The Green Movement in Canada

by

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ABSTRACT

The green movement has evolved over the last twenty years from various social, peace and ecology activist organizations into direct political participation in parliamentary institutions through the Green Party. Although there is no definable theory of green politics, the culmination of interacting social movements as well as feminist, decentralist and in many cases, left wing political ideology, has produced a specific kind of political direction for the Greens internationally. As a result of the increased attention and awareness given to ecological issues, combined with the heightened evidence of large scale environmental deterioration, public attitudes and government decisions on development and natural resource management have been significantly altered.

The Green Party of Canada is still relatively young in comparison to its European counterparts, although ecological awareness and interest in the green movement in Canada is strong, as reflected not only in support on a political level for the Canadian Greens, but for environmental issues and activism in general. For this reason it is important to determine whether or not the Green Party is a significant aspect of the Canadian green movement, and if in fact its representation is necessary as an active participant in the Canadian political system.
The Green Party of Canada, as a vital aspect of the Canadian green movement, and its connection to international green organizations can be examined primarily through the examples of both the Canadian Greens and the Green party of Ontario, by using original party documents and literature, information gained through Green party meetings and discussions with members, and commentary by Green theorists where applicable. As well, the influence on the Canadian green movement by the German Green Party is outlined, again mainly through party literature, documents and critiques of the party's experiences.

This study reveals several existing and potential problems for the Green Party in Canada, and the political future of the Canadian green movement in general. Some, such as the realities of the Canadian political system are external to the movement, and may be overcome with adjustments in goals and methods, and a realization of the changing attitude towards environmental issues in a political context. On the other hand, internal party disfunctions in both organization and direction, caused mainly by the indefinite parameters of green ideology, threaten to exploit the already problematic aspects evident in the Green Party.

Aside from its somewhat slow beginnings, the Green Party in Canada has developed into a strong grassroots social movement, not however from its political visibility but from the steady growth in the popularity of ecological politics in Canada. Due to the seeming enormity of the obstacles facing the Greens in their effort
to achieve electoral success, it is doubtful that Parliamentary representation will be achieved without a major re-orientation of party organization and methods. Ultimately the strength of the Green Party in Canada will be based upon its ability to survive as a significant movement, and its willingness to continue to challenge political thought and practice.
I would like to thank the members of the Green Party of Ontario, and the Canadian Greens for their assistance in the researching and writing of this thesis. I wish to also thank Professor Garth Stevenson for his advice and guidance.
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Chapter One:

Introduction:
Environmental Politics

The internationalization of economies, technology and communications systems has so intensified over the past fifty years, that it is now impossible to consider national issues as isolated from global situations. In the same way, many internal problems of nations are interconnected, and in turn have international consequences. For this reason, while local and even national concerns may seem more concrete in comparison to events occurring far from home, the impact of global problems must also be acknowledged. The rapid decline of environmental quality is one such problem which undoubtedly has international repercussions, and although currently only a major problem in certain nations, ecological decline has for many years become recognizable in every country. If allowed to continue unabated, the negative effects of increasing stress upon our ecological system promise to destroy our political, economic and social structures which presently rely upon the continuation of industrialized expansion for their existence.

Briefly, expansionism can be characterized here as any activities which require increased natural resource use, particularly of non-renewable energy sources, for the purposes of industrial growth at the expense of environmental quality. These operations naturally place enormous stress upon the earth's finite capacities and cause immeasurable ecological concern. In some
cases the harmful effects of this process are immediate, (such as the removal of whole sections of forests without cross-cutting or simultaneous replanting operations), while in other instances only long term mistreatment has resulted in noticeable decline, as is evidenced by the decreasing numbers of plant, marine and animal life through pollution, loss of habitat or deliberate mismanagement of resources. [1] Finally, environmental decay may be evident but cannot be attributed to any single factor. Instead there may be the combined result of long term industrialization and human settlement and growth patterns, such is the case with forest defoliation or the stress on the ozone layer.

These developments seem to be based upon the fallacy that technology and growth are intrinsically good, and that collective wealth through expansionism is an adequate measurement of social harmony and standard of living. In the same way, industrial growth is thought to offer solutions to global problems in all areas including ecological decay and social injustice. For this reason governments are unwilling to address alternative economic or environmental models which do not advocate expansion. Notwithstanding the evidence of historical contradictions, and despite the reality that these activities themselves contribute substantially to the problems they are said to solve, it is similarly dangerous to continue this type of technological myth

as it encourages the idea that our ecosystem offers unlimited resources which will allow growth to continue, while discouraging self-imposed limits to expansionism and proper environmental management for either nations or individuals.

Expansionist activities alone do not result in environmental degradation, nor is technology itself necessarily negative. However, excessive growth without selective resource planning and management, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas, is destructive behaviour and not industrial advancement. At the same time, factors such as population increase and inequitable income distribution similarly contribute to unhealthy ecological use. In all however, current political-economic structures have contributed to the continuation of these factors in order to substantiate their own existence, using the myth of technology. By encouraging a consumer society and not emphasizing the importance of realistic changes in our social attitudes which would be aimed at reducing environmental stress, capitalist nations allow industrialized development to continue to overrule ecological concerns. In the same way, countries led by centrally planned economies participate in expansionist activities to uphold political and economic structures also at the expense of human and natural conditions. The perpetuation of militaristic philosophies has driven both systems to place undue emphasis upon military production, which in turn greatly increases all levels of industrial activity and environmental threat. Finally, expansionist capitalist nations remove opportunities for less developed countries to improve living
standards by using Third World resources to create goods which will be manufactured and consumed in the West.

Since the early 1970's there have been a number of studies which have collectively indicated alarming future consequences as a result of activities such as those mentioned above. [2] The United States government report Global 2000 summarizes the future trends to be:

"continued economic growth in most areas, continued population growth everywhere, reduced energy growth, an increasingly tight and expensive food situation, increasing water problems, and growing environmental stress." [3]

The Club of Rome's Limits to Growth forecasts a similar situation given the fact that although nations are predisposed towards expansionist thinking, the earth's limits will eventually be reached. Fundamentally, they recognize the interconnectedness of human structures with nature, and they consider that without changes in current global patterns of expansion our ecosystem will no longer be able to support those structures. They state:


"Population cannot grow without food, food production is increased by growth of capital, more capital requires more resources, discarded resources become pollution, pollution interferes with the growth of both population and food." [4]

In short, a cycle has been created which perpetuates current environmental dilemmas, and which in turn affects the economic, political and social structures of every nation.

The combination of factors contributing to this cycle can be basically characterized as modes of "old paradigm" thinking. [5] There is a fundamental reliance upon technology and industrial advance, without fully realizing the repercussions of this form of growth upon either human or natural communities. Alternative forms of economic development, social formation or political organization are therefore largely ignored in favour of traditional government regulation, and economic expansionism. So called "alternative technologies" [6] are also overlooked due to the entrenchment of policy making traditions which conform to the predetermined standards of this pattern of thought. Most central is a belief in the anthropocentric nature of the earth, whereby the natural world


is viewed as merely resources available for human use. In this pattern of thought it is perfectly reasonable for technological advance to minimize concern for the natural world, as long as a human centered purpose is served. The feminist critique sees this attitude as having as its base the patriarchal tradition. Characteristics such as hierarchically organized institutions, and the need to dominate through these structures typify this male-oriented policy making system. In this way the historical subordination experienced by women through the continuation of this system can be equated with the pattern of control in regards to the environment. Undoubtedly then,

"patriarchy and ecological destruction are inextricably linked phenomena." [7]

The multitude of critiques which have arisen from a variety of political orientations have collectively demonstrated the destructive character of old paradigm thinking, and the global threat that it poses to the natural world. By contrast, a number of groups and writers have proposed an alternative system to the present process of decision-making. Most fundamentally there must occur a re-evaluation of individual needs and wants, and societal goals must be adjusted accordingly. In this way economic and political structures will also be re-oriented so as to more closely follow this attitudinal reform. "New paradigm thinking" is

therefore to be both an individual change in modes of thought, and an international realignment of policy making. Basically, this would involve a reversal of the present system and its expansionist orientation. Instead there would be an emphasis upon holistic thinking and an ecological perspective in decision-making. The role of stewardship in nature would similarly replace the concept of humans as "users". Finally, limitless industrial growth would be restricted, in favour of a form of more equitable sustainable development through a restructuring of economic and political systems to a more post-patriarchal or decentralized form.

Undoubtedly there are a multitude of obstacles blocking the progress of advocates of new paradigm thinking. Notwithstanding the fact that many writers maintain that neither the critiques of the system nor the proposed alternatives for change are realistic, present national parties and governments are simply not willing to re-evaluate their goals and policy making systems so dramatically in order to divorce themselves from this traditional mode of thought. As already noted:

"Major parties appear to be mesmerized by two dominating notions: that economic expansion is essential for survival and is the best possible index of progress and well being; and that unless solutions can be devised that do not threaten this notion, then the problems should not be regarded as existing." [8]

The Canadian economic structures, like those of other

industrialized countries, continue to be aimed towards increased industrialization and energy consumption, which in turn are supported by social patterns of population growth, increased urbanization and high consumerism. Important economic ties with other nations such as the U.S. - Canada Free Trade Agreement and military arrangements such as NATO, also dictate both technological growth and production. Experience has moreover shown that individuals would probably be unwilling to commit themselves to such drastic changes that would be necessary in order to support the type of alternative economic and political structures proposed by critiques of old paradigm thinking. Indeed, even nominal short term solutions to environmental problems such as recycling are disregarded if they are inconvenient.

If neither societal pressures, nor current political leadership, are to perpetuate the move towards these necessary alternatives in our system, how then are the changes to be made? As the book *Limits to Growth* has summarized,

"Only real comprehension of the human condition at this turning point in history can provide sufficient motivation for people to accept the individual sacrifices and the changes in political and economic power structures required to reach an equilibrium state." [9]

Undoubtedly, a major re-education program as well as government and community regulation must be attempted. However at this time, the

Green Party has been the only global movement which has actively claimed that at a political level reforms such as those characterizing new paradigm thinking are viable.

Green thought is essentially a practise of socially conscious ecology based philosophy which has not yet evolved either an adequate theoretical base or a problem-free organizational method upon which a wholly green principled party can coordinate its operation. European Green parties have to a certain extent overcome these difficulties by relying on practice and decentralized organization to build upon already existing citizen participation groups concerned with environmental protection. Considering the relatively slow progress of a politically active ecological movement in Canada, the construction of the network of Green chapters across the country has prematurely preceded the practical support and participatory philosophy upon which it is necessary to structure a Parliament-oriented party. Green successes internationally have also tended to be in political systems based upon proportional representation, a system which allows for more minor party representation. By contrast, the Canadian single member constituency system discourages minor party participation and tends to keep these parties on the fringe of Canadian politics. Electoral success has therefore not necessarily been a primary goal of the Canadian Greens, despite the realization that change may only be achieved with simultaneous political and social reform. The result has consequently been a turn towards internal ideological debate in order to provide party objectives
and the methods by which these may be attained, and a diverse conceptualization of what the movement actually means.

This lack of fundamental consensus has created numerous difficulties within the Canadian green movement, including both ideological divisions and structural disfunctions. Moreover, there is a tendency for green politics to inadequately address many of the issues connected to the Parliamentary system, which in turn necessitates some kind of consensual movement wide organization. Without the resolution of these problems within green thought and party system, the Canadian Greens will remain a marginal group caught between the status of social movement and political organization.

Despite the number of obstacles facing the green movement in Canada, green philosophy has much to offer our political and social organization. Its insights and criticisms are based upon genuine concern for the need of greater awareness of the intricacies involved in man's relationship with the natural world. Although many of its programs could be characterized as "Utopian" they are a valuable first step towards seriously addressing the threat of environmental destruction. To dismiss green thought as trivial would therefore be a great mistake, as its potential as a successful social movement cannot be ignored. Consequently, if internal and philosophical disagreements within the movement can be overcome, and increased social activism and alternatives to direct electoral objectives encouraged, the Green party could prove to be
an important and beneficial force in Canada.

To best understand the nature of the Canadian green movement and its political future, a detailed analysis of the Greens must include an explanation of party values, policy platform, methods and objectives. This is best done through scrutiny of party documents, and interviews with Green members, as well as a survey of the literature produced by the party itself and by green-minded theorists. It is helpful first however, to explain the roots of the international green movement through an examination of the German Greens, and the subsequent establishment of the Green Party in Canada.
Chapter Two:

The Growth of the Green Party in West Germany

and its influence on the international green movement

The green movement did not begin with the objective of forming an electorally oriented political party, nor was there initially an ideologically organized group of individuals involved. Several distinctions could be made in regards to the predominance of environmental concern, peace activism and a rejection of established methods and values. However, since its proponents did not set out to institute themselves as a politically separate green organization there was at first no agreement as to what did constitute the "green movement". Instead, a variety of political orientations were eventually combined in order to best meet the aims of the individuals who together represented the ideals of various groups. Since many of the individuals who were later to organize the green movement were therefore already involved in political parties, community action groups or issue-oriented causes, it is reasonable to say that the Green party grew out of an already existing movement which collectively shaped the program upon which a political party would become based. For this reason it is difficult to identify the main force underlying the formation of a separate green movement in Europe, and instead it may be easier to point out the sequence involved in the gradual organization of a Green party and ideology.
The Greens have so far been the most successful in West Germany, and it is generally acknowledged that the green movement can attribute its origins to the writings and actions of German activists. Although many of the same actions were also occurring throughout the Western world, the steps towards combining the various factors which were later to evolve into green politics may best be explained through a review of the situation in Germany. It may have been that the issues around which green theory was to become based were most central to the German experience, and not merely that environmental sentiment and activism were more prevalent within the German youth culture and community action groups in comparison to those of other countries. The earliest influences of green thought in any nation were the "Ohne Mich" [1] student movements of the late 1950's and 1960's. Although in the 1950's this alternative "beatnik" culture was largely restricted in Germany to certain urban centres such as West Berlin and Hamburg, the anti-authoritarian, anti-establishment literature which came out of this counter-culture would come to dominate the move towards more open protest in the student movement encountered during the 1960's. Particular to the German situation was a strong disillusionment with past generations and a mistrust of the entrenchment of highly dogmatic and authoritarian acceptance in both institutional establishments and social organization; a pattern which tended to characterize the modes of thought present

[1] The slogan "Without Me" symbolized the attitude towards participation in the establishment and its institutions.
in traditional German culture. As a result there was a demand by this youth movement for a radical change in the ordering of German society which would primarily require new, or alternative forms of thought, organization and operation. In terms of political and social activism, there was almost a total alienation from established political culture in Germany, and instead a turn towards ideology which would fundamentally alter the existing culture. For some, non-traditional politics such as Marxism, anarchism or Critical Theory became attractive as ways through which radical social and political transformation could occur. Still, for many others even these less traditional ideologies were too strictly dogmatic, and confusing in their internal divisions and complexities. Therefore, despite the fact that these leftist oriented ideologies dominated the student movement of these two decades, they did not continue as the dominant thought of the stronger alternative movement. Instead, leftist ideology became fractioned within the youth culture, creating by the 1960's numerous splinter groups which would later combine similar thought in the philosophies of the green movement. Consequently, in the 1970's this "Alternativbewegung" or alternative culture had evolved past ideological discussion merging many of the concerns and ideas of earlier youth movements with more structured and "legitimized" organizational methods, to become a more entrenched part of the emerging green movement.

