THE DECLINE OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY: THE POLITICS OF POSTMATERIALISM OR NEO-LIBERALISM?

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

The New Democratic Party (NDP), Canada's social democratic party, suffered a precipitate decline during the 1990s. They received an average of almost 20% of the vote during the 1980s, but gained only 7% in the vote in 1993 and 11% in 1997. This dissertation considers Inglehart's postmaterialist thesis and Lipset's declining-significance-of-class thesis as possible explanations for the NDP's decline. Lipset focuses on the decline of materialist politics whereas Inglehart focuses on the rise of a new postmaterialist politics. However both scholars argue that due to a prolonged period of peace and prosperity in the postwar years, a growing share of the population have their material needs met. In the political realm, this segment of the population has turned its attention toward postmaterialist issues such as support for the environment, minority rights, and other quality-of-life issues. The postmaterialist thesis implies that the NDP has suffered because they remain wedded to a materialist politics. However, using data from the Canadian Election Studies (1984-1997), I found that postmaterialist issues have had a modest impact in shaping people's ideological outlooks. In addition, postmaterialist issues have played a minor role in structuring recent federal elections.
I trace the NDP's decline to the shift in the balance of power in Canada toward the corporate class at the expense of organized labour and "working people". The neo-liberal ideology which champions the free market and legitimizes stark social inequalities, has become hegemonic in the past decade. This ideology portrays the NDP, which maintains that the state should play a key role in the redistribution of wealth, as passé and out of touch with the realities of the global economy. As a result of these economic and ideological shifts the NDP is increasingly disadvantaged in mustering resources with which to contest elections.
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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Lillian and Sid Butovsky, as a token of my gratitude for their unswerving love, support, and confidence in me.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

The 1990s was a time of anti-politics. That decade saw a rise in alienation from electoral politics and a loss of faith in the ability of governments to improve the human condition. This turning away from traditional politics was caused, in part, by a shift to the Right in federal politics and a wholesale adoption of the corporate agenda by both the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals, who followed the Conservatives in office (Barlow and Campbell, 1995; Dobbin, 1998; McQuaig, 1991). Surveys indicate that there is a growing gulf between the issues salient to the public at large and those that are given priority by business and government elites (Ekos, 1998). While the average Canadian is concerned about maintaining a strong universal health care system and good public education, business and government elites stress the importance of lowering corporate taxation and the size of the national debt (Dobbin, 1998: 131). A significant share of Canadians may feel that the dominant political issues do not reflect their day–to–day concerns. For instance, a 1997 Ekos survey found that 68% of Canadians felt that "government has lost sight of the needs of average Canadians" (Ekos, 1998). Given this gulf between most people's views and government policy, we might expect that Canada's left-wing party, the New Democratic Party (NDP), which has traditionally been a party for "ordinary Canadians," would be seen by people as a refreshing alternative to the pervasive neo-liberal thinking. However, the NDP has had an unprecedentedly low showing in the polls during the 1990s, at times teetering on the brink of irrelevance.

Many scholars have tackled the problem of explaining the booms and busts of the electoral Left. There are two popular approaches to contemporary politics that could be
used to explain the decline of the NDP in the 1990s. First, Ronald Inglehart's postmaterialist thesis might explain the decline of the NDP as a result of its inability to adapt its program to include postmaterialist issues, making it irrelevant to a growing share of the population (Inglehart 1971, 1977, 1990). Inglehart had argued that postmaterialist issues relating to the environment, personal identity, and quality of life have displaced traditional materialist issues. Second, the declining significance of class argument, popularized by Seymour Martin Lipset, might explain the fall of the NDP as a result of the decreasing share of the population working in traditional blue-collar jobs and the diminished importance of class as a predictor of political behaviour (Lipset, 1981, 1991). While these approaches offer important insights, they are limited by their inability to connect changes in party politics with shifts in political economy. Inglehart explains the trend toward postmaterialism has been largely rooted in people's formative experiences. Lipset does connect changes in politics to shifts in capitalist production. However, he takes, as I will argue later, an overly optimistic view of postindustrial society and the impact that it has had on inequality and the class structure (Clarke and Lipset, 1991). My thesis is that the changes in political economy that have brought about the shift to the Right are the same ones that have marginalized the NDP. Increasing capitalist power has decreased the power of working people, giving the NDP fewer resources with which to contest elections. These resources are increasingly necessary to mobilize voters and counter the growing hegemony of neo-liberal thinking.
1.1 Stratification, Party Systems and Alienation from Electoral Politics

Alienation and lack of interest in politics are reflected in the decline in voter turnout in recent federal elections: in the 2000 election, this was 63%, the lowest rate since the 1880s. This followed the low turnout of 67% in the preceding election of 1997, and 70% in 1993. In the 12 elections held between 1957 and 1988, the rate of voter participation ranged from 69% to 79%, with a mean of 75.4% (Nevitte et al., 2000: 60). In comparison, voter turnout was substantially higher in many countries in Western Europe and Scandinavia. For elections held in the mid-1990s, the turnout was 93% in Belgium, 87% in Italy, 86% in Sweden, and 83% in both Denmark and Norway (Center for Voting and Democracy, 2000). In Sweden, for instance, voter participation rates have been in the high 80s and low 90s in elections over the past 40 years (Center for Voting and Democracy, 2000). The share of Canadians who voted in the last federal election was high only when compared to electoral turnout in the United States and Switzerland. Only 43% of eligible voters actually voted in the 1999 Swiss election, and less than 50% of Americans voted in the 1996 Clinton–Dole presidential contest (Center for Voting and Democracy, 2000).

The variation in voter turnout by country is not random. It is determined, in part, by the degree of equality in the distribution of class power. In addition, those countries with a relatively high level of citizen participation in elections tend to be those that offer a range of parties with substantial variation in platforms. In particular, countries with a viable Left party tend to have higher levels of voter participation. In turn, the presence of such parties is a result of a relatively equitable distribution of power across classes. Sweden,
for instance, has had a Social Democratic government for much of the postwar period as well as a Communist party to its Left. Sweden also has three major parties to the right of the Social Democrats. Elections in the United States, on the other hand, have generally been two-party contests; also, in recent elections, the party platforms of the Democrats and the Republicans have been quite similar. The lack of genuine choice in U.S. politics is no doubt part of the reason for the dismally low level of electoral participation.

Alienation from electoral politics is much greater among the poor in the United States. In the 1996 presidential election, turnout was less than 35% for the poorest one-fifth of the population and 75% among the most affluent one-fifth (Boggs, 2000: 31). Although these sorts of differences were smaller in Canada, the same pattern holds. Those with lower incomes and less education were less likely to vote than those with more income and education (Nevitte et al., 2000: 161). Similarly, Newfoundland, Canada's poorest province, traditionally has a turnout about 10 points lower than the national average. In the 1997 election, turnout was just 55% in Newfoundland (Nevitte, et al., 2000: 60)

These numbers call into question the degree of democracy and the meaning of citizenship in the North American context.

Canada can be seen as an intermediate case between Sweden and the U.S in many respects (see Olsen and Brym, 1996). With a viable left party in the NDP, the range of voter choice is wider than that of the U.S. However, since the NDP has never formed the government in Canada and there is no viable party to the Left of the NDP, the degree of political choice is considerably narrower in Canada compared to Sweden. The decline in voter turnout in Canada's recent elections may be a reflection of the narrowing of the
differences between the parties on the Centre and Right, and the marginalization of the NDP.

1.2 Increasing Voter Cynicism and the Turn Toward Non-Conventional Politics

Nevitte's (1996) analysis of the changing political values of Canadians suggests that people have lost faith in normal politics, established political parties, and government. Consequently, people have channelled this suspended energy into non-conventional politics. Nevitte found that, while in 1981 31% of Canadians said that they had a "very strong identification" with a longstanding federal political party, by 1990 only 13% held the same level of identification (Nevitte, 1996: 49). Additional data point to a high level of alienation and distrust toward government. Seventy percent of Canadians held the opinion that the country is "run by a few big interests looking out for themselves" (Nevitte, 1996: 76). Only 20% of Canadians reported that they "always" or "almost always" trust the government in Ottawa, and one in three agreed with the statement that "if an unjust law was passed by the government I could do nothing about it" (Nevitte, 1996: 76).

This distrust and alienation from politics may reflect a growing gulf between the values and interests of the citizenry and the type of government policy that is legislated. The passing of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Tories in 1989 can be seen as a turning point in the contemporary relationship between the elites in society and the people as a whole. According to public opinion surveys, the FTA was opposed by a majority of Canadians who feared that it would result in losses of jobs and
cultural independence (Richardson, 1992). More recently, the public's demands for increased funding to a beleaguered health care system have been largely rejected in favour of income tax cuts that will be of most benefit to the wealthiest Canadians. The fact that the policy agenda appears to be shaped more and more by corporate-funded lobby groups, like the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI), may partially explain the growing alienation from the political process among Canadians (Dobbin, 1998; McQuaig, 1991).

At the same time as support for normal politics declined, Nevitte (1996) found that more people appeared willing to participate in non-conventional political behaviour, including joining a boycott, attending an unlawful demonstration, joining an unofficial strike, or occupying a building. From 1981 to 1990, the share of the population who said that they "might" engage in one of these protest behaviours increased from 23.6% in 1981 to 32.5% in 1990 (Nevitte, 1996: 80). While the reasons for this increased interest in non-conventional politics are unclear, it could be a result of the narrowing of the political spectrum and a subsequent constriction of the range of voices that go into making government policy. As of the 1990s, the Liberals, Tories, and Reform Party could all be seen as parties of big business. The 1993 election of the Liberals, ostensibly a Centre party, continued the Conservative agenda of trade liberalization and cuts to program spending. Both Liberals and Conservatives have been drawn to the Right by the strength of an emergent right-wing Reform Party, which was founded by the Western capitalist class in the late 1980s (Harrison, 1995). The voices of organized labour, women's groups, racial minority groups, and environmental groups have become less audible in the
past decade. People and groups with interests and visions contrary to those on the neo-liberal business agenda are given less of a say in the formal political process and have, understandably, looked to non-conventional politics in order to make their voices heard.

This shift to the Right can be attributed to the aggressive position taken by the corporate sector in favour of creating a business-friendly political environment. Under the auspices of the necessities of international competition, the Liberals have reduced taxes and spending on social programs (Barlow and Campbell, 1995). They have been confederates in the corporate-directed internationalization of trade.¹

1.3 An Electoral Paradox?

While the electoral Left in Canada, as represented by the NDP, would seem to be a natural home for those who oppose the wholesale adoption of neo-liberalism and the ever-growing power of the corporate sector, it had disastrous results at the ballot box during the 1990s. The NDP fell from its peak support of 20% of the voters in 1988 to its trough of 7% in 1993, rebounding modestly to 11% in 1997. As Table 1.1 shows, the

¹ It is important to note that the influence of the corporate sector on social policy during the 1960s and 1970s was much less obvious than it is today. During this period, the state represented a more equitable distribution of power between business on the one hand, and organized labour and other social movements on the other. In this context, Canadian governments sought to expand citizenship rights to previously marginalized groups, enhance the welfare state, and better accommodate Quebec in Confederation. Of course, even at the apex of the development of the welfare state, Canada was clearly a market-driven liberal democracy. Yet Canadian development could not be measured solely by its Gross National Product or the value of the Canadian dollar, as seems to be the case today. During Trudeau's tenure as Prime Minister, for instance, the Liberals were a Centre–Left party whose mission was to create a more just and equitable Canada.
level of support for the NDP hovered quite consistently between 15% and 20% from 1962 to 1988. The drop to 7% of the popular vote in 1993 was the worst showing by either the NDP or the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the NDP's predecessor. In fact, when support for the CCF dipped to 9.5% in 1958, it prompted a major rethinking of the future of the party. The NDP emerged from a dejected CCF party in 1961.

In this dissertation, I explore the decline in the electoral success of the NDP during the 1990s. I ultimately conclude that the decline of the NDP needs to be understood in the context of changes in capitalist accumulation and its supportive ideologies. Specifically,
the post-Fordist period has been accompanied by the growing power of the corporate class relative to working people. In this context, the NDP is disadvantaged at election time, due to a lack of resources with which to mobilize voters who might be sympathetic to its message. Given its lack of resources and the corporate-controlled mass media, which is generally hostile to the NDP, Canada's social democratic party has had increasing difficulty mustering support during election campaigns. Because of this, the NDP has been forced to focus its resources on relatively few regions in Canada (and ridings within those regions) during election campaigns. The NDP's goal of achieving national power, seemingly possible in the late 1980s, now appears improbable.

My approach to politics, indebted to insights from political economy, resource mobilization theory (e.g., McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978) and power-resources theory (e.g., Korpi, 1983; O'Connor and Olsen, 1998) will be contrasted with the postmaterialist and declining-significance-of-class explanations for the decline of traditional Left parties like the NDP. Although these approaches offer some useful insights that can be applied to the NDP's predicament, they ultimately suffer from an inability to conceptualize politics as intricately linked to the larger forces in society: ideology and the economy. While politics certainly represents the interactions and negotiations of the citizenry with political parties (with parties both reacting to the demands of the public and creating a demand for their policies), there are larger forces at work. In particular, politics is shaped by the distribution of power in society between the capitalist class and working people. The behavioural approach to voting needs to be supplemented by a consideration of party resources and the constraints of political
economy. The political economy approach insists that the political, economic, and social realms are related (Clement, 1994). In contrast, Inglehart takes an oversimplified view of the relationship between citizens' values and electoral politics. The political economy perspective helps us to understand how the distribution of class power can first structure people's values, and then influence the likelihood that these values will translate into electoral politics and, ultimately, government policy. Following is a detailed outline of the organization of the dissertation.

In Chapter 2, I evaluate the postmaterialist explanation for the recent lack of NDP success. The postmaterialist approach, developed by Ronald Inglehart in the 1970s, argues that, beginning in the late 1960s and 1970s, politics, particularly for the younger generation, began to shift away from issues of economic distribution to postmaterialist issues relating to quality of life and personal expression (e.g., the environment, racial tolerance, and the democratization of the public sphere). Inglehart's thesis, which has been extensively evaluated using data from the World Values Survey, has been applied to more than 40 countries around the world (Inglehart, 1997). It is widely seen as a valuable lens through which to view political shifts.

While Inglehart's work has focused on the shifting values of citizens around the world, it also has something to say about party politics. Inglehart argues that the birth of the postmaterialist agenda has made parties of the old, materialist Left anachronistic.

According to Inglehart:
the growing tendency for Western electorates to polarize according to materialist versus postmaterialist values...imposes a difficult balancing act on party leaders, especially those of Left parties. If they adapt to the new polarization too slowly they lose their young postmaterialist activists; but if they move too fast in this direction, they risk losing their traditional working-class constituency. (1997: 252)

Therefore, according to Inglehart's approach, to the extent that the NDP has remained wedded to its traditional materialist politics, the party has become increasingly irrelevant. However, in analyzing Canadian Election Study data from 1988 and 1997, I found that postmaterialist issues have actually declined in salience over the past decade, making it an insufficient explanation for NDP decline. I also make the case that the old and new left, though clearly different, share many of the same values, particularly the belief in the importance of the state as an agent to reduce inequality and expand citizenship rights to previously excluded groups.

Chapter 3 continues my investigation of Inglehart's ideas by searching for conflict in the values and ideologies of the NDP's blue-collar and white-collar supporters. It follows from Inglehart's theory that the NDP would experience an internal split between its traditional working-class supporters and its supporters from the white-collar, new middle class. However, the data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study show acceptance of the new politics among the blue-collar base of the NDP as well as strongly pro-labour sentiment among white-collar voters. Overall, I find little support for a postmaterialist
explanation of NDP decline. More generally, I also find little support for the postmaterialist thesis as a whole in Canada.

Chapter 4 evaluates the declining-significance-of-class approach. It follows from this theory that support for the NDP has declined because the industrial working class, the ostensible supporter of Left parties, has shrunk as a share of the Canadian population, and, more broadly, that rising affluence in the population of capitalist democracies as a whole has largely erased the demand for parties that advocate on behalf of the underdog. I conclude that while support for the NDP from blue-collar workers has fallen and the share of blue-collar workers has been declining, neither of these trends provide a sufficient explanation for the drastic decline in NDP support. The evaporation of NDP support far exceeds that which could be explained by the changes in the class composition of Canadian society. Moreover, the NDP has always been a hybrid party of blue-collar union members and middle-class liberals, so the decline of the traditional working class is an incomplete explanation for the decline of the party.

Chapter 5 outlines what I find to be the most persuasive explanation for the NDP's drop in popularity: the increase in corporate power and the subsequent decline in working-class power. Using the cases of the NDP's 1988 campaign in Quebec and its 1997 campaign in Nova Scotia, I show that it is becoming more difficult for the NDP to mobilize voters because of the hostility of a corporate-controlled mass media, and because the NDP has less money available to fight campaigns, which have become increasingly weighted toward expensive advertising. Quebec in 1988 and Nova Scotia in
1997 were selected because both were provinces in which the NDP had had little success in the past but which were targeted by campaign organizers as areas for potential gains. The NDP was successful in Nova Scotia because it was able to spend a relatively substantial amount of money in that province to promote its popular leader to a receptive population. The fact that the NDP decided to mount a serious contest in a province with only about one-seventh the seats of Quebec is indicative of its declining power.

Chapter 6 switches the focus of the dissertation to the ideological front. As in many other areas of social thought, Marx turned the study of ideas on its head. Marx recognized that ideas were socially conditioned (Eagleton, 1991: 6). At the time, ideas were seen by some crude materialist thinkers as emerging from climate, brain physiology, or national character. The Hegelian philosophers, with whom the early Marx spent a great deal of time debating, saw ideas as independent of social practice and the root cause of social existence (Eagleton, 1991: 6). Marx argued that ideas were dependent on the material conditions of a given society. In order to change ideas, it is necessary to change the conditions from which these ideas emerged. In essence, a wage labourer in England had his views conditioned by his working experiences, and a member of the aristocracy or a member of the emerging business class had his own version of how society works and his role in its functioning. But although our ideas are based on our lived experience, our perceptions are shaped by ideological filters. Marx believed, in this often-quoted line, that "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas" (Marx and Engels, 1986: 40–41). More fully, Marx and Engels wrote in *The German Ideology*: "Each new class...is compelled...to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members
of society, put in ideal form; it will give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones" (Marx and Engels, 1986: 40–41). For example, working people were pacified by elite religious sentiment that stressed the insignificance of one's life on earth compared to the hereafter, instead of challenging the source of their misery: exploitative and alienating labour. For Marx, ideology, in this case religious doctrines, were illusions — socially necessary illusions, but illusions nonetheless.

Because Marx saw ideology and its principle conduits — politics, law, culture, religion — as essentially epiphenomena, it was left to later thinkers to outline more fully how ideology was transmitted and how it could be opposed. Gramsci, the Italian Marxist of the 1920s and 1930s, gained prominence in Western intellectual circles beginning in the 1960s because of the independent weight he gave to politics and culture in maintaining the stability of Western capitalism. He highlighted the ideological and cultural dimension of class or political struggle in the West and felt that it was necessary to understand the dynamics of mass consciousness, not just political economy, to understand capitalism (Boggs. 1986: x). According to Boggs, one of Gramsci's key contributions was the analysis of the multidimensionality of class rule:

[Gramsci] insisted that bourgeois domination is exercised as much through popular consensus achieved in civil society as through physical coercion (or the threat of it) by the state apparatus, especially in Western capitalist societies where
education, mass media, culture, and the legal system can so powerfully shape consciousness (Boggs, 1986: 23).

Therefore, social transformation for Gramsci would not result from economic crises alone but through the presentation of counter-hegemonic protests in the form of cultural-ideological agitation. In this vein, Gramsci saw the roots of the French Revolution in the anti-establishment writings of the Enlightenment and social groups that aligned themselves with this thought (Boggs, 1986: 189). He stressed the importance of political strategy and intellectual criticism as key strategies in the realm of civil society, which would pave the way for a transformation to socialism.

Since, in the final instance, electoral politics is about convincing voters that their ideas are the best, or the least objectionable, of the bunch, I describe the contours of political ideology during the postwar period. In brief, while the ideological outlook of the period of the Keynesian welfare state (circa 1945-1990) was conducive to the CCF-NDP's brand of social democracy, the current neo-liberal ideological atmosphere has made it difficult for the NDP's ideas to gain currency.

I argue that neo-liberal ideas supportive of the recent capitalist offensive have become hegemonic, leaving little space for an alternative perspective. This agenda is spread by prominent business lobby groups, the mass media, and the corporate elite themselves. To the degree that the NDP maintains its faith in the importance of the state to reduce social inequality and increase solidarity, it is seen as irresponsible and out of touch. The
pervasive ideological animus toward the social democratic project compounds its disadvantage in material resources vis-à-vis the other main parties.
Chapter 2
The Salience of Postmaterialism in Canada.

Ronald Inglehart saw the May 1968 demonstrations in France, the development of the peace movement in West Germany, and the anti-Vietnam protests in the United States as manifestations of the same social force. That force was a cadre of young, educated Europeans and Americans who, having grown up in affluent households, turned their energies to establishing a more tolerant, environmentally sustainable, and aesthetic society (Inglehart, 1971). Inglehart saw these new social movements not as emerging from a unique period of history resulting from a confluence of social trends (Brint, 1984), but as the precursor of a new postmaterialist politics (Inglehart, 1971, 1977, 1990). He felt that postmaterialism would replace the political cleavages of class, ethnicity, and religion that had existed in capitalist democracies since at least the 1920s with a politics based on value conflicts. In particular, Inglehart believed that the rise of postmaterialist politics would wreak havoc on parties of the traditional Left, like the NDP, who are faced with the challenge of absorbing key postmaterialist positions without losing their traditional working-class constituency (Inglehart, 1997: 252). According to Inglehart's approach, the NDP's decline in electoral support can be understood as a result of its persistent attachment to a materialist politics that have become less relevant to Canadians.

In this chapter, I argue that while Inglehart did identify the roots of a significant social force, that force was historically contingent. Postmaterialism did not become a major force in European and North American politics in terms of the structuring of citizens' beliefs or in driving the issues agenda. I use the case of contemporary Canada to show
that postmaterialism had little lasting impact in at least one major Western democracy. Since Canada ranks high in the correlates of postmaterialism — it has an educated and affluent population — the salience of postmaterialism in Canada should also be high. However, I found that materialist issues remain at the core of Canadian politics, with postmaterialist issues of primary interest to very few voters. Recent federal elections have been fought on fundamentally materialist issues such as free trade, unemployment, the debt, and the deficit. In addition, the level of postmaterialism among Canadian citizens has declined between 1988 and 1997. Overall, the level of social liberalism, a series of values closely related to Inglehart's concept of postmaterialism, has declined. Meanwhile, xenophobia, law-and-order issues, and opposition to women's right to abortion, have become more prominent. Rather than a shift to postmaterialist politics, the trend indicated by the rise of these issues seems to be a move toward postmaterialism of the Right, better described as anti-postmaterialism. Although Inglehart allows for the possibility of the emergence of a right-wing postmaterialism, his theory is directed almost exclusively at explaining left-libertarian postmaterialism (Savage, 1985: 432; Flanagan, 1987: 1305). Therefore, the decline in the electoral success of the NDP may be more a result of the dearth of Inglehart's postmaterialist values in Canada than an excess of them.

I conclude the chapter by arguing that the distribution of wealth in a nation is a more valid predictor of postmaterialism than aggregated economic measures like Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which Inglehart uses. This is because, all things being equal, a country with more equitably distributed wealth is a country with a larger share of the
people enjoying material security, the sine qua non of postmaterialism. Therefore, given the fact that economic inequality has been increasing in Canada over the past ten years, it is not at all surprising that the level of postmaterialism has declined during that same period. My concluding point is that the decline in postmaterialism is actually consistent with Inglehart's premise that we must have our material needs satisfied before thinking about our non-material needs.¹

2.1 Postmaterialism

In 1971, Ronald Inglehart wrote about a shift in values that was taking place in the post-industrial nations of Europe. He labelled these changes a "silent revolution." The shift was from materialist values that revolved around issues of economic security to postmaterialist values relating to the need for belonging, and to aesthetic and intellectual needs (Inglehart, 1971: 992). These values emerged as the generation of Europeans who were socialized during an unprecedented period of affluence and a period free of major wars began to come of age. Taking the work of Abraham Maslow (1954) as the psychological underpinning of his theory, Inglehart believed that individuals pursue needs in a hierarchical order. Europeans who grew up taking economic security for granted set their sights on higher-order needs, while older cohorts, socialized during periods of scarcity, remained materialists. Inglehart notes that there may be life-cycle and period effects that alter one's values, but these do not erode the values acquired in

¹ I conceptualize the notion of a "hierarchy of needs" not as a social psychological constant in human nature but as a general rule of thumb relating to the pursuit of social entitlements. Historically, people tended to fight for workplace safety standards and higher wages before they turned their attention to programs like universal daycare and employment equity (cf. Marshall's (1965) discussion of the expansion of citizenship rights from civil citizenship to political citizenship and social citizenship.)
one's formative years (Abramson and Inglehart, 1992). Inglehart expected that, as a result of these emerging value cleavages, political conflict would increasingly take place between generations rather than within them (Inglehart, 1990, 1997). Moreover, it would be value rather than class cleavages that would serve as the basis for political conflict.

The postmaterialist worldview was displayed by the mass protests that took place during the spring of 1968 in France. During a period of several months, France was the site of political actions ranging from student demonstrations, sit-ins, and the occupation of public buildings to a general strike involving millions of workers. These actions were met by a strong-armed response by the French police, sparking a level of violent conflict that led some observers to describe the situation as a civil war (Inglehart, 1977).

What was perhaps unique about May '68, when compared to other radical social movements of the twentieth century, was that it was led by, and in the name of, the young and relatively affluent. While other 20th century movements may have actually been directed by affluent or highly educated cadres, they were enacted in the name of proletarian workers, peasants, and the petite bourgeoisie. Inglehart comments that "the enthusiasm [for the events of the spring] seems to have been most intense among the younger members of the modern sector of society — the sector that has the greatest economic security but is, at the same time, most heavily bureaucratized" (Inglehart, 1977: 279–80). These young participants shared many of the goals of the members of the working class who also participated in the revolt, notably higher wages and job security. But the vision of these youths went beyond this. Their broader aim was the
democratization of the work place and civil society. Inglehart reprints prominent slogans that were seen in Paris at the time to illustrate this point: "It is forbidden to forbid," "To exaggerate is to begin to invent," and "To be free in 1968 is to participate" (Inglehart: 1977: 268–269).

Elements of value conflict could be seen in the aftermath of the spring events. The alliance between the striking workers and student activists that powered the French upheaval began to dissolve. For example, the students' sentiments about the boredom and meaninglessness of the consumer society did not resonate with traditional workers. Inglehart speculated that "to the striking workers, especially the older ones, it was not so certain that the risk of hunger had been forever eliminated. The consumer society was a world they had just entered, and it seemed very attractive indeed" (Inglehart, 1977: 282). The parliamentary election held later in 1968 seemed to support Inglehart's theme of value conflict. The working-class voters, who were defenders of the social order, moved from the Left to De Gaulle on the Right because of their antipathy to a radical social transformation. Conversely, some highly-educated white-collar workers moved to the Left because of their support for the spirit of May 1968.

2.2 Postmaterialism Quantified

Inglehart moved from the study of politics in the wake of social unrest to a comprehensive examination of the values of citizens in various Western European nations (Inglehart 1971, 1977, 1990, 1997). He classified people as materialists or postmaterialists on the basis of their ranking of a series of societal goals presented to
them by an interviewer. In its original conception, administered in 1970 to citizens in
seven Western European countries, respondents were presented with four goals, two
materialist and two postmaterialist (Inglehart, 1971). The materialist goals were (a)
maintaining order in the nation, and (b) fighting rising prices. The postmaterialist goals
were (a) giving the people more say in important government decisions, and (b)
protecting freedom of speech. Those who chose the two materialist goals as the most
important were labelled "materialists." Those who chose the two postmaterialist goals
were labelled "postmaterialists." Those who chose one of each were labelled "mixed." In
subsequent studies, Inglehart expanded the battery of questions from four to twelve but
the theoretical underpinning remained the same.

In 1970, the percentage of postmaterialists ranged from a high of 17% of Dutch citizens
to only 8% of Britons (Inglehart, 1971: 995). In Europe as a whole, materialists
outnumbered postmaterialists by a ratio of about 3 to 1. Throughout the 1970s, the ratio
of materialists to postmaterialists grew, contradicting Inglehart's prediction that
postmaterialism would rise over time through generational replacement (Abramson and
Inglehart, 1987). ² During the 1980s, however, the balance between materialists and
postmaterialists shifted dramatically to a point where materialists outnumbered
postmaterialists by only 4 to 3 in 1988 (Inglehart, 1990: 103). The period from 1989 to
1994 was one in which the proportion of materialists grew relative to postmaterialists
(Inglehart, 1997: 64). Longitudinal measures of postmaterialist values show that,

²Inglehart considers the growth of postmaterialist values to be a natural outcome of
generational replacement. That is, as materialists die, they are replaced by
postmaterialists socialized during an age of economic security. Inglehart explains that he
although an overall upward trend exists in most Western countries. their growth in the population has been erratic, with the postmaterialists remaining a minority.

Who exactly are the postmaterialists? Inglehart found that postmaterialists tend to be the younger cohorts of the middle class (Inglehart, 1971: 991). High levels of education are also associated with postmaterialism. He offers two main explanations for the positive relationship between education and postmaterialism, one economic, the other cultural (Inglehart, 1997: 152–3). First, since a high educational level is associated with better jobs and higher incomes, educational level is a proxy measure for one's current level of economic security. Economic security is conducive to postmaterialist values. A related economic explanation, and the one Inglehart favours, is that a person's level of education is a proxy measure of how economically secure that person was during his or her formative years, since secure families give their children more years of education than less well-off families. The cultural explanation focuses on the effects of education itself. Inglehart argues that education may work as a form of indoctrination, such that the better educated are postmaterialists because they are taught those values by their teachers. Education may also breed postmaterialism because it teaches cognitive skills and a cosmopolitan worldview that makes the recipient more likely to embrace new ideas (Inglehart, 1977: 76).³

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³ It is plausible that certain types of education promote postmaterialism more than others. For instance, the contents of a liberal arts degree might be more conducive to postmaterialism than those of an engineering or commerce degree. Unfortunately, the Canadian election surveys do not ask respondents to specify the discipline of their education. Even if discipline data were available, we would still be faced with the methodological quandary of separating the effects of education from the effects of the
In his most recent work, Inglehart (1997) expands the scope of his analysis from the advanced capitalist nations to 43 countries, including Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Nigeria, and Turkey. In an attempt to revive modernization theory, Inglehart argues that there is a relationship between economic development and cultural and political change. In particular, he states that "economic development is linked with democracy because it tends to bring social and cultural changes that help democracy emerge and flourish" (Inglehart, 1997: 180). He goes on to argue that for the more economically advanced nations, further economic development has decreasing marginal utility, and, therefore, people have turned their attention to quality-of-life issues. A detailed critique of modernization theory is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Suffice it to say that modernization theory has been criticized for being monocausal, ethnocentric, and reliant on narrow conceptions of development (Harrison, 1982; Laxer, 1998). By expanding his analysis to 43 countries, Inglehart necessarily neglects the historical, political, and social particulars of countries. In his earlier work he focused on the smaller canvas of Western Europe. This focus provided greater subtlety to his argument and enabled him to explain, for instance, why the massive upheavals of 1968 skipped England almost entirely. Also, because of the expanded geographical scope of his work, Inglehart concentrates on the differences in values between countries rather than the great variation amongst segments within individual nations.

occupational position that tend to be associated with the education. Are accountants, for example, more materialist than social workers because they are taught materialist values at school or because of their position in the labour market and its occupational culture and ideology?
2.3 Postmaterialism in Canada.

The rise of postmaterialist values has been studied in many countries with different socio-political systems such as Poland, Japan, and Norway (see Inglehart, 1990; Flanagan, 1982; Lafferty and Knutsen, 1985). However, Western Europe has been the site of the bulk of the research. This has probably occurred for both theoretical reasons — these countries have seen dramatic shifts from depression and war to unprecedented affluence — and empirical reasons — they have seen the greatest growth in new social movements and the new politics. Canada has also undergone these processes, although not to the same degree. However, there have been few studies of postmaterialist values in Canada (but see, Bakvis and Nevitte, 1987; Nevitte, Bakvis and Gibbins, 1989; Nevitte, 1996; Brym et al., 1999).

In their study of Canadian university undergraduates, Nevitte et al. (1989) found a relationship between values on the materialist/postmaterialist scale and attitudes on government policy issues, as well as in party support. Notably, they found that NDP supporters are much more likely to hold postmaterialist views than backers of either the Liberals or Tories. (Sixty-three percent of NDPers were postmaterialist compared with 32% of Liberals and 27% of Conservatives.) The data used for this study came from a 1983 survey of senior undergraduates at Canadian universities. This group was chosen because individuals with high levels of education tend to have greater attitudinal coherence and sophistication, and because university students are among the groups most likely to hold postmaterialist values (Nevitte et al., 1989: 483–4). Later in this chapter, I will test the findings of Nevitte and his colleagues on a wider spectrum of Canadians to
examine the relationship between social background and values, since university students come from a relatively narrow stratum of society.

