EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: A QUEST FOR THE PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY

by

CORINA MARIA DYKSTRA

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Administrative, Adult and Higher Education

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

November 1990

© Corina Maria Dykstra, 1990
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at The University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Administrative, Adult and Higher Education

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date: November 1990
ABSTRACT

This study emerged from an awareness that educators comprehension of what is taking place in social movements (in social sites outside the formal institution) is most vital for understanding and linking adult education to the wider struggle for radical democracy.

The Christian Task Force on Central America is a unique British Columbia wide solidarity network that provided the "practical" context to explore social change education. This case study used participant observation to examine the educational practice of the network.

The study began by presenting the theoretical base, as developed from current literature, on education for social change. This included a critique of the dominant understanding and approach to social change education, reflecting a liberal philosophy of individualism and a pedagogy that is acritical and apolitical in nature. It was argued that this model of social change education strips social processes of their political nature and content by situating them within the framework of social adjustment. An alternative "transformative" social change model was presented; one that places greater stress on the relationship between education and social action. This included a discussion of three core elements: social change vision, a critical pedagogy and a pedagogy of mobilisation.

The process of analysis involved exploring the Task Force as an transformative educational movement. The historical background to the network and its contemporary work was discussed. Key educational principles were identified from its practice and developed into a "grassroots" liberative theory of social change. The factors of "organisational structure" and "resources" were revealed as elements that have both a liberating and constraining effect on the
work of the movement. The Task Force, as a case-study, illustrates the centrality and educational nature of the struggle for social justice. Educational activities of the network incorporate collective and active learning processes for social justice and are based upon a "practical" rather than speculative concept of social change. The study concludes that the radical possibility of education lies within the process of education itself; it is not so much the content as the method of practice which is vital in creating the conditions of a participatory democracy, here and now. Recommendations for further research were suggested for those interested in examining further the role of education within social movements.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Education for Social Change: A Contentious Issue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Background Statement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Dominant Model</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. An Alternative Model</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. The Research Problem</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Purpose</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Format</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CHAPTER TWO: EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: A CRITIQUE OF THE DOMINANT MODEL</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Political Ideology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Pedagogical Assumptions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Conservative Pedagogy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Summary</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The Transformative Paradigm</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Politics of Transformation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Educational Response: The Radical Strategy</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. A Transformative Educational Model</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Vision</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Critical Pedagogy</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pedagogy of Mobilisation</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Summary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Case Study Method</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Selection of Site</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Researcher’s Relationship to Participants</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Data Collection</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Participant Observation</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interviewing</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Documentation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Dealing with Validity and Reliability</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Data Analysis</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Summary</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CHAPTER FIVE: OUTLINE OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK FORCE ON CENTRAL AMERICA</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Historical Moments in Solidarity Work</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Origins of CTFCA</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Formation of the CTFCA</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Vision and Philosophy</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Social Change Perspective</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Theological Perspective</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pedagogical Perspective</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organisational Principle</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Internal Functioning</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working Groups</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Regional Communities</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Office and Staff</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Membership</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Organisational Structure</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Funding</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Summary</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CHAPTER SIX: EDUCATION ACTIVITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK FORCE</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Introducing the Issues</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Public Presentations (Slideshows)</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Newsletter: Network News</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Central America Week</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Vigils and Demonstrations</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Engaging People and Institutions</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Urgent Action Program</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Advocacy and Lobbying</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Exposure to the Central American Reality</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Global Awareness Through Experience (GATE)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Visitors from Central America</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Deepening Relationships with Central America</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Trips to the Camps</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. National Accompaniment Project</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Church/Christian Faith Community Linking</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Program Formation, Analysis and Networking</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Task Force Delegation</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. National Research Delegations</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analysis</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Direct Institutional Lobbying</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Coalition Work and Networking</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Summary</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. CHAPTER SEVEN: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK FORCE ON</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL AMERICA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Relationship of Education to Movement Objectives</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introducing the Issues</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Engaging People and Institutions</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Exposure to Central American Reality</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deepening Relationship with Central America</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Program Formation, Analysis and Networking</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Task Force’s Grassroots Theory of Social Change</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Comparison of Task Force’s Practice to Theoretical Models</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Obstacles facing the Task Force as an Agent of Social Change</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The biblical challenge that inspired me into the quest for social change education was that of Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." The transformative thread that continues to challenge me is that of "metanoia: dare to change;" a challenge attributed to the "continual conversion of the spirit." This thesis, in part, is a symbol of the restlessness that has been invoked in me by my faith.

The study is about the persons in community who opened themselves to this research. To the executive, to friends in the region (Bud and Ann, Cathy and Ken) and members of the Christian Task Force, I am deeply thankful for the opportunity, openness and learning that was shared. I believe this community of faith is an important example of hope for all those searching of the possibility of the continued resistance to the injustices for our day.

To a special group of women, those of the Friday morning prayer group (Marta, Rita, Kathy, Janet, Heather and Kathie), who have taught me more than words could ever express, I say thanks. "Let us not under-estimate our collective power but continue to gain strength from our shared experiences and lift those voices in the spirit of our African wisdom song."

To my friend and mentor, Micheal Law, who believed in me from the very beginning, who challenged me in developing a critical edge and whose words of wisdom in the Bus-stop cafeteria triggered this thesis into motion, I express my gratitude.

I also want to acknowledge with thanks, the contribution of my committee for their openness in meeting my time limits. I express my gratitude to Tom Sork for his patience and continued feedback on the numerous drafts submitted.
Finally, I want to express sincere thanks to my parents whose faith in me and constant encouragement and support provided me with this opportunity of growth.

To one and all, named and unnamed, I say thank-you.
I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the purpose and background of the study. The research problem reflects the importance of this study illustrated in adult education literature. Finally, the chapter will provide an overview of the thesis.

A. EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE

The slogan 'adult education for social transformation' is one heard in the field today, but what does this really mean? What does it mean to educate in a "liberatory" fashion, that is, to educate for social justice in a society orientated toward maintaining existing power relations?

The basis of my interest in social transformation is political and comes from a concern that the present existing order of Western industrialized society is repressive and unjust. This concern is fueled by a commitment and solidarity with the marginalised, silenced and oppressed. It is from this commitment that I question the structures of power operating today; that I challenge the increasing complexity and privatization of processes in our society which locates power in the hands of a minority. I hold that the rhetoric of democracy has become a mask for relations of domination; a domination not only in the economic and political spheres but one that also extends into the social (and thereby has a degree of control over the nature of social thought).

Critical theorists argue that global society, ruled by exploitative trans-national corporations and dominated by a "technocratic" or "instrumental" (ir)rationality, is consciously structured to block, constrain and contain societal wide transformative action that challenges its power base (Welton, 1988). Furthermore, they argue that the nature of power exercised by the elite has
become so "manipulative" that people have become victims of this power because they are not aware of the precise ways they have been implicated in the very processes that are oppressive (Freire, 1973; Giroux, 1988).

It has been suggested by such critics that to expose the impact of the social system requires the creation of both a new consciousness and a new will (Leroux, 1988). It is in this process that adult education can be seen as playing a vital role. Such a process is one that requires a "critical pedagogy" - a pedagogy that challenges on the basis of what some term "false consciousness" and that also challenges the unjust elements of the social structure. Thus, the concern that drove this study was the possibility of political and social transformation and the role that adult education plays in this process.

B. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

Generally absent in North American educational literature is an attempt to link adult education to the wider struggle for radical democracy (Giroux, 1988; Paulston, 1980). At base, this is due to the relative rareity of linking the two, in practice.

1. The Dominant Model

According to critical theorists, the dominant model of adult education is characterised by a "conservative pedagogy." It is conservative in the sense that it is apolitical and acritical in its approach. That is, it does not seek to question relationships between knowledge and power nor between culture and politics. In general, the content of programs leaves little room for students to generate their own meanings, to act on their own lived histories, or to develop "critical
thought" which challenges the dominant culture. Rather, this model has occupied the ground of non-bias and neutrality and reveals a liberal philosophy of "individualism" (Keddie; Thompson, 1980).

Critics also argue that within the dominant camp, programs that do propose to be of a social change nature reflect an "adaptive" framework of social change (Lovett et al., 1983). It is adaptive in the sense that existing social relations are taken as a given. In other words, with emphasis on social mobility, the value of meritocracy and professional expertise - social processes are stripped of their political nature and content by being situated within the framework of social adjustment rather than social and political emancipation.

In general, this means that educational disadvantage is equated with explanations of human inadequacies and so personal characteristics of the individual become the focus for change. The underlying concern is with the self improvement of individuals, furthering personal benefit and fulfillment and the promotion of social justice in terms of individual responsibility and opportunity (Keddie, 1980). With such an individual and psychological orientation, this model leaves unquestioned the fact that personal problems do not exist independently of the social context; that is, independent of economic and political structures in society, in which the creation of inequality occurs (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Within the "adaptive" framework, adult education practice reinforces the status quo and unchallenged power base of the elite; it is one of "adapting" or "coping," not challenging the existing order of things (Lovett et al., 1983, p. 2).

In this light, it can be argued that the liberal way of addressing social change is problematic. The personalised and individualised nature of politics not only masks the nonnecessary conditions of oppression; it also insures or enhances
the survival of a social system by eliciting accommodation to it. Therefore, it has
the function of removing people from the arena of historical, social and political
struggle. The dominance of such "liberal" politics has resulted in a crisis of
practice; that is, a failure to establish in practice the social justice ideals it
espouses (Welch, 1985).

It is the opinion of this writer that the present social context demands a
more radical stance and transformative strategy of change. The "liberal hope of
changing the context and process of education to make it more responsive to the
needs of the disadvantaged, is a vain one without corresponding and significant
changes in the organisation and control of economic life" (Lovett et al., 1983, p.
2).

2. An Alternative Model

A more radical and transformative strategy of adult education requires a
pedagogy that is "critical" in nature. It is a task that is as "engaging" and
"empowering" as it is radical: to build the conditions that allow humanity to
search for its self understanding and meaning (Giroux, 1988). Reality should
never be taken as a given, but instead, has to be questioned and analysed.

Knowledge must be linked to the issues of power, which suggests
educators and others raise questions about its truth claims as well as the
interests that such knowledge serves. This means that facts, issues and events
should be presented in a problem-posing way to students. Knowledge, in this
case, demands constant searching, invention and reinvention. The practice of
education becomes that of a "challenging" education, a critical act of knowing, of
redefining the everyday understandings of how society works, of discovering the
ways dominant ideology acts as a conditioning force and of the challenge to think of possibilities for shaping a new future (Freire & Shor, 1987). The central questions for building a critical pedagogy are the questions of democracy, justice and power.

This alternative way of conceiving education is one also aligned with what I have termed the "transformative" paradigm of social change. It acknowledges that adult education's role in the change of oppressive conditions is part of the wider struggle in changing power relations. This view is different from the dominantly held view, because it holds that the struggle for democracy and social change not only involves a pedagogical task but also a political one. That is, critical pedagogy is but one step in the process of social change. Whilst it can make a contribution in the development of a new consciousness, to talk of social change, one must also address a "pedagogy of mobilisation" (Law & Sissons, 1985). Thus, such an alternative recognises struggle and direct action as an important dimension of transformative education. It is such writers as Freire and Gramsci that redefined the notion of political struggles, emphasising their educational nature.

While some insights into critical pedagogy may be found within institutions, one needs to look beyond them to concrete social struggles for an understanding about a broader range of practices and methodologies (due to the greater distance from formal institutional power). Ohliger (1974) talks about such education work: "outside the establishment or at its fringes, we need to work with individuals and groups who are moving towards an awareness of political and economic oppression and are acting against it" (p. 48). Such an interest is also reflected by Lovett, Clarke and Kilmurray (1983) who advocate the need for
adult education to establish closer links with community action and social movements, to create alternative adult education systems which place greater stress on linking education with action.

Looking at transformative pedagogical practice in such sites would provide adult educators with the opportunity to understand collective and active learning processes that potentially lead to empowerment and social change. As Welton (1987) suggests, resistance to and transformation of societal structures emerges from the adult population and is premised upon movement and individuals' ability to learn new ways of seeing the world and acting within it. Thus, this thesis is concerned with the hope that broad based social change can and does occur in an educative fashion. With this view, the salient core characteristics of a critical transformative education model are: social change vision, a critical pedagogical strategy and a pedagogy of mobilisation (transformative action) (Law & Sissons, 1985; Welton, 1988).

C. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

It is the "pedagogy of mobilisation" that has been virtually ignored in adult education literature. In general, what currently passes for much radical educational theory represents "a language of critique, devoid of any language of possibility"; that is, the necessity of hope as a precondition for radical thought and struggle is not dominantly characteristic of prevailing forms of radical educational theory (Giroux, 1988). In part, the profoundly anti-utopian nature of such theory is due to "the isolation of theorists from larger social movements and sources of social criticism as well as to the pessimism of those academics who distrust any form of struggle or theorising that might emerge in public
spheres outside the university" (Giroux, 1988, p. 205).

In view of this absence, and in relation to the "alternative model" proposed, the challenge for future research is to concretise, and critically assess transformative practice in relation to reality. In this sense, there is a need to turn towards concrete social struggle or movements to deepen an understanding of the role of adult education in social transformation. Further, this thesis proposes that social struggles are of themselves, intensive learning grounds for "teachers" and "learners."

The Vancouver based network, the Christian Task Force on Central America (CTFCA), was the site for my study as it provided a practical reality with which to begin to examine more deeply educations role in the struggle for social justice. Explicitly and implicitly, the CTFCA has an education mandate which is political at base. In broad terms, their stated objectives are to participate in the transformation of social justice in Central America and in the transformation of Canadian consciousness. In this sense, the CTFCA might be located within the social transformative paradigm.

In this light, my quest for untangling the web of "adult education for social transformation" did not lie solely in academia but also in an exploratory study of the practice of a solidarity based movement which continues to educate its members in that liberatory action which their practice consists of.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this study was to use the concrete experiences of the CTFCA to gain an understanding of critical pedagogical practices that explicitly seek to facilitate social change.
The study involved three tasks:

- To identify the vision, values and assumptions that guide the educational approach of the CTFCA.
- To discover and draw out the elements or principles that shape are shaped by its educational practice; and furthermore to explore how the Task Force's practice departs from and fits with the "dominant" and "alternative" models of adult education.
- To identify factors that strengthen or weaken the Task Force's practice to facilitate change and, in so doing, to make some comments about its effectiveness.

2. Format

Following this chapter will be a section that presents two theoretical models of adult education. Chapter Two outlines the dominant "adaptive" social change model of adult education from a critical stance. Chapter Three creates the theoretical base for understanding the alternative "transformative" social change model. This model as proposed has three dimensions: social change vision, critical pedagogy and a pedagogy of mobilisation (or transformative action). Chapter Four outlines the qualitative research methodology involved in the study. Following this is a section which presents the Case Study. Chapter Five provides the background to the Christian Task Force on Central America including the foundational base of the network which gets at the vision, aims and assumptions underlying its practices. Chapter Six provides a discussion of the Task Force's educational practice, focusing on its strategies and activities (i.e content and methodology). Chapter Seven draws out the elements that shape the Task Force's
educational practice and discusses the factors that obstruct or enhance the Task Force's efforts to facilitate change. Finally, a summary of the findings will be presented and suggestions for greater effectiveness of practice to the Task Force.
II. CHAPTER TWO: EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: A CRITIQUE OF THE DOMINANT MODEL

This chapter locates the dominant model of adult education for social change within a theoretical framework; a framework consisting of both political and pedagogical assumptions which shape subsequent educational practice. It is not my intent to address specific practices but rather to present, in a critical manner, a generalised theoretical model of the dominant approach to social change education.

In North American adult education, the liberal progressive tradition has provided the framework which guides the "dominant" approach to social change. Without entering into a historical analysis, this discussion begins with the argument that early progressives, such as Lindeman and Dewey, are acknowledged by contemporary adherents to this tradition, but that they have lost their radical cutting edge and have been incorporated within a framework that has adopted a softer political ideology and resulted in a more conservative pedagogical practice.

A. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

The central idea of reform - liberalism - underlying this framework is that it accepts the way social relations are organised. Such a view takes the structural relationships of society for granted and argues about being "fair" within them (Wren, 1986). In other words, the institutional structures and values of industrial capitalism are regarded as the basis of order and, in practice, should not be considered for fundamental change or as challengeable in any major respect. Reformist strategies for social change attempt to achieve
proclaimed goals of "equality" and "justice" without altering the underlying structures. The conception of change is consistent with the ideas of "improvement" - attempting ("after the fact" as it were) to improve what can be improved. Change becomes seen in the form of "adjustments" that are necessary to keep society moving along an expanding trajectory of progress. In this light, education's role becomes part of the process whereby "human beings learn to adapt to and cope with ongoing social, economic and technical restructuring" (my emphasis, Law, 1986, p. 2).

In general, the dominant view of democracy is consistent with the tradition of parliamentary politics. Relying heavily on the liberal logic of electoralism - on a system of competing political elites - this tradition adheres to established, legitimate forms of political participation such as the "ballot box and the political party as instruments of change" (Selman, 1990, p. 332). Such a notion of democracy results in the situation in which the "politics of everyday life" are not part of the concerns of the majority of the population. Rather, it encourages those features of institutionalization that "leaves the vast majority of the population politically inert between elections and seeks to erode oppositional identity" (Boggs, 1986, p. 239).

Associated with this orientation is the assumption that the elected government will use power justly and act in the interests of the majority to maintain the equalitarian principles of distribution of resources and creation of opportunity (Elsey, 1986). Essentially, the close alliance between economic and political power is ignored; the increasing penetration of representatives from the business sector in positions of political leadership has not been challenged. The consequence is a political situation more and more removed from popular control
by the people. Nor does the liberal view question the pervasive power of the
elite to uphold and transmit cultural values that shape the way we think about
ourselves and the world.

Furthermore, the dominant ideology holds on to the view of "equal
opportunity for all citizens," and uses this notion as a blanket to cover and shy
away from the current realities of power and conflict in society. It is reluctant
to face the clash between beneficiaries of injustice and its victims (Wren, 1986).
Rather, it argues that various interest groups in society have an equal ability to
compete for power and resources. With this orientation it is natural that some
groups in society will occupy a weaker position in the political "snooker game"
and that some will have a smaller piece of the economic pie (Lovett et al.,
1983).

In this light, inequality (or poverty), is defined from an economic/material
perspective and seen in terms of standard of living: "when income and
expenditure fall below the level of subsistence to survive on basic necessities"
(Elsey, 1986, p. 36). Such a limited definition further distances the wealthy from
those marginalised and makes it possible to talk of poverty as one of the 'social
ills' that affects a small group 'over there'. It disguises the fact that in reality,
the majority of people are denied their rightful share to the nation's wealth and
access to political power. Poverty begins when these rights are denied. The
Canadian government's own publications show the inherent contradiction in
clinging to a perception of reality as one of "equal opportunity." In 1984, the
top 10% of Canadian families owned more wealth than the rest of the population
combined. In 1984, the top 20% had 68.8% of the wealth; the second 20% had
19.8% share leaving the lower 60% of the population with only 11.4% (G. Oja,
B. PEDAGOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The relationship between education and society has usually been cast within current relations, "seeking greater access for oppressed groups" or "educating members to perform functions within the structure of state and industry" or raising the level of public awareness over political, economic and social matters (Allman & Wallis, 1990, p. 26). The dominant model of social change education is located predominately within an "individualistic" and "apolitical" framework.

The individualistic component arises from the dominant reliance upon "normative" life span and human development approaches to learning theory, which contribute to an analysis of problems without substantive criticism of the broader socio-political and economic context in which problems are created and experienced (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). This means that situations of social injustice are dealt with "adaptively or therapeutically by individualizing the problem or deflecting any chance of critically examining how it arose" (Law, 1986, p. 4).

This central thrust results in a more "privatistic" conception of liberation and has led to the generation of programs that have resulted in the success for the individual rather than a remedy of the social problem. That is, the "personal" becomes emphasised over the "social" and individual mobility (personal salvation), is the outcome. Mobility in this sense means nothing to the social class; the only true mobility would be the destruction of structures in which inequality lies. Whilst it cannot be denied that personal liberation is a fundamental part of social liberation, Freire and Shor (1987) point to the need to
address both elements in unity, otherwise there results a "false separation" that plays one against the other.

The second fundamental characteristic of the dominant model is its "apolitical" nature. Fostering democracy is seen as a pure educational endeavour and independent of any real challenge to the political system. Critics argue that this approach reduces the slogans of political action, such as freedom and equality, to ideals achievable through education. As a result, these have failed to be concretised in any real sense, and thus remain at the level of rhetoric without any practical substance (Welch, 1985; Giroux, 1988). This is characterised by the fact that much of the language of liberating education has been divorced from its radical roots by the dominant model. In selecting the more humanistic and individualistic aspects of critical theory - those which can be put to instrumental use in adult learning terms - the dominant model neglects the ideological critique and socialist vision associated with those elements. That is, adherents to the liberal tradition have taken ideas from sources which are too radical to assimilate into practice without distortion (Griffin, 1988).

As Collins (1990) writes, critical thinking in the liberal-humanist tradition is marred by its relativism and its emphasis on individualism which over-rides its concern for collective action (p. 98). As such, it becomes couched in terms of "raising awareness" and that, in itself, is seen as enough to heal injustice by changing the conscience of people. From a critics view, the problem in the liberal tradition is its failure to provide a "rational and compelling basis for action towards a more genuinely democratic society" and its lack of a "clear analysis of the coercive societal structures which prevent its realization" (Collins, 1990, p. 98).
In a critique of Mezirow's theory of "perspective transformation," Collard and Law (1989) have also pointed to the "problematic" inherent in leaving collective action to the realm of mere possibility: "it leaves the impression that emancipation can be realised without social action" (p. 105). In allowing for a degree of political detachment the dominant use of the terms "critical thinking" and "empowerment" is critised by Griffin (1988) as being only "a new manifestation of personal growth psychology" (p. 177).