Part of the success of this later alternative culture was the change in the student movement throughout the 1960's. From the
early part of the decade it had evolved from mere animosity towards the established order, to direct rejection of its institutions. Apart from the changing pattern of ideological approaches mentioned above, the student movement also focused upon the need to re-evaluate both the values and structures of political organization itself. Denouncing the hierarchical nature of traditional German organization, they advocated decentralized communities in which individual responsibility prevailed over collective obedience and anonymous responsibility. As well, the feminist movement, which by 1966 had become an integral part of the civil rights movement occurring throughout the West, added to the stress placed upon the legitimacy of male-dominated authority in Germany and other countries. [2] This was especially critical of traditional German society, which in many ways has continued to be strongly male-oriented. In this context a new "world view" was emphasized, in which post-materialistic, post-patriarchical values, such as concern for environmental quality and social equity, replaced materialism and hierarchy. [3] Alternative technology and a renewed interest in the concerns of society living within the natural world characterized the alternative movement at this time.


As Rüdig wrote:

"Dropping out of bourgeois society and established left wing politics, as well as a hedonistic interest in the immediate fulfilment of personal needs, were part of this new counter-culture." [4]

The experiments with decentralized community living in Germany, such as Kommune 1 and Kommune 2, were attempts to

"raise individual consciousness which could then be carried to society." [5]

The failure of these groups did not deter future experiments in alternative endeavours, though, and throughout the 1970's there continued to be evidence of the strength of this counter-culture sentiment in alternative educational institutions and communes, newspapers, clubs and organizations. Influenced by English and American counter-cultures, the German alternative movement began to also devise such practical needs as energy, agriculture and healthcare systems. [6] Although still in its early stages, these were important first steps towards what would later constitute the Green agenda in terms of alternative organization and operation.

The interruption in the ideological path of this alternative or youth culture similarly influenced the evolution of a green movement. By this time most of the youth and student groups of


the alternative movement were classified under a broad category of Ausserparlamentarische (APO) or extra-Parliamentarian opposition. Marxist ideology in some form tended to dominate the student movement of the 1960's, and many Leftist splinter groups or "K-Gruppen" had emerged to continue this tradition. Other less ideology oriented groups such as the Spontis, which by the mid-1970's had provided much of the philosophical and practical focus of this alternative culture, stressed

"a neo-anarchistic commitment to direct action, political subjectivity, and the struggle for a new collective consciousness." [7]

They also tended to reflect the continued dissatisfaction many West Germans felt with traditional party policies, and the complexities of continual internal organizational and theoretical debate which tended to plague Leftist parties. Characteristic of the Spontis satirical yet politically relevant criticism of the state of established parties in West Germany were slogans such as

"Marx is dead, Lenin is dead, and I'm not feeling too well either." [8]

At the same time, heightened anti-establishment ideology had begun to transform the direction of political activism. Peaceful and violent protest had now taken the place of mere literary criticism.


in West Germany. Demonstrations were aimed in particular at institutions of the established political and social order, such as universities, the military and government directed organizations. For example, there were dozens of instances throughout the late 1960's in which student protestors denounced the authoritarian nature of the German educational system by throwing eggs and paint at professors. [9] At a more extreme level, some anti-establishment organizations emerged as terrorist groups such as the Baader-Meinhof, which saw radical transformation only through violence and destruction.

Intertwined with the alternative experience were the environmental and peace movements. The issue of environmental protection had become, by the late 1960's, a matter which was drawing considerable attention in West Germany. Rapid post-World War II industrialization had brought pollution and ecological destruction to a visible level never before realized in Germany. For example, beginning in the 1960's tree defoliation began to increase dramatically as air pollution escalated, a situation which shocked and surprised many Germans who were previously unaware of the country's ecological problems. It is difficult to say how these movements differed from the alternative counter-culture since all grew from the same post-war sentiments of individual responsibility, and dissatisfaction with the traditional order in Germany. Certainly many of those individuals involved in the

experiments of alternative experiences were similarly involved in anti-nuclear and environmental concerns. However, while the alternative movement was based both upon a non-traditional political ideology and restructuring of society, the latter two movements were fundamentally issue-based and therefore generally not active in political organization at that time. Still however, many of the individuals attracted to the concept of an alternative lifestyle similarly saw the importance of these issues which had thus far been largely ignored by the governments of the West, and consequently could be considered a significant alternative political and social agenda. The alternative movement's desire for a new order which involved technology and production which was "environmentally appropriate", was therefore a direct result of the growing importance of the ecological and peace movements throughout the Western world.

While civil rights and the Vietnam War became the main focal points of youth protest in the United States throughout this period, the nuclear issue had become central to the peace movement in Europe. As early as 1957 thousands of citizens had mobilized to protest rearmament of the German army with atomic weapons, and a nation-wide movement was created to bring the issue of this nuclear threat to the German people. Although the Fighting Alliance Against Atomic Dangers did not succeed in preventing the situating of atomic weapons in West Germany, it was an important first step
for the anti-nuclear movement. [10] Anti-American sentiment [11] also encouraged the anti-nuclear and peace movements to protest NATO decisions in Europe. The most publicized demonstrations against NATO were the Frankfurt runway protests of the late 1970's, which culminated in direct confrontation with police in 1980. Throughout this period groups of environmental and peace activists constructed "Huttendorf" or hut villages at the Rhein-Main air facilities to halt planned runway extensions for military use. The persistence of demonstrators against authorities succeeded in increasing public awareness of the movement and their cause, in a manner never before attained by the student protests.

Throughout the 1960's and 1970's the peace movement continued to protest the establishment of nuclear reactors throughout Germany, drawing on the support of both student and alternative protest against nuclear arms, as well as citizens which rejected the placing of nuclear technology in their communities. It was for this reason that the environmental movement aligned itself with the anti-establishment sentiment of the peace and anti-nuclear movement, by focusing its attention on the intrinsic risks and social dangers of nuclear energy. This was not its only concern,


[11] This was manifested not in hostility towards Americans per se, but towards the military and political organizations representative of the United States in Germany and of an authoritarian, patriarchal society. The exchange of counter-culture material between German and American alternative movements was still extensive, and it is undeniable that each gained insights from the experiences of the other.
however, and by the mid 1970's it too had attracted thousands of supporters from various political movements and areas of Germany. This understanding between the two movements was later symbolically linked by the "Ecology and Peace Conference" at Kassel, West Germany in October of 1979.

The multitude of environmentally focused literature introduced by both the alternative movement and by the political ideology of the 1960's youth culture, had for almost two decades warned of the global catastrophes waiting to occur due to our own ecologically destructive behaviour. For Germans the realities of ecological destruction were by this time well known. One of the earliest such books was Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, which in 1962 startled the world with a description of man's environmental negligence, and grim predictions of the future. Other works such as the later *Limits to Growth*, a 1972 study by the Club of Rome, warned of the misuse of natural resources and the finite nature of energy sources; a concept which although it had been considered for decades, was not at that time considered as a possible threat to human existence. The enormity of public concern surrounding the issue of environmental security was at its highest in 1970 with the naming of that year as "Nature Conservation Year" in West Germany. Nuclear energy and toxic pollutants seemed to be one of the main menaces to the environment, and the alternative movement took the search for ecologically sound technology as its program. Writers such as Murray Bookchin combined the concept of an alternative social order with environmental considerations, by describing an
anarchist society in which technology would be "humanistic" and ecologically oriented for a decentralized society. Rudolf Bahro, a former official of the Communist Party of East Germany, declared that nothing but the collapse of the present industrial order would relieve the stress being placed upon the environment.

"The problem is not the abolition of technology" he wrote

"but its subordination." [12]

Others, such as Arne Naess, cited the anthropocentric nature of society as the cause of environmental destruction and social disharmony, and instead advocated "deep" ecological holistic values.

The importance of feminist theory as an influence upon the green movement should also be noted at this point. Feminism had, by the late 1970's, become firmly entrenched within the alternative and youth movements. Much of feminist philosophy mirrored this counter-culture criticism of the hierarchy-based social order and its industrial excesses. In addition, its stress upon the need for social equity and post-patriarchical values attracted both those who adhered to the anti-establishment politics of the many Marxist movements existing at that time, (for this reason the German feminist movement remained largely Marxist oriented [13]) as well


as those who belonged to the alternative community groups which sought to transform German society into

"a model of a quiet, harmonious, ecologically balanced and democratic civilization." [14]

The connection between the environmental protection movement and feminism was therefore a natural progression, as the political activities of the youth and alternative movements began to focus upon ecological and anti-nuclear issues. In 1980 the significance of "ecofeminism" was explored through the "Women for Life on Earth Conference." In West Germany feminist theory never achieved the strength of the American movement, mainly due to its tendency to mirror Marxism and focus primarily upon class based struggle, however, it did contribute substantially to the philosophy of the early stages of the green revolution, and in the later programs of the German Green Party.

The final contributing factor in the emerging green revolution was the growing power of popular movements among the more widespread public. Since the early 1960's the existence of politically active community groups or Citizens Initiatives (Buergerverine) had become increasingly more prominent, so that local issues and public interest now played an important part in German politics. In particular it was the prevalence of the youth protests during the 1960's, and the consequential increased public

awareness about both environmental and nuclear concerns, which ultimately gave the necessary political strength to these citizens associations. In fact, it has been agreed that

"the transition from an initiative of dignitaries to Citizen's Initiatives would not have been conceivable without the uncertainties caused by the extra-parliamentary protest movements in the sixties." [15]

Many former student leaders, and those involved in peace or environmental activism, also recognized the importance of using the citizen associations as vehicles for social transition. Moreover, to many Germans, these organizations were more acceptable forms for realizing alternative aims and concepts within the context of social reality. Here again the environmental and anti-nuclear movements were interconnected in the shape of Citizens Initiatives in order to confront local issues or values which were neglected by the traditional political agenda.

As national concerns, such as ecological destruction and chemical pollution, became more and more publicized, citizens began to increasingly involve themselves in environmental protection at a local level. This included active demonstrations against the construction of nuclear power plants and highways, as well as dissatisfaction with the operation of public utilities and services such as transportation. The environment remained a high priority in community association activism, and in 1972 the Federal

Association of Citizen Initiatives for the Protection of the Environment (BBU) was formed in order to coordinate already existing community-wide action at a national level. Although the majority of the Citizen Initiatives throughout this period remained mainly middle class based and conservative in their political direction, focusing only upon specific ecological concerns which fell within their area, the number which similarly saw the need for broader change in the social order had grown. [16] In part this was due to the membership of former student or leftist activists, however, many participants also saw solutions to environmental problems as viable only through alternative methods. Many of these individuals in particular were not aligned with either left or right ideological movements. [17] This recognition of the need for structural and political reform came to be reflected both in the continued prominence of the alternative-green movement in West Germany, and in support for the Social Democrat party, which at that time also advocated a program of change in the late 1960's.

The Social Democrats (SPD) came to power in 1969 in the form of a coalition government with the liberal Free Democrat party (FDP). Despite their program of social and political reform, they tended to alienate many of the participants in the alternative and youth movements who otherwise would have been attracted to this


agenda or its socialist origins. By the time it came to power, the SPD had become essentially a middle class party, with broadly based policies and less radical views on reform. For instance, as early as 1967 the SPD had even formed an alliance with the right wing Christian Democrat part (CDU/CSU). Consequently much of its Marxist ideology and program had been replaced so as to maintain its wide support base and a compromise position within the governing alliance. The community associations, which had grown by the 1970's to become significant measures of political climate, represented the majority of SPD support, and therefore initially much of its program was based upon localized Citizen Initiatives' demands. Similarly, the downplaying of its Marxist ideology allowed many of the essentially non-ideologically oriented demands of otherwise conservative citizens to be met at once. At the same time however, this direct relationship with the middle class and its concerns tended to alienate many of the individuals associated with both political youth movements and non-political alternative cultures. The students involved in New Left politics were dismayed at the apparent "identity crisis" of the SPD, [18] and consequently they once more turned away from parliamentary politics in favour of non-traditional party politics. As a result the more fundamental issues of environmental quality, the youth movement and international equity were largely ignored by the Social Democrats as less important to their agenda for social

and economic management. Considering that this was a period in which both anti-nuclear activism and environmental concern had caught the attention of the German population and its youth in particular, many potential supporters instead directed their interest towards alternative politics, both left and right.