Nevitte (1996) situates Canada within the European continuum of postmaterialism in his book-length examination of postmaterialist values in Canada. He argues, in the same vein as Inglehart, that postindustrial Canada has given birth to an affluent, educated public with considerable political savvy, a public that has become materially satiated and is now concerned with "higher" goals. Nevitte details the association between postmaterialist values and a host of issues ranging from politics to the economy, work, and the family. Regarding politics, Nevitte finds that postmaterialists have lower levels of confidence in government institutions, more involvement in non-traditional forms of political protest, and greater distaste for traditional authority groups. He goes on to say that from 1981 to 1990 Canadians have become more "politically combative," with a "surging interest in new issues" (Nevitte, 1996: 104).

2.4 Has Postmaterialism Become More Important in the Minds of the Canadian Electorate?

A key prediction of the postmaterialist thesis is that, beginning in the 1960s, the salience of postmaterialism should have increased relative to economic issues, net of cyclical economic factors (Clark, Lipset, and Rempel, 1993; Inglehart, 1990). Presumably, since material subsistence is taken for granted by an increasing share of the population of advanced capitalist nations, citizens will have more time for, and more interest in, matters relating to quality of life, minority rights, and environmental protection. In this section, I
argue that, in fact, economic issues are still vitally important to Canadians and are becoming more rather than less important relative to postmaterialist issues.

In the 1988, 1993, and 1997 Canadian National Election Studies, Canadians were asked to identify what they felt was the most important issue of the campaign. Answers to these questions were opened-ended, and then coded by the interviewer. The responses to this question show that, during the election campaigns, economic issues were at the forefront of the mind of the electorate (see Table 2.1). A small share of Canadians selected a postmaterialist issue as most important. However, this share did not increase over the ten-year period (see Table 2.2 below).

Table 2.1: "What is the most important issue to you in the election campaign?" 1988–97
(The top three are listed, with the percentage of respondents selecting them in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free Trade (61.5%)</td>
<td>Jobs (37.7%)</td>
<td>Jobs (30.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment (4.4%)</td>
<td>Economic and Financial (13.3%)</td>
<td>Economic and Financial (16.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs (2.6%)</td>
<td>Debt/deficit (10.8%)</td>
<td>Health care (10.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Throughout this dissertation I use data from Canadian Election Studies, large-scale surveys done before, during, and after Canadian federal elections since 1965. In particular, I focus on the 1984, 1988, 1993, and 1997 surveys. The surveys ask questions about the respondents' attitudes and values, party preference, and socio-demographic characteristics. Random-digit dialing was used to select the households for participation. The sample size for each survey was approximately 3000 (Clarke et al, 1993; Nevitte et al., 2000). The data were obtained from the Data Library at the University of Toronto. The data can also be obtained from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Data Archive, at the University of Michigan.
While economic issues were at the centre of elections, they were not always the same issues. The 1988 election, which saw Conservative Brian Mulroney gain re-election over John Turner (Liberal) and Ed Broadbent (NDP), is justifiably known as the "Free Trade Election." Over 61% of respondents stated that Canada's proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States was the most important campaign issue. While some critics of free trade stressed the negative repercussions that the deal would have on Canada's cultural industries and environmental regulations, it was advocated by Mulroney as necessary to maintaining international competitiveness. Turner and Broadbent argued that free trade would lead to job loss and a "race to the bottom" in terms of wages and benefits. Therefore, although free trade had some non-material implications, these were considered secondary by most interested parties. The election of Jean Chrétien's Liberals in 1993 had jobs at its centre (38%) followed by other economic and financial concerns (13%) and the debt and deficit (11%). In 1997, the electorate also viewed jobs (28%) and the deficit and taxes (10%) as the most important campaign issue.

Postmaterialist issues, both of the Left (the environment, and women's and minorities issues) and the Right (family values, law and order) were of primary importance to very few respondents (see Table 2.2). Abortion, an issue that engages postmaterialists of both the Left and the Right, was an important issue to some in 1988, but then dropped off the map in 1993 and 1997. These postmaterialist issues were selected by 7.9% of respondents in 1988, but only 1.1% in 1993 and 3.4% in 1997.
Table 2.2 Postmaterialist issues 1988–1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Postmaterialist</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership/integrity</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Issues relating to Quebec, national unity, and language policy have increased in importance from 0.6% in 1988 to 3.9% in 1993 and 9.1% in 1997, about eighteen months after the closely-fought referendum. Although the sovereignty movement in Canada is not typical of Inglehart's postmaterialist issues, it shares with them the prioritizing of cultural and national expression over strictly material concerns. However, for those outside Quebec (who counted for more than half of those who called Quebec the most important campaign issue), the issue of Quebec's separation, to the extent that it signifies concern for market insecurity and the federal government's preferential treatment of Quebec, must be considered largely a materialist issue. Moreover, the question of Quebec sovereignty, far from being a new issue, has animated Canadian politics for more than 40 years. So whether or not Quebec sovereignty is classified as a materialist or postmaterialist issue depends on who is answering the question. In any case, if we classify all of those who considered Quebec's sovereignty as the most important election issue postmaterialists, we are still left with a relatively small slice of the electorate.

The desire for greater leadership and integrity in government is another issue unrelated to the distribution of material resources that was cited by some election survey respondents.
Between 1% and 3% of Canadians chose this as the most important issue of the campaign.

There is no evidence that postmaterialist issues are becoming central to a growing share of Canadians. Interest in "classic" postmaterialist issues like the environment and women’s issues has declined since 1988. For example, environmental issues were cited by 4.4% of respondents in 1988, but only 0.4% in 1997. To the extent that postmaterialist issues re-emerged in 1997 after falling off the charts in 1993, they tended to focus on issues such as gun control, crime, and violence, and the Young Offenders Act, which are not the typical left-libertarian issues about which Inglehart writes.

An analysis of media coverage of the 1988 Canadian federal election echoes my findings on the centrality of materialist issues during election campaigns. In their analysis of English-language television coverage of the election on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Johnston et al. (1992: 115) found that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) took up half the issue coverage during the campaign (Johnston et al., 1992: 115). Economic issues, including employment, fiscal policies, regional development, and the deficit came next in garnering coverage. Social policy was ranked third in terms of coverage. The only postmaterialist issue that received significant television exposure was the environment, which received about 5% of coverage on the CBC (Johnston et al., 1992: 116).

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5 This category includes the environment, women's issues, minority issues, refugee issues, child care as well as family values, violent crime, gun control, and the Young Offenders Act.
My Canadian findings relating to the importance of postmaterialist issues are consistent with those from the U.S. and Western Europe. Rempel and Clark (1997: 40) write about the U.S: "Since the mid-1970s, respondents have mentioned economic problems more often than all other types, with just two exceptions." These exceptions occurred during the period of national prosperity in the late 1980s and in 1994, when emphasis on economic issues was replaced by a focus on crime. Rempel and Clark also found that, for Western Europe, apart for a blip in each country, "liberal-resonating social issues never received more than 10 percent of mentions" (Rempel and Clark, 1997: 41). Looking at the trends across Western Europe from the 1960s to the 1990s, they see that interest in economic issues and social conservatism (e.g., crime and immigration) is growing, while social liberalism (e.g., opposition to nuclear weapons and environmental protection) is declining (Rempel and Clark, 1997: 46).

2.5 Predictors of Postmaterialism (1988–1997)

2.5.1 Predicting Inglehart's Postmaterialism in Canada in 1988

This section tests whether the correlates of postmaterialism, as outlined by Inglehart — age, education, and income — predict the level of postmaterialism of Canadians. I also examine the claim that the overall level of postmaterialism is increasing in the population. I find that the correlates of postmaterialism were consistent with those found in Inglehart's body of work. However, I also find that the level of postmaterialism seems to be decreasing over time, contrary to Inglehart's findings.
2.5.2 Data and Methods Used

The data used in this section are taken from the 1988 Canadian Election Study (CES). The 1988 CES included the standard questions that Inglehart used to measure value orientation. A few words about the structure of the questions are needed. The respondent was presented with this statement: "Here are some goals which are frequently thought of as being important to society. Here is the first list (of four). Rank them on a scale of 1 to 12, with 1 being the most important and 12 being the least important." The respondents were then given two more lists of four goals, with each group containing two materialist goals and two postmaterialist goals, and asked to do the same sort of ranking.

These were the three lists of goals that the respondents saw (I have added an "M" to denote a materialist issue and "PM" a postmaterialist issue):

1. a) Maintaining a high rate of economic growth (M)  
   b) Country has a strong defense force (M)  
   c) People have more say in their work and community (PM)  
   d) Make cities/countryside more beautiful (PM)

2. a) Maintaining order in the nation (M)  
   b) People have more say in government decisions (PM)  
   c) Fighting rising prices (M)  
   d) Protecting freedom of speech (PM)

3. a) Maintaining a stable economy (M)  
   b) Less impersonal, more humane society (PM)  
   c) The fight against crime (M)  
   d) A society where ideas count more than money (PM)

Many respondents did not fill out this section of the questionnaire exactly as directed. In particular, a sizable minority of respondents ranked more than one item in a group of four as the most important (or the least important). Since a large share of respondents treated these items as a series of Likert-scale measures, that is how I interpreted the data. This
loses the "forced choice" aspect of these questions, which would have compelled the respondent to prioritize goals and better simulate the nature of politics in the real world than allowing the respondent to choose any number of goals as a top priority. This is an aspect that Inglehart stresses as important when measuring value orientations since, generally speaking, everyone would like, for example, both a cleaner environment and less unemployment (Inglehart, 1997: 117-122).

To create a measure of postmaterialism, I added the total ranking of the six materialist and six postmaterialist items for each respondent. Out of a maximum score of 72 (6*12), the average on the materialist composite was 48.3, and that on the postmaterialist composite was 43.2. Therefore, in the aggregate, Canadians were more materialist than postmaterialist in their value orientation in 1988. This is not inconsistent with Inglehart's writing, in that he says that postmaterialist values should be increasing in the population relative to materialist values, not that postmaterialism has surpassed materialism in absolute terms. Later, I will analyze subsequent election surveys to see if Inglehart's predictions about changes over time are accurate.

Since Inglehart stresses the importance of knowing how people prioritize a series of desirable goals, I created a new variable by subtracting the respondent's score on the materialist measure from his or her score on the postmaterialist measure. A positive score indicates that the respondent considers postmaterialist issues to be more important than materialist issues. A negative score indicates the reverse. A strength of this procedure is that it retains the notions of the relative strength of materialist versus
postmaterialist value orientations, which is consistent with Inglehart's conceptualization of value orientations.

I then created a model to predict the respondent's score on this postmaterialism variable, to see if the correlates of postmaterialism match those outlined in Inglehart's work. The results are shown in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3 Results of regression analysis predicting Inglehart's postmaterialism score 1988**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-7.111</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-2.091</td>
<td>-0.062</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education- 6 levels</td>
<td>2.454</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income - 9 levels</td>
<td>-0.813</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age - 7 cat.</td>
<td>-1.038</td>
<td>-0.091</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private/public (Public=1)</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionized (union=1)</td>
<td>2.073</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar (white=1)</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC voter 1988</td>
<td>-2.158</td>
<td>-0.062</td>
<td>.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal voter 1988</td>
<td>-0.701</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
<td>.623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP voter 1988</td>
<td>6.083</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform voter 1988</td>
<td>-0.973</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>.743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Standard Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>16.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: CES 1988)
2.5.3 Interpretation of Results

The sign before the coefficient indicates whether the variable is positively or negatively related to postmaterialism. The unstandardized coefficients represent the increase in the level of postmaterialism for each unit increase in the variable in question. For example, the postmaterialism score increases by about 2.5 units for every unit increase in educational level. The standardized coefficients indicate the strength of each variable in predicting the dependent variable. So we can say that education is the strongest predictor of the respondent's score on the postmaterialism variable (standardized coefficient = 0.182). Age, recoded into seven categories, was negatively related to postmaterialism. This is consistent with Inglehart's argument. The younger generations are more likely to hold postmaterialist values.

Income was negatively related to postmaterialism. Contrary to Inglehart's argument, people with lower incomes were more likely to prioritize postmaterialist goals over materialist ones. Otherwise, I found support for Inglehart's correlates of postmaterialism in my examination of the Canadian citizenry. Age and education predicted postmaterialism in the direction that Inglehart predicts. Income, a variable he includes in some of his writings (e.g. Inglehart, 1997: 134) does not operate in the predicted direction. When I looked at some variables that Inglehart did not, I found that union members were more likely to favour postmaterialist goals than their non-union counterparts, as were NDP voters compared to supporters of the other parties.6

---

6 One interpretation of the finding about union members is that criticism of the union movement as an interest group committed solely to increasing the wages of its membership is unwarranted. Rather, the importance of "quality-of-life" issues stressed
2.6 Tracking the Level of Postmaterialism Over Time

2.6.1 Data and Methods Used

Inglehart's theory predicts that the level of postmaterialism among the citizens of liberal democracies should increase over time (Abramson and Inglehart, 1987). Unfortunately, the rich data on postmaterialism that were available in 1988 were not elicited in either the 1993 or the 1997 surveys. As a substitute, I created two postmaterialism indices in the spirit of Inglehart for 1988 and 1997. (I created a new index for 1988 even though Inglehart's questions were asked in that year, so that the results will be comparable with those from 1997). The content of my indices differs somewhat from Inglehart's measures. While Inglehart looks at the ranking of value priorities, my measure looks more narrowly at support for various "new politics" issues. Therefore I label my indices "postmaterialism/tolerance."

For two reasons, I am reasonably confident that both Inglehart's variable for 1988 and the indices that I created for 1988 and 1997 are tapping into the same latent concept. The two 1988 indices — Inglehart's standard index and my modified index — were highly correlated and, in a regression analysis, my postmaterialism index was the single strongest predictor of Inglehart's postmaterialist score. Moreover, my indicators are less abstract than Inglehart's, and, since they probe current political issues, are perhaps a more valid indicator of the concept. Nonetheless, since I have modified Inglehart's notion of postmaterialism, this section should properly be regarded as an indirect test of Inglehart's predictions on value change over time.

by union leaders seems to reflect the genuine concerns of their membership (Hargrove, 1998).
I created indices for postmaterialism/tolerance for each of the 1988 and 1997 Canadian Election Surveys. The 1988 index contains three items (alpha=6.8), asking how the respondent feels about minorities, Aboriginals, and the women's movement. The 1997 index comprises four items tapping the respondent's attitudes toward minorities, Aboriginals, feminists, and gays and lesbians (alpha=7.2). Indices were used to simplify the data by creating a single measure that expresses a latent concept. Indices also minimize the degree of measurement error. My purpose here was again to evaluate the predictors of these variables. As discussed earlier, Inglehart believes that postmaterialism should be positively correlated with education and membership in the new middle class, and inversely correlated with age. Moreover, Inglehart argues that the level of postmaterialism in the population should increase over time.

I find evidence for the correlates of postmaterialism that Inglehart writes about. However, I do not find that postmaterialism is growing over time. To illustrate, we can compare the coefficients (and the constants) in 1988 and 1997 as shown in Table 2.4.
Table 2.4: Predicting postmaterialism/tolerance, 1988 and 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>54.578</td>
<td>41.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (6 categories)</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td>3.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (male=0, female=1)</td>
<td>1.639</td>
<td>4.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDPer</td>
<td>4.315</td>
<td>7.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>2.639</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformer</td>
<td>-6.932</td>
<td>-4.799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar (white=1, blue=0)</td>
<td>2.077</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (7 categories)</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-1.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r-squared</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: CES 1988, 1997)

The predictors that were non-significant in both years were dummy variables for private/public sector worker and union member. Also, income, Tory voter, and Bloc Québécois supporter in 1997 were non-significant. To provide an illustration of what these figures mean, we can predict the score on the 1988 index for a male blue-collar worker who voted for the Reform party and has less than complete elementary schooling:

\[
\text{Constant} + \text{gender} + \text{education} + \text{collar} + \text{party} \\
54.578 + 1.639(0) + 1.072(1) + 2.077(0) - 6.932(1) \\
= 54.578 + 1.072 - 6.932 \\
= 48.718
\]

The 1988 index for a female, white-collar worker, who has a graduate degree and voted for the NDP in 1988 would be:

\[
\text{Constant} + \text{gender} + \text{education} + \text{collar} + \text{party} \\
= 54.578 + 1.072(6) + 2.077(1) + 1.639(1) + 4.135(1) \\
= 68.861
\]

The predicted values for all other groups would fall somewhere between these two extremes.

Doing the same calculations for 1997 provides the following results.
Male, less than elementary school education Reform Party supporter who is over 80 years old (in the highest age category):

\[
\text{Constant+gender+education+party+age} \\
= 41.585 + 4.724(0) + 3.384(1) - 4.799(1) - 1.496(7) \\
= 29.698
\]

Female, graduate degree, NDP voter who is 27 years old (in the lowest age category):

\[
\text{Constant+gender+education+party+age} \\
= 41.585 + 4.724(1) + 3.384(6) + 7.667(1) - 1.496(1) \\
= 72.784
\]

Notice that the range of values has increased from 1988 to 1997. This suggests that there has been polarization on these indicators of postmaterialism/tolerance across this time period.

Findings from this analysis again confirm many of Inglehart's ideas. Those with higher education are more likely to score high on the postmaterialist/tolerance index. Moreover, education is the most powerful predictor of postmaterialism/tolerance. In 1988, a person with a graduate degree would score 5.36 units higher than someone without an elementary school education, all other characteristics being equal (this number rises to 16.78 in 1997). Age is also a predictor of postmaterialism in 1997. In 1997, age exerted a strong negative effect on the dependent variable. This can be interpreted as follows: For every decade of increase in age, postmaterialism decreases by 1.496 units.

In both years, women score higher than men. Women tend to be more liberal and more concerned with identity issues, which is consistent with Kopinak's (1987) findings. She
found that Canadian women held a more liberal political ideology than men, due, perhaps, to their greater nurturing and humanitarian disposition.

The average level of postmaterialism declined from 1988 to 1997. The mean score on the postmaterialist scale was 61.5 in 1988, but dropped to 52.5 in 1997. I wanted to be sure that the drop in the mean score on the 1997 scale was not a result of the item about gays and lesbians that did not appear in the 1988 survey. On value thermometer-type questions, tolerance or acceptance of gays and lesbians generally scores lower than questions relating to minorities or women. However, when I removed the item about gays and lesbians, the mean 1997 score rose by just 1.4 points to 53.9, still 7.7 points lower than the mean for 1988. The differences both with and without the question about gays and lesbians was significant at \( p = 0.05 \). According to Inglehart's notion of generational replacement (as older cohorts die they are replaced by younger, postmaterialist ones) the level of postmaterialism in the population should increase, barring a severe economic downturn. We can also see that all the coefficients for significant variables increase quite dramatically from 1988 to 1997. This can be understood as a process of polarization of viewpoints over this 10-year period with a cohort of young well-educated people who are quite socially liberal pitted against people who are older and less well educated. Looking at the descriptive statistics of the two indices, we see that the standard deviation also increased from 16.1 to 17.6 between 1988 and 1997, confirming that the spread in the degree of tolerance/postmaterialism in the Canadian population increased.
Nevitte found similar results when he analyzed data from the World Values Survey in the years 1981 and 1990. He found that although people continue to support the value of tolerance in principle, when it comes to specific questions relating to the degree of tolerance toward racial minorities, immigrants, and so forth, "people are becoming less tolerant rather than more" (Nevitte, 1996: 230).

When examining traditional economic indicators, we see that the economic conditions were, on balance, as favourable in 1997 as they were in 1988. After the recession in 1982, the GNP grew by roughly 2% to 4% in each of the five years leading up to the 1988 federal election (The Economist, 1999). Similarly, the recession of 1990–1991 was followed by a five-year period of economic growth prior to the 1997 election. The Consumer Price Index (CPI), a standard measure of inflation in the cost of goods and services, shows a rate of 4% in 1988 versus just 1.6% in 1997 (Statistics Canada, 2000). In 1997, therefore, Canadians would be unlikely to have had the perception that their dollar bought less than it did in the past.

The unemployment rate can be seen as a cause of economic insecurity. The unemployment rate was 7.8% in 1988 and 9.2% in 1997 (Statistics Canada, 2000). However, it could be argued that, since in both 1988 and 1997 the unemployment rate was on its way down from earlier recessionary periods, the feeling about jobs may have been roughly similar in both time periods. So the drop in postmaterialism cannot be explained by an economic downturn, the "safety hatch" of Inglehart's theory.
Given that 1988 and 1997 were both high points in the business cycle, what accounts for the decrease in the level of postmaterialism? During the 10-year period in question, the federal and provincial governments radically reduced the level of spending in health care, education, unemployment insurance, as well as decreasing the progressivity of the tax system (Bashevkin, 2000; Barlow and Campbell, 1995; Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1997; McQuaig, 1991). The result of this was growth in economic inequality and a general feeling that the safety net was no longer secure. This insecurity might be the cause of hostility toward minority groups, for instance, or it might have made people less sure that government should get involved in improving the living conditions of minorities.

2.7 Conclusion

When Inglehart expanded his postmaterialist thesis across time and space, it lost much of its power in helping us to understand events in the real world. Inglehart's 1971 paper was published amidst the explosion of social movements of the 1960s and early 1970s. His insights helped readers understand the participation of middle-class university students in movements that attacked hierarchical and oppressive authority structures in their many forms. The postmaterialist "industry" that has developed in the almost three decades since Inglehart began his work has certainly benefited from both theoretical refinements of the concept of postmaterialism as well as advances in computer-assisted survey technology. However, while the measurement of postmaterialism has become more reliable over time, its validity has come into question.
Turning to Canada, the site of what Inglehart would predict as having an increasingly postmaterialist citizenry, we see few of the social movements that have accompanied the rise of postmaterialism in the past. Nor do we see evidence of the "surging interest in new issues" documented by Nevitte in his examination of Canadian attitudes and values. Instead, we see evidence of what Boggs calls the "great retreat from the public sphere" (1997). This retreat has taken place both on the "Right" and the "Left". On the Right, the Reform Party often describes its mission as an assault on elite-driven politics to be replaced by increased grassroots participation in the political process. However, quoting Boggs, this

represents an abstract, ultimately duplicitous rejection of state power; retreat from the public sphere does not suggest popular mobilization against big government as such but rather an assault on just the redistributive and welfare functions of the state. Put more simply: the idea of dismantling the welfare state is really a code for lowered taxes, deep cuts in social programs, deregulation, and freeing of more resources for private consumption. The values associated with citizen participation, much less a recovery of the public sphere, have no place on this agenda. (Boggs, 1997: 753)

On the "Left" we see an increase in new-age spiritual practices, parochial versions of identity politics, and community development projects, whose goal is often limited to personal development or very small-scale changes. These movements make no attempt to gain state power to promote a broad progressive agenda to benefit large sections of society. It is clear that these movements have adopted little of the confidence in the possibility of achieving a more democratic, egalitarian society that guided social
movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Interest in these movements have likely diverted potential supporters away from the NDP.

Protest in the late 1990s has taken the form of a rearguard action against the fraying of the postwar compromise. The tenure of Mike Harris' Conservative government in Ontario has seen major strikes by teachers, public school support staff, and public sector workers. It has also seen unprecedentedly large demonstrations in front of Queen's Park, several of which have resulted in violent clashes between the police and the people. So the political combativeness of Canadians can be seen as a reaction to regressive government measures rather than movements urging increases in the quality of life from the vantage point of the materially satisfied.\(^7\)

At a basic level my findings and interpretations diverge from those of Inglehart and Nevitte. While they see growing levels of postmaterialism and the increasing importance of postmaterialist issues in politics and civil society, I found evidence that material issues remain at the heart of politics and levels of support for some aspects of postmaterialism have declined. My explanation for the decline in postmaterialism is that the growth in inequality over the past 10 or 15 years has meant that the satisfaction of basic material needs has become more difficult for an increasing share of the population.

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\(^7\) The recent protests against greater trade liberalization may indicate the start of a new phase of political protest. The gathering of opponents of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in December, 1999, in Seattle, which had a large contingent of Canadians, included people that would describe themselves as anti-corporate, anti-capitalist, environmentalists, trade unionists, and so on. It is probably too early to understand the
However, my findings are consistent with the hierarchy-of-needs concept that underpins Inglehart's work. Recall that Inglehart believes that the level of postmaterialism in a given society depends on two factors: the proportion of the population socialized during a period of economic prosperity, and the state of the economy at the time people are surveyed. To measure current economic conditions, Inglehart uses an aggregate indicator like the inflation rate or GNP (Inglehart 1997: 136, 257). Since the per capita GNP in Canada increased 18.5% from 1988 to 1997, Inglehart naturally predicts an increase in postmaterialism (Canadian Global Almanac 2000: 197). However, since the early 1980s there has been a decoupling of the relationship between economic growth and reduction in the rate of poverty and inequality. A 1997 Statistics Canada study notes that "the period since the early 1980s has been characterized by deteriorating labour market conditions such as rising unemployment rates, a relative and absolute decline in earnings of youth and the stagnation of family income" (Zyblock and Lin, 1997: 9). The study concluded that the relationship between improved economic performance and low income reduction has weakened between 1974 and 1997. This weakening was associated with rising pre-transfer income inequality.8

Although enormous wealth is being created in advanced capitalist countries like Canada, its distribution is increasingly unequal. In 1996 alone, the average income of the poorest

8 Duch and Taylor (1993: 752) argue that there is "growing evidence in the developed economies that economic growth might even undermine economic security." They write that "efforts of countries to promote the international competitiveness of their industries have resulted in considerable job displacement, a decline in job security, declining wages for certain sectors of the labor force, and the rising threat, if not reality, of unemployment".
one-fifth of families declined by 3.1%, while the richest one-fifth saw their incomes increased by 1.8% (Laxer, 1998: 6). This meant that, in 1997, the top one-fifth of all families received $21 in earned income for every $1 received in the bottom one-fifth (Little, 1999). These statistics reinforce the day-to-day observation that the wealth of the very rich is increasing at the same time as the ranks of the homeless living on Canada's city streets increase.

Not surprisingly, income inequality increased dramatically during the recession of the early 1990s. However, the level of inequality did not decline during the economic recovery that began in 1993. In fact, income inequality reached its peak in 1996 (Little, 1999). According to Little, "even during an expansion, it seemed like market forces were making it harder for those at the bottom end to improve their lot relative to those at the top" (Little, 1999).

Inglehart de-emphasizes the importance of income distribution in structuring the citizen's values. He wrote that "income equality increases sharply up to a level of about $3,500 per capita in 1978 dollars; above that threshold, the curve levels out" (Inglehart, 1997: 257). This suggests that there are no significant differences in income inequality for countries with a per capita GNP of over 3,500 USD. Nonetheless, he points out that the share of a country's income of the top 10% of the population ranges from a low of 17% in the former communist nations of Eastern Europe to a high of 33% in Finland, which represents a significant within-country spread (Inglehart, 1997: 257).
My argument — that recent increases in the degree of economic inequality have led to a surge in the share of the population that feels vulnerable and therefore less interested in postmaterialist issues and the civil rights of others — holds true at the individual level. Respondents who felt that they were "worse off financially" than they were the year before were less likely to be supportive of the postmaterialist issues measured by my index. The mean score for those who felt "better off" scored an average of 54.0 versus a mean of 51.8 for those who felt "worse off." While this difference is not large, given the size of the sample it is statistically significant. Therefore, the theoretical argument is supported at the level of the social psychology of the individual.

A limitation of my analysis is that it spans a relatively short period of time. It may turn out that the decline in the level of postmaterialism/tolerance in Canada is temporary. In addition, because extensive time-series data on the relationship between inequality and values are lacking, the results remain tentative.

To conclude, I found that, contrary to Inglehart's prediction, the level of postmaterialism of Canadians, as reflected in survey data, has not increased over the past ten years. In addition, the salience of postmaterialism remains on the margins of both the issue agenda and the minds of Canadians. So rather than the NDP suffering because the changing nature of politics has made its policies untenable, the NDP has suffered because of a dearth of postmaterialist views in the population. I explained the decline in postmaterialism as the result of increases in inequality and poverty over the past 10 to 15
years. This explanation is not inconsistent with Inglehart's premise that it is only possible to think about postmaterialist issues once one's material needs are met.

The fact that postmaterialism has decreased in Canada during a period of economic growth casts doubt on the appropriateness of Inglehart's approach to politics and political change. One limitation of my analysis of postmaterialism is that, since the empirical data come exclusively from the Canadian case, statements I make are limited to Canada and may not reflect developments in other countries. However, since I suggest that Canada epitomizes the postindustrial nation and is rich in the correlates of postmaterialism, the fact that postmaterialism's impact on Canadian politics has been minor is a criticism of Inglehart's postmaterialist thesis.

The results of this chapter imply that the decline of the NDP was not a result of the party's inability to update its policy agenda to include a focus on postmaterialist issues. Since the impact of postmaterialism on Canadian politics has been minor, it cannot explain the massive decline of the NDP in the 1990s. However, this chapter focused on the attitudes and values of citizens much more than party politics. Chapter 3 probes the impact of postmaterialism on the NDP in more depth. It examines the values and attitudes of NDPers on key political issues, and tries to create an ideological profile of NDP supporters. The chapter looks for shifts in the ideological, class, and demographic make-up of NDPers to help understand their electoral rise and fall. While this question is relevant to the social democratic Left in Canada, it also allows for a concrete test of a key element in Inglehart's argument. Inglehart (1997: 252) argues that
the impact of postmaterialism will be particularly powerful for social democratic parties that are faced with the balancing act of incorporating postmaterialism into their agenda without alienating their traditional union base of supporters. Chapter 3 examines, empirically, the degree to which the NDP faced a trade-off between its traditional blue-collar base and its white-collar postmaterialist constituency.
Chapter 3
The Old and New Left in Canada: Conflict or Compatibility?

In Chapter 2 I found an affinity between postmaterialist views and NDP voters. This chapter moves from conjecture to testing empirically whether erstwhile NDPers have left the party because of either perceived indifference to the pull of postmaterialism, or conversely, too great a shift toward postmaterialist issues. Inglehart suggests that this conflict between the new and old left creates a dilemma for left parties. According to Inglehart, "the growing tendency for Western electorates to polarize according to Materialist versus Postmaterialist values...imposes a difficult balancing act on party leaders, especially those of Left parties. If they adapt to the new polarization too slowly they lose their young postmaterialist activists; but if they move too fast in this direction, they risk losing their traditional working-class constituency" (Inglehart, 1997: 252).

Following Inglehart's argument, the degree to which the NDP has been unable to find this delicate balance might explain its decline in electoral success. And since, theoretically, the impact of postmaterialism should be greater on left-wing parties, the study of its impact on the NDP will be a good indication of the power of Inglehart's approach.

Inglehart's thesis will be tested by examining the changing policy platforms and constituency bases of the New Democratic Party. Specifically, I will ask if conflict between materialist, blue-collar NDPers and postmaterialist, new middle-class NDPers has caused a significant split in the party. This is an urgent question given the NDP's unprecedently poor showing in the polls during the 1990s. These results have sparked a
certain amount of soul-searching among party faithful, reminiscent of the late 1950s, which saw the NDP established in the wake of a defeated and demoralized CCF.¹

I will evaluate Inglehart's position by searching for conflict in the political ideologies of NDP voters from various class positions. Similar studies have been done among "progressive" social movement activists (Carroll and Ratner, 1996a, 1996b), and NDP activists (Archer and Whitehorn, 1997). This work will serve as an important basis for comparison. However, I argue that while activists and party elites can shape party platforms, it is ultimately the rank-and-file voter who determines the viability of political parties. I studied data from the 1993 Canadian National Election Study (CNES) to address this question. The 1993 election was chosen because it was the one in which the NDP plunged to just nine from 43 seats in 1988 and, at the same time, the Reform Party, a party of the new Right, went from one to 52 seats. Therefore, the 1993 election can be seen as a watershed. In analyzing data from the 1993 election, I wanted to understand if these large-scale changes to Canadian party politics were partly a result of the impact of postmaterialism.

Contrary to Inglehart's thesis, I found considerable consistency between blue-collar and white-collar NDP voters. Furthermore, on virtually every political issue I studied, both materialist and postmaterialist, the blue-collar NDPers scored to the "Left" of their peers in the other major parties. However, this is insufficient evidence of harmony in the NDP.

¹ In 1998 Alexa McDonough took an extended trip to Western Europe to look for the secrets behind the success of the Labour Party in England and the Social Democrats in Germany. In addition, members of the NDP federal caucus have created a committee to tour the country soliciting ideas from party members on their vision of the NDP's future.
By looking at the values of NDP voters alone I am, ipso facto, studying only those who decided that they could "live with" the platform of the NDP. Therefore, I go on to look at support for the NDP from election to election. Presumably, NDPers who became dissatisfied with the NDP's platform would choose another party in subsequent elections. Beyond the general pattern of party-shifting from election to election, I found that a disproportionate number of blue-collar NDPers left the NDP in 1988 for Reform in 1993. Most of those who left were non-unionized workers who had never been core NDP supporters.