In terms of social action response, then, the dominant model is characterised by a more "accommodatist" philosophy; it prefers to tackle issues as they arise - to be pragmatic. Wren (1986 calls it the "philosophy of the given situation: given the situation of need, what can we do?" (p. 109). Given that it is government policy to have low wages and cuts to social programs, how can we help those who suffer as a result? Such a philosophy encourages a helping/coping or charity mentality which lacks the long term strategy and vision associated with a more radical social democratic agenda. Collins (1990) sees it in terms of "complicity" in support of prevailing economic, political and social terms which "determine the way things are" (p. 97).

Adult education's response to problems arising from our social environment can be seen with respect to particular target groups: women, minorities, the elderly, the poor. In practice, the dominant model turns to the nature and characteristics of the individual and is consistent with the idea of the "disadvantaged adult"; disadvantage refering to "personal defects" (Thompson, 1980). The basis for intervention by adult education is then couched in terms meaningful to "individual remedies," such as lack of communication skills; lack of confidence, lack of knowledge or life skills related to employment, health and
civic matters (Keddie, 1980). Implicit is the idea of "compensating" people for their condition by providing educational or other services. As Thompson (1980) suggests, the liberal optimism has resulted in all sorts of well-intentioned missionary activities that are based on attempts "to help" but actually conspire to distract attention from the root causes of structural inequality and powerlessness in society (p. 160).

A second response can be seen in light of the community change models. "Community development is an educational process that persuades people to create their own programs with help from various sources" (Grantham & Dyer, 1981, p. 16). It was adult education's way of "reaching out" to those on the margins and resulted in the reorganisation of education around local issues, with the intent of promoting a new form of learning - that of "practical problem solving" (Lovett et al., 1983). With the liberal community development model, the clients as learners are believed to be the best judges of their own needs and the needs of their community, but it is also believed that they probably need or would benefit from professional help in getting the process started, obtaining outside resources, and gaining maximum learning from their experiences (Grantham & Dyer, 1981, p. 16).

The basic critique of the majority of community development models lies with their "middle class origin" (Lotz, 1971, p. 122). "The traditional reluctance of educationists to acknowledge the political nature of their task has led to the acceptance of superficial, tokenistic gestures in community education" (Batten, 1980, p. 27). The problems in need of change are dealt with as those problems of "other people" - "the poor", "the underprivileged," "the underdeveloped" (Lotz, 1971, p. 125). The dominant model relying on a "tidying up" view seeks
remedies through personal/group change by providing people with relevant knowledge and practical skills to deal with problems. As Hamilton & Cunningham (1989) point out, for the most part, "programs require neither the transformation of the problem situation nor the analysis of ways to reconstruct power relationships" (p. 448).

C. CONSERVATIVE PEDAGOGY

Critics argue the dominant approach to social change employs a "conservative pedagogy" which suppresses questions regarding relations among power, knowledge and domination (Giroux, 1988; Freire, 1985). Questions of power are subsumed under the imperative "to master the facts," to "learn the skills," to "accumulate and manage information," or to "acquire knowledge." The dominant framework within which social change ideas are developed carries with it a claim of "objective" knowledge; this refers to forms of knowledge and methodological inquiry that are untouched by the "untidy" world of beliefs and values (Freire & Shor, 1987). In maintaining a guise of value-neutrality, this stance ignores the fact that knowledge can never be constructed independent from particular interests and assumptions. Therefore, neutrality conceals that knowledge is representative of the dominant culture which legitimates particular social relations and lived experiences and is therefore a particular version of "truth" (Welch, 1985). This results in the marginalisation and exclusion of the voices, histories, and experiences of those groups who by virtue of their class, race, ethnicity, and gender are not part of the dominant culture (Freire & Giroux, 1989).

In presenting a one dimensional history and cultural narrative which
legitimises those in power, the emancipatory potential is lost (Cunningham, 1988). The dominant pedagogical approach does not provide learners with any significant opportunity to envision a future not embodied in the present; nor does it allow people to build up an opposing body of knowledge to confront "official knowledge," which has as its raison d'être the maintainance of the system (Ibid, p. 137). What is lost is that learning is not simply "about" but also provides a sense of identity, value and meaning. Writing about Freire's ideas, Giroux (1981) noted that:

Knowing is not a matter of the best way to learn a given body of knowledge, but a theoretical-practical issue designed to distinguish between essence and appearance, truth and falsity. Knowledge parading under the guise of objectivity, has for too long been used to legitimate belief and value systems that are at the core of bondage. 'Objective' knowledge not only mystifies, but it also turns people into spectators by removing the norms and values underlying it from public debate (p. 131)

An important pedagogical element in adult education has been the link between learning and experience; it has provided strong grounds for education that is learner-centered. Educationalists like Dewey made a case for basing curriculum on the needs, realities, and problems of everyday life rather than on abstract, formal knowledge (Darkenward & Merriam, 1982). For adult educators, experience has become a rich source of learning (Knowles, 1980). However, critics such as Usher (1989) argue that within the dominant tradition, no attempt is made to treat experience in any way problematic. Rather, experience is conceptualised within a conservative framework of humanistic psychology and seen as "asocial and subjective" (p. 23). That is, experience is linked with a certain kind of subjectivity to produce the ground of learning in which individuals reflect on their experience in a manner which is "personal and private" (Ibid, p. 28).
Such an interpretation is consistent with the assumption that because reflection goes on inside the head, it is unique to the individual self and results, therefore, in the construction of "unique meanings." In order for experience to be part of a liberatory pedagogy, Usher (1989) argues that reflection has to be seen as situationally embedded and concerned with action as well as thought. Furthermore, the "relationship between reflection, the knowledge it generates, and the human interests associated with different kinds of knowledge has to be recognised" (Usher, 1989, p. 23).

In terms of facilitation of programs, the dominant pedagogy has failed to establish a new liberatory leadership style. Although much energy and effort has gone into the creation of approaches which seek to facilitate the learning encounter in a soft, person-centered manner, critics argue that this dominant model lacks "genuine mutuality" or trust between those facilitating and those seeking access to knowledge (Freire, 1973; Allman & Wallis, 1990). Criticism arises from the concern with the dominant professional service ethos. This ethos promotes the image of educator as one who is licensed to "know" and to maintain a professional political distance. That is, the professional stance of objectivity and neutrality implicitly creates an unequal relationship as it removes the facilitator from the experience of learning; learning becomes "for" and "to" the people rather than "with" (Allman & Wallis, 1990, p. 25). This relationship is also complicated by the issue of control and power: how much is the facilitator willing to let the leadership baton pass from hand to hand? Or is there a fear that this may result in "chaos;" a result in different outcomes than planned? (Wren, 1986)

The management model of "efficiency" has had some influence on
mainstream practice, in that principles of "time" and "results" dominate the learning process. As Allman & Wallis (1990) point out "knowledge is being apportioned in smaller and smaller pre-packaged modules and the educational act is reduced to methods of delivery in which performance is measured against pre-determined competencies in a systematic process" (p. 26). Such a thrust limits the more creative elements of the learning process and does not promote an agenda which directly encourages changes in the ability to question, reason and think critically, nor does it really allow those involved to take ownership of the process of learning.

**D. SUMMARY**

In summary, then, this discussion argues that the current dominant model of adult education for social change has not seriously confronted the reality presented by industrial capitalism. Rather the dominant understanding of social change has coopted the radical cutting edge of earlier progressives into a more conservative pedagogy. This critique acknowledges that "personal liberation" is absolutely necessary for the process of social transformation but argues that it cannot be an isolated element of the process. The following chapter will present an alternative model of social change education; one that locates "personal transformation" in the context of social action. To talk of adult education for social change, then, is to talk of an education that addresses wider socio-political relations.
III. CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

This chapter will present an understanding of "adult education for social transformation" developed from the literature. This will be followed by a discussion of transformative education in terms of presenting the theoretical model developed.

A. THE TRANSFORMATIVE PARADIGM

An alternative way of conceiving education for change is what can been termed the "transformative" paradigm. Such education assumes a critical posture toward the present institutions and seeks change of a systematic and societal nature. "Liberating education involves learning associated with the struggle to survive in a world not organised in the interests of the majority" (Law & Sissons, 1985, p. 69). It acknowledges that adult education's role in the change of oppressive conditions is part of the wider struggle in changing power relations. Liberatory education should be understood as a process or practice where people are challenged to mobilise or organise themselves to get power (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 34). Here, power refers to the power with people, in which a common and more democratic future is created. This political orientation has two elements: the expression of alternative knowledges and the struggle of those knowledges against dominant forces.

In this light, it is in the context of social movements that we find those people who have made the political choice and commitment of acting in response to the current injustices. We see most explicitly not a "mere longing for a different society but, rather, the actual transforming of present society and the creation of a new culture springing from this process" (Preiswerk, 1987, p. 36).
That is, "it is at the margins, where the harsh reality of social life intersects with an embryonic perhaps defensive, collective response" (Law, 1986, p. 5), that we see a practice of adult education that takes seriously the working with people to build a responsible solidarity that can evolve as a collective movement in pursuit of economic, social and political democracy.

It is these more radical projects which link education with action that the concept "adult education for social transformation" takes on its full meaning. It is an alternative educational view founded on a grassroots, activist approach that assumes "an organised people, engaged upon the building of a new society, becomes the agent of its own education" (Preiswerk, 1987, p. 36).

B. POLITICS OF TRANSFORMATION

Radical perspectives on adult education and the struggle for democracy have emerged and intersect with social movements. Historically, it was usually the working class and socialist movements with which radicalism was identified although, in Canada, this could be extended to include the CCF (Commonwealth Cooperative Federation) and the Antigonish movements (Law, 1990). In the 1950's and through the 1960's, the principal sites of radical approaches to adult education in North America were the new arenas of political struggle: first, the civil rights movement in the United States; later, the various movements of the 1960's that were generally grouped as the "New Left" (Ibid).

More recently, radical approaches to adult education have been associated with the New Social Movements (NSM's). These can be defined as "popular organisations," formed by activists committed to bringing about change and who mobilised themselves around single issues or areas of concern, such as women's
rights, the environment, human rights, international development and solidarity concerns. As Findlay et al., (1988) write people were drawn out of a deep sense of personal commitment and refused to accept the inevitability of injustice, violence and alienation. What distinguishes the NSM's from earlier movements is that the NSM's tend not to be built on class lines, but draw their members from "the new middle classes" (Cohen, 1985, p. 667); establishing an alternative meaning of "membership" which Offe (1985) characterises as "highly informal, ad hoc, content sensitive and egalitarian" (p. 829). Over time, these movements have not only significantly altered popular consciousness, but public policy has also been altered as an outgrowth of struggles on many different fronts (Boggs, 1986).

Today, we are entering a new phase of "political struggle"; a phase that is redefining the meaning of socialism and consciously seeking to transform the relations of capitalism. At the root of any discussion on social transformation is the concern with the "creation of democracy." The interpretation of democracy that most social movements have struggled and continue to struggle for is a form of "grassroots participatory democracy." At its base lies the idea of popular power, of a situation in which power, and perhaps authority, rests with the people (Arblaster, 1987). Duncan and Lukes (1963) describe it in terms of "a society marked by wide discussion and consultation, so that the whole people know the reasons for decisions through taking part directly or indirectly in their formulation" (Cited in Thornley, 1977, p. 22).

Arblaster (1987) also points to the fact that the "purposes for which ordinary people wanted political democracy, or the vote, have not yet been fulfilled by any means" (p. 100). Others argue that if any form of popular
democracy requires individuals to have the capacity to impact the governing decisions that determine the fate and shape of the society in which they live, the underlying condition of "popular democracy" in the West is clearly weak and fading in efficacy (Alperovitz, 1990, p. 14). There is thus, a logic in the principle of democracy which points toward radical socialism. "Economic power is political power, and it makes no sense to implement the principle of equality in respect of votes while leaving every other form of political power to be distributed according to the gross inequalities of the capitalist market" (Arblaster, 1987, p. 102). And as Charles Lindbolsm similarly points out "the large private corporation fits oddly into democratic theory and vision - indeed, it does not fit" (Cited in Alperovitz, 1990, p. 16).

The struggle of the current phase can be described better still in the words of E. H Carr who writes:

To speak today of the defence of democracy as if we were defending something which we knew and had possessed for many decades or many centuries is self-deception and sham...The criterion must be sought not only in the survival of traditional institutions, but in the question where power resides and how it is exercised (Cited in Arblaster, 1987, p. 105).

In this respect, the principal practical implication is that democracy is still 'unfinished business' on the agenda of modern politics and must be created. Such is the struggle of social transformation, refering to the reconstruction of the asymmetrical relations of power and privilege that inform and regulate daily life under monopoly capitalism. The struggle for social justice is not simply to effect changes or reforms that bring material benefits or improvements for people. Rather, the concern is how to ensure that the conditions necessary for true democratic participation and liberty are met in society.
C. EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE: THE RADICAL STRATEGY

The issue for those interested in adult education's role in this process is to understand how - collectively and individually - we are implicated in maintaining the relations of power in society. It is from this basis that it then becomes possible to engage in transformative educational practice. As Raymond Williams' (1989) work illustrates, a goal of adult education practice is radical democracy: to understand the modern world and act politically to change it. It is from this concept that a model of transformative practice can be described. The essential components are: a vision of radical democracy; a critical pedagogy concerned with fostering an "understanding" or "critical consciousness" and finally a "pedagogy of mobilisation" which is concerned with the strategies of political action. It is this model that will be discussed below, but first the theoretical framework (or assumptions) underlying it will be outlined.

Assumptions

In examining the relationship between social transformation and adult education, the theoretical framework can be located within a post-marxist paradigm.

A key assumption underlying this radical model is the notion of historical relativism. This refers to the understanding of social phenomena in terms of a specific location as regards history; thus the present context is seen as being historically dependent and specific. It is from this basis that one can understand the 'language of possiblity' or 'hope' for transformative practice.

This links to the second assumption which is the role of human agency in the struggle for change. The primary focus of this argument is that people are "actors" not "spectators" in the politics of everyday life. Such a view is
grounded in the faith of people, in solidarity with them. Freire (1985) describes this dimension of "praxis" as "a process in which people assume the role of subject in the precarious adventure of transforming and recreating the world" (p. 81).

This assumption is linked with the reaffirmation of humans as social beings. An important characteristic of human beings is the way in which their ideas, intentions and motives are dependent on a particular social formation. How people interpret themselves, the world, and their place in the world is socially constituted (Law & Sissons, 1985). The liberal conception of individuals as autonomous, separate and isolatable from their social origins has been criticised by Robert Williams as "merely an abstraction which distorts the understanding of our real social relations and dependence on others" (Cited in Olssen, 1982, p. 12). This notion is then linked with the idea of "social responsibility" that is fostered in the collective struggle for change.

Radical ideology is also connected to the open examination of conflict in society. It views society in a dialectic sense; as containing a "multiplicity of social relations which contain contradictions of interests and can serve as a basis from which social groups can struggle and organise themselves" (Giroux, 1985, p. xii).

This paradigm is also characterised by the stance that no education is neutral. As Allman & Wallis (1990) point out "all educational acts are political, so all education 'workers are obliged to choose the direction they wish to take" (p. 26). Similarly, Freire (1985) writes:

"no pedagogy is neutral. They all have a form and content that relate to power in society, that construct one kind of society or another, and they all have social relations that confirm or challenge domination (p. 13)."
A final assumption is associated with the pedagogical logic which informs the transformative process; that of praxis: action and reflection. It is a dialectical theory of cognition which places social practice front and centre. That is, it gives priority to the productive, material activity of people and the corresponding forms of cultural activity. It treats cognition as an activity that cannot be dissociated from practice (Preiswerk, 1987, p. 118). The requirements of practice are constantly producing, accumulating and modifying knowledge. “Experience is converted into knowledge that is ever being transformed through its permanent verification in practice in a never-ending process” (Ministry of Education, Nicaragua, 1986, p. 13). Neither the supposed “theoretical knowledge” (which without practice takes people further from an understanding of their task) nor practice by itself (without consciousness that enables people to act intentionally) can constitute true knowledge (Ibid, 1986). It is these assumptions that lay a common ground for those interested in radical social change.

D. A TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL MODEL

A transformative adult education movement contains three core elements. Each of these elements is embedded in and informs the others; they are by no means separate and linear but rather are connected in a circular representation where each is linked and has a relationship with the other two.

1. Vision

The vision educators have provides an essential dimension of education - the language of meaning. As Evans (1987) suggests "transformative education needs the explicit articulation and remembrance of a vision and the constituent
values that sustain that vision" (p. 279). That is, effective resistance to injustice and certainly the energy to act for structural change demand constant clarification of a critical and emancipatory vision, an "alternative map of reality."

It is this "map" that then guides educational practice. As Law (1986) writes:

...inspired by that vision, educators can then develop a coherent systematic pedagogy that better relates what we do in our everyday life to the values and the aspirations we have for our wider community (p. 4).

2. Critical Pedagogy

The second aspect of the model refers to critical pedagogy and addresses an educational practice which critically informs, challenges and engages people in the creation and recreation of knowledge.

A central element in the dynamic of transformation is social consciousness, both for initiating change and for sustaining the movement toward justice. It is characterised by the encouragement of a new vulnerability in people, an openness to questioning impressions previously accepted as the "way things are" (Kennedy, 1987, p. 246). Maxine Greene (1978) emphasises the critical consciousness that makes people aware of their presence in the world and of the existing reality that requires action. She stresses the importance of "questioning the every-dayness" of our lives and of becoming ever more aware of how we might be free to contemplate the possibility that "life might be otherwise." For Shor (1980), the development of social consciousness is marked by the "re-perception of reality" (p. 93). That is, the enveloping realm of the routine is extracted from its habitual foundations. This process of reconstructive learning is a means to "delegitimise the absence of democracy in our day to day experience" (Ibid, p. 104).
A key strategy in this process is that of critical thinking: the learning that involves people in a critical process to gain an understanding of political, economic and social forces that influence daily life. Freire & Shor (1987) suggest that in the process of assimilating critical knowledge, one needs to go beyond a mere description or opinion of the material and begin to know the raison d'être which explains the material (p. 82). The challenge for those involved in transformative education is to address knowledge and its intrinsic relation to conflict and domination. What produces our knowledge about the world? Whose knowledge is taken as real and whose is rejected as inadequate? Whose voice is heard and whose is silenced? The more description is removed from understanding, the more consciousness is controlled. That is, the individual is kept only at the surface level of reality and does not go beneath it, into a deep critical understanding of what makes their reality what it is and why (Freire & Shor, 1987).

It is this critical element that is at the core of transformative education. To criticise means, among other things, to react, to respond; it is opposed to acceptance and passivity. To be critical also takes on another connotation - namely, it becomes crucial to freedom, autonomy and justice. Critical thinking involves choice and is a quality of awareness which enables people to perceive a range of options in the way they act and which enables them then to choose a course of action deliberately and with the intention of changing some aspect of their reality (Leach, 1982).

The second part of the critical process is the experiential aspect which moves beyond the provision of information and seeks to engage people in action. That is, it is a process that goes far beyond the usual concept of "knowing
about." Rather, it necessitates personal involvement beyond intellectual knowledge (Isasi-Diaz, 1983). It refers to the entering into some strategic activity at a point of readiness for those getting into it, and, in working actively, growing into a broader critical consciousness of what is involved. That is, "to know" viscerally is essential if learning is to do more that add another layer to the cocoon of conditioning within which we live (Force, 1987, p. 81-82). As Thomas Green (1971) suggests, education is a process whereby "people might test their capacity to face the truth and enhance their ability to change their minds; their change of mind may happen "not only in respect to what they believe but also in respect to what they decide to do" (p. 216).

Transformative learning seeks to provide freedom to escape hegemonic thinking- that is, "go beyond what seems fixed and irreplaceable" (Purpel, 1989, p. 133). As Evan's work (1987) illustrates, imagination is part of a pedagogical strategy which creates in people sensitivity to the breaking points of the present system and nourishes in them a longing for a new kind of society. If we have faith in imagination, we must first create the ability to "possibilize," to have hope rather than despair (Purpel, 1989, p. 135). As Freire and Shor (1987) suggest, imagination can be exercised as a resource to open up space for transcendent thinking. In social inquiry this means a "moment of reconstruction" (p. 185). The capacity to imagine allows us to create alternatives and frees us to transcend the boundaries we once ourselves established. We have created our world and must continue to create, or more accurately re-create (Purpel, 1989). As Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) have also pointed out "by imaginary we mean the proclivities toward creating an alternative world, not representing that which is" (p. 18-19).
The primary methodological strategy of transformative education has been referred to as dialogue; "cointentionality" or a partnership of mutual cooperation is the fundamental base (Butkus, 1983, p. 150). It is not to be understood as a technique but is rather indicative of a critically communicative process, rooted in a horizontal relationship between individuals. Dialogue is a "joint act of knowing and reknowing" the material under study, not transferred as a fixed possession or held as the exclusive possession of one of the individuals in the learning encounter (Freire & Shor, 1987).

Speaking either confirms or disconfirms the social relations of the people engaged. Rasmussen (1985) reminds us that the dominant understanding of power is "calculatedly nonmutual." In most circumstances we "seek maximum influence on the other with minimum influence upon ourselves." Power is exercised "competitively and adversarially with the aim of mastery or control" (Cited in Evans, 1987, p. 271). Liberating dialogue is a form of resistance to such relations and is a process based on mutual equality with the intention of discovering the truth cooperatively and with openness (Butkus, 1983). Such a process by itself remakes authority.