By the end of the 1970's the popularity of what had become known as the green revolution, and the realities of social reform demanded concrete political action which extra-parliamentary protest could no longer fulfil. Proponents of the APO had previously recognized the political opportunity offered through citizen associations. It appeared that the expansion of these Initiatives, and especially their assembly under the umbrella organization, the BEU, forced discussion of many of their concerns on a parliamentary level. Still though, the Community Initiatives did not provide many of the long-term reforms sought by alternative activists interested in expanding the green movement towards parliamentary participation. The result was the inclusion of the "Green List for Environmental Protection" (GLU) in the 1977 state elections of Lower Saxony. The inclusion of this new party list was made considerably easier by the West German electoral system of proportional representation, which allows each citizen two votes: the first to specifically elect a candidate through a majority vote, while the second vote remains for the party list. Since half the seats in the federal Parliament are reserved proportionally for those parties which obtain at least 5% of the national vote, it is easy for minority parties with widespread grassroots support to
achieve Parliamentary representation. Also, the opportunity to
directly decide upon localized issues is increased through support
for issue-based parties, or those without necessarily well
established candidates or extensive platforms. Minor parties with
only localized support can therefore also achieve a significant
percentage of votes, since this system is replicated at the state
level.

In the 1978 state elections of Lower Saxony the Green List had
now obtained 3.9% of the popular vote. [19] And, in the 1979
Bremen elections, an ecological-peace oriented party running on the
basis of demonstrating against the construction of a nuclear
reactor at Esenshamm, and encouraged by evidence of earlier support
for a Green List in Lower Saxony, managed to achieve state
Parliament representation. The European Parliamentary elections of
1979 provided the final push towards constructing a coherent party
organization representing the green movement. The "Alternative
Political Union: the Greens" succeeded in obtaining 3.2% of the
West German vote. [20] A year later, at Karlsruhe, The Greens (Die
Grünen) were formed to incorporate all of the West German green and
community alternative movements. Based to a large extent upon
leftist policy [21], the party included former members of communist
K-Gruppen, conservatives and SPD followers, as well as peace and

[19] Pfaltzgraff et al., The Greens of West Germany, 29.
[20] Ibid., 32.
environmental activists who claimed no official political alliance. The party continued to attract nation-wide support and interest, and at the height of their popularity, the Greens were able to form a coalition government with the SPD in the state of Hessen lasting for one term until 1987. In 1983 the Greens obtained 23 seats in the federal parliament: 5.6% of the national vote. [22] This increased dramatically in the 1986 federal election when the Green vote rose to 8.3%, with 41 seats in parliament. [23] Unfortunately, by the 1990 federal elections to form a united German government, support for the Green Party fell almost as dramatically and rapidly as it had grown. Internal party conflicts and ideological debates were publicly exposed, causing some members to split with the party. The Greens were also criticized for their failure to join with the newly created East German Green Party, which ran together with a civil rights organization known as "Bundnis 90". Finally, much of the Green environmental platform had been adopted by each of the major West German parties, taking with them many former Green supporters. The result of these factors was a decline in the West German Green vote to 4.8%, and the loss of all parliamentary representation. [24] The East German Greens however obtained 5.9% of the East German

[24] Ibid.
vote, and two seats in the new federal parliament. [25] Following their defeat the Greens were quick to unite with the Eastern party in hopes of maintaining some measure of participation in government. Despite recent defeats, the Greens enjoyed great popularity in West Germany for a number of years, and were able to push for changes in many areas, most notably concerning the environment. Perhaps most significantly, the success of the German Green Party has encouraged the formation of green political organizations in other countries.

Chapter Three:

**The Green Movement in Canada:**

**History and Ideology**

The pattern of change which became the green revolution is not as clear in Canada, or in fact, in any other nation as it has been in West Germany. Although Green Parties have achieved measures of either public interest or electoral success in West European countries such as France, Belgium and Italy, the Greens have nowhere been as prominent as they have in Germany. There were similarities between the alternative movements of the 1960's and 1970's in North America and those occurring in West Germany, however, by the mid 1970's much of this alternative culture remained scattered and un-coordinated, and mainly non-active in political organization. The Canadian based organization Greenpeace, although active in political demonstrations and outspoken on issues of environmental protection and nuclear energy, has never endorsed green politics or any other Parliamentary movement, and instead relies solely upon public support. At the same time, community action groups have been slow to develop. They have remained largely temporary; associating only at times of immediate urgency and for localized short term solutions. However, once established, the green movement in Canada has continued to attract significant attention due to the desire of many citizens for a new method through which to achieve alternative aims for industrial development, equitable community living, feminism, participatory democracy, and environmentalism. Green organizations
have also tended to interest students who, while being concerned with political consequences of issues, are dissatisfied with the state of traditional ideologies and political parties. As a result of this relatively slow yet comparatively substantial growth of green theory and action, it was not until the early 1980's that any permanent Green party was established.

In February 1983, the British Columbia Green Party became the first registered Green Party in North America, with Adriane Carr as its president. In provincial elections of that year the party gained 1.5% of the popular vote, deriving much of their support from ecological activists and former New Democrat supporters dissatisfied with NDP refusals to consider earlier environmentalist demands, and specifically the creation of a wilderness park in the Valhalla area of Kootenays. [1] Other provincial and even city based green movements quickly declared themselves as "Green Parties" and in June 1983 steps were taken towards forming a Federal party. On November 6th of that year at the "Gathering of the Greens" conference in Ottawa the Green Party of Canada was officially founded, and Trevor Hancock elected as national leader. To relay the idea that its supporters ranged from new left activists to more conservative ecologists, the international green slogan "We are neither left nor right; we are in front" was taken as its basis for party identity.

Despite continued fragmentation and internal debate over

organization, Canadian Green Parties have remained independent of each other, while agreeing to the need for a Federal association. At the 1988 National Convention in White Rock, British Columbia, a constitution and a Basis of Unity was established. The participants agreed that the party was formed

"to enhance the effectiveness of the Global Green Movement in creating a Green Society by providing an evolving social and political structure that embraces, includes, and supports Green Values and offers itself as a voice for the broader Green Movement". [2]

And finally, the party name was changed to the "Canadian Greens".

The green movement in Canada has gone through a variety of changes since the first Green Party was formed in 1983. Although the concepts which encompassed the early years of the green revolution have continued to influence green political theory, concern for environmental protection and alternative methods of political organization have come to dominate Green policy. In some ways this has reflected the current trend towards increased public interest in matters of environmental concern, demonstrated by the demand for more ecologically safe products, and the relative decline of national concern for issues such as the use of nuclear energy. Similarly, there tends to be less interest among the youth and student culture in the so called alternative political theories such as Marxism and anarchism, which at a previous stage helped to

shape the direction of green theory. This is perhaps due to the realization amongst students that these political movements are no longer considered to be radical or non-traditional, to the same extent they were thirty years ago. The propensity for youth to participate in issues outside of established order may be considered a measure of the next stage in social concern, as counter-culture interests gradually permeate through other groups in society. Therefore, it may be true that the present state of the green movement in Canada is based upon heightened environmental concern amongst the alternative and student cultures. For the same reasons, much of the political theory behind green philosophy has been gradually replaced by more basic concepts of community or alternative processes emphasizing feminist modelled decentralization, non-compromise on issues of ecological and social equity, and a return to more traditional values of conservation, stewardship of nature and harmonious living.

The national Green Party, the Canadian Greens, has not entirely reflected this trend of the green movement towards wider public knowledge and acceptance of its environmental aspects. Although the Green Party has certainly emphasized its environmental character to the extent that it has become synonymous with environmental issues, it has remained on the fringe of the current national ecological movement, and at times has even criticized
widely held environmental concerns as being merely superficial. [3] Instead of emphasizing its involvement with this trend, the party has further attempted to attract public support for its political policies which involve a great deal more than merely ecological concern. For the Green party there has never been the question of "selling" the party image to the public through compromising its position, or attempting to merely exploit public needs and interests. Instead, the Green Party has always emphasized its multifaceted features and ideological diversity, despite the connotation it presents of being entirely ecologically centred. Considering that the Canadian Green Party is a very minor party in a political system with three major parties, it is understandable that much of the public does not know about its aspects and policies not directly associated with the environment, but nonetheless labelled as "green". However, some of the problems presently facing the Green Party of Canada in its attempt to both capture public support, and to participate in the political system on an active level, can be attributed to the party itself, which has evolved in a manner distinct from traditional Canadian political parties, as well as Green Parties in other nations. As well, it has often been acknowledged that the Green political party in Canada was constructed on a weak base; the strength of a grassroots green movement growing only through party instigation.

[3] For instance, ideas such as conservation and stewardship of natural resources are often considered by Green activists as being outdated and even harmful to the search for long-term ecological sustainability, due to their assessment of environmental importance measured against human needs.
This has not only been a problem in the operation and structure of the Green Party, but it has also been a contradiction in terms for a political party which claims to be a decentralized grassroots representative of societal interests. This is not necessarily wholly negative for the party, however, and in many ways the unorthodox nature of the Greens has worked to their advantage. A brief outline of the growth of the Canadian Green Party in terms of both its ideological complexity and structural uniqueness may be helpful at this point in understanding the problems connected with this particular form of organization.

First consider the relationship between national and provincial Green Parties, as reflected in the values which form ideology and policies of each party level. Despite the acknowledgement of the Green Party of Canada as the federal representative of organized Green Parties across the country, the various provincial and municipal level parties remain only loosely federated. Policy direction is neither dictated by the federal party, nor are activities necessarily coordinated. In essence, each Green Party remains totally independent, while at the same time respecting the interdependence of the Green organization in Canada as coordinated through the network concept of the federal Canadian Greens. It is important to the Greens therefore, that a nation wide body exists through which Green values and concepts may be more fully explored, since organization is so fragmented amongst provincial and community based green movements. This fact has been recognized within the 1988 constitution of the Canadian Greens,
which among other more structural purposes connected to electoral responsibilities, includes its functions as

"a liaison with other international Green organizations"

and to

"help establish Green organizations where they do not exist and to assist them and the membership to become involved on local actions and programs of responsibility." [4]

This system of organization is repeated at most provincial levels, [5] such as in Ontario, where the provincial Green Party is itself a coalition of community parties/chapters, while at the same time retaining its status as an independent Green Party. To confuse the issue still further, each party (the word "party" here includes provincial and municipal organizations, as well as chapters and community groups affiliated with the green movement) is also represented by the Green Party of Canada, despite the fact that not all parties have ratified the national constitution, and that each is encouraged to accentuate varied policies or local interests.[6]


[5] Each provincial party may or may not be a coalition of provincial chapters just as each municipal or community level group may be an independent chapter of the provincial party or a separate party.

As an example of the sovereignty given each affiliated party, the Constitution of the Ontario Greens maintains that

"The chapter (parties voluntarily constituted under the Ontario Greens) is the basic decision-making body of the Ontario Greens...the chapter is autonomous with respect to its choice of political objectives and strategies; its response to local issues; choice of its own decision making process; internal structure..." [7]

Furthermore,

"The constitution of the chapter is solely the discretion of the chapter insofar as it is in accordance with this Constitution." [8]

The importance placed upon maintaining a completely flexible and independent form of organization is to ensure that the fundamental green concept of decentralization and the ability of each party to interpret its own green values, are upheld within each party constitution, structure and decision-making formula; adherence to the previously mentioned "basis of unity" often reflecting the only link between Canadian Green Parties.

Unfortunately, this system is not without its faults. The former national leader, Kathryn Cholette, has in particular recognized the problems inherent to this pattern of diverse party


[8] Ibid., Art. 4 sec. 2.
structures and ideals. [9] Basically, the independent nature of party structure resulting from these intangible green values, has produced a marked split in the direction of philosophy within the party as a whole, which in turn increases the tension of the policy making process as individuals are divided on issues of party goals and the appropriate methods by which these goals are to be met. Specifically, the "party" itself has become an unclear concept, as ideological factions cannot be entirely removed from green politics. These are not trivial matters, but instead are fundamental disfunctions of green philosophy, which collectively threaten daily party operation as well as severely limiting its future expansion.

As a social movement these problems are not as serious. Movements can more easily maintain a loose organization without strict membership, as priorities are usually short term, simplified and agreeable to all supporters. Also, movements do not usually require any form of theory to provide focus or policy direction, as support is drawn from across ideological boundaries in favour of the cause or issue in question. Political parties, on the other hand, are by necessity more structured in operation and decision-making, with a commitment to membership, and some form of theoretical base which tends to direct policy. Despite continual attention to these issues, the Green Party has significantly

differed in its approach to building a structural and theoretical base upon which to operate and maintain a grassroots level of support. In many cases this is not altogether a handicap for the Greens. For instance it does allow the party to uphold its original intentions for federal coordination, and, more importantly, it enables the party to remain within the elusive concept which composes the green movement. However, the absence of both organizational coherence and ideological focus has presented many difficulties for the Greens which must be properly addressed if the party is to succeed in capturing the interest of the Canadian voter.

The structural problems related to the strong decentralist sentiment within the Green Party are directly connected to basic green "theory" which has gradually evolved along with the party itself. The complexity of decentralism is an issue particular to the Canadian Greens; being relatively less important in European Green Parties than other forms of value-centred theorizing such as leftist politics. For instance, the French Green Party "les Verts" do not seem to be concerned with establishing an "anti-party" party based upon varied green values such as disarmament or feminism, and instead have labelled themselves a

"purely environmentalist organization." [10]

Similarly, the German Greens have continued to display a

particularly leftist direction in terms of economic policy, activism, and even party organization. For "die Grünen", the early influences of Marxist groups and student anti-establishment protests have remained strong within the party. Although the green movement encompasses individuals of all, or no, political ideologies, the German Green Party has therefore always been noticeably leftist in terms of policy direction.

