THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL: WHY WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN MARXIST GROUP IN STRUGGLE CHANGED FROM OPPOSING TO SUPPORTING THE FEMINIST IDEOLOGY OF THE AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

by

John Cleveland

B. A., Dalhousie University (King's), 1966

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

August 1983

APPROVAL

Name: John Cleveland

Degree: Master of Arts

Title of thesis: The Political is Personal: Why women in the Canadian Marxist Group IN STRUGGLE Changed from Opposing to Supporting the Feminist Ideology of the Autonomous Women's Movement

Examining Committee:

Chairperson: Dr. Noel Dyck

Dr. Arlene McLaren, Senior Supervisor

Dr. Gary Rush, Supervisory Committee

Dr. Veronica Strong-Boag, External Examiner

Date Approved: 11 August 1983

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL: WHY WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN MARXIST GROUP IN STRUGGLE CHANGED FROM OPPOSING TO SUPPORTING THE FEMINIST IDEOLOGY OF THE AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S MOVEMENT.

Author: _____
(signature)

John Cleveland
(name)

August 15, 1983
(date)

ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates the social experience underlying the change in political attitudes of women members of the Canadian Marxist group IN STRUGGLE: from opposition to the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement in 1972 to strong support in 1982. Data is drawn from thirty-four taped interviews with ex-members, confidential files and direct observation. The study concludes that women in IN STRUGGLE adopted a feminist political discourse because the formal equality of women and men in political life was contradicted by the reality of male powers and privileges rooted in personal and family life. IN STRUGGLE said that the material basis for unequal power relations in personal and family life would disappear when private property was eliminated. Before socialism was attained, time spent on "private life" was to be strictly subordinated to political tasks.

Data collected showed that: (1) The extreme time demands on IN STRUGGLE members resulted in men sharing housework tasks but not the household management responsibility or role of emotional support for children, mate, and kin. (2) Women were pushed into posts of power and authority in proportion to their numbers but paternalistic attitudes to feminine "weaknesses" persisted. (3) Women were over-represented in routine organizational tasks. (4) A hierarchy existed based on valuing the capacity to abstract and synthesize data in doing political analyses. (5) The top thinking posts were monopolized by men. (6) Several hierarchies

overlapped: men over women, especially in private life; theoretical tasks over routine organizational tasks; abstracted knowledge over the knowledge of individual participants in social struggles; and the "political" over the "personal." (7) Women who persisted in leadership posts despite all this found that they were "depersonalized" and obliged to deny their preference for more personal modes of expression, attention to practical detail in organizing the work, articulation of emotional bonds of solidarity and collective ways of decision-making and leadership. Feminism helped express the need to make the personal political and the political personal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The list of people who have actually helped in one way or another with researching and writing this thesis is a fairly long one. I presume that most of them would prefer to remain anonymous, so I will leave them as invisible as the contributions of women have been to society for centuries. My thanks to Janet and Jean-Pierre for helping me keep my mind and body together while I was in Montreal, and to Gordon and Susan for doing the same while I was in Toronto. Nancy and Joe were a big help in shooting down the idea of a questionnaire and steering me to rely exclusively on face to face interviews. Josee and Marielle are but two of the many IS women who remain an inspiration. Thanks are due to Arlene and Gary for persuading me out of a theoretical thesis which would have been a disaster. Thanks to Barbara Barnett for typesetting this so that it is at least legible if not always comprehensible. And finally thanks to Ted for making editorial comments on the manuscript and especially for being so prudent in his comments that he kept my morale from going too far below zero.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to describe and analyze the social experience of women members of the Canadian Marxist group IN STRUGGLE (IS) to understand what led most of those women to a change in political attitude -- from opposition to the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement to strong support.

The explanatory bypotheses which will be tested are, briefly:

1. IN STRUGGLE reproduced in its own ranks the sexism (i.e. systematic denial of autonomy and equality for women) of the broader society despite the commitment of its official ideology to equality for women.
2. The Marxist ideology of IS, in contrast to feminist ideology, denied that "the personal is political". More specifically:
   a. it ignored male gender privileges and powers over women beyond those directly caused by class relations (what some feminists cal "patriarchy"); and
   b. it did not value and was simply blind to many of the important but 'invisible' responsibilities borne by women in personal and family life.[1]
3. IS women, many of whom were working mothers, shared the same pressures and contradictions experienced by women in Quebec and English Canada generally between 1972 and 1982,

contradictions which helped give rise to a mass women's movement.

4. The evolution of the women's movement itself between 1972 and 1982 in Quebec and English Canada had an impact on the attitudes of IS women.

The focus of the proof will be on the first two points. The last two are primarily documented in chapter 3.

The term "feminist" will be used in this thesis to refer to the general ideology of a particular social movement, the broad women's movement that existed in Quebec and English Canada between 1972 and 1982. It is perhaps more accurate, particularly when referring to the earlier years, to say that feminism was the explicit ideology of one section of the women's movement, those women organized into women-only structures generally completely outside mixed organizations like the unions or political groups. A number of women in women's committees in the unions for example, denied that they were feminist. In the early 1970s some socialist women called themselves "women's liberationists" in order to distinguish themselves from radical feminists. For this reason although the term "feminist" alone has the definition already given, in most cases I have employed a longer phrase which has a narrower meaning, "the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement" (for example in the title of the thesis).

The hallmark of the women's movement that grew up in English Canada and Quebec from 1972 to 1982 was the importance

it gave to autonomy for women. Autonomy was seen to be equal in importance to the more traditional demand for equality. This was reflected in the fact that women generally preferred to have autonomous women-only structures, including within mixed organizations. It was also expressed in the nature of some of the political demands which were raised, the best known being demands related to women's control and domination by men and male-controlled institutions.

When I refer to "feminist theory" I mean all the theory written by persons who share feminist ideology. However, the aspect of feminist theory which this thesis is most concered with is the concept of "the personal is political". Some feminists are working to deepen the explanation of this concept by theorizing the notion of 'patriarchy'. As will become evident in the pages that follow, I am sympathetic to that attempt and have kept it in mind in formulating the hypotheses for this thesis.

(1) Problems with the existing debates

This thesis is written by a Marxist in the context of a set of political and academic debates which are largely going on among Marxists (including Marxist-feminists like Sheila Rowbotham) although the debates include non-Marxists as well. I will be very happy when a new general theory (or more likely set of theories) surpasses Marxism as the paradigmatic method for

analyzing society in terms of progressive social change. But that day is not yet here. To use the latest buzz word, Marxism has to be "deconstructed" first before it can be surpassed. This thesis fits into the existing debates between academics, as well as between activists, as an argument for the importance of feminism both as a theory and method of analysis and as the ideology of a movement for social change in (a) deconstructing Marxism, and (b) developing the basis for new theories of social change side by side with and independent of Marxism. My main critique of the existing debates in both the academic and political arenas is that they are often not waged in this perspective at all.

For example, Sheila Rowbotham, in "The trouble with patriarchy" (first published in The New Statesman December 28, 1979.)[2] writes that "the trouble with patriarchy" as a concept is that it "implies a universal and ahistorical form of oppression which returns us to biology". Further, "by focussing upon the bearing and rearing of children ('patriarchy' = the power of the father) it suggests there is a single determining cause of women's subordination", biological reproduction and motherhood. Thirdly, it is one-sided because "some aspects of male-female relationships are evidently not simply oppressive but include varying degrees of mutual aid". She concludes that "it is not sexual difference which is the problem, but the social inequalities of gender -- the different kinds of power societies have given to sexual differences, and the hierarchical

forms these have imposed on human relationships ... The concept of 'patriarchy' has no room for such subtleties however".

At first sight Rowbotham's argument seems incontrovertible. She has used all the right words. After all who is going to champion a concept which legitimates ahistorical, anti-male biologism ahead of a dialectical, historical cultural analysis of gender? Taken individually, each of Rowbotham's concerns may be valid. But the thrust of the argument as a whole stands opposed to attempts to theorize the notion of systematic male powers and privileges (patriarchy) if it goes out of the bounds of the existing categories of (her brand of) Marxist analysis. Her argument is dogmatic. Those who use the concept of patriarchy to stress the antagonism of interests between men and women are wrong, according to Rowbotham, because there is also mutuality (common class interests, etc.). Those who talk about biological reproduction (and male control of female fertility and sexuality) being a basis for oppression are wrong because the role of mother (and gendered roles generally) is socially constructed. Those who use the notion of patriarchy point out that the oppression of women as mothers and housewives has continued through various epochs and modes of production. The import of Rowbotham's argument is that this is wrong too because this denies the importance of an historical analysis which notes the specific forms that women's oppression take in different modes of production. Rowbotham pits male-female antagonisms against male-female mutuality, biological sex against

sociological gender, the persistence of women's oppression in the family through many historical periods against an historical analysis of specific modes of production -- as if they were mutually exclusive either/or alternatives as objects of analysis.

What is wrong with this either/or approach is that it denies the relevance or possibility of making an historical analysis of gender relations in the context of specific modes of production which also delves seriously into biological reproduction and the struggle for control over it, the material basis for conflicts of interest between women and men and the relative autonomy of the family as a social structure across several historical contexts. And it views with horror the prospect of doing research which is unable to be fully historical and to make all the links to the mode of production because the theory is not yet sufficiently developed to do so, research which will likely be a bit "ideological" or "psychologistic" and utopian just as the earliest theories of socialism were. As Sally Alexander and Barbara Taylor point out in a reply to Rowbotham's article, "In defence of 'patriarchy'" first published in The New Statesman February 1, 1980:

> Constructing a theory of patriarchal relations is hazardous, not least because it analyzes gender in terms wholly different from those of class. But without a theory of gender relations, any attempt to 'marry' the concepts of sex and class will simply do for theories of sex what marriage usually does for women: dissolve them into the stronger side of the partnership. It was precisely because a Marxist theory of class conflict, however elaborated, could not answer all our questions about sexual conflict that we tried to develop an

alternative. If we need to keep the two areas of analysis apart for a time so be it. Theories are not made all at once.[3]

(2) Theoretical Influences on the Formulation of the Hypothesis

This thesis grows out of a personal political exprience. I was an active supporter and then member of IN STRUGGLE from 1975 to 1982. I moved from Vancouver to Montreal in the fall of 1977 to work in the national apparatus. Although I had expected to be on the "thinking" side of things (to be a member of the national committee of newspaper journalists who were the main interpreters and explainers of the IS political line week to week) I was instead assigned to the task of French-to-English translator. For 4 years I worked within the "infrastructure" of technical and clerical people in the national IS newspaper office. Most of the people I worked with were women. I was doing "women's work".

When the self-conscious women's movement within IS started to build I was more open to it than I might otherwise have been. I had direct knowledge of many of the problems women experienced which are described in this thesis. Some of the things that oppressed them also oppressed me although not always in the same way or to the same degree. I was keenly aware of the slight but real powers and privileges that I had as a man doing women's work among women doing women's work. (For example I was listened to politically when many women were ignored by male political leaders; I was viewed as an acceptable candidate to be put in a

position of supervising the work of other translators while women translators who in fact organized my work and did half my job for me, were ignored).

Chapter 2 explains how the women's movement grew against a backdrop of the development of a generalized "political crisis". One of the reasons for the crisis was the inability of the IS ideology to address the social problems faced by women or with the movement growing up in the Seventies to deal with them. But the roots of the crisis were both broader and deeper. IS was unable to deal effectively with the problems of other social strata either. And the flaws in its ideology, strategy, and tactics were not only of its own creation. To a considerable extent they were inherited from the traditions of the international communist movement which have built up over the last century. My sensitization to a feminist understanding of women's oppression took place simultaneously with my coming to grips with all the other issues in the general political crisis engulfing IS. This was true for everyone, the main players in the IS women's movement included.

In the course of the debates in the last year of IN STRUGGLE's existence, four theoretical insights were made which were important in shaping the way the hypothesis for this thesis has been formulated. All four were a direct product of the women's movement within IS.

The first insight was made by Josee Lamoureux, leader of the IS National Women's Committee in a speech I heard her make

in Toronto on December 5, 1981. She noted that Marx had assumed that the average worker was a male head of a household (he referred to women and children as "that mighty substitute for labour and labourers") and that classes were composed of male-headed families, not individual.[4] In his calculations of the rate of exploitation, Marx stated that "the value of labour power was determined, not only by the labour time necessary to maintain the individual adult labourer, but also by that necessary to maintain his family". He added that the entry of women and children into paid labour depreciated the value of labour power (i.e. drove down the general wage level) and thus raised the level of exploitation of the class as a whole. Besides, it meant that the housework didn't get done! There are lots of points that can be made about this viewpoint of Marx's (how it justifies the family wage, what it implies about the antagonism between capitalist relations of production and the continued existence of the family unit, how it explains women's superexploitation as a reserve supply of labour, etc.) but the point that stuck with me was that at best Marxist class categories were gender blind.

The second theoretical insight was provided by an article in the IS newspaper by a member of the Toronto research collective (not a member of IS), Varda Burstyn, on the origins of the sexual division of labour in primitive society.[5] She argued that Engels had been wrong to presume that the sexual division of labour coincided with the appearance of private

property. Modern anthropological evidence indicated that it had occurred separately and, in most societies, earlier. If this were true then Engels' theory of the family being an ideological superstructure that changed in accordance with changes in the mode of production fell and a new theory was necessary to explain women's oppression in the family. Perhaps the feminists were right, I began to think, to talk about transformation in male-female relations being somewhat autonomous from, and parallel to changes due to class conflict. Perhaps we needed a feminist revolution as well as a socialist one.

The third theoretical insight confirmed the main thrust of the first two. A collection of articles published in a special issue of the IS theoretical journal in March 1982 under the auspices of the National Women's Committee argued that Marxists had a purely economic view of women's oppression in the family.[6] The classic Marxist solution was the abolition of private property and socialization of domestic labour. In practice all efforts in socialist countries to socialize domestic labour had failed. The sexual division of labour inside the family and in the economy continued in socialist countries. The family unit and the woman's roles as mother, monogamous sexual partner and even housewife doing more housework than the man were being reinforced. The point that stuck with me from this insight was that it was insufficient to try to analyze women's labour in the family in terms of production (class) relations. A theory was needed to explain other social relations that mediated the

powers and privileges of men in relation to women, a theory that explained the material basis (other than just economic relations) of what many feminists called patriarchy, especially the "relations of reproduction".

The final theoretical insight was provided by Sheila Rowbotham in her article in Beyond the Fragments: feminism was not only useful as a theory and method of analysis to challenge the gaps and errors in Marx's social analysis it was also instructive as the ideology of a social movement that was challenging Lenin's "vanguardist" view of how social movements organize to "take power".[7] It was possible to base a strategy for social change on the accession of a "self-conscious movement of the majority of the oppressed" to power instead of the conquest of State power by a "conscious minority" (vanguard) with the more or less active support of the majority. Doing so involved a critical examination of notions about leadership being composed of the most advanced, the logic of bureaucratic efficiency and military solidity in the face of repression which justify hierarchical organization in revclutionary political groups, the idea of preparing for a "final battle" or war instead of taking power directly a little bit at a time in the course of everyday life and immediate struggles, and so on.

To sum up, the four theoretical insights which I became aware of as a result of the IS women's movement were:

1. Marxist class categories took the family unit and different roles within it as givens. Marxism alone was gender blind.

2. The evidence for Engels' assertion that the origin of the sexual division of labour coincided with the appearance of private property (and the first organized mode of production) had been convincingly challenged (there was no evidence that primitive pre-class societies had been matriarchal; the sexual division of labour that existed in pre-class societies was far from 'natural' and 'non-oppressive' etc.). This indicated that the source of changes in family forms and corresponding male-female roles and identities might lie 'outside' class dynamics (outside changes in the mode of production) at least in part.
3. Efforts to analyze the family purely as an economic unit had been unable to account for the different identities and activities of women as mothers, sexual partners or even housewives. Attempts to socialize domestic work in existing socialist countries which followed from such a purely economic view of housework had failed.
4. Feminism as a social movement was challenging Lenin's vanguardist approach to 'taking power'.

The first three points were a direct challenge to the tendency in Marxism to reduce the explanation of all social phenomena to a single dynamic, the evolution of the forces and relations of production, or more simply the evolution of the economy and class conflict (what I shall refer to as <u>class reductionism</u>). The last point challenged the Leninist view of how the working class movement could be led to take power

(vanguardism, see chapter 2). Most of the debate in the last year of IN STRUGGLE's existence focussed on the question of vanguardism. The feminist theoretical insights suggested to me ways that the critique of vanguardism could be linked to the critique of class reductionism and economic determinism. This was to have an impact on the way I approached the political debate within IS.[8] It was also to have a determining influence on the way the hypotheses for this thesis were formulated. Behind vanguardism lay class reductionism, I began to reason, and feminism provided a key to going beyond class reductionist explanations of social phenomena.[9]

For example, some feminist theorists asserted that social relations other than the relations of production (class relations) existed as part of the structure of society and needed to be theorized. In particular they advanced the notion of patriarchy, of women's oppression being mediated largely through the family and through non-class power relations governing the control of biological fertility and sexuality and the social reproduction of labour power.

Two inferences, it seemed to me, could be made from this:

1. First, that the material basis of society was not just economic activity to produce and consume goods and services. It also included non-economic activity (what might be referred to as socio-cultural activity) and relations based on control of that activity. The attempt to subsume all of these socio-cultural activities within the economic activity

of reproducing labour power left too many things unaccounted for: interdependent and opposite gender identities, fertility and sexuality conventions oppressive to women, mothering and fathering roles, and so on.[10]

2. The second inference was that such things as sexuality and gender identities and roles could not be taken for granted as basically unchangeable except for their form. They had a history of their own, at least in part. They were cultural as well as biological. They were connected with a distinct matrix of socio-cultural activities and conflictual struggles for control over those activities.

It was these considerations which led me to consult accounts in the written literature which tried to explain sex and gender in ways that allowed for conflict between historical actors and looked at non-economic activities and attempts to control those activities. The best of those accounts was Gayle Rubin's elaboration of the "sex-gender system".

Gayle Rubin tried to theorize patriarchy by drawing upon Marxist economics, Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalysis and structural anthropology (Levi-Strauss).[11]

Rubin began her article by drawing attention to Marx's views on the factors that contribute to what is needed to reproduce human labour power:

> What is necessary to reproduce the worker is determined in part by the biological needs of the human organism, in part by the physical conditions of the place in which it lives, and in part by cultural traditions. Marx observed that beer is necessary for the reproduction of the English working-class, and wine necessary for the

French.[12]

She then quotes Marx as saying that "in contradistinction therefore to the case of other commodities, there enters into the determination of the value of labour-power a historical and moral element" and makes her own inference from this point:

> It was precisely this 'historical and moral element' which determines that a 'wife' is among the necessities of a worker, that women rather than men do the housework, and that capitalism is heir to a long tradition in which women do not inherit, in which women do not lead, and in which women do not talk to god. It is this 'historical and moral element' which presented capitalism with a cultural heritage of forms of masculinity and feminity. It is within this 'historical and moral element' that the entire domain of sex, sexuality, and sex oppression is subsumed.[13]

Rubin then defined her own concept of sex-gender system:

> Hunger is hunger but what counts as food is culturally determined and obtained. Every society has some form of organized economic activity. Sex is sex but what counts as sex is culturally determined and obtained. Every society also has a sex-gender system -- a set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention and satisfied in a conventional manner, no matter how bizarre some of the conventions may be.[14]

Rubin cited Mauss on how gift-giving "expresses, affirms or creates a social link between the partners of an exchange"[15] and Levi-Strauss' idea that the exchange of women between men in exogamous marriage is a basic form of gift exchange which has as its primary aim the development of cooperative ties and alliances between groups of men. Women are the gifts; men are the beneficiaries of the exchange.

> If Levi-Strauss is correct in seeing the exchange of women as a fundamental principle of kinship, the subordination of women can be seen as a product of the relationships by which sex and gender are organized and produced. The economic oppression of women is derivative

and secondary.[16]

She then showed how psychoanalytic theory could be used to describe how individuals internalized the conventions of gender and kinship:

> Kinship is the culturalization of biological sexuality on the societal level; psychoanalysis describes the transformation of the biological sexuality of individuals as they are enculturated.[17]

Rubin continued:

> the precision of the fit between Freud and Levi-Strauss is striking. Kinship systems require a division of the sexes. The Oedipal system divides the sexes. Kinship systems include sets of rules governing sexuality. The Oedipal crisis is the assimilation of those rules and taboos. Compulsory heterosexuality is the product of kinship. The Oedipal phase consolidates heterosexual desire. Kinship rests on a radical difference between the rights of men and women. The Oedipal complex confers male rights upon the boy, and forces the girl to accommodate herself to her lesser rights.[18]

Rubin's analysis of the sex-gender system showed how the three components -- (1) economic (reproduction of labour power); (2) socio-cultural (the conventions governing sexuality etc. encoded in the kinship system); (3) affective-personal (the assimilation of rules and taboos in the parent-child emotional matrix described by Freud in terms of the Oedipus complex -- could be combined in an analysis without being class reductionist or psychologistic.[19]

The relevance of all this is simply that it made credible the idea that there were aspects of the social structure and culture which Marxist ideology was blind to, and that the errors and gaps could <u>not</u> be made up by <u>extending</u> Marxist class analysis to the family. If this were true then the description

of those 'invisible' aspects of the social structure and culture could quite properly be expected to grow out of movements which arose outside of and in partial opposition to Marxist ideology. It was this understanding that led to the formulation of the most important of the hypotheses which this thesis seeks to test: women in IS adopted a feminist discourse because the Marxist discourse was incapable of describing or valuing important parts of the social structure and culture which contribute to defining the (non-class) power relations between men and women. Or in other words IN STRUGGLE's Marxist ideology denied that "the personal is political" in two ways: (a) it ignored male gender privileges and powers; and (b) it did not value or was blind to many of the activities carried out by women, particularly in personal and family life.

It may be a bit awkward that I have defined the notion that "the personal is political" as having two components. I have done so for the following reason. Feminist authors seem to go back and forth between two approaches in describing women's power and authority. The first approach is to stress the existence of women's activities and responsibilities which are not recognized or valued. This is the approach of people like Collier and Stack in the Rosaldo and Lamphere anthology already cited, people who are described as "cultural relativists" by Hartmann in Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979) p. 209. Another example is Anne Oakley's comment in Subject Women (New York:

Pantheon Books, 1981) p. 298, that one can either accept the traditional definition of political power and conclude that women have never had much, or one can redefine it to be the capacity to persuade and influence the actions of others which women have always had but without political authority to match. This first approach refuses to see women as passive victims of history and tries to see women as actors by concentrating on making what they already do visible. The second approach puts the stress on how women are unable to have power or authority because either patriarchy or capitalism confines them to the domestic sphere or creates a sex-segregated economy, etc. This second approach takes up issues like the sexual division of labour, the differentiation of genders, the relationship between domestic and public realms (e.g. Rosaldo and others who Hartmann refers to as "cultural universalists"). It tends to argue that there is a need for a notion of a patriarchy as an autonomous structure which is a cause and not just an effect. See for example Hartmann's discussion of the origin of the family wage. In the second approach the stress is on seeing men as actors who make historical choices which increase of decrease the oppression of women. I have tried to combine these two approaches in order to view both women and men as historical actors.

(3) Methodology

Data for the thesis was sought in two ways. Personal interviews were taped, averaging over 100 minutes each, with former members of IN STRUGGLE. Confidential files were xeroxed from the collection given to the Universite du Quebec a Montreal or were borrowed from individuals.

The interview schedule used in the interviews is reproduced in Appendix A. See Appendix B for a discussion of sampling and the field experience. A few comments are in order about the techniques used in conducting the interviews:

-- Since I was interviewing politically-minded people who were used to a political discourse about the oppression of women, feminist ideology versus Marxist ideology, and so on, there was a danger that people would simply state their political conclusions and add a couple of examples to illustrate or justify their conclusions. Special efforts were made to get people to focus instead on giving their perceptions of the (individual) social experiences of IS women with sexism. This was explicitly requested at the beginning of the interview and was readily accepted by all respondents who did not want to get back into old political arguments. It was also encouraged by a number of techniques. For example, Part One Section Two got the respondents to recount his or her experience in the organization chronologically. The actual purpose of this was to create a "nostalgic" psychological state in which the respondent would be

ready to recount personal experiences or those of others they had heard about. This appeared to work and a number of respondents commented on how the interview was a relatively painless reliving of the past. Another technique was to spend most of the first half of the interview on questions about the chauvinism of individual men in IS. This data does not play an important part in the argument of the thesis but it forced respondents to talk in non-political language and to give examples about personal situations. A third technique was to ask explicitly political questions (at the end of the interview) to guage the political preconceptions of the respondent. In fact, the 'political' questions accomplished more than that - it was the occasion for most women respondents to make clear that they had been voluntarily anti-feminist; it confirmed that their present views were pro-feminist; and it led me to be cautious about employing the notion of an 'old bag network' defining the content of the politics because most respondents said they felt that many hierarchies were involved and that a narrowly 'patriarchal' explanation was no better than a narrow 'class' one.

-- In some cases the same information was sought more than once by posing several different questions. For example, four questions test if the respondents felt there was an "old boy network" of men with de facto control of the organization. Part Two Section One (1) asked about policies and structures dealing with informal inequalities underlying formal equality; Part Two

Section One (3)(e) explicitly asked whether an "informal old boy network" existed; Part Two Section Two asked respondents to look separately at the horizontal sexual division of labour and at the vertical hierarchy of posts of authority; and Part Two Section Four asked whether the "content of IS politics" reflected mainly a male experience of the world.

-- The questions posed in an interview are never completely open-ended. They are based on a definite "problematic" which the researcher arrives at through a preliminary analysis. Biased questions go to the other extreme of being 'closed', i.e. of getting the respondents to simply affirm what is implied by the questions. On the whole the interview schedule used for this study succeeded in posing questions that were neither too open or too closed. For example, the question on the sexual division of labour in the household -- which suggested distinctions between housework to maintain the household and emotional support activities to service the family unit -- gave the respondents a vocabulary to express things about their domestic situation which they likely otherwise would not have expressed. Another example of a question where the categories in the question helped draw out data from the respondents was the one on the five types of chauvinism. Respondents did not reply by restating the terms of the question -- they were stimulated to give examples and to refine the account of their <u>own</u> perceptions.

It was the right decision to conduct face to face interviews rather than to mail out questionnaires. What was lost in terms of intimate details that respondents might be more willing to reveal in a confidential questionnaire where no one knows the identity of the respondent was made up for by the fact that I was able to ensure that all respondents understood the questions I was asking in the same way. This was particularly relevant given that the questions asked were relatively complex and often required follow up questions before they were fully answered. Doing interviews instead of circulating a written questionnaire most likely reached a more representative cross-section as well. A questionnaire sample population would not have been random because the political minority[20] would likely have boycotted it even more completely than was the case after I personally approached some of them for interviews. The sample would also probably have been smaller judging from the number of respondents in both the political majority and minority who I had to "hard sell" into granting an interview.

The second method of investigation was to peruse the IS files. The main sources here were as follows:

-- The National Women's Committee compiled a collection of documents on women which they picked out of the general files. I read through and xeroxed many of those documents. The minutes of many of the Fall 1980 and Fall 1981 meetings of IS women were included in this collection.

-- At the Universite du Quebec a Montreal I xeroxed mostly reports made to the Central Committee on the state of the membership, personnel problems, etc., as well as minutes of Political Bureau discussions.

-- A series of meetings were organized every second Monday night in the spring of 1982 in Montreal by members of the National Women's Committee to get IS members and ex-members to reconstruct the history of IS internal and external policy on women. The testimony of dozens of people was summarized and, together with an overview provided to me by Josee Lamoureux, this is the main basis for the account given in Chapter 3 of the thesis.

-- The national IS Internal Bulletin was published every two months (in the last period every three months for budgetary reasons). It contained articles or letters on matters touching the daily grind of political and family life (dues, housework, childcare, intellectualism in meetings, etc.). Most of the data drawn from documentary sources is statistical information data confirming patterns described in the interviews or data of an "objective" nature (confirmation of official policies, events like the resignation of women from the Political Bureau, descriptions of problems in the way the political work was organized in a formal sense in the newspaper office, etc.).

(4) Structure of the Argument

This thesis is a case study, not a theoretical dissertation. It is not designed to elaborate new hypotheses about the nature of "patriarchy" in Quebecois and English-Canadian society. The main theoretical point which it seeks to establish is the relevance of feminist analysis as a theory and methodology, something which many Marxists and academics still do not concede. Without a feminist analysis, Marxist accounts of the situation of women are gender blind.

When I say "feminist analysis" in this chapter I mean something narrower than feminism as the ideology of a movement although in my opinion the ideology of the current women's movement implies a theory of patriarchy. I mean an analysis which is sensitive to the two factors already mentioned above in defining the meaning of "the personal is political", i.e. to the existence of male powers and privileges and to the social importance of women's "invisible" activities particularly in personal and family life.

Such an approach deals with phenomena which both mainstream social science and Marxism have very few categories to describe (housework, emotional support role, mothering, sex-gender system which establishes gender roles and identities and socializes individuals into them, etc.). Women's activities have been "hidden from history".[21] Feminist analysis makes the value of women's historical and present contributions visible.

Perhaps even more important, a feminist analysis necessarily takes account of women and men as gendered subjects who are socialized into a culture. Feminist analysis necessarily deals with the "affective consciousness"[22] of historical individuals (i.e. the internalized culture expressed in values, feelings, gender identity, etc.) as well as with their rational ideology and set of objective coordinates which describe their socioeconomic situation (status, class, etc.). I say that feminist analysis "necessarily" does this because any description of women's differential treatment or status has to include a definition of what the social perceptions of femaleness are. Even the most "objective" accounts of women in history make assumptions about socialized gender differences and the perceptions of them by historical actors whether these assumptions are made explicit in the analysis or not.

What this assessment of the relevance of feminist analysis means for the structure of the argumentation is that I have tried to marshall data on all three levels of description -- rational ideology (mainly IS policy on women), the "affective" experience of individual women subjects (mainly the experience of paternalistic devaluing of the activities and socialized qualities of women by IS and IS men), and the objective patterns of discrimination -- and to keep them distinct. I have generally not tried to make connections between the different levels of explanation for the simple reason that I do not have a sufficiently developed feminist theory (nor does one yet exist

to my knowledge) to do so profitably. The connections which I do make are made in Chapter 6 and are necessarily tentative correlations.

The argument is structured as follows:

-- This chapter (Introduction) briefly explains the hypothesis being tested, the methodology employed, the structure of the argument, the theoretical influences which led me to formulate the thesis hypothesis and how the thesis fits into existing debates among academics, feminists, and Marxists.

-- Chapter 2 describes the overall official ideology of IS and the "political crisis" which occurred simultaneously with the rise of a self-conscious women's movement within IS. I have taken the time to describe IN STRUGGLE's political project and the process of second-guessing and debate which eventually led to a majority vote at the spring 1982 IS Congress to reject its political project and to dissolve the organization. Although the reader may be impatient to get through Chapter 2 and on to the main body of the thesis, which starts in Chapter 3, this description of the overall political context is relevant in two ways. First, it is more than a coincidence that IS women became more open to feminism at the same time as the capacity of the ideology of Marxism to explain social contradictions was being put into question. It is therefore useful for the reader to be made aware of the ways in which Marxism was being questioned within IS at the time IS women were becoming a more self-conscious movement. Second, IN STRUGGLE's vanguardist

political project sanctioned a whole set of policies and practices which defined the kinds of experiences women in IS had within the organization. For example, it resulted in a generally hostile attitude towards getting immersed in immediate struggles around issues of everyday life and particularly issues related to increasing one's power and autonomy within the existing society ("personal liberation"). It justified applying criteria of short-term efficiency in organizing the political work which meant lots of hierarchy and little concern with personal growth and affirmation. (I am not saying that IN STRUGGLE's ideology caused these things because they exist generally in the broader society also; I am saying it failed to challenge them).

-- Chapter 3 provides a detailed historical description of the phenomenon which the rest of the thesis seeks to explain -- the change in conscious political attitudes of IS and IS women from anti-feminism to feminism including the rise of a self-conscious movement of IS women from mid-1980 on. Chapter 3 sets the change in attitudes and the rise of the women's movement within IS in the double context of: (a) what social changes were affecting Quebecois and English-Canadian women in the same period of 1972 to 1982; and (b) the growth and spread of feminist ideology and the autonomous women's movement in the broader society in the same period. Chapter 3 therefore does more than describe the phenomenon to be explained in the rest of the thesis. It also provides part of the explanation insofar as it shows the extent to which the problems faced by IS women and

the ideology of their self-conscious movement were not peculiar to IS (as they might be if the social contradictions experienced by IS women were mainly caused by its official ideology rather than mainly being ignored or reinforced by it).

-- Chapter 4 reports on the data gathered from the interviews. It is organized to provide information on the three levels of description mentioned above. It includes: objective data providing a profile of the average IS male and female members; both quantified and qualitative data on the sexual division of labour in the household and in the organization and the contradiction between time spent on political responsibilities and personal and family life responsibilities; the experience that women had, as subjects, of male chauvinist attitudes and behaviour both within IS and in "private life"; and a description of the different hierarchies that existed in IS as perceived by interview respondents and how that structured the social experience of many IS women within the organization. Chapter 4 contains most of the evidence about the existence of those dynamics of gender oppression and hierarchy for which we are lacking concepts and means of measurement. Hopefully it is suggestive nevertheless.