3. Pedagogy of Mobilisation

The final dimension of the model refers to a "pedagogy of mobilisation, to the activist strategies of transformative education which arise from the context of "grassroots" struggle. These can be looked upon as the often implicit elements embedded in the building and sustaining of a movement; the practical involvement of people in its organisational and political practice. Only social conditions can explain cultural expressions against oppression, and these structures need more
than a critical pedagogy to be changed. As La Belle (1987) points out, "social change comes not from pedagogical levers but from the combination of these levers with the organisation of groups for achieving political ends" (p. 205). Therefore, while education is not the lever of social transformation, politics itself is an educational event.

I have chosen to use a combination of community organisation theory and ideas about popular education to draw the key strategies of "activism." With regards to organising and participation, both community development and popular education are similar in practice. What distinguishes them is the rhetoric and ideology that form their foundations and establishes goals (La Belle, 1987). In this discussion, I am focussing on the educational process and struggle that seeks to transform relations from the "bottom up," and can therefore be contrasted with the liberal approach which often utilises "top-down strategies" by external agents or "professionals."

The grassroots education process is characterised by the building and organising of people, the community. Change comes from power, and power comes from organising. That is, power cannot be defined in mere functional terms; it is also about how people relate to one another in their material world and, as such, is lived and practiced in the social relationships that are part of daily life (Kemmis, 1988). Social empowerment refers to the creation of conditions in a pattern contrary to the conforming pressures of society. It demands involvement in the struggle to bring about a just order of relationships. A supportive community allows persons to discern and respond to demands for transformation with a degree of honesty and integrity that would be impossible alone. In the absence of such organising, people feel powerless and resign
themselves to a rationalization: "its that kind of world, or all we can do is hope that something happens" (Alinsky, 1971, p. 119). It is through organising for change that education is fundamental for organisational viability and achievement of goals. The very purpose and characteristic of a people's organisation is educational (Paulston and Leguene, 1980).

But movements are more than organisations of structure and membership. They are the creation of an alternative culture characterised by the informed shared perceptions and expectations of members, values they hold, the ways they go about doing things. Gramsci's argument in the 1920's was that the organisation of movements was a necessary counterforce to the political development of the interests of the dominant classes. Organisations must struggle to create, consolidate and diffuse their own social conceptions. That is, struggle must go beyond the political and legal realm and include a cultural and ideological consciousness of how dominant classes use institutions to impose their direction and values onto others.

Participation, as an educative force, is at the heart of the transformative educative process. Ultimately, people's commitment depends on how they actually experience authentic involvement. Participation entails sharing ideas, decisions, work and credit with one another to mesh into a collective effort and "contributes to the development of individuals through a variety of experiences" (Staples, 1984, p. 131).

One such experience is that of leadership development of all members. In all instances those who function as leaders will have to take the initiative to motivate others and to show the way through example. The idea is to build in opportunity for more responsibility and work - a rotating leadership circle for
people to enter into. This kind of broad-based involvement is "the strongest antidote for the tendencies toward centralised leadership and conservative, rigid organisational structure" (Staples, 1984, p. 126). Skills can be learned in a wide range of areas including (but not limited to) recruitment, holding effective meetings, action tactics, negotiations, working with media and fundraising. Development of these abilities and skills will "lessen dependence on outside organisers and professionals" (Ibid, p. 59).

Another educational experience is the development of analytic and strategic thinking. A strategy is a well thought out plan to achieve a specific goal or set of goals. Strategic thinking is systematic, logical and analytical. Each possible option for organising action will produce a reaction; "strategic analysis is a way of examining the helping and hindering forces that will impact on any change effort" (Staples, 1984, p. 80). It is an educational process which enables people to form ideas about the properties of things, to explain the causes of phenomena (understanding that their effects change when the circumstances in which they occur change), to discover the relations and interactions among them and the overriding principles; all which goes to make up knowledge (Ministry of Education, Nicaragua, 1986, p. 12). Such a method of thinking is achieved through "investigating reality, communicating and socializing information, analysing and interpreting it, and playing a role in it" (Ibid, p. 17). It is a process of knowledge that makes it possible to achieve a dialectic comprehension of a reality on the move. The aim is for people "to recover and value their practical, productive, social and political experience, adding to it and incorporating reflection on it" (Ibid, p. 23).

Popular education has been termed the educational dimension of political
activity (Preiswerk, 1987); it prepares people to take advantage of opportunities so that they can become capable of acting for their interests and exercising power in an organised and systematic manner (La Belle, 1987).

It involves the expectation that individuals will proceed from analysis to the identification of avenues of action aimed at penetrating the political sphere. Education is intended to assist in designing strategies that challenges those in power. It is an educative process that "encourages a greater willingness to use conflict and to challenge authority" (Bailey, 1974, p. 143). Conflict is viewed not as something to be carefully avoided but as a constructive process which can help people move toward their goals of social justice. Selman (1990) points to two discernable "levels" of action that engage people: large scale demonstrations and media events - meant to have impact on public policy and public opinion; and the activities of individuals as they seek to influence those around them, and in some cases, model the type of behaviour they are promoting (p. 56).

Unity through coalition and network building is a vital strategy in the transformative process. Solidarity refers to an educative process, rooted in relationship building which promotes advocacy beyond a narrow self interest and is centered rather on the wider community. It is a process which begins within a community and moves outward reaching individuals and those groups who share similar "issue goals" and further outward to those who in some way share the general goals of social transformation. That is, each level of expansion, starting with the particular struggle and making links across struggles, strengthens the popular base of power and counteracts the opposition tactic of division.
E. SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter presented some of the insights gained from the literature on "adult education for social transformation." It also drew the principles together to develop a model of transformative education which is a radical alternative to the liberal model. The following chapter will present the methodology involved in the study.
IV. CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research method of qualitative case study. It begins with an introduction to the method. This is followed by a discussion of the researcher’s relationship to those involved in the study. A discussion of the data collection method follows. Finally, the process of data analysis will be presented.

A. INTRODUCTION

The methodology chosen for this study was that of qualitative case study. The principle reason behind this choice linked with the focus of the study: to further understand social movements as an educative force. Turning to a practical site was deemed fundamentally important and consistent with the researcher’s desire to incorporate an explicit "experiential," "concrete" or "practical" dimension to the study; a dimension that was interwoven with the theoretical body of knowledge that exists about adult education and social transformation. The decision was also linked with the research problem which was orientated towards "insight, discovery and interpretation" rather than hypothesis testing.

Qualitative research can be differentiated from other research designs by what Cronback (1975) calls "interpretation in context" (p. 123) and what McDonald & Walker (1977) call "examination of an instance in action" (p. 181). Thus, the suitability of this research design is that in essence it is a naturalistic inquiry orientated towards the exploration, discovery, description and analysis of the social relations and processes of a "particular" group or community. The focus of the inquiry will be to ascertain the type of adult education that is provided by one particular movement, the Christian Task Force on Central
America, and by taking this one step further will also examine how, why and for what ends.

**B. THE CASE STUDY METHOD**

It is important to note that the knowledge derived from case study research is different from other forms of inquiry; as Stake (1978) points out - by its very nature - it tends to the more **concrete**; that is, case study knowledge resonates with our own experience because it is more vivid, concrete, and sensory than abstract. Wilson (1977) also points to case study research as being compatible with experiential understanding: "...found to be a direct and satisfying way of adding to experience and improving understanding" (p. 263).

A fundamental assumption which is central to the research design chosen is that qualitative research allows for the subject of the researcher's experience to be taken as a given and is not seen as inconsistent with validity, but rather to be its source. As Polayni (1958) states, sense impressions, intuition, creativity - all ways of personal knowledge - are valid. This assumption is linked with the philosophical interpretation of reality as a **social construction**: "The social world is not 'out there' with characteristics, attributes and appearances independent of individuals experiencing it; it is constituted through intersubjective communication and action" (Smart, 1976, p. 86). In this orientation that guides the study and the researcher's interpretations, intuition and experience are as central to the study as these characteristics are in the participants themselves.
C. SELECTION OF SITE

The Christian Task Force on Central America was the case site chosen for the following reasons: it is a solidarity movement with a primary educative focus; it is a movement with which the researcher had contact and a working relationship; it was conveniently located in B.C with its office in Vancouver; and it was a movement that offered a "case" for examining the relationship between education and social change.

The researcher also made a strategic choice to focus on a "particular" case study rather than do a comparative study because it was felt that a single more indepth study would allow for a deeper and more synthesized understanding and allow for the exploration of the theoretical dimensions related to "transformative educational practice" in the time frame permitted. However, it must also be noted that the clear type of study not to do a full description of the CTFCA but rather was interested in generating theory about a particular aspect of it - that of "transformative education." Therefore, the primary purpose was to use the CTFCA as a "case" or "practical" site for building theory upon practice and practice upon theory. Furthermore, the decision was made not to look at individual members of the Task Force and their personal journey of transformation but to understand "transformative educative" in the context of the Task Force or network as a whole.

Boundaries

In selecting the CTFCA, it is important to state the boundaries of the case. The Task Force, as characterised by its members, involves 26 communities scattered throughout B.C, but can be divided into 4 regional zones: Vancouver, the Islands, Northern B.C and the Interior. Because of the researcher's time
constraints and financial considerations a strategic decision was made to make Vancouver the central site of the study. Because of the office being located in this region, it is by its very nature the Task Force's clearing house and base for outreach to the different communities. However, the study included visits by the researcher to various communities in the Interior which enabled the elements of both the office's work and the region to be incorporated.

These boundaries were consistent with the intent to use the case study primarily as a "practical site" to build theory, rather than for the purposes of descriptive case study.

D. RESEARCHER'S RELATIONSHIP TO PARTICIPANTS

The researcher's initial contact with the Task Force began in January 1989. Since that time, the relationship and involvement of the researcher with the group has developed significantly. In October 1989, after returning from Nicaragua, the researcher became a formal member of the Task Force and also began to volunteer at the office in Vancouver, spending approximately 15-20 hours a week engaged in the activities of the Task Force. The formal study began in January 1990 and permission was given through the executive meeting to use the Task Force as a focus of the research inquiry. This was also made known to fellow members.

It is in this context that the researcher's relationship to the participants in the study has to be seen as different than most case studies. The primary relationship to the movement must be seen in terms of "member" and then secondly as a researcher or observer for the purposes of inquiry. Therefore, because the researcher was involved and had a relationship with the movement
before the study began, it brought to the study a different dimension than if the researcher had approached the movement for the sole purpose of doing research.

The strength of the researcher's relationship can be seen in terms of the "trust" already built with the co-researchers or participants in the study; and also in terms of the familiarity and working knowledge of the activities of the group before commencing the study. This also allowed for the accessibility to operations and aspects of the work that could not have been obtained by an "outsider."

The concern that some critics have raised is the "emotional stake" or bias that such a relationship could introduce into the research outcomes. However, it was the conscious awareness of this possible bias that also enabled the researcher to deal with it. This will be discussed below under "dealing with reliability and validity."

E. DATA COLLECTION

The primary method of data collection was that of participant observation, supplemented in part by interviewing and documentation.

1. Participant Observation

The participant observer gets to see things firsthand and to use her (or his) own knowledge and expertise in interpreting what is observed, rather than relying on once-removed accounts for inferences (Merriam, 1988). However, Patton (1980) points to the balance needed between insider and outsider roles in the qualitative research process: Experiencing as an insider is what necessitates the "participant" in participant-observation. At the same time, however, there is
clearly an observer side to this process. "The challenge is to combine participation and observation so as to become capable of understanding the site as an insider while describing it for outsiders" (Patton, p. 128).

It is this view that captured the essence of participant-observation as a method of data collection for this study. That is, the "participant" role allowed the researcher's knowledge and involvement with the Task Force to be interwoven with those of the co-researchers; the "observer" role allowed for the openness or degree of "distance" to be kept so as to fully capture and communicate the "case" to those unfamiliar with it.

As a method of data collection, the researcher's involvement with the activities in the Vancouver office was a principal site for participant observation. Aside from this, participant observation also took place in the context of different events and meetings. This included attendance at the Task Force executive meetings held monthly and the meetings of educational working groups. It also involved attendance at events such as the Annual General Meeting, the Central America Week Conference and strategy and analysis workshops that have a direct bearing on the work of the Task Force. The key principles underlying this method of data collection are understanding, description and interpretation.

2. Interviewing

A second aspect of data collection involved informal interviewing. As Webb & Webb have so aptly pointed out: an interview is a conversation - but is a "conversation with a purpose" (Cited in Burgess, 1982, p. 107). Patton (1980) explains further this role:

we interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...we cannot observe feelings, thoughts
and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. The purpose of interviewing is to allow us into another person's perspective (p. 196).

In this light, interviewing in an informal manner was part of this study's data collection: to gather information on the historical aspects of the Task Force and to gain insights into the education work from the perspective of those involved. Interviews took place with some members of the Task Force; informants were chosen on the basis of their experience as active members of either the executive committee, the different working groups, or as regional representatives.

A strategic decision was made to use a less structured format of interviewing, one based on conversation, that would allow the individuals to respond in their own terms rather than in the researcher's perceived categories for organisation. Thus, the interviews were of an open-ended style and the sequence and wording of questions were dependent on each informant.

3. Documentation

Finally, data about the educational offerings and the movement was acquired through available printed information. The following list points to the variety of material:

- letters, memoranda and other communiques;
- agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events;
- administrative documents - proposals, and other internal documents;
- newsclippings and other articles appearing in the media or bulletins that are of relevance.
For this study, the most important use of documents was to augment evidence from other sources. Merriam (1988) has stated that the advantage in using documentary materials is "stability" (p. 108). That is, documentary data can be seen as an "objective" source of data, and as such is a complement to the more "subjective" forms of participant observation and interviewing.

F. DEALING WITH VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner (Merriam, 1988). The concern raised by critics of "naturalistic inquiry" is around the issue of "rigor" or "trustworthiness" of making interpretations. In addressing this concern, it is important to point out that because "understanding" is the primary rationale for this study, the criteria for trusting the study is different than if testing hypotheses is the objective. It was recognised by this researcher that observation and interpretation are by their very nature subjective but they can still be made susceptible to reliability and validity checks.

Reliability was enhanced by recording wherever possible the concrete data (including verbatim utterances and opinions) on which inferences were based; reliability of observations was assisted by the exposure of data to cross-checking the observations over time in order to reconcile inconsistencies; cross checks were also made by supplementing observations with interviews, and with feedback to the members of the Network for their comment.
G. DATA ANALYSIS

Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe the process of data analysis as an interactive process in which material is continuously gathered, analysed and theorised. Similarly, Merriam (1988) describes the process as "recursive and dynamic" (p. 123). The goal of data analysis, according to Taylor and Bogdan (1984) is "to come up with reasonable conclusions and generalisations based on a preponderance of the data" (p. 139).

Consistent with the purpose of this study was the desire to move beyond description to add a further dimension of understanding - that of "analytic generalization." This refers to the generalizability of the case to "theoretical propositions" with the goal to expand and build theory (Yin, 1984, p. 21). As Merriam (1988) writes, "thinking about one's data - theorizing - is a step toward developing theory that explains some aspect of educational practice and allows one to draw inferences about that activity" (p. 141). Speculation is the key component to developing theory in a qualitative study and involves a playing with ideas probabilistically (Ibid, p. 141).

The form of analysis for this study was a constant process of "verification" with material from the models and "generation" which was the development of new principles derived from the case. This dual focus allowed for understanding practice in light of reflecting on theory and adding to theory in light of reflecting upon practice. In this sense, conclusions reached should not be treated as final, but as a point of departure for further studies and as a contribution to the understanding of transformative education.
H. SUMMARY

This study is then orientated towards "meaning" and strives for "depth of understanding" in its analysis. Most openly put, the final document produced from this study is what precipitated from the subjective intersection of many gazes. A tapestry woven together by the researcher herself, but the threads are those of the informants and other participants who, in combination with the researcher, provided the experiences that enabled reflections about those processes to be integrated with information obtained from other sources. The following section (Chapters Five and Six) of the thesis will present and describe the "Christian Task Force on Central America" as the case-study, showing such weaving in action.
V. CHAPTER FIVE: OUTLINE OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK FORCE ON CENTRAL AMERICA

This chapter will provide an introduction to the network of the CTFCA. The discussion will focus on the historical moments leading to the development of the Task Force as a Central American solidarity organisation; the underlying vision and philosophy that guide the work of the network and its internal functioning. The intention of this chapter is to provide the historical background and a contemporary overview of the case study.

A. HISTORICAL MOMENTS IN SOLIDARITY WORK

The formation of the Christian Task Force on Central America in B.C. in 1984 was the culminating step in a 10-year-long process of solidarity work, community networking, consciousness raising, government lobbying and solidarity/exposure tours to the region. The following discussion highlights the concurrence of the various historical events in Central America, Canada and B.C that led to the development of the Central American solidarity movement in B.C and the Christian Task Force in particular.

One of the historical moments in Latin American solidarity work for Christians was the Latin American Catholic Conference of Bishops in 1968 in Medillin, Columbia. It was at this conference that some of the more radical facets of theology were expressed. One of the significant affirmations was the Churches' commitment to a "preferential option for the poor." Such an initiative inspired many Christian communities in Canada to re-examine the relationship between faith and action.

A further historical moment was the critical response by many Canadians
to the CIA-backed overthrow of Chilean democracy in 1973. "Project Chile" was a Canadian Inter-Church coalition (sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches) that was formed as a concrete response to the far reaching battle for social justice and democracy that was sweeping Latin America.

One of the important groups that played a key role in the Canadian solidarity movement was the "Latin America Working Group" (LAWG), an independent body made up of different labour and church representatives with an office in Toronto. LAWG's analysis, research and educational work around corporate interests dominating Canadian trade and diplomatic ties with Latin America have been crucial to the solidarity movement's development. In 1973, LAWG issued the following challenge:

Canadians who ignore or tolerate this warfare on the hope and future of a people by private corporate empires based in the United States (or any other country) simply invite upon themselves a similar threatened future. If and when Canadians act in solidarity with the Chilean people, they may learn something about their own liberation (Cited in McFarlane, 1989, p. 151).

Furthermore, LAWG developed ties to Church activists, Canadian non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam, Catholic Development and Peace, CUSO (Canadian University Service Overseas). It also linked with the Canadian Labour Congress, helping unite these distinct organisations into a Latin American lobby in Canada.

For the Churches, the growing influx of refugees and the realization of the need to act as their advocates deepened the commitment to educational work around Latin American issues. In 1976, in the wake of this "heightened awareness" of the call to solidarity, the time was right for Project Chile's mandate to be revised and the new Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in
Latin America (ICCHRLA), housed in the Canadian Council of Churches' offices in Toronto, was formed. Its central role was to act as an ongoing monitoring and information clearing house on the human rights situation in Central and South America. This involved liasing with Latin American churches, research and documentation and policy advocacy work. However, it also went further and tried to bring closer to home the struggle for social justice. In its 1978 ‘Open Letter to America’ the Canadian church leaders not only painted a dismal picture of the human rights situation in the region, but also linked the struggles of the poor abroad with those in Canada.

We recognise that our situation in Canada is not as grave. Nevertheless we want you to know that we see a commonality in our struggles for justice because we are victims of similar structures of domination and dependence. As Canadians we recognise that some corporations based in Canada exploit Latin America and deny you control over your destiny. As Christians we join you in opposing this injustice. At the same time Canada is dependent on the same centre of economic power as is most of Latin America. Our struggle to liberate ourselves from this dependence is one way in which we can struggle in solidarity with you (Cited in McFarlane, 1989, p. 152).

It was the strength of the Latin American solidarity movement, coupled with the raised public consciousness of popular struggles in Central America, that gave rise to a second wave of solidarity work: the establishment of human rights and solidarity networks focusing particularly on Central America. The historical moment that set the context for this work was the Nicaraguan revolution in 1979. In immediate response to the revolution, ending 70 years of Somosa dictatorship, solidarity campaigns began mobilising Canadian public opinion to support the new Sandinista party. By the end of 1980, the enthusiasm of Canadian churches, trade unions and support groups for the Nicaraguan revolution
began to broaden to include support for popular revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The strengthened public awareness and lobby work resulted in continued demands being made to Ottawa around its policy to the region. The forces of Central American solidarity were not easily put off by the foreign affairs "experts." As David Bickford, a longtime External Affairs official, put it:

> It used to be that we could say in External Affairs that we are the people with the expertise. We could say 'We've got a man down there on the spot who can tell you the way it is.' Now the churches come back and say, 'No, we had a team down there last week, and this is the way it is.' (Cited in McFarlane, 1989, p. 166).

**B. ORIGINS OF CTFCA**

In B.C, the solidarity movement was consolidated in 1981 when a group of 20 trade unionists, church and NGO representatives, spent 3 weeks in Nicaragua as participants in a work/study tour. The education work done on their return, especially in terms of presentations to a wide variety of groups throughout the province, generated interest which resulted in the formation of the B.C Nicaraguan Solidarity Project. Since that time, the work has been developed further by sending groups of people to the El Salvadoran refugee camps in Honduras and the Guatemalan camps in Southern Mexico.

The Churches involvement was further strengthened when the Inter-Church Ten Days for World Development project focused its national education program on Central America for three years commencing in 1982. This program brought significant growth to the church community, deepening the political and theological understanding of the Central American situation and increasing the number of people called to act out of their faith, on behalf of Central Americans (Ten Days
Handbook, 1989). An integral component of the Ten Days program was that of "Third World visitors;" this element provided the opportunity for individuals from the Third World to come to Canada to share and discuss issues of their reality. These visits also enabled personal relationships between Canadians and Central Americans to expand in breadth and depth.

Another important element of Christian solidarity work was the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches' gathering in Vancouver in 1983. For many attending, a new vision was molded; that of peace with social justice. Speakers addressing the conference from a third world perspective brought the message that "peace without development, without social and economic justice, and peace without responsibility for human rights, was a hypocrisy and a contradiction." Such challenges stimulated further the commitment of many Christian activists in B.C.