Nevertheless, the Canadian Greens have adhered to the informal international green movement philosophy of "neither left nor right," choosing to instead concentrate on what can be described as green values, rather than ideology, which the party considers more fundamental than mere theoretical distinctions. To many Canadian Greens, left or right wing political thought should be more accurately seen as either favouring a system of unlimited growth, or systems which are ecologically and socially sustainable. Along with other values such as non-violence, social responsibility, post-patriarchy and spirituality, feminist decentralization continues to remain important in shaping policy and operation within the Canadian Green Party. The concern arises when considering the uncertain nature of these values. Some are extremist positions in regards to their use in Parliamentary directed political organization, but at the same time, each has to some extent been connected to past political movements. Others however are very traditionalist or non-political in their orientation, such as those which reflect non-violence, community living and appropriate level or individual decision-making, and
respect of the Earth. The Greens have therefore attempted to combine previously existing politically oriented ideology with their own interpretations of the basic values and practices of a conserver society. There has been an inability, therefore, accurately to pinpoint any specific theory or concept which can be denoted as green; a situation which has caused difficulties for the party in relation to internal cohesion and public image.

Some distinctions may be made at this point in clarifying these basic values which lie at the root of green thought. As already explained, the international green movement itself was never isolated in its growth, and quite the opposite, was the result of both the cultural thought and political activism of previously existing groups or ideologies. Even its anti-nuclear, environmentalist direction can be seen as a reaction by these collective groups to the actions of the establishment. For many individuals then, green thought is the culmination of a variety of theories which together share many of the basic values espoused by Green Party policy. In Europe, the continued presence of Marxist, feminist, populist and Gandhist peace activism is consequentially acknowledged as contributors towards green thought. However, a distinction is made between the concentration on these theories individually, and the reinterpretation of ideology which has constituted green theory. In short, the green movement has accepted the use of values and policies of ideology which could be harmoniously adapted to the concept of green values; while rejecting much of these same ideologies which did not suit their
purposes. Nowhere is it expressed how these green values themselves were measured, except that they are inherently "good." Robyn Eckersley has attempted to explain the separate character of Green ideology, and to justify the manipulation of existing ideology, by describing these ideologies as merely stepping stones towards green thought.

"It [Marxism] is to be exorcised as a preliminary step in the search for new radical social movements into a philosophy based on the insights of ecology."

Green politics is therefore seen as a

"cultural shift to the new paradigm." [11]

It must be remembered that while the concept of green philosophy as a new vision of reality is agreed upon in European green politics, there remains a significant trend towards leftism in policy and party organization. It seems however that for many European Greens this is not a problem, and that inevitably several different theories can co-exist within the concept of green philosophy, while remaining within the parameters of green values.

For the Canadian Greens, the problem of a green ideology continues to be discussed. Considering that green thought was essentially transposed onto a Canadian context, and combined with already existing environmentalist and peace activist groups

operating in Canada, the acceptance of the various ideologies
concontributing towards green theory has not been as explicit. [12]
Certain tenets of green philosophy, such as feminism, have been
accepted to varying degrees within the party organization and
membership. For instance, the feminist ideal of anti-
patriarchal/hierarchical domination has been extended into the
"green" value of decentralization; a concept fundamental to the
Canadian Greens in terms of party structure and operation. At the
same time, however, many feminists within the party see the role of
women and feminist theory within the Greens as nominal, and with
the assistance of former national leader Kathryn Cholette, are
attempting to form an eco-feminist caucus, hoping in this way to
gain a greater degree of the party decision-making power. On the
other hand, Marxist and new left input has been relatively minor in
regards to Canadian Green policy, while at the same time many of
the policies, and indeed the image of the green movement, reflects
that of a radical or socialist-oriented party. Perhaps this has
occurred due to the fact that, despite the insistence that they are
"neither left nor right", many Green activities have been anti-
development, anti-pollution oriented, usually directed at huge
corporations such as the recent demonstrations against McDonald's
Restaurants of Canada in protest of their gross overpackaging and
the use of ecologically harmful containers. Still though, there
does exist a significant percentage of Green supporters and members

Green Multilogue 4, no. 4 (July-Aug 1989), 19.
who see Marxism as the only framework which would effectively provide a concrete direction for green thought. This trend has recently grown in popularity, as evidenced by the 1989 symposium presented at Laval University by the Society for Socialist Studies entitled the Red-Green Movement in Canada. The Red-Green movement, while not explicitly included within the established Green Party, has attempted to synthesize concepts of socialism and green values to work within the context of the Green political network in Canada. Once again though, it is unclear what fraction of Green Party members adhere to a leftist viewpoint, or whether the Red-Green movement is in fact an extension of green political philosophy or merely the cooptation of environmentalism by the Canadian socialist movement.

Both these examples demonstrate the difficulties involved in defining loosely founded green values through practical policy and activism. For instance, a feminist caucus would, in the eyes of some Green members, be a complete contradiction of green theory, resulting in levels of structural centralization and lack of party equality; while at the same time espousing the merits of anti-domination and the consequences of structural violence. Other members, while acknowledging that there is some resistance amongst male party activists, regard the potential of a feminist caucus as beneficial to the Greens, and as yet another step towards true equality within society as reflected by the party. An inclusion of the Red-Green sentiment within the framework of the Green Party would similarly contradict the party's centrist political position
in regards to ideological stance. In this case many party supporters actively oppose any overt inclusion of a leftist faction within the Green Party, as is evident from Green publications such as Decentralize. [13] However, the fact that internal differences such as these and others do continue to be debated reveal that it is questionable whether or not there actually does exist a Green basis of unity. Instead there seems to remain a complex mixture of values and emotions, many derived from existing political or religious philosophies, which collectively remain unclear in both extent and limitations.

Chapter Four:

Green values and their interpretation in party policy

The concept of green theory has been obscured by the idea that the basic values of decentralization, ecological concern, social equity and personal independence and responsibility, should replace more structured theorizing. At this point it is not apparent whether this emphasis will have a positive or negative long term effect upon party existence. Still, it is possible to detail several of the difficulties connected to this lack of consistent or even definable ideology, through an analysis of party policy.

The problem involved in defining green values through actual policy is that, like green political thought as a whole, there exists a multitude of interpretations as to the meaning and the importance of the values themselves. Policies at both federal and provincial level reflect the culmination of green values, and therefore it is difficult to pinpoint the particular value from which they were derived. Rather, each grouping of policy (i.e.: animal rights, alternative economics, child care programmes), is characteristic of the all inclusive nature of green theory, which attempts to cover a wide range of social movements and special interests concerned with social equity, sustainable development and environmental awareness. Originally, four pillars of green thought were identified by authors such as Charlene Spretnak and Fritjof Capra, as based upon examination of the international green
movement, and the German Green Party in particular. Their work *Green Politics* listed these four basic values as the essential foundations of green theory and party policy direction. These were: ecology, social responsibility, grassroots democracy and nonviolence. The Canadian Greens, by drawing upon this extensive study and the example of the German movement, used these values to devise the basis of unity upon which the Canadian political movement was constructed. Added to these four concepts were other ideals which they felt must also be acknowledged as fundamental green values: decentralization, spirituality and post-patriarchy or eco-feminism. The constitution of the Canadian Greens clarifies the list of essential values more fully by providing several lists of concepts which have either produced green values or are harmonious with green philosophy. For instance, it cites the roots of eco-feminism as ideas such as social justice, gender balance, cultural diversity, and social ecology as well as feminist concepts. [1]

Ecology is perhaps the most important green value as it is the theme by which policy direction and activism has come to be measured. The Green party does not orient its policy exclusively towards ecological perspectives, but the environmental consequences of issues has remained a primary consideration. Furthermore, an ecological outlook is connected with the idea of personal democracy and social responsibility, as well as more nebulous ideals such as

spiritualism. The concept of ecology itself is somewhat unclear, as the distinction between social and deep ecology continues to be argued within the green movement in many countries. Despite the continued debate over the validity of each theory, both concepts are recognized within the Canadian Green constitution, and to a great extent both have been incorporated within policy and practice. While both are based upon the idea of holism, or the interconnectedness of the world and of all living things, deep ecology, or biocentrism, has attacked man's anthropocentric attitude towards nature. To deep ecologists this "shallow" anthropocentrism has been the cause of ecological destruction as well as the extension of this dominationalist pattern of thought upon women and certain cultural groups. In this type of theorizing, traditional environmentalist measures such as conservation, resource management and other stewardship views of nature, are bound by their basic human chauvinism and therefore are not truly ecologically sound, long range solutions to environmental problems. [2]

Despite the apparent disagreement within the green movement over the priority of either deep or social ecology in policy formation, the two ideals are not necessarily opposed. Some thinkers have recognized social ecology not as exclusively human oriented - or shallow - as the concept of deep ecology would imply, but as merely an extension of the ecological paradigm to include

consideration of human social institutions. At a time when there exists inequality and injustice in condition at both an environmental and social level, this latter view seems to make more sense in terms of advancing serious programs of environmental change. Spretnak and Capra explain social ecology as

"the perception of societal structures and human interactions as an intricate web of dynamic systems that are simultaneously interrelated parts and complete in themselves." [3]

Murray Bookchin, the primary proponent of social ecology for many years now, similarly sees the purpose of social ecology as to

"eliminate the concept of domination of nature by humanity by eliminating domination of human by human." [4]

Therefore, while deep ecology seeks to protect the rights of those who cannot protect themselves against the desires of human society, social ecology attempts to understand and combine the needs of both the human and non-human world in order to create increased justice for both.

The animal rights policies of the Canadian Greens reflect both strains of ecological concern by advocating the protection of animals against unnatural cruelty and degradation by humans (ranging from bans upon non-medical animal testing, to stricter

standards for the use of animals in entertainment), while recognizing the "right to kill animals to provide essentials." This includes a carefully worded refusal to ban all trapping by the fur industry. Nevertheless, deep ecological sentiments tempered by realism in regards to the Canadian social and economic situation, can be recognized in the promotion of educational programs to "encourage a reduction in meat consumption" [5] and for financial alternatives for native Canadians which are unrelated to the fur industry. [6]

In the case of agriculture and fishing, a combination of deep and social ecological views has produced policies which are aimed at both decentralizing the existing agricultural and factory ship fishing industries, and creating a system which would provide for the most satisfactory level of human and environmental health. For instance, self-sufficiency in food production, along with tax incentives for organic farming, family, small scale and cooperatively owned agricultural and fishing businesses, and recycling of organic materials, reflect the strength of both strains of ecological direction in green thought, as does the desire for decreasing the use of nitrogen fertilizers and irradiated food production.

In a similar manner, evidence of ecological concern is


included in all aspects of Green economic policy, energy policy and community structural design. While each policy does not exclusively rest upon environmental involvement, there is the tendency to underemphasize other relevant issues such as already existing social, economic or political practices. For example, in the case of urban design, the Greens advocate bioregionalism as the optimum system of obtaining an ecologically sustainable economy. Through settlement patterns, communities are built so as to preserve the natural environment, in this way retaining the benefits of nature without the use of human-centred technology. While not explaining how this change is to occur, the Canadian Greens instead vaguely describe the aspects of bioregionalism in their national policy platform. For example they state

"it is a mindfulness of local environment, history, and community aspirations...it relies on safe and renewable sources of food and energy...it ensures employment by supplying a rich diversity of services within the community, by recycling our resources, and by exchanging prudent surpluses with other regions." [7]

Many of the policies outlined above are mirrored within Ontario Green policy, but in many instances there appear to be more detailed examinations of social ecology as it affects political agenda. There are several examples of specific recommendations for health care, both prevention and treatment facilities, including clean water and air acts, and no smoking policies. As well, there are detailed proposals for transitional

aid to communities, individuals and businesses to convert to more appropriate ecology conscious systems.

In this way the Canadian Greens have offered a compromise between extremist arguments of both social and deep ecologists so as to satisfy as many as possible positions within the movement, while at the same time hoping to avoid alienating potential supporters through advocating radical social and economic views. Therefore, green values upon which policy is based, in this case ecology, are recognized in policy, while allowing much room for internal debate and practical interpretation. While perhaps being wise politically, in many ways ecology has not been given the strength in terms of policy direction that its importance in the establishment of the Greens has implied.

Connected with ecology is the concept of spiritualism. While not directly evident in green theory through policy, the idea is listed as being one of the fundamental Green principles, and does retain a close relationship with both deep ecological ideology and feminist writing. This sense of spirituality is recognized within the party to different degrees by its members. For instance practices such as the February 1990 Ontario Greens Conference in which, at the opening ceremony,

"delegates passed around a smudge pot of burning sage to breathe in as a means of purifying themselves,"

[8]

reveal that this aspect of green philosophy is not only significant in terms of party organization, but is also present in party operation and policy. Spirituality here is a reality which is reflected in actions and thought not directly connected with religious ideology, but still retaining a certain amount of ritualistic overtones.

Green literature reveals another less symbolic form of Green spirituality, which projects a more obscure meaning to allow for considerations of actual political direction. It attempts to distinguish this value as separate from ecology or ecofeminism, while still related to these concepts in its orientation as a social and personal transition by which humans will move towards a more Earth centred philosophy of life. Bahro first described this theory in his critical 1977 book The Alternative in Eastern Europe [9] as a philosophical transformation occurring within the person, which must then be translated on a social level through to the state system. In later works and interviews in which he espoused these early green theories, he went on to describe the necessity of a revival of mysticism in the creation of a truly ecologically oriented society which would most adequately fulfil human destiny. [10] Finally, there is the interpretation resting almost exclusively upon environmental concern, which gives the sense that


spirituality is at once an individual decision as well as a social responsibility. One provincial member defined this idea as "standing back in awe and wonder at the interconnectedness of nature and how wonderful and beautiful this planet is," referring to the need for a refocusing of our values, in this case our "spirituality," upon how to live in harmony with the Earth. [11] None of these ideas is necessarily original [12] nor can they be considered exclusively green, but still the inclusion of spirituality as a political ideal has been unique to the Green Party. For this reason it is not yet foreseeable whether this will continue to be a significant aspect of the green movement as a political reality, particularly considering the varied interpretations and importance attributed this principle in policy development.

Feminism, and the derived values of decentralization and grassroots democracy, are similarly named as fundamental principles of green philosophy and policy direction. Although the concept of feminism is itself a distinct ideology with its adherents acknowledging its own set of established values and interpretations, the lack of concrete theory in this idea has allowed many groups, in this case the Greens, to use various attributes to reflect the indistinct nature of their political

orientation. While the structural consequences of the use of feminist related ideas will be explored in subsequent chapters, several examples of policy will reveal the indefinite character of this value as an important value in the construction of a green philosophy.

