremony on Parliament Hill --

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38Personal interview. As for his view of Preston Manning, a man he once admired, Leitch would only say that "lately, he's got a screw loose. He's trying to destroy the party"

39With respect to the political scene in his home province, Leitch has thrown his support behind an obscure social conservative-economic libertarian outfit called the Freedom Party of Ontario. Leitch, who speaks at party functions, calls it "an excellent organization, but without capital."

40Reform's major criticism of the Charter was that it contained no guarantee of property rights (also see Manning, 1992:307). Perhaps Reformers could have been more accurately referred to as "Charter sceptics."
Leitch declared to the crowd of 150 or so supporters:

All of these rights and freedoms [contained in the Charter] were mortally wounded by Section 33 of the so-called charter of rights. The right to ownership and enjoyment of property wasn't wounded. It was smothered to death -- without any attempt at resuscitation.

All of the rights and freedoms we are laying to rest today were forged out of centuries of history, commencing with Magna Carta...

These [traditional] rights and freedoms were born out of noble thoughts and deeds. Today they died because of one man's insatiable lust for power. A man who is diabolically cunning and clever. A man who is prepared to destroy a nation in his attempt to shape it in his own image.41

The man referred to in Leitch's address was of course Pierre Trudeau. The entrenchment of "Trudeau's Charter" forced Canadians to abandon the institutions they inherited from Britain, including an organic (as opposed to codified) conception of rights. Now with the Charter in place, rights become subject to the explicit written provisions which define them. According to Leitch, this change gave government -- politicians, judges, and bureaucrats -- an enormous increase in power with respect to determining what rights are to be protected. The Charter throws out heritage, tradition and authentic protection for rights "for a pale codified imitation of the real thing" (Leitch, op. cit.:7).

_The fallacy of Charter rights_

APEC argues further that appearances and assurances to the contrary, the Charter does not offer greater protection for rights vis-à-vis governments, but the opposite. Take section 1 of the Charter. It stipulates that government can limit rights if such limitations are a) "within reasonable limits," b) "prescribed by law," and c) can be "demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." APEC argues that this clause is not a balancing act between citizens' claims

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41_APEC Ontario Newsletter, April 1982, Volume V, No. 4, p. 3._
of rights and governments' ability to impose limits on such, but rather it is a declaration that
governments, with plenty of help from a vastly empowered and activist judiciary, can pretty much do what they please. With the Charter, politicians and judges become allies in a conspiracy to diminish the freedoms of the people, particularly those in English-speaking Canada, who have seen their traditional institutions and guarantees of rights virtually dismantled.

All the rights and freedoms of the Charter existed under the Common Law or were set out specifically in the BNA Act, 1867. There is a perception among some Canadians that for the first time they have rights and freedoms under the Charter that never existed before. Others believe that certain rights and freedoms have become entrenched in the Constitution and have therefore become inalienable. Both statements could not be further from the truth. As an example, take freedom of thought. It has existed since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when judges ruled that "the thoughts of man are not triable." Each Charter freedom in turn can be shown to have existed for centuries. What then did the Charter do? It took the inalienable rights and freedoms of Canadians under the common law and empowered the government to impose restrictions or limitations on Canadians' exercise of those rights and freedoms. Indeed it went even further by allowing governments to be selective about whose rights were to be limited.42

Leitch and many others on the right contend that the Charter has instigated an ominous shift from formal (individual-based) equality to substantive (group-based) equality, or equality of condition. This is especially the case with respect to the French language and other minority rights. As Knopff and Morton (op. cit.:88) point out, the Charter duplicates at the constitutional level "the balance between bilingualism and multiculturalism established at the statutory level early in Trudeau's prime ministership." To make matters worse, guardianship and interpretation of these codified rights has been left largely to unelected judges who increasingly are swayed by arguments presented in court by representatives of minority or "special interests," many of which

receive generous funding from the government. All of this has been entrenched without any prior consultation with the Canadian people.\textsuperscript{43} 

The essence of APEC's opposition to the Charter is contained in the following three arguments. First, the Charter has empowered governments but primarily judges to such an extent that they now determine which particular rights are to be upheld and which are to be "restricted, limited or removed."\textsuperscript{44} In contrast to the common law and British political traditions, with their inherent flexibility and efficiency (also see Leitch, op. cit.:7), the Charter not only makes the matter of rights more rigid and the settling of disputes about them more complex, there are now greater limitations on the scope and meaning of rights than ever before. "If a freedom is not set out in the Charter," APEC argues, "it does not exist."\textsuperscript{45} The codification of rights thus destroys the convention of "King-in-Parliament."\textsuperscript{46} Historically, this is the practice of the monarch "pretermittinig" (allowing by not noticing) rights. To put it another way, what was not expressly prohibited by law was assumed to have been permitted: where the law was silent, so too were the courts. The Charter effectively reverses that practice. Now, rights are determined either by what is actually contained in the Charter, or what judges have decreed by "reading in" additional rights to its provisions.

On its face, APEC's argument is somewhat compelling, but ultimately, because rights assumed under the common law or by statute are still recognized as extant (a fact the

\textsuperscript{43}APEC Newsletter, Volume XVII, Number 9, November/December 1994, pp. 1-2.

\textsuperscript{44}APEC Newsletter, Volume XVIII, Number 1, January 1995, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{45}APEC Newsletter, Volume XVII, Number 9, November/December 1994, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{46}See Freedom Flyer 32. Also see APEC Newsletter, Volume XIV, Number 5, May 1991.
organization conveniently neglects), it loses its force. Section 26 of the Charter states:

The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms shall not be construed as denying the existence of any other rights or freedoms that exist in Canada.

Indeed, rights assumed under common law or declared by statute can be abolished or altered by legislatures (also see Hogg, 1998:665) and this has always been the case. APEC's argument that all other rights pre-existing the Charter and not included in its provisions have in fact been nullified has yet to be supported by evidence.

APEC's second argument is that the Charter amounts to a bold usurpation of parliamentary supremacy. Traditionally, parliament retains the power to make or unmake laws. While judges have engaged in judicial review of Canadian statutes for well over a century, the practice has been limited mostly to settling jurisdictional disputes between the national and provincial governments with respect to sections 91 and 92 of the BNA Act. Now with the Charter in place and "oracular legalism" (Sigurdson, 1993:105) a guiding principle, judges, according to APEC, have become policy makers (or at least policy approvers), striking down laws by way of questionable and at times perversely expansive interpretations of its provisions. Leitch argues that the "inherent right to freedom [in the pre-Charter era] has been taken away by governments and given to judges. Section 52(1) of the Constitution Act [1982] does this."47 In short the Charter has politicized the judiciary and legalized politics (also see Knopff and Morton, op.

47Personal interview. Section 52(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 declares:

The Constitution of Canada is the supreme law of Canada, and any law that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution is, to the extent of the inconsistency, of no force or effect.

This section authorizes the judiciary to invalidate legislation that is inconsistent with the constitution, hence "oracular legalism."
Legislatures for the most part now tend to abide by what the courts "tell" them to do. "The Supreme Court is in charge of Parliament now," says Leitch. "They're the ones enacting legislation." 48

APEC's third argument is that all of the Charter, but especially its equality and affirmative-action rights provisions found in section 15, unfairly discriminates against "the white, English speaking male, whether anglo-saxon or not." 49 What limited, prescribed rights are available under the Charter are primarily for the benefit of minorities, thus allowing a variety of "special" interests to use the courts as a means to short-circuit the elected legislatures. Unlike REAL Women, which is an active participant in Charter litigation (appearing usually as an intervener), APEC, despite the fact that Leitch is a lawyer, shows no interest whatever in pursuing litigation.

Leitch was among the first to articulate the right's fear that a shift from "the people" to minority group recognition would take place under the Charter. The philosophical implications of this were first explored in detail by Knopff (1990:19). In his work Knopff employs a Hayekian framework to assess what he regards as the left-wing, group-oriented, "social justice" underpinnings of the Charter. Charter rights thus become an exponent of an unwelcome trend Knopff calls "social technology" used to combat perceived forms of discrimination:

The new war on discrimination reverses the terms of the classical liberal equation. In the name of social equality it is willing to restrict individual freedom and to whittle away the private domain in favour of increased public authority. Within the public sphere it fosters the growth of relatively unaccountable administrative, judicial, and quasi-judicial agencies, and encourages a shift in power from more

48Personal interview.

49APEC Newsletter, Volume XVIII, Number 1, January 1995, p. 2.
accountable institutions to these agencies. These undemocratic agencies are designed to emphasize rationality over interest or passion and are thus particularly open to the influence of intellectuals. In short, they provide knowledge with an avenue to power. Although the new war on discrimination is waged rhetorically in traditional liberal terms, it actually points in the direction of Plato’s unification of power and knowledge in an elite class of rulers. If it does not exactly lead to the rule of philosopher kings, it certainly fosters a "guardian" rather than a "liberal" democracy.

Today's guardians are thus those at the forefront of the expansion of group and/or minority rights. And with the Charter as their guide, they use the courts, human rights tribunals, in short, any non-legislative, allegedly non-democratic means, to meet their objectives.

Knopff later teamed up with his University of Calgary colleague, F.L. (Ted) Morton, and together they published Charter Politics in 1992. The book was greeted with considerable acclaim from scholars on both sides of the ideological divide. Though the authors are careful to avoid having their own reservations about the Charter steer the analysis (also see Sigurdson, op. cit.:102-103), it is obvious that they see the controversies swirling around it as largely a battle between right- and left-wing views of equality, judicial activism, codified rights, and ultimately, public-policy making:

Other things being equal, partisans of the political left and right will favour or oppose the Charter depending on whether they think the new power it confers on judges is likely to promote their political agendas. Those on the political left and right divide both between and among themselves on this question. There are those at both ends of the political spectrum, for example, who believe that activist judicial review is most likely to further leftist political causes. Naturally those who share this view will favour the Charter if they are on the left and oppose it if they are on the right [234].

One thread running through their analysis suggests that interest group activity is a (perhaps the) primary beneficiary of the Charter. Instead of lobbying elected politicians and bureaucrats in an attempt to have their concerns addressed, groups now by-pass them almost entirely. With the
Charter in place, groups now litigate in order to achieve their objectives. "Interest groups that fail to achieve their policy objectives through the traditional party and bureaucratic channels can now turn to the courts" (ibid.:26).

Though they refrain from making unequivocal statements on the issue, Knopff and Morton's examination of the interest group-Charter relationship strongly infers that those on the left of the ideological spectrum have benefitted the most. From this premise they have developed the "court party" thesis. The "court party" is a social movement of assorted left-wing "special interests" who, unable to achieve their objectives through traditional lobbying practices, use the Charter and the courts to do so (ibid.:79). Elsewhere, Morton, et. al. (1995a:73) describe the party as:

...a coalition of groups whose members are characterized by higher levels of education and income; are more urban than suburban or rural; are more likely to be professionals and/or in the service sector or public sector of the economy (rather than manufacturing or agriculture). The Court Party's primary policy interests are reformist but not economic in the traditional sense. Its agenda has been described as minoritarian and "equality-seeking." It includes feminism, aboriginal claims, linguistic and other minorities, environmentalism, gay rights, peace and disarmament. Its domestic policy goals are redistributionist, but not in the sense of abolishing economic class differences. These new equality-seekers are not Marx's proletariat, but a coalition of minorities -- ethnic, racial, religious, linguistic and gendered -- who seek to find their members proportionally represented within the various economic strata of Canadian society...

There is a strong overlap of the Court Party with the various "movement politics" that came out of the Sixties.

The court party thesis has attracted much the same attention from the Canadian right in the 1990s as the "new class" thesis did for its American counterpart in the 1970s and 1980s. Gairdner (1992:14) embraces it whole-heartedly, as do various issues of Alberta and British Columbia
Report newsmagazines, and of course, so do APEC and Ron Leitch.\textsuperscript{50}

For all of his activities and nation-wide network of contacts and associates, Leitch knows relatively little about the academic right's work. With the exception of William Gairdner (who no longer works as an academic) one gets the sense that Leitch sees academia as more part of the problem than the solution.\textsuperscript{51} For the most part and logically enough, his associations tend towards the activist and polemicist right. This includes the likes of Jock Andrew,\textsuperscript{52} publicist and author Joe C.W. Armstrong,\textsuperscript{53} former PC candidate and early New Right activist Winn Boyd, the Byfields, William Gairdner, Kenneth McDonald, and Dr. Marguerite Ritchie.

In October 1995 APEC mailed out to its members (free of charge) an hour-long video of

\textsuperscript{50} Though he knows little about the authors themselves, Leitch is basically aware, and approves of, the court party thesis.

\textsuperscript{51} Personal interview. Leitch did however host the "Canadian Leadership Conference" held in Ottawa in November 1990. The themes explored by the panel and audience included the Charter, national unity, Quebec sovereignty, federalism and bilingualism. The conference was put on by a small, Montreal-based think-tank called the St. Lawrence Institute for the Advancement of Learning. Among the participants were Bill Gairdner, Barry Cooper of the University of Calgary and William Christian of the University of Guelph.

\textsuperscript{52} When asked if he knew the whereabouts of Andrew, who has been uncharacteristically silent throughout the 1990s, Leitch said that the arch-enemy of bilingualism had become so disillusioned about the lack of action against the OLA that he withdrew from all political activities and all writing and moved to Vancouver.

\textsuperscript{53} Though well-known to many APEC members, especially in the Toronto area, Joe Armstrong is something of an unknown in right-wing circles. In 1994, he published a tome-like polemic, \textit{Farewell the Peaceful Kingdom: The Seduction & Rape of Canada, 1963 to 1994} (Stoddart). The book is primarily an attack on Pearson-Trudeau initiatives like bilingualism, universal immigration, multiculturalism, and the Charter. It is also highly critical of the Mulroney government's failure to dismantle them. His 31 March 1992 address to the Toronto branch of APEC, "Legitimize Dissent or Lose the Federation," is a forerunner to the book and the transcript is still sold by the organization.
a panel discussion on the Charter of Rights.\textsuperscript{54} The discussion, largely unscripted but rather subdued all the same, was moderated by Leitch and featured William Gairdner, Kenneth McDonald, and Marguerite Ritchie.\textsuperscript{55} The video presentation told APEC members nothing they were not already aware of, particularly that the Charter was an unsolicited, French-style, top-down imposition on a heretofore self-regulating, self-governing society with a minimal constitution, where people could exercise their uncodified rights liberally under the common law. Moderator and panelists discussed at length official bilingualism too, dwelling primarily on the point that language guarantees are not subject to the notwithstanding clause. Gairdner provided one of the more forceful statements during the presentation, declaring that while official bilingualism was brought in legally, it was against the spirit of section 33 of the BNA Act. Bilingualism he said, was a "living lie" foisted on the English majority in order to pacify a discontented French minority.

In the letter accompanying the video, Leitch described the project as

\ldots a tool for the use of members to enlighten fellow Canadians. Much is at stake in Canada. It is our hope that not only can members convince their friends of the need to repeal the Official Languages Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but that some of the people viewing the Video will become interested in joining APEC and putting their shoulder to the wheel.

On those bases the video fell short of its stated purpose. Opposition to the OLA and the Charter, though there have been some powerful intellectual arguments against them,\textsuperscript{56} remains fragmented

\textsuperscript{54}The video ate up the bulk of APEC's $100,000 fund for their "special project on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

\textsuperscript{55}Dr. Ritchie is head of a small right-wing organization called The Human Rights Institute of Canada.

\textsuperscript{56}On the OLA see especially Reid (1993). On the Charter, see Manfredi (1993).
and diffuse. And APEC's membership base continues to shrink.

APEC VERSUS THE MEECH LAKE AND CHARLOTTETOWN ACCORDS

APEC saw the Constitution Act, 1982 as a massive breach of Canada's political traditions imposed on the citizenry by the Trudeau Liberals. Not surprisingly then, the Mulroney government's two attempts at large-scale constitution making in 1987 and 1992 were regarded in much the same light. For right-wing critics, both the Meech Lake accord of 1987 and the Charlottetown accord of 1992 put paid to any notion that the Conservative government was different than its predecessor. APEC's criticism of both accords focussed primarily on two themes: they were elitist and undemocratic and they gave too much to francophones in general and Quebeckers in particular.

The Meech Lake accord

In February 1985, almost a year before he would once again be premier of Quebec, provincial Liberal leader Robert Bourassa released a document outlining five basic conditions that would have to be satisfied before Quebec (if led by a Liberal government, at any rate) could rejoin the "constitutional family." These were:

- explicit recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society," preferably inserted into the preamble of a new constitutional amendment;
- extension of Quebec's authority in the recruitment and selection of immigrants into the province;
- granting Quebec the key role in the appointment of the three Supreme Court justices with expertise in the Civil Code of law;
- limitation of the federal government's spending power in areas of provincial jurisdiction;
- granting to Quebec a full veto on all constitutional questions, with the veto entrenched in the amending formula [cited in Campbell and Pal, 1991:77].

With the principal features for this "Quebec round" of constitutional negotiations so identified,
the Prime Minister and the premiers met at Meech Lake on 30 April 1987 to work out a new agreement. The focus obviously was on Quebec; the aim of the project was to put an end to the province's five-year, self-imposed exile in the constitutional wilderness with, as Mulroney had declared in 1984, "honour and enthusiasm."

General right-wing opposition to the accord followed APEC's reasoning that a) it gave far too much to Quebec and not enough to other provinces; b) it was cobbled together without any input from the public; and c) any constitutional change sought by Brian Mulroney and Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa was prima facie suspect. APEC framed their opposition to the accord this way:

A legacy of political arrogance. Backroom politics. Closed door sessions. Failure to consult...What are the issues? First -- the threats -- scare tactics -- backroom politics -- arm twisting to coerce premiers and people to accept an unacceptable deal. Second -- a constitutional change based on false premises and a coverup of its true implications.

The Accord would have amended the Constitution to provide for:

1) a distinct society clause creating a special status for the Province of Quebec.
2) one-third of all Supreme Court of Canada judges to be appointed from Quebec.
3) control by Quebec of immigration policy for that province, with a guarantee of excess numbers, which would affect immigration Canada wide.
4) opting out of national undertakings with compensation to provinces not participating. An open door to sovereignty association for Quebec.
5) unanimity in Amendments, Quebec veto.\footnote{APEC pamphlet \textit{Constitutional Countdown, No. 9}, n.d.}

APEC's hostility towards Meech intensified considerably when the Quebec government, reacting to an earlier Supreme Court decision which declared portions of the province's language law unconstitutional, passed the aforementioned "inside-outside" law in mid-December 1988. As the new bill was itself inconsistent with constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression, it could
be passed into law only by invoking the notwithstanding clause (section 33) contained in the Charter of Rights. The basic thrust of the new law was to preserve the "French face" of Quebec by requiring that all outdoor commercial signage be in French only.

While not tied directly to Meech, the bill precipitated a backlash against the accord in the rest of Canada. To opponents of Meech, Bill 178 represented the thin edge of the distinct society wedge. If Quebec would enact such a law before the accord was ratified, what would it do when it was entrenched in the constitution? The passage of Bill 178 was to APEC fortuitous because it helped to accentuate what they thought were the deep flaws in the accord, especially those dealing the protection of the French language and culture. Meech would not save national unity, they argued; in all likelihood, it would corrode it, perhaps irrevocably.

A combination of the Prime Minister's "roll of the dice" remarks, the refusal of the Manitoba legislature to bend the rules to expedite the debate, and the Newfoundland government's fundamental opposition to the package, rained fatal blows on the accord and its long-predicted death was finally confirmed on 23 June 1990. APEC greeted the accord's demise with glee. Here at last was the richly-deserved rebuke to Mulroney's fixation with Quebec and his penchant for backroom deal-making they had long hoped for. Rather than fretting that the country might be thrown into another unity crisis and more constitutional turmoil, APEC was convinced that the accord's defeat likely prevented all that from happening.

*The Charlottetown accord*

Perhaps it is ironic that the Conservatives' drive for constitutional reform after the collapse

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58Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells' declaration at the time that "Constitutions are for people, not Prime Minister and Premiers" was later adopted by APEC as the basis of their official slogan, "Constitutions are for people, not politicians."
of the Meech Lake accord would encourage (if only temporarily) such a passionate airing of populist views on the subject of national unity. In a country historically incapable of articulating a coherent or at least a uniform vision of itself, the interregnum between the collapse of Meech and the referendum-driven Charlottetown accord produced a veritable cacophony of interests and demands. So much so that when the entire exercise was over, one would be hard pressed to conceive of the nation as anything beyond Siegfried's (1966:113) turn-of-the-century observation that Canada's most salient feature was as "a country of violent oppositions."

As for the Mulroney Conservatives, their putative electoral alliance of western populists, Quebec nationalists and Ontario Red Tories, as daring even imaginative as it might have been, was rapidly becoming incapable of holding together. The demise of the Meech Lake accord was certainly a major setback to the Prime Minister and in the aftermath, his party's "compact" seemed under threat from every quarter. His old friend and cabinet minister Lucien Bouchard had resigned in anger from the party in late May 1990 and promptly established the ultimate in Canadian political contradictions, the Bloc québécois (BQ), a party federal-level party seeking independence for Quebec. Out West, the Reform Party was siphoning off large numbers of disgruntled former Tories who felt betrayed by the party and the Prime Minister. To add to the misery, the country's economy was in recession, with unemployment and small business bankruptcies on the rise. About the only ones even nominally pleased with the governing party and the state of national affairs was the Tory caucus.

Into this political quagmire the Prime Minister set out on one last attempt to square the constitutional-national unity circle between Quebec and what was now being referred to as the "Rest of Canada" (ROC). What Russell (1993:154) calls "the fifth round of mega constitutional
politics" began for the Tories on a somewhat more cautious and consultative note than previously, with the appointment of twelve persons in November 1990 to oversee a so-called "Citizens' Forum." Funded to the tune of $26 million, the Forum, chaired by former official languages commissioner Keith Spicer, was to assess the public mood and gather suggestions on how to resolve the country's seemingly irresolvable issues. The issues included national unity, constitutional renewal and amendment, explorations of "asymmetrical federalism" as Quebec had been demanding and whatever else (even Ottawa's social policies) was thought to be contributing to the country's malaise. Amidst all the unsettled tension, one insight had emerged concomitant with the Forum's launch: constitution-making would no longer be restricted to closed-door negotiations between political executives, ie. between the ten premiers and the Prime Minister. While opening up the process to the inherent messiness of democratic participation entailed certain risks, not the least of which was the possibility of unleashing a veritable panoply of pent-up prejudices, after the collapse of Meech, there really was no other option.