Given the geographical scope of Inglehart's recent work, it is impressive that his thesis describes the recent conflict in the Canadian Left to the extent that it does. However, I will argue that in limiting the temporal dimension of his analysis to the past 20 years or so, he cannot see that this type of conflict within the Left is nothing new. A look at the ideological history of the CCF-NDP reveals that the party has faced similar dilemmas in moving from a farmers' party to an industrial working-class party to, increasingly, a party of the urban, new middle class. Impoverished groups have sought allies in the middle class ever since the original formation of left parties (Przeworski and Sprague, 1986: 38). The transformation of Left parties is driven by both the changing size of potentially sympathetic groups in the population as well as the ideological visions that party elites have for a just, more egalitarian nation. This way of thinking about party change reasserts the potential of human agency to shape the direction of political movements. Inglehart downplays how much parties need to reach brokered solutions to conflict in the effort to unite seemingly disparate groups. It is clear that this brokering went on long
before the current method of cynically using political polling to shape attractive platforms. I will conclude by speculating on whether or not the recent conflict on the Left, outlined by Inglehart, represents the "end of parliamentary socialism" (Panitch and Leys, 1997) or simply one of many challenges the Canadian Left has faced during its roughly 100 years of existence.

3.1 The CCF–NDP: The Short Course

The "dilemma of electoral socialism" involves the trade-off that occurs when a traditional labour party attempts to embrace middle-class issues to broaden its base of support, but, by so doing, alienates its core, blue-collar supporters. I will argue that the unique history of democratic socialist politics in Canada, embodied in the CCF–NDP, requires a rephrasing of Przeworski and Sprague's dilemma. The CCF–NDP has never been a traditional labour party. Rather, the CCF began as a predominantly Western Canadian party comprising a mix of farmers, labourers, and socialists. The founding of the New Democratic Party in 1961 represented an outreach to the industrial labourers of Ontario, French Canada, and middle-class liberals. The expansion of the Left party in Canada resulted in both an increase in blue-collar workers and the urban middle class. Rather than a trade-off, there was net growth as support for the newly-formed NDP eclipsed the gains of the CCF. It is only in the past 10 years or so, as the NDP has expanded its postmaterialist agenda to include, for instance, the rights of gays and lesbians, that the

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2 One problem in evaluating this question is that, when evaluating the health of the Left in a given country is that electoral success is not a sufficient measure. Tony Blair's victory in England, as well as Bob Rae's tenure in Ontario, led some on the far side of the Left to argue that, in capitulating to the demands of the corporate agenda these parties are basically indistinguishable from the Centre and Right parties. I suggest that these
NDP has lost some of its blue-collar base (who have switched to the Reform Party). In the brief ideological and electoral history of the CCF–NDP that follows, I highlight the shifting constituency base of the party and the interplay between the old and new Lefts, focusing specifically on influential policy documents.

The CCF was founded in 1933 at the height of the Depression. It was formed as a federation of provincial labour, farmer, and socialist groups (academic and clergy-based) (Lipset, 1971 [1950]). Needless to say, its program, outlined in the Regina Manifesto, had a strong materialist focus. The Regina Manifesto outlined its program for a "planned, socialized economic order" (cited in Whitehorn, 1992: 39). Specifically, it argued for the necessity of the establishment of a labour code, medicare, financial reform, a reduction in tariff barriers, and the nationalization of certain industries. Although there was some apprehension and even open hostility towards the notion of socialism, particularly among farmers who viewed socialism as an unholy, foreign movement, the final paragraph of the Regina Manifesto ended with a rousing flourish which beckoned the movement toward a socialist society (Lipset, 1971 [1950]): "No CCF Government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation the full programme of socialized planning which will lead to the establishment in Canada of the Co-operative Commonwealth" (cited in Penner, 1992: 88). In its only non-economic reference, the Regina Manifesto argued for the importance of disarmament and international peace.

__appenances and criticisms rarely follow from the election of a Liberal or Progressive Conservative government in Canada.__
The Winnipeg Declaration, approved in 1956, acknowledged the improvements in the standard of living that had taken place since the Regina Manifesto was written. Nonetheless, it argued that since Canadian capitalism produced enormous levels of inequality and poverty, social planning was still required. The CCF, which had been floundering in the polls, seized on the merger of the two major Canadian labour congresses in the same year to make itself more attractive to the growing labour movement. By including fewer controversial statements in the Winnipeg Declaration, it also attracted a share of the growing urban, middle-class population (Whitehorn, 1992: 49).

The New Party Declaration of 1961, which signalled the CCF's transformation into the New Democratic Party, was a response to additional changes in Canadian society. The growth in urbanization, education, and the participation of women in the paid workforce made it essential for the NDP to change its image as a Western farmers' movement if it hoped to continue as a viable party. Another goal of this declaration was to make inroads into Quebec, a province in which the CCF had had very little success. It also tried to tap into the concerns of the liberally-minded middle-class and former Liberal voters by arguing for the protection of new immigrants, free higher education, strengthening the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the development and preservation of the French national identity and culture, assistance to Native Canadians, and more relief aid to developing countries (Knowles, 1961). According to Whitehorn, in appealing to the middle-class "the 1961 statement avoided such terms as 'socialism,' 'capitalism' and 'class,' in the hope that less strident language could address the issues of poverty and
inequality without necessarily alienating the large middle-class" (Whitehorn, 1992: 61). The jump in support from 1958 to 1962, and then 1965, suggests that the NDP was able to pull off this balancing act with success. It had embraced many themes that we would now label postmaterialist at the same time as it was becoming more attractive to the burgeoning industrial working class.

It needs to be noted here that although the NDP wanted to fashion itself as a labour party in the mould of the British Labour Party, the founders were also concerned that organized labour might overwhelm the party. Therefore, they implemented regulations to limit the influence of organized labour. For instance, NDP riding associations were represented at the federal conventions at a ratio of one delegate for every 50 to 100 members, while unions affiliated with the NDP were given one delegate for each 1000 union members. Bradley suggests that the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) was fearful that Canadians would not support a labour party as such, and, consequently, decided to downplay their involvement in the founding of the new party (Bradley, 1985: 146)

3.2 The Waffle Interlude

The Waffle tells us about the potential as well as the limits of a New Left politics in Canada. The Waffle was formed in 1969 as a radical subgroup within the NDP. According to Whitaker, they "were initially inspired by an uneasy sense that, in the search for electoral respectability, the party was forgetting its mission to transform society" (Whitaker, 1990: 167). Central to the Waffle movement was the notion that it was necessary to link the national and class questions. The Waffle therefore argued for
the establishment of an independent, socialist Canada (Watkins, 1990: 173). The Waffle felt that Canadian economic nationalism was necessary to halt the domination of the Canadian economy by American corporations. Other planks of the Waffle platform included support for Quebec's right to self-determination, gender equality, environmental protection, and support for Native self-government (Mahon, 1990: 193). Consistent with the approach of the New Left in other countries, the Waffle stressed the importance of extra-parliamentary organization and the NDP acting as a social movement as well as a party. According to Bradford and Jenson, the Waffle "tried to foster a more participatory, society-centred politics, denigrating parliamentarism" (Bradford and Jenson, 1992: 201).

Between 400 and 500 NDP members signed the Waffle Manifesto. They included members of the provincial parliaments (MPPs) of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and British Columbia (Smart, 1990: 179). Jim Laxer, one of the authors of the Waffle Manifesto, ran against David Lewis for the leadership of the NDP during the 1971 convention. Despite opposition from the more conservative labour unions and older, more traditional, party members, Laxer received almost 40% of the votes on the final ballot. After this challenge, however, the NDP establishment outlawed the Waffle as a "party within a party", and the Waffle disbanded in 1974.

Although the Waffle's challenge was defeated, their ideas influenced the Federal NDP caucus, which, in turn, played a vital role in the Liberal minority government of 1972–1974. Initiatives such as the National Energy Program and the establishment of Petro-Canada were influenced by the ideas and actions of the Waffle Movement. In addition,
the Waffle shaped the NDP's position as opponents of free trade, advocates of national rights for Quebec, and supporters of Canadianizing unions (Penner, 1992: 103). The Waffle interlude suggests that the NDP mainstream was not ready for the complete adoption of the Waffle's program of New Left identity politics combined with economic nationalism. Nonetheless, the Waffle's influence within the Left could not be ignored.

3.3 Adding on Postmaterialism

It was not until 1983, with the passing of the New Regina Manifesto, that the NDP embraced the postmaterialist agenda officially. This program gave environmental concerns a prominent position. It stated that "ecological priorities should guide technological and economic decisions" (Whitehorn, 1992: 62). It also addressed the issues of gender discrimination and inequality, and violence against women, and recognized Quebec as what we would now call a "distinct society" (Whitehorn, 1992: 64).

These policy developments led to unprecedented success in the elections of 1984 and 1988. In 1988, the NDP won 43 seats and over 20% of the popular vote. More generally, the CCF–NDP's share of the vote, which had averaged 14.5% from 1944 to 1978, rose to 19.3% from 1979 to 1988. (In addition, between elections the NDP polled well. In July 1987 for instance, the NDP polled at 41% versus 31% for the Liberals and 28% for the Conservatives (Whitehorn, 1996: 331)). However, this unprecedented success was short-lived. The party had a disastrous showing in the 1993 federal election (to be discussed more in later chapters) gaining just 7% of the popular vote, which translated to nine seats
and a loss of official party status. The 1997 election saw a modest resurgence of the NDP with 11% of the vote and 21 seats, and a return to official party status. Alexa McDonough, the first NDP leader from the East Coast, brought increased exposure of the NDP to that region and eight of the NDP's 21 seats.

This brief survey of the CCF-NDP suggests that both the blue-collar/white-collar base and, in turn, the Old Left/New Left, coexisted quite comfortably.  

3.4 The Current Predicament of the Canadian Left

The future of the NDP, and the Left in Canada more generally, is a topic of current debate (Hargrove, 1998; Laxer, 1997; Rae, 1996; McLeod, 1994). However, it is not a new one. As an opposition movement usually outside the political mainstream and the corridors of power, speculation has necessarily been a large part of leftist thought. At the turn of the century, the debate on the Left was over the appropriateness of evolutionary

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3 It could be argued that the tenure of Bob Rae, Premier of Ontario from 1990–1995, showed that tension between the New and the Old Left did exist under the surface and could emerge given provocation. However, I would argue that Rae's actions represented a shift to the Right rather than a move to increase his appeal to postmaterialists. Upon election Premier Rae vowed to be the government of all the people, and, along with supporting some traditional Left legislation (like the passing of union-friendly labour laws) his government went on to tackle New Left issues like full human rights for gays and lesbians, employment equity, increased environmental regulation, and elder rights. Rae's government then backed down on its election promise to bring in public auto insurance and, most damaging to its traditional supporters, re-opened the contracts of public sector workers that had been established through the sacrosanct process of collective bargaining (this became known as the social contract). This action raised the ire of union leaders, many of whom, including the Canadian Auto Workers, advised their members not to actively work for the NDP during the 1995 election. This inactivity certainly contributed to the NDP's ill-fated re-election bid. In retrospect, it can be said that, in a bid to widen his range of supporters, Rae alienated his core constituents. However, Rae expanded his agenda by trying to appeal to the corporate community and the business lobby, not to postmaterialists and social movement activists.
versus revolutionary socialism: whether to participate in elections or to seize power via extra-parliamentary means. At the end of the century, debate revolved around the appropriateness of the working class and the labour movement in general as an agent of progressive social change in a postindustrial, postmodern world. European socialists like Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue that the new social movements (gay, feminist, environmental, etc.) provide the real possibility for human emancipation, since people's identities and interests cannot be reduced to their class position. Others argue that, in this era of unsurpassed capitalist strength, the emancipatory project must remain in the critique of capitalism channelled through a working-class politics (e.g., Wood, 1995).

The work of Przeworski and Sprague (1986) details the process of the transformation from the old politics to the new politics, also described by Inglehart. Their 1986 monograph revisits this debate on the future of Left in an empirical mode, using evidence from Western European social democratic parties. Przeworski and Sprague (1986) phrase this debate as the "dilemma of electoral socialism." They argue that since the working class (defined in the traditional sense as manual, industrial workers) has never made up the majority of any nation's population (and is now on the decline), parties on the Left are faced with the decision either to search for allies in other classes with the goal of gaining power, or to stay exclusively working class (and true to their origins), but remain as a protest movement. The dilemma is that, when Left parties turn to allies in the new middle class, they must expand their platforms to include issues that are of interest to this class, and expand their appeals from the "working class" in particular to the "people" in general. In expanding their issue base to include the rights of gays and lesbians, the
environment, and opposition to nuclear testing, for instance, they may alienate and then lose those traditional supporters not favourable to these positions. Through a careful examination of several European countries across time, Przeworski and Sprague argue that this electoral trade-off is less severe in countries that have a strong and unified union movement (e.g., Sweden) which serves to unite the working class, and the trade-off is greater in countries that have a divided union movement (e.g., France). In countries like Sweden, working-class solidarity is not based solely on political party involvement.

Przeworski and Sprague also argue that the Left's electoral necessity to expand its base of supporters to non-workers functions to decrease the class basis of politics and the extent to which workers see themselves as a class:

When socialists seek to be effective in electoral competition they erode exactly that ideology which is the source of strength among workers. To be effective they must organize the masses, and yet as they assume a supraclass posture they dilute their capacity to organize workers as a class. They cannot remain the party of workers alone, and yet they cannot broaden their appeal without undermining their own support among workers (Przeworski and Sprague, 1986: 55-56).

The implication is that workers do not vote for Left parties automatically, as a reflex, but must be convinced by the Left party that they alone can represent workers' interests. These appeals can no longer be made as convincingly once the Left party expands its base of support. The NDP has most often represented itself as the party for "ordinary Canadians" rather than the party of the "working class," with a program that Bradford and Jenson call "contentless populism" (Bradford and Jenson, 1991: 192). Note, in this
regard, Dave Barrett's campaign in British Columbia against "vested interests" and David Lewis' federal election campaign fought against "corporate welfare bums" (Morton, 1986: 142).

According to Inglehart, the growth of postmaterialism might encourage the development of new political parties, relatively responsive to emerging value cleavages. Or they may lead to the realignment of the social basis of existing parties, making age an increasingly important base of cleavage...and eventually, perhaps, tending to reverse the traditional alignment of the working class with the Left and the middle-class with the Right (Inglehart, 1971: 1009).

The “old” politics, typical of the period from 1930 through the 1960s, was the politics of class (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Lipset, 1981). Here the Left, based in the working class, fought for greater government involvement in the economy, greater redistribution of income, and an enlarged (universal) welfare state. The Right, which was supported by the middle class, argued for a more laissez-faire approach to the economy and pushed for lower taxes, restrictions on workers' rights, and a restricted welfare state. According to Inglehart, the 1970s ushered in a new politics altering these issue agendas and their related social cleavages.

For Inglehart, while the “old” politics was a fight over money and economic justice, the “new politics” revolves around value conflicts. Here the Left, now based in the middle class, is the champion of the environment, the rights of women, and of gays and lesbians,
and local democracy. The Right, which emerged as a reaction to the putative permissiveness and anti-traditionalism of the New Left, finds much of its support in the working class. The New Right stands against much of what the New Left stands for, tending to be anti-gay, anti-immigrant, and anti-abortion.

It follows from Inglehart’s argument that this transition between the old and new politics would create conflict within the NDP between its older blue-collar constituents, the stalwarts of the party, and the younger postmaterialist middle class. The search for conflict in the NDP is a good test of Inglehart’s claim that politics and political cleavages have undergone significant shifts in recent decades. While Inglehart has amassed considerable and convincing survey-based evidence that postmaterialist values have grown in recent years, especially among the young and well-educated, there is little evidence as to how these value cleavages have affected the dynamics of political parties. The search for cleavages within the Left also provide insights into the future of social democracy in Canada by telling us about the ideological and demographic characteristics of supporters of the Left.

The search for conflict on these grounds has been studied among social movement activists in Canada. Carroll and Ratner (1996a, 1996b) find little evidence for the dilemma that Przeworski and Sprague write about. In their study of activists in a wide range of social movements in the Vancouver area, they find few contradictions between the views of movements that could be defined as Old Left (e.g., union, urban poverty) and ones that could be defined as New Left (e.g., environment, feminist, gay and lesbian
groups). Instead, the majority (75%) of these activists invoked a common "political economy injustice frame" when describing their activities. Carroll and Ratner state that in the "political economy injustice frame,"

power is viewed as systemic, institutional, structural and materially grounded, for instance, in wealth. The various structures of power — e.g., capital, state, the media — are seen as articulated together. Oppression is mainly a matter of material deprivation, of exploitation, of alienation, which may include the domination of nature in the pursuit of profit" (1996a: 416).

This perspective contrasts with the "identity politics injustice frame," which sees power as an attribute of people and is often attached to identity markers such as gender and race. This frame was used by a small minority of activists, although relatively frequently by feminists and gay/lesbian activists. Carroll and Ratner (1996a: 419) also found that, when the identity politics frame was used, it was invoked in conjunction with the political economy frame. They conclude that social movement activists are united under a broadly socialist worldview and vision about the future. They stress that their findings show the potential for a united oppositional movement. This is a different picture from those who see a splitting up of oppositional forces into myriad particularistic groups (e.g., Seidman, 1992).

Archer and Whitehorn (1997) provide further evidence for Carroll and Ratner's position with their survey of delegates at the 1987 and 1989 NDP leadership conventions. One of their key intentions was to see if there was a cleavage between the labour and non-labour delegates, with union delegates anchoring the materialist end of the party and the non-
union delegates at the postmaterialist end. They found very clear demographic differences between the two groups. Union delegates were more likely to be blue-collar workers with relatively low levels of education and a working-class self-image, while non-union delegates tended to be well-educated professionals with a self-image of middle or upper middle class (Archer and Whitehorn, 1997: 61). However, these key demographic differences did not translate to a major policy divide between the two groups. Union delegates did tend to be a shade to the Right of non-union delegates on most policy issues (with the exception of union and workers’ rights), but always to the left of delegates at Liberal and Progressive Conservative conventions. In particular, Archer and Whitehorn found no major division between unionists and non-unionists on issues relating to the environment. (This finding is surprising considering the often-reported inherent conflict between jobs and the environment.) However, they found that the labour group was less supportive than non-labour groups of women’s issues, of an open immigration policy, and of the New Left positions on defence and foreign affairs (Archer and Whitehorn, 1997: 193). Archer and Whitehorn concluded that it remains to be seen whether caucuses of “new politics” groups within the NDP could move the party in a direction that the union delegates would oppose (1997: 193).

Each of the studies discussed above probe the issue of two, perhaps oppositional, Lefts. Przeworski and Sprague, using historical comparative data, identify an electoral trade-off which occurs when social democratic parties widen their appeal to attract middle-class supporters. As they embrace New Left issues, they alienate their traditional blue-collar supporters. Carroll and Ratner, on the other hand, find great consistency in the “master
frames” of activists in both “new” and “old” social movements. Finally, Archer and Whitehorn studied NDP delegates and found some evidence for a union/non-union divide, but concluded that, as of the late 1980s, it was not a major source of conflict.

This chapter looks at ordinary voters, since much policy is shaped by their views as gauged by public opinion polls and through their election of members of parliament. While the viewpoints of social movement activists and party delegates can be seen as harbingers of emerging social trends, they differ from non-activists in that they possess highly developed political worldviews (Converse, 1964). By looking at the views and values of ordinary voters, we can assess the empirical generalizability of the positions of Carroll and Ratner, and Archer and Whitehorn, and see if the dilemma that Przeworski and Sprague pose is, in fact, a false dilemma in the Canadian context.

3.5 Ideological Views of NDP Supporters: A Divided Party?

Some left-wing parties in Western countries, such as the French Communist Party (PCF) have retained the key Marxist positions, while other Left parties (e.g., the British Labour Party under Tony Blair), in the interest of increasing their support in the middle class, have risked the alienation of blue-collar supporters by embracing postmaterialist issues. In other national contexts, new parties have emerged to cater to the growing segment of white-collar, service sector workers in the population (e.g., Democrat ’66 in the Netherlands and the Green Party in Germany).

The NDP is the only viable left-wing party on the Canadian political scene. On economic issues the NDP is clearly to the Left of the other parties. Although the NDP have also
been affected by the revival of liberal economics, both at the federal and provincial levels they have brought in or have proposed labour-friendly legislation, increases in the minimum wage, maintenance of a universal health care system, and a move to a more redistributive tax regime. These actions have occurred at a time when the federal Liberals made fighting the deficit their main priority, cutting transfer payments to the provinces that had been earmarked for social programs. The 1990s have seen a decrease in unemployment insurance payments, skyrocketing tuition for post-secondary education, and hospital closings (Barlow and Campbell, 1995)

The NDP is clearly the most progressive of the parties on social issues. In recent years, the party has either passed or proposed pay equity legislation, legal marriage for gays and lesbians, and the settling of Aboriginal land claims. The NDP has also achieved gender parity in the selection of candidates for provincial and federal elections (eight of 21 of its MPs elected in 1997 were women). A successful combination of social-democratic policies with social liberalism has largely been achieved by NDP policy-makers and politicians.

It is possible that a gulf has formed between the elite and active members of the party (delegates, activists, members of parliament) and the rank-and-file voters. While policy-makers working for the NDP may have embraced these new social issues, the ordinary voter may not have done so. The 1993 Canadian Election Study (CES) has a series of "value thermometer" questions relating to important old and new politics issues. The survey asked people how they felt about an issue or a group in society, using a scale of
“0” meaning “very negative”, through “100” meaning “very positive.” Table 3.1 shows that, almost without exception, NDP voters are furthest to the Left on both social and economic issues, compared to those who voted for one of the other parties. They were the most favourable to people on welfare, labour unions, feminists, racial minorities, and aboriginals. NDP supporters were the least favourable to big business, a position consistent with the traditional left-wing agenda. (The NDP was not quite as favorable to gays and lesbians as were supporters of the Bloc Québécois. This may reflect the laissez-faire attitude to sexuality that is unique to the Québécois.)

Table 3.1: Mean scores for supporters of each of the main parties on important left and right issues. (Source 1993 CNES) N=2374

*indicates that the score is significantly different from that of the NDP (at the .05 level)
These results show that the parties can be placed in the same order on both social and economic issues. They can be arranged from left to right in this order: NDPers, Liberals, Conservatives, Reformers. Again the Bloc Québécois is an exception. It ranks second to the NDP on economic issues, and is the most favourable toward gays and lesbians, but is the least favourable toward racial minorities and aboriginals. This suggests that overall there is only one ideological axis for the English Canadian parties, not two. Or if there are two, these two axes are roughly parallel.

The ranking of party voters from Left to Right suggests that the dilemma of electoral socialism may not apply in Canada; the NDP voters, as a group, are the most favourable to the progressive position on social and economic issues. However, it is conceivable that looking at NDPers overall masks dissent in the ranks. The claim here is that extremely liberal members of the new middle class may mask the more moderate views of the NDP’s blue-collar base. Table 3.2 offers some support for this claim. On five of seven value thermometer items, blue-collar constituents took a position to the Right of their white-collar counterparts. The exceptions were their position toward unions, which was equally positive for blue-collar and white-collar NDPers, and towards feminists, where there was no significant difference. Given the small sample of NDPers in 1993 (N=168), the fact that statistically significant differences were found is evidence that the divide between blue-collar and white-collar NDPers is pronounced.

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Since I take a firm position on the importance of a theoretically sound and historically accurate definition of class in other sections of this dissertation, the simplified blue-collar distinction made here needs to be explained. The “collar” distinction was made to represent the argument of Przeworski and Sprague who argue that the dilemma of electoral socialism lies in the conflict between the views of the traditional blue-collar and other non-blue-collar workers.
Table 3.2: Comparing the attitudes of blue-collar/white collar NDP voters on important Left-Right issues.
(Source 1993 CNES) N=168
*indicates differences are significant at the .05 level

The issue that produced the largest divide was the respondents' view of gays and lesbians. The survey asks, "What do you think of homosexuals?" with responses ranging from 0, "very negative," to 100, "very positive." The mean response for white-collar NDPers was 61 but only 37 for blue-collar NDPers. The blue-collar NDPers' views of gays and lesbians was the only item that provoked a response below 50.

While not unique to the NDP, the value cleavage between blue-collar and white-collar voters is particularly salient among NDPers. Further analysis, not reported in detail here, shows that for each of the other main parties, the value divide between blue-collar and
white-collar workers is smaller and, in many cases, not statistically significant. For BQ voters, there is almost no gap between the views of blue-collar workers and the views of white-collar workers. Only on the issue of gays and lesbians is the difference statistically significant. Perhaps the lack of variation on social issues can be explained by overarching commonalities between blue-collar and white-collar supporters of the Bloc Québécois. They are, almost by definition, francophones living in Quebec who are supportive of the Québécois nationalist movement. The commonality on economic issues is more difficult to explain. Perhaps white-collar Bloc supporters tend to work in the public sector and other economically liberal sections of the middle class.

The gulf between blue-collar and white-collar NDPers is large and important since it speaks to the unity and cohesion of the NDP. However, blue-collar workers do not represent a bastion of neo-liberal economics and social conservatism. Table 3.3 shows that, on most issues, blue-collar NDPers are to the left of their counterparts in the other four main parties. So the divide between blue-collar and white-collar NDPers is as much a function of the extreme liberalism of white-collar NDPers as it is of a conservative blue-collar constituency.
Table 3.3: Comparing the attitudes of blue-collar workers in each of the parties. (Source: 1993 CNES) N=693
*indicates that the difference between the score and that of the NDP is statistically significant at the .05 level.

3.6 Exodus to Reform?
Due to the emergence of new political parties during the past decade, the appropriateness of the "dilemma of electoral socialism" argument can be examined very concretely. In the Canadian case, we would expect the traditionalist NDP voters to jump ship as the party broadened its agenda to include a variety of New Left or postmaterialist issues. We might further expect these disgruntled NDPers to move to the Reform Party which takes distinctly anti-New Left (and anti-Old Left) positions, while sharing the anti-elitism
and populism of the NDP (Laird, 1998). The parallel phenomenon of working-class Tories has been well documented in the United Kingdom (Heath et al., 1985). And the image of the blue-collar worker fed up with the NDP’s pandering to “special interest” groups like gays and women, and fed up with their hard-earned money going to these groups, has emerged in the media. A 1997 Globe and Mail article carried the headline and following byline, “Union members aim for Reform: Propelled by feelings of powerlessness, workers are shunning the NDP’s social-equality policies” (Bourette, 1997). The article quotes a middle-aged auto worker at General Motors in Oshawa as saying, “A working man pays his bills and all he sees are increasing taxes. And what for? It’s for the minorities. Why should I support them when they should be supporting themselves?” The article claims that he and a sizable share of his co-workers, in this traditional NDP stronghold, had moved his vote from the NDP in 1988 to the Reform Party in 1993. Indeed, the Reform Party finished second to the Liberals in 1993, with the NDP finishing fourth. If this anecdotal evidence is indicative of a widespread shift in the allegiances of blue-collar workers it would suggest that we are witnessing a significant shift in the class/party link. However, this theme is not a new one and has been used in the past to discredit socialist movements using the logic, "If the working-class doesn’t support you, who will?" It may also be part of the trend to portray members of the traditional working class as intolerant and ignorant.

I tested for the salience of this trend using the data from the 1993 Canadian National Election Study (CNES). The survey asked respondents who they voted for in 1988, as

5 Though their position over time and among members has varied, they are in general wary of immigration, gun control, and gays and lesbians.
well as who they voted for in 1993. With these data, I looked at whether or not an exodus from the NDP to the Reform Party had taken place during those five years, and if the characteristics of these new Reformers matched the characteristics associated with them in the popular media. The data suggest that there has been a shift from the NDP to Reform. The NDPers-turned-Reformers have different ideologies and demographic profiles from those that remained with the NDP. While the bulk of the NDP turned Reform are from the working class, they are much less likely to be unionized than those who stayed in the party. My analysis suggests that the traditional NDP constituents, unionized workers, have not jumped ship.

Table 3.4 looks at the destination of those who switched from the NDP in 1988 to another party in 1993. I have included the overall vote share for each of the parties (from the actual vote totals) for comparison. The distribution of former NDPers resembles the overall distribution quite closely. In 1993 a slightly greater proportion of former NDPers voted for the Liberals and smaller proportion voted for the Progressive Conservatives. Former NDPers voted for Reform and the BQ at almost precisely the same rate as the population as a whole. It is not surprising that a plurality of former NDPers switched to the Liberals since they are their ideological neighbours. Similarly for Quebeckers, the switch from the NDP to the Bloc Québécois shows ideological consistency. And the federal Tories have rarely appealed to NDP constituents. At first blush, it is surprising that 20% of those that switched from the NDP in 1988 made their way to the Reform Party in 1993. The Reform Party and the NDP represent different ends of the political spectrum in both social and economic issues.
An analysis of the voting choice from 1993 to 1997 indicates that the flow from NDP to Reform continued. Of those who voted for the NDP in 1993, 63.4% stayed with the NDP in 1997, while 5.9% went to the Tories. 14.9% went to the Liberals, and 15.8% went to Reform. This is a disproportionate shift to Reform. This evidence from the 1997 survey suggests that the 1993 election was not a one-time departure of the socially conservative, blue-collar NDP supporters, but the start of a trend.

By studying the characteristics of those who left the NDP for the Reform party versus those who stayed, I tried to reveal reasons for this shift. Table 3.5 shows a comparison of the views and values of people who stayed with the NDP from 1988 to 1993 with those
who voted for the NDP in 1988 but switched to Reform in 1993. We see that, without exception, their views are to the Right of the consistent NDPers. The largest gaps can be seen when voters were probed for attitudes regarding welfare, unions, gays, lesbians, and feminists. There is, then, some evidence that a significant share of NDP voters switched to the Reform Party because they perceived the NDP as too liberal on most issues.


*indicates difference significant at the .05 level

The fact that these NDPers-cum-Reformers share substantially more conservative views than the consistent NDPers shows that there is some ideological consistency between the parties' stated positions and the views of their supporters. It also hints at why they left the NDP. Table 3.6 finds that there is a clear social basis to this realignment. Those who left the NDP for Reform tend to be men working in non-unionized, blue-collar jobs
with very few possessing university credentials. This is largely consistent with the journalistic image of disgruntled blue-collar males who find the traditionalist views of the Reform party appealing enough to detach themselves from their ties with the NDP. Evidence for this is provided by looking at the changing class composition of party supporters over the past 15 years or so (Table 3.7). In 1984, NDP voters were disproportionately blue-collar. Whereas in 1984 the overall share of the workforce that could be classified as blue-collar was 43%, the proportion of NDP voters that were blue-collar was 48%. But, as we move toward 1997, the NDP moves toward the population average in terms of blue-collar/white-collar composition, becoming, by 1997, the most white-collar of the parties in terms of their constituents. Looking at the table, we can see that the Reform Party, and, to a lesser extent the BQ, have picked up the blue-collar slack.

Table 3.6: Comparison of 1988 NDP voters who voted Reform in 1993 with those that stayed with the NDP in 1993
(All data expressed in percentages. * indicates significant at the .10 level)
(Source: 1993 CNES) N=121
Table 3.7: The collar/party relationship 1984-1997

Graph shows the party’s blue-collar support minus the overall proportion of blue-collar workers. A negative score indicates a disproportionately white-collar party. A positive score indicates a disproportionately blue-collar party. (Source 1984-1997 CES)

However, while 58% of consistent NDPers (from 1988–1993) were union members, only 38% of NDPers-turned-Reformers were members of unions. This finding, though based on relatively small numbers, suggests that the ties between the NDP and organized labour are still intact. It is non-unionized workers, who would have benefited less from the NDP’s pro-labour positions (e.g., the entrenchment of the public sector’s right to strike, successor rights), who have been drawn to the Reform Party.
3.7 Conclusion

In general, the New and Old Lefts have coexisted in the NDP. The NDP's constituents are furthest to the Left on both materialist and postmaterialist issues. In fact, in Canada, the major parties line up in the same order on both new politics and old politics issues. However, treating NDP members as a whole does mask some disunity between a very liberal white-collar base and an only moderately liberal blue-collar base. The relatively good fit between the New Left and Old Left is not surprising given the historical composition of the NDP. When it was formed in 1961, it was as a social democratic party, with roughly equal measures of support coming from the industrial working class and the urban new middle class. The fact that its outreach to the middle class coincided with unprecedented popularity suggests that rather than a trade-off, this expansion resulted in a net gain for the NDP.

This suggests that the Left is a truly progressive movement. It is also, by nature, a defensive movement that tends to respond to changes in capitalist methods of production. That is, the traditional Left, rooted in Marxian definitions, was suited to a particular period of capitalist development. As the organization of capitalism became transformed during the postwar period, with the growth of the service sector and the growth in urban professionals, leftist parties altered their program to combat the particular injustices and inequalities that emerged. More pragmatically, they were forced to turn to a new potential constituency rather than stay on a sinking ship — the male industrial worker. Similarly, the entrance of new groups of workers into the labour force during the last twenty years or so — women, visible minorities, and self-identifying gays and lesbians
— and a labour force that is increasingly based in the service sector, has required the Left to shift once again to accommodate the particular needs of these groups.\(^6\)

There is some evidence, however, that as the NDP elite continued to advance a left-libertarian agenda during the past ten years or so, a segment of the blue-collar NDP supporters has left the party, since the Reform Party became a viable option. The "exodus to Reform," therefore, supports Inglehart, who argued that a new politics rooted in values is supplanting that of material/economic issues and will have a great impact on left-wing parties.