-- Chapter 5 presents a different sort of data from a different source (IS internal files) as already explained above to verify or qualify the main points drawn from the interview data.

-- Chapter 6 briefly states the case for the proof of the main hypotheses by the data presented in the preceding chapters. To reiterate, those hypotheses are as follows: that the change in political attitude of IS women from opposition to support of the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement can be explained by four factors:

1. IN STRUGGLE reproduced in its own ranks the sexism prevalent in the borader society.
2. IN STRUGGLE's Marxist ideology, in contrast to feminist ideology, was blind to the mechanisms defining women's oppression summarized in the concept that "the personal is political".
3. IS women faced the same problems as Quebec and English Canadian women generally between 1972 and 1982.
4. IS women were influenced by the rising women's movements.

Notes -- Chapter 1

1. The term "personal and family life" does not just mean the "domestic sphere". It includes all social relations between men and women which are regarded in a common sense way by most people as informal or interpersonal. When patriarchy is theorized more fully, much of what now passes for personal or informal and spontaneous relations will likely be viewed differently just as the "personal" relation of a serf to his lord sanctioned by a Christian view of a harmonious natural order was seen differently after the fact of classes with antagonistic interests was discovered, theorized and popularized.

2. Sheila Rowbotham, No Turning Back, Feminist Anthology Collective eds., (London: The Women's Press, 1981) pp. 72-78. For similar arguments see Michele Barrett Women's Oppression Today (London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1980) pp. 10-29 and Janey Sayers Biological Politics (London: Tavistock Publications, 1982) pp. 196-197.

3. Sally Alexander and Barbara Taylor, No Turning Back, p. 80.

4. I do not have a written copy of the Josee Lamoureux December 1981 speech. Therefore I have reproduced instead some of the same references as quoted in Michele Barrett, Women's Oppression Today (London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1980) p. 125. In the case of this first "insight" and the others which follow I am not trying to infer that the idea was originated by the person I quote only that I heard if first from them. the fact that I heard those ideas at all was a product of the existence of a women's movement in IS which was finally doing some theoretical investigation into existing analyses of the situation of women, something IS had basically neglected since 1975.

5. The article was on page 5 of the IS newspaper of October 6, 1981. Since that time I have read many articles on the subject which have persuaded me even more of the plausability of the idea that the sexual division of labour appeared completely independent of the rise of private property at least in some societies. See for example, Maurice Godelier "The Origins of Male Domination", New Left Review, 127 May-June 1981, and articles by Gayle Rubin and Kathleen Gough in Toward an Anthropology of Women (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975) and several articles in Women, Culture and Society M.Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974).

6. Proletarian Unity, No. 26 (Vol. 6, no. 1) March 1982.

7. It was only in early 1982 after I had read Claudin's The Communist Movement and Eurocommunism and Socialism -- which distinguish between Marx's and Lenin's ideas on the role of a communist party (Lenin had to adapt Marx's idea to the conditions of an economically backward country, (see Chapter 2) -- that I returned to Rowbotham, whom I had heard speak at a women's conference in Toronto in the fall of 1981. See Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1975) and Eurocommunism and Socialism (London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1978).

8. The cumulative effect of all these insights is evident in the way I have formulated the main hypothesis of the thesis. One of the critical problems with the Marxist left (and with the experience of socialist countries to date) has been its inability to enable the mass of individuals to exercize a measure of direct personal control over their own lives and the institutions that govern them. The experience of women in IS was a concrete example of this. Feminism, in my opinion, provides what might be a key to unravelling this Gordian knot in its notion that the "personal is political". That notion sees people as historical actors with an "affective consciousness" or culture which is developed on the level of personal interaction not just as objects with a combination of "economic interests" and "rational knowledge". Thus a feminist analysis of women's unpaid labour in the home does not just examine it as economic activity but also looks at the social-cultural, interpersonal aspect (the role of emotional support for children, mate, and kin, the role related to being primarily responsible for housework) -- an approach which is reflected in the line of questioning in the interview schedule. A feminist analysis looks at the triple load that socially active working mothers carry not only in terms of the number of extra hours of unpaid labour that the woman does compared to the man but also at how dealing with it involves challenging the relation of the private realm of home and family to the public realm of work and politics. A feminist analysis of the unequal sexual division of labour within a political organization like IS does not just talk about explicit anti-female ideological biases or structural barriers to equal opportunity, it also looks at the impact of the culture of (gendered) roles and statuses and the hierarchical and anti-personal organization of the political work. The notion of "the personal is political", in making the "invisible" activities of women in personal and family life (and the male powers and privileges related to them) visible also makes the whole dimension of interpersonal or socio-cultural reality more visible and central.

9. I do not have a full worked out theory to explain this hunch that class reductionism and vanguardism are linked. What it comes down to is a sense that Marxism's blindness to the

social and cultural dimensions of human activity is connected to its weak understanding of various hierarchies that undermine the possibility of direct democratic control by people over their own lives. Secondly economic determinism often leads to denying the role of historical actors: the working class is seen instrumentally as part of the forces of production to be 'developed' by the actions of the Historical Subject, The all-knowing, all-initiating Party.

10. The various contributors to the "domestic labour debate" have improved our understanding of how the economic aspect of what women do in the home (mainly what they do as housewives to provide the services to household members to reproduce their labour power) interfaces with the public economy and the relations of production. But there is a limit to what that sort of analysis can explain. My own interest lies in theorizing how it is that men control the labour of women in the household and the power relations that exist between men and women in relation to fertility, sexuality, parenting, relations with kin outside the immediate household, and so on. As Gale Rubin observes somewhat caustically in her article "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex": No analysis of the reproduction of labour power under capitalism can explain foot-binding, chastity belts, or any of the Byzantine, fetishized indignities, let alone the more ordinary ones, which have been inflicted upon women in various times and places. The analysis of the reproduction of labour power does not even explain why it is usually women who do domestic work in the home, rather than men. (Toward an Anthropology of Women, p. 163).

11. See Juliet Mitchell Psychoanalysis and Feminism (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1975); Nancy Chodorow The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Gayle Rubin, Toward an Anthropology of Women.

12. Ibid., p. 164.

13. Gayle Rubin, Toward an Anthropology of Women, p. 163.

14. Ibid., p. 165. Nancy Chodorow observes in "Mothering, Male Dominance and Capitalism" in Capitalism, Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism ed. Z.R. Eisenstein (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979) p. 84 that "the sex-gender system includes ways in which biological sex becomes cultural gender, a sexual division of labour, social relations for the production of gender and of gender-organized social worlds, rules and regulations for sexual object choice, and concepts of childhood". She adds that kinship and family organization are the main locus of

any society's sex-gender system.

15. Gayle Rubin, Toward an Anthropology of Women, p. 172.

16. Ibid., p. 177.

17. Ibid., p. 188.

18. Ibid., p. 198.

19. Mark Poster has argued in Critical Theories of the Family (London: Pluto Press, 1978) that Freud's Oedipus complex is not universal but could be seen to be generally descriptive of the bourgeois family constituted in Europe and North America in the 19th century. Since the bourgeois family has become the dominant pattern for the working classes of the advanced capitalist countries in the 20th century, Freudian analysis and Rubin's theory drawing upon it remain relevant to the majority of families in the present historical context in the advanced capitalist countries.

20. The "political minority" refers to those members of IS who were in the minority on the main issues in debate at the final IS Congress. The majority of delegates to the final congress voted to reject the old IS programme and constitution. The lowest common denominator among the reasons motivating the majority was the rejection of the idea of a Leninist vanguard party. The political minority resisted this position, fearing that the "class viewpoint" -- the idea of a united working-class being the main agent of social change -- was being abandoned along with the Leninist idea of a party. See Chapter 2 and Appendix B.

21. Sheila Rowbotham, Hidden From History (London, Pluto Press, 1974).

22. Quoted from Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright, Beyond the Fragments (London: Merlin Press, 1979) p. 118. The original source is an article by E.P. Thompson in The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays (London: Monthly Review Press, 1978).

CHAPTER 2

IN STRUGGLE'S POLITICAL PROJECT -- WIN "ADVANCED" WORKERS TO MARXIST IDEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES TO BUILD A NEW COMMUNIST PARTY

The late 1960s saw the rise of many different progressive movements against (U.S.) imperialist war in Vietnam, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and superexploitation of the underdeveloped countries; against racial, national, and sexual oppression; and against authoritarianism in the schools, and society. Students and young people building a "counter-culture" were especially prominent in these new or revitalized movements. When the government and various institutions failed to make significant changes in their policies (and in many cases used the police against demonstrations) some active members of these movements gradually came to the conclusion that the solution was to get rid of the whole capitalist system. There was a renewed interest in the working class as a possible agent of social change and in Marxism, the predominant anti-capitalist theory. This interest was aided by several developments. Third World liberation movements basing themselves on Marxist ideology gave back to Marxism some of the credibility it had lost in the mid-Fifties, when some of the harsher facts about Stalin's Russia had been denounced by Kruschov. Non-Marxist ideologies such as anarchism and NDP-style reformism gave very few answers about what to do when the State refused reforms or used repression, except to <u>wait</u> for The Revolution, or The Election

of a Friendly NDP Government. Finally, the idea that the working class might still be a major force for social change in advanced capitalist countries had been revived by the May-June events in France (and the Italian "hot-summer", etc.). It became even more credible in the early Seventies when the advanced capitalist countries went into a visible economic crisis, provoking strike movements everywhere (in Britain a miners strike brought down the Heath government, in Canada wildcat strikes won COLA clauses and increased real wages).

Many activists of course joined or continued to work in the existing left parties such as the NDP, PQ, or Soviet-line Communist Party of Canada (CP). But there was a significantly large group of other activists from the extra-parliamentary opposition movements of the Sixties and early Seventies who looked for a new political alternative.

In the first couple of years of the 1970s a few ex-student radicals flirted with military-style strategies inspired by the example of Cuba, Vietnam, the FLQ, and the Black Panther Party (Vancouver Partisan Organization, Toronto Red Morning, Halifax New Morning). Others who had moved off campus were active in union struggles, co-ops, the women's movement, Third World support groups, and independent left publications like the Vancouver weekly Western Voice and Regina's Next Year Country. By the mid-70s many of these people had started to study Marxism and to form study groups or collectives based on one or another variant of Marxism-Leninism[1] (the most prominent trends other

than IS coalesced around the Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League and the militantly pro-China Workers Communist Party).[2]

IS was originally set up as a collective putting out a communist newspaper (called IN STRUGGLE). The members of the collective, called l'Equipe du journal (the newspaper collective), came together in response to a January 5, 1972 article written by Charles Gagnon, published in the Montreal daily Le Devoir and later revised and put out as a pamphlet entitled "Pour le parti proletarien". Gagnon was replying to an article by Pierres Vallieres, who had urged all militant Quebec nationalists to join the Parti Quebecois. Gagnon and Vallieres were the two best known leaders of the Front de Liberation Quebecois (FLQ), and had been prominent in left nationalist and intellectual circles since the beginning of the Sixties. Gagnon's reply to Vallieres agreed that terrorism was a dead-end, but said the PQ was a bourgeois party which would bring neither independence or socialism. What was needed was a working class led movement for both socialism and independence. But in order for the working class to lead, Gagnon argued, it must first be educated to become aware of how its interests as a class lay in the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers state. The central task before radical workers and intellectuals was to build a new communist party which could teach militant workers Marxist ideology.

By 1974, IN STRUGGLE had set aside the objective of Quebec independence, in favour of the unity of the multi-national

working class for a Canada-wide socialist revolution. By 1976, IS had also clearly demarcated itself from those elements of the English-Canadian left who felt a struggle for Canada's economic and cultural independence from the United States should precede the socialist struggle against the Canadian bourgeoisie. Still later, IS removed the last vestiges of nationalism from its international policy. In 1977 it renounced the China- formulated "three-worlds theory", which called for support of national bourgeoisies in both underdeveloped and secondary capitalist countries in all situations where they conflicted with either the US or USSR "superpowers". In 1979 IS called on Marxists in other countries to reconstitute a world communist party (a new Communist International) which would help promote working class leadership in all national, anti-fascist and socialist struggles around the globe.

IN STRUGGLE, then, represented one of several attempts to build a working class based anti-capitalist movement by reviving Marxist theory and particularly the idea of a (leninist) communist party. In order to explain the distinctive features of IN STRUGGLE's political project we should first explain Marx's conception of a proletarian party and Lenin's modification of that theory. We will also summarize, briefly and schematically, what IS did in practice as an organized political force in Quebec and Canada between 1972 and 1982. Finally, we will present the major points of the political self-criticism made by the majority of IS members who voted at its spring 1982 Congress

to reject the IS programme and constitution, and to dissolve IN STRUGGLE.

(1) The Theories of Marx and Lenin About the Role of a Workers Party

As Fernando Claudin argues in The Communist Movement:

> Marx's idea of the proletarian political party is a corollorary of his conception of the Communist revolution as the self-emancipation of the working class. According to Marx, no outside force -- charismatic leader, conspiratorial group, political party -- can replace the revolutionary 'maturity' of the working class. The Communist revolution will be made by that class or it will not take place. According to Marx's theory of revolution, this maturity can only be produced by the practice of the class struggle, which is forced on the proletariat by its inevitable situation in the capitalist relations of production. The experience of this struggle teaches the proletariat the need for organization and solidarity. It shows them their common interests and their common enemy, and gradually transforms them from a "class in itself", a set of individuals, to a "class for itself", aware of the radical antagonism which exists between it and the capitalist system. The theory developed by intellectuals of bourgeois origin who "join the revolutionary class", and "have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole" contributes to the growth of this awareness, but is not its cause. For Marx it is revolutionary activity which creates consciousness and consciousness in its turn extends and clarifies that activity.[3]

In short, according to Marx it is a class which takes power not a single party in the name of that class. The communist party is one of several parties and a large number of mass

organizations which together constitute the workers movement, the mobilized working class which is progressively (with ups and downs) more united and conscious of its interests as a class-for-itself. Party theory derives from class practice and scientific observation and can serve to further class consciousness.

Lenin's view of the nature of a communist workers party differs in one important respect from that of Marx. He argues that the party is not a subordinate part of a class-conscious workers movement, but the vanguard of that class. This conclusion is based on his analysis of the workers movement in Russia and other countries in the first 20 years of this century. He saw the workers' movement as incapable, on its own, of achieving socialist consciousness, i.e., a consciousness of itself as a class whose interests are antagonistic with those of the capitalist class and capitalist system. The working class was only spontaneously capable, according to Lenin, as a result of its own direct experience of struggles with the government and employers, of "trade union consciousness": i.e., the consciousness of the need to organize to pressure for redress of grievances from the government and employers.[4] And trade union consciousness meant accepting the continued existence of capitalism. It meant:

> the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie. Hence our task, the task of Social Democracy [i.e., the party], is to combat spontaneity, to divert the working class movement from this

spontaneous trade-unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social Democracy.[5]

The party "diverts" the working class movement, or rather the most advanced members of the movement, from trade union consciousness to socialist consciousness by teaching it socialist theory, theory developed completely independently of the workers movement by socialist intellectuals. It is important to note that the difference between the two conceptions is mainly political and not philosophical. Lenin agrees with Marx that the source of the party's knowledge is the practice of the class struggle, production, and scientific observation. The difference lies in the high degree of autonomy which Lenin grants to the socialist intellectuals in developing that theory, and the very low autonomy he wants the class to have from the guidance of a party based on that theory. Lenin puts a low and even negative evaluation on the capacity of workers to be guided by their own knowledge as subjects of the struggle, and a very high value on the "scientific" character of the indirect knowledge of the intellectuals.

Why did Lenin make this political modification in applying Marx's theory of the party? Because it corresponded to the historical circumstances in which he found himself. The Russian working class of 1902 was far from a class-in-itself with a developing socialist consciousness resulting from decades of struggles and political agitation. Most workers were literally just off the farm and maintained strong connections to the petty

commodity society (and consciousness) of the peasantry. Lenin himself said the revolution in Russia would be bourgeois democratic and not socialist. However, it would be led by the working class, because the bourgeoisie was even more compromised by its ties with feudalism and foreign imperialism than were the workers. If the workers waited for the "normal" course of events -- a bourgeois-led capitalist revolution which then would create the economic and political conditions for a worker-led socialist revolution -- they would wait forever. Lenin hoped that once the workers and peasants of Russia made a democratic revolution they would be able to continue on uninterruptedly to build socialism (with the aid of socialist revolutions in Europe). Meanwhile the course of the workers movement could not be left to "spontaneity"; it had to be harnessed to the strong leadership of a party based on socialist theory.

The danger inherent in Lenin's theory of the party as the vanguard of the movement of the whole class is the danger of substitutionism: the experts in the Party decide what the "objective interests" of the class as a whole are and impose it on the class movement. Instead of serving as a means for the class to organize itself on the basis of the most advanced scientific knowledge, organization and tactics the Party becomes the end and the class is the means which must serve the goals set by the Party.

IN STRUGGLE saw this danger and much of Gagnon's Pour le parti proletarien is devoted to warning of the dangers of

"declaring" into existence a new party before the most advanced members of the class movement had been won ideologically to Marxism and were ready to join the party or work with it. From the beginning, the new party must be a creation of the (advanced section of the) class movement. However, IS didn't go one step further and question the vanguard concept itself.

(2) IN STRUGGLE's Project: Clarify Ideological Principles of Marxism and Win Advanced Workers to Them Before Building a Party

IN STRUGGLE wanted to build a Leninist party. True, capitalism and the working class were in a more advanced state of development in Canada than in Lenin's Russia. But Canadian workers, according to IS, also had "false consciousness" and also required the guidance of socialist theory. The basis, however, for the lack of socialist consciousness was different than it had been in backwards Russia. IS argued that it had two sources: one "objective", and the other "subjective". The objective factor was that Canadian capitalism had been able to continue to develop the productive forces and avoid a crisis of over-production. It had done so mainly by expanding in the Third World, and by manipulating the business cycle through the actions of a strong interventionist State financed by debt (Keynesian economics). The stagflation and energy crisis of the early Seventies showed that those days were coming to an end.[6]

The subjective factor, IS contended, was that all the organized forces that made up the working class movement (parties, unions, militant community groups etc.) were under the sway of "revisionist" ideology, i.e., ideology which purported to be socialist but was in fact reformist and pro-capitalist. This revisionist ideology had taken root in the period between 1945 and 1970, when Canadian capitalism had been able to grant relatively privileged conditions to a significant strata of the working population, mainly skilled workers and the salaried petty-bourgeoisie.[7] This "labour aristocracy" had been willing to support the Canadian bourgeoisie in its exploitation of workers of other nationalities and in wars to preserve the privileged place of Canada and the capitalist West in the world market. And it had managed to get the rest of the working class to go along by taking over (or keeping control of) the organizations of the workers movement, and by promoting revisionist ideology, mainly nationalism (support "our" bourgeoisie) and reformism.

Objective conditions, then, were changing according to IS analysis so that the classic contradictions of capitalist crisis predicted by Marxist theory were reappearing. The main task was to change the subjective conditions, to rid the workers movement of the domination of disguised bourgeois ideology. But there was still another problem. Revisionist ideology did not just dominate the workers movement, it also dominated the communist movement. "Revisionists" had taken power in the Soviet Union and

Eastern Europe while still pretending to be Marxist-Leninists. Even the genuine liberation movements and radical Marxists in the capitalist countries had learned a Marxism that was permeated with bourgeois ideas of nationalism and reformism. For example: the pro-China left wing of the Communist Party of Canada, which formed the Progressive Workers Movement in 1964, had ended up saying that Canada was an economic colony of the U.S. and that a national independence struggle had to precede a socialist struggle to overthrow Canadian capitalism.[8]

IN STRUGGLE therefore concluded that before creating a communist party, a pre-party organization had to be created, to devote its efforts to clarifying the ideological principles of Marxism and to winning the militant (non-communist) workers already leading various struggles to communist ideology. Once the pre-party organization had united the Marxists and "advanced workers" around a programme expressing basic Marxist principles, it would then become possible to establish a Leninist party to challenge the labour bosses, NDP, PQ, etc., for political and organizational control of the unions and other mass organizations in the workers movement.[9]

(3) IN STRUGGLE's Organizational Structure Follows from Its Political Project

IN STRUGGLE considered itself to be a pre-party organization. However, it was organized on the basis of the same principles as a Leninist party. This meant: (a) the formal structure of decision-making was based on the principle of democratic centralism; (b) IS functioned, in terms of the security rules it observed, as a semi-clandestine organization; and (c) the nucleus of the organization was composed of full-time activists. All three of these organizational principles had an important effect on the internal political life of IS.

Democratic centralism

Democratic centralism means "the centralized leadership commands once the policy is set". There is democracy: the leadership bodies are elected at all levels and members have opportunities to debate policy before it is set. There is centralism: once the congress or central committee sets the policy all lower bodies and individual members must carry out the directives of the central leadership without hesitation.

Democratic centralism is a mixture of fire and water -- a bottom-to-top principle (democratic debate and election of leaders) and a top-down principle (centralized leadership

commands to ensure unity of action). In practice centralism prevailed in IS. (For details on how IS was structured and some of the measures taken to try to maximize democracy see Appendix C. The chart may make it easier to comprehend the references in the main text to bodies like the Political Bureau and the apparatus committees).

Semi-clandestine

One of the basic principles of any Leninist organization is that it must be able to carry on political work under any conditions up to and including full fascist terror where all oppositional political action or thought is illegal. Under conditions of relative freedom (bourgeois democracy) such as prevailed in Quebec and English Canada between 1972 and 1982 being prepared for such an eventuality meant functioning in a semi-clandestine manner. Most of the work done by IS members was quite public and legal. But various security measures were practiced as if the group were about to become clandestine: to keep the political police from knowing who did what, what the disagreements were within the leadership, what personal weaknesses made certain individuals more vulnerable to "dirty tricks" manipulation, and so on.

The most important security rule was called "compartmentalization" where the watchword was "need to know". Members were not supposed to tell one another or any outsider (even their

spouse) what tasks they performed in the group; nor to discuss what went on at any of the meetings they attended; nor to identify any other members and their tasks; nor to gossip about their own or other people's personal work and home lives -- unless the person spoken to absolutely "needed to know" that information in order to carry out some political activity. Indeed, in the early days this was carried out to the point that many people did not even know the full or real names of the people they worked with politically, including the identities of the regional and national leadership, and/or their specific tasks. The hope was that under interrogation they would have nothing to tell.

The consequences of compartmentalization on the free circulation of information, which is an important condition for the exercize of democracy, are clear enough. To begin with it rules out most horizontal communication leaving only bottom to top, top to bottom vertical lines of communication open in a strict chain. It automatically tends to make centralism prevail over any other principle. Even if the "centre" or "top" of the chain is conscientiously democratic all information and decisions must be cleared through it.

Nucleus of full-time activists

Democratic centralism means centralized leadership commands once policy is set. A semi-clandestine functioning ensures that

all communications are in a vertical chain up and down through the centralized leadership. The third feature of a Leninist organization -- building the party around a nucleus of full-time activists ("professional revolutionaries") -- ensures that the logic of bureaucratic efficiency will prevail. The Leninist party is preparing to rule, to be the leadership and indeed the embryo of a new State apparatus. The "centre" of a Leninist organization is therefore not composed of a few elected leaders who do their politics after their regular 9 to 5 jobs like the ordinary member. It is composed of the main elected leaders and a bureaucracy of specialists who work full-time for the organization. It is they who set the pace of work for all members of the organization. Like any bureaucracy the Leninist nucleus operates according to the principles of maximum productivity measured by bureaucratically-defined "rational" criteria. This is the very opposite of an organization based on the lifestyle of an "amateur" activist -- a person with an active life as a worker and a full personal and family life.

(4) What IN STRUGGLE did as a political force between 1972 and 1982

The history of IN STRUGGLE's rise and decline as an organization can be summarized in five periods:

(1) 1972-74: from the formation of the newspaper collective to

the first Congress of the group in late 1974: IN STRUGGLE started as a collective of people putting out an openly communist newspaper, and tried to win militant workers and left activists to the project of building a communist political movement. At the time the main trend among Quebec militants to the left of the PQ was "implantation" in factories; the attempt to radicalize union and community struggles without openly promoting communism as a practical solution. In the fall of 1973, IS was one of the main initiators of the Quebec-wide C.S.L.O. (Comite de Solidarite avec des Luttes Ouvrieres, Committee to Support Workers Struggles) to organize support for the militant strike of Firestone workers in Joliette, Quebec.[10] The CSLO became a permanent strike support organization which brought together dozens of activists from a broad-cross section of groups. This was a period of upsurge in the Quebec labour movement, in the aftermath of the 1971 La Presse and 1972 Common Front strikes which mobilized hundreds of thousands in strikes, occupations and street demonstrations. In December 1974 IS had its first Congress. It henceforth tried to develop as a political group with a more defined political line and organizational discipline. The Congress voted to accept a political document with the title of "Create the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Struggle for the Party", meaning a country-wide pre-party organization in place of the dozens of localized Marxist study circles and collectives. The objective of Quebec independence was rejected.

(2) 1975-76: a dogmatic period of internal debate and consolidation ending with the second Congress in the fall of 1976: In September of 1975, the members of the CSLO voted unanimously to dissolve. IS published a pamphlet entitled "Against Economism" to criticize the "non-communist work" that IS and others had done through the CSLO. Instead of doing vaguely left-wing anti-capitalist agitation in relation to localized strikes, said the pamphlet Marxists should be conducting "widespread communist agitation and propaganda". They should call on workers to wage their struggles with the goal of building a political movement of workers to progressively discredit the State and to force it to concede changes in laws and policies, and ultimately to overthrow capitalism. Practically, at first, this orientation mostly meant spending a lot of time distributing the newspaper, and inviting militant workers to join readers' circles to discuss the paper, or study groups to learn about Marxism. Hundreds of people did come to the circles or study sessions, and some of them eventually joined IS.[11] Later it would mean promoting various political campaigns that the IS leadership determined were key to building a political movement of workers. This would mean, for example that IS members went to their union or community group meetings to persuade them to do something about wage controls, or to rally support for the postal workers who were waging illegal strikes in order to protect the democratic right of public service sector workers to strike. The newspaper started coming

out in English as well as French in April 1976, at the same time as the first English Canadian group joined (the Toronto Communist Group). By the end of 1975 a central leadership and apparatus had already been established. Most of this period was spent on internal debates, in preparation for the second Congress in the fall of 1976. Meanwhile a number of groups that had been having unity talks with IS fused together in late 1975 to form the Canadian Communist League (later the WCP), and started to have a high profile in the unions and community groups. IS did little in response, except to call for a series of public conferences of Marxists from across Canada to debate stands on the key issues of political line, as the basis for a unified, country-wide pre-party organization. The September 1976 IS Montreal conference was a success, attracting 1500 participants.[12] The second IS Congress in November 1976 agreed that Canada was an imperialist country and that the revolution was a one-stage socialist revolution, to overthrow the State controlled by the Canadian bourgeoisie.[13]

(3) 1977-78: local groups join and structures are created for more active intervention in mass struggles on a country-wide basis. By the end of 1977 virtually all the localized Marxist groups had joined either the Communist League (later WCP) or IS.[14] IS took its first steps away from generalized propaganda towards agitation in relation to current issues. This was mainly in the form of the IS-initiated political campaigns mentioned above. One such campaign was to get unions and groups of workers

to set up action committees against the wage controls (fall 1976 to spring 1978). Another: a two-month speaking tour by IS leader Gagnon on the Quebec national question, kicking off a petition campaign and a series of public meetings (the PQ had been elected in 1976 on a promise to call a referendum). Also: the use of the newspaper, a weekly starting in the fall of 1978, to link up activists across the country who were building a support movement for the postal workers strikers; and promotion of a civil liberties coalition (Operation Liberty), to denounce the Keable and MacDonald Commissions who were preparing public opinion for laws strengthening police powers to wiretap, conduct illegal searches, and generally do the work of a domestic CIA. A draft programme for IS was printed and debated publicly in this period; 15,000 copies were distributed. In late 1976, Mao died and Teng had moved quickly to depose the leftist "Gang of Four": IS viewed this as a take-over by "revisionists". By the end of 1978 China had invaded Vietnam, after Vietnam had moved into Kampuchea. The spectacle of the "boat people" soon followed. All of this was demoralizing for those who had been politicized in the period of the Vietnam war and the Cultural Revolution in China. From 1977 on, just after IS had reached its objective of uniting the localized Marxist groups, the first set of resignations began. (See Chapter 5, note 8.)

(4) 1979-80: IS becomes more visible in mass organizations and struggles, and less sectarian towards the rest of the left: In March 1979 a finalized programme, constitution and appeal to

radical Marxists around the world to form a new Communist International were adopted, at the upbeat third Congress. A new analysis of the Canadian working class was confirmed, and also a new tactic. Instead of focusing on the classic industrial proletariat where the "labour aristocracy" in the form of the NDP and pro-PQ labour bosses were in complete control, IS would try to "encircle the labour aristocracy" by working in those strata of the working class most open to communist ideas. Experience had shown IS that currently those strata were public sector workers and women, youth and national minorities. A study of the problems experienced in getting workers to join led to reforms in the way meetings were organized (less to read, shorter meetings, more attention to implementation). It led also to the decision to try to provide more analyses and tactical proposals to orient at least the major economic and reform struggles of the militant workers. IS played a significant role in promoting united action despite rivalries between the leaders of the three participating labour centrals through the coordinated intervention of dozens of its militants in their local unions during the Quebec public sector Common Front strike in early 1979; got involved in campaigns for the rights of national minorities (Native land claims, Albert Johnson committee against racist treatment of Blacks by Toronto police, fight for French-language school in Penetang Ontario); intervened in the newly formed socialist feminist International Women's Day Committee in Toronto and in the autonomous women's

movement across the country (see Chapter 3); and got a lot of media exposure for its brochure calling upon the Canadian Labour Congress convention in the spring of 1980 to "Dump McDermott", the CLC president, for failing to support the postal workers.[15] IS members gathered 70,000 names on a petition calling for the Absolute Equality of Languages and Nations. In the spring of 1980 the referendum campaign was underway in Quebec, and IS went into overdrive in a highly visible Quebec campaign against both the federalist "no" and souverainiste "oui" options, appealing to voters to spoil their ballots. In English Canada IS responded to the creation of a Committee to Defend Quebec's Right to Self-Determination by independent left people from the universities in Toronto by calling together broad-based committees in a dozen other centres. IS organizers were now doing regular work in secondary centres like Prince George, Calgary, Edmonton, Sudbury, Moncton, Cape Breton, and all the subregions of Quebec. IS was at its high point in terms of working relationships with activists in mass organizations. There remained only one problem: the organization was not recruiting the "advanced workers" who led the mass struggles, even though many were interested to hear the IS point of view and some took up the tactical slogans and calls to action.

(5) 1980-82: political crisis hits IS, leading to its final dissolution In January 1980 IS leader Gagnon circulated a long analysis of the history of "revisionism" in the international communist movement. He concluded that the problem was not mainly

with the subjective conditions (the "sell-out" of this or that leader) but with objective conditions. Perhaps, he suggested, the material conditions never existed for socialism to succeed in Russia or China. He analyzed many of the conventions and "principles" of the international communist movement as dogmatic affirmations that did not correspond with the reality of modern class structures. Behind this "materialist" approach however, Gagnon was still trying to defend the relevance of a core of "scientific" Marxist principles and the basic concepts of a Leninist vanguard party[16] and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The result of Gagnon's text was to provoke a number of resignations, and the beginnings of a deep debate over the main conceptions of the IS programme. The decision was made to wage the debate over fundamentals in public, to publish a series of articles on the history of the workers movement and its attempts to build socialism, and to organize study sessions for all IS members (starting in the fall of 1980). In the spring of 1980 the dollar started to fall. Business circles proclaimed a full recession was underway. The rise of the Right was being consolidated with the election of Thatcher (in 1979) and Reagan (in late 1980). Summer 1980 saw the rise of Solidarnosc in Poland, calling the idea of socialism based on the rule of a single party into question again. As the economic recession hit and conservatism became predominant in the unions and community groups (concessions,etc.), the average IS member started to become much more active in their union or community group, and

to seek alliances with other progressives to stem the rightist tide and protect their jobs and working conditions. Gagnon and the top leadership at this point were pushing in the opposite direction, in a sense, by saying that the group must devote the lion's share of its attention to study and political debate over the fundamental conceptions in the programme, while at the same time defending those conceptions in immediate struggles. The practical consequence of Gagnon's approach would have been to keep IS members preccccupied with their own study and isolated from the practical struggles progressives were trying to wage against the Right (because they would continue to "agitate around the programme" instead of getting fully invclved in immediate struggles). Many members protested that it was unreasonable tc expect the rank and file to defend the old programme in union meetings or whatever by day and then to go to study sessions tc criticize it at night. The programme was no longer a basis of unity, or a guide for day to day action. The women's revolt (see Chapter 3) came out in the open in the spring of 1981. It was a key factor -- along with the rank and file refusal to become a study group defending the old programme -- in forcing a change of heart among the majority of top leaders. Gagnon was in a minority defending the "essential basis" of the old programme. The editors of the newspaper published an article denouncing Lenin's idea of the vanguard party which brings socialist consciousness tc workers from outside the immediate struggle. The majority of the Political

Bureau published its critical views on the model of socialism IS had been upholding (based on the rule of a single party, etc.) in a supplement to the newspaper in December of 1981. Views on all sides of the debate were published, and meetings and caucuses of all kinds were held. But a positive consensus on what ideas could be put in place of the old programme did not develop. There were lots of questions but few answers. The fourth Congress voted to reject the old programme and constitution, and to dissolve IN STRUGGLE.