The impetus for the Tories' decision for large-scale public input came from the government of Quebec in the form of its two public forums. The first of the two was the Constitutional Committee of the Quebec Liberal Party, chaired by Jean Allaire. Since the demise of Meech Lake, the Committee had organized a number of public presentations throughout the province. In January 1991, the Committee released its report, *Un Québec libre de ses choix — A Québec Free to Choose*. The report argued that "political autonomy [was] necessary for the development of Québec's identity" (cited in Russell, ibid.:158) and called for a significant (some would say a radical) decentralization of federal powers. The Committee demanded that Ottawa cede jurisdiction of no fewer than twenty-two policy fields to the Quebec government (also see
The second forum was comprised of a broader coalition of politicians, business groups, labour organizations and assorted social activists. Established in early September 1990 by the Quebec National Assembly, it was officially and rather ponderously called the *Commission on the Political and Constitutional Future of Québec in Canada*, but referred to as the Bélanger-Campeau Commission (after its two chairmen). The Commission's mandate was to explore "a new definition of the relation between Québec and Canada -- and of Québec's place within or at the side of Canada" (ibid.).

The thrust of both Quebec efforts was that nothing less than a dramatic reconfiguration of the federal system was required to keep the country together, if only for the time being. The key was to provide sufficient flexibility and considerable jurisdictional elasticity to accommodate Quebec's nationalist demands. Failing that, Quebec would have no other option but to reconsider its place in Canada and perhaps pursue some form of autonomy outside the federation. Both forums recommended that a province-wide referendum be held no later than 26 October 1992, the purpose of which was determine which of two possible options might be considered. One option was for sovereignty should Quebec's demands be rejected by Ottawa and the other provinces. The second was to consider offers from the ROC, but only if they guaranteed substantive constitutional changes, including recognition of Quebec as a distinct society. The Liberal government of Quebec favoured the second option.

Once the scope of these demands became known, English Canadians, according to Conway (1992:148), were rendered "speechless." That may be a slightly overblown description of the ROC's reaction to Quebec's position, but it is true that many outside that province were
left wondering, should those demands be met, if there would even be a recognizable country left after all was said and done. To many and particularly those on the right, the whole exercise seemed artificial, forced and pointless. The federal government it seemed, missed the point entirely. That the country had spent the last dozen or so years lurching from one national unity and constitutional crisis to the next was because Ottawa never could say no to the endless demands of Quebec.

In the meantime, the Citizens' Forum chaired by Keith Spicer criss-crossed the country during the first six months of 1991 to assess the views of "ordinary Canadians" and to consider possible responses to Quebec's ultimatum. The Forum, popularly referred to as the "Spicer Commission," was a far cry from the noble exercise in public consultation and enlightened populism it was hoped it would be. It ended up as little more than a sounding board for assorted long-standing gripes and a litany of familiar complaints. As one journalist correctly observed, "...the forum predictably found not an array of new ideas, but the same old grievances from the same old sources: cleavages that swallowed up Meech and have since widened."59

The Commission released a broadsheet "Report to the People" on Canada Day, 1991. Its contents conveyed nothing new to readers; no fresh insights or practical solutions on how to overcome the myriad cleavages facing the country were found within its pages. What the commissioners themselves had said and what they had heard in their meetings with citizens across the country were the same criticisms that had dogged government policies for years: official bilingualism was misguided, so was current immigration policy and multiculturalism;

federal economic development programs were unfair to "the regions"; and the nation was in danger of slipping away out of frustration or apathy or both. It also declared rather brazenly that further constitutional negotiations were unnecessary and unwanted by the people. In some ways, the Report read like a right-wing missive. Then again, it could at least be said that it provided a nominally accurate picture of a confused, insecure, and angry citizenry.

From the early autumn of 1991 to the day of the referendum (roughly one year), APEC was singularly motivated by a visceral opposition to any constitutional changes driven by Quebec's demands. Anticipating what was to come, Leitch wrote:

> The warning flags are flying. There is a movement afoot in this country to create nations within a nation; to grant sovereignty association; to divide the nation by granting self-government and special status to groups scattered across this country. If that is not your concept of Canada; if you believe that Canada is one nation and one people; if you believe in the equality of all individuals without special status for any, then now is the time to act. If you do not stand up for your beliefs at this time there will not be a second opportunity. You as an individual will be forever a second class citizen.\(^6^0\)

With typical gusto, APEC set about producing a torrent of material: stickers, pamphlets, booklets and commentaries. They also made submissions to committees (including the Spicer Commission) and held news conferences (never well-attended by mainstream media outlets) whenever and wherever possible.

Remarkably, just what was to be contained in any new set of constitutional proposals was not publicly revealed until the summer of 1992. At first just snippets of detail emerged from meetings held at the beginning of July. By late August, a *Consensus Report on the Constitution*, soon to become known as the Charlottetown accord, was agreed to in principle by all first

\(^6^0\) *APEC Newsletter*, Volume XIV, Number 9, October 1991, p. 1.
ministers, including Premier Bourassa of Quebec, and released to the public. Among its numerous provisions, the accord proposed:

- recognition of Quebec as a distinct society
- an elected and equal Senate (six per province, one per territory), with a double majority (a majority of all Senators plus a majority of francophone Senators) required to pass legislation that would materially affect French language and culture
- eighteen additional Commons seats to be given Quebec and Ontario; four to British Columbia and two to Alberta. Quebec was guaranteed twenty-five percent of all seats in perpetuity
- recognition of Aboriginals' inherent right to self-government
- changes to the federal spending power, including permitting provinces to opt out of national shared-cost programs and still receive federal funds provided that national objectives were met
- further agreements on immigration and regional development to be arrived at in the near future

The entire accord was to be ratified in a nation-wide referendum held on 26 October. By the third week in September, an intense national campaign was underway.

For APEC members and others on the right who still harboured suspicions over the contents of the more modest Meech Lake accord, the new proposals seemed like a recurring nightmare of epic proportions. Especially worrisome was the provision of the distinct society clause for Quebec; this time however, it appeared twice in the same section. Other provisions, such as Aboriginals' "inherent right" to self-government -- a concept the ramifications of which were never clearly explained -- struck the right as nation-fragmenting rather than nation-building. In addition, the proposed structural changes to the House of Commons gave far too much to Ontario and Quebec and far too little to BC and Alberta. The guarantee of one-quarter of all Commons seats to Quebec was blatant political chicanery and a gross violation of the historical (and more flexible) principle of "rep by pop." Perhaps the only positive elements of the whole deal was that it offered some decentralization of the federation and a hint of Senate reform.
However, those were massively outweighed by the potential dangers of the accord. In short, the Charlottetown proposals, crammed to near bursting with objectionable clauses and contentious assumptions about the nature of Canadian history and contemporary society, was a right-winger's nightmare. Fortunately, it all had to be approved by a majority in every province and, in two of the provinces where the right was strongest, BC and Alberta, the referendum was binding (Quebec, too).

Once the proposals were made public, APEC hit the ground running and registered their objections quickly, especially to those clauses dealing with Quebec. APEC threw whatever resources it could muster into opposing the accord, condemning it as politically and legally indistinct from Meech and anathema to national unity. "Meech Lake II" as they called it, was really a thinly-disguised ploy cobbled together by federal and Quebec politicians to a) further entrench French power across the country and b) to further diminish the (British) constitutional-legal heritage of Canada, a heritage already badly damaged by the codified, "top-down" Charter of Rights.

APEC argued as well that the accord would erode a number of national policies and inhibit the development of new ones in the future:

A YES VOTE MEANS THAT CANADIANS AGREE:
To a Canada with:
No national immigration policy
No national manpower policy
No national education policy

61 According to Leitch, APEC's campaign against the Charlottetown accord cost them $315,000. This is a considerable sum for an outfit of that size. Luckily, the bequest from the estate of Arthur Child covered most of the costs.

62 Education falls under provincial jurisdiction.
APEC's professed concern with the potential decentralization of national policies might seem puzzling to those unfamiliar with right-wing objectives. After all, for an organization that has devoted considerable energies decrying the jurisdictional hegemony of the federal government, to now make a case for greater centralization of policy-making is a strange twist. It should be remembered though, that like the right wing in general, APEC members see themselves as defenders of national unity and national institutions, not their enemy. With the exception of bilingualism and the Charter, two "foreign" outgrowths on the traditional body politic, their goal, as they see it at any rate, has always been to enhance, not dismantle, national institutions.

According to APEC members, the unfortunate path Ottawa has taken since the Trudeau era has been to conceive of national unity as merely the sum of the myriad group particularisms that make up Canadian society -- linguistic minorities, ethnic minorities, feminists, sexual minorities, and so forth. The result was that these groups became convinced that majorities *qua* majorities were dangerous and they subsequently came to regard the dominant anglophone culture as their enemy. It was hardly surprising then, that the political elites and assorted interests who put together the Charter of Rights, the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords were seized with the conviction that "unity" could be synonymous only with "diversity" and vice-versa.

The Charlottetown accord was rejected by voters in six provinces on 26 October, 1992. "WE WON!" proclaimed the headline of APEC's newsletter. But what did "we" or perhaps "they" win? Nothing more than a temporary cessation of hostilities, according to Leitch:

On October 26th the people of Canada rejected an agreement which was the very antithesis of federalism. It was an agreement that denied the fundamental principles of democracy on which this country was founded. The Canadian people have taken the first step in reclaiming their country. Politicians in the past have assumed that once elected they could do as they pleased. They have assumed that they are the masters, not the servants of the people. *The referendum vote is the first step in demonstrating to the politicians that they are indeed the servants of the people.*

The battle of the referendum has been won, but not the war to restore democracy. The Canadian people must continue to take the initiative and force the government to do its bidding. A golden opportunity will occur in 1993 when the next federal election will be held. The Canadian people must come to the realization that the three mainline parties have nothing to offer. They have demonstrated time and time again that they do not understand the fundamental principles of democracy.64

Without going so far as to identify them by name, it is obvious that Leitch was urging his members to support the Reform Party in the next national election. As we know, that support was ultimately short-lived, due primarily to disagreements over language and APEC's bitterness over having lost members to the party.

**CONCLUSION**

Much like REAL Women, APEC, for all their efforts, has seen only modest gains in return: the collapse of both the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords; the odd school board or municipality that rejected French immersion or civic bilingualism; a modicum of support for the repeal of the Charter and the OLA. The big picture remains unchanged however. Official bilingualism is firmly entrenched at the federal level; many school districts offer immersion education; and the Charter, despite a fair number of unpopular judicial decisions rendered under its auspices, counts far more supporters among the public than opponents. In brief, the chances

of repealing either the OLA or the Charter in the foreseeable future are infinitesimal.

Yet Leitch remains as optimistic as he is defiant. Like his counterparts in REAL Women, APEC's central motivating principle (and the one source of what remains of their optimism) is the belief that they reflect the views of "the people." Somehow, someday, their appeal to the majority will get through. "The salvation for Canada is in the people," Leitch says. However, "the people have to be stirred up first in order to educate them." The key then is to get the public to pay attention to them, a task made all the more difficult by the numerous state, media and special interest opponents conspiring against them.

For all the many crises facing the country, APEC insists that the problem lies not with the state per se, nor, with the exception of the Charter and some overzealous judges, does it lie with the institutions of state themselves. The problem, as Leitch sees it, lies squarely with political parties and the policies they enact as government. In their quest for power, parties, including Reform, have allowed themselves to become captive of, or at least brokers to, numerous special interests, be they linguistic, regional, ethnic, gender, or whatever. Combine this with an electoral system that compels parties to stick with the status quo and that tends to produce majority governments with substantially less than a majority of popular support, and far too many of "the people" remain on the outside looking in.

The return of the Liberals to a majority government under the leadership of Jean Chrétien in 1993 (and the success of Lucien Bouchard's Bloc québécois) stifled somewhat APEC's delight in witnessing both the demise of the Mulroney Conservatives and the rise of the Reform Party. For APEC and most others on the right, the Liberals remain the source of most of the hated

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65 Personal interview.
social engineering and special-interest politics that have shaped (or in their view, virtually destroyed) Canada since the 1960s. Not only that: "The Liberals are successful because they steal other parties' policies," says Leitch. "They've pretty much destroyed the concept of Parliamentary democracy."66

In a manner reminiscent of George Grant's (1989) attack on liberalism and the Liberal Party some 35 years ago, Leitch (op. cit.:3) writes:

Canada is rich and noble in history and tradition. We have developed national institutions such as a parliamentary democracy and the jury system, which, while British in origin, have a distinctive Canadian flavour. There has developed over the last few decades an attempt to deny our historical roots and traditions. Politicians have led the parade of those who would deny Canada's roots. They act as if there was no past on which to build; no history; no tradition; everything begins today.

For all the anger they direct towards politicians, political parties, judges, special interests, and others, APEC remains hopeful that someday through "the people," Canada will revert back to its pre-OLA and pre-Charter traditions. Despite their frequent condemnation of parties, APEC members know that as a pressure group, they must find a compatible party for mutual support. After their fallout with Reform, which in the early days after the 1993 election, was the closest any legitimate national party has come to seeing eye-to-eye with APEC, the prognosis is not good.

The next chapter examines the rise, policies and travails of what was arguably the bellwether organization for the entire Canadian New Right and as I argue, one the New Right movement's weaker links, the Reform Party of Canada.

66Personal interview.
CHAPTER FIVE
A WEAK LINK IN THE NEW RIGHT MOVEMENT?
THE REFORM PARTY OF CANADA

...Reform's ideological and personality disputes have always been resolved by suspension, expulsion, or departure, rather than by the compromises over policy or position that make traditional parties work.

INTRODUCTION

For all its high status in the Canadian conservative universe, the Reform Party never achieved the success its members and supporters had hoped. In right-wing lobbies like REAL Women and APEC for instance, what began as a promising and fruitful relationship with the party ended, if not altogether badly (APEC's profound resentment being the exception in this regard) then at least in disappointment. In short, Reform could not deliver what many in the right wanted. This chapter is in part an attempt to determine why that was so.

This is not to suggest that the party had turned its collective back on conservative causes, for that is not the case. However much its values and ideas were tempered by populist principles with respect to decision-making, Reform was by most measures a right-wing party -- to some, a radical right-wing party -- and its policies and principles reflected an attraction to those values. What I am suggesting here is that a combination of factors, including its commitment to populist ideals, but also Preston Manning's risk-averse leadership, and the party's attempt to appeal to the more moderate voter, especially in Ontario, had softened Reform's supposed hard ideological edge. As this chapter shows, the "triangulated" character of Reform's conservatism, namely, right-liberalism, right-conservatism, and right-populism, was also problematic. The party's dissolution and the subsequent birth of the Canadian Alliance is a testament both to Reform's impact on the Canadian political system and its failure as a vehicle for right-wing ideas.
Had those activists in right-wing moral and cultural lobbies paid attention, they would have found that Reform leader Preston Manning could be as ideologically irresolute as the leaders of mainstream parties. Some have argued that Manning eschewed specific ideological principles altogether, preferring process and populism to guide him (see especially, Flanagan, 1995, 1998). That view is slightly misleading, for Manning did (and does) embrace specific right-wing principles irrespective of whether he chooses to identify them as such. But certainly there is no question that adherence to populism remained the dominant motif of his leadership and as I argue, one of the major reasons why Reform was a weaker link in the right than many assume.

Though the party had been labelled Canada's belated participant in the New Right "revolution" that had previously swept through much of western Europe and the United States, there is no evidence that Reform self-consciously accepted the mantle of "New Right Party." What Reform had set out to do was to step into the political vacuum left by the Progressive Conservatives, first in the West, than across the country. Though the evidence is anecdotal, in my discussions with Reformers (politicians as well as the so-called grassroots), I found that they typically resisted being tagged with any particular ideological label. While most with whom I spoke accepted the loose designation "conservative," to them it was more of a suffix than a stand-alone label. Invariably they would add other dimensions to it: democrat, populist, libertarian, and reformer being the most frequently mentioned.

The crux of the matter is that for moral and cultural conservatives, even with the Reform Party as their voice in Parliament, attaining success in the non-economic policy arena proved to be a formidable task. Compared with their market-liberal brethren, moral and cultural conservatives achieved relatively little. Rights for minorities and women (the "special interests"),
including the most controversial community, gays and lesbians, have tended to expand, rather than contract. Where Parliament was reluctant to step in, the constitution, the courts, and human rights tribunals make good the gap. No substantive federal law on abortion has filled the breach in the wake of the Senate defeat of the Tories' bill in early 1991. Official (institutional) bilingualism continues to hold an exalted place in federal government thinking. The Charter has not been repealed. The judiciary, the Supreme Court of Canada in particular, has acknowledged that some of their decisions have been controversial and unpopular with some, but that certainly has not made them legally timorous. About the only non-economic area where some influence of right-wing ideas is evident is in the area of Canada-Quebec relations. The passage of the federal government's C-20 in 1999, the so-called "Clarity Bill," is in part a reflection of Reform's long-held demand that Ottawa make the terms of Quebec's possible secession clear and unequivocal.

Again, with the exception of APEC, the cleavage in the conservative ranks between Reform and the moral-cultural lobbies was traceable not so much to a fatal clash of basic ideas, but rather more to disagreements about what could reasonably be accomplished at the political level. In the Reform caucus for example, the overwhelming majority were opposed to institutional bilingualism as provided for in the OLA; most of them were also on the prolife side of the abortion issue.\(^1\) Yet, in the preceding chapter we saw that with respect to Reform and

\(^1\) Lloyd Mackey, former editor of the party's The Reformer newspaper, estimated that 35 percent (18 of 52) members of the caucus, including Manning, were prolife Evangelical (conservative) Christians. See Douglas Todd, "Evangelicals tone down Reform, author claims." The Vancouver Sun, June 8, 1996, p. A6. According to former Reform MP Stephen Harper, 80-90 percent of the Reform caucus is pro-life. Personal interview with the author, 25 May 2000. Former Reform MP Jan Brown, who said that she had polled every member of the Reform caucus on such views in 1993, put the prolife majority at 73 percent -- 38 of 52 caucus members.
the issue of bilingualism, the party mounted at best half-hearted attacks on the OLA (usually in the form of private members' bills) at the same time that some in the caucus, including the leader, were availing themselves of subsidized French lessons. As for the abortion issue, many Reformers, and especially the leader, seemed resigned to the fact that abortion was not about to resurface as a political issue in Parliament any time soon. While it remained in the Reform's Blue Book as an issue to be decided by referendum, abortion rarely appeared as an issue on the party's legislative agenda. At the practical level the institutional characteristics of the Canadian political system served as fetters on what Reform could achieve and what options the party could reasonably pursue. This is most clearly manifested in Parliament itself: an opposition party facing a majority government has limited influence on public policy. It is also important to remember that, like any political party, and one that trumpets its populist roots at that, Reform was at least cognizant of which strategies would be attractive to "the people."

In that broader context of voter support for the party, the demographic composition of Reform has to be considered a factor as well. Flanagan (1995:35) has referred to the prevailing demographic cast of Reform as the "'4 Ms -- married, middle-aged, middle-class men." Indeed, the party's own 1991 Membership Survey confirmed that the "typical" Reformer was likely to be white, male, middle-aged (ie. 50 and older), and middle-class. If he belonged to another political party previously, it was likely to be the Progressive Conservatives followed by Social Credit. According to one political scientist, Reform's understanding of "the people" is more or less confined to those like themselves, ie. those who reflect "Canada's supposedly 'natural' white,

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Personal interview with the author, 30 May 2000.

2See Reform Party of Canada, 1991 Membership Survey: Initial Results
anglophone and Christian national character" (Patten, 1999:30).

Drawing from data provided by the 1993 and 1997 Canada Election Studies (CES), Nevitte, et. al. (2000:91-92) show that Reform's support "was more strongly rooted in social-background characteristics than the vote of any other party outside Quebec." Such factors as sex (men more likely to support Reform), ethnicity and religion play a significant role in determining the bases of Reform support:

Voters of European origin were twice as likely (31 per cent) to vote Reform as those of non-European background (15 per cent). Support was particularly high among voters of northern-European origin...(51 per cent)....Similarly, Protestants were almost twice as likely (35 per cent) as Catholics (19 per cent) to vote Reform...

Reform attracts the support of moral traditionalists and of voters who are opposed to doing more for women. It also appeals to those who are less sympathetic towards outgroups, regardless of whether those outgroups are defined as racial minorities or aboriginal peoples [ibid.].

In addition to a relatively narrow underpinning of party supporters, the authors' investigations (ibid.:94-98) also show that Reform's regional base of support remained in the West and eventually peaked there. As we see later in the chapter, the failure of Reform to break through in Ontario -- its 1997 showing in that province was weaker than in 1993 -- suggests that the party would likely never have appealed to enough voters outside its western base to form a government. This is a principal reason behind Reform's dissolution and subsequent reemergence as the ostensibly more moderate, broader-based Canadian Alliance in March 2000.

With respect to Reform's oft-stated claim to represent "ordinary Canadians," Patten and Whitaker (1995:24), though critical of the party and its policies, take an even-handed approach in examining the validity of that claim. Their argument is both instructive and persuasive:

Reform claims to represent the people, ordinary Canadians. Crucially, in Reform discourse, the people are presented as classless, genderless, unilingually English,
without ethnicity or skin colour. The people are clearly not the ones making rights claims. Deconstructing Reform's populism provides ample ammunition for name calling. But it's not good enough to use labels to dismiss Reform. [For example t]he party is certainly anti-feminist, but that does not make it inherently anti-woman. Many women reject feminist identification and feminist policies. To some of them, Reform makes "common sense" in a way that more overtly feminist movements do not...Reform draws on a discourse of fairness and the notion of the people to construct a conception of the common good that delegitimizes feminist rights claims. Once again, "equal treatment for all, and no special privileges for special interests"...

Too many of us have been attacking Reform by exposing its right-wing character, as if right-wing orientations were outside the dominant ideological space. But Preston Manning and the Reform Party are not on the outside. They are helping to define the dominant ideology of mainstream Canada. More and more Canadians have been convinced that there is no legitimate alternative to a Reform-style New Right agenda.

Reform was the political party agent of a right-wing, "mainstream agenda" that was and remains forward-looking with respect to economic matters and reform-oriented (obviously) where it concerns the institutions of state. Yet at the same time and notwithstanding its inability to make good on them (because it never formed a government), Reform was also associated with traditional moral and cultural values. Many Reformers, including the leader, were uncomfortable with contemporary moral-cultural values and often looked askance at the ever-increasing secularization and diversification of Canadian society. Like their brethren in other New Right organizations, Reform was in part a mobilization set against postindustrial (or postmodern) values. Such values include the institutionalization of bilingualism, multiculturalism, feminism, the bulk of judicial decisions made under the Charter, the coercive power of "special interests," and the inversely proportionate weakness of "the people" in the political arena. As the right sees it, in Canada these contemporary values and those who champion them have acquired the blessing -- not to mention the funding -- of the state.
The thirteen-year life of the Reform Party of Canada was among the most chronicled in contemporary Canadian political history. From its birth in 1987 to its electoral breakthrough in 1993, to Official Opposition status in 1997, to dissolution and recasting as the Canadian Alliance in 2000, the party was the key, arguably the only legitimate, vehicle for framing right-wing politics in Canada. For scholars, Reform provided a gauge, a means by which to measure the appeal of a number of New Right ideas. For political activists all along the ideological spectrum and for the general public as well, the party was often the focal point for a much-needed national debate over fundamental ideas and principles. If only by default, Reform had at least reinvigorated robust debates about the meaning of political life in Canada in all its manifestations: ideologies, policies, institutions, structures, and national unity. In the process, the party had been labelled everything from a party of conservative common sense principles and a populist voice for "the people" in national politics, to a collection of cranky, far-right malcontents who were bent on destroying the accommodative policies and coalition-building that characterized the old-line brokerage parties over the last 30 or so years.