In B.C., the Christian involvement in the Central American solidarity movement was most clearly manifested in 1982 with the formation of the Guatemalan Refugee Project. This initiative was the foundation stone of the Christian Task Force on Central America (B.C). In March/April of 1982, a group of 6 people visited the Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugee camps in Honduras. At this time, the tragic situation of the refugees in C.A received very little regular or consistent attention from Canadian media. Most coverage was characterised by an "immediate events" and "trouble spot" style of reporting which was sporadic and provided little opportunity for people to develop an awareness of the issues. It was with the group's return to B.C. and subsequent education talks that penetrated people's awareness and interest regarding the situation; the credibility of those who had first-hand experience in the region
created a demand for more regular up-to-date information and opportunities for action by concerned groups throughout B.C.

These demands and experiences fused in 1983 with the organisation of the educational program called "Refugees in Central America: Education and Action Project." Officially sponsored by the Kamloops United Church and funded by donations from families throughout B.C. as well as by a Canadian International Development Agency grant, this project had a number of specific aims and objectives: to enable other B.C delegates to travel to the region and build a pool of people having first-hand experience of the situation there; to set up a system of communication between children in the camps and in B.C.; and to support refugees in their struggle for self-sufficiency by developing outlets in B.C. for goods produced in the camps. The project had as its facilitators a Guatemalan couple who were forced to flee with their five children from Central America, and were able to come to Canada in July 1982 because Kamloops United Church agreed to sponsor them as convention refugees.

This project's significance was that it involved people in a participatory, grassroots educational experience. Community leaders emerged through direct experience in the region; this experience provided powerful learning incentives that were fed back into different communities throughout the province. It also created opportunities that brought a number of constituencies into common education and action, i.e churches, trade unions, educators and youth. Another unique aspect was the participation of volunteers in organising and developing programs and the high degree of personal financial support which bonded people into a deeper commitment.

A second project that consolidated the Christian solidarity movement in
B.C was the "Witness for Justice and Peace" program - an initiative which was stimulated by an article in Sojourners Magazine (November 1983). In 1984, a group of B.C. residents travelled to Jalapa on the Nicaraguan-Honduras border to begin a program of ongoing witness for justice and peace - to provide a nonviolent presence in the midst of war. Delegations worked and worshiped with Nicaraguans in conflict zones (i.e in areas where "contra" attacks have destroyed villages) and also learned about the Nicaraguan socio-political process. For many participants, it was an expression of friendship born out of a desire to help protect the fragile experiment in justice being undertaken in Nicaragua. This initiative provided a logical extension of previous actions in developing solidarity among peoples. Such personal witness for justice and peace was seen as a response to the history of Christian involvement in reflection on the gospels, a response to the call of the church for actions promoting justice, and an awareness of the struggles in Central America. The witness was a concrete attempt to show solidarity with the people in Nicaragua by sharing their life, with all its pain and tensions, and with its hope and vision of a new future. "The Nicaraguans know the faith that is born of risk and sacrifice. It is a lesson many of us North Americans are just beginning to learn" (Hollyday, 1983, p. 11).

The personal presence provided by the "Witness Program" was to demonstrate that in Canada there was a growing number of people who cared deeply about the situation in Central America and were prepared to work in solidarity for peace and justice. It was a statement of resistance to the governments who were supporting directly or by their complicity the situation of war against the people of Nicaragua.
The program was designed so that on participants' return to Canada, education work would be done to mobilise public opinion and work for change in the policies and structures which create injustice in Central America.

C. FORMATION OF THE CTFCA

It is these uncoordinated historical initiatives and the anticipation of the ongoing demanding nature of the Central American struggle that nurtured the emergence and formal establishment of the Christian Task Force on Central America (CTFCA). Already in place was a network of people scattered around 26 communities in B.C. tied through their involvement in various ways in Central American solidarity work.

The Task Force evolved through a series of collaborative meetings in 1984, involving a core group from around the province - representing communities from Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and the Southern Interior. This consolidation of the Task Force "infused its founders with renewed commitment - a commitment born of a shared historical experience and vision." (CTFCA Formation Document, 1984).

In forming the Task Force, founding members were conscious that a different organisational framework was required which would be rooted in the gospel, be based on a covenant, reach decisions by consensus and encourage "grassroots" participation. The central threads that pulled the structure together were the facilitation of Central American solidarity work and the development and nurturance of a Christian response to the "bruised world," one rooted in faith and community (Zarony, 1986, p. 2). It was the vehicle that linked together the many individuals and communities throughout B.C involved in
Central American work.

Describing the Task Force is difficult, as it is characterised by a dynamic structure that is unique in B.C. I would describe it foremost not in terms of an "organisation" but in terms of "people;" in terms of "relationships built between people" both within Canada and most importantly with sisters and brothers in Central America. It is these relationships that provide and give shape to the Task Force as an ecumenical network of people and groups who are concerned with the struggles for justice arising from the Central American situation.

The objectives that were established to guide the thrust of the Task Force's work in B.C were outlined in the original formation document as follows:

1. To maintain and further evolve an educational program designed to conscientise, motivate, equip and mobilise the Christian community in B.C to active and effective solidarity with the struggle of Christians in Central America;

2. To provide the necessary coordination and organisational capacity to service the network in B.C. as it evolves and to integrate new interest and leadership into ongoing education work;

3. To act as a vehicle through which the Christian community in B.C. can constructively collaborate with other constituencies interested and/or committed to working for peace and justice in Central America.

The solidarity work takes many forms and new programs are added spontaneously in response to needs expressed by the people in Central America. This is partly the reason why the Task Force has remained a flexible, nebulous, multi-dimensional organisation.
D. VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

In discussing the philosophy, vision and assumptions underlying the Task Force's work, I will address the explicit and implicit social change, theological and pedagogical dimensions which give it direction.

1. Social Change Perspective

The Task Force's social change vision is one based on seeking justice in Central America; that is to support struggles for life and liberation. It is rooted in the biblical/prophetic Christian tradition of justice. At root is the theme "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice...?" (Mic.6:8). Micah and other prophets call the non-poor to a reversal of their dominant life commitment in relation to the poor.

This vision also challenges the Task Force's vision for North America. It is aligned to the struggles that are committed to building democracy - a democracy that takes its cue, not from elections, but from peoples' participation and the respect for human rights - not only politically, but economically and socially. At its core is the seed of "solidarity" which provides many challenges and profound inspiration from a point of faith, hope and commitment. The Task Force is challenged by the more radical notion of "solidaridad" arising from the people of Central America: this refers to a "way of life" - living out a commitment to social justice. It implies taking risks, individually and collectively, to challenge the unjust structures of domination, to voice the "truth" of injustice, and to work in concrete ways to further democracy. A notion that extends this practice to the struggle within Canada and other parts of the world.

In being true to the practice of "solidarity," its concern is also with the
quality and strength of relationships between people - of building community and resisting the "individualising" and "alienating" aspects of the dominant culture facing people today.

2. Theological Perspective

The Task Force's theological perspective is one inspired by Latin American liberation theology and base Christian communities'. By the example of a "vitaly alive faith" offered by Christians in Central America to those in Canada, the Task Force has been challenged and continues to be challenged to put "Christian" into the heart of its organisation and as a collective body - to a deeper commitment of "spirituality." The Central American example helps build the resistance to the temptation of surrendering to the despair and overwhelming forces of power and domination that confront those committed to the struggle for justice.

The Task Force has responded to the call to be "radically" Christian. As Zarony (1986) has previously pointed out, "contrary to conventional wisdom, radical does not refer to a 'lunatic fringe' but rather to the root or fundamental essence of something" (p. 10). Part of this challenge is to criticise the dominant culture that faces Canada in this new decade - a culture that, by and large, no longer respects human rights, but rather has committed itself to the rights of profit-seeking corporations. For the Task Force, the norm for that critique is justice and love. So to be "radically Christian means to have love, justice and hope at root, as the essence and to be recognised by deeds not words or labels" (Zarony, 1986, p. 10).

The people who originally gathered to form the Task Force committed
themselves to participation in specific ways, not just as a political statement, not merely as short term participation in another cause, but as an expression of faith and hope that within a prayerful, active, concrete covenant, solidarity with one another and with people of Central America could grow and more effectively resist the powers of injustice (Source: CTFCA Formation Document, 1984).

3. Pedagogical Perspective

Central to the Task Force's educational work is the theme of "consciousness raising through involvement." As Zarony (1986) pointed out in her research of the Task Force, involvement with Central America not only leads people to a critical awareness of the struggles and reality of the people in the region, but also of the social reality in Canada and the global context in which we find ourselves.

It is a pedagogy also designed toward action: that people may not only discover the "truth" but also "do" or "act" on their new vision. In commitment to the struggle against injustice, the Task Force sees as an essential part of its education program the development of concrete activities that will actively engage people. It is the Central American people who again provide part of the example and vision for what it means to live and educate for social change - people who actively struggle against "insurmountable odds," who risk their lives for even the simplest activities promoting the dignity and interests of the poor. The personal relationships with people in Central America provide ongoing vision that gives shape to the Task Force's educational work.
4. Organisational Principle

The central principle guiding the operation of the structure of the Task Force (as was advocated at the formation meeting) was that it be an instrument of coordination not definition; that it has the capacity to provide direction while maintaining flexibility. This assertion was based on the desire to ensure that the participation and responsibility of people based in communities around the province would be maintained and strengthened. The founding members recognised that in order to do so, the process of establishing priorities and key policy directions had to be forged through a responsible participatory process.

E. INTERNAL FUNCTIONING

The internal functioning of the Task Force, as a solidarity movement, will be presented by briefly describing the dynamic elements that give shape to the "operating of the network."

1. Working Groups

The operating mechanism that facilitates the solidarity work is "working groups" that reflect the priorities established through a process of critical evaluation and reflection on different facets of the Task Force's work.

The working groups and committees operating in any one year can change from one year to the next in response to needs arising from the situation in Central America and to the changing political context of work in Canada. That is, working groups are reviewed once a year (at the AGM) and new ones may be created and existing ones abolished depending on the direction and priorities set for the Task Force's work. The working groups are responsible for developing
and implementing specific programs and activities. Members of the Task Force commit themselves to different working groups at the AGM; that is, they voluntarily place themselves into various streams of responsibility for the work.

The founding groups were: "Education and Outreach" - which helped communities organise and implement workshops and seminars for developing local community awareness and solidarity work; "Reflection and Renewal" was the response to the need for sustenance and maturity of members in the context of community; "Urgent Action" is an organised network which responds to the human rights violations arising out of Central America, and is a concrete means of expressing solidarity; "Emmaus" was the working group that helped organise educational tours to the region.

2. Regional Communities

In terms of geographic distribution, one can say that the Task Force consists of a number of individuals - both isolated activists and members of a community working for social justice - who are distributed throughout four specific regions in B.C. Communities in each of the regions relate differently to the Task Force and to each other. The Task Force relates to these individuals in various ways. Some are part of the core leadership, others receive information on a regular basis, others occasionally, and still others are in contact with the Task Force when a specific activity occurs or through public events (Source: CTFCA Provincial Assessment Document, 1985). At present the Task Force has key contacts residing in the following regions: Castlegar/Kooteney, Revelstoke/Salmon Arm, Armstrong, Kamloops, Prince George, Port Alberni, Terrace, and Victoria.
3. Office and Staff

The Task Force operates with only two paid staff positions. The co-ordinator is responsible to, and receives direction from, the executive committee and liaises with the working groups in developing and implementing their work. The co-ordinator also develops collaboration with and response to, initiatives from other local (B.C. community and church), and National agencies and coalitions, processes and Central American partners.

The resource staff person, one of the founding Guatemalan facilitators, continues to provide the Task Force with important program support and direction, research and analysis. She also enables the Task Force to take a leadership role in Canadian solidarity work around Guatemala. The Task Force provides her with the necessary support to continue ongoing national and international Guatemalan solidarity work. This includes lobbying at the United Nations Commission for Human Rights meetings in New York and Geneva as well as participating in the National Dialogue Peace talks, since 1988, as a representative of Guatemalans in exile.

A unique aspect of the Task Force's mode of operation is that volunteers provide a crucial role in the work. The Task Force has created an open and participatory structure which allows for volunteers to be active and responsible for key elements of the work. In fact, different facets of the work are carried out solely by volunteers, and thus the operation of the organisation is dependent upon their work. Vital support provided by volunteers are in the areas of "Book-keeping," "Administration," "publication of the Newsletter" and "Urgent Action support."
4. Membership

The majority of the members are white and middle class in ethos, if not in lifestyle or background. "Members are at a variety of levels of social awareness, are involved in a variety of issues related to social justice both in Central America and in Canada, and have a variety of levels and notions of commitment" (Zaroney, 1986, p. 1). The membership of the Task Force has developed at two levels. "Active" membership refers to the formalised membership through a convenant agreement in which each member defines her(his) commitment to participation in various aspects of the collective work. "Supportive" membership includes notification to events and a subscription to the newsletter "Network News," but does not involve the time commitment of an active member.

The Task Force's policy around "membership" remains fairly open and flexible. As outlined in one of the forming documents, active membership implies agreement with the understanding of the purposes and rationale of the Task Force. It also implies participation, in one form or another, in some avenue of action related to the work of the Task Force. This involves a commitment to consciously work in the community from which a member comes, to enhance the awareness of people with respect to Central America.

5. Organisational Structure

The original structure of the Task Force was the establishment of two committees to coordinate and facilitate the work of the working groups. The "Program Committee" was the body made up of representatives from each working group plus three members at large. The purpose was to coordinate and
plan integrated programs for the Task Force, such as the monthly vigils held outside the Guatemalan consulate. The "Policy and Finance Committee" was established with three functions in mind: to provide integrative oversight to all facets of the work; to be the primary point of collaboration and structural planning involving Church leadership, National church organisations, and NGO’s and other sectors involved in the work; to coordinate the development of budgets and see financially necessity for the work of the Task Force.

After the first year of operation, the Task Force saw the need to examine more closely its structure to foster improved coordination, communication and community participation. A number of reforms were made to the original structure early in 1986. The policy and program committees were abolished and replaced with an Executive.

The Executive is made up of elected positions, community representatives and chairpeople of working groups. The elected positions are those of a (co)chairperson(s), secretary and treasurer(s). It was established that these people would be chosen at the Annual General Meeting of the Task Force held each year. The Executive Committee would meet every 4-6 weeks.

The Annual General Meeting, with different emphases each year, incorporate functions which are critical to the life and planning of the Task Force’s work. The important functions being evaluation and reflection, decision-making and planning, and community-building.

The evaluation task of the AGM is to reflect collectively upon the Task Force’s programs of the previous year, particularly with input from those in the regions. This information is recorded in an AGM report and guides the planning for the upcoming year. Time is also spent in examining the changes in the
context of the work, in Canada and Central America.

The AGM has become the time during which constructive planning for the following year takes place. Due to the variety of activities in which the Task Force is engaged, the number of people present, and the incredibly tight time constraints for planning, the AGM is but one part of the overall planning process.

A further dimension of the AGM is the opportunity for people involved and committed to the work to come together across geographical distances; to share experiences and participate in the broader community. It is a time for renewing people's commitment to the work through worship and celebration of the community.

6. Funding

The Task Force is supported, in part, by grants from national, provincial and local churches. It is supported by the United Church of Canada (through the Division of World Outreach), the Anglican Church (through the World Primate and Relief Development Fund), and the Catholic church (through the Catholic Development and Peace education project fund). The Task Force also submits applications to a variety of independent funding bodies and to NGO's for development education funds.

A unique aspect of the Task Force's funding is that up to and over 50% of the budget is provided by personal financial pledges from individual members. That is, people pledge on a monthly and ongoing basis. Each year at the Annual General meeting, an opportunity is provided to renew the amount pledged. Also, financial donations are made by individuals and organisations
throughout the year. This means that the network, as a whole, is able to maintain independence from the purse strings of government institutions.

Fund-raising events generate additional income for the operation of the Task Force. These are also seen as an educational tool to reach out to the general public. For example, activities include an annual educational fund-raising brochure, an annual benefit dinner and the sale of Christmas cards.

The fund-raising committee oversees this dimension and works to maintain current and seek out new funding opportunities in the area of grants, income raising activities and appeals.

F. SUMMARY

This chapter provided an introduction to the Christian Task Force on Central America. It presented the historical origins and context for the formation of the Task Force, the vision and philosophy informing its work and the internal structure and functioning of the network. The next chapter will introduce and provide a description of the educational work undertaken by the network.
VI. CHAPTER SIX: EDUCATION ACTIVITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK FORCE ON CENTRAL AMERICA

This section will present the different educational activities (or programs) of the Christian Task Force on Central America. The Task Force has five areas of work that are each defined by a general movement objective. The key educational activities provided by the Task Force are grouped together under each objective. This discussion is focused on describing purely the activities under each objective.

A. INTRODUCING THE ISSUES

This area of the Task Force's work involves providing educational activities that "introduce" the issues/struggles of Central America to the Christian faith and wider community. That is, to educate and animate new people around Central American issues and to encourage involvement in the Task Force's and others' program priorities.

1. Public Presentations (Slideshows)

Members and staff of the Task Force who have visited the region use the educational approach of "slideshows" to introduce to church congregations and other community groups the situation in Central America.

The structure of a "public presentation" is dependent on the following factors: the individual(s) hosting it; the audience (whether church congregation, general community or sectorial group) and the number of people attending; and the experience in Central America that the slideshow is about (i.e. a visit to the refugee camps, an exposure trip to Mexico). It can vary from a structured
formal presentation to an informal discussion. The general format is a presentation and discussion of the slides, followed by questions and answers, and an opportunity for action. An example of this educational work was highlighted in 1990 with a tour to the Interior of B.C. by two members who returned from a national trip to the Guatemalan refugee camps. Talks, workshops and presentations were made by the pair to a number of communities, churches and schools in the Interior.

2. Newsletter: Network News

The Task Force publication, "Network News," is an independent source of information and an instrument of communication for its dispersed network.

The Newsletter aims to provide articles of update and analysis on countries and issues in Central America and on Canadian foreign policy and bilateral aid. The articles are in some cases taken from research reports or publications that the office receives; or articles written by individual members drawing on resource materials to which they have access. Most articles selected are not merely descriptive, but provide critical reflection on the situation in Central America. For example, with recent elections in Nicaragua and El Salvador evaluated by official information sources as "fair and free," the Task Force, in its Newsletter, challenged people to consider the elections in a critical historical framework. "Overlooked in Nicaragua was the U.S-backed ten year war of military and economic destabilisation. Overlooked in El Salvador were the ongoing realities of military terror, and systematic abuse of basic human rights" (Network News, Spring 1990, p. 1).

Regional and committee reports provide information and details of the work
done in a specific community or by a "program committee" such as "Advocacy" or "Urgent Action." The intent is for members to share information and strategies about the work in which they are involved. The Newsletter also serves as an instrument for encouraging people to take concrete action by suggesting activities for their potential participation. An example is the El Salvadoran coffee boycott. Another element in the Newsletter is reflective and inspirational pieces written by members or Central Americans.

The Task Force publishes the Newsletter four times a year, with a distribution capacity of 2000 copies each time; 800 or so serve its direct membership (those on its mailing list) and remaining copies are available for distribution throughout Christian congregations, and in communities in B.C. and across Canada.

3. Central America Week

The week of March 24th was initiated by the Religious Task Force on Central America in the U.S as a time for North Americans of faith to focus their study, prayer and action on behalf of the people of Central America. It is now observed in communities across North America and Western Europe as a time to raise public awareness about the situation in that region.

The purpose of Central America Week is to draw to public attention the causes of the current situation and the assistance Canadians can offer through deepening their understanding of, and commitment to, the struggle for justice and peace in the region. Each year the week falls sometime around the anniversary of the March 1980 assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero; martyr and symbol of hope for the region.
The type of week organised by communities throughout B.C is shaped by the different organisations that come together for a week of public events, displays, film festivals, church services, vigils and political lobbying of officials around foreign policy developments. In Vancouver, the week is coordinated around a variety of public educational events sponsored by different solidarity organisations, with the objective of providing the public with an opportunity to receive update information on the struggles and political events of the countries in the region and ideas for action/response.

Traditionally, the Task Force was responsible for contacting organisations, inviting and encouraging them to participate, and for coordinating and putting together the calendar of events for the week. A conscious effort was made to target, reach or work with new groups which have not participated in the past. Most recently an initiative developed by the Inter-Agency Committee is to bring CA Week 1991 to different sectors of the community (environment, indigenous people, labour, students, women and church), linking Central American issues to the Canadian reality.

A "Central America Week Conference" has brought together, in solidarity, people from different sectors of the community, and from different regions throughout B.C. for a number of years. The conference aims to attract new and experienced NGO, agency, church and solidarity (Latin and Canadian) people. The purpose is: (a) to provide people with an opportunity to hear an updated analysis of the situation in Central America highlighting critical incidents and relating them to the political situation in Canada and the wider global context; (b) to strengthen the solidarity movement in B.C, and (c) to develop action strategies. In the past, the conference workshops have primarily been held with
the intention of "updating people." In 1990, the nature of the conference had a
different emphasis in response to feedback and needs expressed by those
attending in the past. The alternative was to host a strategy conference with
workshops focused specifically at strengthening and developing the skills of
committed and active members of the solidarity community. The workshops
focused on "media skills" and "campaign strategies."

For the Task Force, its primary educative work is with the church sector
in raising awareness of the Central American struggle. It is a special time to
motivate and mobilise people of Christian faith to new and renewed commitment
to struggle in solidarity with Central America.

As one area of focus the Task Force provides members with information
and resource materials to assist and encourage them to plan public events in
their church and community. Some examples include: the Central America week
edition of Network News, with feature articles on the biblical/reflective theme of
Central America week and on the life of Oscar Romero, a general brochure and
urgent action flyer providing update information, analysis and suggested strategies
for actions around Central America issues and Canadian foreign policy
developments. The Task Force offers concrete suggestions of a variety of possible
activities people can organise. For example, "to include special intercessionary
prayers for the people of Central America during worship services" or "invite a
resource person from your community to speak or show a film at your church"
(Source: Central America Week Resource Materials).