Although the link between women and nature has always existed, the French writer Francoise d'Eaubonne has been credited with first describing this relationship and its values as ecofeminism. [13] It was d'Eaubonne's original intention to focus upon the importance of mythology based mainly upon religious fertility ideals and the concept of "la Terre-Mère ou de la Grande-Déesse" [14] and its importance in relation to contemporary ecological devastation. In this way d'Eaubonne reveals the reaffirmation of feminism in society as the answer to the social and environmental problems of today, due to the physical and psychological subjugation of women as connected to the destruction of the Earth, and not necessarily through so called green eco-feminist values of decentralized, structural formations. She writes:

"le péril écologique mondial, conséquence de l'appropriation par le patriarchat des deux sources de vie, fertilité et fécondité." [15]


Since that time, the concept of eco-feminism has been reinterpreted, almost exclusively through its adaptation by the green movement, to represent a combination of observations upon the link between patriarchal society and environmental decay. For example, German Green spokesperson Petra Kelly has stated:

"Feminism is ecology and ecology is feminism. It's a holistic way of looking at things." [16]

The Canadian Greens have taken this unbounded interpretation of eco-feminism to encompass the party itself. A statement of eco-feminism on the first page of the national policy paper testifies to this concept's importance:

"Eco-feminism is vital to green politics. The forces which are responsible for the competition and patriarchal domination of women and other oppressed people are the same forces that are destroying the Earth." [17]

By using a feminist perspective to interpret the causes of "alienation from the Earth" [18] the Greens hope to develop policy which will result in a transformation to an ecologically sustainable society. Feminist concepts have, in theory, resulted in the non-traditionalist green principles of social equity, decentralization, spirituality and grassroots democracy, without actually prescribing any agenda for deciding party direction. To

[18] Ibid.
Green Party members, the value of eco-feminism can therefore be understood in a variety of ways, and yet still be regarded as relevant to the sphere of green philosophy. Bioregionalism, community alternative institutions such as educational services and cultural development groups, universal child care access and even the idea of a green economy can be attributed to the connection between feminist philosophy and ecology, due to the expansiveness of the green comprehension of these theories.

In addition to decentralism, green eco-feminist theories embrace the practice of appropriate level decision-making; a concept which corresponds with feminist thinking both within and outside of the environmentalist movement. Within the boundaries of social responsibility and justice, individuals are considered responsible for the political decisions made on issues whose consequences affect them directly. This may also extend to collective decision-making, in a non-hierarchical manner, in the case of communities or affected interest groups. Although our current systems of political choice are made at a representational level, the Greens advocate direct individual involvement at all levels of decision-making, in much the same manner in which Green Party policy and administrative decisions are formulated. One foreseeable problem with this principle if put into practice on a wider social scale, is whether or not the amount of community involvement, cooperation and organization necessary is in fact attainable. And, perhaps this coordination of values and independent thinking will not be possible without the personal
transition in spirituality and philosophy described by Bahro and encompassed within green thought. However, in the case of certain issues, (such as those involving civil rights) appropriate level decision-making is acceptable, and most likely is feasible, as long as the political rights of others are not harmed as a direct consequence. Bioregionalism, decentralist economic and legal policies are all examples of the principle of individual responsibility, and their inclusion strengthens the credibility of social justice, ecology and feminism as fundamental party principles.

The interpretations which have given rise to principles such as decentralization and individual responsibility are however not consistent with all values associated with feminist literature, owing to the breadth of ideals which may be espoused as feminist. Problems arise when considering aspects of feminism which are not adequately represented in the Green understanding of eco-feminism. For instance, although the promotion of women's rights has most certainly been advanced through the Green agenda, many members feel that the position of women within the party is still not equal to that of men, and that despite the presence of women in leadership roles they have little real power in terms of decision-making. Moreover, some feminists claim that the ecological connection has been overemphasized at the expense of other equally important aspects of feminism. As a consequence green writing on feminist ideals is split between those espousing ideas based upon d'Eaubonne's concepts of eco-feminism and decentralization as
empowerment and personal freedom; [19] and those more abstract ideals which more closely mirror other green values which themselves remain undefinable. Consequently both the understanding of decentralized structure, as well as policy agenda and goals are affected by this lack of clarity.

As the Green Party in German has become increasingly institutionalized, it has come to recognize these contradictions in the use of feminist concepts. Despite the leadership of several charismatic women, women's participation in the party and in actual policy making has not increased over time. Instead the use of quotas and a "women's program" are considered adequate responses to feminist criticisms. [20] Therefore, while the Canadian green movement does retain a much more decentralized organization than does its German counterpart, the dilemma surrounding the issue of feminism is similar. Spretnak and Capra in Green Politics argue that this friction between feminist perspectives and the use of eco-feminism in Green policy is a result of misunderstanding on behalf of the proponents of each. The use of "big-picture feminism" or holism by Greens, is not clearly comprehended by many in the feminist movement, as well as some feminists within the Greens themselves. As a consequence the policies and expectations


of the Greens are often seen as not coordinating with feminist values. [21] Also, much of the past and contemporary theorizing which constitutes feminist ideology has been overlooked by the Greens, in favour of interpretations which best match existing policy or ideals already decidedly green. Therefore the principles of eco-feminism, grassroots democracy, appropriate level decision-making and decentralization although perhaps considered to be most important in determining policy, are themselves quite expansive terms. The result is a broad policy direction and a continuum of internal debate over both the meaning and application of these concepts.

The final green principles which must be analyzed in their contribution to policy and philosophy, are the related concepts of social justice and responsibility, individual independence and non-violence. To some extent these values may be present in previously examined contexts which have been said to constitute a green theory, such as feminism or ecology, as well as to different degrees in connected political ideologies. Apart from the apparent lack in clarity of theory, the variety of these principles serves to further complicate the relationship between party policy, principles and actual political interpretation. However, due to the abstract manner in which green philosophy seems to affect party policy and its subsequent interpretation, this does not seem to be as much of an internal problem, so much as it gives rise to certain

contradictions in green theory as a whole. Evidence of these principles, as with those preceding, are reflected in several policies. The Concepts of social responsibility and justice are reflected in the support of young green movements such as those in Estonia, and the promotion of human rights internationally. Still however, the selection of specific policies appears to be rather arbitrary, hinging instead upon their relation to other established green ideals. Such is the case with the statement of solidarity with Mordecai Vanunu and the Green admonishment of the Israeli government to allow for his retrial by the United Nations. [22] Although clearly a question of social justice and human rights, it appears that the Canadian Greens are most concerned with this case as it applies to nuclear technology in the Middle East. Other examples of Green policy connected with social responsibility include previously mentioned health care proposals, economic and environmental sustainability, food production and the use of pesticides.

Another strong Green stance based upon concerns for social and individual responsibility is its anti-nuclear position, reflected by provincial and federal parties alike. The federal party does not include detailed proposals on methods to either ban or phase out the use of nuclear weapons and energy, except as a general statement. As an acknowledgement that not all technology is necessarily harmful, the federal Greens, in a separate outline of

national policy, make an allowance for temporary use of nuclear energy for medical purposes. It is this type of compromise on issues which characterizes the Greens, who rely upon the same fundamental values to accept sometimes contradictory policies. As evidence of the lack of unity in party policy, the Ontario Party does list a lengthy and all inclusive condemnation of nuclear technology and its detriments to human and ecological health, and offers replacement energy programs.

Non-violence, another example of the fundamentally green outlook, is also based upon indefinable values involving a combination of social justice and decentralist reasoning. The Canadian Greens argue that a security policy of "active non-aligned neutrality" should replace Canada's involvement in both NATO and NORAD in order to best promote Canada's role as an arbitrator of international disarmament, in a nuclear-free capacity. [23] Canada's armed forces, while retained for peace-keeping functions such as treaty verification and search and rescue operations, would be supplemented by an undefined system of "non-violent social defense." Moreover, the Greens have perceived Canada's responsibility in the global system in a manner that is unconventional in terms of contemporary Canadian politics:

"The Canadian Greens recognize Canada's unique position to play a vital part in the social evolution of civilization towards a peaceful planet." [24]

These are not necessarily exclusive proposals of the Green Party, nor is the idea of an internationally oriented mediatory role for Canada original. Still however, it is confusing when attempting to perceive the direct theory behind this position, except that it is based upon a combination of values examined through feminism, ecology and social justice; ideals which, although realistically applicable in contemporary politics, do not offer reasoning based upon any solid theory, but which remain value laden.

At this point it is not possible to determine if the indefinable nature of its theory will prove to be beneficial to the Green Party in terms of Parliamentary politics, or whether it will have a negative effect upon either the inner workings or the political activities of the party. Already there is evidence of lack of clarity, or unity, in party methods and direction as a result of this multiplicity of fundamental values and quasi-ideologies which at present contribute to green politics. Party identity itself is therefore unfocused; resulting not only in internal differences in terms of policy and values, but also in regards to the public and media knowledge of the Greens, which often does not adequately reflect the reality of the green movement.

[24] Ibid.
Still though, internal debate is encouraged by the party, and diversity in values has to a great extent been compensated for through the expansive nature of its principles, as well as the abstract manner in which they are applied to policy formation. In fact, on one level interpretation, green values such as decentralization and individual decision-making can be seen as discouraging internal cohesion, which would tend to create hegemonic thinking and ultimately hierarchic organizational structures. Consequently, there is no definable green theory - only an eclectic combination of ideals which together devise a way of life or philosophy which does not preclude diverse interpretations of its meanings, nor does it necessarily give any distinct context or direction in which Party policy can be molded. To more fully appreciate the impact of this fact, the structural aspects of green politics must next be considered.
Chapter Five:

Green Party Organization and Structure

The basis of unity in values, from which party policy is at least theoretically formulated, is similarly responsible for the structure and internal coordination of the Canadian Green Party. In much the same way in which principles such as ecology, feminism and grassroots democracy are used to loosely define the parameters of Green philosophy, they are also used to outline party organization, while refraining from dictating strict guidelines. Basically, this provides for a dramatically different party structure which attempts to reflect these principles in national party institutions and their operation, while at the same time maintain an independent identity for each green group across Canada.

Although the international green movement is not necessarily coordinated in terms of political structure or organization, there are undoubtedly certain aspects of all Green Parties which characterize them as such. And, while there do exist definite distinctions between the national, provincial and area parties, decentralist organization as a fundamental green ideal has remained an important consideration in party structure. Spretnak and Capra explain the reasoning underlying this acceptance of decentralist and feminist structural values:
"An organization structured with participatory democracy sets its basic policy according to the voting at large assemblies. It allows individuals access to all party officials, and it eschews hierarchical structure." [1]

The Canadian Greens are perhaps more extreme than other international Green Parties in their adherence to grassroots democracy and decentralist association, as evidenced in official documents as well as the current debates concerned with the extent of decentralism within Green institutions.

As previously noted, the Constitution of the Canadian Greens not only clarifies the responsibilities of the federal party, but it once again explains the importance of maintaining the green values upon which the party is based. Appendix A gives a lengthy explanation of these values and their connotations. Many of these ideological tenets tend to overlap while others such as meaningful work, humour, celebration and quality of life do not necessarily reveal any political insight. [2] Instead the constitution implies acceptance of these concepts within green ideology, and accordingly, their incorporation into party structure. Furthermore, nowhere is the specific structure of the party defined, except for acknowledging membership provisions for greens across Canada either as individuals or as members of provincial or


area chapters, subject to these separate membership rules. In much the same manner, the Constitution of the Ontario Greens (Spring 1987) provides for networking functions of the Ontario Greens through which the national party and provincial organizations may perform some semblance of coordination on issues such as membership, finances, communication and other administrative activities. Both constitutions give little detail or instruction in regards to actual structure, and as a result much has evolved through either practice or continual discussion.

The Greenhouse, the Ontario Green Party internal newspaper, revealed the confusion at the time of its acceptance over the extent of the constitution's form. A poll of members in the Spring of 1988 similarly details the strong internal debate over both national and provincial institutions, as members were divided between those favouring a Canadian Green Party which combined a federal party with a national coalition of green groups; and those who prefer maintaining a party which more closely reflects traditional Canadian party structure. [3] Publications such as Green Multilogue and The Greenhouse have continued to outline many members' dissatisfaction with either party structure or operation. These intra-party communications are excellent forums for debate and the transmission of information for members whose participation in decision-making and party restructuring remains crucial, as well as providing extensive insight into the problems of organizational

unity within the party. They also offer instruction to Green members on the electoral and political processes, the media, campaigning and organization of events. As well, the party uses a free community outreach newspaper, Green News, to inform readers not only about the activities and values of the Greens, but similarly about the need for increased environmentally minded behaviour.

As a non-hierarchical, anti-patriarchic organization, the Greens do not necessarily need the representation of a party leader. However, under the Canada Elections Act, Chapter E-Z sec. 24(1), and provincial election acts such as the Ontario Election Act 1984, Chapter 134 sec. 10(3), each registered political party must have a recognizable leader and executive officers in order to maintain participation in elections. Still though, the party leader and their representatives do not hold any specific functions involving decision-making powers above those of the party membership through decision-making conferences. Nor does the leader hold any authority over provincial or local policies, election platforms or selection of candidates. Instead, an executive council of five Regional Spokespersons are responsible for party administration at the federal level. [4] In short, there is no party discipline in terms of policy uniformity, although there are still limits to the extent to which interpretations of

green values can vary through "green" organizations and be recognized as a legitimate Green Party. The leader and executive council therefore exist to fulfil administrative responsibilities as well as to meet expectations of the Canadian public, media and institutions concerning the operation of a political party.