One objective of this chapter is to test the validity of the following proposition: despite its purported bellwether status in Canada's New Right movement -- keeping in mind, as Young (1978:xi) insists, the fundamental differences between movements (and organizations like REAL Women and APEC) and political parties -- Reform and its leader Preston Manning may actually have been among its weaker links and in that they may have exerted more of a moderating

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3Young writes: "Political parties are not, as a rule, noted for their anxiety to bring about sweeping social and political change; movements are. Herein lies the chief difference between a party and a movement. Parties would rather win elections than converts -- unless, of course, winning converts would win them the election."
influence on the New Right than was widely assumed.

The party was a living example of the theory that one of the major characteristics of the New Right was its internal ideological tension. As we saw in Chapter Two, scholars like Belsey (1986) and Hoover and Plant (1989) have argued that such tensions are limited to just two major ideological positions: social conservatism and economic liberalism. For those who study political parties and their support bases in depth however, these sources of ideological and practical tension are more complex and multifaceted (see especially Betz, 1993; Kitschelt, 1995).

This certainly holds true with respect to the Reform Party. Though not fatal to the party's cohesion, there was strain between right (moral-cultural) conservatives and right (economic) liberals. There was also the added strain produced by the party's commitment to populist principles. So, instead of the standard dualist models for sketching out the tensions found in many analyses of New Right organizations, with Reform we have a triangulated model of social-moral, economic, and populist elements.

Now populist ideas are not new to the right (nor are they specific to it, either). They have long been a prominent fixture in North American right-wing thought. Many in the right, certainly Preston Manning, have long insisted that the natural conservatism of "the people" can be effectively unleashed through the use of populist, direct-democracy mechanisms. The Reform Party was the first successful federal party in recent times to have integrated populist procedures into its platform. Of course, as it never formed a government, the party never had the opportunity to put those procedures into use as public policy. What we do have from the party's experimentation with direct democracy is much less satisfying and conclusive and it would be unwise to assign broad implications for populist principles per se using what in essence were
questionable, self-serving attempts at "direct democracy." On the other hand, though they provided us with at best half-formed insights into the problems associated with populist principles, they did at least provide a far greater insight into some of the internal ideological dynamics of the Reform Party. As I show later in the chapter, this clash of principles over a particular piece of legislation turned out to the most serious crisis in Reform's history.

The central organizing principle in Preston Manning's mind was that Reform was a populist political party and its goal was to achieve political power by attracting a broad cross-section (not a coalition necessarily) of voters, first from across the West then from across the country. For the most part however, notwithstanding the designs of the leader and the presence of moderate voices in caucus, the party's appeal was overwhelmingly limited to those with right-wing leanings and in that, limited largely to rural, small town and suburban dwellers. As Tom Flanagan put it, "Those belonging to the ethno-linguistic majority of the country made up Reform's core support group." Yet for all of that, as the party's former Chief Policy Officer and MP Stephen Harper asserted, because of the strength of Manning's own convictions, "the Reform Party was not, contrary to its image, a moral-conservative party. Its position on issues was fundamentally populist, rather than conservative."

Manning's personal style tended to be risk-averse and to avoid wherever possible confrontation and controversy. Though some observers see in Manning some evidence of ideological dogmatism (see Dobbin, 1991; Laycock, 1994; Patten, 1994; Sigurdson, 1994), others

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4Tom Flanagan, personal interview with the author, 2 May 2000.
have argued that Manning's *modus operandi* was an ideologically diffuse "monism" (Flanagan, op. cit.:34; Flanagan and Harper, 1998:180-181). In Manning's eyes, Reform "should be a demographic representation, almost a microcosm, of the larger society" (Flanagan, ibid.). Ideally, the party was supposed to embrace social-demographic, rather than ideological, "oneness."

As we have seen in previous chapters organizations like REAL Women and APEC have been critical of Reform. Manning's preference for populist majoritarianism over morally-correct principled conservatism, especially as it concerned such issues as abortion, same-sex rights, official language minority rights, and constitution-making proved to be an irritant for them. That in itself is a touch ironic of course, considering that these organizations also saw themselves as populist representatives of "the people." Though these groups continued to be electorally supportive of Reform (realistically there was no other major party for them to turn to), their disappointment with the party and its leader was never far beneath the surface.

But not everyone agreed that the friction (or tension) between moral and cultural conservatives and Reform's right-liberalism was significant. In a recent essay examining the sources of "conservative disarray" in Canada, Flanagan and Harper (ibid.:178), for example, write:

The difference between economic and social conservatism certainly does not explain the rise of the Bloc [québécois], and the separation of Reform from the PCs is related to a split between conservatives and centrists generally within the old Mulroney coalition, not to a split between that coalition's economic and conservative elements. In fact, both brands of conservative thought share a common ethos -- free will, personal responsibility, family values -- as well as a common electorate. Tensions between economic and social conservatives may run high in the United States, but in Canada they are the least of the problems confronting those seeking to build an effective conservative political force.

This view is correct, up to point. There is a basic "common ethos" in contemporary
conservatism, and it is dedicated primarily to preserving market economies and reducing some of the influence of the state in the affairs of private individuals and families. On this, both sides of the movement -- and all three sides in Reform -- agree. But the argument is weak in its assertion that tensions between the economic and the moral-cultural (what Flanagan and Harper call the "social") aspects of conservatism are essentially nonexistent in Canada compared with United States.

I suggest that while they do not prevent intra-movement cohesion, there are tensions aplenty in the Canadian right. In the USA, while tensions between the economic and social aspects of conservatism were indeed quite severe -- precipitating Frank Meyer's plea for "fusion" in the early 1960s -- those differences have been smoothed over considerably, at least publicly. Since the Reagan era it has been thought mandatory, especially for Republican politicians and particularly presidential candidates, to pay homage to the powerful Christian Right. Granted, the Christian Right in Canada has nowhere near the profile and influence of its American counterpart. Be that as it may, the chances of a Canadian politician genuflecting before conservative Christian organizations (or mainstream Christian organizations, for that matter), even someone with impeccable Christian-right credentials like Preston Manning, are slim.

The debate as to whether a thorough-going fusion of economic and social components of the anglophone Canadian right is possible has recently engaged a number of conservative thinkers and commentators. Flanagan and Harper's contribution has already been noted. Others include

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6This is not to say that the debate has been settled once and for all. The differences between the two sides and how it affects the American conservative movement still makes for lively and invigorating debate. See especially, Bartley (1997). For an earlier discussion of the unity question, see Nisbet (1980).
publisher Ted Byfield and journalist Michael Taube. These two have worked to downplay the tensions within the movement, arguing that populist control of the policy agenda (particularly on moral issues) and the ultimate objective of forming a government is a unifying, rather than a fragmenting, force. Through his Report newsmagazine editorials, Byfield has commented extensively on the importance of right-wing unity. Ultimately, he says, the populist mechanism of the referendum is the only viable means to keep the movement together. If "the people" are allowed to express their true preferences on moral issues in binding referenda -- rather than having "novel morality" imposed on them by politicians and the courts -- "[t]he resulting law may not be morally right, but it will represent the views of most people who have to live under it."8

Taube meanwhile, recognizes that "conservatives and libertarians" can and in fact do disagree fundamentally on issues of religion, freedom of speech, and so on; however, their pursuit of common goals, namely, support for "the free market, individual liberty, and the need for smaller government" are likely sufficient to unite them. Taube predicts a "grand scheme" for the Canadian right similar to Meyer's aforementioned plea for "fusionism" in the US nearly forty years ago, which, though rejected by both sides at first, eventually helped pave the way for right-

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7For samples of Byfield's argument, see his editorials: "The UA's strongest suit." Alberta Report, March 15, 1999. "Compromise or oblivion?" Alberta Report, May 10, 1999. "The best possible result." Alberta Report, June 21, 1999. We might also include author William Gairdner's and journalist David Frum's role in establishing a new right-wing organization, Civitas. Born out of the "Winds of Change" conference held in Calgary in May 1996, the major objective of which was to consider a merger between the Reform Party and the Progressive Conservatives, Civitas is an "umbrella discussion group" and a forum (Harper and Flanagan, op. cit.:170) for writers, intellectuals, and activists of the right.

8"The UA's strongest suit," supra.
wing unity in that country.9

Interestingly, Harper's views on the impact of intra-movement ideological tension and by extension, the feasibility of "uniting the right" under the auspices of the Canadian Alliance, have evolved since the publication of the essay co-written with Flanagan and excerpted above. He now sees the tension between the sides as not only significant, but ultimately corrosive to the right itself. In a recent essay10 he stated:

With the collapse of ideological socialism...various groups of "conservatives" have lost the common enemy. They have instead began looking at each and asking "What are you doing in our party?"

From within the electoral coalitions of the old centre-right, new parties have emerged to appeal to its different elements. In the future, we are going to see two types of "conservative" party, similar to the alignment that existed before the rise of ideological socialism.

One type of conservative party, mirroring the "classical liberal" parties of the nineteenth century, will champion the freedom of the individual, laissez-faire and secular values, and globalism. The other type will resemble the old "classical conservative" parties, championing the integrity of the community, traditional religious values, and nationalism.

In fact, these rival "conservative" parties will look at each other and they will often say, "We have more in common with our enemy than we do with you" -- in much the way that many PCs and Reformers see the Liberals, not each other, as their second choice.

This is because rivals of the old centre-left have changed their fundamental fiscal and economic policies to attract some traditionally conservative voters. People like Tony Blair, Bill Clinton and Paul Martin have adapted their parties to the new consensus in order to ensure their political survival and success. With centre-left parties sharing such policies, they no longer constitute a sufficient basis to reunite conservative factions...

The political realignment going throughout the democratic world means that there

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can be no simple "reunite the right" strategy -- and there will be no return to a two-party system in Canada.

All of Canada's major federal parties then, have incorporated market-model principles to some degree. This has in turn caused a rift between the more "pure" conservative parties because what remains for them once the economic dimensions have been squeezed out (and coopted by other parties) is more disruptive than it is unifying. Though short on evidence, Harper's argument is compelling. Given that centrist brokerage parties have themselves adopted, if not wholesale, then large chunks of right-wing fiscal policy (also see McBride and Shields, 1997:Ch. 1), the neoconservative (or business) agenda appears to have triumphed across much of ideological spectrum, at least for now. Because of this, argues Harper, the future for "comprehensive" conservative parties appears rather bleak and the fragmentation of opposition parties at the federal level -- a legacy of the 1993 election -- will continue.

Though Harper's predicted appearance of rival conservative factions-parties is questionable, there is no doubt that the tension he refers to exists. Also questionable is his assertion that the future for comprehensive or "catch-all" parties of the right is bleak. Ironically, it is precisely because of the relative weakness of moral and cultural conservatism in the political arena that the all-out split Harper predicts for right-wing parties is not likely to occur. The reason has more to do with political pragmatism -- indeed, political survival -- than with principle. Given that their efforts in the political and judicial arenas (not to mention the arena of public opinion) have been comparatively ineffective alongside their more market-oriented and socially-liberal compatriots, most moral and cultural conservatives (the exception of APEC has been noted) have few options but to maintain organizational affiliations with more diffuse right-wing parties, like Reform or now, the Canadian Alliance. On their own -- as fringe parties like
the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) and recent editions of the Social Credit party have shown -- moral and cultural conservatives have few chances of getting members elected, let alone forming governments. As part of a larger, though more varied and flexible conservative party, they may stand a better chance for achieving some influence and power.

So some of Harper's arguments have merit. But where he sees an all-out split between the social and the economic right at the party level, I argue that the two sides -- more at the behest of social conservatives than the other way around -- will likely stay together. Instead of a breach in the movement as Harper predicts, what we will witness -- have witnessed -- is the continued tension between the two sides as they co-exist within a single political party vehicle.

This is not to say that such tension is easily defused or accommodated. As we shall see later in the chapter, when such tension did surface in the Reform Party in 1996, the potential for widespread damage was quite high. Before examining that incident, in what follows immediately below, I turn to a brief look at the factors leading to the emergence of the Reform Party.

THE REFORM PARTY OF CANADA EMERGES

The emergence of the Reform Party of Canada has been documented extensively by social scientists, journalists, and by Preston Manning himself (for example, see Dobbin, op. cit.; O'Neill, 1991; Manning, 1992; Sharpe and Braid, 1992; Archer and Ellis, 1994; Laycock, op. cit.; Flanagan, op. cit.; Harrison, 1995; Dabbs, 1997). Given this varied literature (some of which borders on either the conspiratorial or the hagiographic), it is perhaps surprising that so little of

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11This does not preclude the continued existence of smaller parties for moral and cultural conservatives.
it examines Reform's problematic experiences as the leading organization in Canada's New Right movement. That Reform was sometimes a problem vis-à-vis other elements in the right is supported by three arguments. First, Reform's platform was closer to the moderate centre than either its ideological opponents or its more doctrinaire allies like REAL Women and APEC had expected. Second, some party members, particularly the leader and those close to him, remained well aware of the difficulty in advancing some of the more stringent moral and cultural values as expressed in some quarters of the New Right. Though they may have personally been attracted to these views, they harboured few illusions that extending them into the public arena of electoral politics could be accomplished smoothly, let alone successfully.

Third and much to the dismay of those who joined Reform because of its commitment to right-wing principles, it is clear that the party was in no small fashion a personal vehicle for helping Preston Manning realize two long-time objectives: a) a convergence of ideas that included an emphasis on populism, and b) attaining political power, ultimately resulting in the formation of a national government with him as Prime Minister. When those failed to materialize with Reform, Manning and those close to him (including most of the party's sitting MPs), spearheaded the drive to dismantle the party. Immediately thereafter a new(er) vehicle, the Canadian Alliance -- a replacement likely to be more ideologically moderate than its predecessor -- was launched.

Now the fact that Reform was not as radical as some of its opponents insisted, or, as some right-wingers have complained, that it was "not conservative enough," is not to suggest that the party was always a model of moderation and flexibility. By most definitions, Reform was a right-wing party, not a centrist party seeking to draw in diverse communities to its cause.
(though some of its grassroots members and MPs were). Most of its policies and principles -- not to mention many of the views of its parliamentary and extra-parliamentary personnel -- fit well within the ambit of New Right thought. In fact, some of its views and policies were highly controversial and to many of its opponents, offensive.

As controversial as many of Reform's ideas were, they were never particularly new. In fact, many of them were *old*. They were in large part reflective of the historical residue of a region, more specifically, of a province and a relative handful of influential individuals. I am of course referring to the West, specifically to Alberta, and to a coterie of well-connected movers and shakers who were instrumental in getting the party off the ground.

*The roots of Reform*

Most scholarly efforts seeking to understand the rise of the Reform Party acknowledge its ancestral roots in the right-populist Social Credit party of Alberta.\(^\text{12}\) It is there, in that province and with that former powerhouse of a political party -- and of its 36 years in power, Ernest Manning accounted for 25 of them -- that we acquire a more robust appreciation of Reform ideas, policies and principles, and also of the behaviour of its sole leader. The academic literature on the Social Credit party remains rich and vigorously challenging, much of it having achieved canonical status in the annals of Canadian social science.

C.B. Macpherson's classic, *Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System*, first published in 1953, ranks among the most influential studies of the first half of the Social

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Credit era in Alberta.\textsuperscript{13} Briefly, Macpherson argued that, beginning with the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), who governed between 1921 and 1935 and following that, with Social Credit, first under William "Bible Bill" Aberhart and then under Ernest Manning (who would serve as Premier until 1968), Alberta evolved into a one-party polity, what Macpherson described as "the quasi-party system" (237).\textsuperscript{14} Despite its commitment to plebiscitarian populism and its efforts to obscure class tensions (ibid.:231-247; also see Laycock, 1990:Ch.5), Social Credit was the political vehicle for the province's \textit{petite bourgeoisie}, that is to say, for the private farmers who made up most of the independent commodity producing class and who occupied a quasi-colonial niche within North American, but more specifically, Canadian, capitalism (ibid.:246; Harrison and Krahn, 1992:3; also see Finkel, 1984:110 and 1989).\textsuperscript{15} In short, the rise of populist parties in the quasi-party system of Alberta (Quebec, too) was in part a reaction to external structural changes taking place elsewhere, changes which the local population could do little to control (also see Harrison, 1995:9).

Macpherson (ibid.:247) further argued that, despite the ostensible commitment to

\textsuperscript{13}Social Credit governed Alberta continuously from 1935 to 1971.

\textsuperscript{14}Maurice Pinard's (1971:69) important work explaining the rise of the federal Social Credit in Quebec (Crébitistes) employed the synonymous term "one-party dominance system." Apart from this, Pinard (ibid.) insisted that were few other similarities between Macpherson's thesis and his own. For example, Pinard rejected class homogeneity as a necessary condition for the development of a one-party dominant system. As well, Pinard argued that a quasi- or one-party dominant system was not a consequence of the rise of political movements, but an antecedent condition for such a rise (ibid.). In the 1975 edition of the book, Pinard, like Macpherson before him, applied more of a class-based analysis to explain the appeal of the Crébitistes in the 1962 federal election (also see Harrison, 1995:9).

\textsuperscript{15}There have been challenges to Macpherson's thesis that Alberta was in the main a homogeneous province where Social Credit governed more or less exclusively on behalf of the \textit{petite bourgeoisie}. See for example, Irving (1959), Young (1978), Finkel (1984).
plebiscitarian democracy, the quasi-party system under Social Credit was "at best an illusory democracy." Of Social Credit's deeply religious foundation -- a unique indigenous characteristic nowhere present in the original economic doctrine of Major C. H. Douglas -- Macpherson (145) wrote:

Social Credit's remarkable similarities with evangelical religious doctrine, which so many Albertans found the most satisfying, recommended it still further [to the people]. Combining in itself root-and-branch denunciation of the world as it was with a magical promise of a new secular life for all who were suffering, social credit had a peculiar affinity to the fundamentalist and prophetic religious gospel of which Aberhart was a vigorous preacher.

Ernest Manning, who succeeded Aberhart in 1943, was the first graduate of the latter's Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute. Though he would reject his mentor's explicit commingling of populist-driven religious prophecy with Social Credit movement-party doctrine and policy, Manning's leadership would be characterized by a strong commitment to conservative (if not right-populist) verities, particularly sound fiscal stewardship and traditional (though noticeably more secular) moral virtue. As we shall see shortly, that specific commitment to conservative ideals would, by 1967, produce a modest political blueprint for ideological consolidation within the federal party system. That blueprint would help to guide Preston Manning throughout his political career.

The story of Reform has been told many times and from a range of perspectives, both scholarly and popular. I have therefore not devoted a large amount of space going over terrain that has already been carefully explored and well mapped out. What I have done is catalogue the key ideas, events, issues and personalities that helped to define and give shape to the party.

*The "Political Realignment" thesis*

[I]f the Canadian political situation continues to degenerate, and if the cause of
conservatism continues to suffer and decline, not for the lack of merit or a willingness on the part of the Canadian public to support modern conservative principles and policies, but rather because of unnecessary dissension among politicians and parties, the idea of establishing a wholly new political party committed to the social conservative position will find an ever increasing number of advocates and supporters among a concerned and aroused Canadian public [Manning, 1967:86].

Such was the view of former Alberta Social Credit Premier and later Senator Ernest Manning in his brief 1967 book (co-written by son Preston), Political Realignment: A Challenge to Thoughtful Canadians. The book exhorted Progressive Conservatives and their supporters to recast their polices and capitalize on their ideological distinctiveness to show their "Social Conservative position" (ibid.:63). Manning argued that with the end of John Diefenbaker's leadership, the Tories would likely and at their peril attempt to move ever closer to the centrist Liberals. What the party ought to have done was adopt positions and policies more distinct from the Liberals, rather than compete with them for the same policy territory. To achieve this distinction, the Tories would embrace two (ostensibly) dichotomous ideological visions: economic liberalism and social humanitarianism. Put another way, the party would embrace a liberal market economy and conservative social values while retaining the basic principles of the welfare state (also see Flanagan, 1995:11). In Ernest Manning's (op. cit.) own words:

The final product must successfully weld the humanitarian concerns of those with awakened social consciences to the economic persuasions of those with a firm conviction in the values of freedom of economic activity and enlightened private enterprise. If a label must be attached to this new ideology it might well be called the Social Conservative position [bold type original].

Political Realignment also argued for a national two-party system characterized by sharper, as opposed to blurred, ideologies between the two major parties. The suggested two-party model would in effect cleave somewhere at the centre: those to the right would fit into a single party
(ideally a rejuvenated Progressive Conservative party, but if that failed, a new party named Social Conservative); those on the left into the other (the Liberals or the NDP).

Twenty-five years later, Preston Manning would insist that *Political Realignment* "was written for a particular market and time which [has since] passed." That may be true, inasmuch as Manning's goals for Reform were more broadly populist, less ideologically explicit (also see Flanagan, 1995:Ch.4), and in the early going, driven by the regional demands of the West. The key objective of the book, to rationalize the amalgamation of two seemingly disparate ideas and recasting them as ideological "social conservatives," appears on its face to be a normative circle that could not have been squared. Yet, twenty years after its publication, the basic thesis of the book would be instrumental in helping get the Reform Party of Canada off the ground.17

**Major factors leading to the birth of the Reform Party**

i) *The 1980 national election and regional alienation*

Western regional alienation intensified when the Trudeau Liberals were in power. Whether it was Ottawa's fiscal and economic policies, agricultural policies, or even the policy of institutional bilingualism, enmity between the region and the Trudeau government grew as the years passed. Tensions rose even more in the aftermath of the February 1980 national election.

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16Personal interview with the author, 6 February, 1992. Hereafter, "Personal interview." In the October 29, 1990 issue of *Alberta Report* Manning defended the ideas in *Political Realignment* as "fundamentally sound." As we shall see later in this chapter, Manning once more revived the political realignment concept to argue in favour of a "united alternative." See Preston Manning, "Leadership for a New Generation." Address to Reform Assembly '98, pp. 6-14.

17As Dobbin (1991a:9) points out, "[i]n 1978, Ernest and Preston Manning made their [first] stab at 'political realignment'. Still active in the Senate, Ernest Manning convened a regular morning coffee club attended by a dozen or so Liberal and Conservative MPs from the West. This became the base...for the Movement for National Political Change. Its objective was identical to their 1967 effort."
For many westerners, the election's outcome cast into stark relief the structural biases inherent in the first-past-the-post electoral system which, when combined with "rep by pop," assures Central Canada's electoral hegemony. These factors allowed Trudeau to form a majority government despite winning only two seats in the West. To add insult to injury, the outcome of the election was made public before all the votes were cast. News organizations had declared a Liberal majority before many Westerners had a chance to mark their own ballots that evening. What Cairns (1988a:121) calls the "sectionalism" built into the single-member plurality electoral system worked to the West's evident disadvantage.

ii) The National Energy Program

As if the election outcome was not enough bad news, westerners' anger would shortly thereafter reach incendiary levels with the Liberals' unveiling of the National Energy Program (NEP) in October, 1980. NEP legislation was designed to accomplish several objectives: it would encourage the "Canadianization" of the energy (primarily the oil) industry; it would establish a made-in-Canada pricing limit somewhere between the high world (OPEC) rate and the low domestic rate; it would shift energy exploration away from the provinces to the federal lands of the North; and it would change the redistributive patterns of oil and gas revenues between the federal government, the provincial governments, and the producers (see Meisel, 1988:17-18; Gibbins and Arrison, 1995:22).