(5) The Basis Upon Which the Majority of IN STRUGGLE Members Rejected the Programme and Political Project of an Ideological Vanguard at the Spring 1982 Congress

It is always difficult and somewhat arbitrary to interpret the results of a political congress. Different people can vote for the same resolution for quite different reasons. This is all the more true when the decisions being made are essentially negative as was the case in the spring 1982 IS Congress. For that reason I will confine myself to the resolutions actually adopted and the written reasons motivating them which delegates had before them when they voted.

Several loose groupings presented resolutions to the final IS Congress.[17] The first group, the "collective of 30" together with delegates from the B.C. region, basically supported

Gagnon's position. The two main motions from this grouping were both turned down by a 2/3 vote: to suspend but not reject the programme and to affirm both feminist and Marxist principles and say that the two could be reconciled. The second group, the "Majority Consensus", basically supported the position of the new majority in the Political Bureau. Two of its resolutions were adopted (calling for rejection of the programme and the constitution) but their proposal for a Congress agenda was defeated. The rejection of the Majority Consensus agenda showed that delegates did not want to have to choose between the theories of two sets of leaders. They wanted to take their stand on the programme and constitution on the basis of their own practical experience. This sentiment was articulated in a series of resolutions coming from the third grouping, the "Democracy collective". Two of their motions were adopted, one on the role and place of intellectuals in IS and the other on the conception that IS had of its (vanguard) role in economic and reform struggles. The resolution advanced by the Gay and Lesbian caucus on homosexuality was also agreed to as was a motion to dissolve IS proposed by a small grouping around the former editors of the IS newspaper.

The resolution on women criticized the IS programme for failing to recognize that "the system we live under is patriarchal and capitalist", that "production and reproduction are interconnected and the material basis of our society", that "women's oppression cuts across class lines" and that

"long-standing practices of male privilege and domination have been built into the very way capitalism works". The resolution added that "in alliances and united fronts that cut across class lines our objective is to ensure that working class women's interests or a revolutionary perspective is not subordinated by doing work [as communist women] independently and by supporting working class women playing a leading role".[18] It was this last point which caused the motion to be rejected, first by a 70% straw vote of women and then by a 63% vote of the whole congress with a large number of abstentions.

Here are the representative comments of three delegates explaining why they voted against the motion on women.

-- "This resolution is an improved Marxist analysis of women's oppression but it isn't the feminist analysis that's needed. Patriarchy is not just a part of the capitalist system, it is a social system itself, a system of power over women. It exists alongside of capitalism, it reinforces it and is reinforced by it".

-- "The resolution says nothing about the importance of autonomous women's organizations before and after the revolution".

-- "The resolution is an attempt to reconcile class and gender but many of us do not agree with the result. There is a mechanical application of the 'vanguard' role of the proletariat throughout the resolution".

The motion on the oppression of gays and lesbians explained that "it was only with the revolt of the women in the organization and the creation of our own caucus that our struggle began to be seen in its strategic context, namely the challenge to the patriarchal family". The resolution affirmed that homosexuality was normal, "a part of human sexuality just as heterosexuality is".

The resolution on how communists should intervene in mass struggles criticized the notion of a vanguard that pretends to have all the answers and to be able to arrive at those answers purely on the basis of theory. It said it was wrong to intervene on the basis "of our own goals as an organization (making people conscious, building the vanguard)" instead of starting from the objectives set by the people in the mass struggle. It rejected the idea that there was such a thing as "a uniform entity called THE working class without important contradictions within it". The motion affirmed that participation in immediate struggles was in itself an important source of political knowledge "because mass struggles enable people to improve their understanding of their own situation and of society. They make it possible to experiment with new forms of social organization. Immediate struggles can be a way of learning about power" and that process of learning about power had to begin before the revolution, not wait until after State power had been seized. Finally the motion said that a political organization should primarily be a place where activists in immediate struggles came

together to debate and to develop their independent capacities for political analysis. There was no need for a group of expert theoreticians to work out a "correct line", certainly not with respect to how to act in specific immediate struggles.

The motion rejecting the constitution, listed the problems which IS had failed to overcome despite all the reforms made in its structures: the power of decision-making did not really lie in the hands of women, workers, and homosexuals; democracy was formalized and bureaucratic; power was centralized in the central bodies and flowed (was delegated) from the top down which stifled the autonomy and political initiative of the base units and individual members; the leadership was a monolithic block in arguing for its decisions with the rank and file and the members acted like a monolithic block all carrying the same line when they intervened in mass struggles; the tendency was for all members to be expected to live up to a model of a good militant which was a maximum model of total involvement (the pace of work for all members was set by the maximum that could be accomplished by the "permanents", the professional revolutionaries). The root cause of these problems, it was argued was the conception of "the role of the party" and the approach to revolution contained in the programme: "If you want to have a vanguard minority exercize leadership in all mass organizations you have to have monolithic unity and top-down decision-making to be effective".

The resolution on the role of intellectuals in IS said that it had been wrong to have a concept of leadership which presumed that leaders should be those with the best intellectual abilities. Leadership bodies should be composed of a cross-section of members all of whom had something to contribute from their practical experience. "The excessive value placed on the ability to assimilate theory and on leadership by those with 'a view of the whole' resulted in a hierarchy of power based on intellectual abilities. ... There was encouragement and appreciation of those who looked at things 'from a general and overall perspective,' who analyzed and synthesized information. The reverse treatment was meted out to those who looked at things from a 'narrow and specific perspective.' Looking at things from the perspective of your shop, of your set of friends, of your emotions -- all that was economism, localism, stage-ism or subjectivism". Intellectualism had led to a theory which was too general and impersonal: "It led to focussing all our attention on the economic side of things ('in the final analysis, economics is decisive') and this stopped us from seeing life in all its complexity: psychology, pedagogy, science, culture. ... It made us pay too much attention to generalizations; hence instead of making an analysis of specific cases and doing investigation in the field we relied on information clipped from newspapers, magazines and government reports. ... All too often editing in the newspaper came to mean cutting out the concrete examples so as to have room for all the

conclusions".

Finally the motion to reject the IS programme stated that "the programme should be more than just a list of principles which members have in common. First and foremost the programme should be a guide to making revolution in our own country. It should be grounded in a concrete analysis of the situation in the world and in Canada. It should reflect a genuine comprehension of the struggles waged by the masses and of the forces involved on both sides. It should describe what kind of socialism we want and what the strategy is for getting there. We believe that the positions on all these matters contained in the programme are erroneous". The resolution selected out three major points to illustrate that general stand. First, the social analysis was wrong: it presented a picture of the Canadian working class as a monolithic class with purely economic interests that was on the verge of poverty and soon to be cast below the level of subsistence by a world economic crisis. Further it blamed the failures of the socialist countries to build societies where workers had real power entirely on the failure to apply the principles of Marxism (firmly enough) instead of also looking at the shortcomings of the principles themselves. Second, the strategy in the programme for taking power was wrong because "it focuses everything on the building of a vanguard party rather than on the consolidation of the organizations of working people and the conscious participation of working people in taking power".[19] Third, the programme was

wrong on women, seeing their struggles as secondary and subordinate to the economic struggles of the working class.

The delegates to the spring 1982 IS Congress did not share a thoroughly worked-out common critique and were unable to come up with a positive alternative that could be the basis for future united action as a political grouping. But it is apparent that the thread which ran through all of the motions adopted was the rejection of IN STRUGGLE's project of building an ideological vanguard.

(6) Summary

IN STRUGGLE was one of several political groupings which were formed in Quebec and English Canada in the early to mid-Seventies with the objective of creating a new communist party. The beginnings of the economic crisis in advanced capitalist countries and the (what turned out to be temporary) upsurge in the workers movement led IS to the conclusion that the objective conditions for revolution were reappearing. The main task before revolutionaries was to change the subjective conditions -- to clear away the cobwebs of "revisionist" ideology (reformism and nationalism) promoted by the labour aristocracy which caused the mass of workers to have "false consciousness". IN STRUGGLES's political project was to build a Leninist party by clarifying the ideological principles of

Marxism and winning the "advanced" non-communist workers already leading mass struggles to them and to the future party.

IS therefore went about building an organization with the following characteristics: (1) it was a vanguard organization in line with Lenin's modification to Marx's theory of the party. The stress, given the way IS saw its immediate priority tasks, was on building an ideological vanguard. IS would above all carry out basic agitation and educational work to promote "proletarian ideology" (the scientific theory of Marxism) among activists in immediate struggles. To do this IS consciously built an organization in which the main leaders were theorists who excelled at synthesizing and abstracting data about society and social struggles provided to them by rank and file members who monitored those struggles; (2) IS applied democratic centralism which combines democracy and centralism but which gives primacy to top-down authority delegated from the centre; (3) IS was prepared to function under conditions of illegality. The security measures it practiced, such as compartmentalization, were those of a semi-clandestine group. They reinforced the trend for all communications between members to be conducted vertically (up and down) through the centre (through a process of centralization and decentralization); and (4) the nucleus of IN STRUGGLE was made up of full-time revolutionaries working for the organization. This helped establish a logic of bureaucratic efficiency and one-man management instead of the collective solidarity of a movement of

amateurs. It also set a frenetic pace of work for all members which presumed that all other activities would be subordinated to the political work.

By the middle of 1980 it was becoming clear that advanced workers and progressives were not being won to Marxism or IS in large numbers despite the continuing economic crisis. A "political crisis" ensued. After over a year of public self-criticism and debate IS held a Congress in the spring of 1982. Delegates raised fundamental questions about each of the elements of the IS political project summarized above. In addition they began to question whether some of the ideological principles of Marxism still corresponded with the realities of modern social structures and the demands and consciousness of current social movements. One of the areas where the questioning was sharpest, as we shall see in the next chapter, was the Marxist analysis of the roots of women's oppression.

Notes -- Chapter 2

1. The movement of Marxist study groups in the mid-Seventies which eventually coalesced into groups like IS and the WCP was not the first attempt to establish "anti-revisionist" Leninist parties in Canada that broke away from the model of the modern-day Soviet Union. The first wave was in the 1960s. The Progressive Workers Movement (PWM), Canadian Liberation Movement (CLM) and the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) or CPC(M-L) promoted a line of nationalist struggle against U.S. imperialism. In the mid-Seventies the only groups from the first wave left were the CPC(M-L) and the Canadian Party of Labour (a split from the CLM that was militantly anti-nationalist). The trend that was forming around the localized study groups published several lengthy texts explaining why CPC(M-L) was in their view not at all "anti-revisionist" but in fact completely reactionary (see article by D. Paterson in Canadian Revolution, August 1975; see also "The CPC(M-L) a Revisionist Organization of Agent-Provocateurs", an IS book-length pamphlet published in June 1978). The CPC(M-L) was well known for using two by fours with placards attached to make physical attacks on demonstrations organized by left-wing and progressive groups. In August 1979 in Vancouver for example CPC(M-L), in the guise of its front group, the East Indian Defence Committee, attacked a demonstration organized by the Indian People's Association in North America (IPANA) led by S.F.U. professor Hari Sharma and sent two demonstrators to hospital. In 1980 it did the same thing again at a BCOFR (B.C. Organization to Fight Racism) demonstration.

2. Still others of course remained 'independent' of either the Leninist 'far left' or the existing left parties. In Quebec the independent left tended to group around the CSN labour central. In English Canada, the Waffle wing of the NDP was a focus until it was expelled in 1974. Magazines such as Canadian Dimension helped keep the independent left line alive but that left was highly localized and fragmented.

3. Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975) p. 625. In support of his argument that Marx saw the communist party as a subordinated part of a broader socialist workers movement which takes power as a movement of many mass organizations and parties, Claudin quotes the Communist Manifesto:

> The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties. They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement. ... The

> immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

Claudin continues, quoting further excerpts from the Manifesto: "Communists are not 'a separate party,' but a 'section' of the working class movement, 'the most resolute' section. 'Theoretically, they have ... the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement,' which means that 'they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.'"

4. Marcel Liebman, Leninism under Lenin (London: The Merlin Press Ltd., 1975) pp. 25-62.

5. Quoted in Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement, p. 631.

6. See Charles Gagnon, "For the Proletarian Party", translated and republished in a collection of articles in the Western Voice (Vancouver, November 1976) pp. 3-28.

> The low level of proletarian class consciousness in Quebec ... is the effect of concrete historical conditions: the development -- harmonious until now -- of capitalism in North America ... However things are beginning to change under pressure from the liberation movements of the oppressed peoples ... The monetary crisis is taking on a permanent character. Inflation and unemployment are now a regular feature of the developed economies. In short, North America is no longer sheltered from the effects of the contradictions of capitalist development ... North America, and therefore Quebec, is entering the period of the struggle for socialism. (p. 23)

7. All of the analysis which follows is contained in the Political Report to the third IS Congress. It is available in English in Proletarian Unity vol. 3 No. 5-6 (Montreal, June 1979), pp. 9-112.

8. For an analysis of the Progressive Workers Movement and the other nationalist "anti-revisionist" groups in Canada in the Sixties see "Brief History of the Struggle to Rebuild a Proletarian Party", Proletarian Unity vol. 2, No. 1 (Montreal, October 1977) pp. 14-39.

9. In the mid-Seventies the left in Canada that was organized into political parties or groups consisted of three wings: on the right were the parliamentary parties, mainly the NDP, PQ, and pro-Soviet Communist Party; on the left were the "far left" formations which subdivided into: (a) the "anti-revisionist" parties formed in the Sixties, mainly the CPC (M-L); (b) the "new Marxist-Leninist movement" of localized Marxist study groups that was anti-nationalist -- eventually this movement was reduced to just IN STRUGGLE and the Workers Communist Party; and (c) various Trotskyist groupings, most prominently the Revolutionary Workers League; in the middle was the "independent left", many of whom actually worked within the NDP or PQ off and on, who didn't like the reformism of the parliamentary parties or the dogmatism (and isolation) of the far left groups. In its search to redefine the ideological principles of Marxism, IN STRUGGLE was seeking to "expose" the other political groups in the far left and to win over the individuals in the "independent left" by proving that Marxism was not inherently dogmatic or out of date but could be applied to making concrete analyses of Canada and to developing a viable strategy for overthrowing the Canadian State. Both the WCP and IS benefitted from the fact that the "independent left" in Quebec was especially fragmented between the October crisis of 1970 (when most of the nationalist groups were absorbed into the "right wing of the Quebec left", the Parti Quebecois) and the 1980 sovereignty-association referendum. There were simply no organized political formations to join if one wanted to do more than organize a caucus of independent leftists in one's union or join the left within the PQ: the choice was between one of the far left groups and the PQ.

10. The Comite de Solidarite avec des Luttes Ouvrieres (CSLO) played a central role in bringing together those activists from Quebec popular theatre, student, welfare rights, and other community groups and the unions who had joined the localized Marxist study groups in 1974-75. While the CSLO did in fact organize mass pickets and distribute propaganda material in support of a number of militant strikes its meetings were also forums for debates among Marxist-Leninists from the groups and circles and non-aligned people who were interested in Marxism.

11. I have read Central Committee reports in the IS files which give the exact figures for the numbers of people in the newspaper readers' circles and Marxist theory courses which were the first step in joining the organization. For reasons of confidentiality, I cannot give those figures here. Suffice it to say that there were at any given time as many or more people who were "active sympathizers" in the recruitment structures or "contacts" with a regular working relationship with IS as there were members of the group.

12. The September 1976 conference was the first of five conferences, all attracting between 1000 and 2000 participants, sponsored by IS in 1976 and 1977. All of the collectives and study groups that considered themselves part of the "new Marxist-Leninist movement", namely IS, the WCP and the groups which had still not decided which of the two to join, were invited. Each conference had a specific theme: (1) how to unite the different Marxist-Leninist groups and collectives; (2) the international situation (mainly a debate on the "Three Worlds Theory"); (3) how to build a new communist party; (4) the communist programme (debate around IS draft programme); and (5) the strategy for revolution in Canada (debate over whether Canada is imperialist and whether revolution is for socialism or independence and socialism). The conferences became the focal point for theoretical clarification in the new movement. Groups would publish their analyses and stands prior to each conference as well as criticisms of one another's views. Most of the smaller study groups developed their ideas in relation to the more elaborate positions presented by the two "poles" in the debate, IS and the WCP. After each conference several groups would decide they had worked out their political differences with one or the other of the two major groups and would dissolve and join them. The WCP and most of the groups that eventually rallied to it boycotted the conferences after the first one. However it was still part of the debate because it published articles and pamphlets on the same themes denouncing IS positions.

13. The second Congress also voted to reject a draft programme prepared and supported by the central IS leadership because it confined itself too much to stating general Marxist principles rather than taking clear stands on what the strategy and tactics for a revolution in Canada would be. The delegates from English Canada, the first IS members from outside Quebec who had just recently joined, played an important role in leading the opposition to the programme. The debate over what kind of programme IS should have continued within the Central Committee until the third Congress in early 1979. Although the programme adopted at the third Congress was more specifically related to Canadian conditions than the 1976 one it was still fundamentally a programme consisting of the "universally true ideological principles of Marxism" which could be equally applied to an underdeveloped country or a rich imperialist country like Canada. At the fourth Congress in 1982 many delegates pointed out that having this kind of programme had put off facing the fact that the Marxist-Leninist "principles" and classic ideas of strategy and tactics (role of the party, united front between workers and peasants, armed liberation struggle waged by a people's army) had been developed in underdeveloped countries where the concrete conditions were different in many important ways (in Canada we have a

different class structure, more developed bourgeois-democratic institutions like Parliament, more democratic rights won by workers like the right to form unions and legally go on strike).

A second event of interest at the second IS Congress was the rejection of a proposal to apply "affirmative action" quotas to ensure that the Central Committee was made up of a majority of workers and women and had balanced regional representation.

14. The rallying of groups was announced in the newspapers of IS and WCP during the 1975-77 period. Those groups, like the Vancouver Red Star Collective, which did not join either IS or WCP remained isolated and eventually dissolved themselves.

15. CLC president McDermott held up a copy of the IS pamphlet "Dump McDermott" at a press conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on October 25, 1979 during the CLC national executive council meeting. The pamphlet was popular (several thousand were sold) because it coincided with a real current of opinion in the labour movement at that time. Several provincial labour federations adopted resolutions condemning tripartism (which McDermott had supported) and supported the postal workers for their illegal strike (which McDermott had condemned) especially after CUPW president J.C. Parrot was jailed. The largest union within the CLC, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, adopted a resolution at its national congress prior to the 1980 CLC congress calling for McDermott to resign.

16. In separating ideological principles from political line (the application of those principles to concrete conditions) IS was following the lead of Mao who talked about "applying the universally true principles of Marxism to the concrete conditions of China". The influence of Althusser's structuralism is also apparent with the insistence upon the autonomy of the economic, ideological, and political factors but with the "economic factor being decisive in the final instance". At first glance such an approach seems to place an enormous stress on the subjective factor and on the independent role of ideology or scientific theory in shaping it (consciousness). This is partly true but it hides a more fundamental part of the approach in my opinion and that is the assumption that the objective factor, the development of the productive forces (including the working class itself) is also completely autonomous. The world is unfolding as it should, so to speak. The role of ideology and of the intellectuals generating scientific theory is to provide the workers with "the science" so that they can see how the world is unfolding and act consciously to accelerate the process (but not to change its fundamental course which is determined autonomously of any subjective factor).

The analysis made by IS of revisionism is quite consistent with the above approach. It stresses a simple equation (Marxism equals scientific theory equals [proletarian] class ideology) which corresponds to the parallel and autonomous development of the objective factor (including the spontaneous class struggle). The problem in the socialist countries according to the early line of IS is not with Marxism, i.e. not with the scientific theory/class ideology. It is with those despicable human subjects who have (a) misapplied the theory/ideology in fashioning erroneous political lines, i.e. failed to be scientific, and (b) failed to persist in class struggle, i.e. failed to let their actions be guided by a (monolithic, purely economic) class perspective. The later approach to revisionism (Gagnon's INTERNAL BULLETIN 40) shifts ground to focus on the parallel equation about the objectifive factor ([Socialist] mode of production equals level of development of productive forces equals level of spontaneous class struggle) but the point of view is the same.

17. The texts of all the resolutions quoted in the remainder of Chapter 2 can be found in the June 22, 1982 issue of the IS newspaper.

18. See Chapter 3 and particularly note 46 and the related part of the main text for more details on the position advanced by a female IS member from B.C. In the eyes of many women the phrase "working class women play a leading role" (automatically, always) was simply a way of reaffirming the previous anti-feminist position in different language. The same dogmatic assertion was being made that the working class will lead all struggles against all forms of oppression and that the "class factor" must always take precedence over any other factor.

19. Interview respondents were asked to report how IN STRUGGLES's role was perceived by activists in mass organizations, by active supporters and by feminists. It is likely that there is a bias in the reporting in that people probably remember best the criticisms which they now in retrospect agree with themselves. However, the pattern of those criticisms is quite coherent and suggestive. (See Appendix A interview schedule, section five, for question). Criticisms reportedly raised by activists in mass organizations were: (1) instead of orienting its work and developing its analyses starting from the goals set by the people involved in mass struggles, IS operated on the basis of preconceived (usually long-term) goals and a line worked out completely independent of that struggle (18 out of 34, 53%); (2) IS was, as a result of (1), often dogmatic in its analyses which were often more consistent with Marxist principles than they were with the reality of the social movements (14, 41%); (3) the pace of work was voluntarist.

People often marvelled at how IS members worked around the clock 7 days a week on political work with such seriousness and discipline. But just as many cited that pace of work and life style as a reason why they would never join (11, 32%); (4) the other two most frequently cited criticisms were a tendency to be paternalistic (8, 24%) and to act like robots (5, 15%) in meetings where IS people always voted the same way, carried the same line, etc.; and (5) finally, there were 15 mentions of positive criticisms. The most common one was that IS members showed in the last year or two of the organization's existence that they were open to criticisms and serious about making changes. The second most often cited was that IS members had a good individual work style and made useful contributions to the mass struggles despite the shortcomings [of the organization] noted above. A third positive criticism was that although IS tried to win people over to its preconceived analyses and goals incessantly its members did not try to supplant or undermine the duly elected leaders of the mass organizations even when it disagreed strongly with their ideas.

The former members and active supporter non-members apparently reserved their strongest criticisms for the way IS was organized itself internally rather than the way it acted in mass struggles. This is not surprising since they were often as active as members in intervening on behalf of IS in mass struggles and generally acted in the same way. Their criticisms undoubtedly explain why they did not take the next step and become members (again). The three most commonly cited reasons were: (1) the impossible pace of work (18, 62%). A number of active sympathizers guilted themselves saying that they were not ready to sacrifice on the same level as the members because they were too "individualistic" or "petty-bourgeois". Others were more critical of the organization for its failure to take an interest in the cadre, exemplified by the paucity of political education and debate and the "productivity" mentality where the stress was on the number of newspapers sold and contacts made; (2) the lack of sufficient democracy (9, 31%). A number of active supporters disagreed with various aspects of democratic centralism; and (3) wanting themselves to stay active in their mass organizations which IS membership would preclude in practice (6, 21%). Many people did not join IS because they did not want to get isolated politically from others in the mass organizations they belonged to. In most cases, especially in the early years, when someone joined IS they radically reduced their involvement in mass organizations or left them altogether. Finally, the three criticisms which, according to respondents, were made of IS by feminists were: (1) sectarianism (10, 42%), Consistent with its line that feminism was the main thing holding back the struggle of women, IS made feminism and feminist groups the main target of attack wherever it intervened. IS did not recognize the

women's movement as a social movement or feminism as the consciousness that women develop of their specific oppression as women; (2) IS was a patriarchal organization (8, 33%). Women in the women's movement saw IS as male-dominated and deplored the way women were being exploited doing the "shit work", etc. It was not lost on them that IS spokespersons in public events were usually men, except on International Women's Day; and (3) hierarchical organization, individual style of leadership, and approach to theory that denied the subjective knowledge of participants (5, 21%). A smaller number of women, especially socialist feminists in organizations like IWDC in Toronto, repeated the criticisms of the kind already cited in Chapter 1 made by Sheila Rowbotham.

CHAPTER 3

THE RISE OF THE AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FROM 1972 TO 1982 AND THE CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL ATTITUDE OF IN STRUGGLE WOMEN

In this chapter we will document three things: the changes in the material situation of women in Quebec and English Canada between 1972 and 1982 which coincided with the growth of a women's movement; the main periods in the development of the women's movement particularly in Quebec; the evolution of IN STRUGGLE policy towards women -- its theoretical line, internal structures and public activity. The purpose in doing so is to describe the change in political attitudes of IS women towards the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement in Quebec and Canada between 1972 and 1982 against a backdrop of the evolution of that movement. It is this change in attitude which the rest of the thesis seeks to explain. IN STRUGGLE explicitly opposed the political orientation of the autonomous women's movement from its own founding in 1972 to June 1980 and did not begin to work at making its own politics explicitly "feminist" until after April 1981. At the same time, IS explicitly favoured women's liberation and supported the specific demands of the women's movement (albeit some demands more strongly than others). This of course is an internally self-contradictory position and in a sense the evolution of IN STRUGGLE policy between 1972 and 1982 is a working out of that contradiction.[1] As we shall see in Chapters 4 and 5, women

members of IN STRUGGLE fought many battles for women's liberation in their personal lives (getting their husbands to share the housework, actively promoting daycare, maternity leave, abortion rights, and equal pay through their union and/or community group despite the little time in their schedules to do such work). The women in the regional and national apparatuses of IN STRUGGLE in routine organizational tasks challenged the way the political work was organized and the pace of work that left no time for family responsibilities or real involvement in their union or community group. And some women challenged various aspects of IN STRUGGLE policy (e.g. the abolition of a women's column in the newspaper and all specialized structures and posts of responsibility for work among women in 1978). But at the same time it is important to note that by and large IN STRUGGLE women agreed with the anti-feminist position of the group up until at least late 1980. This was clearly stated by the women respondents in the interviews. Although men predominated in the main committees charged with research and analysis to develop IN STRUGGLES's political line the basic original policy document on women's liberation adopted in 1975 was written by the Women's Commission and women at the top leadership level were often responsible for tactical refinements in applying that position (including the abolition of specialized women's structures) after 1975. Therefore the changes in IN STRUGGLES's policy described below also reflect the evolution in the attitude and practice of IN STRUGGLE women:

combining ideological opposition to feminism with support for women's liberation and women's demands. After the fall of 1980 a self-conscious movement of IS women took shape which played a leading role in bringing about changes in IN STRUGGLE policy.

The first thing we will look at is the changes in the material conditions faced by women in Quebec and Canada between 1972 and 1982.[2] The issues raised by the women's movement were not invented by feminist writers out of thin air. They were derived from serious social problems that have touched the lives of millions of women. Some of those women belonged to IN STRUGGLE. We will try in the rest of this thesis to show that the change in the political attitudes of IS women towards the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement was a product of the attempt to come to grips with those social contradictions and to find personal and political solutions to them.

(1) Changes in the Status of Women in Quebec and English Canada Between 1972 and 1982

There were a number of significant positive changes in the status of women in Canada in the 1970s, which can be summarized under three headings: (1) new political and legal rights reduced overt discrimination; (2) expanded reproductive rights increased the possibilities for women to control their own health, sexuality and fertility; (3) the ideals governing family life

became more democratic.

Discrimination Removed from Laws

The Seventies in Canada were a period of rising expectations for women. It was increasingly the norm for women to work for pay, to stay in the labour force longer, to be better educated[3] in a wider range of fields, and to be generally more active outside the home. The women's movement and other pressure groups succeeded in reforming many of the laws and policies which overtly discriminated against women with changes in those acts governing marriage and divorce, property in marriage, (equal) pay, etc.[4] Enforcing those rights may have been a different matter, but the new formal rights did heighten women's expectations of equal treatment.

Reproductive Rights Won

In the 1970s it became legal to perform therapeutic abortions in a hospital if a panel of three doctors determined that a continued pregnancy "would or would be likely to endanger the patient's life or health". In the same year homosexuality was de-criminalized. Birth control information and technology (with all the now well-known side effects) became much more widely available. Mothers were entitled to at least 15 weeks maternity leave at 2/3 pay (up to a maximum of $210) and even more in some unionized jobs. Child care subsidies were made

available to families with low incomes. It became increasingly possible and acceptable for the mothers of young children to work while others minded the children for pay. Again, the rhetoric of the "sexual revolution" is one thing ("Women don't need to worry about having sex any more .."\.) and the reality of thousands of illegal abortions every year is another. But legal and technical gains have made it possible for women to undertake personal and social struggles to actually exercize some control over their health, sexuality and fertility.

More Democratic Ideals of Family Life

There are serious debates among sociologists about what is happening to the modern family, but there is one point of consensus: the ideal of companionate marriage, in which neither the husband or wife is subordinate to the other, is increasingly strongly upheld. Reality still contradicts the ideals, but there have been some measurable changes in women's status. The two most important: first, the participation rate of married women in the labour force is constantly mounting (48.9% in 1980 versus 5.0% in 1941); second, separation and divorce are easier and more common. The first reduces the woman's economic dependence on her husband; the second, like the right to strike, improves her bargaining power within the relationship. The ideal family of the 1950s -- one that conservative ideologues like to pretend is the way of life for the silent majority -- is in fact very much in the minority. A 1977 survey in the U.S. showed that only

one family out of six was composed of a single (male) breadwinner, full-time housewife and children living at home.[5]

In summary, in the 1970s the expectations of Canadian and Quebecois women were raised. New democratic rights were won on paper; more reproductive freedoms were achieved, creating better conditions for women to fight for control of their own bodies; and the involvement of married women in the paid labour force strengthened the ideal of companionate marriage between two equal partners.

Those were the positive dynamics. Unfortunately, virtually all the serious studies of women in Canada reveal another, less positive set of dynamics. The patterns of de facto discrimination against women remain, and in a number of respects are getting worse. The main factors which will be discussed below are: (1) women are still subordinate in the home, doing unequal amounts of unpaid domestic labour, whether or not they also work outside the home; (2) despite increased reproductive rights, more liberal attitudes towards sexuality, and some awareness about the negative consequences of socializing children into "Dick and Jane" masculine and feminine roles, all forms of male chauvinist behaviour directed at preserving traditional roles and male power over women continue to exist up to and including extreme forms of sexual harassment like wife-battering and rape; (3) male chauvinism also persists in more subtle forms as part of a culture of distinct masculine and feminine gender roles and statuses inside and outside the

family, in which socialized feminine qualities, real and imagined, are devalued compared to those associated with male roles; (4) women do not have an equal place in the work force, largely because of the continuing segregation of women into low-paying, low-status "female" jobs while men remain entrenched in their traditional jobs; and (5) although there are a few more women professionals, technicians and even managers than before, women are still excluded from the top of the vertical hierarchy of leadership posts in business, government or any of the other institutions of society.

Working Women Carry a Double Load

Married women who worked outside the home in Canada in the 1970s still did the lion's share of the work in the home. Full-time housewives with no children put in six hours a day, or 42 a week; adding two or more children jumps the hours to 11 a day, or 77 a week. Married women who work 35 to 40 hours outside the home come back and do another 4 hours a day, or 28 hours a week.[6] Several studies done in the late 1970s in the United States and Europe confirm that working women still do between 26 and 35 hours of housework a week, while their husbands do only 10 to 14. Canadian studies show the same pattern, with women doing more than twice as much as the man.[7]

Crude Forms of Chauvinism Persist

The crudest form of male chauvinism is the attempt to control and degrade women through sexual objectification -- overt sexist jokes, putting sexual pressure on women, men asserting the power of their sex through sexual games, aggressiveness or violence. Reproductive rights and wage-earning power have made women more mobile and potentially more able to function autonomously from their husbands.[8] It is no coincidence then that the late Seventies saw two opposing movements arise in Canada. First, the extreme right organized, notably in the Right to Life movement, to try to roll back the rights won by women in the late Sixties and early Seventies.[9] Second, feminists devoted an increasing amount of their time to issues related to the crudest forms of chauvinism and male violence, by setting up rape relief and battered wives centers, by battling for recognition of freedom of sexual orientation and for measures against sexual harassment on the job, and by campaigning against pornographic outlets like Red Hot Video and pay-TV ("Pornography is the theory, rape is the practice").[10]

Studies of pornography and rape show that male violence against women is not the sole preserve of psychopaths like Clifford Olsen.[11] It is estimated that 90% of rapes are carried out by 'normal' men as likely as not to be friends of the victim. Almost three out of four rapes are pre-meditated and planned, hardly the modus operandi of a crime of spontaneous sexual passion. Fully half the reported rapes involve more than

one man in the rape act.[12]

The Family is in Crisis but Stereotyped Masculine and Feminine Roles are Still Reproduced Within It

Most people are born biologically male or female. They have to learn a whole culture of masculine and feminine gender roles and statuses. Children learn the appropriate forms of masculine and feminine sexuality (internalizing the "rule of the father", according to Freud) as well as their own sex identity (which may or may not correspond with their biological sex). The role of woman as mother, the bearer and primary nurturer of children for the father, is another socially-constructed gender role which must be learned. The rules of heterosexual marriage, explained by Levi-Strauss as the exchange of women as gifts between men who thereby constitute non-biological kin ties of co-operation among themselves, set the terms for the sexual division of labour in the home between husband and monogamous wife, father and mother, breadwinner and housewife. The two sexes, biologically similar in most respects, must learn to take on highly differentiated, opposite and interdependent gender roles in order for this whole system of organizing sex, childbearing and kinship to work. The stereotyping of masculine and feminine qualities which are connected to their differentiated identities carries beyond the family. It serves to justify the sexual division of labour outside the home as well.[13]

It is difficult to document what the changes were in this "sex-gender system" in Canada in the 1970s. There was considerable contestation of the traditional system of "private patriarchy" and of the various roles played by men and women in relation to sexuality and child-raising in the family. There is indeed a "crisis" of the traditional (since the Industrial Revolution) family, the main mechanism for maintaining gender stereotypes, as shown by the earlier-cited statistic of one family in six meeting the criteria of a traditional family. Some people argue that this has created a situation where the corporations, the state, and other public institutions have had to intensify mechanisms of gender stereotyping to substitute for the role of the family, although the evidence for those institutions actually taking over from the family remains unconvincing.[14] The trend seems rather to be for conservative forces to seek to re-strengthen the traditional family and the male's status within it. The main problem faced by those who oppose the present sex-gender system is that they have very few worked-out ideas about how people could organize sex and child-raising differently, without gender stereotyping or heterosexual monogamous marriage.[15] Meanwhile the socialization of children into the culture of masculine and feminine roles and statuses goes on.