This week is the time when the Task Force encourages the church and
faith community groups to focus their attention on the commemoration of Oscar
Romero and all the martyrs who have died in the struggle for social justice. In
Vancouver the Task Force, together with the Latin community, contributes to the week by organising the Oscar Romero memorial and ecumenical service. This is a participatory event based on traditions of the popular church in Central America. The service is held in Spanish and English. It has traditionally been organised in cooperation with Salvadorans and Central Americans. Most recently, with a Salvadoran base community in Vancouver.

One of the major tasks around this week is that of "publicity." Promotional work for the Task Force involves: sending out press releases and posters to local groups, churches, local newspapers and newsletters; public service announcements on local radio stations; leafleting community colleges, universities, solidarity groups, public places with flyers promoting week events.

4. Vigils and Demonstrations

The educational purpose of a vigil or demonstration for the Task Force is to raise public awareness of injustices in Central America and of Canada's involvement in the region.

In most cases, the event is initiated and organised by a coalition or collection of Central American solidarity support groups (of which the Task Force is a part). In Vancouver, the Task Force (through its office) takes responsibility in initiating at times, in planning, in publicity and in mobilising its constituency to participate in the event.

In the past, the Task Force network held regular information vigils for a period of four years (December 1984 to 1989). Monthly vigils were held in Vancouver and other communities to express "solidarity and support for the people in Nicaragua," and a second in support of "justice and peace in
Vigils and demonstrations continue on a more ad hoc basis in Vancouver and throughout B.C. as a public and visual witness in solidarity. "Commemoration Vigils" are an act in solidarity with the people of Central America at special memorial times during the year. The intent is to keep remembrance alive of a specific event or moment in the lives of the Central American people. Vigils are also held in immediate response to an emergency situation that arises in Central America. For example, at the time of the Jesuit massacre in November 1989, a candlelight vigil was held in Vancouver to convey and express indignative solidarity with the people of Central America.

Demonstrations are called for in anticipation of, or as a response to, developments in Canadian and U.S policy towards the region. For example at a coalition organised demonstration on June 1st 1990, the Task Force reminded Canadians that "the repression still exists in El Salvador" and asked people to express this view to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and urge him to "raise the issue of escalating human rights violations and to withdraw all support in the way of aid until the killings, captures and tortures stop." It should be noted that the Task Force's role is often to provide input of action and policy analysis at vigils/demonstrations.

A key educational strategy of these events is to convey clear messages and get information to the public. This is done through a variety of activities which include: displaying banners and posters; distributing leaflets and information bulletins to participants and to the general public passing on the street; having "high profile" church speakers, local M.P's and members of the C.A community speak; and creatively conveying messages through the use of street theatre and
music. A second educational strategy of these events is to provide people with an opportunity to take specific action against an injustice and demonstrate solidarity with those suffering in Central America. The activities organised to facilitate this include: signing petitions; encouraging letter-writing (or sending fax), and lobby of the Canadian government on its policies; and delivering collective messages of protest to government officials at the embassy or in the consulate offices.

An important area of work in planning vigils is contacting and informing the media. Consistent with the purpose of these events as "public acts," the Task Force makes the event known to media contacts in order to get local coverage of the event. Contact with major newspapers, broadcast and television stations is made to inform reporters of the event and to provide background materials/resources for their articles or news coverage.

B. ENGAGING PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS

This area of the Task Force's work refers to the development of educational activities (that individuals and organisations can participate in.) Two major educational programs of the Task Force that contribute to this dimension of its work are "Urgent Action" and "Advocacy."

1. The Urgent Action Program

"Urgent Action" is a program that educates and mobilises into action an organised network of people around systematic human rights violations in Central America (and other emergency events). The purpose is to invoke change in the situation in Central America and, in Canada, to raise awareness about those
violations.

The Urgent Action Network first began to operate in an organised way in 1986. In terms of the Task Force's faith-based constituency, the network includes members, religious clergy and different denominational church groups with different levels of awareness in solidarity work, ranging from those newly aware of the Central America situation to those with a long standing involvement in the work. The network also includes individuals and organisations from different sectors and backgrounds in C.A solidarity work; for example, students, NGO groups, specific Guatemalan or El Salvadoran support groups, and the Trade Union Group. Presently the network involves a large pool of people from the Lower Mainland of B.C and Vancouver Island, contact people in communities across B.C, as well as contacts in the Prairies, Ontario and Quebec, and the Maritimes. The Task Force encourages contact people to pass on appeals to a local community network such as church groups, Central American support groups, or other organisations, as a means of increasing public awareness and of involving more people in the work of the Network.

In 1988, the Network was divided into six groups (presently 7 groups exist) and appeals are sent to one group only in a rotating system. Each group has a liaison person in Vancouver. These organisers are responsible for making contact with all people in their group to provide encouragement and support; to serve as a point of contact so that individuals who respond to appeals know they are not doing so in isolation; to evaluate the effectiveness of the Network in generating response, and to further educational goals.

The Task Force office in Vancouver receives and initiates appeals. It is primarily the staff that write/compose urgent action requests, based on
information they receive from the region (by letter or fax) from human rights commissions in the countries involved, from Amnesty International and other research and human rights bodies. Provided in each urgent action issued is a description of the incident, background information appropriate to the circumstances of the appeal, and a request for specific actions, including the necessary addresses, phone or fax numbers. Appeals go out to the network by letter (phone or fax) and members respond with "personal letters, phonecall, telex of fax" using information provided.

The majority of appeals are about Human Rights and include violations arising from political repression and militarization; violations of humanitarian law and practice and general violations of basic human rights. Some recent incidents include the following:

In an incident on Sun Feb. 11, the Salvadoran Air Force and the First Military Detachment bombed and rocketed the recently repopulated community of Guancorita in the province of Chaltangeago, killing six persons and injuring thirteen others, mainly women and children (Urgent Action, 12 Feb, 1990)

The bodies of three Guatemalan university students, kidnapped on March 26 in the capital were found buried in the southern province of Escuintla the next day (Urgent Action, April 6, 1990)

On May 3, Luis Miguel Parjarito, leader of the National Council of Displaced Persons of Guatemala (CONDEG) was detained/disappeared after leaving the CONDEG office (Urgent Action, May 15, 1990)

On March 25th, Rogelio Acosta, a member of a cooperative in Batan, Honduras, was detained by troops. Acosta was so severely beaten that his intestines were ruptured leading to extremely serious generalised infection. The reasons for his detention remain unclear and no charges have been offered against him (Urgent Action, May 4, 1990)
The 'suggested action' component of the urgent action request asks people to write letters (phone, fax or send telegrams) to different governmental, military or UN. officials depending on the circumstances of the event and the political climate at the time. One part usually suggests directing action towards the Government and/or Armed Forces of the Central American country involved; another part requests that people lobby Canadian (and U.S) government officials with the intent of pressuring for policy change. In some cases, the action will call for Canadian policy leaders to monitor and press the Central American government involved; and other times, it encourages action more directly around Canadian foreign policy (especially bilateral aid) or for the Canadian government to take a more active stand on human rights in the United Nations meetings and other international fora.

The network is also used to focus international attention on trips to the region involving "high risk" individuals such as those in exile. For example, in 1988 and again in 1989 the network was alerted to respond to the RUOG (Guatemalan United Opposition) delegation's return into Guatemala. This delegation is comprised of exiled Guatemalans living outside their home country who were returning to participate in the National Dialogue peace talks.

The network is also mobilised around Canadian and U.S foreign policy decisions, in immediate (or in a proactive) response to critical decisions regarding bilateral aid, the Central American peace process and refugee policy. A recent example of this is an appeal in January 1990, in which the Task Force asked members to respond proactively to the upcoming U.S congressional vote on renewing $380 million dollars in military and economic aid to the government of El Salvador.
Educational Information Provided to Network

In the preparation of its appeals, the Task Force provides a variety of educational material to members of the Network. Included is background information and analysis of the political and social context in the countries where human rights violations occur; usually in the form of 1-2 page article excerpts taken from independent reports and documents such as the "Central American Report," "CAIP: El Salvador in Brief" (Concise overview of recent events in El Salvador) and "Central America Newspank" (A BI weekly news and resource update publication).

Information and recommendations regarding Canadian and U.S foreign policy initiatives is also provided to keep members informed and offer suggestions for what can be included in their letters. Frequently, this may be the only source members have for this information and perspective. Material is drawn from reports produced by different research bodies, such as the LAWG and ICCHRCLA Reports, and reports issued from delegations to the region.

Documents and articles detailing relevant legal and human rights agreements are provided to members in order that they have material of law to address human rights violations and Canadian policy, with politicians, leaders and governments. The most commonly provided material is information from United Nations Declarations and Conventions. Examples include the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," the universally accepted "Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners," "UN Convention on Childrens Rights," and also agreements signed in Central America regarding the Peace Process and Human Rights. The Task Force also provides to new people joining the network, information to assist with letter writing and includes suggestions on techniques,
Broader Education Work

As part of a recent initiative in its educative work around the Urgent Action program, the Task Force has put together packages of information regarding human rights violations that relate to specific sectors (eg. the churches, students and trade unionists). For example, in its own constituency, a compilation of human rights violations against the church sector in Central America was distributed to that sector in Canada through the various denominational offices and religious organisations, at the time of the El Salvador offensive in November 1989 and subsequent persecution of the church. Information included reference to dozens of church workers of various denominations who had been detained and in many cases ill treated, also numerous churches and premises belonging to religious organisations that had been raided by security forces, as well as reference to members of clergy and lay workers who had received death threats or had been killed or tortured. (Urgent Action, December 1989). The purpose was to provide church groups with information that was not available in the mainstream media, to increase awareness of the situation in Central America, and to encourage supportive solidarity action in response.

2. Advocacy and Lobbying

This program refers to the education/action work done at the base (by Task Force members in local communities). The intent is to produce grassroots support for constructive social change. This educational work has two objectives: To inform people of an issue and build critical awareness or develop understanding around the issue; and through concrete action, to channel the
concerns of people into a concerted effort for change.

The two major issues that have been at the forefront of the Task Force's advocacy work are: supporting the C.A peace process (both Contadora and Esquipulus II accords) in advocating for a peaceful, just solution to the injustice in C.A; and opposition to the Canadian government's renewal of bilateral aid to both El Salvador and Guatemala, as well as aid policy for Nicaragua and Honduras.

Because of Task Force history and expertise with Guatemala, the issue of bilateral aid has been central to its work. A major instrument the Task Force has developed for mobilising the Canadian public into action around the issue of aid to Guatemala has been its "bilateral aid campaign." The campaign originated in response to the possible shift of Canadian policy in Guatemala towards resuming aid following the 1985 election of a civilian president in that country. The campaign consisted of lobbying Canadian officials to prevent renewal of aid so long as the military apparatus of control remains intact.

The major vehicle the Task Force has used to get information and analysis to people and encourage them to action is the brochure, and a more detailed booklet, "Aid to Guatemala: What Canadians Must Know." In addition to this, the Newsletter, public events, and community gatherings are other avenues for keeping the public informed and active.

The brochure provides detailed information to deepen critical understanding of members and to provide members with independent material/analysis for educating a wider pool of people about the issue. The "action" component provides concrete suggestions as to the types of action and ongoing work members can be engaged in. Some examples include: writing to governmental
officials, including Federal government in Ottawa, External Affairs and Minister of External Relations (responsible for CIDA policy); working with local M.Ps to witness about what is going on Guatemala through letter writing and personal visits; involving others in issues, through distributing brochures to the community, in organising vigils, and discussing issues with union and church groups (CTFCA Bilateral Aid Brochure, 1986/1987).

The brochure distributed in 1986 was the first effort in B.C. to get the information out on the issue. The second stage of the campaign was 1987-1989. This stage was the Task Force's response to the Canadian government's November 1987 decision to renew bilateral aid despite widespread opposition. The brochure distributed this time, linked the issue of bilateral aid to the "Esquipulus II peace accord", which was signed in August 1987 by the five C.A nations "to establish a firm and lasting peace in C.A." In its educative work the Task Force pointed to conditions necessary for the fulfillment of the accord:

1. Systematic human rights offences must be ended and the fate of the 38,000 disappeared investigated and those responsible brought to trial;

2. The structures of military control in all areas of civilian life must be dismantled;

3. Conditions established for the safe return and resettlement of over 200,000 refugees and the one million internally displaced;

4. Fundamental reforms must be undertaken to move Guatemalan society in the direction of justice in the distribution of land, wealth, income and tax burdens.

Avenues for Action included strategies similar to the ones mentioned earlier.

The current phase of the campaign began in anticipation of the actual
implementation of Canadian aid to Guatemala in the spring of 1990, and in response to the general deterioration of the situation in C.A. The Task Force launched a further campaign to stop aid to Guatemala. Linking the issue of bilateral aid to the wider issues of democracy and human rights is the focus of the current educational brochure. This material points to the fact that since the 1985 election, little in Guatemala has changed. It points, then, to the issue that "fair and free" elections are only one component of genuine democracy, and that respect for human dignity and rights is the basis for an "authentic democracy." Underlying the intent of the brochure is an attempt to broaden Canadians understanding of Human Rights (including economic, social and cultural) for application to their own reality in Canada. The focus of information is around the conditions in Guatemala that prevent the existence of "authentic democracy." These conditions are: "the widespread denial of economic and social rights," "the ongoing creation of refugees," "the continuation of systematic repression", and, "the deepening militarization of society." A detailed discussion is provided on each point. Also included is a discussion of how the Canadian government supports and legitimates the Guatemalan government and army, pointing to the contradictions in official policies, rhetoric, and the nature of the new bilateral aid program. The Task Force suggests strategies for action and political lobbying that Canadians can engage in to maintain the ongoing dialogue with the government over the issue.
C. EXPOSURE TO THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REALITY

Another area of the Task Force’s work is the exposure of people to the Central American context. That is, providing the opportunity for people to have first-hand exposure to the reality of the struggles of Central America. The two educational programs in this area are the "Global Awareness Through Experience" and "Visitors from the South."

1. Global Awareness Through Experience (GATE)

For the past three years, the Task Force has been collaborating with the GATE program based in the U.S; it is a Christian study/education exposure tour to Mexico city or Nicaragua.

The purpose is to enable B.C. residents to personally experience the life and realities of Central American people. Educational objectives of the program include the following:

1. To provide a personal experience by exposure to a large number of aspects of the culture and people, so that participants become a "credible" witness to that reality when they return home;

2. To gain insights into the economic/political/social reality of the Third World as well as an appreciation of structural interdependence on a global level;

3. To facilitate a deeper understanding and commitment to the mission of the global church;

4. To provide an opportunity for participants to analyse and use their experience in their own reality in North America;

5. To strengthen participants own commitment to justice work and later, through their sharing of the experience to awaken and encourage others to be involved in this work.
The Program

The Gate program is designed by a church based group in the United States who organise "open" tours available to people from all over North America. In the past, the Task Force has facilitated tours specifically for B.C groups. Presently these tours are only provided if there is enough local demand to form a group. Working with the office in the States in publicity, recruitment, and selection, the Task Force makes arrangements for B.C. participants; and from a Canadian standpoint, providing orientation and debriefing according to participant needs.

The program is a 14-day trip, consisting of lectures, discussion, personal reflection, worship and "sightseeing" experiences. Issues covered in the general Mexico trip include: history and social development of Central America; the process of popular movements (workers, peasants and women sectors); the church and its evolution; the reality of Central America, especially Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Mexico; the North American reality and global interdependence. Issues in the Nicaraguan program follow similar themes with a more specific focus on Nicaragua. The program is also committed to offering people an experience in field situations, and examples include visits to barrios, christian base communities, and refugee communities.

Orientation

The Task Force provides an orientation/preparation program for participants. Depending on the location, these gatherings range from educational events (perhaps a series preceded by potlucks for the participants to ask specific questions and get to know one another), to dinners or a weekend with a GATE participant from a nearby community. This is facilitated by the Task Force
throughout the province to ensure that all participants know others in the community with whom they can work and find support on their return.

In addition, an extensive orientation packet with material provided by GATE and the Task Force is required reading by all participants six weeks prior to the trip. It includes up-dated factual information, historical overviews, reflection pieces, analysis and Canadian policy information and critique. Orientation is also done by the GATE staff on participants' arrival in Mexico.

Project Follow-up

The Task Force's policy is that when possible, extensive debriefing is done with participants on their return. The format of the debriefing varies, depending on location and number of B.C. participants on a particular trip. In the case of a group, debriefing will be more structured with the group sharing exercises, collective role plays and other participatory exercises that bring out the collective knowledge of the group. The debriefing is to allow participants to report and share their experiences - both factual and reflective; to focus on what the significant moments of the trip were; to deal with re-entry and culture shock; and to give evaluatory comments. Part of the debriefing includes a discussion of plans and ideas the participants have for further involvement in the work.

2. Visitors from Central America

The Task Force endeavours to provide communities in B.C. with opportunities for meeting visitors from Central America brought to Canada by NGO, church and trade union groups. The purpose is to build relationships through the personal contact developed by hosting visitors in local communities and in organising to have them speak at gatherings. Visitors also provide the
opportunity to strengthen and deepen understanding of the situation in Central America.

The objectives of these visitors are to:

1. To develop links between communities here and inside the region through personal contact and analysis sessions with the visitor;

2. To provide the visitor with an opportunity to become familiar with the people and the nature of the solidarity work here;

3. To provide a public forum that allows the visitor an opportunity to share stories, analysis and personal testimony with Canadians;

4. To present first-hand information or accounts of the reality in Central America to the press.

The type of gatherings range from small, informal community "potluck" dinner evenings to general public events.

D. DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CENTRAL AMERICA

A further objective is to enhance/deepen the relationship between members and those in the South. The educational programs in this area include "Trips to the Camps," "Accompaniment Project" and "Link-up Project".

1. Trips to the Camps
   - The refugee camps in Southern Mexico were visited in Chiapas in 1981 and again in 1983 and 1984. Delegations from the Task Force have visited the camps in Chiapas and Campeche annually since 1985. The general purpose of these trips is to monitor and maintain a relationship with the Guatemalan people
in the camps and discover ways that the people in Canada can support them.

Specific objectives of the trip vary and are dependent on the "needs" to which the trip is responding. General objectives of this type of trip include:

1. To develop a deeper understanding of the Guatemalan struggle through the entry point of the refugees in Southern Mexico;

2. To maintain and strengthen the Task Force's relationship with Guatemalan refugee and human rights groups in Mexico;

3. To obtain current information as to the status, security, well being and needs of the Guatemalan refugee community in Mexico;

4. To report to the Task Force and make recommendations as to follow up activities or projects;

5. To meet with the organisers and leaders of different projects in the camps so as to better understand their reality and be more effective educators back in Canada.

The Task Force's selection of participants is made by the executive committee, with input by various members of the different regional communities in B.C. The selection of participants is primarily based on level of involvement in C.A solidarity work and interest in understanding the Guatemalan situation. Selection criteria are based on what the group as a whole should reflect, with some specific requirements of individual participants. The team, for example, should include some members with previous experience in the camps and some "newcomers," have some individuals who are able to communicate in Spanish. The individuals must be able to work in a group context, have good listening skills, and be committed to do continuing work after the trip.

The Program

A trip has two parts: analysis and background information in Mexico City
and the visit into the camps. On arrival, the group usually spends 3-4 days in Mexico City, listening and talking with groups from different sectors, in preparation for the visit to the camps. These groups include human rights organisations, justice and peace groups, women's groups, church organisations and groups that liase between international communities and the Guatemalan people in the refugee camps. During this time information, stories and analysis of the situation in Guatemala and of the refugees in exile is shared.

The next part of the trip is the visit into the camps in Mexico. While in the camps, participants talk to leaders, community organisers, and people involved in education, health, agriculture and youth projects in the camps. This opportunity for direct conversation and observations within the camps is designed to allow personal relationships to develop between Canadians and Central Americans and also to allow participants to develop a fairly encompassing assessment of the conditions of refugees living in the camps.

On return to B.C, a de-briefing is organised by staff and volunteers in Vancouver to provide an opportunity for the group to formally report on the trip and share the analysis and information gathered and to discuss with the wider community specific project follow-up suggestions and recommendations made. Other members of the Task Force, including those in the regions, may attend.

An example of the type of follow-up project that develops from these trips is the Tear-drop Craft project; it is established as both a concrete demonstration of solidarity and as an entry point for new people into the movement. The Project involves education work organised in relation to the sale of handicrafts produced by Guatemalan refugees and displaced persons. The goals of the project are: to educate buyers about the current situation in Guatemala
and about the artisans themselves, to encourage the preservation of the Guatemala craft traditions, and to provide a market for textiles produced by groups of internal and external refugees who have been directly affected by the violence. This project combines education with financial support to concretely contribute to the work of the people of Guatemala.

2. National Accompaniment Project

This project is a Canadian national solidarity response to an invitation from Guatemalan refugees to all international communities, to visit the Guatemalan refugees in the camps in southern Mexico. The original intent of this invitation was to accompany refugees and prepare for their 'return' to Guatemala (Source: Project Accompaniment Report, 1990). In light of the current political situation in Guatemala, the physical return is not possible at this time. However, the "preparation" aspect of the project is an educational process that involves understanding the political, social and cultural conditions that are needed in Guatemala for a return to be possible. The organisation of the refugees, themselves, is critical to this process.

One part of the educational process is trips to the camps by national accompaniment teams. The first trip took place in April, 1990. As part of this nine person National delegation, three members of the Task force (representing B.C) visited the refugee camps. Other regions represented on the delegation were Atlantic Canada, Ontario and Saskatchewan. For the Task Force, this trip was an important extension of its previous work. Previously, the entry point into the camps for the Task Force was only through the churches. And with this trip, a direct relationship with the refugees through the Permanent Commissions (the
refugees' own elected representatives and organisation), was established.