The NEP was immediately denounced by many westerners, especially in Alberta, where it was seen as excessively generous to manufacturing interests in Central Canada, but hostile to the oil production companies and the producing provinces. In a rather surreal televised address to the people of Alberta on 30 October 1980, Premier Peter Lougheed told viewers that the NEP
was "an outright attempt to take over the resources of this province, owned by each of you as Albertans...I think what's happened is that the Ottawa government has, without negotiation, without agreement, simply walked into our home and occupied the living room" (cited in Pratt, 1981:165-166).

That Ottawa had not levied similar taxes and surcharges on other forms of energy production, for example, on Quebec's large hydroelectric operations, was seen by westerners as the usual federal double standard in economic policy-making for "the regions." To Albertans especially, the NEP smacked of economic colonialism and a perversely asymmetrical form of federalism, if federalism proper at all. Not only that, but it appeared that Ottawa was even willing to run roughshod over the provisions in the BNA Act enshrining provincial control of natural resources.

"Eastern bastards, you can freeze in the dark!" proclaimed a bumper sticker popular throughout much of the West during the fall of 1980. In response to the "confiscatory" nature of the NEP, the Lougheed government initiated an immediate 15 percent reduction in oil outflows and withheld construction permits for pending energy megaprojects. Intense negotiations between the federal and Alberta governments ensued over the next eleven months. By 1 September 1981, the negotiations produced a modified pricing and taxation agreement. Though less onerous than before, what with a closer gap between the "made-in-Canada" price for oil (what the federal government had insisted upon) and the world price (sought by the producing provinces) in place, provincial revenue losses were enormous, with estimates of $50 billion and higher in Alberta
iii) Western separatism

The outcome of the 1980 federal election and the Trudeau government's imposition of the NEP helped to turn regional anger into a brief, but intense run of western separatism. Though it was in the end more flash than substance (and unlike Quebec separatism, it was comparatively devoid of substantive nationalist/ethnic underpinnings), and beset with internal squabbling, western separatism did convey to the rest of the country that "national disunity" was more than just a Quebec-Canada problem.

Ideologically speaking, western separatists tended to be on the far right, though they liked to view themselves as populist men of "the people." One of the movement's principal figures, Edmonton tractor parts dealer Elmer Knutson, established the Western Canada Federation (West-Fed) in the spring of 1980. During the next two years, Knutson travelled throughout the region selling his organization, though for the most part, his "success" was limited primarily to Alberta. Reluctant at first to call himself a separatist and his fledgling organization a political party (to him, West-Fed was more of umbrella organization for assorted western interests), Knutson's speeches, often laced with racist epithets, drew crowds averaging several hundred and more throughout late 1980 and early 1981.

The message Knutson conveyed was a potent, though unstructured mix of right-wing anger, defiance, frustration and despair. His audiences were told in no uncertain terms how the

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18 The $50 billion amount was the estimate given by the Alberta government (also see Gibbins and Arrison, 1995:22). Others, particularly those Westerners on the right, including Preston Manning (1992:121), argue that it was closer to $100 billion. The latter sum was also the figure quoted in a study by two University of Calgary economists (see Mansell and Schlenker, 1990).
West would never get a fair deal in Confederation from Ottawa because Central Canada -- in particular, "the French" in Quebec and in Parliament -- determined national policy. So long as Trudeau and the Liberals remained in power, Ottawa would always regard the West as a resource hinterland to be plundered at will. Knutson's list of complaints grew as time went on. He was also telling his audiences how freight rates and protective tariffs forced westerners to pay higher prices for manufactured goods produced in the East while their own resources were sold off at bargain-basement prices; how supposedly federal institutions like the Senate would never be reformed so as to allow the West some input into national decision-making commensurate with its population and economic clout; and how state-driven policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism were thinly-veiled attempts by "the French" in Ottawa to undermine the West's Judeo-Christian social values. Despite such far-fetched conspiracy theories, Knutson possessed a certain skill in regaling crowds with tales of the federal government's sinister exploitation of the region. And for a time, West-Fed's membership numbers grew considerably. By the end of November 1980, Knutson declared that West-Fed had 30,000 members, though that tally was never substantiated.

The other major separatist organization was the Western Canada Concept (WCC). The WCC was an offshoot of Victoria lawyer Doug Christie's older (and failed) separatist vehicle, the Committee for Western Independence. Christie, who had previously earned something of a

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20 There was a number of smaller organizations and fringe political parties as well.
reputation on the West Coast,\textsuperscript{21} was also drawing large crowds (especially in Edmonton and Calgary) anxious to hear him speak to the virtues of an independent West (also see Harrington, 1981:29). Christie eventually faced discord within his party, most of it coming from the Alberta contingent, where a disproportionately large percentage of the WCC's membership was located. That his home base was in Victoria was held against him. By October 1981, he was ousted as leader. And in March of 1982, with its organizational structure in tatters, next to no financial support, and most of his former supporters now having jumped to the rival WCC, Knutson pulled the plug on West-Fed.\textsuperscript{22}

The most dramatic manifestation of western separatism was the provincial by-election held in the south-central Alberta riding of Olds-Didsbury on 17 February 1982. WCC candidate Gordon Kesler (who was also on the party's executive after Christie was ousted) won the riding handily. The outcome shocked the nation. Kesler's win gave western separatism a belated and much-needed boost. Though that boost was to be surprisingly short-lived, one interested observer in particular saw the whole matter, not as something to be avoided and/or condemned out of hand, but as a potential opportunity to help test a thesis he and his father had developed fifteen years earlier.

Edmonton business consultant Preston Manning did not know Gordon Kesler personally,

\textsuperscript{21}In 1979 BC election, Christie ran under the separatist banner in the suburban Victoria riding of Esquimalt-Port Renfrew. He polled less than 300 votes. During the 1980s and 1990s, though still a dedicated separatist, Christie would become better known as defence counsel for several neo-nazis, including Ernst Zundel of Toronto. Today, his separatist ambitions appear to be mostly confined to a website featuring "The Western Separatist Papers": essays and commentary from an assortment of individuals on the far- and the racist right. The website address is: www.westcan.org

\textsuperscript{22}Also see Alberta Report, March 22, 1982, p. 8.
but he was acquainted with Kesler's campaign manager (and former WCC leadership hopeful) Howard Thompson. Manning was invited by Thompson to sit in on a WCC executive meeting shortly after Kesler took his seat in the Alberta legislature. He wrote:

...there were six people at the meeting. I asked them, "Is your advocacy of separatism simply a tactic to draw attention to western grievances, or is it a genuine objective that you intend to pursue as such?" Right away, the great weakness of the WCC manifested itself. Three of them said separatism was only a tactic to get attention; the other three said it was a real goal to be vigorously pursued. One man summed it up by saying that advocating separatism wasn't much of a tactic unless your opponents thought you meant it. After that, I had little contact with the WCC, although I am pleased that many of its members, those whose real desire was for a more fair and balanced Canadian confederation rather than a separate western Canada, have since seen fit to join the Reform Party of Canada [Manning, 1992:91-92].

As Manning had discovered, the WCC, in fact the entire western separatist movement, was policy and image poor, organizationally weak, and riven with internal strife, much of it over leadership. It seemed to Manning that the separatists were not looking for ways to solve the disputes between the region and Ottawa; they were looking for ways to exploit them. Knutson, Christie, et. al. could not offer suggestions for a solution because they were not interested in finding a solution in the first place. By the time he met with Thompson, Manning had surmised, correctly as it turned out, that many WCC members were not really separatists so much as they were alienated conservatives who felt excluded from national decision-making.

The separatist movement was not built to last. In the Alberta provincial election of 2 November 1982, Kesler and the rest of the WCC slate failed to win a single seat. For all intents and purposes, save for the odd attempt to revive it afterward, western separatism died with that

\[23\] Kesler resigned as leader shortly after the election. The WCC would remain leaderless (and rudderless) for nearly two years after that. In late August 1984 the party membership, now a fraction of its size compared with its 1980-82 heyday, chose "hard-liner" F.J. "Jack" Ramsay of
election. Preston Manning at least, profited from the movement’s demise. With his willingness to meet anyone who exhibited political motivation and tactical skills, he had in time established the beginnings of a small but potent base from which the Reform Party would emerge five years hence.

In late 1982 and early 1983, the federal Conservatives’ biggest liability, at least from Manning’s point of view, was leader Joe Clark. More of a "Red Tory" on his party’s left than a traditional conservative, Clark appeared ill-suited to capitalize on the public’s increasing disaffection with the Liberals. At a time when right-wing parties and leaders elsewhere were turning more and more to policies inspired by New Right movements in Britain and the United States, the Tories appeared to be headed in the opposite direction. To many right-wingers, with Clark at the Tory helm, Canada had no legitimate, ideologically conservative party at the federal level at all.

When Clark failed to achieve the grassroots support he had thought necessary to continue as leader at the party’s policy convention in early 1983, he called for a leadership vote to be held later that year. In September 1983, Brian Mulroney was chosen to lead the party. Right-wingers, westerners among them, now relished the likelihood of their revitalized party ousting the Grits and by extension, reviving the West’s fortunes at the national level. With Mulroney at the helm it was thought, the party’s chance to form a majority government was now higher than

Camrose, a former RCMP constable and after that, a business consultant. Ramsay managed to keep the WCC together for several more years. By the end of the decade, when the WCC and western separatism in general were reduced mostly to a memory, Ramsay would be among those (former) Alberta separatists who, at Preston Manning’s behest, would join the Reform Party. He was first elected to Parliament in the riding of Crowfoot in 1993. He won the riding again in 1997.
at any time since the "Dief Sweep" of 1958.

THE MULRONEY TORIES AND THE REFORM PARTY, 1987-93

The literature on the Mulroney Tories and their years in power is extensive. There is no need here for a detailed narrative examining the Progressive Conservative's contribution to right-wing politics or to the rise of the Reform Party. Suffice it to say at this juncture that the western right's jubilation with the Mulroney Tories' crushing electoral victory in 1984 was to be short-lived. In the immediate aftermath of the vote however, the Tory victory was something of a political catharsis for the West. For "western Canadians could [now] test how well parliamentary institutions worked not in the worst of times, under the Liberal governments of Pierre Trudeau, but rather in the best of times under the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney" (Gibbins, 1988:89). Though its debut was several years behind similar events in Britain and the United States, the Canadian right, including its large western contingent, now had their opportunity to influence national politics as never before.

For all his success in leading the party and conducting an effective election campaign, the biggest question for western right-wingers was Mulroney himself. That he rallied his party to a vigorous defence of francophone rights in Manitoba against a recalcitrant provincial Conservative government and a largely hostile public had not gone unnoticed by westerners (also see Smiley, 1987:184). And unlike Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan, who appeared deeply committed to conservative ideas, Mulroney, much like his predecessor Joe Clark, seemed more

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24 For example, see Resnick (1984); Brimelow (1988); Cooper, et. al. (1988); Gollner and Salée (1988); Gairdner (1990); Stark (1992); Harrison (1995).
comfortable inhabiting the moveable centre of brokerage politics and coalition-building. What's more, though an anglophone by birth, Mulroney was a completely bicultural, bilingual Quebecker -- ascriptive features not lost on APEC as we saw in the previous chapter. Despite his life-long connection to the Tories, his background was bound to exert at least some influence on policy. Gibbins (1988[a]:345) makes an important observation in this regard:

The ideological foundations of the national Conservative party...were shaped almost exclusively by the English Canadian political experience. Mulroney's Quebec background, then, did not expose him to the Conservative traditions of Macdonald and Diefenbaker. He was unconstrained by his party's past because, in the Quebec setting, his party had no past. He was thus able to fashion the Conservative party in his own image without reference to party norms and traditions. Nor was he constrained by his fellow Conservative MPs from Quebec whose roots within the party were even shallower than his own and whose exposure to English Canadian Conservatism and conservatism was even briefer. In short...the combination of Mulroney's leadership and the results of the 1984 election cast the Progressive Conservative party adrift from whatever ideological moorings its past and traditions had provided...

[T]here has been little evidence to date that the Progressive Conservatives have embraced neoconservatism, that the ideological spectrum has shifted to the right, or that the terms of political debate are much different than they were in the sunset years of the Trudeau government.

Mulroney's reversals on issues like patronage, the "sacred trust" of social programs, free trade and so forth quickly gained him a reputation for insincerity (also see Clarke, et. al.:1991:99). Furthermore, his devotion to, indeed, his party's strengthening of, official bilingualism, immigration and multiculturalism -- unpopular policies for many conservatives -- was a source of friction. Though a good many of his social and fiscal policies did tilt in the direction of market principles (Gollner and Salée, 1988:20), it soon began to dawn on right-wingers that Mulroney was a pragmatist and a coalition-builder, and not an ideologically principled politician.

By the summer of 1986, western conservatives were complaining publicly that they were
without a credible party at the federal level. Mulroney's over-attentiveness to Quebec, combined with his government's slow pace dismantling the NEP and his refusal to entertain meaningful Senate reform, strongly reinforced the growing view that, despite the large western presence at the cabinet table (not to mention the backbenches), the Tory government was as driven by the interests of Central Canada as were their Liberal predecessors under Trudeau. For Manning, Mulroney's problems provided the opportunity for exploitation: "...a political vacuum began to open up, capable of calling into being another populist movement in the western reform tradition" (Manning, op. cit.:126).

That vacuum would expand considerably within a short period of time. Two initiatives undertaken by the Mulroney government gave Manning and other western conservatives all the room they needed. The first of these was what became known as the "CF-18 affair." On 31 October 1986, the government decided that the lucrative maintenance contract for its fleet of new CF-18 fighter jets was to go to Canadair of Montreal, even though Bristol Aerospace of Winnipeg submitted a cheaper, and according to a panel of 75 experts, a technologically superior bid (also see Campbell and Pal, 1989). The government decided that awarding the contract to the Montreal-based firm was more in the "national interest," given that Bristol Aerospace was subsidiary of Britain's Rolls-Royce company, and that whatever technological expertise was to be gained would be owned by the parent company. No amount of rationalizing or Ottawa's subsequent attempts at fence-mending would alter many westerners' perceptions that even a

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26Though as it turned out, Ottawa had to purchase the technology for an additional $30 million.
Conservative government could not escape the pull of Quebec's demands at the expense of their own. "The CF-18 decision also showed westerners exactly how much influence their PC members and cabinet ministers had in the new government when push came to shove" (Manning, op. cit.:127).

The second initiative (though by this time, the groundwork for the initial Reform conference was well underway) was the Meech Lake accord. On 30 April 1987, the ten premiers and the federal government came to a basic agreement on amending the constitution. Such amendments included changes to immigration with respect to provincial concerns; provincial input into Supreme Court appointments; changes to the amending formulae as enumerated in the Constitution Act, 1982; and, among other things, future consideration of Senate reform. The most contentious part of Meech was the issue of constitutional recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society." The proposal to entrench Quebec's distinctiveness in the constitution angered many westerners and in their view was more evidence that Mulroney was overly-sensitive to the demands of his home province at the expense of the others (also see Campbell and Pal, 1991:76-80). Critical of the western premiers for allowing themselves to be "snookered" by Mulroney (and by Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa), Manning (ibid.:87-88) declared that "[t]he dearth of leadership in western Canada on these constitutional issues in the mid-1980s gave added impetus to my own interest in a new political voice."

*The Reform Party emerges*

*Political Realignment* (51) made the point that "[o]nce the major political parties have converged to the point where they are distinguishable from each other only on the grounds of superficialities and the personalities operating them, the period of inadequacy has begun." While
it would be unwise to apply wholesale the internal logic of that book to events twenty years later, something akin to party system "inadequacy" must have been running through the mind of Preston Manning and others during late 1986 and early 1987.

In the late autumn of 1986 with the controversial CF-18 decision still fresh, Manning and others set out to explore whether the existing federal parties could meet western demands, or whether a new reform-oriented "movement" (not necessarily a political party) might be a more useful alternative. With $50,000 in seed money from retired accountant Francis Winspear, advice from academics and policy experts, and the editorial and promotional resources of the Byfield's Report newsmagazines, it was decided that a "Western Assembly on Canada's Economic and Political Future," coordinated by the newly-formed "Reform Association of Canada," would be held in a downtown Vancouver hotel on 29-31 May, 1987.

In the first week of April, Byfield's newsmagazines ran promotional advertisements for the Assembly and Manning was chosen as chairman of a six-person steering committee. All three major federal parties and western premiers were invited to make presentations to the delegates; none of them accepted the invitations. Prime Minister Mulroney was concerned about the event. He suspected that it was both a public relations stunt to make his government appear insensitive to western concerns and ultimately a project to establish a new political party. For their part, the premiers regarded it more or less as a non-event catering to what remained of the western separatist fringe. The national media ignored it completely (see Dabbs, op. cit.:122).

The theme for the Assembly was expressed in the slogan (coined by popular Report columnist and steering committee member Ralph Hedlin), "The West Wants In." As Manning (ibid.:134-135) points out, the slogan was invoked to make it clear "that what we were doing was
not intended to revive western separatism but to establish more fairness and balance in the Canadian federation." So, with 100 official delegates from Alberta, 58 from BC, 38 from Saskatchewan and Manitoba, 100 delegates-at-large (a slim majority of all delegates were disgruntled Tories), along with an assortment of observers and invited guests, the Assembly was underway.

Delegates were charged with carrying out two tasks. The first was to develop an "Agenda for Change" outlining what the West required in order to improve its economic and social position in Confederation. The second task was to decide on an "appropriate vehicle" for accommodating that agenda. The options were basically two: convince one of the old-line parties to pay more attention to the West's demands, or create a new western-based federal party.

In what some regard as among the finest speeches of his career -- and the spark which would lead to the establishment of the Reform Party -- Preston Manning delivered an impressive dissertation on the history of populist-reform movements in Canada. Invoking a gallery of ideologically-disparate, but reform-oriented politicians, from Louis Riel, to Henry Wise Wood, J.S. Woodsworth, Agnes Macphail, Ernest Manning, Tommy Douglas, W.A.C. Bennett and others, Manning argued in favour of "a new party in the Reform Tradition."27 There were four major reasons, Manning continued, for choosing the new party option:

1. Because the West is in deep trouble economically and structurally, yet no federal political party makes western concerns and interests its top priority.
2. Because the federal PCs are in decline all across the West, and this situation is creating a dangerous political vacuum.
3. Because the federal Liberals and NDP as presently constituted are inappropriate vehicles for representing western Canada.

27E. Preston Manning, "Choosing a political vehicle to represent the West." Reprinted in O'Neill (1991:166-173).
4. Because the federal Parliament, as dominated by the central Canadian parties, is lacking in leaders and vision, and requires an influx of fresh blood and new ideas through a strong new competitor at the polls.  

As it turned out, the Prime Minister's hunch was correct: largely on the strength of Manning's speech, the Assembly cast his party in the worst possible light and paved the way for the formation of the Reform Party of Canada. The new party was formally launched in Winnipeg in early November that same year, with Manning acclaimed as party leader.

At the Winnipeg Assembly, a young economist and member of the NCC, Stephen Harper, delivered a speech that would set the ideological tone for the new party. The speech, essentially a critique of the systemic, regional and structural biases inherent in Canadian federalism, was a hit with the delegates. Here is an excerpt:

Canada originally meant only southern Quebec and southern Ontario, and, in an essentially unicameral system of national government, that view has been incorporated. As many others have pointed out, Canada is a rare example of a regionally diverse country with no serious form of regional representation. In addition to this, around the National Policy, the welfare state, and the Quebec question has grown a highly centralized political culture which is inherently and righteously biased against western Canada in its basic values and rhetoric. Whenever challenged, it wraps itself in a flag called "Canadian identity," "Canadian nationalism," "national unity," or the "national interest." For example, protection of the American-owned automobile industry in Oshawa under the Auto Pact is in the "national interest." But the American-owned energy industry in Calgary should be subject to "Canadianization." Foreign investment

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28ibid.

Manning was acclaimed leader after a bitter controversy erupted between him and rival leadership candidate Stan Roberts. The feud centred on alleged irregularities in delegate registration and the management of funds. Roberts requested that a leadership vote be delayed for six months. When that request was refused by the interim executive, Roberts withdrew his candidacy, claiming that the new party was being taken over by Albertans and right-wing fanatics. Roberts later lost the Reform nomination for the BC federal riding of Saanich and the Islands. On 30 August 1990, Roberts passed away suddenly from a brain tumour. See Manning (op. cit.:152-153); Sharpe and Braid (1992:25-28); O'Neill (op. cit.:52).
is labelled "American economic colonialism" when, to Westerners, it is rather a source of funds outside the centralized and concentrated Canadian banking system. The whole concept of "Canadian culture" no longer means the values and lifestyles of Canadians in a diverse country. Instead it means the protection of narrow arts and media interest groups in Toronto. Unilingualism in Quebec is a legitimate desire -- maitres chez nous. In Manitoba, it is "redneck" and "racist."\textsuperscript{30}

\textit{The new party's "Reform Tradition" constitution}

The constitution adopted by the delegates at the founding convention stressed the party's commitment to attaining regional equality "and more responsible and representative government in Canada" which, as the document went on to say, was part of the country's "Reform Tradition" dating back to LaFontaine and Baldwin. The constitution was drafted by Calgary lawyer Robert Muir and annotated by Preston Manning (also see O'Neill, op. cit.:40). Prominently included in the preamble was the statement declaring that "...it is fitting that such a party should be born out of the discontents and frustrated aspirations of Western Canadians, with the immediate aim of bringing Western Canada more fully and completely into Confederation."

One unusual feature of the constitution was its so-called "sunset clause." Reflecting Manning's conviction that protest parties often outlive their usefulness -- rather like Alberta's Social Credit after 1971 -- subsection 11 (c) declared

\begin{quote}
This Constitution shall become null and void, and the Party shall cease to exist, on November 1st, 2000 A.D., unless this Constitution is re-enacted in its present or amended form by a two-thirds majority of the delegates to a Party Assembly held before that date.
\end{quote}

To recent observers, the year of Reform's dissolution and its subsequent rebirth as the Canadian Alliance uncannily reflected the provisions of the sunset clause insisted upon by Manning thirteen years later.

\textsuperscript{30}Speech reprinted in O'Neill (op. cit.:46). Harper's mention of Manitoba was in reference to Mulroney's support of francophone rights there in 1983.
years previously.

On the issue of party leader, the constitution adopted the federal Conservative's practice of holding a membership vote on a leadership assembly after every federal election. Manning (op. cit.:148) points out that the constitution reflected the "populist tone" of the party and "laid a heavy responsibility on constituency associations to recruit and assess candidates, rather than allowing this process to be driven solely by the personal ambitions of potential candidates."