The Canadian case diverges from Inglehart's theory in several important ways, however. Middle-class NDP supporters still favour the materialist Left. The new politics issues have been tacked on to the traditional materialist platform. This may be because both the materialist Left and postmaterialist Left generally argue for the same things — emancipation of previously discriminated-against or exploited groups via state power and the reduction of social inequality — and both are against giving unbridled freedom to corporate Canada and free rein to capital. This can be illustrated by recent policy

\(^6\) Of course, this reaction to shifts in capitalism is neither automatic nor flawless. The direction the Left takes depends on party policy-makers and leaders who have varying ideas on this direction. They also have varying motives, sometimes based on idealism, and sometimes pragmatism and self-aggrandizement. The election of the SPD in Germany and the Labour Party in Britain have caused some on the Left to decry the end of the authentic social-democratic project (e.g., Panitch and Leys, 1997). Many of the directions these parties have taken seem to justify this position. Certainly Blair's government is quite reminiscent of the Tories before him. But those who compromise always face the criticisms of the true believers. The question now is: Has the Left shifted too far toward the Centre to be a meaningful alternative to the bourgeois parties? An examination of the current federal NDP agenda indicates that its platform remains substantially different from that of the other parties.
directions taken by the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). The CAW, which is seen as an icon of industrial unionism is on the forefront of the struggle for equality for women, workers of colour, gays and lesbians and universal daycare. Similarly, Audrey McLaughlin was chosen leader of the NDP in 1989 with the support of labour leaders: less because she rejected the corporate-driven economic trends and wanted to preserve the social safety net than because as a feminist social worker from the Yukon she represented positions on reproductive choice, racial equality, gay rights and Aboriginal claims that union leaders considered essential for successful coalition building (Jenson and Papillon. 1998: 27).

Inglehart also overstates the degree to which postmaterialist issues will animate Canadian politics. The old materialist politics is still much more on the minds of Canadians, acting as the primary determinant for voting. The answer to the open-ended question, "What is the most important issue to you in the campaign?" illustrates this. The vast majority of respondents chose a clearly materialist issue (jobs, the deficit) as the most important. Furthermore, NDP supporters who were largely favourable toward the postmaterialist agenda were as "materialist" as their Progressive Conservative counterparts. In 1993, 46% of NDPers chose jobs as the most important issue in the campaign, with an additional 20% choosing other economic concerns, including the deficit and the cost of living. Less than 4% chose the need for more integrity in government, and less than 2% chose "minority issues" as the most important issue in the campaign. The Tory numbers are similar. Thirty-four percent chose jobs, and another 40% chose other financial and economic concerns. Less than 4% chose more integrity in government and less than 1%
chose immigration or the high level of violent crime. The key difference between the NDPers and Tories is that the NDPers are more concerned with jobs and the Tories are more concerned with the deficit.

The 1997 results are largely similar to those of 1993, indicating that postmaterialist issues have not grown in importance in the minds of Canadian voters. The exception is that issues relating to Quebec and national unity rose in importance and were cited as the most important issue of the campaign by 6% of NDPers and 13% of Tories. This is not surprising considering that the referendum on Quebec sovereignty, in which the "Yes" side came within a percentage point of winning, took place about 18 months before the 1997 election. Of course it could be argued that the Quebec issue is not a postmaterialist issue for some of those who cited it as the most important issue of the campaign. Certainly, some of them were concerned about the economic uncertainty fuelled by the sovereignty movement, as well as the potential economic impact of separation.

Although the battle over such issues as the environment and the rights of women and gays and lesbians is often emotionally charged, it is basically an important sideshow to the main event which remains the battle over the distribution of wealth which remains at the core of contemporary politics.

The decline of the NDP in the 1990s is not primarily the result of its inability to balance the demands of a divergent group of supporters. The blue-collar industrial worker and the white-collar professional have always co-existed in the NDP. The blue-collar NDP
voters are generally very supportive of minority rights just as the white-collar voters are concerned with the rights of labour. There is an underlying commonality between the new and old Left, a faith in the role of the state to reduce inequality and push for social justice.

In Chapter 2, I made the case that postmaterialist beliefs and values have been declining in the Canadian electorate rather than increasing as Inglehart predicted. In this chapter, I conclude that the impact of postmaterialism on the politics of the NDP has been minor. While some materialists did leave the NDP as it adopted elements of postmaterialism in its agenda, overall materialist and postmaterialist ideologies have co-existed quite comfortably in its party platform and in the minds of NDP voters. In Chapter 4, I will examine Inglehart's third prediction — that class should play a diminishing role in predicting political behaviour. In so doing, I continue my search for a persuasive explanation for the decline of the NDP during the 1990s.
Inglehart argues that the spread of postmaterialist values within Western electorates will cause class to play a declining role in structuring political beliefs and modelling political behaviour. According to Inglehart, when economic issues were at the centre of politics, one's class position was a strong determinant of where one stood on the issues. But, now that postmaterialist issues are central, age and education become the key predictors of people's politics (Inglehart, 1997).

Inglehart represents one of many who question the utility of social class as a tool to help understand how the world is structured. Seymour Martin Lipset, one of the pioneers in the study of class voting, now believes that class is less of a factor in politics given the overall increases in the standard of living in Western democracies (Lipset 1981; Lipset and Clark, 1997). Also critical of the class concept are some postmodernist social theorists, who believe that class is a reductionist concept that captures only one aspect of human identity. They argue that class is not an adequate way of dividing up the population, since people's identities and outlooks are shaped by their ethnicity, gender, erotic orientation, and so forth. They also argue that, given that the Left-Right distinction in politics is increasingly meaningless, the study of class politics will provide few insights (e.g., Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

However, class partly determines how healthy we are, how long we live, how much we earn, and who we marry. For example, Wright (1997:234) found that, in Canada, class boundaries are relatively impermeable when it comes to mobility, friendships, and
marriage, and Coburn (2000) documents the relationship between class inequality and health status. This chapter evaluates whether class influences how Canadians think about political issues and for whom they vote. Specifically, I investigate Inglehart's claim that the significance of class has declined by looking at the level of class voting in Canada from 1984 to 1997. Before turning to the specifics of Canada, however, I demonstrate why, both theoretically and historically, class has been a key factor in structuring political behaviour. Then I evaluate the claim that the significance of class has been declining in Western capitalist democracies over the past two decades or so. Moving to the Canadian case, I argue that the relationship between occupational class and voting in Canada is indeed lower than in other countries, and, in fact, support for the NDP is continuing to come from the professional class rather than the blue-collar working class. However, I make the case that to the extent that the NDP was supported by the industrial working class, the decline in the relative size of this class in Canada from the 1980s to the 1990s accounts for only a fraction of the drop in support for the NDP.

In both the 1984 and 1997 elections, union membership was a strong predictor of voting NDP, a stronger factor than the type of job a voter had. I take this finding as an indicator that being a union member places one in a context that provides some socialization into a "pro-labour culture." Being part of a pro-union culture is, ultimately, a better predictor of voting NDP than being in one job or another. This finding suggests that union members develop a degree of class consciousness not shared by their non-union counterparts in the same occupational group. Unionization can, therefore, be seen as an intervening variable between class position and political action.
In the concluding section, I argue that the major limitation of traditional voter studies in Canada is that they treat the likelihood of voting for the NDP to be, in principle, equal to that of voting for the other major parties. However, I argue that the NDP is at a distinct disadvantage during elections because the party has fewer resources than the other main parties. It is also disadvantaged because economic and political orthodoxies in Canada, particularly as they are spread by the mass media, affect the degree to which the NDP is considered a viable electoral choice.

4.1 The Roots of Class Politics

Marx believed that class conflict was the force that drove human history (Marx and Engels [1848] in Feuer, 1959: 7). In a capitalist society, one's class was determined by one's position in relation to the means of production. There were those who owned and controlled the means of production and those who worked for the owners. Those who owned the factories, foundries, mills, and so forth derived their wealth from paying workers only what they needed to subsist; the workers owned nothing but their labour power. In fact, since the owners did not themselves work, proletarian labour was the only source of their income. Marx believed that, over time, workers, when employed side by side with other workers, would realize the basic injustice of these production relations. They would also realize that the best way to transform this unjust system would be through joining with other workers to form labour unions and workers' parties.
This basic logic explains Marx's faith in the ballot box as a tool to achieve working-class power. As a growing majority of the population in capitalist nations, the working class would vote for a party that would govern in the interests of the working class. Marx as a foreign correspondent for the *New York Daily Tribune*, wrote:

Universal Suffrage is the equivalent of political power for the working-class of England, where the proletariat forms the large majority of the population, where, in a long, though underground, civil war, it has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class... The carrying of Universal Suffrage in England would, therefore, be a far more socialistic measure than anything which has been honoured with that name on the continent. Its inevitable result, here, is the political supremacy of the working-class (Marx. 1852 in Bottomore and Rubel. 1956: 206–207).

It is true that in other, less polemical or partisan works, Marx shows more ambivalence about the possibility of overturning the capitalist system via the ballot box. In a famous passage, Marx wrote that the ruling class would not hand over power without a violent struggle. Nonetheless, there is a stunning elegance to the idea that, given the chance, the oppressed will vote their oppressors out of power.

Canadian workers' struggle to achieve a meaningful say in politics can be seen as an indication that society's elite feared the numerical power of the working class. In the 19th century, society's elites were extremely reluctant to expand suffrage to the masses. As late as the beginning of the 20th century, property and/or minimum income requirements excluded most members of the growing working class from voting in provincial and
federal elections. “During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, most workers earned modest if not miserable incomes, and the vast majority...[did]...not own their own homes” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997: 41–42). In such conditions, any property-based qualification, no matter how minimal, was prohibitive. Beginning in the 1890s, one of the chief aims of the burgeoning labour movement was to extend the franchise to lower-income groups (Morton, 1998: 67). However, it was not until 1920 that property requirements were dissolved in all of the provinces, Nova Scotia being the last (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997: 56). Implicit in these restrictions is the assumption that, if the growing mass of poor farmers and workers were enfranchised, they would quickly end the rule of the many by the few. Expansive democracy would bring equality with it.

As late as the 1940s, employers sometimes threatened to fire or reduce the wages of those who did not vote for the “right” candidate (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997: 45). This notice was posted on the wall of a Montreal manufacturing company:

We feel it is only fair to notify employees that, in case of a change in government [Conservative], we will be unable to guarantee the wages you are now being paid; neither will we be able to guarantee work of any kind to all the employees employed by us at this time (cited in Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997:45).
Of course, the introduction of universal suffrage in Canada did not signal the triumph of the working class. This is, in part, due to the fact that the working class was relatively small at the turn of the century. Although the industrialized zones in Ontario were growing, farmers still made up a larger share of the population. As late as 1923, the United Farmers of Ontario (UFO) helped form the government in Ontario, which has since become the industrial heartland of Canada. Additionally, the working class was itself divided over whether or not it should participate in Canada's bourgeois parliament or work in a revolutionary socialist movement. These internecine conflicts meant that the opposition to capitalist power was divided. It was the reformist Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) that emerged as the major representative of the working class. CCF membership also came from farmers, Christian reformers, and progressive members of the middle class. The CCF (and its successor, the New Democratic Party) never achieved power at the federal level. In fact they never received more than 20% of the vote. Nonetheless, their influence in parliament led to the establishment of medicare and other features of the welfare state.

4.2 Class and Voting

In most capitalist democracies, a pattern emerged whereby members of the working class supported parties on the Left while the middle class supported parties on the Right (Lipset, 1963: 297). The work of American political sociologists in the 1950s and 1960s gave both theoretical reasons and empirical evidence for the importance of class as a predictor of political behaviour. In their classic article "Party Systems and Voter Alignments", Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argued that the national and industrial
revolutions represented the origin of four conflict groups or cleavages: (a) churches vs. government; (b) subject vs. dominant culture; (c) primary vs. secondary economy; and (d) employers vs. workers. According to Lipset and Rokkan, these cleavages, established in the 1920s, were essentially frozen until the 1960s. As industrialization progressed, the salience of the first three cleavages declined while the fourth, based on class, was strengthened and entrenched. In the same volume that contained Lipset and Rokkan's article, Allardt and Pesonen (1967: 341) wrote that "it is a historical paradox that the modernization of European societies and the lessening of ascriptive values have occurred simultaneously with the growth of social class as an important source for political diversity".

According to Lipset,

more than anything else the party struggle is a conflict among classes, and the most impressive single fact about political party support is that in virtually every economically developed country the lower-income groups vote mainly for parties of the left, while the higher-income groups vote mainly for parties of the right (Lipset, 1963: 234).

For Lipset, a vote for a leftist party represented discontent with the status quo and an indication that one's needs were not being met. In particular, the Left vote indicated the need for income security, the need for satisfying work, and the need for status and social recognition of one's value (Lipset, 1959: 1959).
Although there were variations from country to country, the analyses of the first
generation of survey data revealed significant levels of class voting in all Western
industrialized nations (Alford 1963, 1967; Lipset, 1960; Linz, 1967). The level of class
voting was typically measured by looking at the propensity of working-class voters to
support the Left party. This measure was codified by Alford as the percentage of the
working-class voting for the Left party minus the share of the middle-class voting for the
Left party (Alford, 1963). Class voting, as measured by the Alford index, was highest in
the Scandinavian countries and Great Britain, was relatively high in Germany, France,
and Italy, and played a moderate or weak role in the United States and Canada (Alford,
1963). To give an extreme example, in Great Britain 80% of persons in "top business"
positions supported the Conservative Party in 1951 versus only 8% supporting the Labour
Party. Conversely, 51% of manual workers voted for the Labour Party while only 28%
supported the Tories (Lipset, 1960: 238). Class voting was lower in countries such as
Canada that had deep cross-cutting cleavages based on region, religion, and nationality
(Alford, 1963). This concept of class voting, which conforms to Marx's ideas on
electoral politics, was used as a professional tool of the trade for political sociologists
coming from all ideological positions during the 1960s and most of the 1970s.

4.3 The Declining Significance of Social Class?

Beginning in the 1980s, many scholars in the field of political sociology, most notably
Lipset (1981), did an about-face and claimed that while social class had once been an
important source of division, it was no longer. Class cleavages were seen as having been
supplanted by value cleavages as the key source of social division.
In an updated edition of *Political Man*, published in 1981, Lipset argues for the declining significance of class as a predictor of party preference (see also Clark and Lipset, 1991). Using the Alford index, Lipset found a decline in class voting in the U.S. and Western European nations in the postwar period. He cites the coming of postindustrial society as the main reason for the declining significance of class. The shrinking manufacturing sector and the concurrent growth of technical and professional workers in Western industrial nations have, in Lipset's estimation, sufficiently altered the class system to make previous forms of analysis inappropriate. He likened the class structure in the early 1980s to a diamond bulging in the middle rather than the pyramidal form of the past. According to his argument, in affluent societies for which the Depression and world wars are distant memories, the fierce conflict over economic distribution has receded and, following Inglehart, a new postmaterialist identity politics has emerged. More recently, Clark and Lipset (1991: 403) concluded that class voting as measured by the Alford index "has declined in every country for which data are available."

However, the Alford index is a poor measure of class voting. While the division of society into manual and non-manual classes may have been an effective way to describe class divisions in the 1940s and 1950s, it cannot accommodate the changes in the class structure since then (e.g., the declining in traditional blue-collar jobs, the rise of the service sector). It also ignores both neo-Marxist (Wright, 1978, 1985) and neo-Weberian (Marshall et al., 1988; Goldthorpe, 1996) attempts to create more differentiated and
relational class maps. On a more technical level, the Alford Index, as a measure of class voting over time, may be contaminated by shifts in the class structure or the overall popularity of political parties (Manza, et al., 1995: 152; Myles, 1979). Finally, the use of the Alford index to gauge the relationship between class and voting relies on traditional class–party relationships (i.e., members of the working-class support parties on the Left) and precludes the examination of the existence of a realignment also based on social class.

Using more sophisticated statistics than the Alford index, a recent re-analysis of the voting patterns of Americans for the presidential elections from 1948 to 1992 described the historical level of class voting in the U.S. as a “trendless fluctuation” (Hout et al: 1994). The authors concluded that “each downward trend in class voting since the 1950s has been reversed a few elections later” (Hout et al., 1994: 30).

The decline of social class as a basis for political mobilization is an accompanying tendency to Inglehart’s account of the rise of cleavages based on values. For Inglehart and others, when material issues relating to economic distribution were the primary issues of contention, class differences did matter (Inglehart, 1977). However, the coming of post-industrial society has led to the emergence of “new” issues. Individuals’ beliefs about these issues give rise to value conflicts, replacing the traditional class conflict (Inglehart and Rabier, 1986). Furthermore, middle-class support for parties of the Left has weakened the historical relationship between class and party. However, Inglehart’s

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1Wright (1985) believes that a simple gradational class scheme is inadequate. Classes are defined, for Wright, in relation to each other. For instance, the capitalist class and
reliance on the Alford index to measure class differences in voting (e.g., Inglehart, 1990: 260) limits the ability to test the relative importance of class versus values as predictors of voting preference and social movement involvement.

4.4 Class and Voting in Canada

Robert Alford’s (1963) analysis of the relationship between class and voting cross-nationally led him to conclude that Canada is relatively “classless” in its political behaviour. Canada scored an 8 on its index of class voting, compared, for instance, to scores of 33 for Australia and 40 for Great Britain (Alford, 1967: 82). The reasons for the low levels of class voting are commonly seen as relating to the ethnic, linguistic, and regional differences that have prevented the formation of either a united working class or anti-monopoly capitalist farmers’ movement (Laxer, 1989: 137). Judging from the numerous articles that peppered the two Canadian sociological journals from the 1970s to the late 1980s. Alford’s conclusion was certainly contentious (e.g., Lambert and Hunter, 1979; Myles, 1979; Ogmundson, 1975a, 1975b; Pammett, 1987; Brym, Gillespie, and Lenton, 1989). The key debates in these journals revolved around the definition of social class (neo-Marxian versus a socio-economic status (SES) measure), objective versus subjective class voting, as well as various methodological issues. Today, there appear to be two main camps in this debate. The first camp, inhabited mainly by sociologists, sees an enduring structural basis to voting in which social class, as well as region, are related to party preference (Brym, 1986; Brym et al., 1989; Nakhæie, 1992; Nakaie and Arnold, 1996). The second camp, made up chiefly of political scientists, describes the political working class are defined by the exploitative relationship between them.
scene as one of “permanent dealignment” in which short-term forces affect electoral behaviour far more than social cleavages (Clarke et al., 1996; LeDuc, 1984).

The studies that most clearly showed a relationship between class and voting were those that used contextual variables as well as individual-level variables to explain voting patterns (Brym, 1986; Brym et al., 1989; Nakhaie, 1992; Nakhaie and Arnold, 1996). Voter preference studies that focus only on individual-level data commit the fallacy of characterizing social movements as simply aggregates of the thought processes and behaviours of individuals. For this reason, it is understandable that “in Canada individual-level sociodemographic variables in general are poor predictors of voting preference” (Brym et al., 1989). The analysis of structural variables that intervene in the relationship between class position and voting, however, show a clear relationship. Brym et al. argue that the ability of a latent class to mobilize itself in the form of electoral support for the Left party (the NDP) depends on the relative power of the class in question. Specifically, the level of working-class power at the provincial level was measured by the level of union and co-operative membership. They suggested that even members of the working class who do not belong to unions will be more likely to vote for the NDP in a milieu with a strong union presence.2 Their study showed that the addition of these contextual variables to the individual-level measures yielded results that suggest that it would be premature to discard class from the analysis of voting patterns.

The paper also enhances our understanding of the process of resource mobilization by which objective class position translates into class consciousness and class action.

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2Similarly, Archer (1985) found that members of unions that were officially affiliated with the NDP were more likely to vote for the NDP than were members of unaffiliated unions.
Nakhaie (1992) built on the work of Brym et al. (1989) to examine the impact of class variables on “voting consistency” across three federal elections. Using neo-Marxist class categories that measure both ownership over the means of production and control over the labour power of others, Nakhaie found that there is a clear class basis of support for each of the three major parties. He concluded that the “NDP appears to be the party of unionized workers, unskilled labourers and farmers...the Liberal party appears to be the party of high and low ranking managers and professionals ....and the PC the party of the bourgeoisie (whether small or not)” (Nakhaie, 1992: 287).

There have been other studies that have tried to explain the low levels of class voting in Canada when compared to other advanced capitalist nations. Ogmundson (1975a, 1975b) looked at individuals’ perceptions of the class position of parties, rather than relying on “expert” ratings of their position. He found that people may perceive that they are voting along class lines even if “expert” opinion does not agree (Ogmundson, 1975a, 1975b). For example, a member of the working class may see the Conservatives as representing their class interests and vote accordingly. In addition, Nakhaie and Arnold (1996) argue that it is also possible to hold a class ideology without being a member of the class in question. In this vein, they found that members of the “New Class” (which they define as social–scientific, artistic, and literary occupations) tend to hold an egalitarian ideology and support union strength, positions consistent with the Old Left. Furthermore, it is this ideology which predicts NDP support.
This empirical work is consistent with Brodie and Jenson (1988) who argue that the low level of class voting does not mean that class is irrelevant to politics in Canada. Theory might predict that members of the working class would support the party furthest to the Left; however, in reality, this translation from class to class voting is quite complex. For class voting to be present, Brodie and Jenson believe that two factors are necessary: a party distinct from the bourgeois parties, and recognition among workers and other sympathetic groups of their class identity, which could, in turn, lead them to support a leftist party. In their survey of Canadian political history since Confederation, Brodie and Jenson conclude that left-wing parties have rarely been able to challenge the dominant definitions of political issues and represent themselves as distinct. Furthermore, they have been largely unable or unwilling to frame their platform as the only one to represent the interests of the working-class. The CCF–NDP have often vaguely represented themselves as the voice of "ordinary people," rather than using explicitly class terms. The problem of confronting mainstream ideology is compounded by the typically scarce resources available to left-wing parties. Brodie and Jenson’s work points to the importance of looking at the specifics of party platforms and campaign strategies with the understanding that the salience of class may depend on the extent to which political parties try to mobilize the electorate along class lines.

Contrary to the findings of Brym et al. (1989) and Nakhaie (1992), Clarke and his colleagues (1984, 1996) believe that there is little structural basis and not much voting consistency in Canadian electoral politics. Parties do not offer the electorate coherent and comprehensive sets of policies and programs but rather focus on leadership
capabilities (Clarke et al., 1996: 2). Further, much of the electorate has a relatively weak sense of attachment to their party and exhibit "flexible partisanship," changing party loyalties from election to election and at the federal and provincial levels (Clarke et al., 1996: 56).

A portion of the divergent visions of electoral politics in Canada held by Clarke et al. (1996) versus Brym et al. (1989) and Nakhaie (1992) revolve around differing evaluations of the trends. For example, Clarke et al. find that, from 1974 to 1988, between 19% and 30% of voters switched parties, and between 6% and 14% switched to non-voting. They view this as a sign of flexible partisanship. Nakhaie, switching the numbers around, considers the fact that between 63% and 72% of the electorate voted for the same party a testament to party loyalty (Nakhaie, 1992: 279).

There are, of course, more substantial reasons for their differing conclusions. The two approaches vary tremendously in their methods of analyzing the data. For example, most sociological research on the class–party connection considers the definition of class itself to be problematic and that theoretical justification is needed to accompany any class scheme. (Indeed, questions relating to social class were central to Western sociology in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s). Clarke et al. (1996), however, take income alone as a measure of social class, and conclude that income is not a good predictor of party preference (Clarke et al., 1996: 52). Therefore they neglect the importance of the origin of the income. For example, a unionized, skilled blue-collar worker earning $50,000 a year might be more likely to support the NDP than a small business owner with the same
income. Clarke et al.'s (1996) analysis also ignores broader contextual variables. This creates an atomized picture of Canadian electoral politics in which individuals are seen as "clean slates" who approach each election anew, largely unaffected by their surroundings and background, and make their selections based on the campaign literature and public personae of the parties.

It would be misleading, however, to minimize the contribution of the work of Clarke et al. (1996) to our understanding of Canadian electoral politics. Their analysis shows that the fleeting issues and personalities that surround campaigns have a significant, if not decisive, impact on the election results. Nonetheless, the sociological analysis of electoral behaviour by Brym et al. (1989) and Nakhaie (1992) has uncovered the structural continuities in Canadian elections.

I now want to bring the discussion back to the central issue of the degree of change, rather than the absolute levels, of class voting in Canada. My thesis would not be refuted if I found that class voting was low in both elections, but would be refuted if the low level decreased from 1984 to 1997, a period in which the spread of postmaterialist and new politics issues is said to have been increasing.

Before presenting my empirical analysis, I outline the issues surrounding the 1984 and 1997 elections and the strategies that the parties used to frame their campaign platforms.
4.5 The 1984 Federal Election

Brian Mulroney's Tories won an overwhelming majority in the 1984 federal election, riding a wave of opposition to the tenure of Pierre Trudeau's Liberals. Canada was mired in a severe recession for several years leading up to the 1984 federal election. Although Canada's economic problems could be attributed to their proximity to an ailing U.S. economy, much blame, particularly by Western Canadians, was placed on Trudeau's introduction of the National Energy Program (Clarke et al., 1996: 135–36). On top of that, a large share of Canadians felt that Trudeau's strident drive to patriate the Canadian constitution represented a high-handed attempt to carve his name in the history books at the expense of the wishes of Canadians (Morton, 1997: 312). John Turner, Trudeau's successor, no doubt suffered from his close association with Trudeau (Clarke et al., 135).

Mulroney capitalized on Canadian's perennial concern with economic issues by promising, "jobs, jobs, jobs." At the same time, the charismatic and media-savvy Mulroney proclaimed that the social programs that Canadians had come to rely on were a "sacred trust," a position belied by his subsequent actions. As the only Quebecker in the race, Mulroney fared very well in Quebec. The NDP leader, Ed Broadbent, got substantial mileage, particularly in the West, out of his catchy portrayal of Mulroney and Turner as the "Bobbsey twins" representing the interests of Toronto's Bay Street (Morton, 1986: 315). The NDP's strategy was to focus on the popularity of Broadbent as their leader, and to address their appeal to "ordinary Canadians." The final tally had the Tories with 50% of the vote and 211 seats, the Liberals with 28% of the vote and 40 seats, and the NDP with 19% of the vote and 30 seats.
4.6 The 1997 Federal Election

In 1997, the Liberals sought re-election facing a divided opposition. While 1984 was a three-party race, in 1997, with the Reform Party and the Bloc Québecois (BQ) now on the political scene, the Liberals faced four viable opposition parties. Working in the Liberals' favour was the fact that the Bloc Québecois, the official opposition, had all of its support in Quebec, and the Reform Party had all of its seats and the bulk of its support west of Ontario. Although the Tories and NDP could claim that they were, in principle, parties with nation-wide appeal, they had a meagre combined total of 11 seats in the House of Commons at the time the election was called.

The Liberal strategy was to argue that the worst of the spending cuts, undertaken under the auspices of the deficit crisis, were over and that they would return to their Liberal roots and re-invest in job creation and health care (Westall, 1997). The BQ, faced with Lucien Bouchard's transfer to provincial politics to become Premier of Quebec, found a replacement in Gilles Duceppe, a man who lacked the charisma and passion of Bouchard (Nevitte et al., 2000: 123). Nonetheless, support for the BQ among Québécois nationalists was seen as relatively secure. The Reform Party, which could no longer campaign on the evils of the deficit (since it had been substantially reduced in Liberal leader Jean Chrétien's first term), stressed the importance of tax cuts (Nevitte et al., 2000: 92). At the same time, Preston Manning, leader of the Reform Party, attempted to distance himself and his party from the racist elements within it, in order to make inroads into Ontario (Ellis and Archer, 1997). The Tories sought to return from the edge of
oblivion by focusing on the strength of their young leader, Jean Charest, who had particular appeal to the so-called "soft nationalists" in Quebec and those living in the Maritime provinces (Greenspon, 1997).

The NDP framed its campaign around the fact that it was the only left-leaning alternative in the election (Nevitte et al, 2000: 103). The New Democrats claimed that Canadians were worse off than before the Liberals came into office in 1993, as a result of cuts to unemployment insurance and health care (Whitehorn, 1997: 101). The NDP's election platform called for a reduction in unemployment, greater government spending on social programs, the elimination of child poverty, and the closing of tax loopholes that benefited corporations and the wealthy (Whitehorn. 1997: 101). This appeal was quite successful in the Maritimes, the region that was particularly hard hit by changes to unemployment insurance, but ineffective in bringing Western voters back to the party. The NDP was also unable to win any seats in Ontario.

The results of the 1997 election saw the Liberal Party return to power with a second majority of 155 seats (and 38% of the popular vote) in the 301-seat Parliament. The Reform Party finished with 60 seats (19% of the vote), the BQ with 44 (11%), the NDP with 21 (11%), and the Progressive Conservatives with 20 (19%).³
4.7 The Relationship Between Class and Voting in the 1984 and 1997 Federal Elections

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 look at the relationship between occupational class and party vote in the 1984 and 1997 federal elections. I divided occupational class into six categories, which tap the Weberian distinction between the market-based life chances of various occupational groups by placing occupations on a hierarchy based on income, education, and training (Crompton, 1993: 29–32). Unfortunately, this classification does not measure authority and control in the labour process, issues that are central to neo-Marxist class schemes. The CES does not permit the construction of neo-Marxist class categories.

Table 4.1: The relationship between occupational class and vote in the 1984 federal election. (% of occupational groups supporting each party)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>NDP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Exec.</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales/Clerical</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Labour</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labour</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 1984 CES)

3 There was one independent MP elected in Ontario.
Table 4.2: Relationship between occupational class and vote in the 1997 federal election (% of occupational groups supporting each party)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>NDP</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>BQ</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Exec</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales/Clerical</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Labour</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labour</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 1997 CES)

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 illustrate the elements of continuity and change that characterized the occupational class backgrounds of NDP voters. In both 1984 and 1997, a larger share of NDP supporters come from the professional class relative to their representation in the other parties. In 1984, over 21% of NDP voters were professionals compared to 17.8% of Liberals and 17.2% of Tories. This difference became more profound in 1997, when over 38% of NDP voters were professionals compared to an average of just over 26% in the other four parties. NDP voters are also underrepresented among the manager/executive class in both years. In 1984, 6.3% of NDP support came from managers and executives compared to 13.6% of Tory support and 12.8% of Liberal support. In 1997, the NDP received 9.2% of its support from managers and executives compared to an average of over 15% in the other four parties. The Tories maintained their attraction to members of the managerial/executive class in 1997.

Between 1984 and 1997, there appears to have been a shift in NDP support among manual workers. While in 1984 skilled and unskilled labourers were slightly overrepresented among NDP voters, by 1997 they were underrepresented. In 1997, the
share of NDP voters who were blue-collar workers was actually lower than in any of the other four parties. In 1997, the Reform Party had the greatest share of blue-collar workers among its supporters. To put it another way, about one in three Reform voters were blue-collar workers, compared to about one in five NDP voters.

Expressed within the traditional lexicon of class voting, from 1984 to 1997 the NDP went from a party with a plurality of blue-collar workers to one in which professionals made up the largest share of supporters. In 1984, about 42% of NDP voters were blue-collar workers, compared to about 40% in the other two parties. In 1997, about 19% of NDP voters were blue-collar workers, compared to an average of about 27% for the other four parties. Applying the Alford index to Canada shows that in 1984, about 8% of all blue-collar workers voted for the NDP while about 8% of white-collar workers voted for the NDP. This yields an Alford index of zero. In 1997 the Alford index declines to -7. Some of this decline can be attributed to the overall growth in white-collar employment relative to blue-collar employment from 1984 to 1997, as the share of the labour force working in traditional blue-collar industries (manufacturing, construction, transportation, and mining) fell from 30.4% in 1986 to 26.3% in 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2000).

To summarize, from 1984 to 1997 the NDP shifted from being a party of professionals, blue-collar workers, and, to a lesser degree farmers, to a party of professionals and sales and clerical workers. Some of those blue-collar workers and farmers seem to have switched to the Reform Party as it became a viable political party. The occupational class
profile of Liberals and Conservatives remained largely unchanged during the 14-year period studied. In general, the key distinguishing feature of Liberals versus Tories is that Tories receive a higher share of their support from the managerial class compared to the Liberals, whereas the Liberals have the support of a higher share of clerical and sales workers than the Tories.

The findings of the above cross-tabulations give the broad strokes of the occupational class–party relationship over a 14-year period. However, the inclusion of only two variables may confound the relationship between occupational class and vote. The following logistic regression analysis includes additional variables that have historically predicted voting behaviour with the goal of specifying the relationship between occupational class and voting.

4.8 Logistic Regression: The Predictors of Voting Choice

The key dependent variable in this analysis is whether the respondent voted for the NDP in the federal election that was held days or weeks before the time the respondent was contacted. The variable is coded "1" for those who said they voted for the NDP and "0" for those who said they voted for one of the other major parties. Those who did not vote were excluded from the analysis. Models predicting support for the other major parties were included for comparison.

I included a series of predictor variables that tap into the social characteristics that have historically influenced political behaviour. Occupational class is included as a series of
four dummy variables: professionals and managers, service workers, skilled labourers and unskilled labourers. The number of classes was reduced from six to four after a series of analyses showed the later scheme produced a more parsimonious result. A dummy variable for unemployed respondents was also added. Unionization was included as a predictor of NDP support since there is evidence that it is, in fact, a better predictor of NDP support than occupational class (Brym et al., 1989). In addition, some unions are formally affiliated with the NDP, which may increase the likelihood their union members will support the NDP (Archer, 1985). Furthermore, union membership may increase a sense of solidarity and class consciousness through union educational programs and association with other union members.