The Task Force was responsible for the orientation and debriefing programs of B.C and Saskatoon delegates. Some "popular education" exercises in the programs included role plays, group participatory exercises, mural exercises (to illustrate the collective knowledge of the group), and presentation and discussion periods.

The trip itself included meetings with representatives of various organisations, some who still operate in Guatemala and some who have been forced into exile. These included people from the trade union movement, the church, peasant worker organisations, indigenous groups and human rights groups. The group then visited and stayed in several refugee camps in the states of Chiapas and Campeche and met with representatives of the Permanent Commissions.

The group on their return produced a report which is a compilation of what they learned about Guatemala and Guatemalan refugees. In it, they present the "moment" in Guatemala: the politics, history, socio-economic situation and the people's response. For the Task Force, the report is a significant educational tool to be used to continue the vital education work needed to increase the support base for the Guatemalan struggle.

3. Church/Christian Faith Community Linking

A part of the Task Force's educational work that grew out of its 1988 delegation to El Salvador, and has recently been developed further, is the work of "church linking." The purpose is to develop personal links between churches and faith communities in Canada with their counterparts in El Salvador and
ultimately Central America.

The educational philosophy behind the project is based on the assumption that relationships develop based on the intent of fostering mutual support and inspiration (and not as a way of raising money for development). Fund-raising may evolve as part of the project but only as an "action" component that complements the fundamental mutuality and learning process and in response to needs that become known; which is the basis of "linking" work.

A "linking" between communities begins with letters of support. Direct correspondence, then, is the primary means by which a relationship begins to develop. Letters of support are designed to give spiritual strength and physical protection to the people of the church/faith community in Central America and to challenge North Americans in their faith response. The relationship may develop further with trips between members of those in the relationship. The original project was conceived only as direct communication to exchange support and solidarity.

The Task Force plays a facilitative role in establishment of direct connections between communities and provides resources and translation needed to set up and continue the relationship. Orientation has been provided for Canadians visiting their community counterparts in El Salvador.

E. PROGRAM FORMATION, ANALYSIS AND NETWORKING

This objective refers to activities that relate to the Task Force at an institutional (organisational) level.

One essential part of "program formation" is the delegations to the region that update analysis and gather information for the development of new program
1. Task Force Delegation

One of the most important trips that shapes the work of the Task Force is its delegation to the region; a trip that takes place every 1-2 years. The overall goal of this delegation is to maintain/develop links between the Task Force and church and popular organisations in the region in order to inform the work in Canada. Objectives of this type of delegation are changing and have evolved over time to include:

1. To respond to expressed needs in the region;

2. To connect with partners as the CTFCA;

3. To bring back interpretation/analysis which feeds into the education and advocacy work;

4. To relate/share the political/economic context of the Task Force’s work in Canada and situate the role of the church in the Canadian social movement;

5. To set priorities for the Task Force’s educational work;

6. To provide opportunities for developing competence, building skills and leadership in staff and executive especially;

7. To do deliberate and direct advocacy work on return with External Affairs, MP’s and parliamentary officials. (This objective has evolved most recently). (Source: Task Force Delegation Material)

Participants

A Task Force delegation includes a team of 4-6 persons, depending on financial resources available, countries to be visited and logistics of travel within
country. Preference is given to staff, executive and other members who are in key positions of analysis, interpretation and shaping of Task Force programs. Denominational and regional representation are considered. Gender parity is another factor. Selection of participants is made by an executive subcommittee, with input from various members in the different regional communities in B.C.

Orientation

The Task Force is committed to preparing participants for the trip and has developed an extensive, intense orientation that takes place over months prior to the trip and is focused primarily on three areas: (a) Up-dated material of both Canadian analysis and Central American analysis is provided to prepare delegates; included is an overview of relevant Canadian NGO and government policy developments. (b) Delegates must have a working familiarity with groups to be visited; that is, they must have thorough understanding and background knowledge on the groups. (c) Preparation for the on-ground experience in Central America includes issues of security, health, language, group agreements, procedures and financial matters. An important part of the orientation procedure is to build the working relationship between "delegate members" and provide support to delegates as a community.

Follow-up

The staff and committee of the executive always plan a debriefing of delegates on their return that is structured to hear reports, come together to share analysis, and provide community support for participants. Internal reports, including evaluation and logistical notes are presented to the executive and are used for the basis of external reports, articles and the collective determination of recommendations. An internal report is written for presentation at the Task
Force's Annual General Meeting. This is to build in accountability to the community and provides the information/analysis which will shape the work of the Task Force and inform its educational program and advocacy priorities.

Other articles and statements are prepared for reporting in church and community papers. Depending upon the information gathered, specific groups in the community, like local unions or the student sector, may also receive reports.

2. National Research Delegations

The Task Force also prepares representatives as participants in research delegations that are organised at a national level. The primary function of these delegations is research, and involves the analysis, monitoring and reporting of the current situation in Central American countries in order to shape the solidarity work in Canada.

The objectives of this type of educational trip for the Task Force are: to ensure the Task Force's perspective is part of the national work, to provide strategic information for shaping education and policy work on return to Canada, and to develop the leadership of its members. An example of this type of delegation is the national Canadian NGO/Church research project (The New Spring I & II Tours). This NGO initiative began in November 1986, when it was felt by Canadian NGO's that an in-depth analysis of the implications of the Guatemalan situation on solidarity work in Canada was needed. A primary focus which has developed of this research delegation is around the issue of bilateral aid to Guatemala and broader Canadian foreign policy.

The Task Force's role in such a delegation involves: (a) selection of its delegate; (b) orientation and preparation of the delegate; (c) de-briefing and
follow-up with delegate, including input into the national report that follows.

3. Analysis

An important part of the Task Force's work that informs all programs is the ongoing analysis of the economic, political and social context within which it works. That is, keeping on top of analysis to discover new ways of relating to the Central American and Canadian context as conditions change. The analysis is motivated by the requirement to seek truth and not merely for merely intellectual curiosity. It is orientated toward social justice; towards taking some action for promoting change.

The Task Force's strategic analysis is informed by some general areas of consideration. These include:

- the perspective of the poor and prophetic perspective of the church;
- a critical analysis of Canadian policy trends, statements, position papers and CIDA funding developments, as well as broad Canadian and international socio-economic and political developments (like structural adjustment and free trade);
- a long term perspective of what its stance on an issue will mean for the future. What implications will it have for the people of Central America in the long term? That is, in the long run, the Task Force holds that there is a need to consider how the struggle in Central America can be undermined if a weakened stance on issues, such as bilateral aid, is taken by groups in Canada (NGOs, churches and solidarity organisations).

The Task Force sees the wider political and economic issues being affected by Canadian government policies aimed towards "silencing" domestic critics (for
example, cutbacks in funding of native and women organisations, and its conservative economic policies). In light of this it considers the need to strengthen the role of Canadian solidarity organisations in the popular movement. In other words, the Task Force views itself as a domestic actor in politics; that is, as an opposition critic to Canadian government policies. These are considerations that, in part, contribute to the Task Force's position around policy issues.

4. Direct Institutional Lobbying

An important area of work for the Task Force that develops and carries its analysis into concrete action at the institutional level, is the lobbying of government and church officials. The focus of this work has been to challenge Canadian government policies (around bilateral aid, refugee policy and the peace process).

The purpose is to maintain consistent correspondence between the Task Force and the government: in the ongoing critique of Canadian activity/policy in the region and in requiring government initiatives that genuinely seek peace and social justice and development in Central America. This work is carried out by staff, advocacy committee members and those active members with experience in certain policy issues.

The work requires actions that involve the continuous monitoring of parliamentary commissions and providing response to their reports through letters, phone calls, and visits to political figures when in Ottawa. The Task Force also seeks to maintain consistent correspondence with members of External Affairs, CIDA and Foreign Affairs officials to provide feedback on their policy positions and to raise questions regarding statements, policies and announcements of
developments or changes in policy. The Task Force also makes clear its position and the topics of concern based from a prophetic Christian perspective.

Other ongoing lobby work that the Task Force engages in is informing and providing information to local M.Ps and opposition critics. The continuing education campaign of M.Ps is an important dimension of the work through visits, sending periodic mailings and petitions regarding human rights violations. The Task Force also engages in media lobby work in a rather ad hoc manner. This does involve meetings with media people and editorial boards to discuss Central American press coverage. Monitoring of media coverage and misinformation is not done in any organised way, but individual members have taken on this work themselves.

5. Coalition Work and Networking

This area of work refers to maintaining and developing networks to continue participation in Canadian solidarity, education and lobby work at levels of regional and national strategising and planning.

Nationally, the Task Force has a working relationship with other ecumenical church coalitions, in particular ICCHRLA (the Inter-Church Coalition on Human Rights in Latin America). The Task Force consults with ICCHRLA conceiving strategies for lobby work in Canada. In its relationship with national church bodies, the Task Force is supported, in particular, by the United Church. Considered as a working unit of the BC Conference of the United Church Global Concerns Division, the Task Force has a presence and an entree into the structures of that Church. For example, the Task Force prepares resolutions around CA issues for acceptance and discussion at BC Conference.
The Task Force has a working relationship with national NGOs, such as CUSO, Oxfam, and Inter-Pares, through the forum of the CCIC (Canadian Council for International Cooperation), an umbrella organisation for Canadian NGO collaboration. The Task Force participates in NGO consultations in Ottawa and these consultations are a means of participating at a National level and having input into Canadian work so as to move it forward. The Task Force helps provide a regional (B.C) perspective and shares strategies and advocacy/analysis from its grassroots experience. The Task Force has participated in a two-year-long initiative around the Canadian-Central American peace process. It also has been actively involved in a series of campaigns to promote the peace process and talks in Guatemala and El Salvador. The Task Force continues to participate in National/Central American evaluative consultations concerning the work of Canadian non-governmental agencies and community-based solidarity groups with respect to Central America.

The Task Force also participates in national consultations with other specific issue solidarity groups. In particular, the Guatemalan consultations have been important for the development of the Task Force's work and the coherence of solidarity work at the national level. The Task Force also participated in a survey and consultation process directed by the Social Justice Committee of Montreal. This process has ultimately led to a proposal for building a national Urgent Action network.

In B.C. the Task Force, primarily through staff and active members, has been actively involved in collaboration work with Vancouver-based NGOs engaged in Central American solidarity work. The forum for this work is the Inter-Agency Committee on CA which meets monthly in Vancouver. This
committee consists of major NGOs and solidarity groups such as Tools for Peace, CUSO, Oxfam, the Trade Union Group, representatives from the student sector and Catholic Development and Peace. The collective work of these groups includes planning for tours, educational events and participation in the national process of consultation on the establishment of a Peace Fund.

The Task Force has also been an active participant in the Vancouver-based "B.C. - El Salvador support Coalition." This coalition brings together Central American groups and Canadian solidarity groups who have an interest in El Salvador. Member groups come from sectors such as students, professional, Salvadoran community, trade union and church. This coalition meets to strategise and plan the direction of work and then each member organisation is responsible to facilitate and integrate strategies in the education work with their own constituency. An important first project for this coalition has been the "Coffee Boycott."

F. SUMMARY

This chapter presented the educative work of the Task Force in light of five central objectives which come together in the model of a wheel depicted in Figure 1., with each area looked upon as a spoke - each having a life of its own but each interdependent to the movement as a whole. The wheel can be thought of as attached to a car with its "body" representing the "organisational structure" which provides the shape and gives character to the movement, and the "fuel" can be seen in terms of human and financial resources needed to move it. In this light, the wheel is not static but remains dynamic and its source of power comes from the movement of people within it.
The discussion focused on describing the educational activities of each spoke of the wheel. It does not represent an exhaustive discussion of the work undertaken by the Task Force, but rather focused most closely on the 1989/90 program year to establish a context for analysis. In the following chapter, the wheel will be used as an analytical framework to examine the relationship between education and objectives.

**PROGRAM FORMATION, ANALYSIS AND NETWORKING**
- Delegations to Central America
- Direct Institutional Lobbying
  - Coalition Work and Networking

**DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CENTRAL AMERICA**
- Trips to the Camps
- National Accompaniment Project
  - Church Linking

**EXPOSURE TO CENTRAL AMERICAN REALITY**
- Global Awareness Through Experience (GATE)
- Visitors from Central America

**INTRODUCING THE ISSUES**
- Public Presentations
- Newsletter
  - Central America Week
  - Vigils and Demonstrations

**ENGAGING PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS**
- The Urgent Action Program
  - Advocacy and Lobbying

**FIGURE 1: THE WHEEL**
The Christian Task Force as an Educational Movement
In examining the Task Force as an educative movement for social change, this chapter begins by using the model of the wheel as a framework for analysis to examine the relationship of education to movement objectives. For each of the objectives (each spoke of the wheel), the Task Force’s educational practice will be discussed drawing out general principles. Strengths and weaknesses will also be identified. This will be followed by a general discussion that pulls the principles together in a "grassroots theory of social change." From this, the analysis will briefly compare the Task Force’s practice in light of the theoretical model of transformative education developed in Chapter Three. Finally, some general factors will be pointed to that both limit and enhance the Task Force’s practice for social change.

A. RELATIONSHIP OF EDUCATION TO MOVEMENT OBJECTIVES

This discussion will work through each spoke of the wheel to examine the Task Force’s educational practice in light of its contribution to social change.

1. Introducing the Issues

The objective of “introducing the issues” to people is to broaden the base of support for solidarity in the struggle for social justice; that is, to reach and draw new people into the movement for social change.

The primary focus of the Task Force’s educational work in meeting this objective is through working in different communities, with different congregations, with different groups of people. It is the educative work done by the Task Force
member who returns from a GATE trip and has a slide presentation in their church or a group of people who organise a CA update event/discussion in their community, for example, that has been effective for the Task Force in building its base.

The Task Force's experience in building its network of solidarity suggests that in order to reach new people, a most fundamental principle of education requires response to where people are at. Firstly, this means relating the issues to the individual's (group's) experience. The Task Force holds that it is much more difficult to engage people in the struggle/issues if the educational process does not make a connection to something in an individual's reality or does not touch a personal chord in their experience. The issues of Central America need to be linked to something in people's reality in Canada. In using the example of a presentation about the refugee camps, the issue for connection might be human rights; that is, people in refugee camps struggling for basic rights can be connected with those same rights for people in Canada. It is this practice that the Task Force tries to facilitate through its work.

The second part, lies in the response that people are able to give. The starting point of education for social change being the "point of readiness" of the individual. For example, the Task Force's experience is that "giving money" is often an initial response by its middle class constituency. The Task Force feels that in this act, there is a potential seed for transformation. That is, an educative practice that is truly committed to the process of social change begins where people are, begins from their framework and from there, challenges and engages people into a more personal involvement in, and critical response to, the issues.
Another important understanding that lies behind the educational work necessary to reach new people is the fact that we can all do something. The implicit assumption of the Task Force is that behind the often negative reaction of members in the church congregation or community is the deep feeling of an inability to change or do something. Central to the Task Force’s educational approach is that "informing people" must be followed or accompanied with an "invitation for them to respond through concrete action." For example, at a public slideshow presentation, people are commonly invited to act by writing a letter.

For the Task Force, a vital strategy in "introducing people to the issue" is to also expose new people to the opportunity for further involvement. That is, to introduce people to the ongoing work of the movement and ways people can participate further (for example, to join the Urgent Action Network). Part of the pedagogy of introducing an issue to people is a process of "empowering people" with the knowledge that they are instrumental in fostering change through their actions, and that whatever level of awareness or consciousness the individual is at, there is always something concrete they can do.

The second area of educative work in "introducing the issues" to people is public work done through distributing material, holding vigils and organising events for Central America Week. Consistent with the intent of gaining support to the movement, the Task Force holds that with these activities there is a greater likelihood that new people will be reached and will follow up wanting to know more. The importance of this work for the Task Force is to get information out to a wider pool of people; that is, to have an organisational presence that is visible. Also important is the fact that even if people do not
follow up at the "organisational level," part of education work is in providing people with alternative information (and an alternative perspective) that is not available through mainstream sources. The material the Task Force distributes seeks to address the critical questions and the root causes of the injustice based from the independent sources of information it has access to, and challenges people from a perspective rooted in the gospel.

The second part to this work is to get material to a wider public than the 'already converted' and to gain support and respect from a wide base of individuals and organisations. The work done through different activities in this area is then part of the Task Force's educational strategy to maintain a visible presence in the community so people can ask "Who is the Task Force?" "What do they do?" and "Why is Central America important to a Christian group?" That is, the work of the movement is not only for internal consumption but it has a responsibility to get the analysis and "perspective of those suffering" out. This helps build a greater "awareness" around the issues of Central America.

The Task Force's weakness in meeting its overall objective of "introducing the issues" is that it could be more strategic about its visible presence and in getting information and resources out to a wider pool of people. Its strength, on the other hand, is that the educational work done through the personal approach of slideshows etc. has been effective in building a committed base of people, people, who in a personal way, have been touched by the issue and mobilised into further involvement. That is, the quality of "educative" work done in this manner has been the Task Force's strength and challenges the "numbers or quantitative" approach of supporting an issue. It is the "grassroots" approach that allows for deeper educational work to be done.
2. Engaging People and Institutions

Solidarity is something very concrete, which must be demonstrated not only in words (moral support) but also in attitude, and by action. The objective of "engaging people in the work" is fundamental for maintaining and continuing the work of the movement, but is also an important point for deepening and fostering people's critical understanding of the issues.

A key element that can be drawn from the Task Force's practice is that it strives for participation which is collective. That is, whether it be that an individual becomes part of the urgent action committee or decides to volunteer in the office in Vancouver or becomes involved in a regional community with the tear-drop craft project; whatever the case may be, what is critical from an educative perspective is that the individual knows she or he is part of a larger movement, the Task Force.

In light of its development and growth, the Task Force has placed importance on activities through which people take "ownership" and have a responsibility to the collective work and to the movement as a whole. It is this emphasis that the Task Force holds is critical for maintaining people in the issues, nurturing people to stay involved. When a person writes a letter in a church and then goes home, she/he has been introduced to the Task Force and has been informed about issues, but it is through an involvement based on a commitment to be part of the work that a critical education for social change truly begins.

For the Task Force, the focus of action is the point around which people are mobilised into a deeper understanding/critical awareness of the struggle for social justice. For example, with the Urgent Action Program, the Task Force
provides a critical source as to why the violations are occurring and who is responsible. It also seeks to broaden understanding around the issue of human rights. Moving people, from the "western mindset" of human and civil rights, to include economic, social and cultural rights; rights to work and to health that ensure the dignity of human life necessary to the integral development of individuals and society. The United Nations' social and economic conventions introduce and provide people with legal tools that are also applicable in Canada.

Another aspect is that in writing letters around human rights violations, people are responding to individuals or organizations, and not "statistics." The Task Force's experience is that the personal/human component moves people into a deeper level of solidarity. In some cases, it allows for a connection to be made that relates to personal experience for those writing the letters; for example, in relation to the same sector or area of work, or same age. It is an education that points to "experiences of suffering." These memories keep alive the horror of needless exploitation, as well as the constant need to intervene and to act collectively to eliminate the conditions that produce it.

In general, the Task Force's educational strategy that is revealed through its practice in both urgent action and advocacy work is the development of a "critical awareness" in people, rather than in the mere provision of information. Implicit in this emphasis is the belief that education is not just a body of knowledge but a way of thinking, the exercise of critical judgement and choices by people about the issues that confront them. In other words, for the Task Force, understanding is linked to the power to learn and change.

In its commitment to the educational development of the critical agent, the Task Force aims to provide a framework of "understanding" in people that links
three fundamental notions - democracy, human rights and power - to form an alternative way of thinking to the dominant official line. These are the threads that form the basis for criticism of the Canadian government's policies, also in laying the foundation for "possibility" or transformative action. In terms of the struggle for justice in Central America, the referent for political action is the repressive situation and systematic violation of human rights in the broadest sense (those based on United Nations conventions including economic, cultural and social rights). It also parallels the moral struggle of Central Americans for social justice and respect for human rights. Central to this struggle is the need to illuminate how concrete mechanisms of power work, that is, the root causes underlying systematic injustice in Central America.

For the Task Force, then, the "development of a new consciousness" - a new understanding provides people with a different basis for participating in the decisions that they can influence and in making links with local issues. It demands an active component which removes people from being "spectators" in political affairs.

In combining education with political action, in both urgent action and advocacy work, the Task Force's practice shows that involvement in politics is educational and that involvement in education can be political, in that people develop new skills and learn in a way that challenges the more liberal understanding of education. For example, the urgent action program is an entry point for people into the work of the movement and into politics. It does not require political analysis beforehand but is based on the assumption that once people are involved, the role of education is to move them to further questioning and analysis, such as: "What kind of economic/political forces are at work to
cause human rights violations?" The program begins with people at their different levels of awareness and through action builds on that and fosters the development of a "critical consciousness." For example, a recent Urgent Action on "military food blockades of repopulated communities in El Salvador" challenges people on a local level in also making connections with the "military blockades of food to the Mohawk in the summer of 1990, in Quebec."

In terms of "action" the Task Force caters to different levels and "comfortableness" of response by people. In all educational work involving letter writing (or response by fax/telegrams) the Task Force invites individuals to respond in a "personal" manner; that is, 'form letters' are not part of the Task Force's program. The importance of writing personal letters is that it is, in itself, an educational process. It requires that an individual has wrestled with an issue, through thought, reflection and questioning of one's position or stand. It enables each individual to respond from the place of "where they are at." The educational process begins with an individual's first letter to a governmental official and continues through a process of reflection on the response received and, in writing again, builds on previous skills. The Task Force's experience is that this process is empowering for the individual in that often it is the first time the individual has been in dialogue with a politician. It is also empowering in the sense that individuals challenge the experts and break the often implicit myth that those in power know more than we do.