**Putting things to the test: the 1988 and 1989 elections**

In the 1988 election, the Reform Party fielded 72 candidates in western Canada. The party's strategy was to highlight the Tory "betrayal" of western Canadian interests. Naturally, the CF-18 affair was the centrepiece, accompanied by the Meech Lake accord, and the government's new amendments to the Official languages Act. As Reformers were in favour of the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States -- by far the dominant national issue in the campaign -- they chose to say next to nothing about it. This might have made some sense politically, but in the larger strategic context of important election issues, it pushed Reform to the sidelines during the campaign.

There was one issue at the time that did attract a fair amount of publicity for Reform -- unwanted publicity to be more specific. It revolved around the short-lived, but controversial candidacy of Doug Collins in the Vancouver-area riding of Capilano-Howe Sound. Collins, a journalist by trade, was perhaps best known for his unrelenting attacks on non-traditional (ie. non-white) immigration to Canada and for his disparaging remarks directed towards Jews. As the author of such books as *Immigration: The Destruction of English Canada* (1979) Collins had a reputation for indulging in the same conspiracy theories as did West-Fed and the WCC earlier
in the decade.

Collins was running unopposed for the Reform nomination in his riding. Manning, sensing that the media had already fallen into the habit of dismissing the party as a collection of white, middle-aged bigots, told Collins that he could not accept his candidacy. Manning offered to compensate Collins for whatever campaign expenses he had incurred up to that time. In addition, Manning assured Collins that if he chose to run as an independent, Reform would not field a candidate in the riding. When Collins refused the offer, Manning informed him that his nomination would stand only if he would sign a resolution condemning racial discrimination. Collins refused that too, then dropped out of the race altogether (Dyson, 1994:56). Resignation or no, the damage to Reform’s reputation had been done.

Though Manning would remain sensitive to such criticism throughout Reform’s existence (often insisting that the media was tougher on his party than on the others), frequently re-asserting his belief that the party was no home for those with bigoted viewpoints, the fact remained that a number of people with such views, prospective candidates and ordinary grassroots supporters alike, would find their way into the party. Since the Collins episode and because of the party’s tough positions on bilingualism, multiculturalism and immigration, Manning had always known that those with extremist views would be attracted to Reform. "Drawn like wasps to a jam jar" was one of his oft-repeated similes for those on the far fringes of the right who made it into the party.31

31Personal interview.
Though they failed to win a seat in the general election, in a March 1989 by-election held in the Alberta riding of Beaver River, Reform candidate Deborah Grey won the party's first-ever Commons seat. In October that same year, in a province-wide senatorial election held in Alberta, Calgary businessman Stan Waters won under the Reform banner.

Mulroney's second ministry (a reduced majority) provided western right-wingers with more reasons to oppose his government. Bill C-62, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the massive follow-up to the failed Meech Lake constitutional accord, and the referendum-driven Charlottetown accord, had all engendered massive opposition in the West. Manning was convinced that the passage of the GST hurt Tory support in Ontario. Thus at the April 1991 Saskatoon Assembly, and at his urging, the party voted to expand into Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Reform's western right-wing populism was attempting to become right-wing populism for the rest of Canada.

Reform's "Blue Book" platforms, 1990-98: conservatism or populism?

From Reform's Founding Assembly came a draft platform of policies and principles.

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32 On a nation-wide scale, Reform attracted 2 percent of the 1988 vote. In the West where the Reform vote was contained, the breakdown by province looked this way (total votes in parentheses): BC -- 5 percent (75,000); Alberta -- 15 percent (178,000); Saskatchewan -- 0.8 percent (3,900); Manitoba -- 3.3 percent (17,700). In the Alberta riding of Yellowhead, where he ran second against Tory incumbent Joe Clark, Manning attracted 29 percent of the vote.

33 Mulroney did not appoint Waters to the Senate until June 1990.

34 Though for his part, Manning took a somewhat equivocal stand on the Charlottetown accord, at least in the early going (also see Flanagan, op. cit.:101-103). In time, the party dropped its opposition to the GST.

35 This was also the Assembly at which William Gairdner was featured as a guest speaker. As noted in Chapter Two, Gairdner's best-selling 1990 book, The Trouble With Canada, was harshly critical of non-white, especially Chinese, immigrants to Canada, and was regarded by many as racist. After the Saskatoon Assembly, Manning severed official ties with Gairdner.
Included among its provisions were strategies for institutional reform, especially of the Senate; democratic reforms, such as the use of referenda and recall; constitutional reform by way of a citizens' constituent assembly and economic reform, the centrepiece of which demanded that the West (and later other regions) be treated more equitably by Ottawa. The draft platform would become the basis of more comprehensive platform statements. These were subsequently referred to as "Blue Books."

What is contained in the Blue Books reads as a mixture of populist decentralization proposals mixed with market-inspired reforms of the federal system and of government institutions. Of course, scholars with different political views and approaches interpret its provisions differently,\footnote{Compare, for example, Laycock's (1994:224-238) critical examination of Blue Book provisions as evidence of Reform's policy inconsistencies with Flanagan's (1995:12-14 and passim) more sanguine interpretation of the Blue Book as an ideologically unstructured guide the contents of which Manning often chose to ignore in many of his public pronouncements.} thus making any facile description of its contents or its ideological foundation impossible. While the right-populist, economic-liberal cast of the Blue Books is the most obvious among its characteristics, the policies often contain qualifiers, making them, in Flanagan's (op. cit.:12) words, examples of "dialectical verbal compromise." In other words, and this is typical of both party and leader, ambiguities abound.

Take, for example, Reform's proposals for the Supreme Court of Canada in the 1990 Statement of Policies and Principles (the successor to the original 1988 platform). Subsection 'A' declares that the party "supports more stringent and more public ratification procedures for Supreme Court Justices in light of the powers our legislators are handing to the courts" (p. 7). In addition to the unproven, but among right-wingers increasingly popular, assertion that

\[\text{\footnote{Compare, for example, Laycock's (1994:224-238) critical examination of Blue Book provisions as evidence of Reform's policy inconsistencies with Flanagan's (1995:12-14 and passim) more sanguine interpretation of the Blue Book as an ideologically unstructured guide the contents of which Manning often chose to ignore in many of his public pronouncements.}}\]
politicians were routinely passing the decision-making process over to the judiciary, the gist of the section implies that some kind of unspecified public involvement for choosing Supreme Court judges would (somehow) rein in a wayward bench.

In the area of economic reform, subsection 'A' of the "Industrial Development and Diversification" provisions states: "The Reform Party supports depoliticizing economic decision-making in Canada through the long-term elimination of grants, subsidies" and so on (p. 11). This implies that Ottawa ought to be removed as much as possible from the economic sphere, since whatever it does with respect to economic decision-making is invariably tainted by political (including regional) considerations which in turn, is corrosive to the free market. Subsection 'D' however, declares that "The Reform Party supports directing physical infrastructure priorities to the regions which have historically suffered underdevelopment as a result of federal interference in the free market" (ibid.).

In the area of social reform, party policy is more ambiguous. There is a suggestion that universality ought to be discontinued in the field of publicly-funded social programs (the 1990 Blue Book does not identify particular programs). There appears to be a political strategy beyond right-wing opposition to supposedly "wasteful" government spending at work here. For ending universality on social programs would likely leave specific -- what Reformers would call "special interest" -- groups as the major recipients, and these groups would likely not attract widespread middle-class sympathies if programs were dismantled. In theory at any rate, this might make it easier to reduce or even dismantle the social safety net provided by government. Should the principle of universality left intact however, a Reform government would have been placed in the more awkward position of launching attacks against "the people," that is to say, against the
same middle class it claims to have represented (also see McBride and Shields, op. cit.:26).

In any case, subsection 'A' on social reform says: "The Reform Party opposes the view that universal social programs run by bureaucrats are the best and only way to care for the poor, the sick, the old, and the young" (p. 20). Subsection 'D' demands greater "financial sustainability in social policy over the long term" (ibid.). As Flanagan (op. cit.:13) points out, this is a "particularly non-conservative...approach to social programs. It wants them to be 'financially sustainable', but does not offer a coherent critique of the fundamental flaws in Canada’s monopolistic state programs...". Furthermore, "[o]utside the economic sphere, Manning's conservatism is even harder to pin down. The Blue Book is silent about the Crown, and Manning evinces no interest in the subject, even though it is prominent in conservative thought in the British tradition" (ibid.). That Manning has no apparent interest in British conservative traditions is not all that remarkable, since whatever right-wing traditions he draws from are more firmly connected to US-style populism and liberalism.

The most accessible of Blue Book provisions and, from a strategic standpoint likely the most attractive from the outlook of populism, were those on political reform. The thrust of these provisions was not exactly right-wing, but rather a mélange of political ideas clustering around a populist impulse. Allowing more free votes in the House and in caucus, instituting a recall mechanism for MPs, providing for binding referenda on certain issues, and supporting voters' initiatives (through plebiscite) were its major components. Probably the most controversial of these reforms was the binding referendum for determining policy on "moral issues" and on other matters that had the potential to "alter the basic social fabric such as immigration, language, and
I now turn to the issue of Reform's attempts at bringing referenda/plebiscitarian forms of democracy to bear on the decision-making calculations of its members of parliament. One incident in particular helps form the basis of my examination. I address that incident shortly.

MORAL ISSUES, VOTER INPUT, AND VOTING IN PARLIAMENT

In all editions of the Blue Book (1990 to 1998) the two "moral matters" singled out for binding national referenda have been abortion and capital punishment. As noted, this was among the most controversial of Blue Book provisions, for it showed quite plainly the tension between populists (like Manning) and dedicated moral conservatives (like REAL Women) for whom such issues transcend majoritarian decision-making. Though the wording of the section has changed somewhat over the course of various Blue Book editions, the processes involved remained the same. The following is taken from the 1998 edition:

C. The Reform Party shall work toward enabling legislation for a binding national referendum on each of capital punishment and abortion.

D. The following process will be employed by Reform Members of Parliament on issues designated by the Reform Party Assembly to be "Issues of Personal Conscience" -- that is, on issues where there exists among Canadians a sharp divergence of intensely-held, value-based personal convictions:

1. Reform M.P.s will state clearly and publicly their personal views and beliefs on the subject;
2. they will ask their constituents to develop, to express, and to debate their own views on the matter;
3. following such a process, M.P.s will seek the consensus of the constituency on the issue;
4. on related government legislation in the House of Commons, Reform M.P.s

will vote in accordance with the expressed will of their constituents [p. 21].

Several impressions stand out here. First, identifying (only) two interrelated "hot-button" issues for moral conservatives gave some indication of where the party and the leader stood with respect to their positions on them; it also conveyed the relative importance of these issues for right-wingers. Second, though the majority of Reform MPs were personally prolife and pro-capital punishment, the use of referenda to determine how they would vote in Parliament projected the appearance of members performing their duties as authentic delegates for their constituents. For too long, Reformers argued, MPs in other parties, soon after taking their seats in Parliament, would become "Otta-washed," that is, they would embrace their party's position on all issues irrespective of what their own constituents wanted. Third, the MP-as-delegate framework helped to convey the right-populist assumption that, when provided with the opportunity to exercise their own judgement, "the people" would invariably choose the conservative path of moral traditionalism.

There is of course every possibility that the majority of constituents might vote against the preferences of their MP, forcing the latter to vote against her/his beliefs. For some Reform MPs that would put them in an uncomfortable situation. Reform's first MP Deborah Grey has stated that, if forced by her constituents to cast a vote on an abortion issue contrary to her own personal (prolife) beliefs, she likely would have no other choice but to resign her seat afterward (also see Sharpe and Braid, op. cit.:145). Grey explained her position this way:

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38 Earlier editions of the Blue Book also provided that, in the absence of a consensus in a constituency, "Members of Parliament shall vote in accordance with their publicly-recorded statements on the issue." See for example The Blue Book, 1991, p. 39. Significantly, while it retained the use of binding citizen referenda, the new Canadian Alliance Declaration of Policy (January, 2000) at section 72, makes no mention of specific issues.
I'm an Evangelical politician. But I was also an Evangelical high school teacher. My faith touches everything I do. My life is belonging to principles and a spiritual journey that I'm on and everything I do affects that. It doesn't make me this wild-eyed, radical creature.
I [would] have to vote with the majority consensus. That's where the pain comes in. And if that is too painful for me to do, then I would probably have to choose not to run again. To me it's that serious a thing.39

This threat may not be qualify as emotional blackmail for political ends, but it comes close. The underlying message conveyed here is transparent enough: should you vote contrary to my own personal beliefs, I will no longer be your representative in Parliament. From a basic practical perspective, resigning in the wake of an unwanted referendum outcome could have the (unwanted) effect of reducing the number of conservatives in Parliament.

For his part (and sounding rather Burkean), Manning (op. cit.:108) hinted strongly that, should he be forced to vote against his personal beliefs, he might very well follow Grey's example and resign, too:

Obviously, if my constituents continually forced me to vote against my better judgment, we would soon come to a parting of the ways. On the other hand, my willingness to represent their view in the House, even when it differed from my own, would give me an opportunity to present my position and to gain a hearing I would not have received had I indicated I would vote my own view regardless of what constituents wanted.
To the charge...that the Reform Party believed matters of right and wrong (moral issues) could be determined by referendum, I answered that this was not the case. Obviously majorities can be and have been wrong. All a referendum tells you is what position a majority (rightly or wrongly) is prepared to support, so that you can tell what course of action has sufficient public support to be implemented. And if a majority makes a wrong decision through a referendum, then at least it can be held morally accountable. On the other hand, if some "principled" minority is always permitted to make moral judgments on behalf of minorities, the majority cannot be held accountable for the course pursued.

Threatening to resign because a majority of constituents disagree with your own personal views conveys a curious commitment to populist democracy. The message that it sends is in fact anathema to populism: vote according to my views or risk losing my services as your Member of Parliament. Fortunately for them, neither Manning nor Grey had to confront such a situation.

But with the party's 52-seat breakthrough in the 1993 election, the potentially thorny issue of principle versus populism was bound to present itself sooner or later.

Barney and Laycock (1995) have analyzed two Reform referenda, both of them held in 1994. The first was North Vancouver MP Ted White's Referendum '94. This was a telephone referendum to determine public and MPs' opinions on the trial and sentencing of young offenders. On the basis of the results, he would subsequently draft and table a private member's bill.

"Referendum '94 was an exercise carried out in observance of the principle of 'universal suffrage', rather than merely a poll of randomly selected opinions" (ibid.:5). Public response to the poll was at best tepid. Approximately 6 percent of registered voters in North Vancouver participated. Only 16 of 295 MPs and 44 of 700 North Vancouver students cast "televotes " (p. 6).

The second referendum was held in October; it was a more ambitious undertaking, called Canada Speaks. Like the North Vancouver exercise, Canada Speaks was a national telephone poll; it also included a panel discussion of the results broadcast from Calgary. The questions

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40In a breakdown of the vote in the Charlottetown accord referendum of 26 October 1992, a majority of voters in Manning's own riding of Calgary Southwest voted for the accord. Of course, Manning had yet to be elected to Parliament, so resigning (or threatening to do so) was not an issue at that time. As for Grey, once elected, she did poll her riding on the abortion issue. A majority of respondents were prolife.

41That is, until federal Justice Minister Allan Rock tabled amendments of his own. Thereafter, the telephone vote would be used to gauge Rock's amendments.
asked dealt with national unity, Quebec separation, federalism, and how political leadership should be structured. Barney and Laycock (p.7; also see Appendix) write that Canada Speaks was more or less an exercise in confirming Reform's own policy positions. Again, as in the North Vancouver exercise, the numbers were low: 9,406 responses were recorded nationwide. What's more, an overwhelming majority (into the 90 percent range) supported Reform's own policy preferences with respect to the questions (ibid.).

Barney and Laycock (p. 10) question the objective of both exercises, at least inasmuch as they were touted by Reform as exemplars of populist input. They argue that what the televotes actually set out to do was reinforce Reform's strategy of restricting policy debates in the public sphere and squeeze out those so-called "special interests" in the process. As for the political utility of the actual exercises themselves:

...here we have a high-profile vehicle for the raising of issues pursuant to the Reform party's overall project, under the guise of soliciting public input and encouraging citizen empowerment, with no danger of eliciting responses that do anything other than vindicate Reform's previously-established positions on these issues....Reform's selection of issues and questions is designed for the construction of problems to justify solutions to which they are already ideologically committed [p.11].

As Barney and Laycock make clear, these two exercises in teledemocracy were pretty much self-serving. However, and to reiterate a point made earlier in the chapter, we ought not infer from these local and ultimately self-serving attempts at popular consultation that a) referenda conducted properly and impartially are similarly problematic, or b) that Reform's commitment as government to holding referenda on certain issues would be as equally suspect with respect to the results. Local -- and largely bogus -- efforts do not necessarily indicate that the policy is

42See page 185, above.
I turn now to another difficult, but related, strategic and conceptual issue for Reform, one that brought the party nearly to the brink of internal chaos.

Reform nearly implodes: the caucus, "special rights," and Bill C-33

The particular incident examined here was among the most corrosive the Reform Party had ever faced and it draws our attention to a cluster of problems facing the party, primarily leadership or lack thereof, party policy, the rights and role of individual MPs versus caucus solidarity, the clash of populist and conservative moral principles, and the voices of constituents. At the centre of all this was the Liberal government's Bill C-33. The purpose of the bill was to amend Canada's Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination. After debate following second reading of the bill, a free vote in the House of Commons was to be held on 1 May 1996.

Addressing the House at the commencement of second reading, Justice Minister Allan Rock explained that the proposed amendment only "applies to the provision of goods and services and to employment in the federal public service and in undertakings regulated by federal legislation." At that time all provinces, with the exception of Alberta and PEI, had made similar amendments to their own human rights acts. Thus, 90 percent of the Canadian population was already covered by similar rights legislation. Furthermore, the Ontario Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada had already rendered decisions that "read in" to section 15 of the Charter equality rights protection for gays and lesbians. Turning to address a central concern of conservative opponents to the bill, Rock argued that the amendment would not alter the

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traditional definition of marriage, nor was it a backdoor attack on the heterosexual nuclear family.

Sharon Hayes (Port Moody-Coquitlam), one of Reform's more socially-conservative MPs, was the party's designated lead-off speaker for the bill's second-reading debate. She began her criticism of the bill by reaffirming the Blue Book position on the family, viz., limiting the definition of marriage to a union of woman and man. Following this, her arguments encapsulated the standard Reform view of equality rights for minorities:

We affirm that all Canadians, including homosexuals, are entitled to life, liberty, security of the person and freedom from discrimination regardless of personal characteristics and that these entitlements should be strictly enforced. We affirm that these entitlements should be based on personhood, not on sexual orientation or on any other personal characteristics.

We oppose the tendency of the courts and of Parliament to create or recognize different categories of persons for the purposes of defining or augmenting their rights under the charter or the Canadian Human Rights Act. We oppose the practice of granting undefined or unlimited rights under the charter or the Canadian Human Rights Act. We oppose the government's announced intention to specifically include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act as unnecessary and inadvisable....

Do homosexuals as a group, which is addressed by the definition of sexual orientation, whose members are linked solely by a shared sexual behaviour, warrant a protected class status such as that which is implied by the discrimination? Historically there have been three touchstones in awarding protected class status to a group of individuals.

As the right sees it, homosexuals already constitute a powerful component within the influential

\[\text{ibid.:2111.}\]
circle of left-leaning, rights-seeking "special interests." As such, gays and lesbians have no authentic, legitimate claim to equality, or what the right refers to as "special rights," either in legislation or through decisions rendered by the courts. In the minds of many Reformers, the conferring of such rights constitutes a serious threat to the established order, that is to say, a threat to "the people."

Despite plenty of extra-parliamentary pressure on Reform from prolife/profamily lobbies such as REAL Women45 and from Report magazines to frame their opposition to homosexuality by demonizing it as deviant, abnormal, and morally repugnant, most of its MPs were reluctant to do so. At least in a direct manner. As we see with MP Hayes' speech to the House, the preferred tactic is to delegitimize gay-rights claims by insisting that a) extending formal rights protection is in fact bestowing special rights on an undeserving (and unpopular) minority; and b) the gay community does not exhibit any authentic need for formal equality rights in the first place.

One way to reinforce the delegitimization argument and to shield your position from those who contend that it was a matter of (in this case) anti-gay prejudice, plain and simple, is to accentuate certain attributes that gays share with mainstream society. The most common of these

45REAL Women's attack on the proposed amendment was characteristically visceral:

The battle has been joined. We must let our individual MPs and the government know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that a homosexual amendment to the Human Rights Act will be political suicide, The Liberals must know that this is the 1990s and that we will no longer tolerate rule by the political elites. A vote in support of the homosexual amendment will be unforgotten and unforgiven [emphases original].

attributes are economic, educational and occupational criteria. In the House, Hayes stated that

gays have an average household income in the United States, but it would be reflected in Canada, of $55,430[,] contrasting the general population income of $32,144. More than three times as many gays as average Americans achieved graduation from college, 59 per cent versus 18 per cent. More than three times as many gays as average Americans hold managerial or professional positions...65.8 per cent of gays were overseas travellers...26.5 percent were frequent flyers. Certainly these statistics do not represent a community that is economically deprived...

Again we concur that homosexuals, just as every Canadian, demand protection and should be protected under Canadian law but special protection is not indicated.\textsuperscript{46}

By measuring the legitimacy of equality rights claims of minorities by their relative success as autonomous individuals in the marketplace, the Reform Party was in essence attempting to convince the public that homosexuals were like everyone else, in fact they tended to be better off than most people on average: they held down good jobs, were well compensated, well educated, took expensive vacations, and so on. In terms of protections and privileges under (existing) law, they were no different than the rest of the population: they could vote, travel, own property and businesses, in short, they could enjoy pretty much the same basic freedoms as the mainstream population. Equality, at least in the more restrictive sense of the right's understanding of it, has already been achieved because the most important elements of the social order as defined by mainstream society, ie. basic market and political rights, are available as well to homosexuals (also see Josephson and Burack, 1998:220).

But when the boundary is crossed and rights are framed within the ambit of (say) sexual orientation, then equal rights become "special rights." Like gender and race, sexual orientation is for Reformers and other social conservatives the demarcation between rights in the ordinary,

\textsuperscript{46}ibid.:2112-3
where everyone is more or less *formally* equal, and "special rights," where the ascriptive or behavioural differences of a controversial minority are recognized as requiring some protection in law because they were the recipients of perceived unequal treatment in the first place. To put it another way, right-wingers insist that to grant substantive equality rights to certain minority groups on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, race, or other such characteristics, is to fall into the trap of bestowing special rights. The principal reason for this view is that granting such rights involves the recognition of certain (behavioural or ascriptive) features as the basis for protection and their subsequent elevation as equals to "mainstream" norms. If homosexuals are extended legal protection because they are homosexuals, then that is tantamount to providing them with additional, indeed special, rights on the basis of private behaviour.