Educational attainment was included in the analysis because it is seen by Inglehart as a key predictor of progressive politics. Educational level was coded as a six-category variable. Gender was included as a dummy variable. A recent study found that Canadian women are more progressive on social issues and thus should be more likely than men to support the NDP (Everitt, 1998; Kopinak, 1987). The respondent's province of residence was included since political regionalism has become a truism of Canadian politics. For instance, the shifting of the people of Quebec almost en masse from the Liberals to the Conservatives in 1984 guaranteed the Mulroney majority. Also, the NDP has historically been strong in British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and, to a lesser extent, Manitoba and Ontario. They have had little presence in Alberta, Quebec, and the Maritimes, with the partial exception of Cape Breton Island.
Finally, variables tapping into the urban/rural, home owner/renter, and religious/non-religious divides were included. In the 1997 model, a variable measuring whether the respondent worked in the public or private sector was included, since recent evidence suggests that public sector workers are more progressive and more likely to identify with the NDP than private sector workers (Langford, 1996). Unfortunately, no question of this nature was included in the 1984 survey. The items on home ownership and the size of the respondent's place of residence were not included in the 1997 survey, and thus do not appear in the model. Nonetheless, there is enough replication in the two surveys to probe the central question of this chapter: Has the salience of class been declining as a predictor of party choice?

4.8.1 Results

Table 4.3 shows the results of the logistic regression equations predicting NDP support both in 1984 and 1997. The results echo those of the cross-tabulations above that suggest that the NDP is becoming increasingly a party of professionals. Perhaps more significant, however, is the fact that being a member of a union increases one's chance of voting NDP more than belonging to any particular occupational class. Also, the propensity of union members to support the NDP has remained strong over this 14-year period. This suggests that being in a union fosters a degree of class consciousness or political awareness that does not emerge directly from the experience of being in one occupational group or another.
Table 4.3: Effects of social characteristics on voting NDP in 1984 and 1997.  
(Source: 1984 and 1997 CES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Equation 1, 1984</th>
<th>Equation 2, 1997</th>
<th>Equation 3, 1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.123*</td>
<td>.322*</td>
<td>.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof./Manager</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>.458*</td>
<td>.448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled labour</td>
<td>.299</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled labour</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionized</td>
<td>.702*</td>
<td>.553*</td>
<td>.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.532*</td>
<td>1.035*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td>.016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>-2.14*</td>
<td>.611</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>-2.43*</td>
<td>1.090*</td>
<td>1.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>-7.68</td>
<td>1.080*</td>
<td>1.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>-1.01*</td>
<td>-1.316*</td>
<td>-1.330*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>-1.132</td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>-2.77</td>
<td>.874*</td>
<td>.862*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>1.04*</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>.464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>-1.17*</td>
<td>-.501</td>
<td>-.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>.368</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territories</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>.749*</td>
<td>.730*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.063*</td>
<td>-.006*</td>
<td>-.006*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>-.166</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home owner</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>-.398*</td>
<td>-.387*</td>
<td>-.4134*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>-.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public * Education</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>.2819 (Sig=.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female * union</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-.9156*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-2.002*</td>
<td>-4.072*</td>
<td>-3.424*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Slope significant at .05 level

The first column of table 4.3 shows the results of the logistic regression predicting the New Democratic vote in 1984. Logistic regression is used instead of standard regression when the dependent variable is dichotomous rather than a continuous variable (Kleinbaum, 1994). The Beta (B) coefficients represent the change in the odds of voting.
for the NDP for each unit change in the independent variable. For example, recall that education level has been coded into six categories, with one for those with less than a primary school education and six for those with graduate education. Therefore, in 1997, someone with a graduate education had a 2.09 times greater chance of voting NDP than someone with less than a primary school education. In the case of dummy variables, independent variables that are not measured on a numerical scale but are qualitative in nature, the coefficient represents the change in the odds of voting NDP with the presence of that variable versus the absence of it. For instance, the B value for members of union households is 0.702. This translates to an increase of 2.02 (the exponent of B (0.561), e to the x) in the odds of voting NDP compared to a member of a non-unionized household.

The series of dummy variables relating to occupational class and province of residence should all be read in comparison to a reference category. In equation 1, the reference group for occupational class is the professional/managerial variable and New Brunswick is the provincial reference group. In equations 2 and 3, unskilled labour is the occupational reference group and Ontario is the provincial reference group. The selection of reference groups aids in the interpretation of the regression coefficients. In the case of occupational class, the group with the lowest odds of voting for the NDP was chosen so that the remaining coefficients for occupational class would be positive and easy to compare. For the provincial variable, the province with approximately average odds of voting for the NDP was selected as the reference group so the coefficients for the other provinces can be interpreted as being above or below average.

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4 Since the model predicts an increase of 0.123 in the B value for each additional level of education, six levels higher would be 0.74 (6 * 0.123) which translates to an odds
In 1984, NDP voters were more likely to be unionized skilled and unskilled blue-collar workers than those who voted for the Liberals or Tories. The likelihood of voting NDP became higher as educational level increased and lower as income increased. NDPers were less likely to say they were somewhat or very religious than supporters of the two other main parties. Compared to the baseline of New Brunswickers, those living in Saskatchewan were more likely to support the NDP and those in Alberta, Newfoundland, P.E.I, and Quebec were less likely.

The unionization variable was easily the strongest predictor of NDP involvement, followed by living in Saskatchewan and having a higher level of education. By contrast, the strongest predictors of voting for the Liberals in 1984 were being somewhat or very religious (which reflects the historic link between Catholics and the Liberal Party (Johnston, 1985)), being older, and having a high income. Support for Brian Mulroney's Conservatives was highest amongst Albertans and Maritimers, home owners, and those living in rural areas.5

increase of 2.09, when B is transformed e to the x.
5 The results produced by the logistic regression for the Liberals and the Tories should be treated more cautiously than the NDP results. Since the dependent variable in the Liberal equation is coded "1" for those that voted Liberal and "0" for those that voted for the NDP or the Tories, the NDPers (on the left) and Tories (on the right) are lumped together, which likely dulls the contrast between Liberals and those voting for the each of the two other parties. This is not the case when we look at the equation with NDP coded "1" and the Liberals and Tories coded "0," since both the Liberals and Tories are traditionally to the Right of the NDP. Moreover, the ideological gap is greater between the NDP and the other two parties than between the Liberals and the Tories. This is evidenced by the 1984 CES in which the respondents were asked, for each of the parties, whether the party favoured the working class or the middle class, where "1" indicated the party favoured the working class and "7" indicated that the party favoured the middle-class. The average
The results of a parallel logistic regression predicting NDP support in 1997, reveal that the bulk of NDPers have shifted from being skilled blue-collar workers to being a member of the professional and managerial occupational class. Unionization remains as powerful a predictor of NDP support as it was in 1984. Having a higher income remains negatively associated with voting for the NDP, while education level is still strongly and positively related to the NDP vote.

From 1984 to 1997, the core support for the NDP shifted from the West of Canada to the East. Although the overall NDP tally in the 1997 election was a significant improvement over their disastrous showing in 1993, the breakthrough in the Atlantic provinces was particularly heartening to party organizers. The NDP was finally able to capitalize on its reputation as a representative of the underdog amongst those living in the "have-not" provinces. In a pre-election poll, a plurality of respondents in the Maritimes felt that the NDP was the party that could best represent their region's interests (Marzolini, 1997: 195). The leadership of Alexa McDonough, a celebrated child of Nova Scotia, no doubt helped the NDP's fortunes down East. The Reform Party, a voice of Western alienation, seemed to have stolen some of the NDP's traditional support in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

The overall conclusion that can be drawn is that, consistent with Inglehart, Lipset, and others, occupational class was a relatively weak predictor of voting preference in 1997. Knowing if someone was a member of a union or had a university degree gave a better rating for the NDP was 2.85, while it was an indistinguishable 4.84 and 4.82 for the Liberals and the Tories respectively.
idea of which party they voted for than knowing what they did for a living. However, it is crucial to note that the association between occupational class and voting behaviour was also quite weak in the 1984 election, and also in the 1968 election, for that matter. If class voting is defined as the share of blue-collar workers who support the Left party, then class voting for the NDP did decline between 1984 and 1997. While, in 1984, skilled workers were the occupational group most likely to support the NDP, in 1997 it was those in the professional and managerial class. This is the result of the common practice of the NDP which, in contrast with more traditional labour parties, has tried to appeal to sympathetic groups, regardless of their class background.

The finding that NDP support increases with education is also consistent with Inglehart's thesis. The premise behind this is that education fosters greater liberalism, either through the content of the education itself or as a proxy for childhood affluence (Inglehart, 1997: 134). However, a closer look shows that the relationship between education and an NDP vote holds only for those working in the public sector (see Figure 4.1). The inference that can be drawn is that the nature and content of the education is as important as the number of years of education. The types of jobs that are concentrated in the public sector — teachers, nurses, social workers — requires the type of education that is congruous with the traditional NDP focus on the sanctity of social programs.6 By contrast, higher

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6 The difference in outlook between those in the public and private sector may be generated through training and work roles. In an article on the ideological cleavage between those in the public and those in the private sector, Langford wrote that, "cultural, human, and social specialists perform roles which are not very instrumental to profit maximization and are thus distinctive in political orientation from managers/technicians who have instrumental roles in the profit system" (Langford, 1996). Moreover, those working in the public sector may feel that their jobs are threatened in the neo-conservative zeal to reduce government debt and the perception of inefficiency in the
education that ultimately leads to private sector employment does not imbue NDP–style values in people.

**Figure 4.1: Education of NDPers in the private and public sector**

![Education of NDPers in the private and public sector](image)

Source: 1997 CES

Another notable interaction indicates that the increase in the odds in voting NDP as a result of being a union member operates for men and not for women. The inclusion of the gender * union interaction variable siphons the independent effects from the union variable and streams them into male union members. This may indicate that there is a union culture or community that fosters NDP allegiance in men but not in women.
My findings echo those of Brym et al. (1989), who argue that the context in which one lives and works is more important in configuring one's political ideology than the occupation itself. Based on their analysis of the 1968 federal election, they found that those people living in a province with a high level of unionization were more likely to vote for the NDP, whether or not they themselves were union members. Although I did not find this to be the case in 1984 or 1997. I did find that being a union member or part of a household that included a union member, was a strong predictor of voting NDP in 1984 and 1997. Therefore, it is not primarily the daily experience of work itself, be it alienating or creative, that shapes one's political outlook. Rather, it appears that there is something in the nature of union culture absorbed through union meetings, educational programs, and union newsletters and magazines, that increases the propensity of union members to vote NDP.

NDP support varies significantly by province, independent of the class composition of the province. For instance, support for the NDP is traditionally higher in Saskatchewan and British Columbia than it is in Alberta and Manitoba. This could be because of the presence of NDP government at the provincial level, which creates a certain level of awareness of the NDP as a viable option. For instance, Saskatchewan under the leadership of the legendary figure Tommy Douglas saw the first election of a CCF government in Canada and the first social democratic government in North America, and humanities, social sciences, arts, and education held attitudes to the left of professors in the natural sciences, business, and engineering.
was the first province to introduce socialized medicine. Socialized medicine, later adopted at the federal level, has become a source of pride for Canadians.7

In sum, I found that occupational class is a relatively weak predictor of party choice in Canada in both 1984 and 1997. Looking at the NDP in particular, we see that it has increasingly become a party of professionals and white-collar workers. This finding supports Inglehart’s claim on the changing electoral base of Left parties when influenced by the postmaterialist shift. I argue, however, that the NDP has had a significant white-collar contingent since its inception in 1961. Also, as I argued in Chapter 3, the NDP has been able to adopt planks of the postmaterialist agenda without alienating much of its traditional blue-collar base.

The most significant finding of this chapter is that being in a union and living in a province that has a tradition of supporting the NDP, along with having achieved a higher educational level, were the strongest predictors of voting for the NDP in both 1984 and 1997. Both of those variables go beyond individual-level attributes and tap into the context in which people live their lives. Being a union member and living in a pro-NDP province may foster an awareness of, and sympathy for, the NDP that transcends other personal socio-demographic characteristics.

7 The presence of provincial NDP governments does not always increase the federal NDP’s popularity in that province. For instance, the NDP did particularly poorly in Ontario in the 1993 federal election, in part, because of the widespread disdain for Bob Rae’s government.
4.9 Conclusion

One flaw common to all election studies that use survey data to examine the social bases of politics is that they begin with the premise that, in theory, there is an even likelihood of voting for each of the parties. Although these studies provide insights into the values and beliefs of the electorate and how these relate to party choice, they are narrow cross-sectional snapshots. Each election, however, is shaped by political and economic developments across time and the distribution of power in society. In this context we see that, for instance, the ability of Left parties in Canada to challenge elections has often been hampered by biased media coverage. The main reason for the distorted media coverage is the fact that media ownership in Canada has been historically under oligopoly control by a small number of large companies (Winter, 1997). Examples of this bias can be found in Canadian electoral history. In the prelude to the CCF victory in the Saskatchewan provincial election in 1944, the three major dailies, all of which were Liberal-owned, refused to print the results of Gallup polls that predicted a CCF victory (Bradley, 1985: 79). Bradley reports that these newspapers claimed that "their own polls, described as 'the consensus of opinion of a number of electors', showed the Liberals ahead and certain to form the next government" (Bradley, 1985: 79). In the following year, a powerful fear-mongering campaign accompanied the CCF's 1945 federal election campaign. The country was exposed to massive amounts of anti-CCF propaganda and advertising. According to Bradley,

this propaganda campaign was backed by major Canadian corporations, especially life insurance companies, and cost much more than CCF campaign expenditures.

Life insurance salesmen were instructed to tell policy-holders that their policies
would be worthless under a CCF government. Company presidents called workers together and said that their firms would be forced out of business by the CCF and workers would become unemployed" (Bradley, 1985, 79).

Examples of this media bias can be seen long after the politically charged 1940s. In the 1965 federal election, an NDP television commercial attacking misleading advertising was banned by the CTV network, owned by John Bassett, a prominent Conservative (Morton, 1986: 62). Right-wing media heads were not required in order for anti-NDP views to crowd out those of NDP supporters. The simple fact is that advertising is expensive, and NDPers and groups sympathetic to their cause have less to spend on it than the parties that receive large amounts of corporate funding. In a study tracking voters' attitudes in the 1988 "Free Trade Election," Johnston et al. (1992) found that pro-free trade, third-party advertising swayed some previously wary voters into supporting free trade and the Conservatives (Johnston et al., 1992). On the last full circulation day before the election, pro-FTA groups placed 27 pages of advertisements in the 14 newspapers that they studied, almost two full pages per paper (Johnston et al., 1992: 129).

More recently, Robert Andersen (1999) found media bias that acted against the NDP on several fronts during the 1997 federal election campaign (Andersen, 1999). Andersen's study of 14 Canadian media organizations, both television and newspapers, found that the media played a significant role in agenda setting during the campaign. The media seized upon the national unity issue even though, according to data from the CES, it was of little
interest to Canadians. On the other hand, issues that voters judged as important — unemployment and social programs — received only token mention in the media. As it happens, these were key planks in the NDP platform. Andersen also found that the NDP received less media attention than the other parties. He wrote that,

"one could argue that the lack of attention given to the NDP simply reflects their low popularity and slim chance of victory. In other words it was the victim of horse-race journalism. This argument would make some sense if the PC Party — a party that held only two seats heading into the election — had not been given so much attention. Furthermore, since the NDP's issues were given less attention than others, it is more sensible to argue that the media did not like the message of the NDP, and tried to ignore it accordingly (Andersen, 1999: 21–22).

The electoral fortunes of the CCF and NDP have suffered due to the hostility of the capitalist media. It is plausible to argue that to the extent that support for the CCF–NDP was suppressed, its electoral outcomes were further damaged by the public perception that they had little chance of electoral success. However, it is impossible to quantify the effects of this bias. Although it does not necessarily follow that the level of class voting in Canada has been underestimated, we can say that the support for left parties in Canada has been systematically distorted in a way that was not the case for the other two major parties.

Without fully embracing the much-maligned "false consciousness" position, support for the NDP, and the CCF before it, suffers because, though moderate, the CCF–NDP
platform is inconsistent with the dominant ideology in Canada (Marchak, 1988; Allahar and Cote, 1998: 1–22). I have already argued that the NDP message is marginalized by the Canadian media. It is similarly marginalized by the other conduits of the dominant ideology including schools, corporation, and the state.

Throughout the period of my analysis, 1984–1997, the free market ideology has held a dominant position in Canadian political discourse. This ideology states that corporations and markets are the forces that drive society forward and that government interference in the economy is seen as encumbering the activity of the market. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, this position has become naturalized to the extent that any opposition to it is has come to be seen as opposing the state of nature. For instance, the FTA and North American Free Traded Agreement (NAFTA) were rationalized using the free market ideology, although at a gut level the majority of Canadians were opposed to them, citing concerns that they would lead to a weakening of social programs and a drop in wages, and would threaten cultural industries (Richardson, 1992). Free trade passed because of the support of Canada's concentrated and powerful capitalist class and the relative weakness and decentralization of the Canadian labour movement.

More recently, the globalization worldview has argued that because capitalism and markets are now global, national governments cannot, or should not, organize markets or capital flows (McQuaig, 1998; Dobbin, 1998; J. Laxer, 1998). The New Democrats, which still advocates a significant role for the government in job creation, heath care, environmental protection and so forth, are depicted as quixotically swimming against the
stream of progress. Again, although the effects of the dominant ideology's
discouragement of Left voting are difficult to quantify, they are no less real.

To conclude, if class voting is defined as the share of working-class voters supporting the
NDP minus the share of middle-class voters supporting the NDP, then class voting did
decline in Canada from 1984 to 1997. This result is consistent with Inglehart's position
that contemporary politics is defined more by value conflict than by class conflict. On
the other hand, if one broadens the definition to take into account the historic relationship
between union members and Left parties, then the degree of class politics has been
consistent during this period. The NDP has lost some unskilled, non-unionized members
of the traditional male working class and, at the same time, solidified its support among
certain sectors of the highly educated professional class. It is also not the case that the
main reason for the NDP's decline was a fall in the numbers of the population working in
traditional blue-collar jobs, since the proportion of the workforce in traditional blue-collar
jobs is shrinking much more slowly than the decline in support for the NDP. I have also
suggested that there are certain features of capitalist democracies that favour Centre and
Right parties over Left parties. These biases tend to be more pronounced in countries like
Canada, where the labour movement is weak relative to that in most European countries.

To sum up thus far, I find little support for the postmaterialist thesis in Canada.
Postmaterialism has had a limited impact on Canadian politics. Canadians have remained
overwhelmingly concerned with materialist issues. Furthermore, when asked about
postmaterialist issues, they have become less, rather than more, sympathetic toward them
over the past 15 years. Regarding party politics, postmaterialism did not cause the split in the NDP predicted by Inglehart's theory. Although class voting in Canada has declined slightly, this decline cannot account for the dramatic drop in NDP support. Overall, the analysis of the values and attitudes of the Canadian electorate, as well as individual-level class and socio-demographic data, offer few insights into the key empirical question running through this dissertation: Why did support for the federal NDP drop dramatically from the 1980s to the 1990s?

In Chapters 5 and 6, I focus more closely on how the NDP is at a disadvantage relative to the other major parties, and how electoral success results from a concerted attempt to overcome this disadvantage. In so doing, I will move beyond the study of election surveys to look at variables that structure electoral contests. In particular, I borrow from the political economy perspective to examine how the distribution of power in society shapes Canadian politics. In Chapter 5, I look at the role of campaign spending and media coverage in the electoral outcomes of two NDP federal election campaigns. In Chapter 6, I broaden the scope of my explanation by looking at how shifts in capitalist accumulation have increased the power of the capitalist class relative to the working class, and elevated the neo-liberal ideology to hegemonic status. In this ideological context, the NDP has had increasing difficulty getting its message across.
Chapter 5
Success and Failure: Power and Resource Mobilization in NDP Electoral Campaigns

In Chapter 4, I suggested that election surveys obviate analysis of the larger structures that affect electoral outcomes. The effects of the media and other conduits of neo-liberal ideology, and the political mobilization that takes place during campaigns, are largely missed. By comparing the success of the NDP in Nova Scotia in 1997 to the failure of the NDP's 1988 campaign in Quebec, I will highlight the impact that the distribution of power in society, in general, and the political mobilization that takes place during campaigns, in particular, have on electoral outcomes.

This chapter will analyze the causes of the divergent outcomes in these two provinces. The survey tradition would likely explain the differences either as a result of the fit between the attitudes and values of the Maritime or Quebec electorates and those of the NDP, or because the class structure in the Maritimes was conducive to NDP support where it was not in Quebec. Put differently, the tendency in election studies is to look for the association between the values, beliefs, and ideologies of individuals and those of political parties. Where there is a match between people's views and particular policy platforms, parties are seen as likely to garner support. Therefore, the NDP's failure in Quebec in 1988 might be because the NDP's program did not resonate among Quebeckers. Conversely, this mode of analysis might explain the NDP's Nova Scotia breakthrough as being a result of its platform meshing with the views of a plurality of the electorate.
What is missing from this perspective is an analysis of the processes that mobilize the latent support of the voters. Rather than the voter simply choosing the party that matches his or her worldview, political parties help to create the group consciousness of voters (Veugelers, 1999: 9). In addition, I will argue that the NDP is disadvantaged in the mobilization process, due to certain structural features of Canadian capitalism. The evidence presented in this chapter makes the case that parties need to mobilize voters in order to be successful. It is not enough to produce a platform that may, in principle, resonate with the values or ideology of a significant share of the population. The trick is to turn this latent, potential support into votes on election day. This partisan mobilization process is ongoing, but it greatly intensifies during election campaigns.

This reasoning derives from resource mobilization theory, first proposed by McCarthy and Zald (1973), which sought to break from the existing, grievance-based explanations of social movements, such as relative deprivation theory. For advocates of resource mobilization theory, the presence of aggrieved groups is not enough to form an active social movement. Rather, a social movement relies on access to resources, including mobilizing structures, to become successful. Mobilizing structures have been defined as "those collective vehicles, formal as well as informal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, Zald, 1996: 3). The NDP has always maintained that it remains, to a certain degree, a social movement when compared, for instance, to the institutionalized Liberal Party, which is often referred to as the "natural governing party." The NDP has, therefore, traditionally attempted to create a competitive
advantage in terms of its organizational ability, its ability to reach people, and to communicate its message.

The NDP offered policy alternatives in the 1997 election campaign. It opposed the prevailing political wisdom that stressed deficit reduction and tax cuts. However, it was necessary for the NDP to get its message out. Its platform had the potential to resonate among Maritimers who were disappointed with their social and economic possibilities. The importance of the NDP spreading its ideas is particularly important given that the tendency of people to explain their situation as a function of individual deficiencies rather than features of the system is more likely to occur under conditions of social isolation rather than organization. Lacking the information and perspective that others afford, isolated individuals would seem especially likely to explain their troubles on the basis of personal rather than system attributes (McAdam et al., 1996: 9).

In other words, an active political campaign was necessary to channel the frustration of a portion of the Nova Scotia population into concerted action in the form of NDP support.

Pichardo (1988) argues that early versions of Resource Mobilization Theory focused on the internal strength of social movements in explaining their success and failure, and, therefore, downplay the importance of the political environment as an explanation for the outcome of political struggles. Later studies in the field of social movements recognized the vital role that political opportunity structures play in explaining the success and failure of movements. In a 1977 study, Jenkins and Perrow argue that "the rise and dramatic success of farm workers insurgents...can be best explained by changes in the
political environment the movement confronted, rather than by the internal characteristics of the movement organization and the social base on which it drew" (cited in Picardo, 1988: 106). Since opportunity structures, including elite divisions, ideological atmosphere, and the phase of the "protest cycle" are now seen as key variables (McAdam et al., 1996: 17), they will be examined in an effort to better understand the success and failure of the NDP.

5.1 A Comparison of the Ideologies of Nova Scotians and Quebeckers

Little difference can be seen between the political ideologies of Quebeckers in 1988 and Nova Scotians in 1997 and those of other Canadians. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 compare the political views of Quebeckers in 1988 and Nova Scotians in 1997 with those of other Canadians. Few differences can be found between residents of those provinces and those living in the rest of Canada. For example, Nova Scotians score slightly lower than the national average on my postmaterialism/tolerance scale, slightly higher on their attitudes towards unions and the power that unions should have, and almost right on the average about the role of big business in society. However, none of the differences was statistically significant. Quebeckers are slightly to the Left on traditional materialist issues. On postmaterialist issues, they are relatively favourable to feminists and gays and lesbians, but relatively unfavourable toward Aboriginal Canadians and ethnic minorities. Again, these differences were not statistically significant.
Table 5.1: Political views of Quebeckers vs. those in the rest of Canada 1988
(0 indicates "really dislike" and 100 "really like")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Issue</th>
<th>Quebeckers</th>
<th>Canadian Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward the poor</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward ethnic minorities</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward Native peoples</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>67.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward feminist groups</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward labour unions</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 1988 CES)

Table 5.2: Political views of Nova Scotians vs. those of the rest of Canada 1997
(0 indicates "really dislike" and 100 "really like")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Issue</th>
<th>Nova Scotians</th>
<th>Canadian Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward big business (neg.)</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward labour unions</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward racial minorities</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward feminists</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings toward gays and lesbians</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 1997 CES)

That there is little to distinguish between the ideological makeup of various regions, despite radically different electoral outcomes, has led some commentators to conclude that Canadian elections are determined by short-term issues and politicians' personalities (e.g., Clarke et al., 1996). In this chapter, I will suggest that there are more enduring reasons for different electoral outcomes in the regions. The distribution of power and the degree of political mobilization can help explain electoral outcomes in Nova Scotia and Quebec, for example. Specifically, I will:

(a) justify the choice of Quebec and Nova Scotia as appropriate examples to argue my case by drawing on the literature of comparative/historical sociology;

(b) look at the significance of the popularity of NDP leader Alexa McDonough as a cause of the NDP's heightened exposure in Nova Scotia. In contrast, I will show how Ed Broadbent's low profile in Quebec hurt the NDP campaign in that province;
(c) analyze the impact that campaign spending levels had on the mobilization of voters;
(d) evaluate the coverage of the NDP in the major newspapers in Nova Scotia in 1997 and compare that with the type of newspaper coverage the NDP received in Quebec in 1988 to see if the media's treatment of the NDP is associated with its success or failure;
(e) look at the NDP's campaign strategy in Quebec and Nova Scotia for additional clues as to why the former failed and the latter succeeded.

5.2 Description of Cases

5.2.1 Quebec 1988

Although popularity in Quebec was seen as vital to the NDP's goal of national power, there were serious obstacles before them. Historically, the CCF-NDP was seen as atheistic, materialistic, and anti-clerical in its orientation, characteristics that were not popular in a province in which the Catholic Church held tremendous sway (Whitehorn, 1992: 3). Furthermore, since the NDP was almost exclusively Anglo in its membership, it seemed alien to most Quebeckers (Whitehorn, 1992: 3). Those Quebeckers who considered themselves on the left might still not support the CCF-NDP since "Quebec's socialism has little in common with the NDP's populist Fabian tradition." (Morton, 1986: 57).

One of the reasons for the NDP's creation was to make a better start in Quebec (Whitehorn, 1992: 3). An appreciation of Quebec as one of the "nations" of Canada was enshrined in the initial NDP programme. However, there was soon to be tension between the federal NDP and the Quebec wing as the Quebec NDP began to take a position on
Quebec independence that deviated from the stance of the federal NDP. In the early 1970s the Quebec NDP published a "mini-programme" that was dominated by nationalist content and claimed, for instance, that when Quebec decided on independence, NDPers in Ottawa would be their most valuable spokespeople (Morton, 1986: 138). David Lewis, leader of the federal NDP, realizing that the views of the Quebec NDP would not be popular in the rest of Canada, announced his "formal repudiation" of the Quebec programme (Morton, 1986: 138). On a more general level, the federal position on the importance of a strong central government, needed to implement programs like Medicare, was in conflict with Quebec's insistence on provincial autonomy. This basic conflict would show itself again during the 1988 election campaign.

NDP strategists knew that a breakthrough in Quebec was necessary for the party to take a qualitative leap forward in terms of electoral success (Whitehorn, 1992: 213). Such a leap seemed possible leading up to the 1988 election with the Liberals in disarray, holding just 10 more seats than the NDP, and the volatile free trade issue on the agenda. Based on the positive results of opinion polls, there was a glimmer of hope within the party that the NDP just might win the election, or, at least, become the official opposition (Whitehorn 1992: 213). Unfortunately, neither the NDP nor the CCF before them had won a seat in Quebec. The CCF had done terribly in Quebec, averaging just 1.5% of the vote (Whitehorn, 1992: 3). Although the NDP had still not won a seat in Quebec, its support had been around 9% during the past two elections, a significant improvement from the days of the CCF (Whitehorn, 1992: 264). The 14% of votes that the party received in 1988 was its highest result, but far short of expectations.
5.2.2 Nova Scotia in 1997

The CCF and NDP’s support in Nova Scotia had hovered around the 10% mark between the 1940 and 1993 elections (Whitehorn: 1992: 264). Peak support came in 1980, with about 20% of the vote. Throughout its history, the CCF—NDP had held three seats in the province of Nova Scotia. The weakness of the Left historically has been explained by the distribution of power in that province which has a strong, united capitalist class and a weak disorganized working class (Brym, 1979). In the previous, 1993 election, the NDP received only 7% of the vote in Nova Scotia (Clarke et al., 1996: 1990). Nonetheless, with their leader, Alexa McDonough, coming from Nova Scotia, NDP strategists felt that they could do well in that province in 1997 (Whitehorn, 1997: 97). The NDP achieved unprecedented success in the Maritimes in general and Nova Scotia in particular in the 1997 federal election. In Nova Scotia, the party received over 30% of the popular vote (compared to 11% in the country as a whole) and six out of 11 seats (Frizzell and Pammett, 1997: 253). The NDP’s share of the vote in the remaining Maritime provinces was substantially higher than the Canadian average, and sufficiently concentrated to give them two seats in New Brunswick. They just missed winning a seat in Newfoundland.

5.2.3 Why Quebec and Nova Scotia?

In choosing cases, one must select instances in which some elements vary while others remain constant (Ragin, 1994: 98). According to Ragin,

a common strategy is to categorize cases according to their different outcomes.

The goal of the research in this case is to unravel the causal conditions that
generate different outcomes. If different causes can be matched to the different outcomes, then the research confirms the investigators' understanding of the factors that distinguish these cases (Ragin, 1994: 109).

In this case, I have selected two provinces in Canada in which the NDP tailored its program to suit the perceived interests of the region in order to make a breakthrough in terms of electoral success. Although the degree of NDP success in the Maritimes in 1997 was far greater than that of Quebec in 1988, the prospects at the outset of the election were largely similar. Both were areas targeted by the NDP leadership for potential breakthroughs: Quebec because of the presence of an established social democratic movement at the provincial level embodied in the Parti Québécois (PQ) as well as a relatively powerful union movement, and the Maritimes because it was a "have-not" region where the NDP's left-wing platform could be appealing. The NDP thought it could capitalize on resentment toward the neo-liberal turn taken by the federal Liberal Party, especially its changes to Employment Insurance. However, the two campaigns differed in the extent to which they were able to mobilize the electorate. These differences, I will argue, resulted in the NDP's success in Nova Scotia and its failure in Quebec. Table 5.3 shows the relevant differences between the two cases.
Table 5.3: A Schematic comparison of the NDP’s campaigns in Quebec in 1988 and Nova Scotia in 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local Campaign</th>
<th>National Campaign</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quebec 1988</td>
<td>Lackluster, low level of campaign spending, weak NDP institutional framework</td>
<td>Mediocre; NDP neither gained nor lost support during campaign</td>
<td>Sympathetic to Quebec independence; tried to tap into social democratic roots in Quebec</td>
<td>Coverage ranged from neutral to hostile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia 1997</td>
<td>High profile, high level of spending in many ridings, moderately well-developed NDP institutional framework</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>Tapped into the resentment toward Liberal cuts to EI and other programs</td>
<td>Moderately positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The appropriate selection of cases is crucial since, unlike large-scale sample surveys which tend to be large enough to capture the range of variation in the variables relevant to the population of interest, with only two cases there is no margin of error for post-hoc correction. It is my contention that although Quebec and Nova Scotia are quite different in terms of size, rural–urban composition, language and culture, there are enough similarities in the key variables to support the argument that follows.
5.3 Getting Out the Message

5.3.1 Alexa McDonough and the NDP's High Exposure in Nova Scotia

The campaign in Nova Scotia was particularly strong because of NDP leader Alexa McDonough's reputation in the province as an experienced and well-respected political figure. McDonough had been leader of the Nova Scotia NDP. She was the daughter of Lloyd Shaw, a prominent brick manufacturer and a staunch CCF and NDP supporter (Smith, 1992: 224). This meant that the NDP had a higher base level of awareness among the electorate. Such an awareness is a prerequisite to voter support.

Nova Scotia voters had far more knowledge about Alexa McDonough than people in any other region in Canada. According to Table 5.2, almost 29% of Nova Scotians knew "a lot" about the leader of the NDP and an additional 54% said that they knew "a little." The comparable numbers for voters not living in the Maritime provinces were only about 4% who knew "a lot" and about 34% who knew "a little" about her. McDonough's popularity in Nova Scotia had only a slight spillover effect in the rest of the Maritime region. People living in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were slightly more aware of her than those in the rest of Canada, but the results in Newfoundland were very close to the Canadian average.