Women Have an Unequal Place in the Work Force

In the 1970s women increased their participation in the work force but -- except for some gains in management, technical and professional jobs -- their place in the economy is hardly more equal than it was ten years ago. For example, if one includes part-time jobs, women's average earnings were 51.2% of men's in 1979 ($7,673 vs. $14,981). If one counts full-time jobs only women still earn a mere 63.8% of what men do ($11,741 vs. $18,537). And given that, outside agriculture and sales, the widest gap is in the service sector, the future looks unpromising, because the service sector is precisely where most new jobs for women continue to be created.[16]

This continued inequality seems to be the result of two factors: first, the sexual segregation of jobs; and second, the disadvantages women suffer because of their primary responsibility for child-raising.

The segregation of the labour force occurs between sectors and within them. Certain sectors of the economy are overwhelmingly male and others are largely female in composition. For example, the processing, fabrication and materials-handling sectors are over 80% male; the medical sector is 75% female. Further, certain jobs within sectors are designated as female jobs. Over three-quarters of all clerical jobs in any and all sectors are occupied by women. It is not surprising then to find that two out of three women who work hold traditionally "female" (clerical, sales, or service) jobs.[17]

The second factor holding women back is family responsibilities. This affects wages, because women are unable to work overtime; and, more subtly, it also affects promotions, because women are less likely to feel able to take on jobs that would require more unplanned time away from the children.[18] Family responsibilities are also the main reason why one in four women work only part-time -- compared to only one out of twenty men.

Public day care in Canada is still only available for 3.8% of the under-2 years old children and 15.8% of the 2 to 5 year-olds (1980 figures). The result is that over 80% of the children of working mothers are cared for through private arrangements (the four and overs can go half-day to kindergarden in some provinces). In most cases (71% of the time according to a Saskatchewan study) this must also be paid for.[19] This creates obvious pressures on the working mother, who must worry constantly about child-care arrangements, both for while she works and for her other activities in the evenings or on weekends. It generates anxiety about the quality of care received, about whether she is being "a good enough mother", etc. Despite these problems, an amazing 50% of women with children under six were in the work force in 1981 (compared to one in six as recently as 1967).[20]

The situation for most women therefore is increasingly frustrating: sexual segregation in the work force has them locked into low-paying and frequently part-time jobs; unequal

responsibility for child care in the home makes it doubly hard to move up or out of the female ghettoes.[21]

However, there is another grouping of women who were doing relatively well in the work world in the Seventies: managers, technicians and professionals. There are more women professors, doctors, and lawyers now than there were at the beginning of the Seventies, even though they are still very much a minority. In 1975, only 18.7% of the managers in Canada were women; by 1980 that figure was already up to 25.2%. Armstrong and Armstrong note that three-quarters of the women managers were in the largely female service sector, especially in health, and very few were in male-dominated sectors. This shows that the growth of a female elite does not necessarily challenge sexual segregation for the mass of women, but the trend to more women managers still cannot be denied.[22]

Women are Excluded from Posts of Authority

While the number of women exercizing some class power directly as managers and professionals is increasing, the situation with regard to access to posts of authority is quite something else.[23] Certainly this is true in the most literal and narrow sense: the people at the top who set policy and make the big decisions in businesses (the boards of directors), the State (Cabinet and top civil servants) and other institutions like the universities are still overwhelmingly (and in many cases exclusively) men.[24]

To sum up, Canadian and Quebecois women in the 1970s had more legal and reproductive rights and a better bargaining position within the family. Even married women with young children worked outside the home in increasing numbers. The aspirations for greater autonomy and equality were high. But those aspirations were as often as not dashed on the rocks of male power and privilege inside the family and out.

One theme is constant throughout all the above: women carry their homes on their backs. Women cannot escape the responsibilities or the male-female power relations of personal and family life when they move into the public realm of work and cultural, social or political activity. What that implies is that any change in male and female roles must bring with it a merging of the public and private realms or a major rethinking of how the two are organized and linked together.

(2) The Evolution of IN STRUGGLE's Policy on Women from 1972 to 1982

The preceding description of changes in the status of women is schematic. It ignores the role of social struggles, and particularly that of the women's movement in bringing about some of the positive changes and in making people aware of the negative things affecting women's status. The rest of the chapter looks at the evolution of IN STRUGGLE policy on women between 1972 and 1982 in four periods. I begin the description

of each period by summarizing what was going on in the women's movement outside IN STRUGGLE at the same time, particularly in Quebec.[25] (1) 1972-1975 -- First socialist feminist groups formed: The first francophone women's group (created in 1969) that openly advocated women's liberation in terms of making radical changes in society in Quebec was the Front de Liberation des Femmes (FLF). It was preceded and influenced by the McGill University campus-based Montreal Women's Liberation Movement. The first members of the FLF came from the MWLM and various left nationalist groups and one of the first decisions of the FLF was to expel the anglophones. FLF was preoccupied with linking itself up with the Quebec nationalist movement and winning acceptance from men in the left, union and nationalist groups of the need for an autonomous women's movement and a struggle for women's liberation. Its slogan was "Pas de Quebec libre sans liberation es femmes, pas de liberation des femmes sans liberation du Quebec". One of the FLF cells worked with Dr. Morgenthaler in establishing an illegal abortion referral service in 1970 in Montreal. The FLF itself folded in 1971 in the aftermath of the October crisis. Like most left groups in Quebec the FLF was pushed by the widescale arrests, emergency government powers, and the presence of an "occupying" army in the streets of Montreal and a general climate of repression and paranoia to intense internal debates about basic strategy which were never resolved. A number of former FLF members continued as the Centre des femmes (Women's Centre) doing abortion

counselling and putting out a socialist feminist newspaper, Quebecoises Debouttes, which had a circulation of about 2,000 at its peak in 1972-74.[26] It was the beginning of a period of union militancy and a shift in the radical left from emulation of Third World nation liberation struggles to a revival of Marxism. The Women's Centre was part of that shift. It criticized the PQ for seeking political independence without any change in the capitalist and patriarchal social structure. The Centre identified its concern as linking up the autonomous women's movement, which it saw itself as stimulating into existence, with the workers and socialist movements. The Women's Centre approached IN STRUGGLE in 1973 about working together politically and had a representative on the editorial board of the IS newspaper for one issue but the negotiation of political unity went no further. The main reason: IN STRUGGLES's refusal to take feminism seriously enought to guarantee at least one article in every issue.[27] The main Quebec teachers union (CEQ) set up women's committees in 40 locals across Quebec in 1973 and the CEQ and Women's Centre worked together with the main welfare rights group (ADDS) on the Montreal Abortion Committee in 1974 after withdrawing from a broader committee which wanted to restrict its political advocacy to a legalistic defence of the jailed Dr. Morgenthaler. However, the Women's Centre never really linked up with the unions and remained at odds with the rising Marxist left, the PQ and the reform-oriented women's groups.[28] A last attempt to bring together women from the

different sectors on a socialist feminist basis was initiated by the Women's Centre in late 1974 but it led nowhere.[29] The Centre was dissolved in 1975 and its members went into a wide array of projects and groups, some even joining IN STRUGGLE. Both the Conseil du statut de la femme du Quebec and the Canadian Status of Women Council were established in 1973. In the same year the Confederation des syndicats Nationaux (CSN) revived its women's committee while the Quebec Federation of Labour received the report of a commission to investigate why women were not participating in union structures.[30] The women's movement was beginning to grow in Quebec in the 1972 to 1975 period but the groups that existed were still weak and isolated and only starting to be taken seriously by the unions, left groups, and the governments in power. There were no radical or lesbian feminist groups at all yet among francophones.

The most important public organizing work done by IN STRUGGLE members in this first period was carried out in conjunction with the Comite de Solidarite avec des Luttes Ouvrieres (CSLO), a united front of about 30 political and community groups initially formed to support the strike of Firestone workers which took place between October 1973 and January 1974. IS women did a lot of work with the Firestone Strikers Wives Committee.

In August 1974, a Marxist film distribution collective, Cinema d'Information Politique (CIP) received a copy of a film made by Claudie Broyelle in China in 1971 called "Shanghai de

jour le jour". They proposed to IN STRUGGLE that the two groups collaborate in promoting it. Eventually a collective was formed (calling itself the Shanghai Project), with women from half a dozen union and community based groups participating and the film was shown to about 40 groups of women in and around Montreal, mainly in working class neighbourhoods. The pamphlet that was distributed at each of the showings contained long excerpts from Broyelle's La Moitie du Ciel. The contents of that pamphlet reflected how the women in the Shanghai Project, including IS women, saw the linking of the struggle for socialism with the women's liberation struggle, learning from the Chinese example. The oppression of women by their fathers and husbands was seen as part of the ideological superstructure which corresponded to the feudal mode of production. With the political revolution and land reform the material basis was created for women's liberation from this oppressive feudal ideology. The central example cited in the pamphlet, "La Liberation des Femmes en Chine et Nous", was that of the peasant women in Taking who liberated themselves through: (a) active participation in the Liberation war and in the ongoing political struggle afterwards, and (b) massive entry into social production. When women started working just as much as the men it forced changes in the organization of personal and family life. Collective daycare was developed, communal restaurants were established and groups of two or three families took turns cooking for one another. Campaigns were launched to get men to

share in the housework.[31]

The other elements of a line on women developed by IN STRUGGLE in this period were the analyses of the nature of household labour and the class position of housewives done by the Women's Committee in 1974. The IS Women's Committee grew out of the Wives and Girlfriends Committee (Comite de Conjointes) which was set up in November 1973 right after the Firestone strike support work got going. The women, whose husbands and boyfriends were members, were upset about the dues system which created economic hardship (see Chapter 5) and the constant absence of their mates from home which left them alone or with the children all the time. At first the Wives and Girlfriends committee organized discussions with the men about sharing household tasks and a few collective family outings were arranged. The committee then started to do study into the roots of the oppression of women especially women like themselves, stuck in the home. The conclusions they reached were similar to Broyelle's analysis of the oppression of the Chinese peasant woman except they were applied to working class housewives in a capitalist society. A woman suffered a double oppression. First she suffered an economic exploitation by capital in the form of unpaid domestic (unproductive) labour reproducing the labour force. The conditions of her labour were very much like those of the traditional petty bourgeoisie (small isolated units, control over the pace of her own work). According to the Wives and Girl Friends Committee, this helped explain the conservative

attitudes of the wives of many strikers.[32] The economic exploitation of women in the home could only be ended by eliminating the capitalist mode of production. The second aspect of a woman's oppression, according to the committee, was her ideological submission as wife and mother to her husband, analogous to the submission of a serf to its lord. The ideological chains could only be broken by removing the economic basis for the capitalist family and by getting women out of the home into paid labour. The analysis was a slightly idiosyncratic restatement of the classic Marxist position first put forward by Engels.[33] Women's liberation could only follow the elimination of private property; in the meantime, according to the IS women, women should fight for democratic reforms giving them an equal access to the paid workforce (paid maternity leave, childcare, equal pay, etc.) and join the political movement to overthrow capitalism. In both cases they should look to their working class husbands, fathers, and brothers as allies in a common struggle.

The experience of showing the Shanghai film to groups of working class and progressive women made many of the IS women enthusiastic; especially when the women in the audience spoke about how they experienced their oppression as women and workers and how the fight for worker and women's liberation could be linked. On the basis of this experience, the women's committee judged it timely to revive a proposal from March, 1974 for establishing an autonomous organization of working class women,

linked to the communist movement.

The women's committee had also been increasingly concerned about the isolation of work among women from the rest of IN STRUGGLE's work. They proposed their own committee be abolished, to be replaced by a Women's Commission empowered both to develop theory and direct the practical work of both men and women in relation to women's issues.

The Women's Commission was established as a leadership structure involving one or two people. Other women from the previous women's committee were integrated into regular structures and work among women was to be taken up by all functioning committees. But the Women's Commission itself later rejected the proposal for a mass organization of women.

(2) 1975-1978 -- Autonomous women's groups spread: The year year 1975 was International Women's Year which helped draw broad public attention to the issue of the status of women. Government funding was made available to a number of projects and there was a rapid growth of a very diverse and decentralized women's movement based on different types of projects from health clinics to rape relief houses. The first radical feminist collective in francophone Quebec made its appearance in 1976 and published the magazine Les Tetes de Picches.[34] The first francophone lesbian group was founded in 1977. The Parti Quebecois was elected to government in 1976 and there was a relaxation of police harassment of the abortion referral clinics. In 1977, delegates to the convention of the largest

labour central, the Quebec Federation of Labour voted for the first time to support women's right to choose an abortion and the first large pro-abortion demonstration with union backing was held in Quebec City. This was also the period when all three of the main labour centrals (CSN, CEQ, QFL) started giving funding and time for resolutions in conventions to their respective women's committees. The women's committees had been established (or in the case of the CSN revived) for two main reasons: (1) to finds ways to increase the participation of women in union structures; and (2) to formulate contract demands related to the specific concerns of female union members. (The history of the relationship between the women's committees and the central leadership of the unions was an up and down affair. For example, in the 1982-83 public sector Common Front the male members of the CSN unions voted overwhelmingly not to include demands proposed by the women's committee on the grounds that they were a "luxury" in a period of recession.)[35]

The other main development in the 1975-78 period was the revival of the tradition of celebrating International Women's Day on March 8. The union women and the autonomous women's groups organized separate celebrations, a practice which continued until 1980 (see note 34). This symbolized the continuing isolation of feminists in the autonomous movements from the nationalist, far left and union groups. The Marxist-Leninist groups put a lot of energy into making March 8 a big event in their calendar of activities it being the high

point of their work among women every year. In 1977, the Communist League (later WCP) and IN STRUGGLE drew a total of 2600 people to their separate March 8 rallies in Montreal while the autonomous women's groups attracted about 1000 and the unions 400.[36]

The year 1975 marked the beginning of a dogmatic period for IN STRUGGLE with the accent on propaganda activities aimed at individual recruitment and polemics with other Marxists aimed at persuading the localized Marxist study groups to join IS instead of its rival, the Communist League (see Chapter 2). In the fall of 1975, the Women's Commission circulated what was to be the main theoretical basis for IS work among women until 1981, "Emparons-nous de la Conception Proletarienne de la Lutte pour l'Emancipation des Femmes". There were four main points in the position.

First, the idea of setting up a broad-based women's organization was rejected as an "Economist" and feminist error. The error was in presuming that women must first be won to a mass organization fighting for democratic rights and then to linking the struggle against women's specific oppression to the struggle for socialism as a result of the educational work done by communist women in those democratic struggles. The Shanghai project had shown that women were not just interested in their own "narrow" issues but in all political questions. Women could and should be won directly to whatever the major political struggles were in any given period from the point of view of

making revolution. In 1975 that meant propaganda work to build a new communist party.

Second, the document rejected the idea of concentrating on battles to win new democratic rights on paper. It noted with some alarm that "the bourgeoisie itself has taken over the leadership in struggles to win new legal rights for women":

> The bourgeois approach to women's liberation continues to be the confining of struggles within the strict framework of winning new legal rights. The current proliferation of organisms dedicated to improving the legal status of women so that it is equal to that of men, the many recommendations recently made to the State to this effect by the Status of Women Council, Quebec Women's Federation (AFEAS) and the Women's Federation of the Liberal Party, et al. prove what I have just said.[37]

The obtaining of new rights was to be welcomed but the energies of a working class women's movement should be directed elsewhere: at fighting for the application of those rights in practice. This would expose the illusion that women have been granted equality in terms of the real power relations and material conditions of life. Furthermore it would teach women that only socialism could guarantee the application of their rights fully.[38]

Third, according to the IS text, working class women could not be liberated until after their class was liberated. The feminists were seen as diametrically opposed to this because, according to the document, they called for unity of all women regardless of class first and only later if ever for class struggle. It is here that the significance of the idea that the family was part of the ideological superstructure and that the

woman's oppression by her husband within the family was an ideological oppression became apparent:

> Socialism creates the necessary economic conditions for the realization of genuine equality between men and women. At this point only can the struggle to resolve the contradictions which still remain between men and women, which are ideological contradictions among the people, become the principal aspect of the struggle for women's liberation when, under the leadership of the Party, it will be part of the struggle to build socialism. ... Total victory is only possible to achieve under communism, i.e. when classes [and private property, the family and the State] have been completely eliminated.[39]

Fourth, "special methods" and specialists responsible for work among women at all levels of leadership were required to bring women into the general activities of the group on an equal footing with men. The slogan was "same issues, special methods".

> Special methods means taking account of the specific oppression of women in two ways: first, by recognizing that women have had an inferior status in society for centuries which explains why their level of consciousness is often much more backward than that of other workers; secondly, by making allowances for the practical fact that it is women who are mothers.[40]

The image of the backwards wife of a striker or single mother on welfare persisted.[41] Examples of special methods included: a policy of choosing women for posts if they had equal abilities as men being considered for the same post; free daycare for major IS public events and networks of volunteer babysitters to enable women to attend internal meetings; specialized recruitment structures for women such as an all-woman study circle; a regular column for women in the newspaper which appeared between April 1977 and August 1978; national training schools for working class members to develop leadership skills;

and a routine practice of meeting with the husband or boyfriend of a woman who showed interest in IS to make sure he did not stop her from coming to meetings.

(3) 1978-80 -- Women unionists come to the fore: In 1978, women trade unionists started to really make their presence felt in the workers movement. In Quebec, the women's committees in all three of the main labour centrals got some of their main demands adopted in union conventions as official policy. A number of contract battles were fought around the issues of equal pay, daycare, and maternity leave.[42] The unions joined women's groups in defending the right to choose to have an abortion in response to the "right to life" campaigns organized by rightists.[43] In Ontario, women were prominent as strikers wives in rallying support for the 1978 INCO strike and low-paid women workers fought a series of strikes for union recognition and equal pay (Fleck, Fotomat, Radio Shack, etc.).[44] The Ontario Federation of Labour established a women's committee in 1978. Saskatchewan Working Women was formed in 1979 out of a 1978 conference on women sponsored by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. The first women in non-traditional trade groups were established and the Women into Stelco campaign forced the Steel Company of Canada to hire more women in "men's jobs".

A second development in this period was the penetration of feminist ideas and involvement of autonomous women's groups in the workers movement. In Quebec the CSN initiated the first of three "Etats Generaux" which were conferences bringing together

all women's groupings large and small from within the unions and the autonomous women's movement. The objective was to work out a common platform of women's demands and a plan of action for realizing them through the concerted action of union, community and autonomous women's groups. Feminists from the autonomous groups clashed with union women over the way the discussions were organized (too formal), whether men should be able to participate equally in the conferences and action committees and the relative attention paid to non-employed women (students and housewives). Consensus was not reached but the coming together of the two groups of women was a major change likely to have important long-term effects.[45] In Ontario socialist feminists formed Action Day Care and won approval for their full programme of demands from the NDP and Ontario Federation of Labour. A campaign of lobbying and demonstrations involving both union and feminist women from autonomous groups won concessions from the Davis government. Socialist and lesbian feminists formed the International Women's Day Committee in Ontario which led a coalition that managed to attract upwards of 6,000 annually to International Women's Day rallies in Toronto. The IWDC was also very active in strike support work for the women in places like Fleck and Radio Shack.

In 1978, IN STRUGGLE began a period of agitation and involvement in mass struggles. IS was present in most of the activities just listed above. Except the political line IS promoted ran directly counter to the growing trend towards unity

between the union women and autonomous groups, and the associated revival of socialist feminism. IS now hardened its anti-feminist position, exemplified by the article it published in the February 1979 issue of its theoretical journal (Proletarian Unity) with the title, "Feminism, the bourgeoisie's standard- bearer in the women's movement".[46] Internally, the line of "special methods" was repudiated on the grounds it focused on the backwardness of housewives, isolated in their homes, and on the problems faced by individual women in getting involved politically.[47] In future it was argued, IS would develop its tactics for rallying women into political struggles based on the strengths of individual women particularly on the strengths of women like the Fleck strikers who were already engaged in collective struggles. All specialized responsibilities for work among women were abolished right down to the cell level. Day care was continued for major IS public events but the internal networks of volunteer babysitters were no longer standard. The main IS women's pamphlet for public distribution "Men and Women of the Working Class: One Enemy, One fight", first issued in January 1978, was criticized for being "economist" and soft on feminism. The women's column was dropped in the newspaper. The last move was protested in a flurry of letters to the newspaper in the spring of 1979 indicating that there was dissatisfaction with what some women already saw as the downgrading of the importance of dealing with the specific oppression of women although few were yet defending the ideology

of feminism.[48]

(4) 1980-82 -- Feminism and autonomous groups reach working class women: The trends in the women's movement begun in the previous period continued. This stood out all the more though because the union, popular group and political left movements were in general in sharp decline. The unions and autonomous women's groups celebrated International Women's Day in common in Quebec for the first time in 1980 and again in 1981 and 1982. In English Canada movements against violence against women got higher profile in the media (e.g. protests against Red Hot Video in B.C.). Support for feminist ideas continued to broaden. In contrast, the main debate in the union movement was whether to follow the Chrysler model of "giveback" concessions or whether to just settle for a wage freeze. Around the world, some social democratic parties were getting elected (e.g. Mitterand in France, Papandreacu in Greece, NDP in Manitoba) while others were getting decimated (Labour Party in Britain NDP, in Saskatchewan). On the whole there was a continued shift to a climate of conservatism.[49] In the unions and community groups in Quebec the buzz word to describe the situation was "la crise de militantisme" meaning the crisis of activism affecting activists in all movements.[50] Much of this of course was due to the economic recession but there were probably as well some underlying longer term trends which remain to be analyzed.

In June 1980 IN STRUGGLE's Central Committee altered the policy on women. It recognized that the autonomous women's

movement was on the rise and saw it as a positive development. It declared that it was an error to have downplayed struggles against women's specific oppression and particularly to have contended that feminism was the main thing dividing men and women workers when in fact it was male chauvinism which was doing this. The debates with women from the autonomous women's movement that took place in the context of intervening in the same struggles in 1978-80 had had an effect. The IS leaders in charge of that work had progressively come to the conclusion that the IS assessment of the role of the independent women's movement was wrong. Socialist feminists were not anti-working class or anti-male reactionaries, the IS leaders concluded; they were progressives linking the struggles for the liberation of women to other popular struggles. The CC resolution called upon IS women to caucus to articulate their grievances to try to understand why so many women were leaving IS or resigning from leadership posts. The meetings of women in IS cells and committees in the fall of 1980 were an occasion for links to be made between the erroneous attitude towards feminism and the autonomous women's movement and the internal policies affecting women cadre. Although few IS women would yet describe themselves as feminist it was the beginning of a self-conscious women's movement within IS. IS members now became increasingly involved in the women's movement working with socialist feminists while also debating with them their criticisms of Marxism. In Ontario this meant closer ties with the International Women's Day

Committee. In Quebec, it meant involvement in the CSN women's committee and the daycare movement. In B.C. IS members were strongly involved in the abortion and rape relief movements.

In March 1981 Josee Lamoureux, later the acknowledged leader of the IS National Women's Committee, gave a speech in Montreal which went still further in critizing IN STRUGGLE's previous line and practice. It provoked IS women in attendance at the meeting to articulate some of their grievances in public. The April 1981 Central Committee adopted a resolution proposed by the women members of the Political Bureau which set aside the 1975 policy on women. It also called for the formation of research collectives jointly with socialist feminists outside IS to develop a new theory. The Central Committee motion endorsed the Lamoureux speech and the coming into the open of a self-conscious movement of IS women and made a detailed analysis of the errors in the previous anti-feminist line. Some of the points made included: (1) Feminism was a progressive movement which must not be subordinated to the struggle for socialism although to be victorious the feminist struggle had to be waged alongside the socialist struggle; (2) the struggle for unity of male and female workers, principally a struggle against male chauvinism, was not just a struggle against a backwards ideology "artificially maintained by the capitalist class"; it also had to be understood as a struggle against definite structures which were the material basis of chauvinism:

> (Male chauvinism) corresponds to material privileges which have existed for a long time and are still

> maintained today which create a situation where men are in a relation of domination and power over women: economic power, political power, etc. Fighting chauvinism therefore doesn't just mean fighting against specific prejudices against women which may be reflected here or there in the behaviour of certain individuals, it means fighting a whole system of privileges which maintain the general pattern of domination.[51]

And, (3) feminist ideology, which up to then IS had defined to mean anti-male ideology, was in fact the ideology of a social movement of women seeking their liberation. There were different trends within the women's movement just as there were within the workers trade union movement some more worthy of support than others but that had to be determined in each situation by a concrete analysis.

In the fall of 1981 caucus meetings of women were held on a city and province-wide level in the different regions. In Quebec a new question was proposed: shouldn't IS declare itself to be a feminist as well as a socialist organization in line with the April declaration that the two struggles were to be placed on an equal footing? There was general consensus on this point across the country. This led to many suggestions about how to "feminize" the organization. One idea discussed in Quebec was the establishment of autonomous parallel structures for women at every level of the organization including a conference of all women which would have the final say on all policy matters related to women. This debate was pushed forward by the participation of many IS women in the research collectives. But the discussion also revealed signs of cleavage. Working-class women said they felt oppressed by petty-bourgeois women within

the women's caucuses.

In March 1982 a special issue of the IS theoretical issue (Proletarian Unity, vol. 6, no. 1) was published. The articles were critical of the way the IS programme treated the question of women as well as of the conception of a hierarchical single vanguard leadership of a monolithic monogendered working class.[52] A national conference of IS women was held in April 1982 just before the final IS Congress with the objective of achieving a consensus of views among women on the main points to criticize in the programme. But a minority of women, led by women from B.C. disagreed with the orientation of the National Women'S Committee. The B.C. women agreed with feminism and favoured suspending the IS programme but they ardently defended the correctness of the ideological principles of Marxism, particularly the principle that the working class will lead all movements against oppression including the women's liberation movement. The result was a split among women at the final Congress (as we saw in Chapter 2).

(3) Summary

In this chapter we have looked at three sets of changes which took place in Quebec and English Canada between 1972 and 1982: the rise of a women's movement both inside existing mass organizations like the unions and in the form of autonomous women's groups; the contradictions which came to the fore for

women, especially working mothers, with the changes in women's role and status in Quebecois and English Canadian society; and the evolution of the policy of IN STRUGGLE and the attitudes of IS women from a position of opposition to the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement to one of support.

The main conclusions that can be made are:

(1) IN STRUGGLE policy on women evolved in four periods:

-- IS explicitly opposed the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement from its founding in 1972. However, it also acknowledged the specific oppression of women in the sense that it saw the oppression of women in the family and supported all demands of the women's movement. IS gave priority to those demands which helped to grant women equal access to the paid labour force and to free women from family responsibilities so that they could participate equally in social and political struggles.

-- From 1975 to 1978 the fact that women suffered a specific oppression was acknowledged by a policy of "special methods". This meant a whole series of practical measures to aid individual women to participate equally in IS political work including in leadership posts.

-- From 1978 to 1980 IS intervened more actively in the strikes, union conventions, and conferences on issues raised by the women's movement where activists from the union women's committees and autonomous women's groups were also present. IS continued to support women's demands but sharpened its attacks

on the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's groups which was making headway among working class women through the work of such organizations as the International Women's Day Committee in Toronto and Saskatchewan Working Women (in which both union women and women from autonomous groups participated).

-- From 1980 to 1982 IS itself adopted pro-feminist positions but dissolved before the new approaches could be consolidated. The changes in IS policy began in June 1980. They resulted from two factors: (a) two years of active contact with the women's movement led the IS people involved in that work to the conclusion that the autonomous women's groups on the whole played a positive role in promoting the unity of progressive forces in support of women's demands. The stereotype of the anti-male dividers of the working class did not correspond to reality; and (b) in the summer and fall of 1980 there was a wave of resignations by women from leadership posts and from the organization entirely. The meetings of women in the cells and committees in the fall of 1980 called for by the June 1980 CC resolution to discuss why women were dissatisfied marked the beginning of a self-conscious women's movement within IS.

That movement came into the open with the speech of Josee Lamoureux at a public meeting in Montreal in March 1981 which provoked a number of IS women in the audience to speak from the floor to describe their personal experience of oppression within IS. The April 1981 Central Committee meeting voted to endorse the speech by Josee Lamoureux: "The events that took place at

the time of International Women's Day accelerated a process whereby IS members are becoming more keenly aware on a political and individual level of women's oppression, what is at stake in women's struggles and the importance of waging struggles against women's oppression in the short-term including within our own Organization, in the Quebec region at the very least".[53] The April 1981 CC resolution, presented by the women members of the Political Bureau, also set aside the 1975 anti-feminist policy. It also created autonomous structures for IS women to continue to develop a new political position on women and to wage struggles against chauvinist attitudes and behaviour within IS itself (the research collectives and women's caucuses both coordinated by the all-woman National Women's Committee). The first conclusion that can be made from the evidence presented in this chapter is that <u>the changes in IS policy on women were stimulated by a movement of IS women that first took shape in the fall of 1980</u>.

(2) A look at the evolution of the women's movement particularly in Quebec) in the same 1972 to 1982 period makes it evident what led the IS members active in work among women to recommend to the June 1980 Central Committee that IS change its evaluation of the nature and role of the autonomous women's movement. By the end of the Seventies it was increasingly difficult to maintain a position of opposing the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement and only giving really active support to the kinds of demands raised by the

unions designed to give women equal access to the paid labour force (equal pay, maternity leave, and daycare). The union women were themselves becoming "feminist". This was evident by the creation (in 1979) of structures like the Etats Generaux in Quebec, at the initiative of CSN and CEQ women, which sought to work out a common programme of demands and mobilization structures that would enable the autonomous women's groups to work alongside union women and others. It was apparent from the trend among union women to broaden the scope of their demands. Saskatchewan Working Women for example took up the issue of sexual harassment on and off the job in 1980. IN STRUGGLE was forced to choose. Either it maintained its anti-feminism and stood opposed to all but the most conservative sections of the overall women's movement or it switched to support for feminism and all that that implied including the creation of autonomous structures for women within IS itself. The second conclusion which can be made from the data presented in this chapter is that IS was in the rearguard of the women's movement from 1972 to at least June 1980 supporting women's demands but resisting the growing influence of feminist ideology which corresponded with the rise of an autonomous women's movement.

(3) An overview of the changes in the status of women in Quebec and English Canada in the last 15 years leads us to a third conclusion: the increased openness of working women to feminist ideology (including working women in IS) corresponded to changes in their material situation. The many complex changes

in society affecting women cannot be reduced to a single dynamic. However there is one important contradiction directly relevant to this thesis which continued to intensify for working women (especially working mothers) throughout the Seventies: the contradiction between their responsibilities in personal and family life and their involvement in the 'public' realm of work and cultural, social and political activity. Women cannot generally do like many men do and escape from one realm into the other (neglecting their family responsibilities and escaping into their work). They carry their homes on their backs wherever they are. Despite improved legal and reproductive rights and massive entry into the paid labour force women are not equal or autonomous in either the "private" or "public" realm. What this suggests is that changes in the status of women may require a direct challenge to the way the "personal" and "public" realms of society are organized and linked together. Feminist ideology, whatever its shortcomings may or may not be, is a discourse which addresses precisely these sorts of changes.

Notes -- Chapter 3

1. An example of the permanent tension inherent in the IN STRUGGLE position was the reaction of people in the Toronto district of IS to the proposed platform for the 1979 International Women's Day celebration as recorded in a report filed by the IS representative after attending a coalition preparatory meeting:

> The fourth demand was for "a woman's right to control her own body" which we of course opposed. But then for some reason the RWL [Trotskyist] representative suggested that it be changed to "free abortion on demand" which we spoke in favour of.