For Reformers, there are just too many "special interest" groups demanding rights protection in an already overcrowded market. As Laycock (1994:244) put it,

...these contemporary right-populists have adopted a neo-conservative redefinition of the public sphere that is antithetical to earlier populist democracy in one crucial respect. It insists that citizens' problems of economic insecurity and social alienation result from too much rather than too little public participation. Too many groups with inflated senses of their disadvantage make too many claims for state support, and parties seeking power through elections must offer these groups something. What neo-conservatives call "democratic excess" results from too many people taking the promises of liberal egalitarianism seriously.

Manning himself addressed the issue of contending with the demands of "special interests," or what he calls "value-driven people," this way:

While we don't want to *institutionalize* certain values [like feminism, multiculturalism, gay rights], how do you provide a place for [such] 'value-driven people' — people who have strong convictions, no matter what they are, whether they're Christian or feminist or whatever — in a democratic system, and reconcile that with the will of the majority? We suggest two approaches...[One] a political party ought to provide a place for people with deeply-held values to stand, and to advocate the application of their values to public policy -- and they shouldn't be
'hissed out' from the back of the room when they try to explain [their views]. On the other hand, we say that when it comes to actually defining either the policies of the party or public policy...that the final decisions should be made by some democratically or [sic] constituted majority in a democratically constituted assembly, so that majorities have the assurance that value-laden minorities, whether they're Christian, or feminist, or environmentalist, or whatever, cannot impose their minority values on others...We attempt to strike that type of balance in the Reform Party itself. We suggest that that's the type of balance that a modern democracy should seek to establish.47

The issue of equality rights for minorities highlights the three different sides within the right-wing universe of the Reform Party: social conservatism, right-liberalism, and right-populism. For social conservatives, extending rights to controversial minorities is morally contentious and constitutes yet another threat to an already morally-depraved secularized society. Right-liberals insist that the issue ought to remain for the most part a private matter between consenting adults. So long as no harm comes from it, the state has no business interfering with the rights and behaviours of citizens; formal recognition of such a right in law however is not entirely objectionable, since it may ensure that the state will not readily interfere.48 Right-populists, though they likely share moral conservatives' apprehensions, would argue (much like right-liberals) that, from the standpoint of public choice, there is too much demand on the political system to entertain what in their view are frivolous claims to special rights. The preferred approach, in Reform's view at any rate, is simply to declare that everyone is essentially equal and that everyone should be protected against unreasonable forms of discrimination. As we see shortly, the open-endedness of this proposal makes it virtually impossible to operationalize.

47 Preston Manning, address given at Simon Fraser University, 6 February, 1992.

48 A point often neglected by social conservatives, who otherwise decry the intrusion of the state into private, particularly family, affairs.
All three variations on the right-wing theme were at work in the Reform Party and accentuated the party's lack of policy coherence on this particular issue. As the story of Reform's enormous internal difficulties with Bill C-33 unfolds, we are provided an opportunity to assess how each of the right-wing elements dealt with what was arguably the biggest crisis the party had ever faced. I begin with the social conservatives.

Social conservatives and human rights controversy: C-33 and MPs Ringma and Chatters

Reform's opposition to Bill C-33 surprised few and it was widely expected that all of the caucus would vote against the amendment.⁴⁹ What drew a particularly harsh spotlight of public and media attention to the party were statements made by two of its MPs, David Chatters (Athabasca) and Bob Ringma (Nanaimo-Cowichan). On 29 April,⁵⁰ at the same time that Commons debates on Bill C-33 were in full swing, Ringma had repeated to journalist Peter O'Neil of The Vancouver Sun comments he had made back in 1994 to a local paper in Duncan, BC. In recalling his statements to the local paper, Ringma suggested that if he was operating a business and a homosexual employee was responsible for a decline in profits, he would let the employee go. When asked if he would do the same to a black person if there was a similar decline in business, Ringma said he would tell the employee, "Hey, I don't need you in my employ or I'm going to switch you to the back of the shop or I'm going to do something to make

⁴⁹As Stephen Harper said, "The great irony in the big blow-up over the human rights bill was that, before the blow-up started, every member of caucus was committed to voting against the bill anyway. The fight occurred between people who were actually technically on the same side...of that debate." Personal interview.

⁵⁰My thanks to Jan Brown for providing me with the correct dates and the proper sequence of events.
Sure you don't lose business for me."\(^{51}\) Ringma's comments were tape-recorded by O'Neil and were aired -- on a television newscast -- the following day. On 1 May, at the urging of the party's strategists and consultants, Ringma offered a public apology and stepped down as party whip (he was replaced by Jim Silye). Preston Manning, on a tour of BC, was unavailable for comment on the issue at that time.

The next day, a similar controversy swirled around MP Dave Chatters. In a radio interview, Chatters had said that discrimination against homosexuals was justifiable in specific circumstances, for example in schools and post-secondary institutions.\(^{52}\) Despite most of the caucus supporting the two MPs, Manning moved quickly and suspended both Ringma and Chatters from caucus for a then-undisclosed period of time. The leader also issued a statement declaring that "all Canadians are entitled to freedom of [sic] discrimination on the basis of equality for all, not special status for some. That is a good principle, a governing principle on which one can build."\(^{53}\)

**Right liberals and the threat of caucus implosion: C-33 and MP Jan Brown**

Calgary Southeast MP Jan Brown was one of a relative handful of right liberals (or

\(^{51}\) *Vancouver Sun* interview was reprinted in *British Columbia Report*, May 13, 1996, p. 19.

\(^{52}\) Though he was in general harshly critical of what he referred to as the "homosexual lifestyle," Chatters made specific references to the case of Delwin Vriend, who was fired from his job as lab assistant at the Roman Catholic King's University College in Edmonton for being public about his homosexuality. See "Reform suspends Alberta MP for statement on gay workers." *The Globe and Mail*, May 3, 1996, p. A1. By 1998, Vriend's firing and the absence of protection against discrimination for homosexuals in Alberta's human rights code was the basis of the Supreme Court's controversial decision in *Vriend v. Alberta* (1998).

\(^{53}\) *The Globe and Mail*, ibid.
moderates) in the Reform caucus. Asked how one whose views on social and moral matters were generally the antithesis of those held by most of the caucus could ever feel comfortable in the party, Brown replied that Reform's populist ideals had always appealed to her and so had leader Manning. "I was also," she said, "quite naive." Brown had polled her constituency on a number of issues, including gun control legislation in 1994 and homosexual rights in 1995. The results of both surveys indicated to her that voters in Calgary Southeast were just about evenly split on the issues, with bare majorities (less than 55 percent) opposing gun control and human rights protection for sexual minorities.

54 Others included, Keith Martin (Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca), Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest), Jim Silye (Calgary Centre), and Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat).

55 Personal interview.

56 Like Ted White's "Referendum '94," Brown's survey on gun control was conducted using telephones and computer-assisted technologies which proved to be somewhat unreliable. Still, Brown said, they were able to retain some data, including the outcome of the vote. For the 1995 referendum on homosexual rights, Brown used a mail-in ballot. As the party executive suggests, the ballots featured short explanations of the pros and cons on the issue of homosexual rights. When asked if party headquarters and/or the leader's office had offered any advice or guidelines for conducting constituency referenda, she said no. "Each MP was pretty much free to conduct these things as they saw fit."

57 The bare majority opposing gay rights in Calgary Southeast reflected similar trends in English-speaking Canada. A Southam News/Angus Reid poll released 2 June, 1996 found that 49 percent supported legal recognition for same-sex marriages, with 47 percent opposed. Adoption of unrelated children by gays and lesbians was the most controversial issue in the poll with 52 percent opposed. See "Gay marriages gain acceptance." The Vancouver Sun, June 7, 1996, p. A10. On the matter of Brown's own referendum, there is a discrepancy between her current recollection of the number of respondents involved and what was reported in the press at that time. At the interview I conducted with her in May 2000, Brown thought that somewhere in the neighbourhood of 5,000 respondents was "about right" and that a slim majority opposed the government's proposed legislation. On May 3, 1996 however, The Globe and Mail quoted Brown as saying that "[t]hirteen hundred respondents participated and over 75 per cent of them voted against the legislation...I felt comfortable in voting against [the bill]" (p. A4). The referendum process was problematic for a lot of Reform MPs, especially when it came to writing the explanations of the issue at hand and composing the question to be voted on. Also see Ken
Though not tied directly to the issue of homosexual rights and the Reform caucus, we ought not to put too much faith in the accuracy and viability of local polls such as the ones Brown conducted in her riding. While one should give an MP some credit for at least attempting to discern the opinions and the mood of her constituents before voting on legislation, the results obtained in these polls are far too unreliable and inaccurate to constitute a sound basis for decision-taking. That an MP's vote was based essentially on the results of a questionable poll is not an especially appealing exercise in democracy. Again, is not to cast aspersions on the concept of participatory or direct democracy, though for many it is in itself problematic. If conducted appropriately with due care and attention to the question(s) asked and to maintaining proper controls on the process -- the two Quebec referenda on sovereignty and the Charlottetown accord come to mind here -- then at least the legitimacy of the exercise and the results produced are not in question.

Brown's own moderate views found an ally in fellow Calgary caucus member Jim Silye. Both MPs distinguished themselves as being on the party's left with respect to a number of policy issues, including capital punishment, corporal punishment, treatment of young offenders, gun control, and of course, homosexual rights. In March of 1996 Brown and Silye threatened not to run for reelection unless the party moderated its positions on social issues. Brown had apparently expressed concern that the party's upcoming Assembly, slated for Vancouver in mid-June, might embrace more "radical, extremist resolutions" further tarnishing the party's already controversial

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MacQueen, "Reform searches for ways to give its constituents the final say." The Vancouver Sun, June 8, 1996, p. A18.
In what appeared to be his typical pattern of behaviour, leader Manning chose not to deal with growing caucus tension surrounding the issue when it first surfaced back in March. Indeed, when a caucus meeting was called for 20 March to address the growing rift on the issue, Manning journeyed to Newfoundland to help campaign for an upcoming by-election there. Brown and Silye emerged from the caucus meeting apparently chastised and both apologized for making public statements that ought instead to have been confined to the secrecy of the caucus meeting. The Report magazines stated that "some party members still worry that while Mr. Silye got the message [of caucus], Ms. Brown did not and will repeat the episode again in the future." The prognostication proved accurate.

By the time of the Ringma-Chatters controversy some five weeks later, Brown had publicly declared her exasperation with the party's stand on social issues and what she thought was Reform's gaping policy void and Manning's lack of leadership on the issue. As a result, and in protest, Brown had at first stated that she would abstain from voting on the amendment. But because she had already gone to the trouble of polling her constituents for their views on the subject six months before, she changed her mind about abstaining. On the first of the free votes, held on 1 May, Brown voted against the amendment along with the rest of her party (and 23 Liberal backbenchers).

Because her public opposition to the party's position and her impatience with Manning

58Quoted in British Columbia Report, March 25, 1996, p. 11. In my interview with her, Brown said she had never used the word "extremist" in connection with the party.

59ibid.
had become a matter of concern for her constituents, Brown returned to her Calgary riding and arranged a "town hall" meeting on 6 May. With plainclothes police officers in attendance at the packed hall (she had received a death threat), Brown informed her constituents before the meeting got underway that she would not abstain from the next free vote on C-33, rather, she would follow the wishes of her constituents as reflected in her poll, go back to Ottawa and vote no once again.60

The issue of Manning's leadership was still a matter of concern. But instead of confronting the issue and those principally involved directly, on 7 May, in a long letter to Southam News, Manning reiterated Reform's opposition to prejudice and bigotry, and its wholehearted support for universal equality. "All Canadians," he wrote, "are entitled to freedom from discrimination on the basis of equality for all, not special status for some...The direction we choose will determine whether we are able to continue developing as a major political party, or shrink into a cranky rump."61 When Brown read what she referred to as "Preston's Manifesto" in that day's edition of The Calgary Herald, she was struck by one sentence in particular: "Some [party members] will have to go, even those who care too deeply." Brown said, "That's when I knew I was going to be dumped...There was absolutely no leadership shown throughout this whole thing."62

The same day the letter was published, Brown issued a press release declaring her

60 At the same time that Brown's town hall meeting was going on, both Ringma and Chatters were meeting with a party disciplinary committee to determine their fate. During the interview, Brown said at no time was she "ever afforded the courtesy of speaking with anyone [ie. any party official] about the matter, ever."


62 Personal interview.
intention to step down from the caucus for a "cooling-off" period of unspecified duration. She had also planned to return to Ottawa and vote on C-33 after third reading debates, scheduled for 9 May (which she did). Later that afternoon, minutes before he was to appear on a nationally televised press conference to discipline her, Ringma and Chatters, Brown contacted Manning by telephone. When Manning informed her that her removal from caucus was imminent, Brown replied that she "was already gone." Despite that unequivocal statement, Manning stuck to his prepared script and told the press that, in order to be reinstated, Brown would have to convince him "that she is willing to work co-operatively with the party and the caucus to achieve our common goals." On Friday, 10 May, Brown called her own press conference and announced her resignation from caucus. Thereafter she would sit as an independent MP.

Right-populists and leadership: C-33 and Preston Manning's "defining moment"

When Manning rose in the House on 9 May 1996 to debate third reading of C-33, his tone was both statesman-like and authoritative, a far cry from what had been a two-week period of indecision and avoidance on his part. Here is an excerpt:

I...wish to make clear at the outset that Reform supports the noble intention of this bill. We fervently desire, as do all members, a society free from prejudice and discrimination. Our commitment to this intention comes from two sources, from the Canadian people whom we endeavour to represent in this Chamber and from the principles of our party itself. The foremost among attributes that Canadians want reflected in our political

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63 Given the hostility of the caucus against her, party strategist Rick Anderson had earlier advised her against returning to Ottawa. Personal interview.

64 Ringma and Chatters had their suspensions reviewed by Manning by July. They were then readmitted to caucus at that time.

65 Personal interview.

leaders and institutions are integrity, accountability, freedom, equality and
tolerance of differences. These are fundamental to the aspirations of Canadians
to be one of the world’s most democratic, just and pluralistic societies.
The principles of the Reform Party are equally clear on this subject. Our party
affirms the equality of all Canadians in law, the fundamental importance of the
individual and the right of individuals to be different from one another. Our party
affirms the right of Canadians to be free from discrimination, hate mongering and
intolerance on any basis.
It is because statements by several of our own members this week cast doubt on
these commitments that I have had to take some extraordinary steps to reassure
Canadians of our commitment. It is not all right for employers to fire an
employee simply because an intolerant customer complains about their colour or
their lifestyle. It is not all right to justify and explain away discrimination or to
imply that some Canadians have invited discrimination against themselves. These
views are not consistent with the broad values of Canadians, with broad values of
Reformers or with the principles of the Reform Party, and I want that on record.67

Manning’s speech to the House was designed to defuse the Ringma-Chatters controversy and to
challenge the perception that the party condoned intolerance. But for all the "noble intentions"
attributed to C-33, as Manning called them, Reformers would not support the bill. He argued
instead that the amendment was another example of a dubious "special status approach"68 that
federal governments had for too long and too frequently taken when dealing with issues of rights
and discrimination. The better approach to protecting rights, said Manning,

...is one that would base entitlement to special help and protection not on personal
characteristics or membership in a special group, but simply on the naked fact that
those people are Canadians period, entitled to equality before the law. This is an
equality approach to affirming rights and preventing discrimination. Its chief
advocate in the federal field is the Reform Party of Canada. In my judgment it
will lead to higher ground and better results than the tired old Liberal approach
to dealing with discrimination, aboriginal policy, multicultural policy and national
unity on the basis of special status.69

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68*ibid.*

69*ibid.*
If the party's unofficial media organ was anything to go on, the policy as outlined by Manning brought on more confusion and exasperation than clarity. In response Ted Byfield wrote:

We found that Reform has a policy on human rights questions that only its leader understands, and Mr. Manning spent the week hurling one member after another out of caucus for misinterpreting it...
Did I hear right? We are all entitled to "freedom from discrimination"? Well, we aren't...[W]hen the Reform Party assures us of "freedom from discrimination," what on earth is it talking about?...
So the Reform policy is, in short, a collection of words that means nothing. Or they mean whatever the leader decrees them to mean in any given circumstance.  

The contemporary issue of rights and who specifically is to be provided with substantive legal protection from unreasonable forms of discrimination is a circle that cannot be squared in either populist thought or in Reform Party policy. Manning is no doubt sincere in his belief that identifying particular, controversial minority communities in need of protection is tantamount to carving out "special rights" for them that "the people" do not enjoy and cannot claim for themselves. And it is a view consistent with populism's "monistic view of the People as in principle a factionless entity whose will should rule" (Knopff, 1998:703).

But the power of the undifferentiated mass, or as Canovan put it, the "notion that the people are one" (quoted in ibid.:699) as the foundation of policy-making is problematic. In a complex, diverse, regionally and linguistically differentiated society such as Canada, any notion that "the people are one," that is, "one" beyond the boundaries of shared citizenship and a dedication to its basic democratic norms and social values, is contentious. Once these basic attachments are accounted for, it becomes far more difficult to locate "oneness" among the people. Indeed, if such inclusive "oneness" was the norm, most political parties would soon find

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70British Columbia Report, May 13, 1996, p. 44.
themselves redundant.

Furthermore, the right-populist's insistence on "equal rights for all" fails to grasp that when such undifferentiated conditions prevail, those in minorities are invariably treated unequally, i.e. unreasonably discriminated against under the law. The sociological and legal facts are not in dispute: homosexuals (and before them, ethnic minorities, women, and Aboriginals, to name but a few) are discriminated against. There are concrete legal advantages extended to heterosexuals, particularly married couples, that homosexuals do not enjoy.

What is also clear here is that the right-populists' insistence on "equal rights for all" only partially hides what for them appears to be the real and unspoken gist of the matter: that they are uncomfortable, politically, morally, socially and legally, with equal rights for controversial minority groups. To be fair, on the moral side of the issue, Manning did raise in the Commons a concern that C-33 could have potentially negative implications for the traditional family, but that did not make his objections to the bill necessarily more coherent. Thus his unqualified commitment to equal rights does not apply where it concerns the traditional family.

Reform's chief strategist Rick Anderson referred to C-33 and the difficulties it caused for the caucus as "a defining moment for Preston and the party." The entire controversy suggested internal problems for Reform on two interrelated fronts: effective leadership and coherence in policy-making. There is a strong tendency in populist parties to concentrate power in the leader; this in turn makes it critically important for that leader to demonstrate a commitment and an aptitude to policy consistency and coherence. Though it appears somewhat paradoxical on its

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71 See Barbara Yaffe, "Crisis of conscience expected to make or break Reform." The Vancouver Sun, May 8, 1996, p. A3.
face, carrying out the wishes of "the people" requires cohesive and decisive leadership. If Manning's "defining moment" was indeed the C-33 controversy, it was surely not one he would ever wish to revisit.

Finding herself at the centre of the storm on the issue of C-33, Jan Brown suggested that the problem with Manning's leadership was that he was not really a leader at all. Rather he was and remains, "a micro-manager," as she put it. The perception is a valid one and the differences between the two positions are significant. Fundamentally, leadership is about making choices and understanding the dynamics of delegation and the processes by which people are led (see Mancuso, et. al., 1994:8). Managing on the other hand ("micro" or otherwise), conveys more of a behind-the-scenes fixer, a rational strategist who plots, who tinkers at the margins, and only occasionally, if ever, assumes a leadership role.

Was Manning more of a manager than a leader during this difficult time? Though he did eventually restore caucus order and reassert his leadership in the months to come, the policy incoherence and subsequent near-implosion of the caucus over C-33 provides no easy answer to that question. Tom Flanagan, who was close to Manning during the early 1990s, says,

Manning was very leery of getting into [moral issues]. This probably was a mistake. By leaving a vacuum, he ended up letting others attribute positions to the party which weren't always accurate. In the end, he had to yield anyway, and let elements in the party adopt the positions. I think that if he had gotten out in front [of issues] by the early nineties, he might have been able to achieve more.

When the 52 Reform MPs first came to Ottawa in 1993, Manning vowed that the party would "do politics" differently. Inside the House, for example, Manning eschewed the usual leader's

72Personal interview.
73Personal interview.
position at a front bench and sat instead, several rows back, in the centre of the caucus. There were to be no individual critics of ministries, nor whips nor house leaders for that matter. There would be four cluster groups of MPs: economics, social affairs, resources, and a cluster without portfolio to handle all else. Manning referred to this novel arrangement as "Her Majesty's Constructive Alternative" (Dabbs, op. cit.:181). 74

Organizationally, Reform professed to be different as well. Devoid of thick administrative layers between the executive and the grassroots and dedicated to "free[ing] MPs from excessive party discipline" (Manning, op. cit.:273), Reform was to be the vehicle for what Manning (ibid.:321-322) called the "unified field" of the three standard representational models: delegate, mandate, and trustee. In addition, in the leader's mind at any rate, Reform was a non-ideological populist party cutting across, indeed rejecting, the old divisions of right, centre, and left. As to where the leader of such a party fits into this, one observer pointed out,

Reform always presented itself as a "populist" party, driven by the wishes of the proverbial grassroots. The irony of that description was always apparent, however, because self-described populist parties are usually the ones in which the leader's power is greatest. The more widespread and "democratic" the theoretical structure for making decisions in a populist party, the more the real power resides in the leader's hands, because there are no competing centres of regional, intellectual or political influence. Populist parties feature the leader and the masses, with almost nobody who counts in between. 75

The combined weight of these cross-cutting and to some, contradictory internal features, in addition to the problems of Manning's leadership, took their toll on the party. Fortunately for its members, Reform did recover.

74Though Manning did adopt the conventional shadow cabinet by the fall of 1994.

75Jeffrey Simpson, "Reform must decide whether it is a populist or democratic party." The Globe and Mail, May 9, 1996, p. A20.
FROM REFORM PARTY TO CANADIAN ALLIANCE

A party leader's job is never secure of course, though Manning's might arguably have been more secure than most. Reform after all, was mostly his project; it was part of an idea he and his father had nurtured along since 1967. Still, given Reform's ostensible dedication to letting its members speak their minds and the constant vigil of both the mainstream media and the ever-alert *Report* magazines, some criticism of the leadership was bound to work itself loose. Relations between Manning and the caucus had first soured in early 1994. Calgary West MP Stephen Harper let it be known that while Manning was attempting to reap a public relations bonanza by turning down a number of Ottawa "perks," including a taxpayer subsidized automobile, a chauffeur, and a credit card allowance,⁷⁶ and at the same time cut his own salary and office budget, he was also receiving a $31,000 annual expense allowance from the party (see Ellis and Archer, 1997:112).