This does not however negate the existence of an informal party hierarchy which has made up for the lack of institutional powers by assuming the role of leadership and decision-making executive. For example, although each Green chapter or community group is encouraged to follow its own "awareness raising campaigns" or fundraising events, all so-called Green activities remain subject to party scrutiny. In part this has occurred due to the pervasiveness with which the term green has become used to describe any environmental related idea, ranging from recycling waste products to business packaging processes. Despite the media and the private sector's attachment to labelling such activities, in one sense it takes away from public understanding of the Green Party program, and confuses the issue of what is green in terms of party ideals, and what is merely public relations. As a consequence an informal communications system is maintained by the Greens in attempts to coordinate party events and image, or to distance the party itself from those issues or activities which do not follow the political ideals of the green movement. Therefore the national party in Canada, in connection with the international movement, has been quick to denounce what it sees as the undeserved adaptation of the label green by community or political groups it
feels do not conform to true green values. For instance, one group which the Canadian Greens see as decidedly non-green, is an organization operating throughout North America, most notably in San Francisco, Toronto, Montreal and New York, who refer to themselves as "The Green Party," causing considerable confusion and anger amongst Green supporters. A survey of their literature by concerned green organizations has concluded that they are

"pyramidal and highly centralized with direction and orientation coming from the top down... extremely hierarchical."

The Green Future Siloist Greens, also known as The Movement, has a radically different policy than conventional green philosophy encourages, and speaks instead of "humanizing" all that is natural, since nature itself has no intentions. [5] As a consequence, Green leadership has taken the initiative to distribute literature warning green supporters of the differences between the two organizations.

On the other hand, a small group of party activists also control the organization of events in connection with environmental and community groups whose values they see as coordinating with those of the Green Party. For example, a recent attack against Ontario Hydro's plans to build another ten nuclear plants in the next twenty-five years, which involved surrounding the Hydro building with a human chain of protestors, linked the Green Party

with groups such as Greenpeace, Energy Probe, and a national coalition of labour, women's, peace and citizens groups called Campaign for Nuclear Phaseout. [6]

Most daily policy decisions are therefore carried out in this way. Despite objections that there is not a central body ordering local decisions, local activities are monitored informally, as are suggestions and encouragement to participate in national or provincial events. Larger issues are sometimes brought to the attention of community based activists by internationally affiliated Green Parties, as was the case with the Siloist Greens. Members in chapters across the province are either unable to devote their full attention to party matters, or unwilling to become actively involved, and consequently a small group of provincial or federal leaders, plan and coordinate large media-oriented events, without allowing for much member input. It is hard to say whether or not these same small groups of activists are also involved in the party executive. Participation in the federal functionary council is based upon nominations and general membership ratification, and rotates on a two year mandate. On the national level former leaders Seymour Trieger and Kathryn Cholette, as well as members of their executive, have in fact been quite outspoken on their particular views within party correspondence, as is their right as Green Party members. On the other hand, within the more decentralist Ontario Greens who have an elected leader, presently

Katherine Mathewson, but no official executive council, there is much less clear leadership. The federal system therefore seems to contradict the basic concepts underlying unique Green Party organization in theory.

The whole issue of decentralization, and its denunciation of hierarchical organization, is therefore constantly being questioned within the Green Party. Undoubtedly party operation relies upon a good measure of centralized administration, by a small number of members acting usually upon their own interpretation of green values, and an informal initiatives and communications network between an equally informal leadership hierarchy. Keeping this in mind, it is easy to understand why the ongoing debate over party organization and the concept of decentralization remains unresolved.

As previously discussed, Green chapters retain a certain measure of autonomy, while coming under the auspices of provincial supervision and a degree of centralized decision-making. The degree to which this occurs differs significantly in each province where the Green Party maintains representation. For instance, in Quebec, Le Parti Vert du Quebec maintains a much tighter control over its large membership provincially, in a more structured party with a highly visible leadership. In the 1988 federal election, the Quebec Greens fielded 30 candidates, and received over 32,000 votes. [7]

The difference in style of these Green groups is also revealed by Le Parti Vert du Québec's debts after the most recent provincial election - a sign that they are willing to conform to more conventional campaign practices. [8] It has even been said that this is due to the real absence of any green movement in Quebec, and that without this base the Quebec Greens have had no example but to form a traditionally styled party. It must be kept in mind however, that grassroots movements, have been able to form highly successful party structures.

On the other hand, the Ontario Greens who have similarly had some success in provincial politics (they obtained almost 16,000 votes in the September 1990 provincial election - 0.75% of the popular vote), and have lately been able to capture media attention with the initiation of several environment-oriented protests, do not maintain a large membership, nor is its official leadership and executive emphasized.

Finally, the Green Party of Canada, having developed out of the original Green Party in British Columbia, now operates as an umbrella organization for green groups across the country. While not necessarily representative of all provincial groups, The Canadian Greens try to maintain a decentralized policy making agenda and structure. Still though, grassroots organizations have not ratified the original Canadian Constitution of 1988 as of the National conference in August 1990, despite being allowed to

participate in policy making and constitutional amendments. Consequently, there remains no formal relation between this group and organizations across the country, except qualifications for policy input and adherence to universal green values.

What seems to characterize the Green Party in all its forms however, is the constant concern that this loosely structured organization, defined only by what could be considered green thought, is more or less centralized than is desired, or than is set out in the constitutions of the various chapters. It is because of the fluid nature of the Canadian Green Party's constitution, that there is as yet no definitive answer to the ongoing debate over the appropriate level of decentralization.

While some measure of centralization has certainly occurred since the Green Party was first formed in Canada, [9] it still remains adamantly decentralized; its decision-making formulas requiring as near to consensus as can be reached in order to make or change policy - something difficult to achieve especially considering the diversity of views within green philosophy. Even what may seem fundamentally important to more traditional parties, that is the concept of the party itself, has been obscured due to internal differences arising from this demand for extreme decentralist structure. The encouragement of dissension amongst

[9] For instance, individuals who lived in areas where Green chapters did not exist could previously be "orphan" members of the Ontario Greens, and could vote in policy decisions through a monthly mailing referendum system. Now however, both practices have been discontinued.
Greens has led to two distinct divisions within the party. This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that some members refuse to regard the split amongst Greens as an important obstacle to party growth, or to acknowledge that it exists as an aspect of green politics as a whole.

The first division revolves around the non-specific nature of green philosophy. Some party members prefer to regard the Greens solely as a movement which follows green decentralist ideals in terms of political participation, while seeing the participation of the party as an entity in Canadian politics as a contradiction of these values. After analyzing the complexities of green politics, it is not confusing to understand why division has occurred within the party. Many supporters believe that the proper interpretation of these ideals means both living within a green lifestyle, while at the same time attempting to help re-socialize others into this frame of thought without the use of old paradigm processes, such as our parliamentary system. Others however see this as only a limited view of the possibilities of green thought. To ignore the use of current systems or institutions would mean denying the educational and social values of real political change, thus disregarding the political abilities of functional green theory. This split between "movement" and "party" is not unique to the Canadian Greens, considering green ideology itself is an amalgamation of political, economic and social issues arising from a number of already existing group movements. And, although through their constitution, structure and decision-making process the Greens have declared
themselves to indeed be a viable political party, albeit an "unparty" party, no serious attempts have been made to resolve this split so far.

The lack of definition in green politics has further allowed a more serious split to occur, which has more fundamentally affected the ideals, organization and structure of the Greens if we are to regard them as a political party. It too centres on the lack of clear intent in green ideals, but more directly, it relates to both the degree of centralization in policy-making and structural decisions, as well as in leadership and party structure.

To some Green members although debate is healthy, the current structural organization is not only counterproductive to party operation, but it creates considerable disunity in the party as a whole. Without any kind of uniformity in objectives and methods the concept of the party itself is blurred, and the idea of the movement as holistic becomes meaningless. A unified direction is similarly important in terms of leadership. Here centralists are not advocating a strong executive with significant decision-making powers, but merely they stress the need for an identifiable spokesperson for the party. Internal dissensions would therefore not be quelled by party leadership, but at the same time they would not be revealed to the media or the public through too many "Green" spokespersons with conflicting interpretations of green values. In this sense, there is no argument over green values or their importance, however, it is the extent to which their interpretation
denotes party organization and political policy making that is in question. This faction of "centralists" see a compromise with green values and structural necessities as the only method by which the party can provide a uniform representation to the public, and achieve any kind of electoral success. This does not necessarily mean a transformation to conventional party organization, merely a more centralized structure in terms of policy making, administration and leadership. In other words, the political process should be just as meaningful as the green ideals upon which the party rests.

Other Greens disagree with this centralist position that the party presents a disunified image, and that too much diversity is harmful. They maintain that the fundamental values dictate internal differences, and that while the constitution is open to wide interpretation, this does not promote confusion or unmanageability. Therefore, allowing all Greens to claim before whomever they wish that they truly do represent the values and views of the Green Party is justifiable as long as those views do in fact reflect some strain of the Canadian Greens. By encouraging variety in interpretations of ideology, Green thought will be allowed to expand naturally while attracting a wider circle of supporters. Process therefore is important, but only as the fulfilment of green thought. Consequently, only through the continuation of a decentralist agenda, with consensus-oriented decision-making, can true green values be reached.

The problems over method naturally also affect uniformity in
objectives. To different degrees, within those who see the Greens as a "political party," it is true that:

"Greens wouldn't even think of being political if they didn't think they could transform parliament."

[10]

Without some intention to participation in the political system there would be no need for the Green Party; the number of grassroots movements adequately covering much of the issues contained in green philosophy. However, many Greens see not parliament but educational enlightenment as their principal aim. Political success would not necessarily be a contradiction to the decentralist supporters within the Greens, but without the required shift in thinking towards new paradigm politics, parliamentary representation would be useless. It is also realistic to say that electoral representation would be impossible without some sort of social shift in attitudes. On the other hand, many Green members believe that this re-education can only be achieved after parliamentary representation has been attained, thus requiring a change in the methods and operation of the party. In short, this has created a conundrum for the Canadian Greens, which at present remains unresolved.

The question over the extent of political participation, and by assumption, the amount of compromise in terms of green principles, has instead become increasingly more complex following the recent Ontario provincial election. Since the number of

constituencies far exceeded the number of province-wide green grassroots groups, many members felt that it would be hypocritical to run a paper candidate in those areas. Others realized that a Green presence was necessary in as many ridings as possible, despite the absence of active local support. The outcome was the creation of several constituency associations where no Green support existed, operating through single chapters based upon the willingness of those chapters and upon a consensus vote. As a result of this dissension several Metro Toronto areas, such as the Beaches, which did already have Green chapters or significant active support did not run a candidate at all.

As evidenced by the multitude of letters and debates revealing members' dissatisfaction over the state of internal Green order, there is no doubt that the party must search for a solution if it is to exist as a political reality. Former federal leader Kathryn Cholette stressed the need for "radical caucuses" to provide analysis of the parliamentary system, and Green values, objectives and activism, in order to attempt and resolve this split. [11] Others, such as former Media and Public Relations Coordinator for the Canadian Greens, Jim Bohlen, declare that there is no division, merely a natural evolution towards increased centralization and electoral participation within the Green movement as a reaction to rising levels of environmental decay. [12]

Finally, in what the decentralist faction proclaimed as an important decision in their favour, the August 1990 Federal Conference (not yet ratified by the Canadian Greens as a whole) provided that while individuals or chapters may make their own statements,

"Units must always state or make it clear who they are speaking on behalf of for each and every point made; and Units must always state differences in their unit's position, with that of the Canadian Greens, if there is any difference." [13]

Thus far, within the Canadian Greens many members do not see any necessity for the resolution of this conflict, as green politics are constructed in a manner so as to absorb this strain through continued internal debate. International Green Parties, including the relatively successful German Green Party who are also still struggling with this division between the "realos" and the "fundi," have unavoidably moved towards increased centralization due to the demands of political participation. Whether or not this latest decision will bring the question of structure any closer to being resolved is therefore yet to be seen.

The final structural difficulty associated with the tenets of green thought which guide party operation and organization, is the decision-making structure. Incorporating green principles into structural organization means creating a process which is just as

significant as its outcome, and therefore the structure of policy-making, notwithstanding the question of who should be involved in this process, has from the beginning also been subject to a considerable amount of debate. This issue is of course exacerbated by the split in interpretation of green politics, and, as in the case of party organization and goals, has resulted in two distinct views of the party and its principles.

Decisions on federal structural organization, policy-making formulas, constitutional amendments, representation and new policy directions are carried out during party conventions, or gatherings, which all members as well as "green-thinking" non-members are encouraged to attend. Proposals for constitutional amendments or party policy may come from representatives of any green member organization, including a committee or caucus with as few as five individual members. [14]

The first national gathering of the Greens on November 4th-6th, 1983 in Ottawa, attempted to construct a decision-making formula which most closely reflected those green principles which were to encompass green politics in Canada. This process was simply to achieve consensus (90%-100%), and failing that, a fallback mechanism of 75% in agreement; 10% blocking; and 15% abstain from voting. If not more than 15% abstain, then a motion can be considered passed. A quorum of two-thirds of the members must also be reached. Apart

from the choice to organize the Canadian Greens in the form of a party, and its subsequent registration as a federal party, the procedure for actual policy-making was not expanded upon. Membership in the Greens at that time was low enough to allow this sort of decision-making to function. However, even with this straw vote to determine party structure no consensus could be reached.