Knowledge of McDonough was likely high because the NDP poured a disproportionate amount of its resources into Nova Scotia (Whitehorn, 1997: 98). In addition, since
McDonough's riding was in Halifax, the NDP leader spent a large share of her time in Nova Scotia campaigning for her own seat. (Whitehorn, 1997: 100).

| Table 5.4: Voters' knowledge of Alexa McDonough by Maritime province (%) |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|
|                | NS  | NB  | PEI | NF  | Rest of Canada |
| A lot          | 28.7| 8.3 | 8.9 | 3.0 | 3.5            |
| A little       | 53.5| 37.0| 47.5| 36.4| 34.3           |
| Nothing        | 16.8| 52.8| 43.6| 59.6| 61.1           |
| D.K./Refused   | 1.0 | 1.9 | 0   | 1.0 | 1.3            |
| Total          | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100            |

(Source: 1997 CES)

By way of comparison, we can look at the awareness of the other federal leaders by Nova Scotians shown in Table 5.5. The only leader that compares to Alexa McDonough is Jean Chrétien, who had been the Prime Minister for the previous three and a half years, and a Liberal cabinet minister off and on since the 1960s. Slightly more people knew "a lot" about McDonough than about Chrétien, but more people knew "nothing at all" about McDonough than about Chrétien. About three times more Nova Scotians knew "a lot" about McDonough compared to those that knew "a lot" about either Preston Manning or Jean Charest.†
Table 5.5: Nova Scotians' knowledge of federal party leaders running in English Canada (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chrétien</th>
<th>Charest</th>
<th>Manning</th>
<th>McDonough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.K.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 1997 CES)

5.3.2 Ed Broadbent and the Anonymity of the NDP in Quebec

During the mid-eighties, the NDP's fortunes were riding high. Several polls found the NDP to be the first choice of a plurality of voters, including those living in Quebec (cited in Whitehorn, 1993: 219). Prior to the election, party leaders knew that success in Quebec, which held about one-third of the seats in Parliament, would be key to raising up the NDP from its traditional third-place finish in federal elections. For that reason, the NDP held its biennial convention in Montreal, the first time an NDP convention had been held in Quebec (Whitehorn, 1992: 212). However, despite the fact that the New Democrats made a concerted attempt in Quebec to raise awareness about their party and leader, Ed Broadbent, during the 1988 federal election campaign, people living in Quebec had less knowledge about Broadbent than people in any other province in Canada.

The NDP felt that their leader was the key to victory. The campaign rationale produced by the Strategy and Election Planning Committee working group reads: "Our greatest asset is Ed Broadbent, still the most popular leader in Canada" (cited in Fraser, 1989:

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1 Nova Scotians were not asked about Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe since the BQ did not run candidates in Nova Scotia.
Therefore, it must be seen as a failure of the NDP strategy in Quebec that only 15% of Quebeckers knew "quite a lot" about Broadbent, who had been NDP leader since 1975, compared to an average of 25% in the rest of Canada.

The discussion of Nova Scotia above suggests that the home province of the NDP leader can benefit electorally because of the increased awareness that the leader brings. Following this logic, the NDP might have fared better in Quebec had they chosen a leader from that province. Of course, since each party can have only one leader the NDP would have risked losses in other parts of the country if it had decided to drop Broadbent.

5.4 The Impact of Campaign Spending

An analysis of campaign spending provides insights into the lack of recognition of the NDP leader in Quebec compared to Nova Scotia. It is a truism of electoral politics that money is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to guarantee election-day success, particularly since the proliferation of political advertising in the mass media (Nevitte et al., 2000: 24; Fletcher, 1991). Campaign spending is the key to voter mobilization. Few candidates win their seats without a significant level of campaign spending, and it is extremely rare for a candidate to be elected without spending at least 60% of the allowable limit (Denis, 1994: 206). (The allowable spending limit for a riding is determined by the number of people living in that riding.) Money is needed to rent a campaign office, install telephones, produce campaign literature, buy lawn signs and so forth. The general purpose of the local campaign is to raise awareness of the candidate through advertisement in the mass media, the distribution of campaign literature, and
door-to-door canvassing. The historic strategy of NDP campaigns, in particular, is to identify supporters painstakingly by combing the riding during the campaign period and "bringing out the vote" on election day (Morley, 1984:90). New Democratic strategists have long understood the process of transforming latent support into a vote on election day (Whitehorn, 1992). The NDP tries to enlist large numbers of partisan volunteers to compensate for its lack of funds.

Sayers (1999) illustrates the nature and importance of riding-level politics. In a book that details constituency-level campaigns in seven BC ridings during the 1988 federal election campaign, he notes that the relationship between the characteristics of riding-level contests and a candidate's success and failure has been under-studied (Sayers, 1999: 13). Looking at the successful campaign of the NDP's Svend Robinson in suburban Vancouver, Sayers reported that his campaign had all of the winning elements: media attention, adequate funding, and a large contingent of volunteers (Sayers, 1999: 144). Robinson's campaign had over 500 local riding association members or NDP sympathizers working for his election. Due to his popularity in the peace, environmental, and gay and lesbian movements, Robinson attracted workers from outside his riding. By the end of the campaign period, his team had given him blanket coverage in the area through door-to-door canvassing, phone canvassing for apartment residents, and the "blitzing" of seniors' homes (Sayers: 1999: 148). According to Sayers, "polls where there were many undecided voters received the greatest attention and were subjected to the most aggressive campaigning" (Sayers, 1999: 149).
Given the importance of money to electoral success, the NDP was at a significant disadvantage in 1997 relative to the Liberals and Tories. The Liberals spent $11.2 million, the Progressive Conservatives $10.3 million, and the NDP $5.9 million. The NDP figure was lower than their expenses in 1993 by about $1.5 million (Whitehorn, 1997: 94). Although the Reform Party spent less than the NDP, $4.9 million, it did not run candidates in each of the 301 ridings but focused on their areas of regional strength (e.g., Alberta and BC).

The lower level of funding for the NDP compared to the Liberals and Tories may have been a symptom of their unpopularity during the 1990s. However, if that were the case, then the Conservatives, with only two seats going into the 1997 election, would not have been able to muster the funds that they did. Rather, the fact that the NDP receives its funds largely from individual donors and, to a lesser degree, trade unions, explains the funding deficit. The Liberals and Tories received the bulk of their funding from business and other commercial organizations. Of the more than $17 million in contributions to the Liberal Party, over $11 million was from business. Of the almost $11 million received by the Progressive Conservatives, about $6.5 million came from business. Further disadvantaging the NDP's financial fortunes in the 1997 campaign was the fact that it had difficulty securing bank loans although, according to Whitehorn, the NDP had "a stellar record of paying off its previous election debts" (Whitehorn: 1997, 108). It is possible that institutional animus to the NDP's program influenced the banks' decisions.

2 Derived from the "Contributions and Expenses" section of the Elections Canada website (www.elections.ca/ecandidates/191/table07.html).
Given its lack of funds, the NDP had to be judicious in targeting regions and ridings within regions for aggressive campaigning. It was decided before the election that the Atlantic region, and Nova Scotia in particular, would be one of the beneficiaries of NDP finances (Whitehorn, 1997). The NDP decided to target Quebec in the 1988 election but it was unable to devote sufficient funds to run credible campaigns in a significant share of Quebec ridings.

5.4.1 Bulging Wallets in Nova Scotia

The importance of political mobilization to campaign success can be evaluated by comparing the level of campaign spending in ridings in which the NDP was successful to ridings where it was unsuccessful. My hypothesis is that the NDP will be successful in the ridings in which it spends as much as, or more than, its competitors. The data that will be used to support this hypothesis were derived from reports gathered by Elections Canada (1997) for each candidate running in each of the 301 ridings. These reports detail the sources of campaign contributions and give an itemized account of campaign spending. Spending is divided into advertising (including television and radio), salaries, office and other expenses. The report also lists the level of campaign spending as a percentage of the spending limit. This number is more telling than the raw expenditure, since the spending limit depends on the size of the riding.

In general, campaign spending in Nova Scotia paid off for the NDP. In the six seats it won, the NDP spent between 60 and 99% of its campaign spending limit. Conversely, it spent less than 20% of the limit in each of the ridings in which it did not win (an average of about 10%). The two winning ridings in which the NDP candidate spent less than
85% of the limit, Bras d'Or–Cape Breton and Sackville–Eastern Shore were tight, three-way races in which the third-place finisher received at least 20% of the vote.

Figure 5.1 demonstrates that the share of allowable riding-level campaign spending was an extremely powerful predictor of the share of the vote that the NDP received in that riding. In each riding that ran a serious campaign (i.e. spent at least 60% of the allowable spending limit) the NDP was successful.

**Figure 5.1: NDP vote by percentage of campaign spending Nova Scotia, 1997**

![Graph showing NDP vote by percentage of campaign spending Nova Scotia, 1997](image)

Before concluding that the NDP's success in Nova Scotia was primarily due to political mobilization during the campaign period, it is crucial to determine if there is a causal relationship between spending and success. It could be that NDP campaign strategists
targeted particular ridings where they felt the NDP might be successful, and then decided to devote significant funds to those ridings. In this latter case the role of campaign spending could be seen as an intervening variable between the evaluation of a riding's potential and the level of success there on election day. I believe that campaign spending was an intervening variable since campaign organizers indicated prior to the election that Nova Scotia was an area that the NDP could win seats. To that end, the NDP did advance polling in several Nova Scotia ridings and elsewhere in the Maritimes. However, the data gathered by NDP strategists is imperfect and cannot always lead to accurate predictions about electoral outcomes. There are other factors that operate during election campaigns that affect these outcomes. I believe that election spending is just one of those factors.

Traditionally, the NDP targets the ridings in which it will run hard based on the results of a preliminary analysis of the riding characteristics. Ridings are selected using voting spreads from past elections, riding histories, candidate qualities, and the popularity of the incumbent. Since the NDP regarded its leader's home province as a priority, the party had been polling in Nova Scotia during the pre-election period.

However, given the fact that the NDP had had little previous success in Nova Scotia, the results of an analysis could offer few clues regarding which ridings had a good chance of electing an NDP candidate. Not only had the NDP not held a seat in Nova Scotia since

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³ This information is from personal communication (October 19, 1999) with Jim Matsui of Comquest Research, the party's pollster for the 1997 election.

⁴ This information is from personal communication (October 19, 1999) with Jim Matsui of Comquest Research, the party's pollster for the 1997 election.
In the mid-1970s, the party had not come close to winning a seat in the previous elections leading up to 1997. In the 1993 federal election, the NDP vote averaged 6.6% in Nova Scotia (the standard deviation of the vote was 2.6%). It received a low of 3.9% in the riding of Cape Breton Highlands-Canso and a high of 13.4% in the Halifax riding. In 1988, the year in which the NDP won a record number of seats nationally, it averaged only 11% of the vote in Nova Scotia (standard deviation, 4.0%). Again, the lowest total, 5.1%, was in the Cape Breton Highlands-Canso riding and the highest was the Halifax riding, with 17.7%. These numbers suggest that the Halifax riding was the most receptive to the NDP campaigns, and Alexa McDonough won that seat easily in 1997. However, in 1997, the NDP also won each of the seats on Cape Breton Island that had been barren territory in the recent past. Because the NDP had done so poorly in recent federal elections in Nova Scotia, the data on riding-level outcomes from past elections was probably of little use.

To the extent that the NDP did target ridings as potential wins prior to the start of the campaign, their evaluations were necessarily speculative and were sometimes off the mark. Prior to the 1997 campaign, the NDP labelled 46 ridings as either priority "A" (incumbent or must win) or "B" (potential gain) (Whitehorn, 1997: 97). However, no priority ridings were listed for New Brunswick, although the NDP went on to win two seats in that province (Whitehorn, 1997: 97). Conversely, many high priority ridings were lost by the NDP. This suggests that the relationship between expert

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5 The NDP won a single seat in the 1974 federal election in a Cape Breton Island riding populated by a large share of aging, unionized miners (Morton, 1986: 196).
6 Incidentally, the NDP spent over 60 percent of allowable expenses in both Cape Breton ridings.
assessments of success and electoral outcomes is complex. It is plausible that campaign spending is one variable that, when high, can improve the outcome of a candidate with mediocre prospects or, when low, damage a strong candidate.

5.4.2 Restricted Spending in Quebec

Although the NDP leadership set their sights on making significant inroads in Quebec in 1988, the amount of the campaign budget allocated to Quebec belies those intentions. As a share of its local expenses (i.e., funds not directed toward the national campaign), the NDP spent 21.9% of its budget in Quebec, a province with over 32% of the nation's seats. In contrast, the NDP spent 20.9% of its budget in BC, a province with only 13.8% of the county's seats. According to Denis, "the enormous proportion of third places in Quebec is largely attributable to a large number of non-competitive candidates (where competitiveness is indicated by the percentage of the allowed expense actually spent by the candidates)" (Denis, 1994: 222). Table 5.6 shows the percentage of the allowed expenses spent in each of the Quebec ridings. Considering that the NDP strategists had targeted 39 winnable ridings in Quebec, the amount of campaign spending was woefully inadequate (Whitehorn: 1989: 46). According to data from the financial report of the Chief Electoral Officer, the candidate ranked 39th in spending used only 23% of his limit, an insufficient amount for a credible campaign (Elections Canada, 1989).
Table 5.6: Percentage of riding limit spent by the NDP in Quebec, 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Riding Limit Spent</th>
<th>Number of Ridings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80–90</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70–80</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60–70</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>50–60</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>40–50</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>30–40</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>20–30</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Report on Campaign Finances for Thirty-Fourth General Election, Elections Canada, 1997)

Denis concludes that the failure of the NDP to make a breakthrough in Quebec was largely attributable to the fact that the party did not mount a significant campaign in that province:

In 1988 as before, the NDP could not field an organization anywhere near large and strong enough to give the party a 'big league' status.... At ground level in Quebec, the NDP campaign was spotty and heavily focused on a few ridings where either star candidates or local conditions dramatically improved the party's prospects – or so strategists thought (Denis, 1994: 235).

Table 5.7 shows that the NDP was drastically underfunded relative to the Conservatives and the Liberals. The table shows the number of ridings in each spending decile for each party. The PCs spent between 90 and 100% of the allowable spending limit in 43 out of 73 ridings for which we have complete data, the Liberals had 30 ridings in that range, and
the NDP just eight. And while the NDP spent less than 60% of the allowable limit in over two-thirds of the Quebec ridings, the Tories spent at least 60% in all of the ridings.

**Table 5.7 Campaign spending in Quebec**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decile Number</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>LIB</th>
<th>NDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of ridings in each spending decile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Financial Reports from the Chief Electoral Officer)

Figure 5.2 shows that there was a strong correlation between the NDP's campaign spending in Quebec and the share of the votes the party received. This table is quite revealing since it allows us to differentiate the "degrees of success" of the NDP campaigns, given that they did not win any ridings.
The strong correlation between the amount of campaign spending and the votes received by the NDP suggests that had the NDP devoted a greater share of its resources to its Quebec campaign it may have fared better in that province. Therefore, it was not solely the lack of acceptance of the NDP agenda per se, but weak political mobilization that influenced the NDP’s failure in Quebec in 1988.

5.5 The New Democrats: A Bureaucratic Party?

Denis (1994) makes the argument that not all campaign spending is equal in terms of increasing voter awareness. He argues that money spent on active campaigning, such as the distribution of campaign literature, and newspaper, radio, and television advertising,
is more effective than money paid to campaign staff salaries or office expenses. Denis found that the NDP devoted a much bigger share of its campaign spending to its administrative apparatus than did the other two major parties. He concludes that excessive bureaucratization has been a pernicious problem for the NDP and its predecessor, the CCF, as it has for most social democratic parties since the time Michels wrote about the overly bureaucratic, top-heavy German Social Democrats in the early part of the 20th century (Denis. 1994: 200).

In 1997, the NDP spent a disproportionate amount on the salaries of its workers compared to the other parties. Although total campaign spending for the NDP was about half that of the Liberals and Tories, the party spent more on salaries and benefits, administration, and national office expenses in absolute terms compared to the other parties. Not surprisingly, the NDP was left with substantially less than the other parties to spend on radio and television advertising. The Liberals spent $3.8 million on radio and television advertising (plus about $3 million on other advertising), the Tories spent $5.9 million, Reform spent $2.8 million, and the NDP spent just under $2 million.

It is likely that this spending distribution disadvantaged the NDP in terms of its ability to diffuse its campaign platform. However, the disproportionate share spent on salaries may have more to do with the classes that support the various parties than with excessive bureaucratization. The NDP must pay its campaign organizers, while the other parties

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These data come from the Elections Canada website ("Contributions and Expenses Reported by Candidates and Registered Political Parties" - http://www.elections.ca/eccandidates/191/table07.html)
tend to use volunteers who have taken leaves of absence from law, advertising, and other professional organizations.⁸

5.6 The Mass Media and Canadian Politics

Speaking to the importance of the media in shaping public opinion, Cohen (1963: 13) wrote that "the media may not be successful in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about". The influence of the media has grown considerably in the nearly four decades since Cohen made this observation. Speaking in 1991 about the Canadian scene, Fletcher and Everitt (1991: 198) claimed that elections are becoming "contests of television performance."

The close association between the mass media and politics is not problematic, according to the functionalist viewpoint (e.g., Siegel, 1996). From this perspective, the role of the news media is to contribute to integration and consensus in society (Siegel, 1996: 20). According to Siegel, "since raw news would be a confusing jumble of masses of information, the media interpret the messages they carry and place them in a meaningful context" (Siegel, 1996: 20). From the functionalist viewpoint, the mass media in a geographically large and sparsely populated country such as Canada are essential for societal bonding and the articulation of shared goals.

Those who take a more critical view of the function of the media argue that rather than providing "democracy's oxygen" the news media today legitimize a fundamentally

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⁸ This information about accounting methods comes from Professor Leonard Preyra, a specialist in Nova Scotia politics and the NDP (personal communication, October
undemocratic system. Instead of keeping the public informed, they manufacture public
consent for policies which favour their owners: the corporate elite" (Winter, 1997: xv).
This corporate elite, men like Conrad Black, Ken Thompson, Izzy Asper and Ted Rogers,
controls an increasingly large share of Canadian media outlets.\footnote{Izzy Asper the head of Global CanWest broadcasting purchased most of Conrad Black's Canadian papers in August, 2000. The take-over of the Southam papers by Asper, a long-time Liberal, led commentators to speculate on the effects this would have on the papers' content. While Asper may soften the right-wing content of Southam papers, it is now taken for granted that ownership can have a strong effect on the content of the paper.}

While owners rarely edit or censor journalists' columns directly, their ownership has an
indirect impact. As journalist Linda McQuaig wrote:

we must always remember that virtually all media outlets are owned by rich and
powerful members of the elite. To assume that this has no influence on the ideas
that they present would be equivalent to assuming that, should the entire media be
owned by, say, labour unions, women's groups, or social workers, this would have
no impact on the editorial content (McQuaig, 1995: 12).

Partisan politics and the news media have a long tradition in Canada. During the later
part of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century, political parties sought the
exposure provided by mass circulation papers, and newspaper editors were often on the
payroll of political parties (Siegel, 1996: 93). For example, William Lyon Mackenzie
was the editor of The Colonial Advocate and The Constitution, Prime Minister Wilfrid
Laurier edited L'Électeur, and Liberal Party Leader George Brown was the editor of The
Globe (Siegel, 1996: 93). The influence that people like Conrad Black have on the
content of their newspapers is less direct than those of the earlier politician/editors, but flows indirectly through the selection of editors and other high-level staff. More importantly, elements of the political economy of the media ensure a largely pro-free enterprise agenda. Simply put, since advertisers pay for about 75–80% of the cost of daily newspapers, content is rarely included that could be considered offensive or in opposition to the interests of the advertisers (Winter, 1997: 91).

Due to this organization of the mass media, many debatable assumptions are treated as givens. Some of these assumptions are that private enterprise is always preferable to public ownership, that the deficit, created through excessive social spending, is our number one problem, and that welfare fraud is a common and extremely harmful problem (Winter, 1997: 72; see also McQuaig, 1995). The corporate media often rely on the input of allegedly independent resource organizations, like the Fraser Institute and the C.D. Howe Institute, to substantiate these claims. These corporately funded think tanks are called upon for their expertise much more often than labour-sponsored or independent institutions. James Winter cites a study that found that, in one year of economic stories on the Canadian Press wire service, the Fraser Institute was quoted in 140 stories while the leftist Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) was quoted in only 16 (Winter, 1997: 81). (The CCPA publishes a shadow "alternative budget." The most recent, published in 1997, was endorsed by 164 economists and political economists ([Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1997]). Part of the reason why right-wing think tanks are cited more often than left-wing think tanks is that they have a larger

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10 Incidentally, Thomas Kierans, president and CEO of the C.D. Howe Institute, is a member of the Board of directors of Southam Inc.
research staff and produce more research on a wider range of topics than their left-wing counterparts (Abelson and Carberry, 1998: 534). Right-wing think tanks receive the bulk of their funding from large corporations (Dobbin, 1998: 186).

Alternative views on social and economic policy are relatively hard to come by. Organizations such as the Canadian Auto Workers, the Council of Canadians, and the Centre for Policy Alternatives conduct research that provides alternatives to the current neo-liberal orthodoxies, but their views are rarely heard. Canadian magazines such as *Canadian Forum, Canadian Dimension, This Magazine*, and various union publications write about such issues as the dangers of global corporate control associated with the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investments (known as the MAI), the anti-union campaigns by Wal-Mart and McDonalds, and industrial pollution, but the circulation of these magazines is a fraction of that of the daily newspapers and newsmagazines like *Maclean's*. There is not a single daily newspaper that can be said to be aligned with the NDP, although there are papers that endorse each of the other four major parties.¹¹ The result of the media's adoption of generally pro-business positions on social and economic issues means that the NDP's social democratic project is often portrayed as naive, irresponsible, or just wrong.

In general, it can be said that the fortunes of the NDP in its almost 40 years of existence, and of the CCF before that, have not been aided by the mainstream mass media. That

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¹¹ According to Lynn McDonald, "every country of Western Europe has some paper at least sympathetic to, if not actually supportive of, its social democratic party...the result is that social democratic politicians can count on reasonable coverage of their views in some papers" (McDonald, 138).
being said, in the next section I argue that there is variation in the tone of the coverage given to the NDP. The modestly favourable coverage given to the NDP in the major Nova Scotia daily compared to the negative coverage in Montreal dailies also offers insight into the NDP's different level of success in the two provinces.

5.6.1 Newspaper Coverage of the 1988 Election

Claude Denis (1994) implicates the largely unfavourable newspaper coverage of the NDP's Quebec campaign as a reason for its lack of success in the 1988 election. To substantiate his conclusion, Denis performed a content analysis of the coverage of the NDP in the three francophone dailies published in Montreal: *Le Devoir*, *La Presse*, and *Le Journal de Montréal*. *Le Journal de Montréal* and *La Presse* are part of large corporate media chains, while *Le Devoir* is independently owned. Denis focused on the reporting in *Le Devoir* in particular, since its influence goes beyond its readers and historically it has been an "opinion-maker" (Denis, 1994: 118). The choices made by *Le Devoir*, in terms of which stories to cover and editorial angles to take, are often adopted by other newspapers and television news broadcasts.

The ardently nationalist *Le Devoir* was suspicious of the NDP's support for Quebec's independence, given its long tradition as a centralist party (Denis, 1994: 125). In addition, articles on the NDP's ties with the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL) noted the lack of ties between those two groups in the past, although they had been aligned in the early 1960s. Other stories about the history of the NDP spoke about Tommy Douglas as a "televangelist" and stressed the fact that he did not speak French (Denis, 1994: 129).
Articles published at the end of the campaign stressed the errors that the NDP campaign had made along the way and foreshadowed the lack of success that they would have on election day. Denis points out that *Le Devoir's* coverage of the NDP was highly selective, focusing on the QFL–NDP alliance and the nationalist credentials of the NDP, while almost ignoring the NDP's position on free trade (Denis, 1994: 164). More generally, the Montreal dailies had a negative slant on labour unions and the Left. Both *Le Devoir* and the middlebrow *La Presse* painted the unions in "an unflattering light" during the conflict in 1981–1982 between the Common Front of public employees and the provincial government (Denis, 1994: 121). During the 1988 campaign, *La Presse* found the QFL–NDP alliance to be "counter-productive and undemocratic" (Denis, 1994: 141). According to Denis (1994: 141), *La Presse* expressed a "very strong editorial hostility to the party's social democratic project."

### 5.6.2 Newspaper Coverage of the 1997 Election

According to a study of media coverage in the 1997 federal election by Robert Andersen, the NDP received disproportionately little coverage on national television and newspapers, compared to the other four major parties during the campaign (Andersen, 1999: 8). Looking at newspaper coverage, the Liberals were the subject of 35% of stories, the Reform Party 20%, the Conservatives 18%, the BQ 15%, and the NDP 12% (Andersen, 1999: 25). The distribution of coverage on the evening news was similar.

Andersen found that, although the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* did not endorse the NDP, it was "far less critical than other newspapers of the NDP and provided proportionately
more coverage of the party as well. The NDP's platform was displayed as the most likely to help the desperate unemployment problems of Eastern Canada" (Andersen, 1999: 11). Of the 11 newspapers he studied, the Halifax Chronicle-Herald was one out of only two not to make an official endorsement. Given their generally favourable coverage of the NDP and the fact that they did not support any other party, we can take this to be relatively positive from the point of view of NDP organizers. The NDP was the subject of proportionately more newspaper articles in the Halifax Chronicle-Herald than in the other newspapers studied (Andersen, 1999: 26). The NDP was the focus of 12.6% of reports, which was second only to the Liberal Party, the subject of 20.6% of reports. By way of comparison, the NDP was the subject of only 5.7% of articles in the Globe and Mail, 6.5% in the Vancouver Sun, and 9.8% in the Toronto Star.

It is important to note that the Halifax Chronicle-Herald is independently owned (i.e., not a member of the Thomson or Southam conglomerates) and might be more open in its political coverage and less beholden to the interests of the neo-conservative heads of the major newspaper conglomerates. By contrast, the Irving family owns all four English language dailies in neighbouring New Brunswick (Winter, 1997: xi). While this evidence for the impact of the media coverage and the political economy of the media is by no means conclusive, it suggests that the media powerfully affect electoral outcomes: the NDP faced an unsupportive press in Quebec in 1988 and did poorly in the election relative to the rest of Canada, while the moderately positive press received by the NDP in Nova Scotia was associated with a relatively strong election result.

12 The only other paper not to make an official endorsement was the Calgary Herald, although they typically favoured the Reform Party in their editorials.
5.6.3 Television Coverage in 1997

In their study of television coverage of the 1997 election, Nevitte and colleagues (2000) found a paradox. While the NDP's coverage during the election was rather favourable it received significantly less exposure than the other parties (Nevitte et al., 2000). For instance, although both the Conservatives and NDP were minor players in the 1993 election, the Tories were the subject of 20% of the television stories that focused on one political party compared to 15% that focused on the NDP (Nevitte et al., 2000: 26). Moreover, the New Democrats were the only party not to receive an intense flurry of stories at least once during the campaign. The coverage of the NDP began at levels comparable to the other parties, sank dramatically during the second to fourth weeks of the campaign, and then rose again to comparable levels. According to Nevitte et al., "the party remained in a relative media shadow during the heart of the campaign" (Nevitte et al., 2000: 27). The Tories, on the other hand, received a great deal of coverage immediately following the English-language debate in which leader Jean Charest was seen as the clear winner by the press.

Nevitte et al. had teams of undergraduate research assistants watch the late-night television news broadcasts and note the tone of the story. A positive story received a score of 1, a neutral story received a score of 0, and a negative story a score of -1. Based on these rankings, the Liberals averaged .00, the Conservatives .20, the NDP .30 and the Reform Party -.34 (Nevitte et al., 2000: 29). So, while the NDP received low visibility but favourable coverage, the opposite was true for the Reform Party.
A clue as to why favourable NDP coverage did not translate into rising voter support is that the issues central to the NDP's platform received relatively little television coverage. While over 43% of television reports dealt with "leadership issues" and almost 40% mentioned "national unity," only 20% mentioned "unemployment," under 12% mentioned "health care," and less than 4% mentioned "education" (Andersen, 1999: 27). In general, the lack of visibility of the NDP campaign related to the media's focus on "horse-race journalism" and, in the 1997 election, national unity, with comparatively little attention paid to the NDP's focus on unemployment and social programs, issues that are not as amenable to the sound bite or a brief newsclip.13

5.7 The NDP's Platform and Strategy

Although I have argued that different levels of mobilization and the role of the media are the chief reasons for the NDP's failure in Quebec and success in Nova Scotia, the content of the NDP's appeals must also be considered. This is particularly the case since the NDP has fashioned itself as a party of substance, one whose core ideals transcend the personalities of leaders and the transient issues of the day.

5.7.1 Quebec 1988

The NDP launched its Quebec strategy for the upcoming election during the federal convention in Montreal in 1987. The NDP chose to take a Quebec-nationalist position on issues of Québécois language and culture. This was seen as strategically necessary, given

13 This analysis of television coverage does not evaluate the more general campaign stories that did not deal with one party in particular. Andersen found that about 30% of election stories did not deal with a political party or any party in particular (Andersen, 1999: 25). Based on the evidence of election news stories, it is likely that the bulk of these stories were not about issues central to the NDP's program.
the intersection of nationalism and social democracy embodied in the popular Parti Québécois (PQ) at the provincial level. The NDP endorsed "a resolution affirming Quebec's right to self-determination, and calling for recognition of Quebec's uniqueness in the preamble of the constitution" (cited in Denis, 1994: 80). Their position on the distinctiveness of Quebec, combined with a push for a full employment policy, decentralization of government power, and the strengthening of social programs made up the bulk of their platform in Quebec, as elsewhere. The NDP's acceptance and promotion of the Meech Lake Accord, which would have enshrined Quebec's "distinct status" into the constitution, was done, in part, to appeal to Quebeckers (Whitehorn, 1992: 196).

John Harney, who led the NDP in Quebec, managed to coordinate a growing party membership in Quebec made up of people in various left-wing groups and of those who supported the PQ at the provincial level. Encouragingly for party organizers, the NDP was welcomed by many key members of the Quebec labour movement and was endorsed by the Quebec Federation of Labour.

After the NDP ultimately failed to make a breakthrough in Quebec, journalists and former candidates attempted to explain the lack of success. According to a book written by campaign strategists from each of the three main parties, the NDP could not make inroads in Quebec because "few party organizers or strategists really had any idea of how the political process worked [in Quebec]" (Caplan, Kirby, and Segal, 1991). In addition to this explanation, commentators fell back on what Denis calls the three main narratives to explain the NDP's failure in Quebec (Denis, 1994: 98). These are the lack of a populist
or labour tradition in Quebec, the perception that people had of the NDP as foreign, lacking roots in Quebec, and the fact that separatism had become hegemonic on the Left and that the PQ was a proxy for a Quebec-based social democratic party (Denis, 1994: 98).

Denis argues that the failure of the NDP in Quebec was symptomatic of the lackluster campaign they ran throughout Canada. The free trade issue was tailor-made for the NDP, since it married the issue of the protection of Canadian workers with the issues of the protection of social programs and cultural sovereignty. Instead, the NDP campaign concentrated on the popularity and trustworthiness of the party's leader and its belief in the sanctity of social programs.

5.7.2 Nova Scotia 1997

The NDP's electoral platform was released at the outset of the campaign in a 53-page booklet called *A Framework for Canada's Future*. This document (summarized in Whitehorn, 1997: 101) called for "significant cuts in unemployment, greater government spending on social programs, expansion of medicare to include prescription drugs and home care, eliminating childhood poverty, and closing of tax-loopholes so that corporations, banks and the wealthy, paid their fair share [in tax].... It advocated a halt to the harmonization of the GST with provincial sales taxes and proposed the gradual phasing out of the GST." Without doubt, many of these proposals, particularly those relating to unemployment and spending on social programs, appealed to a large proportion of Nova Scotians. However, Nova Scotia and the Maritimes in general have
historically had high rates of unemployment and relied on social spending. This had not led to above-average NDP support. For that reason, we must look chiefly to the degree of resource mobilization in Nova Scotia to explain the NDP's breakthrough.

5.8 Conclusion

Ideological forces serve to buttress support for the status quo, making it difficult for oppositional movements, no matter how moderate, to make inroads. Electoral outcomes in Canadian federal elections are largely determined by the way power is distributed in society. It is understandable that powerful groups in society would use the levers they have. The mass media are becoming an increasingly important lever to maintain the dominance of these groups.

The NDP is usually at a disadvantage in the mobilization process vis-à-vis the other major parties because of lower levels of funding, inadequate or unfavourable media coverage, and a generally hostile ideological environment in which to sell its social democratic project. The degree to which the party was able to overcome this traditional disadvantage in Nova Scotia can explain its success there in the 1997 federal election.

Another crucial element in explaining the success and failure of NDP is the degree to which the political environment was conducive to the NDP's challenge in 1988 relative to 1997. This approach to the study of social movements, known as the "political process model," focuses less on the internal resources of social movements and more on the political opportunities available to them (cf. Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1982). Proponents of
this approach "see the timing and fate of movements as largely dependent upon the opportunities afforded insurgents by the shifting institutional structure and ideological disposition of those in power" (McAdam, 1996: 23). According to Tarrow, social movements are more likely to be successful when elite political alignments are unstable or divided and when social movements are assisted by influential allies (Tarrow, 1994: 87–89).