In light of these revelations, at the 1994 Assembly in Ottawa, Manning faced the first-ever sustained criticism of his leadership. The criticism was fuelled in large part by delegates' concerns that, despite its 52-seat breakthrough the previous year, the party had lost direction with respect to policy, was relatively ineffective in Parliament and, now with Manning's expense allowance made public, its credibility was taking a beating. To top it off, Reform's standing in nation-wide polls had dropped to 10 percent (ibid.:13). In a bid to repair the damage, Manning backed away from his usual practice of hands-on, micro-managed control of the Assembly's resolutions. As a result, delegates produced a set of resolutions and a policy agenda that

⁷⁶From the party's broadsheet, "Why did 2.5 million Canadians vote Reform in the 1993 federal election?" n.d., p. 4.
appealed more to the right-wing core of the party. Questioned by the media about the harsh ideological tone of the resolutions, Manning defended the delegates' decisions. The strategy worked. Capping off the Assembly with the standard leader's speech, he acknowledged the deficiencies in the party and pledged that the caucus would return to Ottawa to take on both Quebec sovereigntists and the Chrétien Liberals with renewed vigour and purpose. Delegates approved and gave Manning a 92 percent vote of support (ibid.:115).

Assembly '96: not the best of times

Much the same dynamic -- right down to the campaign-style rhetoric of the leader's speech -- would characterize the party's next Assembly in 1996. With the C-33 controversy still fresh in Reformers' minds, Manning came to his party's June 1996 "Fresh Start for Canada" Assembly in Vancouver with his leadership capabilities once again in question. Contrary to the slogan's upbeat tone, Reformers attending the convention seemed a rather flat and unhappy bunch. Concerns over social policy, the C-33 controversy, the suspension of MPs Chatters and Ringma, the resignation of Jan Brown, a May Angus Reid poll showing a dismal national approval rating of 13 percent, and the strong possibility that the party would have to gear up for a general election in less than a year, cast a cloud of gloom over the gathering. Delegates were also warned in the days leading up to the Assembly to "hold their tongues" (at least publicly) on hot-button social issues like gay rights.

And they did, more or less. There were relatively few -- conspicuously few for a Reform

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77 See Barbara Yaffe, "Even in the West, federal Reformers slide in the polls." The Vancouver Sun, June 13, 1996, A3.

Assembly -- discussions on "hot-button" moral or cultural issues. One resolution (mirroring the preamble to C-33) affirmed the traditional definition of marriage; another called for the elimination of group-based rights; another called for the repeal of subsection 15 (2) of the Charter which protects programs designed to end discrimination against certain groups. There were also the standard Reform resolutions calling for a balanced budget and income tax cuts.

Reform's other major plank, its national unity policy, was drawn primarily from an earlier policy document, "20/20 -- A Vision for the Future of Canada." The proposals, intended for formal debate at the Assembly, addressed the usual Reform issues, including decentralization of the federal system, reform of the Senate and the equality of provinces. Also included in the document was a section called "20 Realities of Secession," which spelled out the party's positions vis-à-vis Quebec should that province vote to secede. In the end, the party pulled back somewhat from its hard(est) line on Quebec and defended that province's right to determine its future, though with Reformers insisting that negotiations with the rest of Canada on the terms of secession would be tough. With an eye to the next election and hoping to appeal to Ontarians, Manning had stood the usual Assembly debate on federal-provincial distribution powers on its head. Instead of the standard resolutions demanding that Ottawa give up certain powers to the provinces, delegates now discussed what powers Ottawa should keep.⁷⁹

The Assembly took on a much cheerier tone when party strategists (who were predicting a 16 June 1997 election date) unveiled their strategy for the next national election campaign. The party would focus on three primary goals: a breakthrough in seats in Ontario, Official Opposition

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party status, and more seats in the House overall. The party's ultimate objective was to win 153 seats: 29 in BC and the Territories, 43 in the prairie provinces, 66 in Ontario, 6 in Quebec, and 9 in Atlantic Canada. To accomplish this, delegates were told, Reform would have to obtain at least 35 percent of the popular vote, compared with 19 percent in 1993. The only way to achieve that kind of support was lure away voters from the other parties, especially from the Conservatives and Liberals.

So what began as rather a dour Assembly ended up looking like an election-style rally. There was some strategic benefit to this. By closing out on a high note, Manning and the party executive had managed to short-circuit a potential revolt among the party's large social conservative contingent over the treatment of MPs Chatters and Ringma. Less than a week after the Assembly had ended, the party was formally recruiting candidates for the national election.

The 1997 election: good news and bad news

Carrying on the theme of the 1996 Assembly, Manning started Reform's run-up to the anticipated June 1997 election with a public launch of the "Fresh Start for Canadians" platform in October 1996 in London, Ontario. Opening the pre-election campaign in the heartland of southern Ontario was significant, too. Manning wanted to convey to voters the importance of the province to the party and that the policies of Fresh Start were not the product of radical right-wingers bent on destroying the status quo -- a status quo that for the most part had served Ontario well -- but a careful, moderate, thoughtful platform that appealed to the middle-of-the-road voter.

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80 Also see British Columbia Report, June 24, 1996, p. 9.

81 ibid.
The fundamentals of Fresh Start were contained in a magazine-style publication. There were six primary planks to the platform: the economy, tax relief, support for traditional families, justice and crime prevention, social programs, and national unity. Sounding more like a perishable food item than policy, the platform was protected by "Reform's Fresh Start Guarantee." The guarantee was basically Reform's standard commitments to democratic accountability through the recall of MPs, more free votes in Parliament, reform of the Senate, direct democracy through referenda, and an end to the "gold-plated MP pension plan." Though it reflected the right-wing tilt of the June Assembly, the Fresh Start platform was designed to lure moderate-right voters away from the Liberals and the Conservatives.

As it was likely at or near the upper limit of its appeal to western voters, the key to Reform's success was Ontario. The election of 1993 produced just one seat for the party in that province, the riding of Simcoe Centre, held by Deputy House Leader Ed Harper. He would not run in another election. Along with Harper, those not seeking reelection in 1997 were among the party's more prominent members: Herb Grubel (Capilano-Howe Sound), Stephen Harper (Calgary West), Bob Ringma (Nanaimo-Cowichan), Jim Silye (Calgary Centre), and Ray Speaker (Lethbridge). Jan Brown by this time was sitting as an independent MP.

The official election campaign began on 27 April. For the next 36 days, Reformers conducted themselves relatively competently. Manning had desperately wished to avoid any charges that his party's policies or his colleagues were bigoted and narrow-minded. For the most

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part, he got his wish, and the party stuck to the Fresh Start script. The most controversial aspect of Reform's campaign was likely its views on Quebec. Unofficially labelled the "Boot the Bloc" campaign, at the very least Reform sought to replace the BQ as the Official Opposition. Because it was crafted at the 1996 Assembly, Reform's hard-line stance on Quebec sovereignty was already well known and in any case the Fresh Start details had been in the public eye for months. However, the airing of a Reform television ad during the fourth week of the campaign brought back all the old charges that the party not only failed to understand Quebec, its prescriptions for national unity were ill-conceived and unworkable.

The ad in question featured black-and-white news photos of Prime Minister Chrétien, Conservative leader Jean Charest, Bloc québécois leader Gilles Duceppe, and Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard with the red "forbidden" slash through each. An unseen narrator intoned that "last time, these men almost lost our country" -- a reference to the razor-thin victory of federalist forces in the 1995 Quebec referendum on sovereignty. The narrator went on to declare that what the country really needed was "a voice for all Canadians, not just Quebec politicians." The message could not be clearer. Quebec politicians of all stripes, from federalists to separatists, whether in Ottawa or Quebec City, enjoyed power and influence grossly disproportionate to their numbers. And they could not be trusted. Despite the outcry from other parties and the national media, Reform's numbers rose throughout the West following the airing of the "attack" ad. In Ontario, the province targeted by the party as pivotal to its electoral success, the ad appeared to

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83 There was one incident prior to the dropping of the writ wherein the party's BC organizer, George Rigaux, stepped aside for what were deemed to be derogatory remarks directed at a Sikh organization's participation in the nomination process. See "Reform organizer quits over Sikh slur." The Calgary Herald, April 23, 1997, P. A4.
have halted the party's growth (Ellis and Archer, op. cit.:127; also see Nevitte, et. al., 2000:93-98).84

Gidengil, et. al. (1999:247) make it clear: "The most critical feature of the 1997 Canadian federal election was the regionalization of the vote." That said, the results of the election turned out to be a mixed blessing for Reformers. Owing to the peculiarities of a first-past-the-post electoral system that rewards parties with regionally concentrated support, Reform increased its overall seat total to 60, all from the West. As well, they replaced the BQ as the Official Opposition. Ontario, however, proved to be inhospitable territory. Not only did they receive fewer Ontario votes than in 1993; they lost the one seat they held in Simcoe Centre. In the eyes of many east of Manitoba, Reform's Fresh Start failed to shake the perception that it was a party of and for western Canadian interests.85

Nevitte, et. al.'s (op. cit.:93-98) analysis of the 1997 CES survey results provide us with a richly-detailed explanation of Reform's failure to break through into Ontario. On the national unity issue, the party's hard line on Quebec was seen by many as too extreme.86 Moreover, many saw the party as a mouthpiece for western interests only (p. 93). One important finding from the CES data was the government's role in job creation. While this was apparently not a weighty

84Most scholarly analysis of the Reform campaign makes it clear that there was a drop in Reform support in Ontario after the airing the controversial ad. However, Alberta Report (June 16, 1997, p. 11) stated that Reform's numbers went up after the ad was aired. Ron Leitch of APEC -- who, needless to say, thought the ad was completely appropriate -- said in my interview with him that, subsequent to the airing of the ad, Reform's support rose 6 percent in Ontario. Neither the magazine nor Leitch provided evidence to support this.

85Though had the party won a seat or two in Atlantic Canada, their legitimacy would surely have been enhanced considerably.

86Just after the election, Alberta Report (June 16, 1997, p.9) stated: "In retrospect, the [Reform] strategists wonder if the ad backfired in Ontario..."
election issue in the West, it did resonate with Ontario voters. Reform's reputation as the party that would scale back government involvement in job creation did not sit well with Ontarians (p. 94).

Interestingly, on the issue of Quebec, the CES investigators found that "[i]n Ontario opinions on accommodating Quebec simply do not affect the Reform vote...In the West, opinions about Quebec are one of the prime factors motivating a vote for the party" (pp. 94-95). Other factors differentiating the party's western vote from its Ontario vote include moral issues (moral traditionalists in the West support Reform, but those in Ontario do not) and attitudes to minorities and/or "special interests" communities -- sometimes referred to as "outgroups." Again, the same vote patterns with respect to moral matters holds for outgroups. Those in the West who are less sympathetic to such groups tend to vote Reform; those in Ontario do not (p. 95). Finally, the issue of Preston Manning as leader appeared to have influenced the Ontario vote. Put simply, Manning had never been popular in Ontario. He was seen as too much of a westerner in his views and indeed, a threat to national unity, rather than its saviour. The short of it was that the 1997 election exposed the limits of what the Reform Party could reasonably accomplish. Having had a good deal of their (neoconservative) economic agenda co-opted by the Liberals, not much else in their platform resonated with voters beyond the West.

Manning had never been content to have Reform remain as a right-wing vehicle representing the interests of one region only. As he and his father had suggested back in 1967, the party they envisioned would be national in scope and support and rather inclusive in its appeal to the moderate right. After the election and now as Leader of the Official Opposition, Manning took steps to dissolve the party he had helped to found.
The rise of the Canadian Alliance

The idea of a contemporary alliance of conservative forces at the national level was given its first serious consideration at the "Winds of Change" conference held in Calgary in May 1996. In a "draft manifesto" circulated among prominent right-wingers in advance of the conference, organizer David Frum declared:

In the realm of ideas, the right has never exerted stronger force in Canada than it does now. However, with two political parties battling for support of right-of-centre voters, the prospects for the formation of a conservative government have seldom looked worse. Canada needs an alternative. We need a national government that cherishes our free-market economy instead of treating it as a goose to be plucked; that respects Canadians' moral convictions, rather than seeing our convictions as superstitions to be remodelled by Ottawa social engineers. To elect such a national government, we first need unity on the right. To achieve that unity, we must begin by agreeing on policies that the next federal government should implement. 87

In his keynote speech to delegates attending Reform's Assembly '98, held in London, Ontario, Manning spoke of the "realignment of federal politics" that had paved the way for Confederation. This brief foray through history provided the appropriate segue for a new direction, a modern "realignment of our national politics." 88 Thus, Manning introduced delegates to his plans for "United Alternative Assembly." The proposed assembly would serve two purposes:

1. To gather under one federal political roof representatives of all Canadians who share four fundamental principles on which a strong, united governing alternative to the tired old Liberal party could be built for the 21st century.


2. To define a platform and a political action plan for electing a majority of members to the House of Commons committed to those principles and that plan at the next federal election.\textsuperscript{89}

The "four fundamental principles" to which Manning referred were standard Reform Party planks drawn from the Blue Book. These were: fiscal responsibility, social responsibility, democratic accountability, reforming federalism and federal institutions. Manning also made it clear to the delegates what the United Alternative proposal would \textit{not} be. First, it would not be a watered-down version of long-standing Reform principles. In fact, "[i]t calls for a stronger, not a weaker, expression of Reform's commitment to principles."\textsuperscript{90} Second, the proposal was not a merger of Reform with the federal Tories. The ubiquitous "unite the right" slogan, Manning said, was nothing more than "a media invention."\textsuperscript{91}

In the meantime, as the Official Opposition, Reform set out to tackle a number of issues: taxes, healthcare, relief for farmers, changes to the Young Offenders Act, the hepatitis-C scandal, the proposed Nisga'a Treaty in BC, national unity, and so on. Typically, the party produced a virtual torrent of pamphlets, circulars, booklets and position papers on policy, though much of the deluge was in the form of variations on Blue Book statements and Assembly resolutions. On the economic front, always the party's strong suit, Reform released its "50/50 Plan," calling for half of all budget surpluses to go to tax relief, the other half to paying down the debt.

The date for the proposed United Alternative Assembly was set for 19-21 February, 1999

\textsuperscript{89}ibid.

\textsuperscript{90}ibid., p. 10.

\textsuperscript{91}ibid. Much was made of the possibility of Preston Manning and Conservative leader Joe Clark combining forces (and parties) in a true Reform-PC merger. Mr. Clark made it clear however, that the possibility of such a partnership was at best remote. Also see, \textit{Alberta Report}, July 26, 1999, pp. 8-9.
in Ottawa. The Assembly was open to any Canadian citizen who could pay the registration fee.

Various right-wing lobbies kept their members abreast of the event, urging as many as possible to attend.\textsuperscript{92} As it had done in 1987 with the first Reform Association Assembly in Vancouver, the Byfields' 
*Report* magazines spread the word about the upcoming event.

Some 1,200 self-selected delegates descended on the Ottawa Conference Centre on 19 February, not all of them supporters of the "UA" proposal. Former Tories, like Mulroney cabinet minister John Crosbie for example, condemned the Assembly for being little more than recycled Reform ideas.\textsuperscript{93} Some Reform caucus members, as many as 13 at one point, had their doubts, as well.\textsuperscript{94} Some expressed concern that their constituents might rebel; others questioned the need for such sweeping changes in the first place, if the bedrock policies of Reform were all going to be preserved anyway. Reform's grassroots had their share of outright dissenters, too. In Saskatchewan, where extra-parliamentary opposition to the UA seemed to be the most intense, an opposition group called GUARD (Grassroots United Against Reform's Demise) conducted a through-the-mail campaign against Manning and the proposals.

The delegate composition of the Assembly was a 60-40 split between Reformers and non-

\textsuperscript{92}APEC, which had distanced it self from Reform back in the mid-1990s, was characteristically silent. REAL Women, which had maintained at least civil relations with Reform, urged its members to attend so that their moral concerns would be addressed. A contingent of about 60 made up the prolife/profamily contingent at the Assembly, including Alberta's "senator-in-waiting" Ted Morton of the University of Calgary's political science department. The group wanted to make certain that traditional family-values principles would not be swept aside. For the most part, though they were not all that pleased with the final wording of the provisions, they got their way. See *Canadian Alliance Declaration of Policy* (January 2000) sections 25-27, reprinted in the Appendix.


\textsuperscript{94}The dissident MPs were all "caucus outsiders, not members of the inner circle. Hence they cannot be easily stifled." *Alberta Report*, April 19, 1999, p. 8.
Reformers, with Ontarians comprising the single largest bloc by province. Their influence was felt during the resolution debates. For example, through their efforts, two amendments, one calling for the "urgent reform" of immigration policies and the other calling for the new party's constitution to adopt the Constitution Act, 1982 preamble recognizing "the supremacy of God and the rule of law" were defeated. The Assembly voted 54 percent in favour of forming a new party. The next step was for Reform's membership to vote on whether or not to continue with the UA process. Seventy thousand mail-in ballots were sent out on 1 May. On 10 June, with a response rate of close to 46 percent, a 60 percent majority voted to continue.

Despite their participation at the first UA Assembly, one concern hovering over the project was the "fit" of moral and cultural conservatives. Unlike economic liberals, moral-cultural conservatives find it more difficult to fit into broad-based movements, even those self-identified with conservative principles. Ted Byfield, long a leading voice of moral conservatism and one of the co-founders of the Reform Party, whittled the choices facing these conservatives down to two: compromise or oblivion.

[W]e [moral conservatives] must ask ourselves: Is compromise invariably wrong? In matters of basic truth and religious doctrine it certainly is wrong. You cannot compromise the truth... Here [with the United Alternative] we are dealing with neither doctrine nor morals, however, but with politics in a democratic system. Democracy, like capitalism, involves a negotiational process. Both are founded on the assumption that people will compromise, and in both there are two opposite hazards. One is never to compromise, the other is to compromise too easily, and you have to steer between them.

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96 The party had a "double majority" requirement: 50 percent plus 1 of the total vote and 6 of 10 provinces.
What matters is where and how and by how much we compromise.\textsuperscript{97}

After weighing several clusters of issues -- life (abortion and euthanasia), sex (homosexuality and gay rights), the Senate (Triple-E), and Quebec (constitutional issues, national unity) -- Byfield declared that while the first two were not subject to negotiation, the latter two were. Therefore, to compromise "would seem somewhat preferable to oblivion."\textsuperscript{98}

Nevitte, et. al. (op. cit.:98-99) considered the prospects for a United Alternative from the interrelated perspectives of ideologies and issues:

The difficulties facing a unite-the-right plan become even clearer when issues are considered. The three sets of issues that stand out as separating Conservative voters from Reform supporters are law and order, moral traditionalism, and accommodating diversity. These are precisely the issues that separate supporters of radical right parties from supporters of older conservative parties in western Europe. Where Canada's new right party differs from its European relatives is on the economic dimension. In contrast to supporters of the European new right, Reform voters are very close to Conservative voters when it comes to issues like the deficit and government spending. But so, too, are Liberal voters, making this a very crowded part of the issue space. And on issues that define the new right, Conservative voters are as close to the Liberals -- or closer -- than they are to Reform voters.

The conceptual and practical difficulties in bringing the two sides together were doubtless well-known to UA supporters. Throughout the next year, the project took shape: a new name was unveiled -- the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance (Canadian Alliance). There was also a new "Declaration of Policy" released in January 2000. Much of its contents, especially on moral and social issues, reflected a watered-down version of right-populist principles found in the Blue Books. In March 2000 Reformers voted overwhelmingly to dissolve their old party. Preston

\textsuperscript{97}Alberta Report, May 10, 1999, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{98}ibid.
Manning then stepped down as leader. At the beginning of April, the Canadian Alliance took its place as the Official Opposition in Parliament. In late June 2000, delegates will gather at Calgary to select the party's first leader. Among the contenders are Alberta Treasurer Stockwell Day, Ontario Conservative Party strategist Tom Long, Alliance MP Keith Martin, and of course, Preston Manning.

CONCLUSION

During its relatively brief existence, the Reform Party of Canada has been a major force in the contemporary Canadian right. Socially conservative, economically liberal, right-populist -- the party has helped define the ideologically complex framework of the New Right as well as draw considerable attention to the issues it wanted addressed. We have seen how the Political Realignment thesis had guided, though never precisely, Preston Manning's political party projects.

We have also seen, in focussing on Reform's internal struggles with Bill C-33, how the party, for all its purported bellwether status, was in fact one of the weaker links in the New Right chain.

The heart of the problem for many right-wing activists (moral and cultural conservatives especially) with respect to Reform is that they failed to appreciate a) that Manning was neither as ideologically rigid nor as devoted to hard principles as they had wanted; and b) that a political party with designs on forming a government must demonstrate a willingness to be flexible. Those who hold non-negotiable views when it comes to certain issues do of course have the option of joining a smaller, more doctrinaire party, or else organizing one themselves. The trouble is, any chance of such a party attracting more than a small fraction of voter support, let
alone enough to win a seat, is virtually nil. So, the only option, as Ted Byfield put it in the quote above, is to compromise.

The role that compromise has played in the political career of Preston Manning has often been overlooked by critics of the party, many of whom seem likewise constrained by (and perhaps unaware of) their own ideologically circumscribed view of the world. Dobbin (1991a:9) for example, writes:

> From its beginnings, the genesis of Reform reflected the long-term plan of Preston Manning, a plan threatened from within by a potentially fatal contradiction. Harnessing the unpredictable and eclectic sentiment and volatile energy of popular/populist discontent to form the base of an ideologically pure conservative party was the equivalent of trying to pound a square peg into a round hole. It would require careful planning and calculated control.

Dobbin is correct on three counts. First, populist discontent, in this case, out of the West, did indeed form the base of the party. Second, "calculated control" was (and remains) Manning's modus operandi, though in some crucial moments when control was called for, as in the C-33 controversy, he tended to back away. Third, there was unpredictability -- tension -- in attempting to meld together populism with conservative ideas.

But where Dobbin errs in my view is his insistence (more his indictment, actually) that Reform was an "ideologically pure conservative party." I noted earlier in the chapter that, by most measures, Reform was a right-wing party. That much at least, is likely not in dispute, However, and Dobbin never fully explains what the designation entails, it was never "ideologically pure." The fact -- and Dobbin has his finger on the reason behind it -- that the party, at least in Manning's mind, was more a populist vehicle, scotched any chance that it would be doctrinally pure. Certainly in the eyes of REAL Women and APEC, Reform was not pure in the least.
The thrust of my argument is that Manning's devotion to populism and his tendency as leader to back away from controversies within the party weakens the argument that Reform was ideologically rigid. I suggest that Reform was on the whole more moderate than the New Right movement itself. This is not to argue that Reform was always the calm voice of reason, or that it never championed some controversial ideas and policies, or that some of its members, grassroots and caucus, never uttered an offensive phrase or embraced bigoted notions about contemporary Canadian society. For as we saw with the Ringma-Chatters affair and Jan Brown's subsequent expulsion/resignation from the party, that was not the case.
CHAPTER SIX
WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

That Preston Manning, lately, he has a screw loose. He's out to destroy the Reform Party.
-- Ron Leitch, APEC (1999)

The [ideological] pendulum may swing back to us. Perhaps with a new leader, the Reform Party could be of some help.
-- Gwen Landolt, REAL Women (1999)

The purpose of the conservative movement is to change public opinion and public policy, not solely to elect to office a party with a particular name.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis began by asking questions regarding the ideas, activities, policies of several New Right organizations in Canada and the nature of the relationships between them. I return to address those questions momentarily. As I have shown, the New Right, whether in Canada or elsewhere, is ideologically complicated and politically diverse. By focussing on three very different organizations, two of which have had little in the way of political or legal success to show for their years of effort, I wanted to convey how that complexity and diversity functions within the contemporary right.