The next Federal Convention in August 1988 was considerably more successful in expanding upon the method of deciding policy, and in organizing the party in a more viable manner. A constitution was drafted along with a political platform and basis of unity for all Canadian green organizations. As well, detailed procedural organization was designed to qualify the rules for policy-making. It was established that the party should hold a national convention a minimum of every two years, to ensure that individual members would have adequate opportunities to participate in policy choices. [15] In all these processes therefore, vocal diversity is encouraged, and every attempt is made to reach a level of consensus. For instance, if there are any motions against a proposal, a process of up to four rounds of discussion and voting are carried out, after which time the fallback formula is employed. And, if this too fails to produce a satisfactory outcome, the proposal is referred back to its sponsors for re-thinking. As a final grassroots check on decision-making, all convention proposals, after being passed through this procedure, must then be accepted by all member groups.

such as provincial parties or regional organizations in the same manner. Perhaps the complexities of this qualification are the reason that the federal constitution itself has remained a draft document for the last two years. [16]

Following these designs a decision-making cycle was also implemented to carry out purely administrative decisions of the federal executive council. Since the 1988 constitution states that

"The council shall meet a minimum of 4 (four) times per year"

in its two year mandate, with a quorum of at least two thirds of council members participating [17] and given the problems of administering a nationwide party, it was agreed that this cycle should operate through the mail; its decisions being processed and presented by the Networking Coordinator. [18]

The last convention of Canadian Greens was held in Montreal on the 14th-19th of August 1990. Several clarifications, or amendments to the yet unratified constitution were proposed and passed by those in attendance, as well as a motion that a ratification ballot pertaining to convention decisions be mailed to all Green


members. [19] It is interesting to note that some issues, such as the status of a Green member who simultaneously retained membership in the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, contrary to Article 8 section 2 of the 1988 constitution, is discussed both at the convention and by the federal functionary council. Despite the fact that the proposals of each decision-making institution have been clearly delineated, there are therefore instances in which issues invariably overlap. If this is true, then how realistic is the principle of grassroots control over policy-making, while debate over constitutional interpretations takes place within a closed-system executive? [20]

In contrast to the federal party, the Ontario Greens have in a somewhat contradictory manner, devised a much more restrictive method of policy and administrative decision-making in order to provide decentralist process. Previous to the 1987 Ontario constitution, a Monthly Mailing and Referendum System (MMRS) was utilized to provide provincial members continual access to all party decisions, both operational or political in nature. This was a two-tier voting system in which the votes of both individual members


[20] Any decisions reached by the Functionary Council are distributed for the general membership; however, in those decisions deemed administration only and therefore within Council responsibility, no general ratification through a consensus of party membership is necessary. Internal Council debate or agenda are of course available to any member of the Canadian Greens who request this material.
and chapters were calculated separately so as to ensure that small groups of activists or representatives of chapters would not monopolize the proposing and deciding of party policy or organization. A consensus of at least 75% member and chapter support, and a quorum of 75% chapter and 20% member participation were necessary in order to pass all proposals. Due to the stress of internal divisions, in 1987 an official provincial constitution was drafted to redefine the limits of decision-making in a totally grassroots direction. Instead of continuing the MMRS, a system of provincial conferences was devised to deal with both organizational administration and party policy-making. Conferences to settle inter-chapter issues are held a minimum of three times per year, and extraordinary meetings, called mini-conferences, can be proposed to discuss immediate concerns, such as election strategy. [21] Although in theory this allows for greater depth of debate amongst Greens members, there is also less incentive for individuals to participate in this process when they must take part in person rather than through a mail-in ballot. The voting procedure is by consensus, and, as in the federal party, a fallback formula of 75% support also exists, but with votes limited to chapters only. Quorum is considerably lower however; 50% of provincial chapters must be in attendance, and individual membership is not emphasized. [22] Chapters, which are more likely to maintain representation at


[22] Ibid., By-law 3(i).
all conferences, are thus unavoidably more influential in this process than are individuals or internal groups.

Institutional inefficiency as an aspect of green theory is perhaps less evident in Ontario Green structure and decision-making, which in many ways is very rigidly controlled so that it will conversely maintain its decentralist foundations. For instance, in February 1990

"a plan to institute direct participatory democracy through a series of referendums was tabled until the party's next meeting." [23]

By the Summer conference at Christie Lake this proposal was passed through a consensus vote. When implemented the "Three Phase Participatory Democracy" scheme may be more similar to past structural designs such as the MMRS which has since been replaced by more centralist institutions. The differences in value interpretations and organization are further reflected by a proposal also made at the Summer Provincial Conference that at the August 1990 National Convention

"representatives of the Ontario Green Party not endorse the federal policies"

and that they

"urge the Canadian Greens to organize along the same lines as the Ontario Greens, as a decentralized organization." [24]

Grassroots participation seems therefore to remain a much more important value for procedural decision-making for the Ontario Greens, and despite the contradictory nature of many of its structures, policy stagnation is not as evident as within the federal Party.

Although the more decentralist elements of the provincial party seem to have dominated both constitutional development and policy procedure, the split between those members who favour increased centralization and those who emphasize expanded decentralization still continues. In the same way, the latest proposals at the national convention in Montreal reflect the precarious balance of power within the Canadian Greens, due to the wide variety in interpretation of what constitutes green politics. As previously outlined, this division revolves both around the concept of movement versus party, and in the case of the latter, between the noncompromising position of pure decentralists, and those Greens who recognize the need for a greater degree of organized centralization in the fulfilment of eco-feminist, grassroots goals.

The method of consensus decision-making, a fundamental aspect of green values common to both provincial and federal levels, has

therefore been subject to considerable scrutiny due to the split. Not only is there a question of inefficiency occurring due to its use, but there is also the matter of equality through appropriate level decision-making, two other basic green values. The absence of any real executive council within the Ontario Party, as well as the federal functionary council responsible for administrative and financial duties, are both the results of different interpretations of these values. Contradictions occur within each structural design, however, such as the replacement of the MMRS and the secondary nature of the national conventions. Still though, attempts have continued to achieve green ideals throughout the policy-making process, in efforts to encourage diversity of member input. In fact, at the Summer provincial conference a women’s circle (so named to avoid the negative centralist-oriented connotations of the word "caucus") was instituted to facilitate increased emphasis on feminist ideals and to ensure their consideration in regards to proposed policy. Compromise on issues, especially in terms of activities, is often necessary, but is not usually sought, and as a result involvement in media events has sometimes lagged behind the good intentions of party activists. This does not mean that all members agree with the process of decision-making. It is particularly apparent at the federal level, as structural inefficiency seems to have been a curse for the Canadian Greens since its beginning. There is not the
"chaos of capitalist society in both economic and ecological spheres" [25]

that Rüdig predicts will be produced in green politics when centralized planning does not exist, however it is true that at the federal level there has been a considerable lack of dialogue between green factions within the movement, which has led to stagnation of policy and activism. The problem is nonetheless self-evident as Green newsletters and meeting reports are crowded with concerns from members unsatisfied with the current inefficiency of policy and administrative decision-making procedures, stressing that some sort of compromise must be achieved in order to repair the internal fragmentation of discussion between Greens with differing interpretations of basic values. In short, they agree that compromise on ideals is not desirable, in order to remain a non-traditionally organized political party, but that procedure must not become so overwhelmingly important that it causes the party to lose sight of its original values and goals. Consensus has even been criticized as being essentially an anti-green method, as it negates free discussion of proposals and forces compromise when it is not appropriate, in efforts to actually make the policy process more worthwhile. In this way a common "state of disempowerment" [26] is reached, rather than total equality in checking centralization.

[26] Helen Riley, Green Multilogue 5, no. 1 (Jan-Feb 1990), 45.
"Those who disagree feel coercive social pressures to suppress their differences or by blocking group decision-making they themselves coerce others by preventing any action." [27]

Views such as these reveal that undoubtedly many Greens are not satisfied with structure and policy process.

Although the split continues to be a source of fragmentation for the Greens, at the present time it does not seem to affect party operation, at least at the provincial level, too dramatically. Apart from the problem of ratification, provincial level parties, as well as their chapters, are able to interpret party values through individual policy and activities to a certain level. Furthermore, the structural organization does reflect as was intended, the diversity of green philosophy, general objectives and flexibility in membership. In essence, the Green Party's institutions uphold its claim to be a political alternative both in theory and operation. A lack of effective activism as well as clear policy and goals has had a greater impact upon the existence of the Canadian Greens. These problems may worsen if the Greens continue to mature as a participant in Canadian politics, and this lack of focus in objectives, leadership, organization and structural decision-making has not been resolved. Potential supporters and members will not be satisfied with the kind of disunity currently afflicting party performance. Furthermore, almost undoubtedly this would not be sufficient to handle the planning or implementation

[27] Ibid.
of more complex issues on a larger scale, and in terms of Green institutions (bioregions, local councils, or community equitable sustainable development plans) operating within economic and social realities. Consequently, without the willingness of members to take any solid steps towards compromise, conflict either through physical division of the Green Party into fragmented political and non-political organizations, or actual stagnation, will inevitably occur.
Chapter Six:

The Future of the Greens in Canada:

Problems and Potential Solutions

For over twenty years the green movement in Canada has been ever changing: transforming itself from a multitude of single-issue protest groups, to a more complex organization competing on a realistic level in the political system. The Green Party in Canada has similarly evolved in terms of both grassroots membership and ideological foundations, which has helped the party federally and provincially to form a structure and organization which reflect political ideals to a great extent. This does not mean that the progression from movement to the six Green Parties presently registered across Canada has been as successful as some Greens perceive, nor has it as yet achieved the expectations and goals of others. However, considering the numerous factors working against such a heavily idealized, decentralist-oriented party maintaining a working system for over seven years, the Green Party should be viewed as one of the more significant fringe parties currently participating in Canadian politics.

Despite the relative progress the Greens have had in the most recent provincial and federal elections, there are a number of obstacles barring the party from more concrete electoral success. The structure of the Canadian political system, single-member constituencies, makes it difficult for fourth parties, or those
without concentrated support, to attain parliamentary representation. The lack of stable grassroots support throughout the voting population, as reflected by media and corporate characterization of the concept of green politics, and the cooptation of these politics by established parties, similarly affects the validity of Green Party politics. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the party itself may not be able to survive the internal conflicts with which many members are presently struggling.

The seeming enormity of the barrier between Green goals and actual party operation does not necessarily designate the Green Party to political obscurity however. As many factors as there are working against the reality of a green political future, there are also reasons why green politics should retain and expand the popularity it has already enjoyed. Internationally, the ecological paradigm, whether demonstrated through green politics, feminist, peace and environmental activism, or any of the various expressions of the green movement, has collectively altered established popular thought in relating to man-made social organization, and the natural environment. Thought processes are not altered overnight of course, and often concrete physical evidence is required fundamentally to alter entrenched perceptions. Often slower still is the reflection of popular values in established institutional order, political and economic. Traditional political organization has begun to gradually reflect this shift towards ideas of ecological sustainability. Still though, the extent to which actual "green" philosophical policies are incorporated into social and economic planning differs
greatly from region to region, depending upon factors such as the relative affluence of the country, the prevalence of ecological destruction, connection between state and economy, relation to other levels of government, and international presence. European and North American politics are now talking of green alternatives, but again much of what has been labelled green thought is based largely upon expanded notions of conservation or redirection of natural resources. This is not necessarily harmful for the green movement, as it reveals the extent to which green philosophy, at least in terms of environmental awareness, has become entrenched in social concerns, as have past issues such as civil rights. However, at the same time this public perception takes away attention from alternative structures designed for long-term solutions to ecological dilemmas offered by the green movement.

Although many Canadians naturally associate the term "green" with the notion of heightened environmental awareness, many do not know of the existence of a "green" party until election time. In fact, because of the expense and subsequent low-key tone of Green campaigns, many undecided voters do not vote Green until they actually read a list of candidates and parties running in their constituency. In an informal poll of a cross section of Ontarians, 85.2% had some knowledge of terms such as green movement, while only 29.6% had actually heard of the Green Party itself; most understanding merely that it was a political party based upon ecological protection. On the other hand, 37% revealed they would support such a party, and 18.5% said that with further information
they might support the Green Party. In all, 92.6% of respondents showed interest in learning more about the Greens. Most Green supporters tended to be between the ages of 20-30 years, many of them also involved in other forms of activism such as community action groups, or issue-based movements. A poll conducted by Angus Reid just prior to the provincial election in 1990 confirms these informal results of the correlation between age, social activism and interest in environmental issues, and concluded that 42% of those surveyed would consider supporting the Green Party. [1] The Angus Reid poll also noted that many respondents who said they might support the Greens,

"now tended to vote New Democrat (except in Quebec, where the provincial Green Party actually beat the NDP in popular support last year)." [2]

Pilat, in Ecological Politics: The Rise of the Green Movement, similarly substantiated the Canadian results. Green supporters in West Germany and France were identified as mostly young, well educated, middle class individuals. Women and those already involved in social movements were also disproportionately represented amongst Green Party supporters. [3]

It is not the concept of green politics that is unfamiliar


[2] Ibid.

to Canadians then, but rather it is the image that is still somewhat blurred. The use of "green" talk to market a range of concepts and products creates some confusion over Green Party ideology, for some voters. The media has similarly focused upon the ecological aspect of the Greens, categorizing it mainly as a single-issue party. This offers a paradox for Green members; the idea of "green" representing environmental consciousness appeals to a large proportion of Canadians, while making the Greens themselves easily identifiable. Conversely, if other Green policies or issues are stressed they are either ignored by the media or forgotten by the public due to a preconceived notion of what constitutes a green image. For instance, a general meeting of the Ontario Greens in July held at the 519 Church Street Community Centre encouraged community members to meet with the Greens and discuss the formulation of a possible election platform. Whilst debating such diverse issues as Quebec independence, the housing problem in Toronto, the welfare system, abortion rights and the 1996 Olympic bid, several community members voiced their dismay at being invited to a "green" party meeting and not focusing solely upon the environment. Many were also surprised to learn that the Greens are unofficially linked to other non-environmentally based groups such as the pro-choice movement, and the Bread Not Circuses Coalition.

The Green Party as a political alternative in Europe has similarly suffered some loss of identity, due mainly to the ability of traditional parties to grasp the growing environmental dimension of European politics. Yet by strong campaigns which combine the
need for environmental alternatives now with programs on other issues such as labour, industry, education and foreign policy, European greens continue to be a realistic, albeit minor, player in party politics.