A "woman's right to control her own body" is viewed by the IS representative as a call for personal liberation within capitalism which only petty-bourgeois women could hope to attain even partly. That formulation contradicts Marxist ideological principles and is "of course opposed". It is rejected out of hand by IS as a typical example of "petty-bourgeois feminist ideology" which creates illusions about the possibility of reforms giving real autonomy or control to working class women under capitalism. But "free abortion on demand" and other specific demands which were included in the Toronto March 8 coalition platform concerning rape, battered wives, and homosexual rights were acceptable to IS as democratic demands. They were however viewed as "secondary" in relation to the "main issues of concern to working women", namely those issues related to reconciling motherhood and full-time work (equal pay, maternity leave, and daycare) which IS proposed be the main themes of the 1979 event.

There was a second point contained within the IS position which stood the test of time better than the rest: the recognition that the struggle of women for liberation was not confined to the autonomous women's movement and could be waged by women and others who are not necessarily feminist ideologically except in the most basic sense of wanting equality for women. Women were not just women, they were also workers or members of a national minority, or lesbians. And they experienced social oppression in relation to those other aspects of their material situation. IS insisted that women had an interest in all political issues and social struggles and that links had to be made between the different movements. The basis that IS proposed for doing so, which involved the complete subordination of the women's movement to the struggle for socialism as interpreted by a single vanguard party was of course quite

something else.

I am aware that what I say in this chapter (IS supported women's demands) appears to contradict what I report in Chapter 4 (IS ignored the feminist issues of masculine and feminine roles in personal and family life, sexuality, childraising, etc.). But both statements are true. The first formulation refers to IN STRUGGLE's formal position expressed in its publications. I can find no record of IS actually opposing any demand raised by the women's movement (the one exception is the decision to stop supporting the demand for "user control" of daycare in 1978 on the grounds that it was impossible to attain under capitalism; IS members in the daycare movement did little to promote the position and it was reversed again in 1981). IS went on record as supporting demands such as the rights of homosexuals, abortion on demand, and strengthening laws against rape. The point is that it saw these issues as secondary, as issues of personal and family life that might be slightly alleviated by immediate reforms but would only really get dealt with after capitalism had been overthrown.

2. An examination of the footnotes which follow will show that the main sources of information are Quebecois and English Canadian. I have also drawn on British and American works mainly to illustrate theoretical points about changes in the (post Industrial Revolution) traditional family and the sharing of housework. I also cite examples from the studies mentioned by Armstrong and Armstrong who are English-Canadians working in Montreal. I have chosen not to quote separate Quebec statistics because they follow the pattern for Canada as a whole. For further proof of this see the statistics cited in Violette Brodeur, et al. Le Mouvement de Femmes au Quebec (Montreal: Centre de Formation Populaire, 1981).

3. Education was a more important determinant for women finding work than for men. R.A. Holmes argued "that only one-quarter of the pay gap is attributable to personal worker characteristics such as work experience, education and hours of employment, leaving three-quarters of the gap unexplained by these factors". He estimated that if both part-time and full-time workers are included, "the potential lifetime earnings of a female university graduate is about equal to that of a male high school drop-out". Some 88.8% of the women who found employment in Canada in 1980 had high school education or better, compared to only 81.9% of the men. (Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, A Working Majority (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1983) p. 76 and p. 267). Still more striking, women are more likely to be found in jobs requiring greater education but paying lower wages while men were more likely to be in jobs requiring less education but offering better pay (Bernard Blishen and William Carrol, "Sex Differences in a

Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada", The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 15-3 (August 1978):352-271). Similar findings for Quebec were also reported (Francine Barry Le travail de la femme au Quebec. L'evolution de 1940 a 1970 (Montreal: Les presses de l'Universite de Quebec, 1977) and Anne Legare, Les classes sociales au Quebec (Montreal: Les presses de l'universite de Quebec, 1977).

4. For some of the laws changed in Quebec see Veronique O'Leary and Louise Toupin, Quebecoises Debouttes, 2 vols. (Montreal: Les editions de remue-menage, 1982) 1:42-3. The biggest change was of course in the 1980 Canadian constitution.

5. Barrie Thorne, Rethinking the Family, ed. B. Thorne and M. Yalom (New York: Longman, 1982) p. 5. The distribution into different types of households was as follows: (1) father breadwinner, full-time housewife and children -- 16%; (2) woman works as well as man, children at home -- 18%; (3) husband and wife with no children -- 30%; (4) single parent family headed by woman -- 6%; (5) single parent family headed by man -- 0.6%: (6) solitary -- 21%; and (7) households with relatives other than spouses or children -- 5%. Even if you ignore children in the model and count half the type (3) families in the first category of male breadwinner and woman full-time housewife the number of traditional families is still less than one-third. The other big change apart from women working is the number of "solitary" households. Of course, given the domestic cycle most people will still live part of their lives in the traditional family but at any given time it is a minority phenomenon.

6. These statistics from the Bird Commission are quoted from O'Leary and Toupin 1:48. Several other studies generate very similar numbers. See Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, The Double Ghetto (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1978) p. 78 and Ann Oakley, Subject Women (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981) p. 172. An interesting point raised by a Vancouver study cited in Armstrong and Armstrong, ibid., p. 81, is that the extra hours that come with children is not so much due to the time actually spent with them (1.3 hours a day) as in doing the extra housework they create (although this ignores the need to babysit and be available for pestering all the time the children are not in daycare or school). Another 1976 study cited in the same book (p. 55) showed that modern husbands are most likely to volunteer to help with the 1.3 hours of play time, least likely to take on the time-consuming and monotonous tasks like ironing and cleaning. The different studies do not share a common definition of what activities are included in the term "housework". For my use of the term see Chapter 4, footnote 2.

7. The American and European studies are cited in Thorne, Rethinking the Family, p. 15. The Canadian studies are quoted in Armstrong and Armstrong, The Double Ghetto, p. 55. Thorne says that younger more educated husbands tend to do a bit more than 10 to 14 hours while fathers of babies under 2 help more with the baby directly.

8. A 1977 study by Monica Boyd, The Working Sexes, ed. P. Marchak (Vancouver: UBC Institute of Industrial Relations, 1977) cited in Armstrong and Armstrong, A Working Majority, p. 29 estimates that over 40% of married women must rely on their own employment earnings not their husband's as their major source of income.

9. Kathleen McDonnel Still Ain't Satisfied, ed. M. Fitzgerald, C. Guberman and M. Wolfe (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1982), pp. 32-42.

10. Jillian Pidington, ibid., p. 93-11.

11. Clifford Olsen was convicted of kidnapping, raping, and murdering young women, many of them children, in British Columbia in 1982.

12. A Book About Sexual Assault, ed. M. Bircher et al. (Montreal: Montreal Health Press, 1979), p. 16.

13. Women are seen as suited for jobs that require the same qualities as do the role of nurturant mother, servicing husband and children in the home, etc. I am basing my discussion of the "sex-gender system" mainly on Gayle Rubin, Towards an Anthropology of Women, ed. R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975) pp. 157-209, and Nancy Chodorow, Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism, ed. Z. Eisenstein (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), pp. 83-106. In asserting that the rules of heterosexual marriage set the terms for the definition of gender roles I am not ignoring the different roles that will be promoted in different historical periods. Obviously the role of a housewife in capitalist society is different in many ways from the role of a wife in the domestic economy in the feudal period, for example, as is the role of mother. Betty Friedan is not the Wyf of Bath. The relationship between evolving conventions of kinship, sexuality, reproduction, home, etc., and other facts which shape the "sex-gender system" is a point of contention that requires a good deal more research and debate. In my view, the "evolution" of the sex-gender system, and in particular the roles of woman as mother, sexual mate and emotional support and housewife must not be looked at with the presumption that all the independent variables originate in the public sphere outside the home as if the woman in the home was a piece of clay waiting to be moulded. One of the most positive features of

the "crisis of the family", as I have tried to argue, is that it represents the outcome of a struggle by women to overcome their alienation (loss of control) as reproducers and domestic labourers.

14. The two main proponents of this line of thinking are the followers of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, et al.) in Europe and people like Eli Zaretzky and Christopher Lasch in the United States. See for example J. Benjamin, "Authority and the family revisited: or a world without fathers?" New German Critique 1978 13:35-57. Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life (A Canadian Dimension pamphlet reprinted from Socialist Revolution, n.d.); Christopher Lasch, Haven in a Heartless World (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1977). For a recent critique of Lasch, see Michele Barrett and Mary McIntosh, The Anti-Social Family (London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1982).

15. How do you raise children without mothers? How do you organize sexuality without possession? How do you reduce the burden of housework? The Marxists have talked about socializing domestic labour as if differentiated roles in relation to sexuality and child-raising would automatically change in consequence. In practice, private households remain in the socialist countries after several failed experiments in communal housing, cafeterias, etc., and the sex-gender system remains unchallenged. Radical feminist alternatives of women living separately from men in Lesbian nations, or test-tube babies (Firestone) have not won broad support. Liberal experiments with open marriage have failed because in fact they have proven to be but a variation on the traditional model governed by the same notions of male and female roles in sexuality, etc. Indeed, as Ann Oakley observes, "Marriage is more popular: more people marry, they marry at younger ages and live longer as married people in 1980 than in 1880". Ann Oakley, Subject Women.

16. Armstrong and Armstrong, A Working Majority, p. 247. The gap between male and female pay is very much wider in Canada than in Western Europe. In England women get 73.8% of male wages. In West Germany it is 75%, in the Netherlands 78% and in France almost 85%. This is only partly due to the exclusion of agricultural wages from the ILO statistics. (Ann Oakley, Subject Women p. 161.)

17. The 1980 Labour Force Survey figure for Women working in traditionally female jobs (clerical, sales, and service) is 62.7% as cited in The Daycare Kit, The Daycare Research Group (Toronto, n.p., 1982), p. 14. Some 44.1% of women workers are located in the service sector with 18.7% in the trade sector. The third biggest employer is manufacturing such as the textile industry where women are stuck in low-paying, non-union women's jobs with no "career path" of

promotions open to them. The one hope women have of getting more equal pay seems to lie in the expansion of the education and health sectors where most of the "good" women's jobs are to be found. Armstrong and Armstrong argue this is not happening and indeed that men are beginning to move into both sectors, but the statistical evidence is inconclusive.

18. For some reason this fact is rarely expanded upon in the literature. All of the attention is on those women kept out of the work force altogether by their family responsibilities, the implication being that wage-labour will liberate them. Ann Oakley mentions the point about overtime in Subject Women, p. 161.

19. The Daycare Kit, p. 5 and figures from "Childcare Needs of Working Mothers", pamphlet from Saskatchewan Labour, Women's Division, Regina, 1980.

20. The Daycare Kit, p. 17.

21. The fact that women have gained a 3.3% larger share of the total number of jobs in the economy (in 1980 compared to 1975) is deceptive. Most of those jobs were part-time ones. And the unemployment rate of women has more than doubled and is now a full percentage point higher than the male rate.

22. See Table 5 in Armstrong and Armstrong, A Working Majority, p. 252 as well as a discussion on pages 235-6.

23. I am using power and authority in the Weberian sense suggested by M.Z. Rosaldo in Women, Culture and Society (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 21. Authority "is, in the abstract, the right to make a particular decision and to command obedience". Power "is the ability to act effectively on persons or things, to make or secure favourable decisions which are not of right allocated to the individuals or their roles".

24. Ann Oakley notes in Subject Women on page 300 a number of facts, namely: "the fact that only 3 per cent of current British MPs are women (a 1.5 per cent drop from 1964); the fact that only 5 per cent of members of state legislatures in the United States, 2 per cent of members of national legislatures in France and 5 per cent in New Zealand are women; the fact that even in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, where women have cajoled and pressured into the public-political world, 'women are virtually absent from the top political decision-making organs' (Jancar, 1974, p. 218) (In 1975, 35 percent of the Supreme Soviet membership was female, 2 per cent of the Central Committee, and 0 per cent of the Politburo -- Hough, 1978)".

Oakley then describes the situation for women in positions of authority in the American civil service: "In America in 1961, when President Kennedy established the first Commission on the Status of Women, approximately 1 per cent of people in high-grade positions were women. In 1967, the percentage was 3.7 and in 1972 it was 4.0 -- which is evidence of women's persisting political powerlessness".

Finally, on pages 301 and 302 of the same book, Oakley describes the opportunities accorded women in the British Labour and Conservative parties:

> About 40 per cent of Labour Party members and 50 per cent of Conservative Party members are women. However, women are not represented in these proportions on the Labour Party General Management Committee or on Conservative Party Constituency Executive Councils. As delegates to party Annuals Conferences, women have not been more than 11 per cent (Labour) and 24 per cent (Conservative). On the policy-making and administrative bodies of the two parties, the proportion of women ranges from 18 to 24 per cent (the Conservative Party's National Executive Committee). As candidates in local government elections, Conservative party women generally do better than Labour Party women, but for either the proportion rarely rises above 20 per cent and both parties show a predisposition for women candidates whenever the chances of election are rather small.
>
> But it is at the level of candidates in national elections that women disappear en masse. Between 9 and 10 per cent of nominations are women. Having been nominated, women have a relatively good chance of being selected, but again most are chosen to fight where they have no chance of winning (62 per cent of Labour candidates in the February 1977 elections).

For an analysis of the exclusion of academic women from posts of authority in Canadian universities see Dorothy Smith, "An analysis of ideological structures and how women are excluded: considerations for academic women", Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 12 (4) Part I 1975 pp. 353-369.

25. I have consulted five sources for the information on the women's movement in Canada: (1) a detailed resume of Martine Lanctot, "La Naissance du Mouvement de Liberation des Femmes a Montreal, 1969-1976", (MA thesis, Universite de Quebec a Montreal, 1981); (2) The most recent history of Quebec women: Micheline Dumont, et al., L'Histoire des Femmes au

Quebec depuis Quatre Siecles (Montreal: Les Quinze, 1982); (3) The two volume anthology of texts from the two main socialist feminist groups in Quebec between 1968 and 1975, the Front de Liberation des Femmes and the Centre des Femmes Quebecoises Debouttes, 2 vols. ed. Veronique O'Leary and Louise Toupin (Montreal: Les Editions du remue-menage, 1982); (4) Violette Brodeur, et al., Le Mouvement des Femmes au Quebec (Montreal: Centre de Formation Populaire, 1981); and (5) Data included in IN STRUGGLE files. In general I have not relied on the last source alone but have sought corroboration in the other sources. For English Canada the sources are: (1) IS files; (2) Still Ain't Satisfied, ed. M. Fitzgerald, C. Guberman, and M. Wolfe (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1982); (3) Resources for Feminist Research, vol. 10, no. 2, July 1981; and (4) Conversations with members of the International Women's Day Committee in Toronto and socialist feminist Jean Rands in Vancouver.

26. The Women's Centre was not really a mass organization although it served the functions of one as an abortion referral service. The founders and leaders of the Centre were women who had been in the nationalist mixed left. Their political project was to stimulate the development of a mass autonomous socialist women's movement. Thus they also saw themselves as a kind of vanguard. The publication of the Quebecoises Debouttes newspaper and political agitation work around abortion and other issues were aimed at elaborating socialist feminist theory and creating a climate of socialist feminist opinion. See Violette Brodeur, et al., Le Mouvement des Femmes au Quebec, p. 41 for a list of some of the organizations spawned directly by the Women's Centre -- a feminist theatre troupe, a women's publishing house, a research centre, a Montreal neighbourhood-based women's health clinic, and the Montreal Abortion Committee.

    The first half of Martine Lanctot's MA thesis, "La Naissance du Movement de Liberation des Femmes a Montreal", is largely devoted to explaining the political project of the Front de Liberation des Femmes and subsequently the Women's Centre. Both Lanctot (no page reference, from notes) and Brodeur, et al., (ibid., p. 35), refer to the meetings between the leadership of the Women's Centre and IN STRUGGLE.

27. Private conversation with a member of the Women's Centre from 1972 to 1975 who was later a member of IN STRUGGLE. The meetings are also chronicled in documents in IS files in my possession.

28. The Women's Centre's commitment to revolutionary socialism and militant feminism was too radical for the reform-minded women's groups. Its commitment to an autonomous women's movement was not accepted by the left political groups, unions or nationalist forces. See Violette Brodeur, et al.,

Le Mouvement des Femmes au Quebec, pp. 34-35 and Micheline Dumont, et al., L'histoire de Femmes au Quebec depuis Quatres Siecles, pp. 484 and 493. Efforts to develop a strategy which linked an autonomous women's movement to a socialist movement also failed in English Canada in the early Seventies and women activists went in several different directions after the united campaign around the Abortion Caravan in 1970. Naomi Wall, attributes this to a failure to develop a theoretical basis for such a coming together:

> Other issues related to women's sexuality and reproduction were also the focus of political activity in the early seventies. There were campaigns around daycare, women's work both inside and outside the home, the oppression of women within institutions such as schools and universities, and sexism. But many of the women who had worked hard to bring these demands into focus were dissatisfied with the limitations of political action which centred on single issues. They were convinced that a much broader strategy for women's liberation had to be developed and that a theoretical basis for political practice was the essential component of this strategy. Many of these women looked to the organizing of the women in the work force -- both in and out of existing trade union structures -- as the most viable focus for their political work. Others joined political parties or organizations, preferring to work in groups with men, as difficult as that might be, than in a women's movement which, in their minds, lacked a theoretical basis. (Still Ain't Satisfied, ed. M. Fitzgerald, C. Guberman, and M. Wolfe (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1982), p. 19).

Wall goes on to say that by the mid-Seventies there was the beginnings of a diverse autonomous women's movement as a third option open to activists:

> There were artist collectives, writers' groups, feminist therapy collectives, service organizations for women, feminist publications, feminist self-help groups, skills-sharing centres, health clinics for women, information networks, and many others -- all staffed, administered, and controlled by women. (Ibid., p. 20)

As we shall see this also took place in Quebec in the 1975-78 period.

29. Micheline Lanctot, "La Naissance du Mouvement de Liberation des Femmes a Montreal" (from detailed resume).

30. The report, Travailleuses et Syndiquees, commissioned in 1972 discovered that women had a double load and could not attend meetings, they were alone in doing the housework and there were not enough public childcare facilities. See Micheline Dumont, et al., L'histoire des Femmes au Quebec depuis Quatres Siecles, p. 485.

31. The pamphlet also took up the question of sexual liberation although there was no mention of homosexuality. Broyelle argued that in capitalist society sex was a form of release and escape from the tedium and drudgery of exploitation. "A free sexuality requires a free man and a free woman in a free society" (p. 16). In China, according to Broyelle, women did not marry until after 25 but this was not principally for family planning reasons. The object was to give women time to get a trade and acquire economic, social, political, and ideological independence before going into a marriage contract. Such autonomy and equality were the basis of a free sexuality.

32. On page 5 of the theoretical document "Notes de travail sur la question d'appartenance de classe des femmes" dated summer 1974 the observation was made that wives often opposed the strikes their husbands were involved in, "vacillating like the petty bourgeoisie often does":

> One might say that housewives occupy a status which has many of the traits of the lower petty bourgeoisie such as individualism, conservatism and an aspiration to rise to the level of the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

33. The classic Marxist solution to the "women's question" followed directly from the analysis made by Engels in The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State. The oppression of a woman, in particular her confinement to the domestic sphere, economic dependence on her husband and exclusion from paid labour, emerged with the appearance of private property. The women's struggle, according to Engels, was thus of necessity a part of the class struggle to eliminate private property. And the most pressing demands to fight for were those which would place working class women on an equal footing with men workers economically (access to paid work), socially (maternity leave, childcare, public health, and education), and politically (right to vote, divorce, and other legal rights in marriage, etc.): this would create better conditions for their full participation in the struggle to overthrow capitalism.

Two things stand out in this approach. First, although mass women's organizations might be created to fight for these changes and reactionary men might have to be confronted to implement them, the main focus is on democratic demands on the State to legislate changes. There is no recognition of any need for a specifically feminist struggle to accompany the democratic struggle for equal rights and the socialist struggle to eliminate private property. Women's status in the "private" realm of the family as mother, monogamous heterosexual partner, and person primarily responsible for the domestic labour, is not seen as a cause of her devalued status in the larger society, but only as an effect. The personal is not political. Second, there is no recognition that meeting the demands of women would require radical changes in the culture and social structure (and indeed perhaps mode of production and State too) changes just as "revolutionary" as the changes in the State and the mode of production which Marxists see the demands of workers requiring. The feminine is not revolutionary.

In practice the main policies implemented in the socialist countries have been as follows: (1) full integration of women into paid labour; (2) measures to allow women workers to meet their responsibilities as mothers (maternity leave, mothers' leave until children are 3 years old, childcare, birth control, and abortion); (3) attempts to socialize domestic labour through the provision of communal services, but mostly by the State taking over health, education and social welfare functions necessary to reproduce the labour force; and (4) full legal and political equality and the banning of all (usually pre-capitalist) discriminatory social practices (veiling, kin-arranged marriages, polygyny, etc.). See Maxine Molyneux, Of Marriage and the Market, ed. K. Young et al., (London: CSE Books, 1981), pp. 167-202.

34. Both Violette Brodeur, et al., (p. 40) and Micheline Dumont, et al., (p. 493) agree that the appearance of Les Tetes de Pioches symbolized a rupture within the women's movement and an end to the hegemony of the socialist feminists. As mentioned below in the main text this coincides with the growth of the women's movement within the unions but the union women had quite a different orientation from the women in the autonomous projects and collectives. The union women's focus fell on contract demands and struggles to change attitudes and structures to allow participation of women in the union. The autonomous women's movement was concerned with issues of personal and family life in which individual men were the immediate agents of oppression (rape, battered wives, abortion, and women's culture). The union women and women from the autonomous movement held separate celebrations of International Women's Day every year until 1980.

35. For example, the proposal to make equal pay a priority in public sector negotiations was rejected.

36. See Proletarian Unity, vol. 1, no. 4 (April 1977) pp. 10-11.

37. "Emparons-nous de la Conception Proletarienne de la Lutte pour l'Emancipation des Femmes", 1975, p. 49 (unpublished).

38. "Working class women have to more than just fight for the legal recognition of their rights -- something that the bourgeoisie can concede quite readily if need be -- they must above all fight for the full implementation of those rights in practice. (Ibid., p. 49).

The document cited references from classical Marxist texts in support of its line of argumentation which showed the Leninist view of "bourgeois democracy" in the period of the "final crisis" of imperialism (which supposedly has been with us since the Bolshevik Revolution), a view which IS shared. First, there was a quote from Engels explaining why communists support increased legal rights:

> In the industrialized world the specific traits of the economic oppression which the proletariat has weighing upon it does not become fully visible until after the legal privileges of the capitalist class have been suppressed and a full juridical equality is established between the two classes; the democratic republic does not suppress the antagonism between the two classes, just the contrary; it is the first regime to provide a battleground on which the conflict can be fought out. Similarly, the specific traits of the dominance of men over women in the modern family, and hence the need for and manner of establishing a genuine social equality between the two sexes, will not be fully discerned until men and women have absolutely equal rights. (p. 48)

Second there was Lenin's modification to this approach which stresses that in the period of imminent collapse of imperialism the bourgeoisie is unable to allow the application of even these legal rights in practice:

> Capitalism in general and imperialism in particular make democracy a sham and an illusion while at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations among the masses, creates democratic institutions and aggravates the antagonism between imperialism, which negates democracy in practice, and the masses who aspire to democracy. (p. 48)

This approach to reform struggles was a very important part of the attitude IS took to all movements, including the autonomous women's movement. A closer look at many of the polemics directed against "feminism" shows that the content of the IS critique was that feminists confined the struggle to the battle for new legal rights thus reinforcing illusions about the possibility of women's liberation under capitalism.

39. "Emparons-nous de la Conception Proletarienne de la Lutte pour l'Emancipation des Femmes", (1975) p. 44, unpublished.

40. Ibid., p. 53.

41. This is not to say that the focus was away from working women. IN STRUGGLE's experience with working women led them to conclude that they had the same "backward" consciousness as the Firestone strikers wives. Up until 1976, IS targetted women working in industrial plants in Quebec (footwear, textiles) who were often immigrant women from peasant backgrounds or Quebecoises from small towns. They were both anti-communist and somewhat afraid of "politics". Newspaper distribution aimed at these women was a total failure. It was only after 1976 when IS adopted the "encircle the labour aristocracy" line (see Chapter 2) and targetted women in public sector unions like hospital workers, government employees and teachers that internal documents record that women are in fact on average more responsive than men to communist ideas.

42. Improved maternity leave was the major gain in the 1979 Quebec public sector Common Front strike and in the country-wide Canadian Union of Postal Workers negotiations in the same year. Several Quebec hospital unions won concessions in the area of equal pay. Unions pressured the provincial government to increase its subsidies for public daycare.

43. See Kathleen McDonnell's article on the overall situation in Canada in Still Ain't Satisfied M. Fitzgerald, C. Guberman, and M. Wolfe eds., pp. 32-42.

44. See Resources for Feminist Research, vol. 10, no. 2 (July 1981), p. 19.

45. Violette Brodeur, et al., Le Mouvement des Femmes au Quebec, pp. 81-82.

46. The article concludes:

> In the end, the political alternative facing the women's movement is Marxism or feminism. For, despite all the attempts on the part of the

so-called "Marxist" feminists and the Trotskyists to reconcile the two ideologies and the two political programmes, the reactionary objective of feminism is clear: isolate women from the struggle against the source of their oppression, which is none other than the private ownership of the means of production by the exploiting classes. And in the entire history of class society there is but one group, one class and one political programme capable of eliminating the system of private ownership of the means of production and of ultimately attacking the very existence of social classes and women's oppression. That class is the working class and its programme is the communist programme. (Proletarian Unity, vol. 3, no. 3 (February 1979), p. 24.

47. The "special methods" policy is criticized as a policy of "individual case work" such as is carried out by government social workers:

> There are as many special methods as there are "barriers" or "blocks" of individual women to political involvement. One woman's barrier is her responsibility for the children. Special method: organize day care. Another has housework to do. Special method: struggle with her husband and children to share the housework. Another feels inferior when she is among men. Special method: recruitment structures for women only. Women are found to be more strongly affected than men are by family traumas (illnesses, problems with the children, marital problems, etc.). Special method: the group must help those women and provide emotional support at the crucial moments etc. All these "special methods" have one point in common -- they fail to rely on the real and conscious desire to fight back which women have, especially the advanced elements, and they do not arouse women to action. On the contrary, they mother hen them to death. (Written by person in charge of work among women in the Political Bureau, May 1978).

48. Another indication of resistance to the hardening of the line was the debate at the third Congress in March 1979. The third Congress adopted the programme and constitution which were to be the focus of debate in the last year before being rejected in 1982. A formal criticism was made by Congress delegates criticizing the fact that the Political Report, main basis for discussion of the current political situation

at the 1974 Congress, did not even mention women. Women delegates also objected to the programme's almost complete ignoring of women. A number of women challenged the idea that women's liberation from specific oppression by structures like the family could not become central political issues until the advent of communism, i.e., not until near the end of the period of socialism. Several top male leaders argued strongly against the women's views, using their role as interpreters of orthodox Marxist theory to discredit any feminist positions that challenged or even questioned traditional Marxist theory. The final result of this battle was an uneasy compromise. The programme adopted spoke much more about women than the original draft, but only within the limits of classic Marxist principles. Current feminist positions were accepted verbally as legitimate considerations for further analysis, but kept out of the programme. The male leaders opposed to feminism fought a tactical battle at this stage, not wanting to openly oppose feminist positions consistent with socialist aims, but instead persuading the Congress they could not be put in the programme because they were new ideas that should remain open for debate.

49. Other examples of the decline in fortunes of the left since 1980 -- the federal NDP's plunge in the Gallup poll and the rise of the Conservatives, the decline of the nationalist movement in Quebec and clear signs that the PQ will lose the next election.

50. This was reported by several interview respondents. See also the article on page A15 of the Thursday, July 7, 1983 edition of the Vancouver Sun.

51. IS newspaper, vol. 8, no. 34 (May 19, 1981), p. 8.

52. The National Women's Committee critique noted that the IS programme had nothing to say about women's role in either biological or social reproduction. It said workers had "nothing to lose but their chains" when in fact male workers had material privileges due to their gender. The programme's failure to spell out how social relations other than relations of production would be transformed by socialism followed from ignoring women's role in reproduction, according to the NWC. The existing socialist countries continued to reinforce women's traditional reproductive roles and there was a glaring sexual division of the labour in the economy, party and State. Marxist ideology was sex blind; feminist ideology was not. The National Women's Committee was unwilling to speculate as to whether making a concrete analysis of the oppression of women could successfully build on both feminist and Marxist ideologies without perhaps rejecting some of the "scientific principles" of Marxism.

The disagreement with the NWC position was expressed in a theoretical text by a woman member from B.C. She made three main points: (1) the NWC was wrong to talk of women as an "oppressed social strata". Women must be seen as an oppressed part of a class. The fight for women's liberation was a class struggle of the (women of the) exploited classes against patriarchal capitalism not a sex struggle against men. When the most oppressed and exploited women are liberated they will liberate all women. (2) To avoid the errors that IS made in the past in mechanically counterposing class struggles to women's struggles IS should extend the range of class analysis to include the "mode of reproduction". It should broaden the definition of working class to include those (women) dependent on the sale of labour power as well as those who sell it directly. (3) The programme should add a demand for "sexual integration of domestic labour", i.e. men sharing the housework.

53. IS newspaper, vol. 8, no. 34 (May 19, 1981).

CHAPTER 4

REPORT ON FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

In this chapter we will look at what former members of IN STRUGGLE (IS) remember about the experiences that led IS women to adopt a feminist political discourse in the last year of the organization's existence. The source for this information is thirty-four taped interviews conducted in April and May of 1983 (see Appendix A for full text of interview schedule).

The instrument used was an interview schedule not a written questionnaire with multiple choice answers to choose from. Hence not every respondent addressed all the same points in precisely the same measurable or comparable way. Therefore the findings will be weighted by saying the absolute number of people who said it and what percentage that represented of the total number of people expressing any view at all on that same point: "Twelve interviewees (75%) agreed ..". means that out of the 34 people interviewed 16 expressed an opinion on that point and 12 of the 16 or 75% said they agreed. In most cases the number of people expressing an opinion is significantly higher than that. Where there was a significantly different response among different categories of people like men or women, leaders or non-leaders etc., that was also noted.

The findings from the interviews have been organized under four headings: IS members -- what kind of people were they?;

experience of family life and sexual division of labour in the household; individual male chauvinist attitudes and behaviour; and the sexual division of labour in the organization and the problems faced by women in tasks and posts. The relevant interview questions have been reproduced at the beginning of each section. The full interview schedule is in Appendix A.

(1) IS Members -- What Kind of People Were They?

Section one

1. sex?
2. age at present?
3. highest education level attained?
4. class origins? Explain if it is ambiguous or complicated.
5. your present occupation?
6. your present family situation (single or couple, children or not, etc.)?
7. your family situation most of the time you were in the group? Was it the same? If not, explain. (e.g. explain when first child was born, etc.)

Section two

1. In what year did you "rally to" IS (e.g. start working closely with IS on a regular basis)?
2. Was it your first contact with a left group? If not, could you list the left organizations you have been involved with in rough chronological order?
3. What were your main reasons for joining IS?
4. Had you had any contact with groups putting forward women's demands, either women's groups or mixed organizations like unions with women's committees?
5. What was your attitude to women's demands before joining IS? What was your attitude towards "feminism"?
6. After you joined IS and found out what its line was on fighting women's oppression did you find it more or less acceptable at the time or did you have disagreements with it or significant questions about it from the beginning?
7. Could you give me a rundown of all the posts you held and the tasks you performed while in IS

starting from the beginning? At least the main ones ... The reason I ask is to find out where you have expertise and to get an idea of what experiences you base your opinions on.

8. Did you have any particular responsibilities for internal or public work in relation to women?

What kind of people joined IN STRUGGLE? Obviously they were people who were highly committed to radical social change and thus, given the general absence of radical mass movements in Quebec and Canada in the 1970s, more often than not radical intellectuals. Beyond that distinguishing characteristic the women in the sample are remarkably like the women looked at in Chapter 3 -- the group of young women of child-bearing age who are as fully involved as they can get in the economy, culture and politics of society while still carrying out their roles as mothers, housewives, and sexual partners too. And like those other women their expectations of liberation kept getting dashed on the rocks of male power and privilege. A group committed to socialist revolution and women's liberation under socialism was supposed to be better or different. As it turned out, IN STRUGGLE was not.

Every woman interviewed (24, 100%) regularly worked to support herself and her family.

About half of the women had some contact or involvement with the women's movement prior to joining IS, but only 5 had been involved to a significant degree.

Two out of three (16, 67%) had completed a university education. Almost all (23, 96%) had at least 2 years of college. It is clearly a group that is upwardly mobile (half are of

working- class origins), and intellectually skilled.