For the Task Force, the role of education for social change can be seen in the contribution it makes in forming public opinion around an issue. With the issue of bilateral aid, for example, a Task Force education campaign played a major role in the development of a critical perspective in some people in B.C.
That is, education contributed to the process whereby some individuals now autonomously question how the current bilateral aid program has changed and question the government’s stand on bilateral aid. Lloyd Axworthy (Liberal party MP), in a recent public meeting, pointed to the work of the churches and solidarity organisations in laying the ground work that has developed a public that are asking articulate, intelligent and probing questions. Also from visits to Ottawa, the Task Force has received feedback regarding the effect of letters in influencing public policy. As one campaign activist has pointed out:

"Ottawa knows that there is a large, well informed and well organised body of voters from many sectors right across the country who are paying attention to External Affairs and CIDA policies and actions" (Network News, 1988).

Most recently, this is reflected by the more cautious approach the Canadian government has now had to take because of the degree of "awareness" around the issue (McFarlane, 1989).

In determining the effect of its work (combined with other solidarity organisations) in influencing public policy, the Task Force points to the need to count single victories. In regards to bilateral aid, the following is a comment 10 months into the campaign:

"We did delay the decision of bilateral aid for a considerable amount of time and in the process educated many Canadians about the Guatemalan reality and about Canadian aid policies" (Network News, Summer 1987, p. 3).

Moreover, the changes made to the current aid mechanism in Guatemala, appear to reflect External Affair’s concerns about a growing critical Canadian constituency concerning Canadian policies in Central America.
For many members within the Task Force the effect of an involvement in political advocacy and urgent action is reflected in the following comments: "Canadians are engaged in the political process," "people treat the government's response to their letters with a critical perspective," "the involvement challenged my previously held assumptions about power relations" (Source: Discussions with Task Force members).

Also in terms of writing letters to the government or military in Central America, through the urgent action program, the intent is to contribute to a change in the situation. Instances in which letters have had an effect provide hope to continue, people also required to lose the "western mindset" of expecting immediate results. For the hundred cases about which letters are written, only a few may result in instigating a change. But this one may save a life. And for many members of the Urgent Action network then, "hope comes not from results but from a commitment to justice; to the betterment of life for all" (Source: Interview with Task Force member). That is, change cannot be measured in a quantitative way. The Task Force holds that social change is an ongoing process. Reflected in its practice is the idea of not becoming obsessed with "quantifiable results," rather the process of engagement is as vital as the ends.

The strength of the Task Force's work in meeting it's objective of "engaging people in the work" and contributing to social change can be summarised in the following points:

1. It provides an opportunity for action where people are at;

2. Development of critical consciousness lays the groundwork for "active, participatory members of society" that can challenge government and policies on all levels;
3. Political action is educational in terms of developing skills but also "involvement in action" is instrumental for breaking cycle of power;

4. It fosters collective empowerment so that people feel part of the movement.

A further point to be mentioned is the educational work of "popularising material" without losing the complexity of issues. For example, with the "bilateral aid" educational brochure, the Task Force does not resort to "simplifying the issue," so individuals are not given the opportunity to try and understand its complexity. For the Task Force, herein lies the challenge of education - to develop critical understanding through the engagement of each individual in the issue. This challenges a more liberal model in which individuals are often not given opportunity to work through critical questions about power; the solution to the injustice (problem), then, comes from a more adaptive or charity standpoint.

In relation to theory, then, the Task Force's practice of "engaging people in action" confirms that the political process is educational. Involvement in a letter writing campaign, for example, develops political skills and a perspective through the activity itself, in which the very process of learning is a contribution to the building of an authentic democracy.

The area of weakness in the Task Force's practice in this section, is that of "follow-up;" both in terms of personal follow-up with people (especially new people) who are engaged in the work, and also in terms of the follow-up needed to encourage and inform people of the effectiveness of their work. In terms of personal follow-up, new people become involved in the work but there are issues about how much they are supported. There is a need for the Task Force to be more strategic in monitoring how people feel and where they are, especially in relation to the advocacy work. In terms of the effectiveness that letters have,
the Task Force’s experience indicates the vital importance that follow-up encouragement provides to people in continuing their lobby work. Again this is an area of work that needs more effort so that it does not happen on an ad hoc basis, but rather as a strategic and integral part of the Task Force’s educational practice. The committee of support that is in place for the urgent action work could also be a model that is adopted for advocacy work.

3. Exposure to Central American Reality

The Task Force’s educational activities organised to meet the objective of "exposing people to the reality of Central America," not only contribute to a deepening of the collective work of the organisation but also provide the opportunity for "critical conscientization" of individual members.

The Task Force’s practice is based upon the assumption that essential to an education for social change is that Central Americans are not talked about but that they talk for themselves. The Task Force’s experience has shown that its strength and authenticity comes from a model of education based on its relationships with individuals in the South; a model that responds directly to the "voice" of the poor.

If the organisation is a "collective of its members," then the way the Task Force is exposed to the reality of Central America is through its members going and seeing for themselves and bringing that experience back into the life of the organisation. Also, Central Americans visit Canada in order to provide to those members who do not have the chance to go South, an opportunity to meet Central Americans.

The Task Force’s experience of involving people in the concrete situation
of the oppressed also has pedagogical implications for developing critical consciousness. For many members who have participated in the Gate exposure program, face-to-face encounters with the needs, hope and courage of the poor are "powerfully conscientising" because for the first time the contradictions embedded in Western society are brought into the open. An experience in the south "challenges one's worldview" and "the once accepted assumptions of Canadian reality;" that is, the experience not only deepens an awareness of the Central American reality but also leads to further questioning and confrontation with the North American economic and political system.

*I felt very challenged by the model we saw within the Base communities, and it made me look more closely at my own life. Do I give in to the forces that could seek to keep me isolated, and stop me from working for change? Or, can I begin to move out of that isolation to work with others for real change? (Reflection by GATE returnee, Network News).*

*Decision to go to Nicaragua was reaffirmed by reading John Ch 1 - "come and see". To visit Nicaragua is to be in touch with a sharper, keener awareness of the value of life - a richness that does not depend on material comforts (Reflection by GATE returnee, Network News).*

Part of the conscientization process for Christians also involves a new understanding of the "option of the church." For many members, the faith and hope of the popular church (in Central America) provides a different understanding of an active faith - one that involves risk and even the cost of life in the struggle for social justice. This is reflected in the following comments regarding the challenges raised by the Central American experience for some Task Force members: *the CA experience challenges the work that North American churches might be able to play in struggle for change - in responding to poverty*
issues here in Canada." For others the experience "revealed the radical word of the gospel and how that side of the gospel was not taught in regular Sunday service."

For many members, the process of reflection on their experience once they return to Canada, leads to a concrete commitment to action in solidarity with the people of Central America. Most often, "GATE returnees" will be further engaged in the work through speaking and witnessing about the experience they had. The importance of this educational work for the Task Force is that "personal testimony" has often been the vehicle through which a wider circle of people have been challenged by the experience. It is not only the individual participant who undergoes an educational experience, but on their return, also the family, friends, and church congregation are often challenged to new understanding. As one participant said "it is not some leftist telling them what reality is but their daughter or a member of their church who they have seen grow up."

The pedagogical process of participants on return is significant. Some who were challenged by their experience return to Canada to find themselves "a minority within one's congregation" or "feeling the loneliness of no-one in the congregation who understands," or they may "experience the frustration of being considered the victim of brainwashing by one's family and church," or "feel the frustration of media presenting consistent misrepresentations." In light of these challenges that often confront participants on return, the Task Force observes that in order for the experience of initial first contact to be deepened, it needs to be reflected upon and the individual needs to feel part of a supportive community. As some participants suggest "you need to be among a community
who understands you, sees the world as you do and responds in the same way - makes the same choices" and "the only strength on return is collective and mutual understanding.

The strength of the Task Force's educational work in this area, is that it is strategic (through its orientation and debriefing procedures) to make sure the participant feels and is connected to a community on their return from a trip. But it is also a weakness because of the dispersed nature of its network. Many times, the return of a participant is not completely followed through with - especially those in regional communities where few people have had a similar experience. The question of how the person is supported and whether their energy and commitment is diffused, is a critical one.

4. Deepening Relationship with Central America

The objective of "deepening relationships" in the Task Force's solidarity work is met by educational opportunities that foster the "engagement of members with those in the South" in order to move the work forward mutually.

The focus of the educational programs in this area is on the linkage between solidarity work and the struggle for social justice in Canada. For example, on a trip into the camps, members who have worked in the down-town eastside (one of the "visibly poor" areas in Vancouver) are able to share involvement in church work as well as poverty work, members who are community organisers in the regions of B.C. are able to dialogue with community organisers in the Christian base communities. The Task Force's intent is to send people who are rooted in political analysis and who also have experience with social justice work in Canada. The encounter between delegates on "camp trips"
or the "accompaniment project trip" and those in the South is based on a "mutual dialogue of solidarity." That is, the primary criterion of relationship is "mutuality," not charity.

All educational activities in this spoke of the wheel are based on a "relationship" or "partnership" with those in the South. This implies a two way process: in order to gain trust from those in the South (from the poor), the individual has to be in a relationship with them - a relationship that will challenge and question the work that is done. There is a need to share the aspirations for change not only in Central America but of the common aspirations for justice in both societies; and also to share the concrete ways that people are working for change.

For those participating in trips, the learning that takes place is both that of deepening analysis and also of understanding how the Central Americans analyse and strategise work for social change. This latter aspect involves a learning process around different models of organising, of different popular education techniques that the Central America experience illustrates. Participants learn from the programs and methods of organising that are operating in the camps. There is also a reciprocal process for them to share their experience of working for justice in the Canadian context. This model of sharing is the ideal relationship towards which this area of work strives.

For the Task Force, then, the role of education in this process is that of "critical inquiry - always questioning what we do and for whom?" It is a pedagogy of questioning that leads those engaged into a deeper process of reflection and into a new understanding of the relations between people; not only for those in Central America but between people everywhere. The following
reveals the learning inherent in an educational process committed to "mutuality":

...come to understand reality in a horizontal rather than a vertical (or hierarchical) way. Of course when you view things in the vertical model, the poor are always at the bottom of the structure... clearly history verifies the reality of the hierarchical model. So in effect changing from this model to a horizontal one is to truly call for a revolution...Challenged me in my life to consider how I was part of hierarchy? (Personal reflection by Task Force member).

For the Task Force, the learning process and bonds developed between people are deepened through action; through concrete ways that commitment and energy can be channelled and responded to in Canada. For example, the creation of projects, such as tear-drop & shalom crafts, combine critical education with raising money. Individuals, returning from the region, contribute to the public education and political advocacy work in Canada through shared analysis, strategies and action around issues, such as bilateral aid.

From the Task Force's practice, several insights can be gained that challenge the more liberal model of social change. Firstly, the openness to be challenged and questioned by the "poor" often leads to a new model of learning; one that is practical and concrete and one that is "collective" and "organised in its struggle for justice." The challenge offered by the "cry of the poor" is based on concrete struggle and requires "not only talk but action."

Secondly, the principle of "critical support" not "charity" challenges a more "adaptive" model of social change. It demands more than "helping" or "enabling people to cope;" rather it calls up a response that requires "mutual engagement in the process of change" (a change that links the struggles and confronts power relations). As educators interested in social change, part of one's responsibility then is to challenge injustice and the way in which people respond to problems.
It is a pedagogical practice not based from the point of "what can we offer the poor" or "do for them" but rather is based on principles of "shared analysis" and "shared learning" to move struggles forward in a collective manner. These principles also challenge the traditional student/teacher relationship as outlined in the dominant model. It challenges the view that "one is the teacher and one is learner" or that "one has knowledge and one not." This points to the question of "How do we as educators fit into a hierarchical model of relations?" That is, "Who listens and who talks in the learning encounter?" and "Who asks the questions and who answers?" That is, are the relations "dialogical" or "hierarchical?"

The Task Force's practice in this area also points to the fact that an "education committed to social change" is long term and requires commitment. For example, those involved in the educational work of "project accompaniment" share an understanding of "accompaniment" that demands them to be actively engaged in the struggle for justice not only in Central America, but also in Canada. The two struggles are integrally linked and individuals can not expect to see change in Canadian policies immediately but are prepared to struggle in the long term. For many members of the Task Force, then, hope in the struggle for social justice comes from the "doing," being engaged in the struggle.

The danger in this area of work is that attention can become so focused on overseas relationships to the extent that the situation of injustice in one's own context is not strategically reflected upon. That is, domestic issues can be overlooked if the nature of the overseas relationship is seen in narrow terms. The role of education is to further the process by which those individuals 'in relationship with the South' are also challenged to extend that relationship and
deepen their analysis of the structures of poverty and power in the Canadian context. It is this dimension of the work, for the Task Force, that needs to be deepened and developed.

5. Program Formation, Analysis and Networking

The model of education that is reflected by the Task Force's practice in meeting this objective, is one that is participatory and collective in nature. In terms of the information gathered by research delegations, the emphasis is on "shared knowledge." That is, even though "individuals" may have been to the region as delegates, the development and integration of that material into the Task Force's educational programs on return, is facilitated through the "collective." The Task Force is strategic about accountability to its members; that is, information and analysis must be shared and collectively developed. For example, at the Annual General Meeting, and in many other fora, opportunities are provided for the experience of a delegation to the region to be shared, and collective priorities for the shaping of the work set by a larger groups' interpretation of that analysis.

Another objective of delegations is that of furthering a relationship with popular movements and partners in the South for the purposes of sharing a political analysis from a common Christian perspective; this analysis is fed back into the Task Force's educational programs and provides direction for work on return. So programs remain flexible and are shaped to respond to new insights gained. Sharing the analysis from the Central American experience fine-tunes the critical analysis of what is happening in the Canadian context. Part of the educational work involves making links to parallel issues in Canada in order to
make change at the local level. The commonality of the struggle for justice forms the basis of the Task Force's solidarity work.

A weakness in this area of work is in terms of strategising. The Task Force needs to integrate its analysis of the Canadian context into its educational programs. Although the Task Force has analysed the global trends in power relationships, for example, conservative economic policies such as structural adjustment and Free Trade agreements, the issue for them is how this analysis can be strategically integrated into the work. This has implications for both the content of its educational programs and also in terms of how the Task Force, as an organisation, relates to coalitions struggling for social and economic justice within the Canadian context.

In the area of participation in decision-making, program planning and evaluation, the Task Force's model is one that seeks to be "democratic" in nature. For example, many strategic decisions are made through executive meetings held in a participatory atmosphere around "Rita's kitchen table." At the Annual General Meeting opportunities are made for open discussion and evaluation of programs. Decisions are made regarding priorities and the collective decides on executive and committee structures and members. A question here is Whether an Annual General Meeting held once a year is enough? or Should there be other fora (beside the executive meetings) where regional and other representation is more accessible?

In developing its strategic position around an issue, the Task Force works as a team. The operant principles are those of collective experience, analysis and strategising. This is reflected in the meetings in which individuals come together to develop or re-evaluate a position. For example, the Guatemalan working group
came together in September 1990 to strategise around the position of bilateral aid. The group gathered in a "cooperative coffee room" and included someone from the Kootneys, Victoria and Vancouver-based staff and volunteers. The Task Force is also committed to an open and rotating leadership style and seeks to foster opportunities that concretise this. For example, an individual who was a member of the Task Force for just one year represented the Task Force on a national research delegation. Another individual, after attending her first Annual General Meeting, became part of the executive committee. This is also reflected in the shared leadership roles between staff and volunteers. For example, both do menial tasks like licking stamps for mail outs and both share in the organising and planning of events.

The strength of the Task Force's work in this area is the creativeness of the work nurtured by its dispersed network. The educational work is not formed in Vancouver and shot off to other regions within B.C. Vancouver does not send regions packaged blueprints and define for them what work should be done, but rather the work of the Task Force unfolds differently from community to community. The development of this model comes from experience. The Task Force started with a more centralist and controlled model but the principle of constant "reflection" and maintaining an openness and respect to the needs of others, resulted in the development of a more dynamic, democratic and participatory model.

Some challenges are presented by the dispersed nature of the Task Force's network. In having people in different communities all over B.C., the challenge is for better facilitation of communication and community. In Vancouver, it is easier for people (members) to come together, to participate, and to gather
as a community to make decisions and share information. One issue regarding information is the accessibility of information that comes through the office to those in the region. Does the office serve as a bottleneck or do people have access to information? How is the question of "distance" worked through?

B. THE TASK FORCE'S GRASSROOTS THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

This section will summarise and pull together the pedagogical threads from each area of the Task Force's work (each spoke of the wheel). The purpose is to make explicit the Task Force's theory of social change.

Consistent with the fundamental belief in the importance of people in the struggle for change, the Task Force's priority in its educational work is 'at the base' - with the ordinary Canadian. A fundamental principle of the Task Force's educational approach, then, is that education must respond to where people are, to connect with individuals at a personal level to engage them in the struggle for justice. Having a strong critical edge to it, the Task Force's educational strategy is rooted in finding and revealing the "truth" from the perspective of the poor. It is aligned with those suffering and struggling in Central America for even the most basics of a democracy, the right to life, to food, to shelter and to work. From this perspective, it provides Canadians with a source of knowledge which addresses critical questions and the root causes of injustice.

The Task Force's analysis of the situation in Central America is linked to issues of power and militarism. It is committed to understanding the structural conditions that sustain and dehumanise poverty and to understanding the system of injustice which is responsible for the continuation of human rights violations on a daily basis. This understanding then is the basis of the Task Force's
critical pedagogy. In introducing the issues, the Task Force seeks a particular kind of awareness - a personal confrontation with injustice that demands a response.

Another principle in the Task Force's grassroots theory of social change is learning through involvement in the issues. In the long run, the Task Force believes that the greatest potential for changing Canadian policy towards the region, and an alternative order, is through the education work of people at the base, in their communities. Creating the foundation for a deeper understanding and commitment is interwoven with the engaging of people in concrete activities, such as political lobbying. Thus, a truly democratic base develops in Canada at the same time. The response of some individuals takes the form of denouncing the structures that are seen as supporting patterns of dehumanization - through lobby efforts around foreign policy issues and around the injustices of human rights violations.

The pedagogy for social justice, then, encourages political involvement; its social vision calls for a change of power relations from a perspective and foundation of faith. This vision is sustained and concretised through the activities that allow people to commit themselves and take collective ownership for aspects of work which encourages a responsibility to the movement as a whole. It is in working together, as a collective, that a sustaining and empowering context for those involved is developed.

The contribution of education to the struggle for social change is also in developing critical consciousness in individuals about Central America and also in relation to the Canadian and global context. The Central American experience often challenges the values and assumptions basic to the operation of Canadian
society. The hermeneutic of learning that is central to "experiencing the Central American reality" is that of action-reflection-further action. That is, the personal experience, with those suffering injustice and struggling in the midst of death, holds one accountable and demands a further response of action. Reflection on the experience challenges people to 'see with open eyes' the similar structures of power operating in Canadian society.

Another principle that characterises the Task Force's method of practice (its relationships) is that of mutuality. For example, the relationship of accompaniment in its truest sense is "dialectical" or "reciprocal" - a relationship reflecting and committed to the principles of cooperation and collaboration. It challenges the dominant and commonly held understanding of power based on control. That is, the form of relationship the Task Force strives for in its work/practice is one of trust, vulnerability and exchange, not one of distance and domination. This type of relationship requires a new understanding of power that, for the Task Force, is rooted in a biblical and theological tradition of liberation; one demanding that the cycle of taking over unshared power be broken. It requires the forming of new relations that exist "to empower others to maximise their humanity."

For the Task Force, the challenge of reworking power relations by deepening the relationship with those in the South, is one. It is also challenged to have that "dialectical model" inform its work and relations on a daily basis, including the relations among individual members of the network and between the network and other solidarity groups in Canada. It is this practice of solidarity that provides the essence of an education for social change. The principles of mutuality, equality and partnership are also the principles that are striven
towards in the creation of a democratic society in the Canadian context - in resisting the values of consumerism, materialism, individualism and control that that are part of the dominant culture in contemporary Canada.

In light of social change theory, the model of practice striven for by the Task Force as illustrated by its commitment to collective and participatory forums of planning, decision making and evaluation of programs, provides insights into the meaning of "praxis" as discussed in the transformative model; that is, into the relationship between theory and practice. If a movement is committed to the principles of social justice and democracy, then the question needs to be asked "How are these are reflected in the movement’s practice?" Are means complementary to ends in the movement? Is practice coherent with theory? The Task Force, then, not only has an implicit theory of social change but actually moves toward the practice of it. For its practice to be authentic, it cannot espouse/demand "democracy and social justice in Central America" and at the same time function as a bureaucratic, authoritarian organisation. The principles embedded in the organisation’s social change vision must inform its process of struggle/practice.

The importance of ongoing analysis and reflection of CA and other related issues is undertaken in order to keep abreast of the changing context both in terms of global, Central American and Canadian developments, analysis and networking. In working for social change, the Task Force’s analysis and practice is holistic in orientation. As a general theme for those working in confronting injustice it is crucial not to compartmentalise or isolate issues, but to strive for integration in analysis, and to link issues internationally and domestically.

The Task Force’s practice reveals an attempt to remain open and dynamic
to respond to new conditions which present themselves in face of current shifting economic and social policies and global trends - for example, the Free Trade agreements both with the U.S and Mexico, the globalisation of capital and the attempt by Western powers to weaken the popular movement base to strengthen the corporate agenda. Not only do these developments have implications in relation to the work around Central America but also in terms of the overall direction of the movement in Canada.