In Canada, the strength of entrenched theory reflecting Canadian realities, in conjunction with a stable grassroots movement, has been absent for most of the seven years since a Canadian Green Party was first formed. The growing significance of the green movement internationally and in Canada in particular, has helped bring some momentum to the party in recent years, and with the construction of a grassroots organizational network the Greens have been able to claim steady, if slow, progress in the political system. In the 1984 Federal election, the Canadian Greens ran 60 candidates and received 26,328 votes. [4] Their results were only marginally better in the 1988 Federal election, in which they ran 69 candidates on an anti-Free Trade platform, achieving 47,424 votes, over 30,000 of those in Quebec. [5] Provincial parties, or regional organizations as in the case of British Columbia, have been comparatively more successful in electoral politics, due most likely to more localized issues as well as stronger party cohesion. In the 1990 Ontario election, the Ontario Greens ran 40 candidates and


gained 30,101 votes, [6] achieving 0.75% of the popular vote, a rise of 0.66% from the 1987 provincial election. [7] The 1990 Ontario election also represents the first time a Green candidate has gained over 15% of the constituent vote when Richard Thomas, the Green candidate for Parry Sound, polled over 4061 votes - 17.64% of the total constituency vote. [8] It is also interesting to note that although the NDP achieved an overwhelming upset in the recent provincial election, in Parry Sound the Green candidate gained more votes than did the NDP candidate. Undeniably, the 1990 election was one in which Ontarians most clearly sought change, and perhaps the surge in the Green vote also reflects an aspect of this grasp for political alternatives.

The sluggishness with which the Greens have made their presence known as an alternative political movement in Canada may be explained by examining several factors. In contrast to the European situation, Canadian established parties, most notably the New Democratic Party, have been quick to incorporate environmental perspectives into their programs. Moreover, social democracy is still a relatively new political alternative for Canadian voters, thus leaving an even greater gap for Greens to cover before being recognized as a realistic political entity. Regardless of outside influences, the party and its ideology have also created a handicap

for the Greens in their efforts to stamp their ideology in the minds of Canadian voters. Continued weakness in terms of undefined political theory, awkward leadership and decision-making structure, and a reluctance to commit themselves fully in the direction of either political participation or social education through more visible activism, has resulted in a party which is ironically flawed as a result of the concepts upon which it was founded.

Support in Canada for the Greens has therefore not grown as a result of the impetus of the party itself. Instead, increased recognition has tended to follow the political successes of European Green groups, as well as paralleling heightened awareness of ecological deterioration and resulting concerns for environmental protection. The failure of the Greens in Canada has thus been the slowness with which the party has acted "green." Despite its seven years of existence in Canadian politics it has only caught serious media or public attention in the past two or three years, as other sources of ecological wisdom have appeared. In Canada the green movement has therefore been overly passive in their political participation and as a consequence they have been neglected by many voters as a realistic political alternative.

The Canadian Greens are a comparatively young party (both in terms of established Canadian parties, and the worldwide green movement), and as they have already attracted some political attention, there is still much to build upon. The Greens should continue to exist as an environmental and social conscience in
Canadian politics, and as a visible anti-party alternative to established politics. With a clearly defined ideological base, and a stronger internal order upon which to build a more concrete agenda, the party could become a stronger political contender. Even without parliamentary representation (since with a re-evaluation of goals, electoral politics may not still be a primary consideration), the Greens are capable of significant political participation in efforts to achieve long range economic and social transformations. The momentum of the green movement as reflected in either established politics, restructuring of economic systems, or popular protest movements, should not continually be discredited by Greens despite what they see as essentially old paradigm rhetoric. Instead, Greens must capture this force through a more active presence, first to gain political recognition, and second to exert its radically alternative views of what does constitute green solutions. This may mean working within the traditional system which they seek to transform, and which some members do not accept, as well as activism and policies which may not conform with traditional political practices, but which will help to positively alter the image of the Green Party. Most important however, is the need for the resolution of a number of internal disfunctions, which realistically, will require either compromise or conflict.

The future of the Green Party in Canada depends as much upon the continuation of environmental concerns amongst voters as it does upon party coordination. If the Greens are to resign themselves to accepting the image and internal problems they are presently
experiencing, they would undoubtedly maintain a base membership, while electoral support would gradually decline in correspondence to traditional party acceptance of green issues. However, despite a 1987 public opinion poll which concluded that Canadian voters are more concerned with environmental issues than unemployment, trade and inflation [9] the Green Party could not hope to attain sustained success based upon the environmental issue alone. Fundamentally then, a re-assessment of internal order, as well as an evaluation of the realistic obstacles to political participation, is necessary to maintain the fullest expression of green theory through the party. Without a dramatic re-evaluation of ideology, organization and goals, the Canadian Green Party cannot hope for stable electoral success. And, if the internal debates over party identity are not soon resolved, at worst there is the danger of self-destruction; at best, continuation as a social movement or as an alternative fringe party whose political ideals and methods are rapidly becoming more mainstream.

The lack of internal cohesion presently dividing the Greens is perhaps one of the most serious barriers to growth at this time. Not only does this take away from further political participation, activism and party policy-making, but it also creates a disunified party identity which confuses the public and disms membership. The problem is much deeper than the split between decentralization

and centralization previously described. Essentially it is an aspect of the vague parameters by which green theory is defined. Although this broadness has enabled the Greens to encompass a wide variety of social issues, it has been too difficult to limit interpretation when implemented in party policy, structure and decision-making. The strong desire for consensus, and unwillingness to compromise on green values is subsequently also an aspect of this dilemma which has caused conflict over party goals and methods. Finally, the interpretation of green ideology by some members has also led to struggles between factions such as Greens identified as "red greens," or strongly feminist individuals, and those members who feel internal movements should not exist within a party which stresses total equality and a non-left or right political orientation. Green ideology however, both includes and precludes the issues which encompass these internal caucuses, and as such does not adequately regulate their acceptance in the green movement. Membership must therefore first come to terms with the fact that these groups do already exist within the Canadian Greens due to their acceptance of the Green basis of unity, and that a holistically based organization should be able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of all its parts. Furthermore, party unity necessitates coordination of the goals and processes of these groups, if it is to continue to operate effectively in the political process.

This leads to another aspect of the contradictions within green theory which has created a number of divisions and disfunctions for
the party; the lack of clear party directions. The split between movement and party is most significant in this factor, exacerbated by the lack of internal harmony, and expressed through the disunification inherent in the decision-making and planning process. The result has been an extremely low level of visible activism, in relation to other international green organizations, as well as Canadian social movements and political protest groups. This has not helped to alter the single-issue image of the Greens, nor have its activities added to the political credibility of the party. This past neglect of effective activism has been acknowledged by the party. Most recently the Ontario Greens have been successful in attracting public attention by their organization of large scale events such as the protest against McDonalds' use of styrofoam packaging, which featured a march of activists dressed as McDonalds' products, carrying an enormous "golden arches" built of discarded packages. As well, several "eat-ins" were staged at restaurants around Toronto, in which participants were urged to request that food be served on reusable dishes rather than in disposable containers.

Undoubtedly Green members are quite active in social debate and demonstration on a wide range of issues. Furthermore, before beginning the above-mentioned Party organized activities, the Green Party has been supportive of numerous events but at a much less visible level, such as the Don River Walk, Gay Pride day and anti-nuclear protests. The media of course also have much to do with the visibility of Green activism, and, until most recently, Green
participation in events has been largely overlooked. Nevertheless, there has clearly been a problem with party image both within public perception and internal party organization. Stabilizing unity in party direction through either redefinition of green theory or the reinterpretation of Green processes would thus allow the continuation of the planning and creative focus such attention grabbing media events require. Unfortunately, one possible outcome of such an evaluation is a physical division of the party, with a split both in ideological interpretation and organizational process. More beneficial to the Greens would be compromise in regards to process and the interpretation of green values. Either way, a much needed self-assessment would help to strengthen political participation capabilities and more clearly define party identity.

Notwithstanding the re-organization of internal order in the Green Party, there must also be a more adequate evaluation of the Canadian political environment. If the Greens are to operate from within the system they must be prepared to function according to the realities of the system (such as the necessity of a certain measure of bureaucratization, financial administration and party unity), while avoiding sacrificing green values and policies. Several writers have theorized on the potential impacts of compromise and institutionalization on the Green Party. Murray Bookchin maintains that value degeneration and compromise due to participation in the political process are inevitable, and that the centralist, or realist, factions ultimately will control Green parliamentary
representation. [10] On the other hand, Paehlke, while believing that direct electoral participation is not the most promising future for the Green Party, states that

"One can develop and maintain in one's mind utopian visions without suffering the illusion that utopia will actually arrive."

He goes on to say that

"The costs of compromise do not include a lapse into pure tolerance, the universally feared bureaucratic mentality." [11]

Finally, Weston, in Red and Green — A New Politics of the Environment, sees green theory in North America as flawed due to its unwillingness to accept a socialist dimension. The resulting lack of radicalism in ideology has created an illusion for the Greens that would make them incapable of either participating in the mainstream political system, or of producing any real change. [12] Although each of these theorists expresses dramatically differing views on the future of the green movement within the political system, they are realistic aspects which must be considered by the Green Party if they intend fully to direct their attention upon electoral participation.


Understanding the practicalities of the Canadian political environment also means accepting alternative forms of political participation when parliamentary goals have not been met. Maintaining an active political presence at a municipal, or even community/neighbourhood level would enable the Greens to experience political cooperation with other individuals in the political process. As well, the Green Party must come to terms with the idea that it does not hold a monopoly on ecological thought. Particularly because of the Green Party's weakness in terms of public and media identity, established parties have been able to co-opt the environmental question without any political pressure from the Greens, and consequently not as a result of the structural redesign which Green theorists see as a necessity for long range ecological solutions. As a politically alternative Canadian party, the NDP has already succeeded in gaining much support from many of the groups within society that would otherwise provide large numbers of Green supporters. Continued representation of varied social issues by the NDP, including environmental quality, will therefore not help the Greens in terms of electoral progress, especially if the single-issue image of the Green Party continues to be stressed. In much the same way that community level participation would be beneficial, serious association with established parties, as a pressure group, as supporters of green-oriented candidates, or as denouncers of overtly anti-environment candidates, would help to refocus Green Party political participation to the realities of institutionalization, and to introduce green ideals and policies to
more established parties.

Finally, if green concepts are to be accepted in the political system by the Canadian public it is important that there be evidence of alternative green structures and policies. This does not necessarily mean the large scale implementation of such radical systems as community redesign based upon the theory of bioregionalism or the experimental economic systems such as the "LETS" barter system employed in both the Ontario and British Columbia Green parties. On the other hand, the structure of programs for alternative energy systems, appropriate technology and sustainable resource use are not altogether unfamiliar concepts in Canada. However, if the Greens are to continue to represent the goal of social transformation they must be prepared to demonstrate realistic alternatives to socialized practices.

As previously explained, not all Green proposals are necessarily as radical or as unattainable as they may be perceived. Many policies such as their opposition to bilateral free trade with the United States, the anti-nuclear strategy, and the withdrawal of Canadian involvement in NATO and NORAD already reflect the views of a significant proportion of Canadians, and consequently are also represented in established party politics. Concerns for environmental protection, recycling, and more responsible use of natural resources are even more representative of accepted public opinion, and consequently cannot be labelled as radical green values. Policies in regards to these issues do however differ,
sometimes considerably, from the more conservative proposals forwarded by Canadian governments. For instance, in a paper named "Towards a 'Zero-Garbage' Society: The Green Party Solution to the Garbage Crisis, (Summer 1990)," the Greens propose that single-use packaging should be heavily taxed to encourage the manufacture of reusable or returnable containers, as well as the recycling of only paper materials to avoid the energy and chemical intensive process of plastic and metal recycling currently in practice. Once again, the concepts are not unfamiliar, but the practical applications of the Green program are quite unlike those of proposals made by established parties, who suffer from the institutionalized interconnectedness of the political, social and economic systems.

Undoubtedly however, more demanding policies which reflect popular concepts, such as is the case with many of the proposals made by the Green Party, are often adapted by mainstream politics once the ideas have gained a wide level of social acceptance. For instance, 1987 Green proposals for no smoking in hospitals, banks and public transportation facilities, as well as the increased penalties for tobacco sales to minors, are now government policies. Also, programs for the improvement of public transportation and the redesign of urban centres to provide bicycle lanes or traffic free areas, are now in the experimental stage in several cities across Canada. [13] Although these proposals may have already existed, they did not come into being through any overt action on behalf of

the Green Party, nor have they been emphasized through the media or party activism. While the media are important for the expression of green activism and ideals, they must not be relied upon to promote concepts which do not appeal to the image the Green Party has thus far presented. Consequently, some demonstration of green thought in practice, through either increased activism, public educational programs, or actual implementation of programs on a community wide level, is necessary to improve understanding and political acceptance of Green policies.

The future of green politics in Canada is not as clear as some theorists may imagine. While it is unlikely that electoral success is attainable in the near future, the Green Party is not to be ignored as merely a social movement with little political consequence. The international green movement, promises to hold popular attention until definite solutions are found for environmental dilemmas. Demands for heightened political responsibility in addition to increasing interest in local level self-government, similarly reflect green decentralist attitudes. The Canadian Greens, both provincially and federally, must take advantage of these present trends to demonstrate the possibilities of alternative politics. More importantly, the Greens must ensure, through political and social pressure, that society is kept aware of the unresolved social and ecological problems which will continue to occur until alternative structures are devised which are not a part of the institutionalized old paradigm thought processes.
This may not be as easy for the Green Party in Canada as it has been for the European Green movement. North America has not yet been subject to the degree of environmental pollution that Europe has experienced, and it has therefore been only during the last decade that serious consideration has been given to increasing environmental protection. Moreover, European Greens have been much more effective in stressing the various aspects of green thought through the peace and the women's movements, thus not being subject to the label of single-issue party to the same extent as the Canadian Greens have been. The Canadian political system also presents numerous problems for the Green Party, many of which will remain unalterable. However, it will be the Greens themselves who will decide if they are to sustain active political participation, and accordingly, the actions they take in the immediate future to resolve current internal divisions and ideological inconsistencies, and to promote green concepts, will be most significant for the green movement in Canada. It is time for a strong green conscience working within the Canadian political system. Hopefully the Green Party will soon be able to fulfil that role.
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