Almost 2 out of 3 (15, 63%) said they accepted IN STRUGGLE's anti-feminist political line when they first joined, for two reasons. They were opposed to "bourgeois feminism" because it, under the cover of the common interests of women of all classes, promoted issues that served the class interests of careerist middle-class women, and refused to attack the root of women's oppression, private property and capitalism, or to support struggles by working women (or men) against the bourgeoisie. Second, they were opposed to "radical feminism" because it was anti-male and was only succeeding in dividing women and male workers, thus playing directly into the hands of the bourgeois feminists. The other one-third were unsure, or realized that there were different trends in the women's movement, including the trend of socialist feminism.[1] But only 4 (17%) said the line caused them real trouble, and all of these 4 (except one person who resigned) went along, because it was not a priority for them, or because they expected the line to change eventually. Most of the one-third who had some doubts accepted the line, because they were strongly committed to subordinating all short-term mass struggles for reform to the revolutionary political struggle for socialism. Their commitment to a Leninist strategy prevailed. It is accurate to say then that the overwhelming majority, perhaps as much as 80% to 90% of the women in IS, were voluntarily anti-feminist, and did not have strong conscious objections to the line of anti-feminism upheld

by IN STRUGGLE until 1980.

A majority of the women did not become politically aware or active until 1970 or after (14, 58%), the balance all being from the "'68 generation" politically. For many, IS was the first involvement in a left activist group. Their previous experience had been either in post-1970 student activism or in the militant Quebec community groups movement (especially tenant unions, welfare rights, food co-ops and daycare) and, in a couple of cases, public sector unionism. The 9 (37%) for whom IS was not their first political group came from new left Marxist groups or culture-propaganda collectives (promoting progressive films, popular theatre). Thus although half of these women (12, 50%) are from working class backgrounds, and almost half (10, 42%) are presently in working class jobs, they did not emerge from the unions as the left did in the '30s. But neither were they housewives without any social experience outside the home. Except for 7 (29%) who were young students when they joined IS in the mid-Seventies, most women had had an experience of 3 to 5 years of social activism. They were, by and large, experienced organizers and politically literate. But only a minority of women had been involved much in political theorizing, except in the localized Marxist study groups formed by activists within unions and community groups as part of the process of deciding whether to join a Marxist-Leninist group in the 1975-77 period.

Twenty-two (92%) women joined IS in the 1975-77 period, when whole groupings of people from social organizations and

Marxist study groups were rallying, or in the early 1972-74 period when the group was starting up (3 of the 22 are from the early days). Only four people in the sample resigned before IS was dissolved in 1982, 2 of them in the last weeks. Thus almost the entire sample was in IS for 5 years or more.

Eighteen women (75%) were between 28 and 34 when interviewed, which means that they were between 21 and 27 in the median year of 1976 when most joined the organization. The 5 women over 34 in 1983 (the oldest being 44) all still had children at home. Most IS women had completed at least a college education when they joined IS in 1975-77. They were in their early to mid-twenties, worked to support themselves and their families, had been active in social action groups for several years, and were of child-bearing age. Most (15, 63%) were working mothers or soon to become so.

The men in the sample were chosen as a kind of control group to see if their perceptions of the facts of the situation varied significantly from those of the women (they did not). Hence the criteria for selecting them was even more so that of the access they had to information about what was going on in all parts of the organization, what data were recorded in the internal files that I could search out, etc. Eight of the men interviewed (80%) were in leadership posts, half at the national level, half at the regional level. What is interesting to note -- given their higher status compared to the women interviewed -- is the extent to which they resemble the women in terms of

social background, age, education, etc.

The same percentage (50%) are of working class origin and had two years college education or better (9, 90%). The number with university education is actually slightly lower (6, i.e. 60%, compared to 67% of the women). The number presently in working class jobs was about the same (40% vs. 42%).

Some 80% of the men were between 28 and 34 when interviewed (compared to 75% of women) and the 2 over 34 (the oldest being 38) still had children at home or were co-parenting while separated. Sixty percent had children (vs. 63% of the women) and 80% had been in a couple most of the time they were in IS (vs. 71% of the women). All of them (10, 100%) worked to support themselves and their families. Like the women the men were in their early to mid-twenties when they joined the organization (90% of them in the 1975-77 period), had completed at least college education, worked for wages or salary, and were soon to become working fathers with household and family as well as work and political responsibilities.

One would expect that at least as many of the men would have readily accepted the group's anti-feminist line in the early years as women had and this is the case (70% of men vs. 63% of women). But just as many men said they had significant and conscious disagreement with the line early on (20% vs. 17% of the women). This corresponds with the degree of previous contact with feminist groups before joining IS Although half the women had had contact (versus only 30% of the men) only 21% of

the women had joined the women's movement as their primary activity at any point, whereas the three men who had had contact said that the contact had been a significant one which strongly shaped their own views and practice. It would probably be wrong to make any general inferences from the above data because there is a probable source of sampling bias. Seven out of 10 of the men interviewed were anglophone, and the women's movement had been more successful in confronting men in the left in English Canada in the early and mid-Seventies than in Quebec. The sampling bias is somewhat mitigated by the fact that 4 of those 7 are in fact Quebecois anglophones who are fully assimilated into the francophone milieu socially and had their main prior political experience in francophone Quebec. That makes 7 of 10 men coming out of the Quebec left comparable to the 80% Quebecois women. With all those ambiguities all that can really be said then is that the interviews did not provide any data to prove that IS men started off any more anti-feminist politically than the women in the early years.

(2) Experience of Family Life and Sexual Division of Labour in the Household

Section Three

(1) Let's say that your day can arbitrarily be divided into three sorts of activities -- political tasks, both household tasks and emotional support responsibilities (for mate, children, family) rolled into one, and work for wages or full-time school. Pick any period you were in IS and estimate if you can how many hours a week you put into each activity. If that is

too difficult, just run down a typical weekday from when you got up in the morning to when you went to bed at night, then do the same thing for a weekend day and we'll figure out the number of hours from there.

(2) Did your mate share both household tasks (cooking, cleaning, etc.) and nurturant responsibilities for emotional support of mate, children, and kin (taking mother to hospital, etc.) equally? If the division of labour between you changed over time what caused it to change? Was it IS policy or actual intervention by IS that caused the degree of sharing to change? Was it struggle within the couple (led by the woman)? If it was struggle within the couple, was IS basically supportive (of the woman) or did it not get involved at all?

(3) Would you describe the sharing situation in your couple as typical of couples belonging to IS? If not, what was the situation for others?

As we saw earlier in Chapter 3 a typical Canadian married woman that works for wages can expect to do at least 28 hours of housework a week with her husband doing only 10 to 14 hours.[2] The total of 42 hours is the same amount of hours as is estimated to be put in by a full-time housewife with no children. With children the total number of hours of housework to be done between the man and woman can reasonably be raised to 50 hours a week. If a person did nothing but housework and childcare 7 days a week in the time slot between when she and the children get home at around 5:00 p.m. and the moment the children go to bed at 7:30 p.m., she could get 14 hours of housework done (deducting 30 minutes for eating supper). It is unlikely that any major cleaning will get done except after the kids are in bed or on weekend days. If 10 hours get done on the weekend (say all day Saturday plus half of either Sunday morning or evening) another 20 to 25 hours of housework still remain that will have to get done during the week. That is 3 to 4 hours a night after the kids are in bed, 2 hours if we take the 42

hours of total housework figure. Divided between two people this means an hour or two each, mostly after 7:30 or 8:00 p.m. If either the man or the woman has a meeting on a weekday evening then there will be 2 to 4 hours to do on another night instead of the usual 1 or 2. The pattern being assumed here is the typical Canadian one cited earlier with the woman doing 28 hours of housework or more and ending up with a real "double load", a total work week (including her job) of 65-70 hours. Obviously if both man and woman were busy every Sunday outside the home and out to a meeting every weekday night this would create real problems for both time spent with the children and time to do housework. This was the case for people in IS.

The working women in IS carried a triple load. As described in Chapter 2, IS members whether they worked for wages or worked on staff for IN STRUGGLE as "permanents" were expected to act as professional revolutionaries. That meant making the third load, political work for IS their most important activity, one to which all other activities had to be strictly subordinated. This was monitored by one's immediate superior or "responsible". The rank and file member would meet periodically with her cell secretary (or if she were in a specialized work committee in the national or regional apparatuses with her committee secretary) to go over her schedule. That schedule was made up of 21 "blocks", 3 blocks a day of 4 hours each (morning 8-12, afternoon 1-5, and evening 7-11) 7 days a week. It ran on the honour system rather than a cop system with someone checking on

you all the time. But the individual sense of commitment to perform at a maximum level "for the Revolution" was enough for people to drive themselves to their limits. As the 21-block system implies, IS members were expected to spend every waking hour in some form of task-oriented activity that could be described on a schedule, with political work coming first. As a majority of respondents mentioned in the interviews, it was official policy for most of the years IS existed to spend no more than a maximum of two blocks a week, i.e. 8 hours, on activities other than your job and political work, 2 blocks therefore for housework, family time, and recreation of any sort.

The actual amount of time spent on political tasks varied with your post; and there were slack as well as busy periods. Mostly people kept going at a pretty regular clip, with no let-up on weekends. Respondents were asked to give detailed estimates of how they used their time. The pattern is very clear for each of the different categories of people -- the full-time staffer, mobile organizer, leader, and regular member with a 40-hour a week regular job. The full-time staffers or "permanents" in the apparatuses or IS enterprises usually spent between 60 to 70 hours a week doing political tasks including: 9 to 5 on weekdays, 5 out of 7 evenings and 1 full weekend day (usually Sundays). Leadership usually squeezed a little more time than this because they had to plan and review the work of others as well. When leadership people were on the road

trouble-shooting problems "at the base" they generally spent from morning to midnight doing nothing but political tasks with lots of short meetings with notebooks over kitchen tables between 2 or 3 people. Organizers who generally worked alone or with 1 other person in regions where no territorial cells yet existed (hence mainly in secondary regions and towns outside the main centres of Vancouver, Regina, Toronto, Ottawa, Quebec City, Rouyn, and Montreal) put in a 75-hour week (the figure is from actual reports filed at the time in Ontario). The organizers were renowned for showing more initiative and getting more results than a whole cell. The average member with a 40-hour job did another 25 to 30 hours for the group with the same 5 evening blocks out of 7 and 1 2-block weekend day pattern (as for permanents) being the minimum. Many actually did more, especially those with tasks in the apparatus. For example working on the weekly newspaper meant working every weekend with 4 regular weekends off a year. Cell or committee secretaries had to do extra as well: preparing written agendas, and doing activity reports that reviewed past work and plans of work suggesting future activities for the regular cell or committee meetings.

Sixty to 70 hours a week devoted to a combination of political work and wage labour already takes up as much time as a working housewife carrying a double load. Where does the time to look after the needs of your children, mate and kin come in? Who does the 40 to 50 hours of housework, and when? A real

problem, when the man and woman together are only supposed to spend 2 blocks apiece, a total of 16 hours, on housework and recreation. (In the 21 block system of three 4-hour blocks a day, 2 hours are allowed as lost time between 5 and 7 in the evening , but even if that is counted as housework time we are still 20 to 25 hours short of the 50 hours needed for housework.) This problem was solved by different people in different ways. The most common ones cited by respondents were as follows.

(1) Men shared in the housework Of the 29 people who had lived in couple situations who gave time estimates 23 (79%) said that men shared fairly equally in carrying out designated tasks including child-rearing tasks. (In most cases both man and woman were IS members.) Another 3 (10%) reported that the men still did less but were gradually increasing their share. (21 of the 29 people doing the reporting on men's share of the housework were women.) Only 3 (10%) described the pattern supposedly typical for Canada and Quebec of the woman doing twice as much as the man -- all 3 relationships ended in separation or divorce. A surprising number (8, 29%) indicated a sort of role reversal with the man actually putting in more hours than the woman, especially in cooking and childcare.

However doing half the tasks is not carrying half the load as many respondents were careful to point out. There are at least two other things involved: responsibility for emotional support and servicing of children, mate, and kin, and the

management function of planning the domestic tasks for both to do. Of the 23 reporting an equal or more than equal sharing of assigned tasks 12 (52%) qualified that statement by saying women still had primary responsibility for the emotional part of the family relationships (husband-wife, parent-child, family-relatives), on top of doing most of the planning of tasks.

> Men didn't discuss things like children or their personal lives before and after meetings like women did. And they didn't do it much at home either. Men are trained to put everything into neat little boxes. So work is work and physical sex is physical sex and problems in the relationship are "problems in the relationship". They don't think about one while doing the other. But we women can't live like that. We carry our homes on our backs wherever we go. We are always worrying abut the emotional side of things, about relationships between people inside the family and out. (Marie)[3]

> I think men are generally doing more housework in the whole society these days, certainly younger men are. There are big changes happening. The grounds are shifting in the war between the sexes. I really liked the line in the [Montreal] play Les maisons s'emportent: "With you doing half I'm no longer stuck alone in the house. But I'm still alone in the family. When are you going to start carrying your share of the emotional load? (Claudette).

> Whenever I asked a man comrade how much work he did at home he always said "half". But when I asked his wife she gave me a different story. What it came down to was that he took on half the regular tasks as his tasks and did them every week. But he didn't share in the planning, in the household management responsibility. To do that you have to participate in doing all aspects of the housework at least a little bit so you are on top of everything. Men are doing more work than before but it is still women who do most of the planning and worrying. (James)

Respondents were unanimous (23, 100%) in reporting that the increased involvement of men in housework was due to struggle in the relationship, not to actions by the organization. The

organization sometimes did play a secondary and supporting role. For example in one case a member was having repeated fights with his wife (a non-member). She did not accept her husband's explanation that he had important political work to do all the time, preventing him from doing his share at home. Finally he asked a (male) member of the national leadership to talk to his wife and to make suggestions.

> I was very uneasy in asking him to come in like that into our family life. I really felt threatened but something had to be done and we were at an impasse. It's funny. He [the leader] has a bit of a personal reputation as a chauvinist but after he investigated he basically supported her. But he did it in a good way which was helpful to me too. (Bob)

More frequently however the organization intervened in a more impersonal and mechanical way. According to a member of the Political Bureau, the push for cell and committee secretaries to do something about the load on mothers came from the top, when the baby boom of 1977-79 started straining women's schedules past the breaking point:

> Cell secretaries would look at the schedules of the men to see how much housework and childcare they were doing, that's all. And they would tell them to do more. (Ghyslaine)

(2) <u>There was a reduction in the quantity and quality of housework done</u> The criterion that was applied to decide who should do what in the way of housework was not, however, a strictly feminist one of transforming the sexual division of labour in the home and the stereotyped male and female roles within it. Struggles went on in relationships, or the organization intervened, because both men and women were members

with 60 to 70 hour weeks (besides housework). The object was to "free" people as much as possible <u>from</u> the family, more particularly from the "constraints" imposed on their availability for political work by the demands of family life. Women also wanted to be equal in the home of course but the main stimulus was extreme practical necessity not feminist ideology. Hence the second thing that was done to make it possible to deal with family and household responsibilities was to reduce the quantity and quality of tasks performed to an absolute minimum. First, by planning every move, to be more efficient, and to waste less time in between tasks. And then by simply cutting things out. The things easier to cut were those related to upgrading and repairing the house or yard. Living near or below the poverty line (because of the dues system), most people lived in 5 or 6 room walk-up apartments anyway. The next thing to go was often personal time with other family members.

> The group seriously underestimated the time required for housework. If you asked for more time you were accused of making a fetish out of it. If you spent too much time with your child -- anything over the minimum -- you must be spoiling him and you should feel guilty for your "mother complex". And you had so little time to keep in touch with what was happening in your relationship that things would just build up and build up and before you knew it everything blew up in your face and it was too late to repair the damage. (Genevieve)
>
> We never even had time to fight about housework. We only saw each other five hours a week. The organization expected me to do more of the work because his task was more important than mine. He never changed and eventually we split up. (Christiane)
>
> My boyfriend [who was a non-member] was really good about everything but it was impossible. I worked 9 to 5 every day and was out to meetings most nights and

weekends. He did the cooking and cleaning. But that's not really what broke up the relationship. When we were together I was never really there. I just never had time to be with him emotionally. I just couldn't do it. (Lucille)

I tried to spend as much time as I could with my child but it wasn't enough. He was babysat all week long and lots of weekends. And when we were home together I was always at my typewriter. We discussed lots of solutions in my committee [Lise was the head of it] but they all came down to reorganizing my work so I could still put it first. Now I'm paying the price for all that. My little boy has lots of complexes. He is very, very afraid of being rejected or even abandoned. (Lise)

As already stated the struggle to reduce housework and family time was not primarily motivated by a feminist concern for equal sharing within the home. The objective was to maximize participation in political work outside of the home. And if one person's political tasks were deemed more important than another's, then it was expected that the person with the lesser task would do more housework.

Ginette was one of those people who's really highly organized and she insisted on Ronald doing a 50-50 share. But his work on the newspaper meant every weekend away from home. She protested but the newspaper leadership said she would just have to do more than half because his tasks were more important. That left her at home or dragging the kids shopping with her every weekend. She was criticized for failing to subordinate her personal interests to those of the revolution. (Nanette)

In the early years if the husband was a member and his wife was a non-member (fairly common when the man was an industrial worker), then it was considered quite okay for her to do virtually all the housework alone.

(3) <u>The "cheat your employer" technique</u>. A third way that time was squeezed for housework (although the real motive was to

find more time for political work) was to work part-time instead of full-time; to find ways to do your political reading of all those reports on the job; and generally to try not to "waste" too much time on your career. People did the minimum they could get away with without getting fired (not a very good strategy in an economic recession where most people are taking extra courses and putting in extra hours to survive.)[4]

All of the above techniques made it possible to combine different activities -- doing housework while reading a report, taking an extra half-hour for lunch and having a political meeting in a downtown restaurant with another comrade, etc. All of these efficiencies meant that 74% of the respondents managed to get their hours of housework down to under 15 a week each, meaning a couple together did 30. The other people estimated they did upwards of 20 hours each.

(3) Individual Male Chauvinist Attitudes and Behaviour

1. Did individual IS men exhibit any forms of male chauvinist behaviour? If so, what forms of chauvinist behaviour were the strongest and most widespread? Which were the least strong or least widespread?

2. I want you to comment on each of the following forms of chauvinism to say whether they existed in IS, were weak or strong, etc., and to give concrete examples where you can:

   a. sexual objectification: everything on a continuum from treating women as sexual objects by making sexual "comments" or jokes through to the extreme of sexual harassment or violence.

   b. ridiculing women who were assertive of women's specific concerns or insisted on their autonomy. In society

generally this usually takes the form of calling an assertive woman a "frustrated bitch", etc. behind her back.

c. passivity or actual resistance by men to efforts to bring women into "traditionally male" tasks in the organization or to get men to take up "traditionally female" tasks in the household.

d. failure to see "women's issues" as genuinely collective issues where both men and women should take initiative; hence the failure to take the initiative in criticizing other men for chauvinism or even to raise women's demands in their union except in response to a directive from IS or an initiative by (IS) women.

e. failure to really regard women comrades as equals in practice. This can take the relatively mild form of picking up what a male comrade says at a meeting while ignoring the fact that a woman has said the same thing half an hour before. It can go to the extreme of men only talking serious politics with other men to the point where an informal "old boy network" is created of men consulting one another, recommending one another for posts, etc.

3. Were some categories of IS men more chauvinist than others?

a. For example, compare men in the higher echelons, in leadership, to men in the cells and committees. Were the men in the higher echelons less chauvinist because they were more "politically advanced"? Were they more chauvinistic because they had more power and used it? Or was the chauvinism of IS men something which varied independent of the post occupied by those men?

b. What about men from working class backgrounds versus petty-bourgeois men?

4. How would you rate the chauvinism of IS men compared to the progressive men in the unions, in community groups and in other left groups? Was it more? Less? About the same?

The strongest form of chauvinism: There was a consensus that the strongest form of individual male chauvinism was the fifth type, "failure to really regard women comrades as equals in practice" (24, 80%). Men responded more to what other men said and did than to what women said or did. What women said

carried less weight. The bottom line was that men had a paternalistic attitude towards feminine "weaknesses". A number of people felt this was connected to the tasks most women performed: tasks which were of lower status and prestige, more practical than theoretical. Others felt it had more to do with the fact that issues most related to women's lives (e.g. having to do with personal and family life, problems of children, sexuality, etc.) were not regarded as important political questions. As a consequence women's particular strengths related to these activities were not acknowledged or valued. When commenting individually on each of the 5 forms of chauvinism 23 of the 25 people expressing an opinion (92%) said it was strong; 19 of those people (83%) were able to give detailed reasons and examples to back up their statement that it was strongly present. Sixteen (70%) of the people who said women were treated paternalistically mentioned the fact that "men don't listen to women". Many said that an important reason why men did not listen to women was that they did not respect the way in which women expressed themselves. For example, a lot of men showed impatience and outright hostility when women got emotional (laughing, crying). Some men would criticize women for failing to take a definite stand quickly enough, or for getting too mired in petty details. Women were perceived as being both less rational (balanced, in control of their emotions) and less articulate (able to overview a situation and take a clear stand). Another reason men were not listening, according to

several respondents, was that a lot of them liked to hear the sound of their own voices too much. Men talked more often and at greater length, making it difficult for women to even get on the speakers list. Six people (26%) made a connection between the paternalistic attitude to women's qualities and the fact that men controlled the posts associated with the development of the group's value system (ideology).

The weakest form of chauvinism: "Sexual objectification" -- overt sexist jokes, putting sexual pressure on women, men asserting the power of their sex through sexual games, aggressiveness or violence -- was judged to be the weakest form of chauvinism by 26 (87%) people. However, when asked to comment spearately on each type one-third of the respondents (32%) said "sexual objectification" was present. And 15 (71%) of the people who said it was scarce or weak went on to qualify their remarks by explaining that the main reason it was absent was that there was a strong moral censure or taboo on the expression of the cruder sex power-related forms of sexism. In other words, many people suspected that such behaviour was repressed or hidden. There was a notable difference in the responses of single women to this question. They account for 6 of the 10 people who said sexual objectification was strong in IS. The explanation for this is not hard to find and can be pieced together from comments made by both married and single women respondents. In the early days of the group a lot of people were single and/or childless and in their early to mid twenties. There was a great

deal of sleeping around and men exhibited all the typical forms of cruder chauvinism, tempered only by the fact that the group's politics were for women's equality and it was a group of intellectuals. (There was at least one case of wife-beating -- the man was suspended and then expelled.) There was a struggle against this in which women played an important role in criticizing the hypocrisy of the "free love" ethic which allowed men to be irresponsible. At the same time the group was expanding quickly and demanding more discipline of its members. The ideal of the "proletarian family", the stable couple composed of 2 people who were equal as comrades, was upheld.[5] This aided the process of separating personal life from political life and of subordinating the former to the latter. A moral code of correct behaviour developed in relation to how men and women acted when doing political work -- non-emotional, impersonal and asexual. The main outlet for the man to express his sexual aggressiveness became his private life: either within the relationship, or with single women, who were still viewed as fair game for sexual adventures. The idealization of the stable heterosexual couple also reinforced prejudices against "deviant" forms of sexuality, such as homosexuality.

Other expressions of chauvinism: The respondents were not asked to rank the other three types of chauvinism, but they did comment on each one individually to say whether it was strongly or weakly present and so on.

(a) The largest number of people (20-23 people giving an opinion, 87%) said that "resistance to the integration of women into traditionally male tasks (and vice-versa)" was strong. The resistance was not to women holding leadership posts or even to individual women fulfilling traditionally male tasks. Both men and women respondents reported that although women might be "tested" when they first took on a new position, women were accepted as leaders by the people under them. There was however, one condition attached -- that they become "one of the boys", that they prove themselves to be "as good as any man" (13, 65%). A second example of "resistance" was the response of men to the feminist challenge in the last year. Most women felt that IS men showed a genuine open-minded attitude to, and even sympathy for, feminist ideas in the last year. All sides in the pre-Congress debate favoured making the organization into one that was just as much committed to feminist goals as it was to communist ones. However, in practice, IS men did not take any political initiatives to feminize the organization, nor did they change their behaviour in their personal life in ways that gave women confidence (12, 60%). A third example was of more overt resistance. The men who controlled the key posts involved in defining and propagating the political line resisted feminist ideas most strongly (7, 35%). This is not really that surprising, given that they were the direct targets of 2 of the three main feminist criticisms -- the abstract approach to developing theory, and the hierarchical and individualistic

style of leadership (the third being the refusal to sufficiently take up feminist issues and the concomitant denial that "the personal is political"). In short, the Political Bureau, research commission, and newspaper were the main battlegrounds between opposing (or at least contradictory) political conceptions. The men in those posts stood to lose the most in terms of political influence and authority if the feminist criticisms were accepted. The individual actors may or may not have been more chauvinist individually than other men, but that was not the main reason why resistance was stronger there. This was where the power lay to define the political line.

Finally, on a more positive note, several respondents (5, 25%) spoke of signs of an increasing willingness of men to take up traditionally feminine tasks. We have already noted men's increased sharing of childcare, housework, etc., type of tasks in the home. Men also took on more of the routine clerical and organizational tasks within the organization, volunteered more frequently to do childcare for meetings, and so on in the last couple of years that IS existed. This was so to the point that in the Quebec region 43% of the organizational and clerical tasks in the regional apparatus were being performed by men by 6 months before the final Congress. Some of the women who had been in infrastructure tasks were transferred into agitation-propaganda or research and analysis tasks.

(b) Only 19 people gave comments one way or the other on the "failure to see women's issues as genuinely collective

issues". The reason for this is that the whole organization, men and women, had been anti-feminist and had failed to sufficiently take up feminist issues. Although the line changed in the last year there was too little time to judge how genuinely individual men were taking up those issues in practice. The 17 people who felt that passivity in taking up feminist issues was strong were mainly making the point that the change of stand did not come about because of a sudden and spontaneous change of heart among the men. It was only after women had organized together, developed their criticisms, and fought for changes that opinions changed. Examples of this included: the struggles within individual couples over sharing childcare and housework; the protracted battle of women in "infrastructure" in the apparatuses to change the way the work was organized and to increase democracy; the women's caucuses, research collectives and National Women's Committee in the last year; and the showdown caused by the resignation of the women members of the Political Bureau.

(c) Comments about the prevalence of "ridiculing women who were assertive of women's specific concerns" were more difficult to interpret. The word "ridiculed" was too strong and a number of people (6 of 26 people expressing an opinion, 29%) objected to the formulation. A more detailed examination of the examples cited by the 16 people (62%) who said "ridiculing" was strongly present indicates that most men were prepared to accept an assertive woman but not one who was feminist as well or even one

who was feminine as well. We have already noted above that the strongest form of chauvinism was a paternalistic contempt for alleged "feminine weaknesses" like excessive emotionalism, the tendency to be one-sided and too preoccupied with the practical details, etc. A number of respondents gave examples of how women who were either too "feminist" in their political ideas or too "feminine" in their personal style were labelled as unstable or subjective and kept out of top leadership posts. A top level woman leader described the treatment accorded Anne-Marie:

> Women like Anne-Marie who contested the line were kept out of positions of leadership. They were labelled as emotional, subjective, not taking a balanced and measured approach etc. They were good enough to do high-level work but always under the supervision of a top leader, perhaps another woman who was reputed to be balanced in judgement. (France)

An Ontario respondent cited several other examples of where women in that province who challenged the prevailing political ideas were denigrated for their supposedly divisive <u>method</u> of raising the issues rather than having what they said directly addressed. In the final year one of the main charges against feminist women was that they were splitting the organization by using divisive methods of struggle and by proposing to institutionalize such methods in the form of autonomous structures for women with final decision-making powers over issues affecting women. It should be said that a number of respondents were careful to make the point that some women in leadership positions were also contemptuous of "feminine weaknesses" and put down other women for being too "feminist". A

number of men had difficulty understanding women's insistence on being autonomous and on validating "feminire qualities". The organizatien's line had always been to say that women were equal to men and should be treated the same. But as one woman put it:

> We realized at the end that when you say everyone has equal rights and that's all you say then you are saying that women have the right to be like men. Sure women have the right to be equal in that sense but they also have the right to be different, to be women instead of men. We recognized the principle of the equality of the sexes but failed to highlight the differences and to see the need to take account of them systematically. (Therese)

The organizational structure rewards and reinforces chauvinism Thirteen people (52%) said that male chauvinism was stronger among leadership men than it was in the rank and file, and 12 (48%) said it was independent of one's place in the hierarchy. No one felt that men at the lower levels were more chauvinist than men at the higher levels.

A further breakdown reveals three things that make this result clearer than it appears at first glance. First there is a marked difference in the evaluation made by those who had been leaders themselves and the judgement made by non-leaders. All but 1 of the 13 people who felt male leaders were more chauvinistic were non-leaders. Nine of the 19 people who said all men were about the same had been leaders themselves. It is apparent that non-leaders felt the chauvinism of male leaders more intensely and personally. It is one thing to be treated paternalistically or have your sex ignored when you have high status: it is quite another thing to be low status and be

constantly reminded that your "feminine qualities" are a weakness. Second, half of the leaders who answered "about the same" explained their answer by saying that men at the top had in fact expressed a more extreme chauvinism than lower-echelon men but that this had been due to the roles they were required to play by the structure not by their individual chauvinism. Third, the way in which the greater chauvinism of higher-echelon men is described by rank and file people is consistent with this interpretation: all say that what made those men worse was that they exhibited an intellectual air of superiority and an aggressiveness that intimidated women and made them feel inferior. They added that men at the lower levels were chauvinistic too but that they were closer to the problems faced by women at the lower levels than the leaders because they were somewhat less cloistered from the world outside the organization. Rank and file men were also victims of the same intellectual paternalism so they tended to be more supportive of women challenging that hierarchy.

In sum, the respondents were unanimous that the situation was not one of a more enlightened leadership trying to educate more backward rank and file men. Most men, leaders and non-leaders alike, were chauvinist to a significant degree. The point was that the structures of the group and the model of leadership acted to reinforce, reward and increase the expression of male chauvinism rather than to discourage or lessen it. Indeed, several people observed that it did so to the

point of making several of the women who became leaders exhibit definite male chauvinist qualities.

> My cell secretary used to give me all sorts of problems. She was a nurse. People who knew her before said she was a very soft, kind lady. I have met her since the group dissolved and she is like that again. But when she was cell secretary she was hard and difficult and she kept doing self-criticisms for still having some of those feminine qualities that are in fact virtues. The fact that she tried to listen to people became the self-criticism "I wasn't firm enough". She would be intransigent and then self-criticize for not being intransigent enough. (Judy)

Chauvinism takes different forms in different classes Many people were reluctant to express an opinion about whether working class men were more chauvinistic than petty-bourgeois men or vice-versa. The explanation in many cases was that they did not know enough working class men to judge which may say something about the absence of workers in the apparatus, or the existence of social circles based on class. Four people (18%) said that working class men were more chauvinistic while 2 (9%) thought that petty-bourgeois men were worse. Sixteen (73%) said that the level of chauvinism was independent of social class. However, 10 of those 16 added that chauvinism takes on distinctly different forms according to class. Working class men are more likely to exhibit cruder forms of sexism and to resist changes in the sexual division of labour in private life more vigorously. On the other hand they are more honest about their feelings and are more likely to change practical things about their own behaviour. Petty-bourgeois men are quicker to understand the feminist criticisms intellectually, to change

their verbalized ideas and to share in household tasks. But they are more likely to hide lack of changes in personal practice behind a mask of guilt and they remain strongly paternalistic towards women.

IS men were open to changing their ideas, but their practice was only average. Only one person felt that IS men were more chauvinistic than progressive men in the unions, community groups, and other left organizations. Seventeen (57%) felt that they were about the same while 12 (40%) said they were better. Most respondents stressed that all progressive men, including IS men, were less chauvinistic than men in society in general. Eleven people specifically mentioned that chauvinism was worse in the union movement. However, the overall judgement was more stern than appears from the 40% of people who said IS men were better in dealing with chauvinism than other progressives. In 10 of the 12 cases the respondents specified that they were referring to the fact that in the last year of IN STRUGGLE men had showed a genuine openness to changing their previous attitudes. They agreed with the respondents who had said "IS men were about the same" that, before 1981, IS men were no better than other progressives. Many also added that although IS men showed open-mindedness, little had changed in their practice so far. A few English-Canadian respondents suggested that Quebecois men had had less contact with feminism than English-Canadian men and thus tended to be more conservative (before 1981 at least) especially in their family life. Quebecois men in IS, therefore,

were about the same as Quebecois progressives but worse than English-Canadian ones.

Silence about homophobia

One of the weaknesses of the interview schedule is that it does not include questions on attitudes towards homosexuality. Ginette, a lesbian herself, described how she saw the atmosphere in the organization with regard to homosexuality. The attitude of individuals: men were generally more threatened, women more honest about their fears. The attitude of the group: silence. No work done in the gay or lesbian movements. No mention in the IS press except in the last year or so. In 1977, a few gay and lesbian members and supporters gathered together in Montreal to discuss their common situation. A representative of IS told them the meeting was an illegal "faction", confiscated their documents and forbade them to meet again. A gay and lesbian caucus formed in the last year in the wake of the women's revolt and the final Congress adopted a resolution recognizing that homosexuality was a legitimate and normal form of sexuality. The prevalence of the ideal of the stable heterosexual "proletarian couple" that reduced the time wasted on meeting personal needs to a minimum contrasted sharply with the lifestyle of the "marginal" gays and lesbians. Investigations were done into prospective IS members who admitted to their homosexuality to see if they were "stable".

(4) Sexual Division of Labour in the Organization and the Problems Faced by Women in Traditionally Male Tasks and Posts

1. First of all, how well did IS do in getting women into leadership posts at all levels?
2. Second, how well did IS do in integrating women into traditionally male tasks?
3. What problems did those women who did manage to get into leadership posts at a level higher than those generally occupied by women in the broader society or who got to perform traditionally male tasks have? Can you give some concrete examples?