Ayers (1996, 1998) applies the "political process model" to explain the emergence of a popular movement in Canada opposed to North American free trade. The Pro-Canada Network (PCN) was an amalgam of labour, women's, faith, students' and other groups that mobilized in 1987 to oppose the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed by Canada and the United States (Ayers, 1996: 475). Although the PCN was ultimately unsuccessful in quashing the FTA, they did accomplish much of what they set out to do: to educate and mobilize the public about the dangers of free trade, delay the free trade bill in Parliament, and press for an election to be called on the issue (Ayers, 1996: 475). According to Ayers, the PCN was successful because it was well-organized, reasonably well-funded, and represented a wide range of organizations (Ayers, 1996: 475–477). But, apart from these internal variables, the political opportunity structure was favourable to the aims of the Pro-Canada Network. In particular, the political environment was unstable due to Mulroney's landslide victory in 1984, which disposed of the Liberals, Canada's "natural governing party." And the Liberal caucus, which had been reduced to 40 seats in the previous election, was divided between a left-nationalist group and a more conservative
faction. The left-nationalist wing of the Liberals became dominant and was an important ally to anti-free trade mobilization (Ayers, 1996: 478).

The ideological environment was also in flux during the time of the PCN's campaign against free trade with the United States (Ayers, 1996: 478). The Mulroney-led turn toward neo-liberalism had not been normalized, and people still had strong memories of activist governments and the efficacy of popularly led challenges.

The inference that could be made from Ayers' work is that challenges to the expansion of the neo-liberal agenda have become more difficult as neo-liberalism has become further entrenched in Canada. The NDP's decision in 1997 to concentrate its resources on the rather electorally insignificant Maritime region represented a tacit understanding that the party could not compete in the rest of Canada. In the Maritimes, they relied on their homegrown leader, Alexa McDonough, and were able to devote sufficient funds to the smaller number of ridings in the region to win at least some seats. In contrast, during the 1988 election, the NDP felt that the combination of sufficient resources and a conducive political environment could lead to a breakthrough in Quebec and unprecedented success overall. Although they ultimately failed, for the reasons detailed above, they did receive almost half a million votes, or 14% of the vote in Quebec. In 1997, the NDP received less than 2% of the vote in Quebec.

In the following chapter, I use the insights of the political process model to illustrate that political and ideological opportunities for the NDP have become constricted between
1988 and 1997. The period between 1988 and 1997 led to a shift in the balance of power in Canada toward the corporate class at the expense of organized labour and "working people". This had caused a "re-sealing" of the corridors of power, narrowing the potential for NDP success. At the same time, the neo-liberal agenda has become hegemonic, leaving little ideological space for the social democratic project. In outlining the relationship between shifts in capitalist production and political opportunities I am trying to correct for Resource Mobilization Theory's "inattentiveness" to the macro level of society (Buechler, 1993: 227). According to Buechler, "[Resource Mobilization Theory] takes an eclectic and somewhat ad hoc approach to structural issues and does not offer any systematic theory of how macro-level organization might affect movements (and vice versa) beyond resource availability or opportunity structure" (Buechler, 1993: 226). The following chapter speaks directly to the "structural issues" that have eroded the NDP's mobilization potential from the 1980s to the 1990s.
Chapter 6
The Politics of Neo-Liberalism and the Decline of the NDP

While election surveys offer important clues to understanding shifts in Canadian politics, an understanding of wider developments in political economy is a vital supplement. In an effort to identify important changes in Canadian politics, this chapter examines the structural changes to Canadian capitalism that have taken place since the 1970s and the supportive neo-liberal ideology that has legitimized these changes. The post-1973 breakdown of the post-war Keynesian welfare state regime led to a restructuring of the Canadian political economy aimed at restabilizing the capitalist system. While the full effects of restructuring were not seen for at least ten years after the breakdown, it would lead to an erosion of the gains made by working people in wages, universal health care, and education during the postwar period (Bashevkin, 2000). An ideology that attacked the role of government in the economy, while praising the virtues of the free market, was dusted off by elites to rationalize these changes and their deleterious effects. The role of the state during this period has been to legitimate the shrinking of government spending on social programs as necessary, prudent, and, eventually, "common sense." In light of this political and economic climate, the NDP's ability to disseminate alternative viewpoints about how society might work and find a receptive audience for these views has been limited.

This chapter will compare the political economy of the Keynesian welfare state to that of the current neo-liberal state with an eye to drawing out the relationship between political economy and Canadian federal politics. The NDP's brand of moderate social democracy was well suited to the postwar years which saw the benefits of economic growth spread
to working people due, in large part, to the strength of the labour and other popular social movements. The NDP at this time could be considered the conscience of parliament prodding the government in office to expand the boundaries of the liberal welfare state. The introduction of public health care, for instance, can be attributed to the influence of the NDP.

Crises in the system of capitalist accumulation in the early to mid-1970s led to growing inflation, decreasing capitalist profitability, and a gradual halt in welfare state expansion (Smith and Taylor, 1996). In Canada, as in other capitalist nations, the capitalist class united and mobilized to restore profitability. In this context I present the battle over free trade with the United States in the late 1980s — in which a highly organized capitalist class mustered a formidable political and ideological campaign in favour of free trade — as one manifestation of the ascendance of capital. In the years since the signing of the Free Trade Agreement most Canadians have seen their living standards stagnate, their jobs become more insecure, and their expectations for widespread prosperity lowered (Jackson and Robinson, 2000).

In a neo-liberal Canada, the New Democrats have suffered on both the material and ideological levels. They have suffered materially because a battered labour movement has not been able to up the ante to help the NDP compete in increasingly expensive federal elections. They have suffered ideologically because the NDP’s pro-welfare state and economic nationalist discourse has been marginalized by the hegemony of neo-liberalism.
6.1 From the Keynesian Welfare State to Capitalist Crisis and Economic Restructuring

The post-1973 period was marked by a crisis of capitalism that marked the end of the postwar compromise between government, business, and labour. This arrangement lasted from the end of World War II to the 1970s and was labelled by some observers the "Keynesian welfare state" (e.g., Watkins, 1997) The business class granted the relatively powerful working class reasonable wages and an expanded welfare state in exchange for labour peace and the suppression of more radical demands. During the postwar period, the state was able to provide various social programs and income supports. This was because of the high demand for Canadian resources, particularly due to the rebuilding of the war-torn nations of Europe and Japan. During this period, writes Burman, "social activism was accepted, even admired, and progressive ideas had wide play" (Burman, 1997: 194). Unemployment insurance was introduced in 1941, family allowance in 1945, and old age security in 1951. The 1960s brought the establishment of the Canada Pension Plan (1964), the Canada Assistance Act (1966) and universal medicare.

The welfare state was not part of the grand design of the capitalist classes in the Western nations, but a result of the growing demands of labour and other social movements, and the growing power behind these demands. At its height in the 1960s and 1970s, the welfare state reflected the growth of working-class power in Canada. The wider distribution of power in Canadian society meant that the postwar Canadian state was less
dependent on the capitalist class than it was before. In this context the state was relatively free to introduce programs to reduce social inequality (Brym, 1989).

Under Trudeau, the Liberals set out on an ambitious effort of nation-building, with the stated goal of creating a more just society. In the late 1960s, the Liberals established a new labour code, a new immigration act, collective bargaining for the public service, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and the Economic Council of Canada (now defunct) (Bartlow and Campbell, 1995: 27). In the 1970s and early 1980s, the Liberals established the National Energy Plan and Petro-Canada, and continued to increase spending on social services. Even a guaranteed income and full employment program were on the policy agenda (Axworthy and Trudeau, 1990). Philosophical convictions combined with intense social protest by the poor, seniors, tenants, Aboriginal peoples and others, compelled the Liberals to engage in progressive social policy. The corporate community gave tacit support to the Liberals' agenda in an effort to maintain social and political stability and high demand for its goods and services. At the electoral level, the Liberals were concerned that the surging NDP would usurp them if they did not preemptively adopt key planks of the latter's program.

1The Canadian variant of the KWS was relatively underdeveloped compared to that of other OECD countries. The scope of individual welfare states at their peak has implications for their composition during their ongoing period of erosion. Because of the relative weakness of the Canadian KWS, it could be eroded more rapidly than that of more developed welfare states of Scandinavia. Esping-Andersen (1989) has labelled the Canadian welfare state "liberal" because of the relatively high share of programs that are means-tested rather than universally distributed to Canadian citizens. By way of contrast, the Swedish welfare state is classified as "social-democratic" due to the greater universality of benefits and, more broadly, because of efforts to expand social citizenship and decommodify services seen as essential to this citizenship. The stunted development of the Canadian KWS is seen as a result of a weak and divided working class and
The dawn of the 1970s brought with it a generalized economic crisis in the Western capitalist nations (Watkins, 1997; Ross and Trachte, 1990) Symptomatic of this crisis were the oil and monetary shocks, which saw the end of the Bretton Woods economic order that had been anchored by the United States and the American dollar (Block, 1977).

The oil crisis was a result of the tripling of the price of crude oil by the OPEC oil-producing nations and prevented access to cheap energy needed for industrial production (Watkins, 1997: 32). The monetary crisis followed the freeing of the U.S. dollar from gold reserves. Currencies began to fluctuate more than they did when the currencies of most industrialized nations were valued based on the U.S. dollar. The 1970s brought the concurrent economic ills of inflation and unemployment, which became known as "stagflation." To restore profitability, the capitalist class in Canada, as elsewhere, introduced "flexible production." causing increased unemployment due to corporate downsizing. This led to the end of the postwar growth in working-class wages and consumer spending, as well as a gradual halting of welfare state expansion (Watkins, 1997: 32–34). This period also saw the wholesale implementation of labour-saving new technologies and the deskilling of labour, which caused unemployment and decreased the importance of workers in the labour process (Braverman, 1974). The capitalist class, enticed by low wages and few environmental and labour laws, transferred much of its production to areas in the developing world. Finally, the capitalist class sought and received generous benefits from the Canadian state, which subsidized the cost of local production (Phillips, 1997: 67).

relatively weak ties between the labour movement and the CCF–NDP (Bakker and Scott, 1997: 298).
The Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada (known as the McDonald Commission, after its chairman, former Liberal Finance Minister Donald McDonald) was established by Pierre Trudeau in 1982 to establish a coherent economic plan for Canada. The Commission can be seen as a factor in both the creation and legitimation of a post-Keynesian political economy in Canada. Its findings, published in 1985, are often cited as the symbolic turning point in the shift toward neoliberalism that followed the decline of the Keynesian welfare state (Barlow and Campbell, 1995: 41). According to Barlow and Campbell, the McDonald Commission called for "the contraction of government itself in order to foster business competition. Concerned that the welfare state subverts the 'genius of the market economy,' the report laid the groundwork for continental free trade, planned high unemployment, and the coming assault on universal social programs" (Barlow and Campbell, 1995: 41). The report also stressed the necessity of entering into a free trade deal with the United States in order to adjust to the global changes in trade and production relations.

Drache and Cameron (1985) note that although Royal Commissions are ostensibly designed to shape public debate and create consensus on divisive issues, the McDonald Commission served an explicitly political purpose. They argue that rather than actually achieving a consensus, the job of a Royal Commission is to create the appearance of a consensus. In the case of the McDonald Commission, the backgrounds of the twelve commissioners themselves were weighted towards business, the academy, and former government elites. There was a gesture toward diversity, with three women and
representation from all regions in Canada. However, the members were mostly older and well-off (Drache and Cameron, 1985: xii). The Commission did not include representatives of what Drache and Cameron call the "popular sector," such as women's organizations, anti-poverty groups, and environmental groups. The one dissenting view within the Commission was from Gerard Docquier of the United Steelworkers of America, who condemned the final report "for having embraced market-based fantasies as a solution to [Canada's] nearly two million unemployed" (cited in Drache and Cameron, 1985: x).

The results of the McDonald Commission in 1985 dovetailed nicely with the agenda of Brian Mulroney's newly elected Conservative majority. In general, the period beginning in the 1980s is marked by the ascendance of the capitalist class, underpinned by the popularity of neo-liberal economic policies. These policies included endorsement of the free market, deregulation of the economy, tax reform to benefit large corporations and the rich, privatization of nationally owned companies, free trade, attacks on organized labour, erosion of social programs, acceptance of a greater disparity between the rich and the poor, the promotion of private property rights, and the desire for the state to be run like a business (Naiman, 1997: 173).

Rather than solely an inevitable response to the crisis in capitalist accumulation caused by the shocks of 1973, the "business agenda" was actively created by those who would benefit from it. Linda McQuaig is a journalist who has stressed the human agency involved in creating the neo-liberal movement (McQuaig, 1987; 1991). She argues that
much of the neo-liberal agenda was constructed in closed-door meetings between the
Mulroney government and the business community, whose interests had become more
tightly organized by lobby groups like the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI).
As a result of pressure from business, the taxation system was reformed, draining wealth
from the middle- and lower-income earners to the wealthy. This was done through the
deferral of corporate tax, expansion of business expenses and business entertainment
deductions, the cancellation of estate taxes, lowering taxes on dividends and capital
gains, the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax and the de-indexation of
income tax brackets (McQuaig, 1987).

6.2 The Canadian Capitalist Class

6.2.1 The Structure of the Capitalist Class

The implementation of neo-liberalism was enabled by a strong and united Canadian
capitalist class. The structure and function of the capitalist class was a much-debated
topic among sociologists and political economists during the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Brym,
1985; Carroll, 1986). One conclusion that emerged was that there was a great deal of
concentration in corporate Canada as well as integration between the financial and
manufacturing sectors of the economy (Carroll, Fox, and Ornstein, 1982). In 1987, for
instance, the assets of the 186 largest non-financial corporations were controlled by just

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2 Clement (1990) defines the capitalist/executive class as those who employ three or more
workers or "command the means of production and make binding decisions
themselves...or identify as top, middle or upper management" (Clement, 1990: 485).
According to this scheme, 8.8% of men and 2.7% of women were classified as members
of the capitalist/executive class (Clement, 1990: 472). My concept of the capitalist class
is more limited. Although for some theoretical or analytic purposes an employer with
three employees is a capitalist, they do not wield the same power as owners or executives
in top corporations.
17 dominant enterprises (Richardson, 1992). Finance capital in Canada, already highly concentrated when there were five large banks and several large independent trust companies, is now centered in only four banks, and all trust companies have now been taken over by the banks. There is also a great deal of integration and coordination between financial and non-financial enterprises via interlocking directorates (Carroll, 1989). Popular books by Peter C. Newman (1975, 1982, 1998) and Diane Francis (1986) accurately portray the corporate elite as a cozy clique of (mostly) men who tend to share the same ethnic and religious backgrounds, social clubs, and sit on each others' corporate boards. Although the white, male, Protestant image has changed somewhat since Porter (1965) wrote about the Canadian elite in the 1960s, there are still very few women or visible minorities in today's corporate elite (but see Ogmundson (1990) who argues that the elite studies of Porter and Clement underestimate the degree of diversity in Canada's corporate elite).

It has also been shown that there is a great deal of ideological cohesion among members of Canada's corporate elite, and there is a significant gulf between their views and those of other groups in society. Ornstein found that the business community was strongly opposed to increasing the power of trade unions and to the redistribution of income, and supported cuts in assistance to the unemployed (Ornstein, 1986: 204). For instance, over 60% of business leaders believed that legislation should be used to decrease the power of unions, and over 70% of executives in large corporations said that there should be more cutbacks to government social programs (Ornstein, 1986). A more recent study of Canada's elite done by the Ekos research group found that there was a "profound gap"
between the public and decision makers in the area of preferred government values (cited in Dobbin, 1998: 131). The study, which sampled high-level civil servants, elected officials, and corporate executives discovered that policies related to equality, social justice, collective rights, full employment, and the regulation of business were low on the elite's list of priorities but highly important in the minds of the general public.

It is perhaps telling that the Ekos study grouped top civil servants and elected officials with the corporate executives to construct a sample of Canada's elite. The relationship between the capitalist class and the state was a key topic of neo-Marxist theory and research (Brym, 1989). Positions on this issue are typically divided into the instrumentalist and structuralist groups. The instrumentalist position, popularized by Miliband (1969), says that, because of common ideologies and class backgrounds, the capitalist class uses the state as its right hand to facilitate its goal of profit maximization and wealth generation. The structuralist position, developed by Poulantzas (1975 [1968]), says that by virtue of some of the verities of the capitalist system, rather than through common class origins, the state functions to facilitate capitalist production. The state, according to the structuralist position, is ultimately reliant on the capitalist class. However, occasionally the state will act in a way that opposes the short-term interests of some segments of the capitalist class in the interest of ensuring the stability of capitalist economic relations in the long run. (In this vein, Finance Minister Paul Martin prevented the mergers of several of Canada's largest banks in 1999, in the interest of maintaining capitalist competition.)
There is certainly evidence for both positions in the Canadian case. In support of the instrumentalist position, we can note, anecdotally, that Prime Minister Jean Chretien spent his hiatus from politics during the 1970s as an executive in Canadian boardrooms and amassed a substantial fortune. Paul Martin, his finance minister, was the head of Canadian Steamships and a millionaire many times over. Furthermore, Canadian parliamentarians, tend to come from backgrounds in business, law, and other elite professions. Supportive of Poulantzas' structuralism is the fact that the state is fundamentally at the mercy of the capitalists' threats to relocate if actions are taken that affect profits. We can point to the vitality of the capitalist system as evidence of the fact that even policies that helped workers or the unemployed were, ultimately, not harmful to the system. However, this reveals the pernicious functionalism of the structuralist argument.

The pure positions of the instrumentalists and structuralists are too static in their conceptions of state–capitalist relations (Brym, 1989). Following Brym (1985, 1989) and Korpi (1983), I take the ability of the capitalist class to ensure that favourable legislation is introduced as dependent on the strength of the capitalist class vis-à-vis the other classes in Canadian society. It is my position in this chapter, that beginning in the mid-1980s, changes in global capitalism allowed an already powerful Canadian capitalist class to further enhance its might and weaken the position of labour. The following section documents the heightened strength of Canadian capital using two of the indicators outlined by Olsen (1991) as measures of capitalist strength. These are (1) the degree to which capital is concentrated and coordinated and (2) the orientation of key
employers associations (Olsen, 1991: 115). The orientation of employer associations will be discussed with particular reference to the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI). The mobilization in favour of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will illustrate the concentration and coordination of capital during the late 1980s. After demonstrating the growth of capitalist strength, the following section will document the declining power of the labour movement in Canada. Although the growing strength of capital and the declining power of labour will be discussed sequentially, these two movements were closely connected. The growth in capitalist power was achieved at the expense of labour in Canada.

6.2.2 The Business Council on National Issues

The Business Council on National Issues (BCNI), based on America's Business Roundtable, was formed in 1976 by the chief executive officers of 150 leading Canadian corporations (Langille, 1987). The companies that made up the BCNI were focused in the financial sector, resource extraction, and primary manufacturing, the longstanding specialties of Canadian business. The BCNI was formed to oppose what was perceived to be Trudeau's excessive expansion of the state and its encroachment on the prerogatives of big business (Langille, 1987: 43). In addition to these domestic developments, the growing internationalization of capitalism had created greater competition among nations for profit and provoked the Canadian capitalist class to take a more aggressive stand against the growth of government spending. The mandate of the BCNI, in its own words, was to "strengthen the voice of business on issues of national importance and put together constructive courses of action for the country" (cited in Langille, 1987: 48). The BCNI
represented the venue in which the business community could unite and mobilize its power toward the construction of a neo-liberal Canada in the wake of the breakdown of the postwar compromise.

The BCNI used its extensive resources to create policy positions on the issues of the day as well as to take proactive positions on what they saw as important upcoming issues. According to Newman, "the BCNI researchers are always ahead of the game, providing useful detail and handy rationales that outline — and suggest — the bureaucrats' and politicians' choices" (Newman, 1998: 155). Under the rubric of creating a competitive environment for Canadian business, the BCNI mobilized for lowering the rate of inflation (by keeping wages low), reducing the deficit, and introducing business-friendly tax reform and free trade with the United States (Langille, 1987). A key to the success of the BCNI in having its policy positions adopted was its rhetorical ability to frame its recommendations as not narrow and parochial, but beneficial for Canadians as a whole. It also understood that the Canadian attachment to universal health care, unemployment insurance, and, more generally, a caring and equitable society meant that the neo-liberal agenda could not be advocated all at once.

We cannot underestimate the significance of the BCNI in shaping the political economy of Canada. According to Langille, by 1987 the BCNI had "become the most powerful and effective interest group in Canada...and now exercise[s] hegemony over both the private sector and the state" (Langille, 1987: 70). For instance, in 1985, a new energy policy to replace Trudeau's NEP was drafted by the premiers, the federal energy minister
(Jean Chrétien), and representatives of the BCNI. The BCNI was also the chief author of the new Competition Act that, in 1985, replaced the old Combines Act.³ Some commentators (e.g. Langille, 1987; McQuaig, 1991) credit the primary push for the FTA as coming from the BCNI, whose members sought secure access to the large American market, which was becoming increasingly protectionist. Members of the BCNI funded a significant public relations campaign to convince a reluctant Canadian public of the merits of free trade with the U.S.

The members of the BCNI now control $1.7 trillion in assets, earn annual revenues of $500 billion, and have 1.5 million employees (Newman, 1998: 154). Their power is readily admitted by their long-time leader, Thomas d'Aquino: "If you ask yourself, in which period since 1900 has Canada's business community had the most influence on public policy. I would say it was in the last twenty years. Look at what we stand for and look at what all the governments, and the major parties...have done and what they want to do. They have adopted the agenda we've been fighting for in the past two decades" (cited in Newman, 1998: 159).

Alongside the BCNI is the Vancouver-based Fraser Institute, which is a corporate-funded think tank that publishes studies supportive of neo-liberalism. More than half of Canada's top 100 most profitable companies have contributed financially to the Fraser (Dobbin, 1998: 186). By adopting what Knight (1998: 117) called "every energetic and successful approach for securing media access for its spokespeople," many of the

³ According to Newman, this was the "only time in the history of capitalism that any country allowed its anti-monopoly legislation be written by the people it was meant to police" (Newman, 1998: 156).
Institute's studies have become influential. Their critique of what they consider to be Statistics Canada's overly generous, low-income poverty line gets a great deal of media attention, as does the Fraser's Tax-Freedom Day held in June, which symbolically marks the day in which one's income no longer goes to paying tax.

6.3 The Free Trade Agreement (FTA): A Turning Point in the Capitalist Offensive

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the United States and Canada is a classic case of how the business agenda was able to override the wishes of a strong majority of the Canadian population. Although the Free Trade agreement was ostensibly about tariffs it also had the effect of reducing national control over economic and cultural policy. Under free trade, this control would be transferred to multinational corporations. The evolution of the FTA was a result of a forceful lobbying effort and an effective public relations campaign on the part of a highly-unified corporate Canada. These efforts to pass a free trade agreement were met by an energetic and diverse opposition movement. However, while the opposition effectively promoted a national debate on the potential consequences of free trade, it lacked the financial resources and unity necessary to win the debate.

As late as 1983, the idea of such an agreement with the United States had little interest for the Canadian political elite. While campaigning for the Conservative party leadership in 1983, Brian Mulroney compared a free trade pact between Canada and the U.S. to sleeping with an elephant: if the elephant moves even slightly, it could crush the Canadian economy (Mulroney cited in Richardson, 1992: 307). Initially, the driving
force behind the FTA was the wish of American business for unprotected access to the Canadian market. According to McQuaig, American Express chairman, Jim Robinson, was central in pushing for the FTA from his posts as co-chairman of the Business Roundtable (a key corporate lobby group) and head of the U.S. President's top private-sector trade advisory panel (McQuaig, 1991: 120). An important ploy of the U.S. lobbying efforts was to push for free trade without making it appear that it was "the greatest thing in the world for Americans" (McQuaig, 1991: 152). The Americans were concerned that Canadians would feel that they were being taking advantage of.

For someone who seemed dead against free trade in 1983, Mulroney was an enthusiastic supporter by 1984. The reason for this change of heart was that Mulroney's Tories were supported by an increasingly powerful corporate Canada and corporate Canada supported the FTA. Canadian big business, as represented by the BCNI, had been lobbying for free trade since 1981, and had spent over $18 million in the two years leading up to the 1988 election to promote it (Richardson, 1992: 207).

According to Doern and Tomlin (1991: 46) the embrace of free trade by the Canadian business community was the "pivotal domestic political event in the long road to the FTA." Doern and Tomlin document the Realpolitik of the movement toward free trade. In 1982, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association (CMA), a century old organization of manufacturing enterprises, exchanged their historical ambivalence toward free trade for a pro-free trade stance. This reconsideration was made in the wake of a damaging recession and increasing reliance on exports (Doern and Tomlin, 1991: 49). Doern and
Tomlin also reports a March 1983 meeting between the BCNI and American Vice-President George Bush. While Bush was initially skeptical of the merits of free trade he left the meeting intrigued by the possibility of having access to a market "the size of another California" (Doern and Tomlin, 1991: 46). In May, 1986 the Canadian and American Chambers of Commerce met in Florida and came to the conclusion that "the time for action [on implementing free trade] had come" (Hart, 1994: 77). The meeting ended with an agreement to send a joint letter to the President and Prime Minister announcing their support (Hart, 1994: 77). Once the decision to go forward with free trade was made, business lobby groups had key input into the drafting of the FTA. Thomas d'Aquino and the head of the CMA, Laurent Thibault had almost daily contact with Simon Reisman, Canada's chief FTA negotiator, and his deputy Gordon Richie (Doern and Tomlin, 1991: 105).

Since the BCNI was composed of CEOs from companies in most sectors of the economy it could speak with authority on behalf of Canadian business. The BCNI spearheaded a consortium of business groups, called the Canadian Alliance for Trade and Job Opportunities, organized to raise popular support for free trade leading up to the 1988 federal election. This group, formed in March 1987, included 35 business organizations, including the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (Dobbin, 1998: 46). The co-chairs of the alliance were former Alberta Tory Premier Peter Loughheed, and Liberal Donald McDonald, who had chaired the McDonald Commission. The Alliance ended up spending $6 million in the months leading up to the 1988 election including
$1.5 million on a four-page insert that went into 35 English-language daily newspapers across the country (Dobbin, 1998: 47).

The many grassroots organizations representing millions of Canadians in opposition to the Free Trade deal were unable to match the economic clout of the corporate elite, and were outspent 15 to 1 (Dobbin, 1998: 48). Furthermore, the anti-free trade side had difficulties bringing a diverse list of interest groups together into a organized political force (Doern and Tomlin, 1991). The Pro-Canada Network (PCN), for instance, was an amalgam of labour, women's, faith, students' and other groups. Some social policy and women's groups in the PCN feared they might lose funding if they opposed the Tories too forcefully (Doern and Tomlin, 1991: 213). In addition, environmental organizations, as well as other groups unaccustomed to partisan politics, were slow to join.

The Free Trade Agreement came into effect in January, 1989. Free Trade which has had a major impact on the Canadian economy and culture (see, for example, Jackson, 1999), was foisted upon the people by the corporate elite in a profoundly undemocratic manner.

I have argued that, beginning in the early 1980s, the capacity of the Canadian capitalist class to shape the political agenda increased. This was a result of shifts in political economy that saw the end of a period of compromise between capital and labour, and the beginning of a capitalist offensive (similarly, see Akard [1992], who argues that the American capitalist class was instrumental in the election of Ronald Reagan as President and the subsequent implementation of neo-liberal policies). The following section
demonstrates that, concurrently with the growth of capitalist power, the power of the labour movement declined.

6.4 The Declining Power of the Labour Movement

The offensive on the part of the capitalist class during the 1980s and 1990s was made at the expense of the Canadian labour movement. Because of the efforts of capitalists to increase flexibility and control labour costs, the labour movement has seen the erosion of many of the benefits it gained in the immediate postwar period. Globalization in general and the North American Free Trade Agreement in particular caused a weakening of Canada's manufacturing sector and allowed capital to move toward regions with lower labour costs (Jackson, 1999). Unions have endured stagnant recruitment rates, the increasing use of back-to-work legislation, and the imposition of wage controls (Panitch and Swartz, 1993).

In retrospect, labour's heyday in Canada was relatively short-lived. The economic boom of the postwar period led to greater corporate dependence on Canadian workers and a shift in the balance of power toward labour. Although unions would not fundamentally disrupt the authority of capital to control the labour process, union demands led to a significant increase in the standard of living of Canadian workers. The first breakthrough for the labour movement was the passing in 1944 of Order-in-Council 1003, which gave temporary legal recognition of private sector workers across Canada to organize, bargain collectively, and strike (Panitch and Swartz, 1993: 9). As a result of the increasing politicization and militancy of the labour movement, these temporary rights were made
permanent with the passing of the Industrial Relations Disputes Investigation Act in 1948. These changes led to growth in union membership. Union membership as a percentage of the non-agricultural workforce rose from 17.3% in 1940 to 30.3% in 1948. Union density reached another peak with the extension of collective bargaining rights to public employees in the 1960s and 1970s. The unionization rate peaked at 39.0% in 1984 and has been slowly declining since then, reaching 33% in 1998 (Panitch and Swartz, 1993: 141; Directory of Labour Organizations in Canada, Workplace Information Directorate, 1999). Table 6.1 shows the rate of union density throughout the postwar period.

The rate of strikes and lockouts, which peaked in 1976 with over 1.5 million workers involved in strikes and 11.6 million person-days lost, also declined rapidly. In 1992, only 150,000 workers were involved in strikes and lockouts, leading to just over 2 million person days-lost (Panitch and Swartz, 1993: 145). The decline in the strike rate reflects increasing levels of job insecurity and the greater risks involved in going on strike. Table 6.2 shows the frequency of strikes throughout the postwar period.
Table 6.1: Percentage of non-agricultural workers unionized 1945-1998

(Sources: Labour Organizations in Canada, 1972; Directory of Labour Organizations in Canada, 1998)
The beginning of the 1980s saw various attacks on trade union freedoms and marked the beginning of the decline of union density. In 1982, in an effort to control inflation, Trudeau's Liberals introduced the Public Sector Compensation Restraint Act, which unilaterally extended workers' contracts, limited wage increases, and suppressed the right to bargain and strike for public employees (Panitch and Swartz, 1993: 29). The 1980s also saw back-to-work legislation used with increasing regularity, as well as the expansion of the range of jobs considered "essential services," in which workers were prohibited from striking. Beginning in the early 1980s, managers also took a new approach to collective bargaining. Instead of reacting to workers' demands, they often came to the table seeking concessions, such as wage freezes and rollbacks (Heron, 1996: 122). Companies used the threat of moving their operations elsewhere as a way of
encouraging these concessions. The long and bitter strike at the Gainers meat-packing plant in Edmonton "became a national symbol of union-busting and sounded a dire warning to unionists and a rallying cry to anti-labour employers" (Heron, 1996: 122). During the strike, hoards of police were required to protect busloads of replacement workers from angry packing house workers (Morton, 1998: 328).

Panitch and Swartz argue that while there was a good deal of consent in relations between labour and capital from the 1940s to the 1960s, labour relations since the beginning of the 1980s have become much more coercive. This offensive against labour freedoms, while varying somewhat from province to province, continued throughout the 1990s (Morton, 1998: 336-353). Teeple (2000: 121) summarizes the current predicament of labour unions in countries like Canada:

As products of the postwar period of Fordism, Keynesianism, and the nation state, [labour unions] are ill prepared not only for the challenge of the new right, which is upon them in the form of deregulation, privatization, and anti-union legislation, but also for the realities of the global economy, advanced technology, and the supranational organizations representative of the interests of capital.
In sum, beginning in the 1980s, the strength of the capitalist class grew relative to the power of labour. As a result, the postwar compromise between capital and labour, negotiated by a relatively powerful working class, collapsed (Wright, 2000a). Table 6.3 illustrates this shift in power by showing how government revenues from corporate tax have been declining, with the government relying increasingly on personal income tax and regressive taxes such as Employment Insurance contributions (McBride and Shields, 1997: 58-59).

Table 6.3 Changes in federal budget revenues as a percentage of total revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1975-76</th>
<th>1997-98</th>
<th>97-98 as % of 75-76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal income tax</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>118.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate income tax</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales, excise tax, GST</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Insurance contributions</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>212.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenues</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Adapted from McBride and Shields, 1997: 59)

Concurrent with these large-scale economic shifts have been ideological changes that have legitimized them.\(^5\) The following section connects changes in political economy

\(^4\) Clawson and Clawson (1999) similarly attribute the drastic decline in union density in the United States to a combination of demographic factors, restrictive labour legislation, globalization, neoliberalism, and an employer offensive.

\(^5\) The economic changes largely preceded the ideological shift toward neo-liberalism. The neo-liberal ideology was used to justify the retrenchment of the welfare state.
that developed in the wake of the post-1973 economic crises to the establishment of a neo-liberal orthodoxy in the ideological realm.

6.5 Shifting to the Right: The Construction of Neo-Liberal Hegemony

Both Marx and Gramsci stated that the capitalist class's economic power alone could not maintain the status quo. In addition, the people at large must come to accept the legitimacy of the distribution of class power. This acceptance is conditioned by the distribution of a pro-status quo ideology by societal elites. Stressing the importance of ideology, Marx wrote that "a popular conviction often has the same energy as a material force". Gramsci expressed a similar view when he wrote that "material forces would be inconceivable historically without form and the ideologies would be individual fancies without the material forces" (cited in Barrett, 1994: 237).