The principle of creativeness and risk taking is fundamental then to an education and struggle for social change. In terms of the movement itself, and individuals within the movement, there is a need to take risks and be challenged through reflection to move forward in a manner consistent with the movement's vision. It is this openness that also provides direction for the "networking" that is necessary to not only legitimise the movement in terms of its work around Central America (and to form alliances with those in the solidarity struggle), but also to challenge the movement in terms of extending its working possibilities.

In summary then, this section located the principles of the Task Force's practice for social change in a wider theoretical framework.

C. COMPARISON OF TASK FORCE'S PRACTICE TO THEORETICAL MODELS

In terms of comparing the Task Force's practice to the theoretical models presented earlier, it can be noted that the it most closely reflects the elements of the transformative model. The core components presented in chapter three were "vision", "critical pedagogy" and "pedagogy of mobilisation". How does the Task Force's theory relate to these components?
Woven through each area of the Task Force's work (each spoke of the wheel) is a critical pedagogy based on the principle that education must be a critical, analytical process of reflection upon information and experience; it must also raise questions regarding power relations and address the root causes of the injustice. The Task Force's practice incorporates the strategy of "critical thinking" outlined in the theoretical model as "a learning that involves people in a critical process to gain an understanding of economic, political and social forces;" it combines this with an "experiential element" which was described in the transformative model as "entering into some strategic activity at a point of readiness and working actively, growing into broader critical consciousness."

Insights from the Task Force reveal that involvement must be empowering and this means that "engagement in the issue" must begin where the individual is at.

In building participation, the Task Force has developed a network of community based education activities, but also has a pedagogical orientation which emphasises the necessity of rooting education in people's experiences, and linking education and action. Within activities, there exists a core of beliefs that stresses the process of education as well as the product. That is, education is seen not as the transmission of information/knowledge, but as providing a context within which individuals can come to understand their own situation, and act on the basis of their understanding.

The Task Force's principles of "responding to where people are at", "providing a source of information which addresses critical questions and the root causes of injustice" and "engaging people in concrete activity" affirm the importance of a "critical pedagogy" in developing social consciousness.
In terms of methodological strategy, the Task Force's practice is consistent with the principle of dialogue outlined in the transformative model as a method that has "conintentionality at its base" and is "understood not as a technique but is indicative of a critically communicative process." The educational and theological meaning of accompaniment is a theory that adds dimensions to this component of the transformative model. That is, it offers a liberating methodology with principles of "mutuality," "partnership" and "trust" that provide valuable insights into the understanding of "dialogue."

In terms of a "pedagogy of mobilisation," the Task Force's practice reveals the educational nature of involving people in organisational and political activity. Again elements of this component, as outlined in Chapter Three, are also found in the Task Force's practice. The element of participation described as the "development of individuals through a wide range of experiences" is also fundamental to the Task Force's development as an educational network. Each spoke of the wheel includes activities through which individuals involved develop a wide range of skills and abilities; that is, the Task Force's model reflects a breadth of learning that can be acquired as individuals involve themselves and enter into different areas of work (different spokes of the wheel).

The Task Force's practice also demonstrates that by participating with others in activities, new forms of sociality and an identification with a "community" are developed. Implicit in this involvement is the idea of a collective social education, which rests upon principles of moral commitment, solidarity and social responsibility.

In examining the Task Force's practice, an understanding of the educational nature of political activity was revealed. The programs of urgent
action and advocacy highlight the richness of such education. These illustrate the reality that "education is political and politics is educational" (Freire, 1987). It is not through "providing content" that a critical consciousness is developed, but rather involvement itself, is an educational experience which empowers people collectively and builds a democracy from the base.

Finally, the element of "coalition and network building" is key in building a movement for social change. Vital to the the existence of the Task Force has been the legitimacy gained from working with different solidarity and human rights groups within B.C., nationally and internationally. Without the support, the challenges, the collective analysis and strategising that take place through such 'links,' the effectiveness of its work would have been questionable. Especially in the current context, in which the pressure by conservative governments to divide and conquer popular movements is being felt by the solidarity movements, it is essential for such groups to build broadly-based coalitions of support. That is, this is a time in which it is even more important for those struggling for the interests of justice to join together, to seek allies and to unite as a coherent force in acting and strengthening the movement for social justice.

Because the central thrust of the Task Force's educational work is "critical and political," its practice of social change departs from the dominant model, outlined in Chapter Two. Acknowledging that it operates from a political perspective, in taking the side of the oppressed, the Task Force challenges the status quo. The Task Force also situates its educational practice within political activity, which it considers a viable and necessary element of education for social change.

In summary, what has been learned about transformative education from
the Task Force’s practice is that it is not enough to "talk of social change." It is in the "doing" or "in concrete activity" that an education for social change truly reveals itself. And it is from this process that a contribution to social theory can be made in developing a critical concept of "democracy as practice."

D. OBSTACLES FACING THE TASK FORCE AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE

In examining the Task Force as an educative movement for social change, three issues were raised that inhibit and enhance this process.

Firstly, there is the question of resources, material and human. The Task Force’s strength lies in the fact that it is independently funded, free from government purse strings. Therefore, it is able to take a radical and independent stand on issues. It can criticise government policy and be the "prophetic voice" in the solidarity community. But this positive factor is also a negative one in that financial resources are limited. The question needs to be raised as to whether financial constraints limit or stifle the growth of the Task Force’s work for social change. Is the organisation merely maintaining itself or is it continuing to grow in a way that is consistent with its transformative vision? With only two staff persons, the question is raised around what those persons are expected to do. Is the Task Force able to sustain its staff. And how can volunteers and the wider membership take more responsibility for the work? For the Task Force, its work expands and new projects continue to develop with each visit to the region and with new opportunities within existing programs. The question, then, in light of its resources, is - How it will able to build on these initiatives and provide the fuel (material and labour) needed for the network to be effective in
the process of social change?

Another issue is the relationship or balance between action and reflection, between theory and practice. One factor that inhibits the strength of the Task Force as a movement for social change is that the "urgency" of the situation can override the time needed for "strategising" or "reflection." Its current practice illustrates a more urgent/reactive position. Because of limits presented by the organisational structure and resources, the time for reflection and proactive positioning needs to be more systematically incorporated into the work of the movement. Especially in terms of staff or coordinator time, there is a need for the Task Force to re-examine the balance between office administration and time for reading, analysis and strategising so as to keep abreast of developments throughout the year.

Finally, there is the issue of the relationship between "core/active" individuals and other members. The strength of the Task Force's practice is in providing opportunities for participation for people in whatever stage of "awareness" they are. The weakness, however, is that it could be more strategic about fostering people through support, encouragement and education. Collectively, it could be more deliberate about involving people in different spokes of the wheel.

The relationship between the regions and the office is both a strength and a weakness. In light of the principles of decentralization, shared analysis and resources, the work in Vancouver needs to remain flexible and learn from the models of organising and education based in the regions. One of the strengths of the Task Force is the work done in local communities and this needs to be nurtured more strategically. The question of distance needs to be explored
further, in relation to resources available.

In terms of organisational administration (including structure, human and financial resources) the Task Force needs to examine whether these are a means to an end or if they have become ends in themselves. A fundamental problem in furthering the work of the movement is when the means are mistaken for ends. Insufficient means straitjacket the ends (or educational activities) of the movement. For the Task Force, then, the office can straitjacket the work through lack of vision; but as well, the office can be straitjacketed by lack of resources in the face of too many immediate demands. A key question concerns the issue of more creative models of sharing the work or facilitating the movement to move the work forward?

In summary, the organisational impediments to the Task Force’s work, in the short term, can be seen in terms of the question of direction provided by the executive to staff and movement. Can the executive better facilitate its strategic process of overseeing and guiding the work? Secondly, in terms of the question of human resources especially in relation to the need for more office support to carry out the work on all levels.

On a more long term basis, the aspects that need to be examined further by the Task Force are: (a) the integration of analysis in developing educational strategies that reflect and respond to changes identified in the Central American and Canadian context; (b) the question of how theological reflection and a Christian faith perspective can be more systematically woven into the fabric of its programs; and (c) how it can address improved coordination and participation of both core/active and support members.

This analysis concludes that in light of the short term obstacles, the Task
Force is maintaining itself on a day-to-day functioning basis. In order to propel the movement forward, in a direction consistent with its transformative theory/vision, there is a need for the Task Force to address the issue of organisational structure. Required in the long term, is the need to reexamine/reflect upon its educational strategy in light of the new developments that challenge its role as part of a solidarity movement in the struggle for democracy as it enters into the 1990’s.

Within each spoke of the wheel, there is an opportunity for growth, both to create new educational activities and to delete or re-prioritise existing ones. In addition to this, there is the opportunity for adding new spokes to the wheel in response to the needs of members or needs arising from the South. In this light, the possibilities for the role of education are inexhaustible. For the Task Force, the potential of enhancing itself as a vehicle for social change needs to be determined from the strengths and weaknesses visible in each spoke and the contribution of the spoke to the organisation as a whole.

E. SUMMARY

This chapter completed the analysis of the Task Force using the wheel as an analytical framework for examining the Task Force as an educative force for social change. It was also the tool for developing a general theory of the Task Force’s grassroots practice and in comparing this to the transformative model developed from the literature. Finally, the Task Force as a movement for social change was examined, focusing on the resources that provide the fuel to keep the wheel of the movement turning in a direction consistent with its vision, and on the structure of the movement that facilitates participation, coordination and
guides the operation of the movement as an agent of social change. The next chapter will conclude the thesis.
VIII. CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the study with a review of the intent behind the research, followed by a discussion of insights about the Task Force as an educational force for social change. Finally, the chapter makes suggestions for further research.

A. INTENT OF STUDY REVIEWED

This thesis began as a quest for untangling the web of "adult education for social transformation" in order to deepen an understanding of the role education plays in the struggle for radical democracy (social justice). The study sought to combine a theoretical understanding from the literature with a concrete understanding gained from examining "collective and active learning" in the context of the practical reality of the Christian Task Force on Central America. It was the intent to use the concrete experience of the Task Force to gain an understanding of critical pedagogical practices that explicitly seek to facilitate social change. In turning to "lived practice," a part of this study was to understand how social sites outside the institutional establishment provide a viable context for learning.

B. LEARNINGS ABOUT THE TASK FORCE AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE

This discussion will begin with a brief overview to recapture the theoretical and practical elements embedded in the Task Force's educational work. It will be followed by a summary of the insights gained.
1. Theoretical Themes Underlying Practice

The Task Force's educational practice is grounded in a theory of Christian faith constructed around a particular view of human suffering, solidarity and community. These are the threads that weave into its particular educational approach.

The Task Force's practice begins with an identification of the needs and desires of popular groups in Central America and in the ongoing attempts to end suffering and oppression. Human suffering provides the moral reflection for political action rooted in an affirmation of the importance of human life and the necessity to address injustices caused by militarization and other forms of exploitation.

Another theoretical element is that of solidarity. This refers to the need to remain in community with those who are oppressed and suffering against the oppression. For the Task Force, the personal contact with those in Central America is a constant reminder that the suffering is real and must be addressed. Being a form of sociality that is experienced in actual participation in collective activities, based on respect for human rights and life itself, the notion of solidarity becomes the central concept for organising people in the struggle for social justice. As such, solidarity as lived experience serves as the point of reference from which oppressive social structures are criticised and also provides the ideal for the struggle for an alternative form of social existence. For the Task Force, the verification for social democracy is practice. It is therefore committed to a process of education for social change that is open and self-critical. Constant reflection upon practice is necessary and emerges from an effort to live and learn from those in the margins. It is engaged in a battle for
truth with a conscious preference for the poor.

The context of community gives nourishing and challenging support to those committed to the struggle. As a community of faith, the Task Force finds collective strength in the understanding of a God, active and human, in the context of the everyday. Its support structures, as a community, nourish the concrete, human and spiritual elements in moments of brokenness, discouragement and fear. The realization that the struggle for change is dependent on the collective is a sustaining factor and gives direction to the Task Force's practice. From the collective the network continues to be challenged to move in a direction coherent with its radical vision. What is fundamentally important, and provides a source of power, is the strength/depth reflected in the quality of human relationships between members of the network. The common "spirit" or faith dimension brings everyone together as equals. The dignity and respect of each member involved in the collective work, are the central principles in the building of a democratic community. It is these principles that are part of an alternative model of power seeking mutuality, not control.

2. Social Change Practice

The Task Force's practice as an educational movement for social change comes together in a model that has five components. These are "introducing the issues," "engaging people and institutions in the work," "experiencing the Central American reality," "deepening relationships with the south," and "program formation, analysis and networking." Created in each component are activities and educational programs contributing towards an educational practice characterised by a critical pedagogy which seeks "to develop critical consciousness" and a pedagogy
of mobilisation which seeks "to motivate and involve people actively in the struggle for social change."

3. Summary of Insights Gained

In summary, then, to pull together what has been learned about the Task Force as an educative force the following points can be made:

1. The Task Force has an educational theory of human agency, which has, at its core, a belief that people are the greatest resource for change and can be mobilised into effective action.

2. Its educative work is based on norms embedded in Canadian society, based on the belief of understanding where people are at and what they value. These norms have human rights and democracy as basic principles of Christian and moral practice for justice.

3. Its educational work provides the continual backdrop of information, understanding and a growing consciousness in people about the situation in Central America. This awareness and deeper understanding prompts people into action and prepares them to respond to political changes in the region and also to lobby for policy changes by the Canadian government;

4. The Task Force creates concrete actions and suggestions for action so people at varying levels of awareness can become involved in the solidarity struggle for peace and justice, through their most comfortable entry point and most suited to their level of commitment.
In other words, these elements comprise a struggle for social justice (democracy) which embodies a role for adult education very different from the more restrictive liberal view. As the transformative model illustrated, the struggle for social change involves not only a pedagogical struggle but also a political and social one. Therefore, it is the Task Force's active educational practice that involves not only understanding (critical consciousness) but also the engagement of people in action that situates its practice in an authentic struggle for democracy. In conclusion then, the core components summarised above reveal the insights gained into how the Task Force acts as an alternative transformative adult education institution in contemporary Canadian society.

C. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This discussion will point to some general suggestions for further research for the field of adult education. This will be followed by some general suggestions of areas that need attention and further examination for the Task Force.

1. Suggestions for Further Research

The insights gained from examining the Task Force as an educative force have resulted in elements that could benefit the academic community interested in the relationship of adult education within the context of social movements. The following lists only a few avenues of potential research and investigation.

The first questions focus on the model of the wheel as a framework for analysis that may offer components that could be generalised for examining the role of education in other social sites. That is, the education activities of different
social movements could be examined in light of some of the objectives developed in the wheel. Questions that could form part of the analytical framework include the following:

- What activities does the movement provide for introducing people to the issues?
- How does the movement engage people in the issues? What are the activities provided by the movement in which people can collectively involve themselves in the work?
- What is the model of relations that exists within the movement? Does the movement provide activities that challenge the relations of power between people?
- What activities or forum is provided for analysis, developing programs and strategising? At the institutional level, how does the movement relate to different bodies?

Another part of the model is to examine the movement to identify factors that enhance or limit it as an agent of social change. In general the two areas that could be part of further research as an analytical tool are those of resources, both human and financial, and of organisational structure. These two elements are an area for further investigation as to how other social movements develop and deal with these critical elements that need to be balanced in order to operate as a transformative force.

Secondly, the theoretical model of transformative education needs to be studied further and examined in light of the educational practice of different social movements. Further studies could add to the breadth and deepen a practical understanding of the components of "Vision," "Critical Pedagogy," and "Pedagogy of Mobilisation."

Finally in terms of the research methodology chosen for this study, the
instrument of participant observation was an invaluable means for understanding and gaining insights into the Task Force's practice. This case study demonstrates that further research of "education for social transformation" could benefit from studies located within social sites outside the institution.

2. Recommendations for the Task Force

For the Task Force, this case study has raised a number of important issues which merit further attention. Some suggestions will be pointed to, but are not exhaustive of the questions raised for the Task Force in this study.

Foremost, the Task Force needs to begin a process of reflection and analysis to determine the direction of its work for the next decade. What changes are necessary in light of the changing context? These discussions must also involve an examination of the structural impediments to the work. It is from this process that a clearer direction for the movement can be clarified (the direction which the wheel should move in). This study supports the suggestion arising from the 1990 AGM that a retreat in February/March of 1991 is vital to begin this process and should involve regional contacts, active members and the wider membership. Consultations within local communities in preparation for this event should begin as soon as possible, perhaps through key questions being circulated that will encourage people at a community level to begin a process of deeper reflection.

In being consistent with its intent for fostering democratic participation, even outside this retreat, the Task Force needs to examine possible fora for strategising and gathering as a community other than at the annual AGM. Once a year is not enough to develop and evaluate the work of the Task Force as a
whole. A suggestion is that another meeting/workshop could be held with local contacts at some other time of the year to deepen analysis, to collectively strategise and share developments in work from different communities. These meetings could rotate each year from region to region or be hosted in communities that are accessible to regional contacts, staff, executive and active membership.

The Task Force needs to continue developing people committed to the work - adding to the pool of people who actively do the work of the Task Force. It needs to further develop the leadership and skills of its general membership.

The model of theological reflection integrated in the 1990 AGM could be developed and extended further and incorporated into other elements of work and be a strategic dimension of educational programs.

In terms of each of the different areas of work, (each spoke of the wheel) some suggestions will also be given. The Task Force needs to be more strategic in its follow-up of urgent action and advocacy work. This needs to be a priority for its work in this area or there is risk that energy will be diffused. In terms of advocacy work, this could be fostered through the organising of a committee of people that keeps in personal contact with those most active in lobby work. That is, a similar model to that of urgent action could be organised to follow-up on those engaged in advocacy work. Also there is a need for workshops that help people in developing their lobby skills in responding to government responses. A suggestion is that the Task Force could divide those active in advocacy work into groups like the Urgent Action Model, develop resources and follow-up material for each group, and then bring people together
through workshops around different skill-building programs.

In relation to the GATE program, the Task Force needs to decide whether this is a priority. It so, then a committee needs to be restructured to address issues of recruitment, follow-up and to oversee creative extensions of the programme such as "youth gate" and a more strategic emphasis on integrating the Canadian context into the program.

The theology/philosophy and most recent work around accompaniment has the potential of developing into a key educational strategy. The Task Force needs to develop a committee who can define this more clearly and develop a brochure that describes the meaning of accompaniment for the general membership. The theological roots and biblical paradigm that underlies this relationship could be developed into a reflective component that is part of the educational process used with groups interested in developing a relationship with the South. This area of work also needs to combine the theoretical dimension with the concrete. It could develop further the practical avenues for action that engage people in supporting not only the struggle in Central America but also the social justice struggle in Canada.

A further area of challenge for the Task Force is to develop a coherent educational strategy which extends the relationship and analysis gained from the Central American experience to the Canadian context. The intent, then, is to develop ties with the popular movement in Canada by supporting those coalitions that link with the Central American issues. A possible suggestion is that the Task Force select representatives to attend the Mexico Free-Trade meetings in order to expand its work domestically.

Finally, information from returning delegations needs to be made more
accessible to the wider membership. The relationship between different communities and between Vancouver and the local regions could be better coordinated by structuring regular visits by individuals (not necessarily just staff) to dialogue and share analysis, information and updates on work.

D. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE FIELD OF ADULT EDUCATION

The Task Force offers an example of the centrality of education in the process of mobilising and engaging people in the struggle for social change. The study provided an insight into how social movements operate as educational mechanisms, and represent a viable political form of adult education. The Task Force provided the context for understanding educational practice grounded in social and political thought rather than psychological theory. Talking of adult education for social change points to the need for unity between social change vision, educational strategies and political practice. Participation in political struggle for social justice changes the contours of theoretical work. Instead of merely espousing the principles of democracy, the work is more specific, since the challenge is to create and struggle for those conditions in our reality today. The conditions for justice, democracy and participatory power must be constructed, worked toward, created and experienced; they do not exist in the mere naming.

The tension inherent in grassroots struggle calls for "action" toward the formation of political strategies to overcome injustice; an educational practice that has been termed a "pedagogy of mobilisation." It is this practice that opens up new ways to examine how radical adult educators can further develop their understanding of the relationship between education and politics.
Finally, then, this study points to an understanding of social transformation as a process. That is, the vision of social transformation provides only a view of what society can become. It is the conscious choice and struggle of establishing a different relationship of knowledge to society, here and now, that gives meaning to adult education’s role in making democratic politics a reality.

E. SUMMARY

The study of the Task Force has proved to be valuable in developing a practical understanding of the essence of an education for social justice. A critical model for analysis was developed from the Task Force’s practice and provides insights into the role of education in the active struggle for social change. A theoretical understanding, based from the literature, was gained and developed into a transformative model of adult education for social change and was useful as a basis for examining practice. It is the combination, then, of the field of adult education and a Christian-based solidarity movement that were brought together in this study to build theory upon practice and practice upon theory.

"to educate is not so much to teach as it is to become committed to a reality in and with the people..." (World Council of Christian Education, Geneva, 1971).

"Walker, there is no way, the way is made by walking" (Antonio Machado).
AFTERWORD

It can be noted here that for the Task Force the study was useful in providing a model for reflecting upon and examining its work/educational practice. At the 1990 AGM, the model of the wheel was used as a framework of analysis. The model enabled some members of the network to see, for the first time, how different facets of the work came together as a whole. It reflects, in visual representation, the broad picture of the Task Force as an educative movement. Secondly, this study provides a source of documentation for what was largely unrecorded history.

On a personal note, the study provided the opportunity for the researcher, as learner and educator, to explore in concrete practice the meaning of education for social transformation. The demands set by the context of concrete reality challenged the researcher in developing a more rooted understanding of the educational nature of social struggle and made practical sense of what was largely "abstract theory."
REFERENCES


from CTFCA Office, P.O Box 65899, Station F, Vancouver, BC).


Elsey, B. (1986). Social Theory Perspectives on Adult Education. Nottingham: University of Nottingham, Dept. of Adult Education.