IN STRUGGLE promised women recruits that they would have a full and equal role in the socialist movement (see Chapter 3). How well did it live up to its promise? Respondents were agreed on the two main points. Twenty-nine people (93.4%) said that leadership posts at all levels were genuinely open to women. Twenty-one out of 25 people (84%) said that the group had failed to end sex segregation of tasks, a division of labour marked by sex-typing and male and female job ghettoes. Twenty-four of the 29 people who said IS was successful in opening leadership posts to women qualified their remarks with the simple observation that it did not last. One by one and then (in late 1980) in a flood women quit their posts. The reason was the "male" model of leadership that people were supposed to live up to. What lay behind this? What justification is there for saying that the model of leadership was "male"? A quite consistent and coherent pattern emerges from the interviews which can be summarized in seven points.

(1) IS pushed women to take on leadership posts:

> Unlike the unions, IS at least wanted women to be in leadership posts. (Lucille)

> I've been in the Quebec left since the time of the RIN in the mid-sixties. IS had more women in posts of leadership than any group I have seen anywhere. (Jacques)

> Oh yes, opportunities did exist for women to be leaders. To be perfectly frank, it's one of the reasons I joined IS Here was a chance you couldn't have anywhere else, especially if you were young. (Marie-Renee)

> There were openings for women with the right skills. If you were a worker with a big mouth like me you became an agitator. If you were an intellectual you could be in leadership. (Angeline)

> We pushed women and workers into leadership positions. We saw it as a way to solve the women's problem. We thought we could <u>make</u> women equal just by pushing them hard. (Denyse)

There were exceptions to the rule of posts being open to women. There were no women in the regional leadership in Ontario until the very end, or in the Prairies after the very beginning. But women were the majority at the regional level in Quebec, including the regional secretary; the majority in the Maritimes; and among cell secretaries everywhere. Women headed up committees in the national apparatus and sat on the central committee and Political Bureau (top executive body).

(2) <u>Sex segregation of tasks persists for most</u>: Although ledership posts were open to women, the allocation of people to specialized tasks was quite a different situation. Here again there was an effort to encourage women to take up whatever tasks they wished to take on, including traditionally male ones. But there was no effort at affirmative action quotas or the like. Nor were there any long-term training programs for women,

workers, and others denied the socialization and skills necessary to perform well in these tasks by society. IN STRUGGLE did not see itself as a utopian alternate community, as an island of socialism in a sea of capitalism. It was building an effective machine to lead the movement to overthrow capitalism. When socialism was established, then the special training and affirmative action would make some sense. For now it would rely on a combination of the skills and aptitudes its members could acquire themselves in existing society, and a willingness to struggle hard to "learn on the job". Two key principles guided the structuring of the apparatus and the selection of personnel to fill those tasks: "Make it simple, make it efficient, make it work" and "Put the right man in the right spot".

The practical results of such a policy were predictable. Women did take on a broad range of responsibilities, especially when the group was small and loosely structured, and political enthusiasm and willingness to work hard and to develop one's abilities were major criteria. According to one of the leading people in the national apparatus, this changed slowly as the division of labour became more pronounced. Women had always lacked self-confidence. When nominated for cell secretary women would often say they were not good enough and urge people to support the other candidates. But when elected anyway they would do the job. As the organization got more bureaucratic women became even more reluctant. (In contrast, as several women pointed out, men tended to be eager to get posts and would

stress all their strong points. Women had to be more than equal in ability to appear equal.) Cadre schools in leadership methods were organized. It was suggested that two women could share some posts with one as the assistant or replacement. Such measures did not solve the problem and anyway they only applied to the minority of women who were individually breaking through the sex-typing barriers. The allocation of people on the basis of "merit", of pre-existing socialization and skills, meant that the big picture at all points in IS history was the same: IS reproduced in its own ranks the sexual division of labour that exists in the broader society. In particular, women were concentrated in clerical and routine organizational tasks. The basic pattern of the sexual division of labour and the exceptions to the "norm" of the surrounding society were noted in an internal organization report in 1980. One respondent who had been involved in preparing the report summarized its contents as follows:

> First, women were roughly the same proportion of the leadership as they were of the membership (45%) but there were fewer the higher you went. Second, women predominated in clerical and routine organizational tasks while men were over-represented in political and theory tasks. A larger number of women leaders at the national and regional apparatus levels were in administrative or practical organizing posts. Third, on the local level women were often cell secretaries and sometimes agitators, on the regional level there were women mobile organizers but when it came to spokespersons representing the organization -- excepting of course on International Women's Day -- it was mostly men. (Pierrette)

(3) Notion of ideological vanguard requires conscious building of hierarchy in which "thinkers" predominate over "doers": The

origin of IN STRUGGLE's view of its own role as that of an "ideological vanguard" in the workers movement has already been explained in Chapter 2. The IS program says: "The masses make the revolution, the party makes them conscious". Objective conditions for revolution existed in various parts of the world and increasingly so in Canada with the mid-Seventies economic crisis. But the subjective factor, workers' consciousness that there was a political alternative to capitalism in the form of working class rule, lagged behind the development of the objective factors of poverty, inflation and unemployment. Workers were still under the sway of the ideology of the dominant bourgeois class, whose values were inculcated in all institutions of society (schools, media, on the job, etc.). Although workers resisted exploitation and fought oppression in unions, community groups, and other mass struggles, they still had "false consciousness". The task of communists was not to substitute for workers in organizing or leading those struggles. It was to provide those "advanced workers" who were already fighting back with a socio-economic and political analysis of the contradictions in the system and how they could be attacked in order to overthrow capitalism.

This concept of its political role led IS to deliberately build a structure in which optimal conditions were created for thinkers to think. This did not mean setting up a philosophy department or a debating society. Political knowledge necessarily drew upon the lessons learned from the social

struggles waged against the system. And tentative analyses had to be tested and refined by being applied as tactics in those same mass movements. There was a need for activists as well as researchers and analysts. But the work of the activists was to serve the process of "developing the political line". A hierarchy was built in which "thinkers" predominated over "doers" at every level. A lot of energy and resources went into building up the apparatus of support staff at the national and regional levels to create the best possible conditions for the leaders to do their work of research and analysis. The leadership was linked to the base units by a highly organized system for centralizing information (from the bottom up) and decentralizing analyses and directives (from the top down).

> Once that logic got established everything was subordinated to creating the best possible conditions for the development of a "scientific" analysis. All the thinking jobs to the extent possible were to be concentrated in the "brain" at the centre and the rest of the organization was to be the body -- the senses to take in new information and the arms and legs to test out hypotheses developed from that data. The people who had it the worst were the "infrastructure" -- the cardiovascular and nervous systems that kept both the brain and the body working. The analogy is a gross exaggeration of course but the tendencies were there. (Ralph)

> In the early days IS was very democratic. Everyone did a bit of everything from distribution of the newspaper to debating theory. Congresses were open to the entire membership not just a few "advanced" people chosen as delegates. It took a struggle to change all that ... to force a division of labour and a hierarchy of functions. You can read all the debates and directives in the Internal Bulletin in the 1976-77 period. The cells were no longer to discuss the same issues as the Central Committee at the same time. The CC was to discuss theory and analyses of the current political situation. Regional committees were to do analyses of the regional

situation. And cells were to confine themselves to practical tasks. (Pierre)

(4) Top "thinking" posts held by men: At the top of the intellectual hierarchy the key posts involved in research and analysis were filled almost exclusively by men. This may or may not have been an accidental feature peculiar to JS. Although the data from the interviews does not demonstrate directly how this came about, several of the people interviewed had precise and amazingly similar hypotheses about the roots of this phenomenon. As one person stated:

> There was an implicit ranking system that was very rigorous at the highest level based on mastery of research and the written word. There was an informal network of men leaders who acknowledged one another's intellectual superiority. The men in the Political Bureau would consult the men in the research committee or political commission on something not the women elected to the Central Committee. Women were in the top political posts but they never cracked the network that controlled the development of political theory. (Martin)

Women did hold posts of authority at the highest level. But as a female member of the Political Bureau explained there was a perfect overlap between the division of labour into thinkers and doers and the division of roles between male and female leaders:

> Our job as women on the Political Bureau was defined by the division of labour between thinkers and executants too. We women performed several functions there: first we took care of the organizational side of things, of translating their ideas into action; second, it was our job to be a conduit to put before the thinkers some of the feedback from the realm of practical life. It is not unlike the role the woman plays in the home where she upholds the law of the father in the family and tells the husband about the problems the children are having and what needs fixing in the house. (Francine)

She described the reaction of the men in the political bureau in the last year when the women PB members stepped out of their

accepted role:

> Anne-Marie and I were influenced by the debates and the theoretical work going on in the women's movement. It led us eventually to question the way the programme treated the whole question of women. The reaction of the boys in the PB -- and it's no exaggeration, that's exactly what it was, the boys -- was no way, you cannot start challenging the line. At the beginning we didn't have enough facts and arguments in hand to prove for example that Engels had been wrong but we had enough to cast significant doubts upon it, enough for a decision that the group no longer based itself on Engels view. But that wasn't acceptable. To challenge the line you had to already have a counter-line worked out or you were put down. That's how men controlled the process of elaborating ideas all through the history of IS.

In actual fact of course women leaders did contribute to the development of the political line. For example the analyses made in the last couple of years of the problems with the IS approach to its trade union work, attitude to the autonomous women's movement,. etc. was mostly made by women in the agitation commission on the basis of the lessons from the practical work. But the method was different, and this wasn't really regarded as "theory".

(5) <u>After the baby boom, women were forced to choose between family and political responsibilities</u>: Two principles governed the IS approach to personal and family life. First, family life was private. Second, all private interests must be subordinated to those of the revolution. (The latter principle was even spelled out in the constitution under the duties of members[6]; it was applied to review people's conduct when they were being considered for admission to the group and later full membership.)

The positive side of seeing personal life as private, respondents agreed, is that IS did not try to police anyone's morality. The negative side is that it ignored the situation of homosexuals, etc. The positive side of subordinating private interests to those of the revolution is stands like the one in favour of men sharing housework to "free" the woman from the constraints of family life so she could do more political work. The negative side is that issues of personal life -- of masculine and feminine roles, sexuality, child-raising -- were not seen as political and were ignored.

In the early days subordinating private life meant not having children, and IS was very unenthusiastic about maternity. In the heady days of 1976-78 with the group growing quickly in size and impact the anti-maternity attitude slackened. There was a baby boom from 1977 on.

Being responsible for one's private life also meant not burdening the organization with demands for child care, maternity leave, etc. Several respondents recounted details of struggles that were waged by members to progressively win leadership authorization of things like one month's summer holidays, a week at Christmas and four weekends a year. Adequate maternity leave was finally accepted (there were a number of horror stories recited by respondents about women who were "struggled with" when they failed to imitate the style of heroic Vietnamese women in returning to the battlefield a week after birth) and arrangements for childcare went through a thousand

variations. But all of these things were concessions to practical reality that contradicted the overall principles governing the relationship that was supposed to exist between personal and political life.

As time went on more and more members had to cater to young children's needs in addition to their own. The meaning of "subordinating private interests to the Revolution" changed from subordinating her own personal growth and interests to subordinating those of her children. And that is where a lot of women would draw the line.

(6) Women who subordinate personal life are "depersonalized" within the organization: Those women who were not eliminated from posts of responsibility by the impossibility of reconciling the demands of family life and political life ran into another problem. The only choice open to them, as many respondents phrased it, was to "become men", to deny their feminine qualities (modes of expression, ways of organizing the work, methods of leadership, informal ties of solidarity, etc.) and in many cases to suppress their separate sex identity and sexuality. It was the other side of the coin of denying that personal life problems were political issues -- denying that there was any room for personal growth and affirmation in political life. After all, emotional ties and personal affirmation were private matters to be kept within the confines of the family! To promote them in the organization was to put private needs ahead of those of the revolution.

Some examples of what this meant:

Michele was highly regarded as the secretary of a clerical-technical committee in the national apparatus. She lived in a stable relationship. No children. In 1981, after 5 years as a "permanent", she resigned to go back into the workforce. The dues system had made her dependent economically on her mate, undermining her autonomy in the relationship. After 5 years of completely cutting off her ties with friends and outside activities (too busy), in order to "mother" the male intellectuals she selflessly did the detail work for, she found that she "could not remember or identify what my personal needs or even tastes were in anything". She noted that many men in the same situation had lasted longer, because "men don't quit when they get cut off from people. They can live through their work better because they usually have a woman somewhere who is their connection with 'personal reality'".

Marie-Claude, a working mother from a blue collar working class background did mostly clerical and routine organizational tasks in a local cell. She had been "helped" with a variety of "special methods" to overcome her "backwardness". There were special classes to teach her how to study. Babysitting was provided so she could go out at night to distribute the newspaper, something she pushed herself to do despite a strong fear of repression. She was also encouraged, but not forced, to intervene at union meetings. She never did so locally, but she once ended up making a couple of speeches at a union convention.

She said that on balance she was glad to have been in the group, despite all the pain of pushing to go beyond her limits.

> But there is something wrong when dealing with a woman's problems is "special methods" for special people who don't fit into the model. I think the real problem is that the group didn't concern itself with finding a place for people with different needs and different abilities. There was no chance for us workers or us women to be ourselves and still be respected.

She is just completing a year of psychotherapy to "recontact my emotions and to learn to communicate with my friends and children again".

Renee was single all the time she was a top level leader, having been married (no children) before. A success story, she had given up sexual relationships with men for most of that period.

> Unlike other women I was listened to but that is precisely because I wasn't treated like a woman. In fact my sex was ignored and I was free to develop the same habits and attitudes and mannerisms as all the men.

Another woman in the national apparatus, Jane, explained the schizophrenia that several women leaders she had worked under had about their sexual identity:

> A woman had to learn to be hard on people. She had to look at the big picture, to not look at the details, to not react emotionally to the details. And then after that she had to go home and react emotionally to things in the family, to see the details. It is no wonder that they had such a battle to maintain their marriages. They had to become completely schizoid to manage it.

(7) Women resign from posts of leadership at all levels: The cumulative result of all six factors was that women resigned from posts of leadership or asked to have their level of responsibilities reduced. Fewer and fewer women were willing to

accept nomination to any position (to the point that the "women's cell" in Toronto was led by a man because no woman would take the job). In the last year many experiments were tried with collective leadership in the cells, rotating tasks, a less rigid division of labour so that people could be "polyvalent" and engage in several types of activities outside their specialization, etc. But it was too little, too late. It was reform when what was needed was a whole revolution in the way politics was conceived, especially the relationship between political life and personal life.

(5) Summary

The main points which arise from the interview data presented in this chapter will be summarized in the opening paragraphs of the next chapter so there is no need to list them here as well. Chapter 5 will look at information from written IS documents to see in what ways the data in this chapter is upheld or qualified. The points that are confirmed by both documentary and interview data will then be summarized at the end of Chapter 5.

Notes -- Chapter 4

1. The term feminism is problematic because it is used to mean different things. Here are four possible meanings: (a) the consciousness of a woman that she is oppressed as a woman ("That woman is totally submissive to her boyfriend. She has no feminist consciousness at all"); (b) the point of view of anyone who is in favour of women's liberation whether they are in mixed movements, autonomous women's groups or in no movement at all; (c) the antipatriarchal ideology/theory of the autonomous women's movement; and (d) the theory of radical feminists, caricatured, that "men are the enemy", the source of women's oppression, and that some form of separatist solution is required.

   Many of the women who later joined IS were feminists from either group (a) or (b) listed above. A few were also feminists from group (c), having been active in the autonomous women's movement or in contact with it and sympathetic with much of what it was trying to do. They recognized that women suffered a specific oppression as women and that there was such a thing as male domination and male privileges including in the working class. This latter group of women were "anti-feminist" in a more narrowly political sense. They disagreed with where the autonomous women's movement seemed to be headed politically. They made a political choice to join the mixed left in part because they felt it would do a better job of fighting for women's liberation. This was not just an ideological choice motivated by a choice of socialism (or Leninism) over feminism. In the mid-Seventies IS seemed to offer things that the autonomous women's groups did not -- it concentrated its work in the working class and was recruiting a significant number of working class women; it was debating how to link the struggle for women's liberation with the struggle for socialism; it was promoting women to leadership positions with real power; it was trying to link the struggles of different groups, including women, together to build a more unified overall movement, whereas many of the women's groups at the time were caught very much in a "single-issue" focus.

2. Unfortunately the various studies do not have a common precise definition of which activities are included in housework. The definition I use myself is very broad. It includes all activities performed to service the family unit and maintain the household. Hence it includes both childcare and time spent servicing one's mate and immediate kin (e.g., taking mother-in-law to the hospital, or caring for mate when he or she is sick or depressed) as well as all the cooking, cleaning, and house maintenance activities.

3. The name "Marie" is not the real name of the respondent quoted here. Pseudonyms have been used throughout to indicate the sex and language group of the respondent being quoted.

4. I personally, for example, quit a high-paying and steady job as an engineering technologist with a firm in Vancouver to move to Montreal to work in the national apparatus. I could have worked full-time as a college teacher but only worked part-time in order to put in a 60 to 70 hour week as a translator for the weekly IS newspaper. I did not keep office hours and avoided appointments with students. I refused nomination to departmental committees, took no professional courses to upgrade my skills and tried to cut my preparation time (and the quality of the courses I gave) to a minimum. I did not publish any academic articles or attend meetings of the Sociological Association.

   In general people refused overtime and avoided bidding for promotions that would require them to commit more time to their job.

5. In fact the "proletarian couple" was just Marxist jargon for companionate marriage. The woman and man were equal partners in a marriage contract and divorce or separation was acceptable as a last resort. The stable couple was idealized and was presumed sufficient to meet all emotional and sexual needs of both the man and the woman.

6. Article 2.3 of the constitution listed 6 "duties of all members and probationers". The fourth was "to subordinate their personal interests to the demands of the revolution". If a person was applying for probationary membership status they could be refused if someone in the cell plenary meeting voting on the application (or the sponsors who had investigated their case and interviewed them or the head of the committee they had worked under who sent the cell a written report and recommendation also) gave convincing evidence about their failure to put political work first at all times or to reduce the time wasted on personal life to a minimum. When a probationer was being considered for full membership (which gave them the right to vote in cell meetings and to serve in a leadership post) a year or so later clause 2.3 could be used to postpone acceptance of the change of status (and postponements happened in the majority of cases at least once in the 1976-80 period). In practice it came down to an evaluation that the person had not achieved a sufficient level of competence in being efficient in the use of their time and in having a high enough level of productivity in doing political work as a result. I witnessed many examples of this personally.

CHAPTER 5

REPORT ON FINDINGS FROM INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

In Chapter 4 the interview data indicated a pattern to the experience of a large number of IS women. The organization pushed many women to take up traditionally male leadership posts, but the majority of women were caught in traditionally female "infrastructure" tasks. All women worked within a consciously-created hierarchical structure in which "thinkers" predominated over "doers", and the key "thinking" posts connected with the work of developing the political line were held by men. Many women found themselves having to choose between their responsibilities as a mother and responsibilities in the organization after the "baby boom". Women who managed to subordinate and handle their personal life found themselves "depersonalized" and pressured to "become men". As a consequence of all this women resigned from posts of leadership, or asked to have their level of responsibilities reduced; first a few of them, later in large numbers.

Respondents also indicated that male chauvinist attitudes and behaviour existed within IS although the overt sex-power type of chauvinism was weak in the organization itself. The strongest form of chauvinism within IS was a paternalistic contempt for "feminine qualities" as weaknesses. Women also reported that, although struggles within their private couple led to men sharing household tasks, battles over chauvinist

values were often sharper in private life than within the organization. Men still did not accept emotional responsibilities, or take on other aspects of the "feminine" role in the family.

In this chapter we will look at data from confidential IS files. Some of them are documents borrowed from individual ex-members. Many were xeroxed from originals presently being classified at the Universite du Quebec a Montreal. In order to protect the identity of individuals and respect the spirit of the (still-unspecified) confidentiality rules governing these documents, I have only referred to them by their date. I have also confined myself to percentages when discussing changes in the size of the membership and the number of women in various apparatus committees and leadership bodies. All the passages cited are verbatim from the original and all facts mentioned when paraphrasing texts are taken from the texts themselves.

The objective in looking at the data from the documents will be to see to what extent it either confirms or contradicts the various facts drawn from the interviews. The information from the documents will first be presented under a series of headings based on the conclusions in Chapter 4. Then at the end we will summarize where the two sources of data reinforce one another and where there are contradictions.

(1) Data Relevant to Points 1, 2 and 7 from Chapter 4

The interview data led us to infer the following:

-- women were "pushed" into leadership posts at all levels in proportion to their numbers in the organization (42% of total membership were women).

-- women were over-represented in routine organizational tasks in the horizontal division of labour.

--women leaders reduced their level of political involvement or resigned from posts in the last two years. The main reasons were contradictions between political responsibilities and personal and family life responsibilities and the impersonal, individualistic and hierarchical approach to organizing the political work.

What do the documentary sources say about these points?

A document dated January 1976, written by a member of the national committee for work among women, states that women are playing an active role at all levels of the organization in all of the 4 Quebec regional units but one. Only in region three are women complaining about "problems in getting involved in debates and having a chance to fill leadership posts".

In June 1978, a member of the Political Bureau (executive for the Central Committee) writes about a disturbing trend that has been developing "in the last year": a number of women are asking for a lessening of their organizational responsibilities. The article is an argument about how not to "waste" too much

time on mothering children. This would indicate that the trend is related to the "baby boom", which (according to data from the interviews) was just beginning in the 1977-78 period.[1] The last half of 1977 and early 1978 was also the period in which the division of labour within IS became more highly organized and specialized. In a 6-month period the national apparatus doubled in size, to the point that 30% of the members in Quebec were assigned to leadership posts or specialized tasks within it.[2]

In August of 1979, the Central Committee met to discuss a still more unsettling development, a rash of resignations from membership (with no indication, however, that women were resigning more often than men). The resolution adopted by the Central Committee affirmed that it was correct to have pushed in the previous period to increase discipline, productivity and an ethic of subordination of private life. However, it admitted that a significant number of people, (men as well as women) had quit "because of the demands the Organization makes on them, the pace of work, and the contradictions they have run into between their personal interests and family life and political work".[3]

In May 1980 a woman with access to membership statistics wrote to the Central Committee to decry a situation where "there are fewer and fewer women in leadership posts and many are asking for reduced responsibilities".[4] She called into question the IS policy of downplaying struggles with individual men over their chauvinism and specifically suggested that men with children have limits set on the level of political tasks they

were allowed to accept. The statistics cited for the number of women in posts were:

Top elected posts (CC and PB): 28.5%,

Top appointed posts (apparatus committee heads): 40%,

Regional committee leaders: 40%,

Local cell secretaries: 50%.

This represented a decline since 1978, according to the author of the letter. It should be noted however that women were still represented in proportion to their numbers in the organization (42%) at all levels except the "top elected posts".

The June 1980 Central Committee announced measures to respond to the problems of women cadre. The measures: (1) the sexual division of labour is to be challenged by rotating women out of infrastructure tasks[5] and assigning more men to traditionally female tasks; (2) women are encouraged to meet together and identify the problems they are having collectively and to publish the results; and (3) the policy which said feminism was the main thing dividing men and women is changed. Chauvinism is targetted as the main problem.

Meetings of women were held throughout the organization in the fall of 1980. The summaries of the discussions of a Toronto and Montreal cell are revealing about the status of women at the time in the base units. In Ontario, according to the Toronto women, all the elected leaders were male, the public spokespersons were usually men and women in the cells were usually assigned tasks to perform rather than given areas of

responsibility. In Montreal, on the other hand, the sexual division of labour seems to have been less pronounced. The cell secretary was a woman as were 2 of the 4 heads of committees (although it is said women have to be better than men to get elected). There were two people doing infrastructure tasks, one man and one woman (although the woman did the typing and the man, who could not type, did the finances). The Montreal cell report said that women lacked self-confidence and routinely worked extra hard to prove themselves to the point that most women were frequently sick. This seemed to be accepted as almost inevitable by the women themselves: "The education of women is not centered on developing self-affirmation or a spirit of struggling and fighting but rather on engendering docility, submission, gentleness and 'feminity.' Women comrades must continue to fight against the persistence of these 'feminine' attitudes".

In April 1981 the Central Committee adopted a long resolution on women, which was detailed in Chapter 3. It included statistics about women in leadership posts as of December 1980:

Top elected posts (CC and PB): 28.5%,

Regional committee leaders: 42%,

Local cell secretaries: 35%.

The figures for women in top elected posts and regional committee leadership are basically the same as reported in the May 1980 letter, cited earlier. We do not have figures here for

women heads of national or regional apparatus committees, but the May letter had mentioned two cases of women who had been transferred from such posts in the recent past. The figure that stands out is the drop from 50 to 35% for cell secretaries which had apparently occurred in the period between May and December 1980.[6] As for segregation of tasks by sex, the 1981 motion mentioned that women were still excluded from committees charged with developing the political line. The figure for women in infrastructure tasks was 58%, still too high given that women were only 42% of the membership. But it indicates that the policy of putting men into traditionally female tasks had begun to be applied.

The final set of figures is from October 1981, 6 months before the organization is dissolved. At the top level all the women in the Political Bureau had resigned and no women had been willing to take their places. Women were active however in the women's research collectives which were being loosely coordinated by the National Women's Committee. The numbers for the Central Committee remained the same, 28.5%.[7] If we include the posts connected to the National Women's Committee as part of the national apparatus, then the number of women heading national apparatus committees was only slightly down (from 40 to 36%); if they are excluded the drop is from 40% to 30%. At the regional level, the number of women in leadership posts was actually up from 40 to over 50%. However the main change here, in the Quebec region at least, is a redefinition of the role of

regional leaders. Rather than resigning, women had used their leverage (note that women were a majority on the Quebec regional committee) to get the Quebec regional conference to endorse a greatly expanded regional committee, composed primarily of delegates from all the base units.[8] The executive selected from this larger body had more circumscribed powers and lesser responsibilities. There are no figures for cell secretaries available, but again the main point is the redefinition of the role that cell leaders were expected to play. In a large number of cells, according to various documents, there were attempts to have a more collective style of leadership and a sharing out of responsibilities to lead on various questions, rather than a single super-leader assigning tasks to everyone else.

As for the sexual segregation of women in infrastructure tasks and men in elaboration of theory, there were signs of both improvement and problems. The increase in the number of men in traditionally female tasks continued: men now did 50% of the infrastructure jobs in the national apparatus. The integration of women into the process of defining the political line is harder to evaluate. If one looks at the figures for the regular committees in the national apparatus charged with research, analysis and the writing of theoretical articles there was an improvement in the number of women (from 0 to 17.4%). However, women remained seriously under-represented, and the leaders of all committees were still men. The part that is most difficult to evaluate is the theoretical activity under the auspices of

the National Women's Committee (NWC). Although officially it was part of the national apparatus, the relationship between the theoretical work done by the NWC and the work done by the male-controlled committees is very unclear. In fact what we have here is two parallel processes of elaboration of political theory, one controlled by men, and one by women. As we shall see below, the women's approach to theory was quite different, and represented a political challenge to the approach of the male-led committees. It is impossible to judge what would have happened here if IS had continued to exist. Would the male theoreticians have accepted the women's criticisms of their previously prevalent approach to doing theory? Would the women leading the process of theoretical research for the National Women's Committee have been placed in leading positions in mixed committees, at least in proportion to the number of women in the organization? We cannot say.

(2) Data Relevant to Points 3 and 4 from Chapter 4

The interview data also suggested that:

-- There was a hierarchy based on the ability to synthesize and abstract data in making political analyses. Thinkers predominated over doers at every level.

-- Men controlled the top "thinking" posts. The division between male thinkers and women doers was most apparent in the roles played by men and women in the top leadership bodies

(Political Bureau, Central Committee) and in the division of labour in the national apparatus (which included the support staff for the "thinkers") where women were over-represented in routine organizational tasks.

We will look at documentary evidence of the problems women faced living up to the model of a good leader in the Political Bureau later in this chapter. In this point we will concentrate on the difficulties experienced by the women doing technical or routine organizational tasks in the national apparatus and in the cells.

In the fall 1980 meetings of women in the cells and committees there were a large number of particular grievances about the attitude of "thinkers" to non-theoretical work. Disdain for manual labour and routinized non-theoretical tasks was exacerbated by the promotion of the ideal of the good cadre: the combination of the articulate thinker and one-man manager. (In the words of the April 1981 CC resolution criticizing this model the ideal IS leader had been someone with an "ability to synthesize, to make a political analysis, to take on a very high degree of individual responsibility and to be comfortable in the role of public spokesperson").[9] This model was particularly hard for the women (and men) who were doing infrastructure tasks. A number of measures were applied in the national apparatus, starting in late 1980, to rectify the situation: (1) technical and clerical people would henceforth debate and adopt their own plans of work, although "management" (elected political

leadership) would still set the policy and objectives of the work; (2) the infrastructure committees would also devote time to upgrading sessions in their field, and would have time for such things as debates on new techniques and problems that arose from the work requiring reorganization of the work process; (3) the committee heads would delegate responsibilities to members of the committee, and thereby promote more of a collective approach to problem-solving, instead of one-person management; and (4) some time would be guaranteed to all people to get out of the isolation of their specialized tasks (to get active in their union or popular group, or to regularly attend meetings of their territorial cell where cell members could tell them about the progress of the mass work).

The reforms were designed to increase democracy (point 1), build up the pride of the infrastructure people in their work as craftsmen (point 2), give infrastructure people areas of mandated authority to develop not just parcellized tasks to perform (point 3) and to counter isolation and over-specialization by allowing infrastructure people time to engage in other activities where they also got to play more of a "thinker" role (point 4).

The minutes of a meeting of one of the technical committees connected to the newspaper held in early 1981 indicated that the infrastructure workers welcomed the changes. But that meeting also insisted that the 1980 reforms did not begin to touch the longstanding problem of the attitude of the people in "thinking"

tasks to the work performed by others.

The example cited was the refusal of the editors of the newspaper to create a position of copy editor. On a bilingual newspaper the main steps in the production process are as follows: First, the journalists submit their articles to the news editor who edits them for style and content, mainly the latter. Then the edited article is translated and the translation is edited by a translation corrector (one French, and one English) for style and accuracy, mainly the latter. Then the article is typeset, laid out, proofread and printed (both the English and French versions go through parallel processes). The translators and proofreaders wanted twin French and English copy editors to replace the twin translator correctors. The copy editors would have the authority to rewrite articles for style as well as ensure the accuracy of translations. This simple proposal was made and refused several times over a period of years. For the infrastructure people in the newspaper it stood as a symbol of the domination of the "thinkers" over those performing non-theoretical tasks in the production process. The argument against the proposal was that twin copy editors might change the content in rewriting for style. It would dilute the political control over content exercized by the elected leaders. The infrastructure people countered that what the editors were really saying was that the tasks in the production process that followed after the edited article left the news editor's hands should involve no thinking or critical judgement except of a

purely technical nature. There were "thinkers" with political authority and "doers" with none. Making a translator into a copy editor with authority to rewrite for style was thus unacceptable.

A second point made at the same early 1981 meeting was that it was hard for infrastructure people to develop pride in their own work when the editors and journalists continued to devalue it. One woman compared the attitudes of the male editors to non-theoretical tasks to the attitude of most men to housework: after a long struggle they will recognize that it is demanding work that takes time and energy to accomplish and needs to be properly planned; they will even pitch in to do some of it themselves. But they still see it as donkey work, as boring routine that should just be executed and got out of the way as fast as possible. Men rarely "get into" housework in the sense of focussing the same creative energies on it as they do on their work outside the home. The infrastructure women on the IS newspaper alleged that the editors acted this way towards the planning of and detailed involvement in trouble-shooting problems in the "non-theoretical" part of the production process. The editors wanted to leave it to the (female) administrators and technicians to deal with. The end result was that the non-theoretical tasks were still regarded by the editors as "purely routine" and "women's work", or so the women alleged. "How does the leadership expect us to develop more pride in our work if they have no respect or genuine concern for

it themselves?", one woman translator asked.

Another set of problems associated with the existence of a hierarchy with thinkers at the top that was identified in the interviews was:

-- There was a gap between the activists in the practical struggles (IS members in the cells) and the thinker-leaders who developed theory. The leadership synthesized and abstracted but the cell members mainly fed in data and applied the analyses the thinkers developed.

One of the grievances high on everyone's list in the meetings of IS women in the fall of 1980 was difficulties with study. In Chapters 2 and 4 we saw how IS was consciously structured in order to create optimal conditions for an academic (scientific) process of research and analysis. The main function of an "ideological vanguard" was to provide concrete political analyses to the practioners of the class struggle. The main role of ordinary members was to centralize information and points of view based on their experience in practical struggles, and then to carry the political analyses developed by the leadership-theoreticians back into those struggles again. The work of the theoreticians in the national apparatus went on silently, somewhere; most members knew nothing about it.