Since ideology is a contentious concept that has engendered much debate, it is necessary to outline the meaning of ideology that I have adopted. Ideology can be seen as "a body of thought resulting from the universalization of a partial and narrow social point of view" (Parekh, 1982: 29). According to Marx, ideology in this sense is usually derived from the ruling class and can be referred to as the dominant ideology.

I argue that consent for the status quo in Canada is maintained through partial adoption of the ideology of the capitalist class by society as a whole and that this dominant ideology has become more hegemonic during the 1990s. I do not suggest that the dominant ideology is accepted by everyone. It is likely not accepted by most people who voted for
the NDP, or those who voted for one of the smaller parties, or some of those who did not vote. I also reject the premise that ideology is generated solely as a function of class position. Evidence from Chapter Four, which found that social class is a weak predictor of political views, suggested that this is not the case. What I am arguing is that there is a relationship between mode of production and political ideology, that political ideology is largely generated by the capitalist class and other elites, and that this ideology has a pervasive influence on the thinking of people across the class structure.

The analysis of political ideology in the postwar period may prove that, in retrospect, the period of the Keynesian welfare state (circa 1950-1990) was exceptional in terms of elite acceptance of trade union freedoms and an activist state promoting welfare state expansion. In contrast, the current neo-liberal ideology prioritizes corporate freedom and promotes welfare state retrenchment. The next section outlines the content of Canada's dominant ideology and how it works to legitimize current economic shifts.

6.5.1 The Dominant Ideology in Canada

According to Marchak, political ideologies can be ranked on two dimensions depending on the degree to which they emphasize individualism versus collectivism, and elitism versus egalitarianism (1988: 8). The dominant ideology in Canada, which she calls, "contemporary liberal," can be placed squarely in the individualist–elitist quadrant. A central tenet of this ideology is that equality and personal freedom exist. It follows that individuals who invest in sufficient human capital will be successful (Marchak, 1988: 25–29). A corollary is that the unemployed and the poor suffer their fate because of their
individual deficiencies or unwise choices. The dominant ideology also claims that there are no classes in Canada in the sense of enduring groups structured by their relations to the means of production. Nor are there structural reasons why some groups do better than others above and beyond differences at the individual level. In liberal democracies, governments are seen as representing the people, in that a politicians' role in government is proportionate to the level of support they receive in elections. In addition, politicians can be replaced if the voters are not satisfied with the job they are doing. When flaws in the liberal–democratic system are mentioned, they are viewed as temporary aberrations rather than systemic features.

Although the dominant ideology has been broadly liberal throughout the postwar period, it has varied substantially with respect to the role of government intervention in society. For example, when Tommy Douglas first proposed the idea of socialized medicine in 1944, it was decried as a threat to democracy and choice. For almost the next 20 years doctors opposed even the gradual introduction of medicare, going on a three-week strike in Saskatchewan in 1962 (Smith, 1992: 158). In contrast, those who grew up in the years of Pearson, Trudeau, and even Mulroney have come to take socialized medicine for granted. As mentioned above, during the period of the Keynesian welfare state, there was support for state involvement in the economy and a good deal of faith in the role of the state in creating a more just society. This support has eroded in the 1980s and 1990s as the liberal ideology became ascendant (Ekos, 1998). Today conventional wisdom suggests that the state should play a minimal role in the economy and society. The dominant ideology shifts according to phases in capitalist accumulation, which influence
the strength of the capitalist class and the corresponding reaction on the part of ordinary working people and the labour movement in particular.

Ralph Klein's Conservative government in Alberta and Mike Harris's Conservatives in Ontario epitomize the popularity of liberal ideology. Harris's winning 1995 platform promised cuts to welfare and income tax, the privatization of government corporations, and anti-union labour laws. It was dubbed by Harris the "Common Sense Revolution". The Conservatives claimed that their regressive tax cuts were necessary, natural steps that would benefit everyone. Shouldn't everyone be entitled to keep more of their own money? they ask rhetorically. In fact, they were a guise to legitimate the redistribution of wealth from the poor and working class to higher earners. By definition, anyone who opposes this distinctly neo-liberal agenda is deemed lacking in "common sense."

6.5.2 Shifts in the Ideology of Canadians

Although I have made a prima facie case for a shift to the Right in Canadian politics via the efforts of a united Canadian capitalist class to conscript the political agenda, there is also evidence that the ideological beliefs of the general public have shifted. By presenting this evidence I am going beyond reductionist approaches to ideology that impute acceptance of the dominant ideology on the basis of the lack of overt opposition to the status quo. By comparing the views of Canadians in 1984 and 1997, I find that there has been a trend - although not an unequivocal one — to the Right on traditional Left — Right political issues. Support for the Keynesian welfare state is eroding and being replaced by a neo-liberal framework.
Table 6.4: Comparison of political views 1984–1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Views</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Class conflict</strong></td>
<td>There is bound to be class conflict 49% &quot;agree&quot; 51% &quot;disagree&quot;</td>
<td>Workers and management: 14% &quot;are natural enemies&quot; 75% &quot;share same interests&quot; 12% &quot;not sure&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2) Unions</strong></td>
<td>68% &quot;too much&quot; 32% &quot;about right, not enough&quot;</td>
<td>12% &quot;should have more&quot; 37% &quot;the same&quot; 47% &quot;less or much less&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a) Power of unions</strong></td>
<td>mean=43 (feeling about those that run unions)</td>
<td>mean=45 (feeling about unions themselves)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b) Feelings toward unions</strong></td>
<td>mean=43 (feeling about those that run unions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(value thermometer 1-100)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Business</strong></td>
<td>Power of large corporations 63% &quot;too much&quot; 33% &quot;about right&quot; 4% &quot;not enough&quot;</td>
<td>How much should be done for business? 15% &quot;much more&quot; 28% &quot;somewhat more&quot; 33% &quot;same&quot; 13% &quot;somewhat less&quot; 5.7% &quot;much less&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4) Taxes</strong></td>
<td>High income groups should pay more tax 52% &quot;strongly agree&quot; 28% &quot;agree somewhat&quot; 11% &quot;disagree somewhat&quot; 6% &quot;strongly disagree&quot;</td>
<td>Cutting taxes 42% &quot;very important&quot; 39% &quot;somewhat important&quot; 17% not important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: CES 1984 and 1997)

Table 6.3 shows that fewer Canadians believe in the inevitability of class conflict in 1997 than in 1984, and that Canadians in 1997 feel more favourable toward business than they did in 1984. In 1984, the majority of respondents supported the principle of a progressive tax system. A key question relating to taxes on the 1997 survey found that the vast majority felt that tax cuts are important. Perhaps surprisingly, the level of support for unions did not diminish from 1984 to 1997. Neo-liberals see unions as anachronistic
checks on economic growth. However, moderate acceptance of unions still remains. This may be because the union movement has managed to keep union density at about 35% of the workforce, despite the introduction of anti-union legislation in several provinces.

The questions in Table 6.3 were chosen because they asked questions on similar topics in both election years. However, the ideological shift that took place in the roughly 13 years between 1984 and 1997 can be seen perhaps more clearly by the questions that were asked on the 1984 survey but not in 1997 and vice versa. This may be due to the change in the research teams involved in the studies, but I think it also signifies the shift in political discourse during the ensuing years. For instance, in 1984, respondents were asked about the government's responsibility in housing. Forty-three percent of respondents "strongly agreed" that the government should ensure adequate housing and another 36% agreed "somewhat" with that statement. The fact that the question was not asked in 1997 may have reflected the fact that in 1995 the federal government renounced its role in providing social housing, and now sees housing as a commodity provided by the market. In 1997, when respondents were asked to choose the best way to fight unemployment, 38% said "reduce taxes," 33% responded "eliminate the deficit," and another 8% recommended a combination of a tax reduction and the elimination of the deficit. Only 7% suggested the creation of jobs or some other solution to unemployment. These answers suggest widespread acceptance of the neo-liberal views that a reduction in taxes will spur businesses to expand their workforce, and that the deficit is a drag on economic growth.
A major 1998 Ekos survey supports my interpretation. The survey concluded that neo-liberalism has had an "indelible" impact on Canadian attitudes to government and social policy (Ekos, 1998). According to a commentary on the survey's findings, "the old progressive model of wealth distribution, passive income support and heavy state apparatus is in disrepute with the public" (Ekos, 1998). At the same time, the survey found that, in its totality, neo-liberalism has not persuaded the majority of Canadians. Public support has not matched the degree to which it has shaped government policy.

6.6 Conclusion

Canadian politics is becoming less and less a reflection of the political attitudes and values of the population and more a function of the priorities of the capitalist class. Surveys show a strong discord between, for instance, the priorities of the Canadian people and the policy decisions taken by the federal government. To illustrate, the Liberal budget released in February 2000 placed great emphasis on tax cuts, while surveys show Canadians are much more concerned about their deteriorating health care than the amount of tax that they pay. More broadly, Canadians believe in "class-based" explanations for inequality, despite the meritocracy mantra that emanates from government and corporate elites (Pammett, 1996: 77). More and more, the decisions of governments represent the needs of the corporate sector and a segment of the wealthy elite. The degree to which Canadians accept the corporate agenda is, in part, a result of the deluge of neo-liberal ideas circulated by the press, governments, and the corporate

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6 A poll published by Angus Reid in February 2000 found that 78% of Canadians say that their province's health care system is currently "in crisis" (Angus Reid, 2000).
sector and the concerted assault on the role that government has to play in Canadian society.

Given the weight of elite influence in shaping politics, surveys alone are increasingly unable to help us understand the changes in Canadian politics and society. Some have argued that the use of surveys to understand politics amounts to psychological reductionism, defined by Vanneman and Cannon (1987: 15) as "the assumption that the structure of any society can be reduced to the wishes and motivations of its members." But they continue, "[s]ociety is much more than a straightforward embodiment of the wills of the people within that society." I have argued that to understand Canadian politics we need to examine the corporate offensive that, in the absence of a strong, united labour movement, is able to make its views and agenda hegemonic.

The NDP has been damaged by these economic and ideological shifts. The labour movement, the NDP's traditional ally, has been on the defensive for years, and is facing growing barriers to its expansion. The public sector, another NDP ally, was greatly reduced in size during Jean Chrétien's first term in office (Bashevkin, 2000: 17). At the same time, the capitalist class has initiated changes in the production process that have led to greater employment insecurity and higher rates of part-time and self-employment. The capitalist class has also demanded and received benefits from the state to improve its profitability. These include tax cuts and lax environmental regulations. The corporate community has also been instrumental in expounding an ideology to legitimate these changes as necessary and, ultimately, beneficial for all. In this ideological context, the
NDP's message is portrayed, and seen by many, as out of date and contrary to the conventional wisdom.
Chapter 7
Conclusion

This dissertation has been motivated by the desire to understand the electoral decline of the NDP during the 1990s. A puzzle emerged. Given that economic inequality is growing and that the health care and educational systems have been damaged by the deficit-fighting focus of recent governments, why is the only mainstream party that is somewhat critical of these changes in Canadian society mired at about 10% popularity? By way of contrast, during the 1980s, the NDP received about 20% of the vote and was, on one occasion in the late 1980s, the most popular party in Canada, according to opinion polls.

More broadly, the dissertation has attempted to further our understanding of the changing nature of Canadian federal politics during the 1980s and 1990s. The growing salience of new postmaterialist issues is seen by Inglehart and others as shattering our previous materialist conception of Western politics. Dovetailing with the postmaterialist thesis is the declining-significance-of-class-approach which claims that, while social class was a key motivator of voting behaviour in the past, it has become increasingly irrelevant. According to this later approach, the growing middle class, bringing with it a rising standard of living, has made issues of economic distribution less salient in Western democracies. In the course of this dissertation, I have found that these prevalent explanations of recent political shifts offer only partial insights into the Canadian case. This has driven me to the understanding that these approaches, and the almost exclusive use of sample surveys used to support them, must be supplemented by an understanding
of the political economy of capitalist democracies like Canada and the associated hegemonic structures that serve to legitimate them.

This chapter will classify the insights gained and errors spotted from the application of some of the dominant approaches to the shifting nature of Western politics. First, I will summarize my inquiry into both the postmaterialist theory and declining-significance-of-class argument in the Canadian context and offer some more general conclusions on them. I conclude that neither of these approaches can go far in explaining the NDP's precipitate decline during the 1990s. I will then recap the findings from my look at the NDP election campaigns that led, on the one hand, to failure in Quebec in 1988 and, on the other, to success in Nova Scotia in 1997. My analysis found that electoral success depends on the ability of the party to mobilize potential supporters. While logistics and strategy are clearly important to the process of mobilization, access to resources and media coverage are probably even more important. Since the NDP's brand of social democracy represented a vision somewhat contrary to the prevailing wisdom, it is particularly vital for the party to get its message across to the potential voters. However, the drop in union density during the past decade has eroded one of the NDP's traditional sources of financial support. This decline in resources is all the more damaging given the growing importance of advertising in election campaigns.

7.1 The Postmaterialist Explanation

Ronald Inglehart has argued in a series of influential books and articles that issues relating to the distribution of goods and services have lost their centrality to the politics
of Western democracies. Replacing them are issues relating to quality of life, personal expression, and aesthetics. The reason for this shift, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, is that an increasing majority of the electorate are able to take their material needs for granted and have moved on to satisfy higher-level needs like personal fulfillment and self-actualization. This freedom from prosaic worries is a result of the growth in living standards and a long, uninterrupted period of history free of major wars or economic depression.

According to the postmaterialist thesis, parties that are wedded to materialist issues are becoming increasingly irrelevant. The NDP, according to this thesis, was forced to incorporate postmaterialist issues — including the environment, feminism, gay and lesbian rights — into its agenda or risk irrelevance. The risk the NDP took, however, was that by incorporating these new issues into its program, its traditional blue-collar base, unsympathetic to postmaterial issues, might leave the party. According to Inglehart, to the extent that the NDP has not been able to balance these potentially conflicting forces, its fortunes during the 1990s have declined.

In Chapter 3 I concluded that the new and old leftist politics are largely compatible. In terms of political and social values, NDP voters are further to the Left on both the old and new issues. For example, NDPers are the most favourable to labour unions and hostile to big business, and are also supportive of gay and lesbian rights, feminism, and Aboriginal Canadians. Furthermore, while there is a gap between the blue-collar and white-collar NDP voters in terms of their support for the new political issues, blue-collar NDPers are
by no means hostile to these issues and are much more supportive than blue-collar workers who voted for the other major parties. White-collar NDP supporters are also solidly pro-labour in their views.

Moreover, the old and new Left share many of the same underlying assumptions. Both are supportive of forwarding the interests of disadvantaged groups and are prepared to use government intervention in the economy to achieve that end. For instance, the labour movement in Canada has been instrumental in the institution of employment equity for women and visible minorities. More generally, both the new and old Left are wary of the unbridled freedom of the capitalist economy.

Over the past two decades, the NDP has embraced postmaterialist issues. At the policy level, for instance, the NDP has supported programs to reduce inequality between men and women. In particular, the party has supported employment equity, equal pay for work of equal value, and the establishment of a universal daycare system. At the same time, it has promoted the participation of women within the NDP and has had the highest share of women candidates and women elected to Parliament. Rather than a trade-off between postmaterialist and materialist, or the old and new Left issues, the inclusion of members of various new social movements offered the opportunity for a net growth in the NDP's ranks. However, the decline of support for postmaterialist issues and traditional leftist views is largely responsible for the NDP decline.
7.2 A Critique of Postmaterialism

Inglehart's work on the introduction of a new postmaterialist politics overstates and generalizes a very limited, localized phenomenon: the emergence in the 1960s of a politically active, educated, liberal generation in the United States, France, and some other European nations (Brint, 1984). But just as the former 60s radicals have become stockbrokers or Clinton-style Democrats (or George W. Bush Republicans), the enthusiasm for social change in the 60s, especially as it relates to the expansions of grassroots democracy and issues like the environment, women's rights, minorities, gays and lesbians, have largely passed by the 1980s and 1990s. This period has been marked by the individualistic ethos of the neo-liberalism of Thatcher, Reagan, and Mulroney. On the Left, this often means a retreat from politics into the realm of individual-centred therapeutic practices (e.g., deep ecology, New Age beliefs, and identity politics) (Boggs, 2000: 166-207).

Furthermore, the chief condition for postmaterialism, material security, is now less and less prevalent. The neo-liberal perspective, which advocates the shrinking of the welfare state and the lifting of restriction on trade flows, has resulted in record corporate profits and executive salaries, on the one hand, and alarming growths in homelessness and food bank use on the other. Inglehart's emphasis on value socialization makes his theory quite unadaptable to changes in the economic and political landscape. His ideas abandon political economy and history for the notion that people are solidly imprinted by their formative experiences.
In Chapter 2 I link the decline in economic security and the growth of economic inequality caused by the dismantling of the Keynesian welfare state to the decline of support for postmaterialist issues in Canada. Although I found support for many of the correlates of postmaterialism discussed by Inglehart — age, education and so forth — I also found that, from 1988 to 1997, Canadians became more hostile to feminism, ethnic minorities, and Aboriginal Canadians. My findings are consistent with other research on Canada. For example, Ponting and Kiely (1997) found a drastic deterioration in support for Native people over the past two decades. They found that many fewer people feel that racism is the main problem facing Aboriginal people, while many more consider that alcohol and drug abuse is their most serious problem. Similarly, concern about the environment spiked in the late 1980s with much attention placed on global warming and the ozone layer, but has declined since (Bakvis and Nevitte, 1992). These findings are inconsistent with the temporal dimension of Inglehart's theory, which predicts a steadily increasing level of postmaterialism, given continued economic growth.

7.3 The Declining Significance of Class/The Shrinking of the Industrial Working Class

This rise in postmaterialism is often seen as coinciding with the decline of class voting (Lipset, 1991, Lipset and Clark, 1991). Class position in the economic hierarchy is seen as a diminishing source of political ideology and voting behaviour. According to Lipset, this is because of the growing prosperity of the industrial worker which has dulled the radical edge of the working class, and also because of the growing liberalism of left-leaning, middle-class professionals. Further weakening the association between class
and voting is the decline in absolute numbers of the industrial working class, in Canada as elsewhere. As the share of service sector workers increased, class voting became less prevalent. The conventional explanation for the declining fortunes of the NDP is that there has been growth in the share of service versus industrial workers, combined with the rising social conservatism of those workers still in blue-collar jobs.

The results and discussion in Chapter 4 found that explaining the declining significance of occupational class as a predictor of voting in Canada is like proclaiming the demise of something that never existed. Class has never been found to be a key structuring variable for Canadian politics. This is despite the often ingenious efforts of Canadian academics to find class effects. In a review article, Pammett (1987) divides the explanations for the weakness of class voting in Canada into those that look to the low level of class consciousness in Canada, and those that look at the inability of parties, unions, and other institutional groups to structure their appeal in class terms.

I was also unable to find strong class effects. Being a member of a union or living in a province where the NDP had a history as a viable party were stronger predictors of voting NDP than being from one class or another. These findings substantiate the findings of Brym et al. (1989), who found that, although occupational class as an individual socio-demographic variable was a weak predictor of voting NDP, living in a province that enjoyed a high union density was a strong predictor.
Across the time period I studied (1984–1997), support for the NDP shifted from skilled blue-collar workers to middle-class professionals. However, the NDP’s embrace of the middle class is at least 40 years old. The CCF–NDP was only briefly a traditional working-class party. The CCF emerged in the 1930s as a party made up of farmers, Christian socialists, and industrial workers. The NDP was formed in 1961 to solidify its ties with the industrial working class and the unions that represented them, and, at the same time, increase their appeal to urban, middle-class liberals. Therefore, finding that the NDP appeals to middle-class professionals is consistent with the development of the party since its founding convention. The fact that the blue-collar worker may be less likely to support the NDP today than 15 years earlier may be because those workers earning $60,000 or $70,000 a year may find the tax cuts offered by parties to the right to be very attractive.

The recent decline in union density has likely diminished the pool of NDP supporters. Furthermore, some former NDP voters left the party because of their move towards postmaterialist politics, while others may have moved to the Green Party, or have chosen not to vote at all, because they felt that the NDP was too mired in its materialist conception of society and politics. However, the evidence presented in the chapters that evaluated both the postmaterialist and declining-significance-of-class theses do not provide a complete picture of the decline in support for the NDP.

7.4 Explaining the NDP’s Successes and Failures
Chapter 5 compared the success of the NDP in Nova Scotia in 1997 with its failure to win any seats in Quebec in 1988. It explains how the distribution of power in Canada can determine the electoral success of the NDP. By understanding why the NDP is successful or unsuccessful, we can explain its electoral decline during the 1990s. I chose Nova Scotia and Quebec for my analysis because they are provinces in which the NDP felt it could win more seats. I concluded that the NDP's success in Nova Scotia was due to the disproportionate amount of resources the party was able to invest in its campaign there. These resources were used to fund riding campaigns and pay for advertising to raise voter awareness of its programs. In addition, the media's coverage of the NDP campaign in Nova Scotia, although far from effusive, was balanced relative to the anti-NDP bias found in all the other provinces. If the NDP's campaign was well-funded and the media relatively balanced in Nova Scotia, the opposite was true in Quebec. The NDP were able to muster credible campaigns in few Quebec ridings and was almost always outspent by the other parties. Also, the media were generally hostile to the NDP's program. This combined with what can be described as a cultural animus toward the NDP and the perception in Quebec of the NDP as outsiders. In contrast in Nova Scotia the NDP could draw on the strong ties McDonough and her family had in that region.

The demonstration of low levels of campaign finances and the tenor of media coverage were chosen as variables because they both reflect the distribution of power and resources in capitalist democracies like Canada. First, the NDP is chronically underfunded relative to the other major parties because it is the only party that receives little, if any, money from corporations. That is because, on the one hand, the NDP has
ideological reasons for maintaining its distance from the corporate sector, and, on the other, few businesses support New Democratic principles. Labour unions, the NDP's chief institutional source of funds, have seen their membership shrink in the past decade, which has reduced donations from this sector. In addition, some unions have loosened their ties with the NDP because of anger toward right-leaning NDP governments at the provincial level. Second, as the mass media have become increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few multinational conglomerates, alternatives to neo-liberal thinking are increasingly hard to find. To the extent that NDP supporters are able to hit the pavement and get their message across, as they did in Nova Scotia in 1997, they can still be successful. However, in larger provinces like Ontario, their message is elbowed out by neo-liberal orthodoxies.

7.5 Neo-liberal Ideology and the Decline of the NDP

Chapter 6 places the findings of Chapter 5 in the larger context of changes in Canadian political economy and the supportive ideology used to legitimate these changes. Using insights from the political process stream of resource mobilization theory, I make the case that the political opportunity structure was more favourable to the NDP in 1988 as compared to 1997. By 1997, the ideological sphere was dominated by neo-liberalism and hostile to the social democratic project. Specifically, I argued that the advent of post-Fordism as a reaction to the crisis in capitalist accumulation has had profound consequences for the politics of capitalist democracies like Canada. The 1980s and 1990s have seen the balance of power shift overwhelmingly toward the corporate class, at the expense of organized labour and working people generally. Neo-liberal ideas
supportive of this capitalist offensive have been widely circulated via tightly organized business lobby groups, corporate-supported think tanks, and the largely pro-business mass media. As a result, the neo-liberal agenda has become hegemonic, leaving little space for alternative perspectives.

The NDP's heyday in the mid-1980s occurred in a substantially different time in the ideological history of Canada. In the early 1980s, while Reagan and Thatcher were implementing monetarist economic policies and reversing the gains of the postwar period, Trudeau was making a last ditch effort to create a more just and independent Canada. The 1980 budget, for instance, saw the creation of the National Energy Program (NEP), which was described by James Laxer as "the most significant act of government intervention in the Canadian economy since the Second World War" (cited in Harrison, 1995: 59). In this context, the NDP's agenda seemed reasonable to a significant share of Canadians. In fact, many of Trudeau's programs over the years were amply borrowed from the NDP. The passing of the Free Trade Agreement, opposed by the majority of Canadians, represented a turning point in the ascendance of the neo-liberal, corporate agenda.

Much of the decline of the fortunes of the federal NDP is a result of a shift to the Right in Canadian politics, which has made the party's platform less attractive to Canadian voters and has decreased the legitimacy of the NDP. This contrasts with the recent electoral success of many labour parties in Western Europe. The electoral success of "left-labour" parties in Western Europe may relate to the fact that the parties of Blair in the England and Schroeder in Germany, for instance, have moderated their program (i.e., shifted to
the Right) to the extent that their policies represent neo-liberalism with softer edges (Panitch and Leys, 1997). Blair's Labour Party has framed its program as representing a "Third Way," presumably located somewhere between neo-liberalism and traditional social democracy. The message of Blair's Third Way can probably be best understood by a series of catch-phrases: "public–private partnerships," "active welfare states," "social entrepreneurship." and "harnessing local initiative" (cited in Zuege, 1999: 90). European Left parties have also tended to be successful where they are one of the parties that tend to alternate as the governing party with parties on the Right. Some members of the NDP caucus have suggested moving in the direction of their European counterparts, but, in the main, the NDP platform has remained quite consistently on the left in terms of issues of economic policy and social issues. Overtures to the right have been rebuked by core NDP partisans. To the degree that the NDP has been unchanging in its program, its ideas are increasingly presented as being out of date and out of touch with the current realities of a globalized economy. This has created a vicious cycle: the political, economic, and ideological shifts that have resulted in the marginalization of the NDP, have placed the party on the periphery of Canadian party politics, further damaging the legitimacy of the NDP in the eyes of the Canadian electorate.

Figures 7.1 and 7.2 summarize my model of NDP decline from the 1980s to the 1990s. The shift in the balance of power between capital and labour in Canada has affected the ideological atmosphere of Canadian politics, the level of funding available to the NDP, and the degree of legitimacy of the NDP. These three factors have influenced the level of the NDP's electoral success.
Figure 7.1 Structure and NDP mobilization 1980s

- High levels of funding, strong mobilization
- Ideological terrain relatively open
- Ascendent neo-liberalism not yet institutionalized
- Relatively high level of electoral support
- NDP has relatively high level of legitimacy/electoral viability
- Fighting for national power

Ratio of capital strength to labour power relatively balanced
Some may argue that I have let the NDP leadership off the hook by portraying their poor showing in recent election as a result of forces beyond their control. Specifically, I have explained the party's decline as a result of the growing power of the corporate class and decline in the strength of organized labour. To be sure, the NDP has made decisions in recent years that may have had an impact on their electoral decline. For instance, if Svend Robinson had been selected as party leader over Alexa McDonough, the party would have had a more vocal and passionate opponent to recent government cutbacks and privatization. As the first openly gay federal party leader, Robinson would have garnered press coverage for the novelty factor alone. Under the leadership of the moderate McDonough, the NDP has been fighting a rearguard campaign, decrying further cutbacks to social programs and prodding for a return to previous levels of
spending. Rarely is the party's vision cast beyond the reinstatement of the liberal welfare state. Indeed, there has been little discussion of the possibility for more radical forms of egalitarian social organization that might inspire more people to take a closer look at the NDP. Several such proposals have been making their way around academic circles recently (Wright, 2000b), two of which are the universal basic income grant and a market-based socialism, proposed by John Roemer (1994). The universal basic income grant would provide a monthly stipend, set somewhere over the poverty line, to all citizens, decreasing the coercive power of employers as well as eliminating the stigmatizing effects of mean-tested government payments. In Roemer's model of market socialism, shares in corporations would be distributed equally throughout society, thereby eliminating inequalities in wealth. Although these ideas are intriguing and viable in theory, they do not recognize the limitations of political reform. These proposals involve massive government intervention in the economy and the acquiescence of the capitalist class, neither of which is likely to happen soon. Russell Jacoby describes proposals such as Roemer's as "practical reforms that require a revolution" (Jacoby, 1999: 22). Given the ideological context in which we live, I would argue that the NDP is doing the best it can under the circumstances: trying to remain a credible alternative in an increasingly hostile environment.¹

¹ Left-wing critiques of neo-liberalism, like Teeple (2000) and Panitch and Leys (1997), have influenced my thinking about how changes in capitalist development- in particular the decline of the Keynesian system- have left social democratic parties largely unable to address the neo-liberal agenda. For Teeple the type of social reform typical of postwar social democracy was predicated on strong economic growth, a relatively powerful labour movement, and the organization of capitalist accumulation at the level of the nation-state. According to Teeple, these conditions had disappeared by the 1990s. However Teeple abandons his acute analysis of the structural influences on politics when it comes to discussing the fate of social democratic parties. According to Teeple, "the social democratic left has become, in effect, part of the problem. It remained wedded to a
There are several limited changes to the electoral process that would likely improve the visibility and impact of the NDP on Canadian politics. A cut in the allowable election campaign spending limits would help the NDP and other smaller parties that have little corporate sponsorship. This would be of net benefit to the NDP even if it meant the end of union contributions, since these pale next to corporate donations. Strict limits on third-party advertising during election campaigns would also decrease the influence of wealthy corporations and individuals. The introduction of a form of proportional representation would also improve the parliamentary presence of the NDP, whose support is spread thinly throughout the country. The NDP regularly receives a lower percentage of seats compared to its share of the popular vote (Milner, 1998). More voters would likely cast their ballots for the NDP if they felt that it would contribute to an additional seat in Parliament. As it stands now, the vast majority of the 1.43 million Canadian who voted for the NDP in 1997 effectively wasted their vote. Ultimately, these changes would increase the level of democracy in Canada and might serve to decrease the level of alienation associated with the political process. Not surprisingly, electoral reform is opposed by the Liberals, the Reform Party, and the Bloc Québécois who benefit from the current system. The Progressive Conservatives have also recently suffered in the "first-past-the-post system." The greater possibility of minority governments and unstable alliances under a proportional representation system would, in my view, be outweighed by the increased representation of popular preferences in Parliament. The federal NDP's notion of reformed capitalism until the 1980s and since then has produced little analysis of or alternatives to neo-liberalism." (Teeple, 2000: 148-149) Teeple blames social democratic parties for their own demise, thereby giving too much power or agency to the particular actions of political parties in explaining their fate.
platform prepared in August, 2000, includes for the first time, an endorsement of proportional representation.

In the wake of another miserable electoral outcome in the 2000 federal election, rethinking of the role of the NDP in Canadian politics began in earnest. Not since the Waffle movement thirty years ago has there been so much debate within the party, or the question of whither the NDP raised seriously. Op-ed pieces has appeared in newspapers offering the NDP advice. A major conference co-chaired by Ed Broadbent and Desmond Morton has been planned to discuss the future of the NDP, and the social democratic Left in general. Preliminary suggestions range from a move to embrace the values of the young anti-corporate globalization activists to a move back to more tradition Left issues such as the promotion of organized labour and redistributive justice.

The findings of this dissertation suggest that postmaterialism is not widespread in Canada, nor is it growing, and that a move in that direction would be electorally limiting. Similarly a move to the traditional left would find little popular support given the current popularity of neo-liberal thinking. In the later part of the dissertation I argue that Canadian politics is conditioned by the capital-labour power ratio. Therefore the prospects for the Canadian Left will likely not improve without a narrowing of the power imbalance between capital and labour. This suggests that that anti-corporate protests, social unionism, and other extra-parliamentary activities are critical to the future prospects for a parliamentary Left in Canada.
If, as I have shown, an increase in the power ratio between capitalists and workers was associated with the decline of the left in Canada during the 1990s, the degree to which this association holds in other times and other countries is unclear. The dissertation thus cries out for comparative analysis to substantiate and generalize its central theoretical claim.

In the 1990s, the rise of neo-liberalism was symptomatic of a capitalist class growing stronger in all of the world’s rich countries. Concomitantly, the left and the welfare state retreated. However, they did so to varying degrees in different countries. In fact, in some places, such as Sweden, the welfare state is resurgent today. In Western Europe, socialist parties head eleven of fifteen governments. Can the power ratio account for these variations in electoral success? Initial impressions suggest that it can.

Consider, for example, the broad difference between Western Europe and North America. Socialist parties remain viable in most Western European countries because, in each country, one or both of the following conditions obtain:

1. *Working classes won the right to vote relatively late.* In Western Europe, the protracted struggle to win the vote mobilized the working class and led it to form strong unions and political parties. These organizations became the basis for sustained power throughout much of the 20th century and into the 21st century. Thus, although capitalist class power grew in Western Europe in the 1990s, the working class remained a strong force there. In contrast, workers won the vote relatively early and without much of a struggle in North America. As a result, they lacked an important
basis for mobilization and organization. Thus weakened, the North American working class met with less electoral success, particularly in the neo-liberal era of the 1990s.

2. *Citizens won systems of proportional representation.* An important consequence of working class power in Western Europe was the establishment of electoral systems based on proportional representation. Working class citizens in particular struggled to institutionalize systems of proportional representation because they lower the threshold for achieving parliamentary representation. In contrast, by winning the right to vote early and without much of a struggle, North American workers failed to promote and achieve systems of proportional representation. The non-proportional electoral systems of North America raise the threshold for parliamentary representation.

As the Western Europe / North America contrast illustrates, then, variations in the ratio of power between the capitalist and working classes seem to be able to explain variations in the strength of the parliamentary left in various settings. Substantiating this argument historically and on a country-by-country basis will require a more systematic and quantitative approach to analyzing the power ratio than I have employed here. It is a promising area for future research.
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