Each organization exhibited different motivations, perceptions, and ideas, yet each was convinced that it represented the genuine wishes of "the people." With the prolife, profamily group REAL Women, it was a moral conservatism shaped in large part by traditional Christian values -- values which those in the organization felt were under repeated assault by "special interest" opponents, the media, and government. In the case of APEC, it was a particular cultural, i.e. anglophone, conservatism that refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Canada's official linguistic dualism, Quebec's uniqueness, or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Reform Party provided an entry point for a variety of right-wing views and in some
respects functioned as a broker for conservative ideas. Certainly economic liberalism (or conservatism) was a major plank in the party's platform; so was reform of many of the political, institutional, and constitutional features of the country and of course, its commitment to populist democracy. But as we saw in Chapter Five, moral conservatism and cultural conservatism had their place at the Reform table, too. Granted, with Preston Manning's risk-averse leadership style and dedication to populist principles in decision-making, these two right-wing elements were more muted in the party than certainly their proponents had wished or expected.

In addition to discovering what the objectives of each of the three organizations were and what their activism entailed, I was interested as well in determining the nature of the interplay (or lack thereof) between them. I had presumed that moral and cultural conservatives formed something of dominant or at least a highly influential bloc within the Reform Party. Like many observers, I was convinced that the old-line traditionalists -- those who saw feminism and gay rights as highly offensive and those who could conceive of Canada as a white and English-speaking nation only -- ruled the roost in the party. I have determined that that is not an accurate picture, either of the Reform Party itself, or of the Canadian New Right movement as a whole.

This is not to say that moral and cultural conservatives are a weak, ineffective minority within the New Right, for that is not quite the case. During the course of the interviews I conducted with those of varying hues of conservatism and in more informal discussions held at gatherings of right-wing organizations, it was evident that most (certainly not all) held morally and culturally conservative views. There is considerable latitude within those views: some may lean towards a prochoice view on abortion, but reject same-sex rights; others may wish to dismantle official bilingualism, but remain supportive of the Charter. The truth is, there is no
single model, no slavish devotion to an unalterable view that right-wingers adhere to.

That said, it probably is true that most people in right-wing organizations share the same "space" with respect to moral and cultural values. They value the nuclear family, the role of faith, the sanctity of marriage, traditional gender roles, Judeo-Christian and Anglo-Saxon traditions, and the like. They are also likely to be sceptical with respect to the alleged "sanctity" of the Charter of Rights, or at least the jurisprudence drawn from it; they are bewildered by Quebec and not a little impatient with what many of them insist are Ottawa's innumerable and sycophantic gestures toward that province. Finally, they are convinced that a "new class" of left-liberal bureaucrats and a small but disproportionately influential number of "special interests" have pretty much had their way in Canadian politics since the Trudeau era.

That much, I think, is certain. Yet, the degree to which people are willing to have those views shape their politics ought also to be considered. Some are quite willing to blur the distinction between public and private in their politics; others are quite hesitant to do so, and in fact see little to be gained by it. Members of REAL Women and APEC fit into the first category, so did Reform MPs Bob Ringma and David Chatters; Reform leader Preston Manning and former MP Jan Brown fit the second. This also draws attention to the distinction between what lobby groups want and how they frame their objectives in public, and what political parties -- successful ones at any rate -- might reasonably accomplish. For Manning, the best that could be done with, say, the abortion issue, would be to subject it to a vote of the people and abide by what the majority decides.

As we saw with Reform's "Canada Speaks" poll or MP Jan Brown's survey of her constituents on the gay rights issue, there are problems on the ground with local polls and
surveys. They tend to be self-serving, self-selecting and amateurishly put together. One suspects, and this was certainly an issue with respect to Reform's own attempts, that the results obtained are not in any way an accurate account of public opinion, but rather they tend to reinforce what the party or at least the local MP had assumed all along.

This is not to cast aspersions on the idea of participatory or direct democracy, for it does at least offer a partial solution to those who insist that a) local MPs follow the party line too slavishly, or b) that minorities almost always get their way while the median voter has little or no say in anything. And of course, these are precisely the complaints one hears from across the right: the combination of ineffective politicians and political institutions and "special interests" minorities have taken just about all power away from "the people," the bulk of whom, they insist are innately conservative in their views. Yet, as we have seen with APEC, but particularly with REAL Women, though they too insist that they speak for "the people," there is an uneasiness about instituting populist measures to decide matters of moral and/or cultural principle.

This then is the principal clash, the uncertainty over ideas, values and processes as it relates to the right-wing organizations examined here and, it can be argued, as it relates to the New Right in general: the potential disjunction between the "will of the people" as expressed in referenda and other populist mechanisms, and the ostensibly immutable values of conservative principles. The former assumes a kind of consequentialist perspective with respect to important issues, ie. what "the people" want is in and of itself acceptable; the latter insists that hard principles must dictate a priori what "the people" ought to have. Neither side is completely comfortable with the other. If there is an inconsistency, and incoherency to New Right thought and ideas, it is this, and not the traditional-conservatism-versus-market-liberalism tension that
some analysts insist upon.

RETURNING TO THE THREE QUESTIONS

1. Is the Canadian New Right ideologically coherent?

For the most part, it is. Recall that in Chapter Two, the argument for ideological coherence was argued rather well by King (1987). As we have seen throughout however, there is tension when it comes to ideological principles. Yet, the insistence on seeing the New Right as ideologically incoherent -- or at least potentially so -- is especially prevalent within British academic circles, particularly among the left. Levitas (1986:103) for example argues that the marked contrasts in both rhetoric and ideology between the neo-liberal and neo-conservative views of the good society...are underpinned by conflicting concepts of human nature and the relationship between individual and society; and they are obscured by a truly ideological use of language, particularly the word freedom, to mask the contradictions.

Levitas does concede however that the New Right's "common ground" (ibid.), viz. its principal conviction that market freedoms are best preserved by a strong, that is to say authoritarian, state,1 outweighs internal ideological conflicts.

Recall as well Diamond's (1995:7-9) thesis that right-wing movements and parties are essentially "system-supportive." Specifically that the right "supports the state in its capacity as enforcer of [traditional modes of] order and...oppose[s] the state as distributor of wealth and power downward...".2 While there are internal tensions within the right, they are outweighed by a movement-wide consensus of stronger convictions insisting that a) traditional moral and cultural

1Devigne (1994:79) refers to this as "rule-governed morality."

2Though recall also, as was pointed out in Chapter Three, Erwin's (1993:402) contention that the Canadian New Right is not as hostile to the welfare state as its American counterparts.
norms must be reinforced, b) the market economy must be preserved, and c) "the people" must exercise greater control over the institutions of state.

Now in Canada, the tension is principally between conservative values and populist demands. As my analysis of the three organizations indicates, there is widespread agreement on a number of fundamental ideological principles, among them, support for free enterprise, for the traditional family, and for traditional culture. It has also been shown that while the two lobby groups examined here fit more easily into a standard social conservative-market liberal ideological template, the Reform Party is "triangulated" in its ideological composition: right-conservative, right-liberal, and right-populist. While REAL Women and APEC also claim a populist dedication to the wishes of "the people," the possibility for ideological incoherence and strain becomes most apparent where rigid conservative principles meet the majoritarian demands of populism.

2. What explains the New Right's relative lack of success in federal politics?

In economic and fiscal matters, New Right (or neoconservative) influence on government has been considerable. By the 1990s the right-wing economic model had come to dominate government policy. As has been noted, with the possible exception of the New Democrats, all major federal parties (and most provincial ones, too) have shifted to the right with respect to their economic policies. That just about every other party has stolen the right's economic thunder, as it were, made it all the more difficult for more comprehensive right-wing parties (like Reform) to appeal to voters.

Chapter Two argued that when it came to attracting support for its moral and cultural views, the New Right in the US and in Britain had achieved at best only limited success. With
respect to non-economic issues and the Canadian right, Stephen Harper has said that the trouble with "moral coalitions" (as he called moral conservatives) is that while many people may agree with their views, at the level of party politics and voter support, their appeal is too narrow. He says further that,

The irony is, if you can meld that kind of conservatism into a classical liberal framework, you would actually have a lot of support for a compromise conservative position. I think that's possible. [Otherwise] you have zero support for moral coalitions...even though they are a pretty important constituency. The problem I have with them is that...you [end up] crossing the line between the practice of your religion versus the pursuit of your interest in the political arena...Even as a religious person, I'd have to be an effective political person and [not just] associate only with my own kind.  

It appears rather obvious that much of the right's moral, cultural, and social prescriptions do not meet with the approval of the majority of the people. On such issues as women's rights, abortion, gay-lesbian rights, bilingualism, respect for the Charter and so on, poll after poll has shown that a majority of the Canadian public and the right hold different views. For example, as Nevitte, et. al. (2000:93-98) have shown in their study of the 1997 federal election, many voters in Ontario considered the Reform Party to be too extreme. Whether or not Reform was in fact "extreme" (however that is defined) is another matter. Still, it goes to the heart of the right's relative lack of success at the national level: their attitudes, especially where it concerns social, moral and cultural values, and national unity, are rejected by many because they are perceived as extreme and thus unattractive. This is not to say that the majority of Canadian voters or the public at large are amoral or "soft" on Quebec, or even in love with the Charter; what it does say is that the public has become relatively comfortable with, or at least tolerant of, many of the

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3Personal interview.
social, moral and/or cultural matters that the right opposes.

3. *Is there a future for the New Right in Canadian politics?*

At the close of each interview I conducted, I asked the interviewee if he/she felt confident about the future with respect to conservative ideas and political parties. It was there that I found some divergence of views between the leaders of REAL Women and APEC and the rest. Both Gwen Landolt and Ron Leitch were less optimistic about the future prospects for conservatism. Though their outlook was not entirely bleak -- "No situation is hopeless," Leitch had said -- they were not expecting a breakthrough anytime soon. "We [social conservatives] haven't quite got our act together yet," Landolt stated. Both noted that the only recent bright spot was the appearance of Southam Press majority shareholder Conrad Black's aggressively right-wing *National Post* newspaper. As their interviews were conducted before the Reform Party folded into the Canadian Alliance, both leaders blamed Preston Manning and Reform for the sad state of moral and cultural conservatism.

Other interviewees expressed at least some confidence that, given the opportunity to get the message out, most conservative ideas and political parties could look forward to a potentially rewarding future. That said, there was no evidence of utopian or naïve optimism among the interviewees. On the contrary, they were fairly realistic in their assessments, and conceded that pendulum swings in public opinion and support go both ways.

On the subject of the Reform Party as the "weak link" in the New Right, it must be said that such weakness was not across the board, as it were. In furthering the moral and cultural agenda demanded by supporters in REAL Women, APEC, and in the minds of some, Preston Manning's leadership, Reform was indeed considered a weaker link than some had expected. By
any other measure though, and due in large part to Manning's sheer determination and
doggedness, Reform was a successful political party. From obscurity in 1987 to 52 Commons
seats six years later and to Official Opposition and 60 seats less than four years hence, the story
of Reform is one punctuated far more by breakthroughs than by setbacks. True, success is
relative and can be measured in different ways; and there can be little doubt that in Manning's
mind, because both he and the party could not attract enough voter support east of Manitoba and
could not form a government, Reform was on balance unsuccessful. Yet, when set against the
records of other third or protest parties, especially those with strong roots in the Canadian West
(see for example Morton, 1950; Young, 1969), Reform and Manning compare rather well.

At the time of this writing, the leadership race for the new Canadian Alliance had been
animated by questions about its relevance and the future of right-wing politics in Canada. The
questions seem to bear down most directly upon candidate Stockwell Day, who had been fairly
candid about his morally-conservative views on issues ranging from abortion, to same-sex rights,
to religious schools, and so on. Though he would likely be the favoured candidate for moral
and cultural conservatives, Day has attempted to assure more moderate voters that his personal
views would not be imposed over the will of the majority:

I believe that on [moral] matters politicians have a responsibility to state their
convictions clearly, but I also believe that these debates [on moral issues] should
be conducted with respect for the democratic rights of all citizens, even those who
may disagree with us...I will always state my beliefs clearly, but I will always
seek to conduct debate in an open and democratic matter. As Prime Minister I
would not -- and could not -- "impose" my will on my party or the country. No
Member of Parliament has the right to do that.

See for example "Alliance candidates skirt social issues." *The Globe and Mail*, May 8,
2000, p. A5. "Alliance candidates advised to tiptoe around explosive issues." *The Globe and
To take but one example, it is well known that I am pro-life...I do not support abortion or euthanasia, and I would personally favour measures to protect human life in Canadian law. But I would not seek to impose my views on the Canadian people. I would want issues such as these to be determined freely and democratically by the people, either through a referendum initiated by Canadians or a free vote of their representatives in the House of Commons. Debates like this need to be conducted with the greatest possible respect for democracy and the views of others, without the angry and harsh rhetoric that too often prevents serious democratic debate on moral questions.  

While Day's position might mollify those moderates who fear that moral conservatives might start limiting rights should they ever get into power, it may not please moral conservatives themselves. Day's views appear very close to the position of the Reform Party: moral issues have a place in elective politics, but only if the voters give their consent. While that probably sounds reasonable to most right-wingers, to moral conservatives it may mean more years in the wilderness even if the Canadian Alliance wins power.

Is there a future for the New Right in Canadian politics? Yes, there is. But the future is not theirs alone.

CONCLUSION

By focussing in large part on the non-economic components of the New Right in Canada, this thesis set out to shed some light on a relationship and a dynamic that has often gone unnoticed. While there have been many scholarly and popular analyses of the Reform Party and a fair amount on prolife and profamily organizations (most of it from ideological opponents), there has not been, so far as I am aware, extensive studies of antibilingual organizations like APEC and

no analyses tying together the various normative strands of the movement as I have attempted to do here. In many ways, this thesis is a study of failure. The moral and cultural concerns of organizations like REAL Women and APEC have, if popular as well as no small amount of informed opinion are anything to go on, have long since ceased to be relevant for most Canadians. Though issues like abortion, gay and lesbian rights and the value of the Charter are certainly important in and of themselves, those organizations that mark their traditionalists lines in the sand to oppose them are often derided as bigots or extremists or just simply dinosaurs who have somehow failed to notice that the world has long ago passed them and their views by. What possible resonance do they have for much of contemporary society and especially for younger generations who, according to countless polls, surveys, and studies, no longer have much use for traditional moral and cultural ideas? It is quite likely that the moral and cultural right will face a protracted battle to win sufficient numbers to their cause.

Baldly stated then, the New Right has a considerable public relations problem and not all of it related to their "old fashioned" thinking. One of their major difficulties is overcoming the widespread notion that most if not all their members are racist, sexist, homophobic, generally mean-spirited and unreasonable. These people do not wish to live in a democracy, many contend. They respect neither the right of others to be different nor the fact that modern liberal societies are complex, diverse, organic and tumultuous. What right-wingers really want is a socially and morally authoritarian state, a uniform society, perhaps even a theocracy if they thought they could get away with it.

Some of this criticism, while perhaps bordering on the stereotypical, does have a certain ring of accuracy. Many in the New Right are indeed hostile to minorities' and to women's rights.
They can be xenophobic and at times, smug and self-righteous. But they can also be generous, kind, gregarious, hard-working, and yes, tolerant. In short, they can be good citizens. And as most scholars, whether friend or foe of the movement, will declare, they have every right to make their voices heard and to participate in the daily plebiscite that is democratic politics.

Much has been written on the New Right phenomenon, both here in Canada and internationally; the available literature is rich and the scholarly interest, particularly in this country, or so it seems, remains high. The ideological dimensions of the movement are quite dynamic, its prominent individuals are interesting and quite frequently controversial, and its activists are aggressive, industrious, and dedicated to their cause. That combination of factors probably explains much of the high interest in the New Right and may even help to maintain the movement's continued existence.

With the advent of the new Canadian Alliance, scholars will have a new(er) vehicle and perhaps a new(er) leader to engage their research and prompt their thinking. Indeed, Reform's folding into the Canadian Alliance ought to keep political scientists busy for some time. Certainly, the virtual explosion of election studies and the steady stream of analyses on Canada's ever-changing and dynamic party system will provide us with a rich accounting of the electoral fortunes of the right for many years to come. Liberal-democracies need their moderates and their left wing advocates; they also need their right wing, too. On the whole, the country would be a poorer place without any one of them.
APPENDIX
EXCERPTS FROM REAL WOMEN, APEC, REFORM PARTY AND CANADIAN ALLIANCE LITERATURE

• REAL Women of Canada: "10th Anniversary Historical Perspective" pamphlet

WHO WE ARE
REAL Women of Canada (Realistic, Equal, Active, for Life) is a non-partisan, interdenominational organization of independent women. We come from all walks of life, occupations, social and economic backgrounds. Some members are employed full or part-time outside the home, while some are employed in the home and some are both. We represent a broad spectrum of Canadian women who, until our formation, had not had a public forum in which to express their views.

OBJECTIVES
We promote equality for all women, the concept of which is expressed in the acronym "E" in our name...One of our objectives is to support policies for women that provide equal opportunity in education, employment and retirement. We believe that social and economic problems and solutions of women today should be resolved by taking into account their impact on the family and society as a whole.

Our view is that the family, which is now undergoing serious strain, is the most important unit in Canadian society. We believe that the fragmentation of the Canadian family is one of the major causes of disorder in society today. Our objectives are as follows:
1. To reaffirm that the family is society's most important unit, since the nurturing of its members is best accomplished in the family setting.
2. To promote the equality, advancement and well-being of the woman, recognizing her as an interdependent member of society, whether in the family, workplace or community.
3. To promote, secure and defend legislation which upholds the Judeo-Christian values of marriage and family life.
4. To support government and social policies to make homemaking possible for women who, out of necessity, would otherwise have to take employment outside the home.
5. To support the right to life of all innocent individuals from conception to natural death.

MOTTO
"Women's rights, but not at the expense of human rights."

AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS
111 organizations across Canada

• Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC): "Here are the Facts" pamphlet

The Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada was formed in response to the unnecessary and expensive creation of an artificial need for the use of the French language in government services and in government institutions. APEC is not a political party, but an
organized group endeavouring to make political parties realize that Official Bilingualism is divisive and discriminatory...

APEC SUPPORTS
1. Canadian unity through communication in one official language -- English.
2. Equality for all Canadians and special status for none.

ADVOCATES
3. English as the one and only official language throughout the whole of the Dominion of Canada except for the province of Quebec.
4. English and French languages be permitted in the debates of the Parliament of Canada and Legislature of Quebec and the Supreme Court of Canada and the Courts of the Province of Quebec (BNA Act 1867, s. 133).
5. Repeal of the Official Languages Act 1988 (Canada) and the abolition of the Commissioner of Official Languages.
6. Freedom of choice of language in business, social, fraternal, and religious activities to all Canadians everywhere in Canada.

OPPOSES
7. The creation by governments of an artificial need for the use of the French language at the federal, provincial and municipal levels.
8. Discrimination in the employment and promotion policies and practices of governments against Canadians who do not speak the French language.

• The Reform Party of Canada: "The Blue Book, 1991"

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES
1. We affirm the need to establish a Triple-E Senate in the Parliament of Canada...
2. We affirm that political parties should be guided by stated values and principles which are shared by their members and rooted in the political beliefs of Canadians...
4. We believe that Canada's identity and vision for the future should be rooted in and inspired by a fresh appreciation of "our land" and the supreme importance to our well-being of exploring, developing, renewing, and conserving our natural resources and physical environment...
6. We affirm the value and dignity of the individual person and the importance of strengthening and protecting the family unit as essential to the well-being of individuals and society...
12. We believe that public policy in democratic societies should reflect the will of the majority of the citizens as determined by free and fair elections, referenda, and the decisions of legally constituted and representative Parliaments and Assemblies elected by the people...
14. We believe in the common sense of the common people, their right to be consulted on public policy matters before major decisions are made, their right to choose their own leaders and to govern themselves through truly representative and responsible institutions, and their right to directly initiate legislation for which substantial public support is
demonstrated.

15. We believe in accountability of elected representatives to the people who elect them, and that the duty of elected members to their constituents should supersede their obligation to their political parties.

16. We believe that the legitimate role of government is to do for people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all -- or do as well -- for themselves individually or through non-governmental organizations.

21. We believe that Canadians should seek to maximize the benefits of our unique geographic and economic relationship with the United States, and that the establishment of more positive relations with the U.S. need not in any way impair Canada's national sovereignty or cultural identity.

MORAL DECISION-MAKING
We believe in freedom of conscience and religion, and the right of Canadians to advocate, without fear of intimidation or suppression, public policies which reflect their most deeply held values.

ABORTION
A. The Reform Party commits its Members of Parliament to stating clearly and publicly their personal views and moral beliefs on the question of abortion; to asking their constituents to develop, to express, and to debate their own views on the matter; and to seeking the consensus of the constituency on the issue.

B. In the absence of a national referendum, the Reform Party expects its Members of Parliament to faithfully vote the consensus of the constituency in the appropriate divisions in the House of Commons if such a consensus exists. If such a consensus does not exist or is unclear, Members of Parliament shall vote in accordance with their publicly-recorded statements on the issue.

• Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance: "Declaration of Policy, January, 2000"

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL THEMES
We commit ourselves to a small and effective federal government that is accountable, responsive and fiscally responsible, and whose powers are strictly limited to the functions that are essential to a modern state...

Government will foster an economic climate where a thriving entrepreneurial sector creates jobs for all Canadians...

2. We will encourage the entrepreneurial sector by eliminating unnecessary regulations and minimizing government interference in the labour market, including the elimination of discriminatory hiring and promotion policies for federally regulated employees. Every job shall go to the most qualified applicant without the use of affirmative action or any other type of discriminatory quota system. We are committed to voluntary, free and fair collective bargaining.
SOCIAL THEMES
Our social policies will build upon Canadians' traditional characteristics of strength and compassion, and on the recognition that all human beings possess the fundamental human rights of life, freedom, and the right to own and enjoy property...

25. We believe that the family unit is essential to the well being of individuals and society, because that is where children learn values and develop a sense of responsibility. Therefore government legislation and programs should support and respect the role of the Canadian family. Bills and regulations will be evaluated to ensure their effect on families is positive...

27. Legislation and programs designed to strengthen and protect the family will be directed by individuals related by blood, adoption or marriage. The marriage relationship will be defined as endorsement by Parliament (June 1999) as the union of a man and a woman recognized by the state.

DEMOCRATIC AND GOVERNANCE THEMES
We recognize the need for more democratic and accountable political institutions and a better-working federation. We support policies that renew and strengthen democratic institutions and that resolve questions of accountability and jurisdiction...

72. We recognize that there are issues so important to Canadians that direct public input is desirable. Therefore, we will introduce measures that allow citizens to initiate binding referenda. In addition, we will also seek the consensus of all Canadians through judicious use of national referenda, both on issues having significant implications for Canadian society and in proposed changes to the country's Constitution.

73 In order to make elected representatives more accountable to constituents between elections, we will support recall initiatives permitting voters to petition for a by-election in their riding.

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