In the fall of 1980 the leadership tried to change the process of developing the political line in two respects. First, the debate over many fundamental points of basic political theory was to be conducted in public. Members could express

their individual views and disagree with one another publicly. Second, instead of having a few theoreticians doing research in an organized way while everyone else was simply exhorted to do individual study on their own, collective study sessions were to be organized for the whole membership. The study sessions would follow a curriculum which corresponded to the research being done by the commissions in the national apparatus into the history of the communist movement, the attempts to build socialism and the problems with Marxist theory. Women and workers expressed a lot of dissatisfaction with the study sessions. They said they were too abstract, and unconnected to the practical political questions people wanted answers to: the validity of the Leninist model of socialism and the party, the connection between women's liberation and socialism, etc. As a result people felt that they had nothing to contribute from their own practical experiences or their own theorizing, that they were still passive recipients. The gap between a handful of analysts doing the abstracting and synthesizing, and the mass of "practical" activists and infrastructure people, was as wide as before.

When the women in Toronto met in October 1980 they tried to itemize the problems that women were having with study and analyze the reasons (besides problems with the curriculum). Many women said that they simply did not follow current events as men did, so when there was a debate they soon drifted out of it, even when the men were being very "concrete". The women in a

Montreal cell made the same point. Going around the circle, they found that only one woman in the room actually watched the news and read the newspaper from cover to cover every day. While men seemed to talk politics and current events in informal get-togethers as well as formal meetings, women did not. Men were more trained to deal with politics as events and ideas abstracted from their own personal experience.

When the National Women's Committee was charged by the April 1981 Central Committee with the responsibility of developing IN STRUGGLE's political line on women, it decided to try a different approach to developing theory, one which took account of the problems women had had with study. One of the key innovations was the establishment of research collectives in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Regina, Rouyn and Vancouver. The collectives included both theorists and activists, and both members and non-members of IS. They tried to link the political issues discussed to people's personal and political experiences. Instead of always starting with a broad overview and general principles, they took up specific issues and developed them. There was no claim that this was the only way to do research. But it was an attempt to develop theory in a way that made it easier for the average member to feel a genuine actor in the process.

(3) Data Relevant to Point 5 from Chapter 4

The interview data leads us to expect the following:

-- Time spent on personal and family life was supposed to be reduced to a minimum (2 "blocks" or 8 hours a week) and subordinated to one's political responsibilities.

-- When some members had children they faced a choice of maintaining their level of political activity, which necessarily required sacrificing their children's interests, or leaving IS.

We will look at data from the files relevant to three specific points affecting personal and family life -- children, housework, and money -- and then at the more general attitude to the relationship between political life and "private life".

Having Children and Caring for Them

A text by a member of the Political Bureau dated June 1978. posed the question squarely: "Is it possible to have children when you belong to a communist group? The answer to that question was already given by the last leadership: yes, just as long as it does not restrain the energies that you make available for political work. That answer is still the correct one. ..".[10] In practical terms, applying that principle meant having someone else babysit your children most of the time. The only deduction that was allowed under the IS dues system from the very beginning was the claim for daycare expenses -- to ensure that the alternative solution of the woman becoming a

housewife was not forced upon members. But putting your infant in public daycare only covers 8-5 Monday to Friday. An inquiry into the childcare needs of Political Bureau members dated January 1979 indicated that the big problem was evenings, weekends and holidays. The worst situation was when PB members were on the road for several weeks, and their wife or husband was left with the children around the clock. The report detailed all the methods that had been tried to cope with the situation: relying on neighbours and family; getting comrades on the same or related committee without children to takes turns babysitting; including childcare in the duties of the Political Bureau members's personal secretaries when the PB member was travelling; convincing the family that the children were left with during the day to keep them over supper, on weekend days or even overnight; and a formal directive to the cells the PB members belonged to, to get active sympathizers to provide a pool of babysitters. Serious thought was given at one point to renting the premises of a regular daycare centre to set up a 24-hour IS daycare for weekends and holidays.[11]

Housework

The 1978 report was equally forthright about the attitude that should be taken to housework: "If you start from the principle that your time belongs first of all to the group and only secondly to your family, then it is evident that a leader cannot do an equal amount of housework. This applies just as

much to a situation where the woman is in leadership and her mate isn't (and there are plenty of cases like that!). The allocation of household tasks must take account of the shift each family member is on and the quantity and importance of their political tasks".

Dues

The primary purpose of the dues system in IS was to provide a stable basis of revenue for its activities; to make the organization self-supporting. There were fund-raising campaigns every year or two that netted $150,000 to $200,000, but most of the money had to come from dues. As a result the dues system was, in fact, a taxation system.

In the early years a second principle underlying the IS taxation system was to confiscate virtually all excess wealth above a strict minimum in order to "proletarianize" the organization. The "levelling" approach proved unworkable -- the strongest opposition came from workers who refused to join IS with such a dues policy in effect -- and was changed at the end of 1977.[12] The new system set a fixed sum to be paid per week, on a graduated scale according to income. If you earned more than a specified "ceiling income" then you also had to pay 75% of the surplus over that amount. The remaining 25% of the excess could be retained, but members were encouraged to give as much of that as possible in voluntary donations. Here is the scale of minimum dues as of November 1977. Note that the retained income

for couples is less than that for two single people:

	NET WEEKLY INCOME	MINIMUM WEEKLY DUES
Single Person:	$ 0.00 to $ 69.99	$1.00
	70.00 to 99.99	2.00
	100.00 to 129.99	3.00
	130.00 to 139.99	4.00
	140.00 to 149.99	5.00
	$150.00 and over	$5.00 plus 75% of the amount exceeding $150.
Couple:	$ 0.00 to $ 99.99	$1.00
	100.00 to 129.99	2.00
	130.00 to 149.99	3.00
	150.00 to 169.99	4.00
	170.00 to 189.99	5.00
	$190.00 and over	$5.00 plus 75% of the amount exceeding $190.
Couples with children	$ 0.00 to $129.99	$1.00
	130.00 to 159.99	2.00
	160.00 to 179.99	3.00
	180.00 to 199.99	4.00
	200.00 to 229.99	5.00
	$230.00 and over	$5.00 plus 75% of the amount exceeding $230 for 1 child; plus 50% for 2; plus 25% for 3; plus 0% for 4 or more children.

Even the more reasonable post-1977 dues system had important consequences. It was an economic measure indirectly forcing subordination of one's private life. Living in relative poverty meant that most members simply could not afford to go out on the town on weekends or travel outside Canada for holidays or afford such luxuries as a stereo or TV if they didn't already have one before they joined.[13]

Another objection was raised to the dues system in November 1981. Treating two members as a "couple" instead of as 2 single people living together meant assuming that the woman had no

financial autonomy but that all decisions about budget, voluntary extra donations, etc., would be made by the "couple".

General attitude

In a text written by another Political Bureau member in December 1980, reviewing some of the excesses of earlier attempts to subordinate private life to political tasks, we find a phrase which occurs in several other texts as well: "On the other hand we cannot conceive of being a revolutionary militant and leading a normal life, a balanced life as if making a revolution was just a piece of cake". Private life could not be accommodated to or reconciled with the needs of the struggle; it had to be subordinated. There were four arguments, all basically variations on the same argument, that recur in text after text.

#1: the "get ready to die for the revolution" argument: It was an observable fact that in all revolutions the ruling classes had eventually used violent means to suppress the mass movements and particularly the communists. Communists had to start steeling themselves for that level of repression. Otherwise instead, of being exemplary leaders, they would capitulate to repression. If IS members didn't subordinate their private lives day to day, what would happen when they were forced to choose between their own personal life and the collective interests of the revolution.?[14]

#2: the "collective negation, not personal liberation" argument: People with petty-bourgeois careers had a choice: they could

either join together with others, pool all their material resources and individual talents, and collectively negate the system through a collective struggle; or they could seek individual solutions within the existing system. It was a zero-sum situation: individual indulgence took away from the collective struggle.

#3: the "let's be materialist" argument: Those people who did seek personal liberation within the existing structures of capitalism were living an illusion anyway. It was not possible for the organization to create "an island of socialism in a sea of capitalism" by trying to create conditions so its members could live on a higher level of freedom and absence from hierarchy than the surrounding society. Such utopian notions were at the basis of all reformist theories of socialism. One just had to look at what happened to all the attempts to build co-ops and communes to see where such illusions led.

#4: the "Isn't our goal freedom from domestic slavery anyway?" argument: A male member of the Political Bureau made the following argument in February 1981 in opposition to the feminists who "counterposed feminine sensitivity to male reason, feminine warmth and valuing of equality to male sense of organization and hierarchy". People who argued like that were presuming that males and females had innately different qualities and were promoting a reactionary "cult of the housewife":

> Either one struggles to get men to share these "feminine values", to get closer to home life, the children,

> intimate communication, the perfect sharing arrangement within the couple and pretends that this little world of the family is an entity which is partially insulated from society and a haven from its political problems (and therefore says that "personal life is political" or even that "the political is personal life") or one gives priority to the struggle to liberate women from the domestic tasks and responsibilities they are still saddled with, which then permits them to have full freedom to work, be politically active, take on responsibilities, and to "be political" on an equal footing with men".[15]

This general attitude towards the subordination of personal and family life made it very difficult to function as a member of IS if your mate was not also a member. Here is an extreme example which shows the problems created when the attitude was pushed to its logical extreme. It is a letter written by an ex-member of IS in early 1981 about the problems he had because his working class wife was not a communist:

> The problem: my spouse was not a member and wanted me to be with her more often. At the time, like everyone else, I was busy every night of the week and often on weekends. My leadership pushed me to convince her that this was right. I believed so myself and tried to persuade her. This state of affairs went on for 2 years, going from bad to worse, until finally we started talking about separating. Having run out of arguments, I took on a "semi-member" level of involvement: three nights a week, a weekend afternoon and cell plenaries.

He then quotes from a letter sent to him by someone in leadership in the national apparatus (dated February 1980):

> The problem is ideological, it is on the level of the goals which are antagonistic. As a couple your goal is to lead a "normal couple's life". ... But revolutionary work is incompatible with a normal couple's life. ... Isn't it obvious that a communist's life cannot be orderly, without surprises, following a regular schedule? ... This is why there is an antagonistic contradiction between the "needs" of your spouse, as long as they remain what they are today (attention, stability, etc.), as long as they develop -- as they inevitably will -- along the same lines (household,

children, etc.), and those of the revolution and the Organization, a contradiction which can only be resolved by giving up one of the two goals.

(4) Data Relevant to Point 6 from Chapter 4

According to the interview respondents the other side of the coin to denying that the personal was political was the denial that political life could be anything but impersonal and isolated from daily life. In particular the interview data suggests that:

-- The expression of emotional solidarity with others or collective styles of leadership and decision-making were discouraged in favour of a one-man management approach.

-- Paying attention to personal growth and the affirmation of individual members was seen as putting one's private interests ahead of the collective (organization) and hence ahead of the revolution.

-- Women who did subordinate their personal life totally and live up to the ideal of a good cadre found themselves "becoming men" to the point of losing various aspects of their sex identity and feminine qualities.

In all of the minutes of the various conferences and caucuses of IS women held in 1980 and 1981-82 three points keep re-occuring in close proximity to one another.

(1) Men should play a more active role in childrearing and emotional support relations in the family, more than just babysitting and doing assigned housework tasks.[16] Although the

institutionalized privileges and power of men in the public realm are important, chauvinism is most strongly felt and hardest to grapple with in private life. Any attempt to deal with male power and privilege must consequently start with what the Quebecois call "le quotidien" -- the routines of daily life in a personal world of friends and kin.

(2) Women find it difficult to be assertive, appear firm (resolute) and maintain a composure of self-confidence, particularly in public-speaking situations. An important component of this is their uneasiness with individual self-affirmation in opposition to others. The approved ways of affirming self contradict their desire to maintain ties of emotional solidarity with others and to function in a more loose, collective manner. The policy of "one-man management" which calls for individual responsibility (the buck stops here) is antithetical to any kind of emotional support system and collectivity. Women can and do learn to be leaders in the approved way, but they feel that they do so at the price of their sex identity as women.

(3) The most frustrating thing about men's attitude towards women in IS was their put-down of women for being "subjective", for failing to have a "view of the whole", for being too emotional and emotive in meetings that were supposed to be serious places for business and reasoned debate. What was especially difficult was that it appeared that men and women had a different <u>form</u> of discourse and that women were not allowed to

speak in their own voices.

An example that contains all three themes is the experience of one of the women members of the Political Bureau, which she summarized in a letter of resignation in the spring of 1981. She had been a top leader in the largest (Quebec) region for 5 years before being placed in the PB after the spring 1979 3rd Congress. She was a leader of proven abilities. As a mother she had all the same problems with childcare that the other PB members with children had, already described earlier. As a permanent she felt the "physical" isolation from ordinary people "because you are always trapped between the 4 walls of your home working alone on paper". As a leader she felt "psychological" isolation because "one of the main qualities expected of leadership is individual responsibility". Meetings of the PB were few and far between. Each leader was supposed to run their own department and not bother one another with petty problems. When they did meet it was to concentrate on the big issues. "Support between the members of the PB is not part of the methods of work. There were times when I received support and it was a great help. But it was the exception, not the rule. I always felt that when I asked for support I was bothering people somehow". Perhaps the most traumatic experience was when she was placed in charge of one of the committees dealing with research and analysis. It was an all-male committee. She felt that she was constantly being tested and that criticisms of her leadership one-sidedly stressed overcoming individual weaknesses

through "criticism, self-criticism" rather than building on strengths. "People did not seem to take account of my specific conditions [as a woman]. I was pressured to struggle against myself constantly (against stress, to develop my capacities of political analysis, to have a clearer sense of priorities, to have better methods of work, to make sure that I did not concern myself too much with my child and with domestic tasks which my husband was to take on more with all the contradictions that posed for me [he had gotten sick from overwork and she blamed herself for that]". The idea of "fighting self in order to build self", of purging oneself of individual weaknesses rather than sharing in a group process of building on personal and collective strengths, had become institutionalized in the way IS functioned, she concluded. Everything worked "to intensify the gap between my life and my political work to the point where I can no longer find myself as an individual".

So she resigned a victim of all three factors mentioned above. In her case, her husband had played an active part in child-rearing and housework but it was a role reversal not a sharing. Despite her proven abilities to take initiative and accept responsibility the isolation of the one-man management style cut her off from the emotional support of others to the point of undermining her self-confidence. And the experience which "broke" her was being placed in charge of an all-male theory committee with its climate of negative criticism.

(5) Conclusions: What the Documentary Evidence Confirms from Interview Data

The data from Chapters 4 and 5 permit the following conclusions:

(1) The personal profile of the average IS female member as a college-educated working mother who joined IS in 1976 when in her early to mid-20s after having been socially active in community, cultural, union, or political groups for several years is confirmed.

Membership data shows that most people joined in 1975-77. Data on the dues system and a document circulated within IS exhorting women to return to work immediately after giving birth indicates that it was expected that women members would work and pay dues. The information on the baby boom and various direct references to it as a phenomenon indicate that many women had children. This data on the characteristics of the majority of IS women is relevant because it shows that we are typically dealing with a woman from precisely that section of the female population who, independent of being in IS can be expected to be most aware of her rights, have a basis for self-confidence and autonomy and yet sharply face the problem of the triple load.

(2) The interview data indicated that IS women faced a triple load and that responsibilities in personal and family life, including housework and childcare, come a poor third. Although research on Canadian, British, and American families all show

that a couple with one child needs to do a minimum of 50 hours of housework a week between them interview respondents said they were only supposed to do 16 hours and actually did 30 which is 20 hours below the normal minimum. (The precise figures here are not important for our purposes; given that there is no shared definition of what is contained in housework and how to measure it, it cannot be otherwise anyway.)

The documentary data confirms the existence of a systematic and conscious policy of handling the triple load by subordinating housework and childcare to political tasks. A document dated June 1978 explicitly takes up the problem of women asking for lesser political responsibilities after having a child. It was expected that children would be cared for by other people than their parents much of the time and this was applied even or expecially at the highest level by Political Bureau members. We have the written testimony of one former member that this logic could even be taken to the extreme where the organization demanded that one choose between commitment to a communist lifestyle which can never be "normal" and the demands of one's spouse for a regular home life, time spent with the children and so on. We have the detailed examples of the triple load borne by two women cadre cited in the Central Committee resolution of August 1979.

(3) Interview respondents said that men shared in housework tasks but not the household management responsibility or the role of emotional support for children, mate, and kin.

There are many exhortations to male and female members to share housework on the pragmatic basis of freeing both to do political tasks and to allow the one with "more important" political tasks to do less than half if need be. There is at least one documented case of a role reversal with the husband of a female Political Bureau member doing the majority of the childcare and housework. We have no documentary evidence of the number of hours men put into housework tasks. On the other hand the minutes of many of the women's meetings held in fall 1980 devote attention to criticizing men for expressing more overt chauvinism in private life, for failing to take up the role of emotional support and for not giving the necessary quality of attention to children. The letter from a woman to the Central Committee in May 1980 suggests that male members with children have a limit set to the quantity of political tasks they are allowed to take on so that they will have more time to father their children. Also, although I did not include it in the text of Chapter 5, there are many documentary references to debates about the need for paternity leave which was an accepted practice in Ontario by early 1981.

(4) The interview data gave a detailed portrait of the ideological climate among IS men with respect to male chauvinistic attitudes and behaviour patterns. The failure to listen to women equally and the prevalence of a paternalistic attitude to feminine qualities as weaknesses was said to be the strongest form within IS.

The minutes of the Fall 1980 women's meetings confirm the point about the main expression of chauvinism and the fact that women are particularly frustrated to be seen as less articulate and less "rational" because they use more personal and emotive forms of self-expression, seek to maintain collective forms of decision-making and so on. There is even evidence that women themselves internalized the idea of the need to struggle against what they regarded as socialized feminine weaknesses of gentleness, etc.

(5) Chapter 4 concluded with seven points describing the elements of a pattern to the social experience of the IS women. Point (1) was that posts of power and authority were open to women at all levels and that women were pushed to occupy them in proportion to their numbers (42% of the membership).

The evidence on this point is strong and consistent from the first reference in a January 1976 document to the detailed breakdown in a November 1981 report. Women are represented in leadership posts, both elected and assigned, at or above the 42% level as late as May 1980. The one exception is in the top elected posts: women make up only 28.5% of the Central Committee and of the Political Bureau. The CC had been elected at the third Congress and could not be altered in composition until a subsequent Congress. There were periods when a larger proportion of the Political Bureau was female. According to a February 1980 document women were a majority of the Political Bureau for a 3-month period until some of the women withdrew (it did not

specify when that period was).

(6) Point (2) from Chapter 4 was that although all tasks were open to members of both sexes assignment was largely based on "merit", i.e. on aptitude due to pre-existing socialization and skills. The result was that women who were fast typists and good at research typed while men who were slow typists and good at research did research. Women were over-represented in administrative, clerical, and routine organizational tasks.

Here again the evidence is quite definite. The problem of women's over-representation in infrastructure tasks is the explicit focus of the June 1980 Central Committee reforms and is described in the minutes of the Fall 1980 women's meetings. The interesting qualification the documentary data provides is that this started to change when the policy changed so that by October 1981 men were doing 50% of the infrastructure jobs. The breakdown of male and female jobs within the general category of infra-structure would likely reveal persisting problems of sex-typing; for example the continued over-representation of women in typing jobs.

(7) Point (3) from Chapter 4 was that thinkers predominated over doers at every level due in a large part to an explicit valuing of the capacity to abstract and synthesize data rapidly and in written form in doing political analyses. IS saw its main function as being the clarification of the ideological principles of Marxism and the generation of concrete political analyses to orient the actions of activists in social struggles.

Hence much of the organization was structured around the collective process of "developing the political line".

The evidence presented on this point is not extensive. At first sight it may not be very impressive. But it is sufficient to verify the main point. First, there is the problem many members had with political study. The documents on this indicate that workers and women had a number of grievances about the gap that existed between the ordinary cell member who mainly did agitation in immediate struggles and the researchers and analysts whose daily activities consisted of synthesizing data and formulating hypotheses. The study sessions were an attempt to democratize and collectivize access to theory and to link study to public political debate over current issues but they failed to accomplish this. The second set of evidence is the June 1980 CC decisions. They are concerned with altering the conditions of work of people doing non-theoretical tasks in the apparatus. The type of changes made reflect an analysis of what the problem is -- the split between mental and manual labour and the domination of the former over the latter. In particular, there is an attempt to address the tendency for non-theoretical tasks to be non-thinking tasks in the literal sense of being isolated, over-specialized, repetitive, and uncreative. For example, prior to June 1980 the head of the committee of translators was responsible for doing all the initiating of policy and coordinating all the work: all authority was concentrated in one person. After June 1980 different members of

the committee were given the authority to develop specific mandates. One person was to design and teach a course in upgrading translation skills. Another developed a network of resource people outside the organization able to aid periodically when the regular committee was overloaded. Another person was placed in charge of organizing, staffing, and supervising the simultaneous translation systems in use at all major internal and public meetings. And so on. In each case the persons continued to carry out their regular tasks in the production process as "doers" in the weekly newspaper assembly line. However they now had some authority to think, to initiate policy ideas and to carry out some supervisory-management functions within a framework of collective decision-making as well. The third example based on documentary evidence is the negative one of the refusal of the newspaper editors to create a position of copy editor. It exemplifies the policy which IS upheld of concentrating all thinking jobs at the centre and vesting all political authority there as well. Infrastructure people were expected to take initiative and had some autonomy as to how they carried out tasks but a relatively small group of thinkers had political authority to decide the what and the why while the doers had none.

(8) Point (4) from Chapter 4 was that the <u>top thinking posts were held by men</u>.

The statistical evidence here is straightforward. Men headed all the committees dealing with the development of the

political line as late as May 1980. A parallel process of developing political theory was begun in April 1981 based on the work of the research collectives coordinated by the National Women's Committee. Women started to be integrated into the regular research and analysis committees in the apparatus in 1981 but men still headed the committees. The stage was set for a confrontation between the different approaches to doing theory favoured respectively by the male-led and female-led committees. This might or might not have led to a restructuring and an equal role for women in leading this work had IS continued to exist long enough.

(9) Point (5) in Chapter 4 is that after the baby boom the pressure placed on mothers by the fact that subordinating private life now meant subordinating the time and attention accorded the children made the issue of personal and family life a political issue within IS itself. Some women asked for lesser responsibilities or resigned from leadership posts, others quit IS entirely. But many demanded that changes be made in the way that political life was organized and the way personal and political life were seen in relation to one another. Women cannot separate the personal from the political very easily -- they carry their homes on their backs wherever they go.

Much of the evidence for IS policy and practice with respect to childcare, housework, and financial autonomy has already been mentioned in points (2) and (3) above. Evidence for the tendency of women to stubbornly insist on linking of the

personal with the political even while enduring a lot of pain subordinating the personal is diverse. Women did not leave the organization more than men despite the greater pressures on them and the less-rewarding political tasks some of them performed. Women never quit at the regional leadership level and used their leverage to redefine the functions and powers of regional and cell-level leadership and to allow time for meeting personal life responsibilities. Even in the last year women showed a preference for taking a "leave of absence" from political responsibilities while retaining their membership and (in some cases) continuing to participate in the women's caucuses and research collectives (the November 1981 report said that at that time 16.3% of the Quebec members were on leave of absence, most of them women; according to a later document only 20% of the half who eventually quit membership were women). Finally there are all the different concessions won from the leadership, presumedly due to pressure coming largely from women: maternity and paternity leaves, more weekends off, and longer time for family vacations at Christmas and in the summer.

(10) Point (6) in Chapter 4 is that <u>women</u> who did subordinate their personal lives <u>became depersonalized</u> (isolated, pushed to deny their feminine qualities, and even their sexuality). They were obliged to set aside their preference for more personal modes of expression, attention to practical detail in organizing the work, articulation of emotional bonds of solidarity, and collective ways of decision-making and leadership. Women felt

that the model of leadership they were being asked to emulate was a male model.

The documentary evidence in relation to this point consists of (a) the grievances articulated by the fall 1980 women's meetings which repeat all the above points in the form of more specific grievances; (b) the clear pattern to the changes in how leadership functions, etc., were carried out in the regional committees and cells in the last year -- a delegated representative leadership instead of leadership by the "most advanced", executive with circumscribed powers and lesser responsibilities, broader distribution of mandates so that responsibility for leadership is more of a collective process; (c) the different approach to developing theory taken by the women's research collectives -- including both theorists and activists, members and non-members, relating general issues to personal experiences and to current problems; and (d) the reforms made by the Central Committee in the organization of the work in the apparatus in part due to pressure from women in infrastructure tasks (aimed at reducing isolation from daily life and overspecialization and increasing the sharing out of mandates among ordinary "doers").

(11) Point (7) from the interview data is that the women resigned from posts of leadership or demanded lesser responsibilities in the same post and that this phenomenon became generalized in the last period.

The evidence is that women did resign at the very top level (all women withdrew from the Political Bureau after April 1981) and at the local cell unit level (in the Fall of 1980). However, there is little evidence of abandonment of posts in the national or regional apparatuses or on the regional committees or central committee (individual women may have quit but they were replaced by other women). Here changes were made in the way the work was organized and what was demanded of people in leadership posts. And women returned to giving leadership at the cell level in 1981 when cell secretaries were generally replaced by collective leaderships. This indicates that the withdrawal of women from the Political Bureau was due to other factors than just the social pressures on the individuals. It is most likely explained (according to two interview respondents) by the fact that the PB women could see the political handwriting on the wall: IN STRUGGLE would not survive the process of fundamental political questioning it was beginning to undertake with a common basis of ideological unity; and in the case of the feminist questioning in particular a minority of the Political Bureau was going to fight tooth and claw to ensure that any concessions to feminism did not threaten the "ideological principles" of Marxism enshrined in the IS programme.

Notes -- Chapter 5

1. Nineteen of the 34 ex-IS members interviewed were the parents of children born before the spring of 1981 when the "women' revolt" came out into the open with the public speech of Josee Lamoureux at an IS-sponsored International Women's Day meeting. In 16 of the 19 cases the children were between 3 and 6 years old at the time of the interviews in April-May 1983. If the interview sample is at all typical this means that the baby boom took place between the spring of 1977 and the spring of 1980.

2. The source is a document dated November 1981. The central apparatus continued to account for between 25% and 30% of the members resident in Quebec until IS dissolved. When you add the 10% to 15% of Quebec based members who worked in the regional apparatus a very high proportion of Quebec members were part of a highly organized, centralized and specialized bureaucracy. The other 60% did most of their work in the territorial base units (or cells), applying the policies and directives emanating from the national and regional leaderships and their "civil services". Most of the people with tasks in the national apparatus also worked for wages elsewhere. However there were some full-time (paid) "permanents". At the end of 1977, 25% of the people in the national apparatus were permanents. That jumped to nearly 40% by the end of 1978. In early 1980 a campaign to reduce costs and simplify methods in the national apparatus dropped the figure for permanents to under 25% where it stayed until the end.

3. "For two years now we have waged a major struggle around issues of criteria for new members, subordination of private life to political life, the dues system, etc. It was necessary to fight against liberalism and the lowering of the criteria for admitting new members, against a desire to start from the needs of the individuals to define those of the Organization. The struggle was conducted in all parts of the Organization for a better application of democratic centralism". The Central Committee resolution goes on to cite two examples of what is viewed as a secondary but important error -- the failure in waging the above struggle to recognize that real people will not correspond to a 100%-perfect ideal of the good militant and that their specific material conditions and capacities must be taken into account. The first example is a woman who "has always been exemplary in devotion, discipline and courage in standing up to the union bosses". Her schedule is described: "Get up at 6:00 AM, take the children to day-care, ride the bus, work, pick kids up at day-care, supper, find a babysitter, meeting, get back home again after midnight.

This goes on 5 days a week, 3 out of 4 weeks each month, and 3 1/2 weekends out of 4 are all booked up. ..". The second example is of a working class woman who "has been assigned to do secretarial work and handle internal files for the past 10 months. Nothing unusual in that you will say. Except that this comrade also works in a factory 40 hours a week, is the elected president of her local union, has two young children and a husband who is busy as he is also a member. On top of work, union and family she is isolated for another 30 hours a week doing clerical tasks for IS". Instead of being isolated and depoliticized by the fact there is not time or opportunity for study and political tasks in such a schedule, this woman should be reassigned to do mass work, the resolution argues. The concern in the motion is not with the problem of subordination of private life demands. It is with the effects of bureaucratization. Members devote all their time to the performance of specialized tasks and soon it is just another job. The resultant depoliticization, movers of the motion argue, is what enabled the "revisionists" to take over so easily in places like China. The CC resolution calls for organized political education sessions and a stronger role for cell plenaries in debating policies originating from on high. It issues a caution to leaders to be more sensitive to the unequal material conditions and individual abilities of different members. The image of the 100% perfect-in-all-ways militant guilts and demoralizes imperfect members.

4. She also noted a pattern of sex segregation which is not a new development at all: women were excluded from committees charged with developing the political line (not a single woman member) while men accounted for only 20% of the people on several clerical committees she named. (May 1980).

5. Before, people who made proposals for rotating out of infrastructure tasks after a fixed period of years were condemned for putting their individual needs ahead of those of the Organization and its need for trained specialists.

6. There is evidence of an earlier "crisis" of morale at the level of the territorial cells: the sharp drop in newspaper distribution in Quebec in the period of early 1979. This also is when the rate of resignations exceeds new members joining for the first and only time before the last period preceding dissolution (see table on resignations below in footnote 8). According to a Central Committee report in this period most of the early 1979 resignations (over 2/3) were people in the cells, not the apparatus. A look at the newspaper distribution figures below shows that this was a period of upsurge in English Canada as many volunteers transferred from Quebec to bolster forces and the top leadership devoted its main energies to "Canadianizing" the organization. In the second half of 1979 newspaper

distribution in English Canada stabilized at a lower level and Quebec distribution picked up somewhat. There is also an increase in the number of people joining in late 1979 and early 1980. But in late 1980, after the Quebec referendum and the publication of Internal Bulletin 40 questioning whether the USSR had ever been socialist, the crunch came everywhere. Women resisted being cell secretaries. Newspaper distribution dropped everywhere, although less quickly in B.C. than in the rest of English Canada.

Table 501

PERIOD	all Canada	Quebec	**Quebec as % of total	West***		Ont.	Mrtms	Engl. Canada
late 1976	*1500							
early 1977	*1500							
late 1977	*3000							
early 1978	*3650							
late 1978	**6530	5690	87.1%	380		260	200	840
early 1979	5800	3980	68.6%	570		990	260	1820
late 1979	6125	4785	78.1%	550		570	220	1340
early 1980	5865	4522	77.1%	571		496	276	1343
late 1980	4546	3649	80.3%	471	(124)	271	155	897
early 1981	3509	2648	75.5%	479	(70)	312	70	861

*Figure is 50% of distribution of each issue coming out every two weeks until fall of 1978 when it became a weekly.
** Actual total distribution is higher because sales in other countries not included in this table. Column 4 is % of Canadian distribution.
***Figures show combined total of B.C. and Prairie provinces. Bracketted figures is the portion of total distribution in West done in Prairies.

7. From the point of view of democracy the composition of the Central Committee was problematic in other ways as well. It was completely dominated by people in the national and regional apparatuses and ultimately by "permanents" in the employ of the organization. No fewer than 76% of the CC members held "political" (non-infrastructure) leadership posts in the national or regional apparatus; 62% were permanents although in many cases they were only made permanents after being elected to the CC (ironically since the third Congress had consciously tried to avoid choosing too many permanents). And many had been there a long time (57% were repeats from the smaller 1976-79 Central Committee) since only 20% of the previous Central Committee had failed to get re-elected to the 1979-82 one. There was only one ordinary cell member in the whole Central Committee as of October 1981.

Up until the third Congress of spring 1979 the Central Committee was relatively small. The Political Bureau, elected by the CC from within its own ranks, were all made permanents and always voted as a block. Since one worker member of the CC also invariably supported whatever the PB proposed it took only one more member to vote with the PB for it to get its way.

8. In the table which follows below the first fact to notice is how stable the figures are (in the last column on the right) for women as a percentage of the total membership. If women were joining at a rate greater than 42% this figure would go up; if they were leaving at a rate exceeding 42% it would go down. The detail given for the last four periods on the percentage of new members and resignees who are women confirms the hypothesis that in general women join less and quit less than men. The exceptions are when women join more in early 1980 and quit more in late 1980. Although the percentage of women leaving the Organization is also slightly above 42% in the two periods before late 1980 (building to the late 1980 peak) the important fact is the overall stability: women represent 41.3% of the membership in early 1977, 42.4% in late 1979 just before the women's resigning rate goes up and the same figure, 42.4% in early 1981 after the women's resigning rate goes back down.

Table 5-2

PERIOD	Joining	(% women)	Leaving	(% women)	Net Change	Women as % Total Membership
early 1976	+35.3%				+35.3%	
late 1976	+45.4%				+45.4%	
early 1977	+26.0%		-4.7%		+21.3%	41.3%
late 1977	+20.8%		-2.1%		+18.7%	*44.6%
early 1978	+11.9%		-3.4%		+8.5%	*42.9%
late 1978	+6.1%		-4.1%		+2.0%	*41.9%
early 1979	+5.3%		-7.4%		-2.1%	43.3%
late 1979	+10.7%	(34.5)	-5.9%	(43.7)	+4.8%	42.4%
early 1980	+15.8%	(54.5)	-4.6%	(46.2)	+11.2%	44.9%
late 1980	+9.6%	(33.3)	-7.1%	(59.1)	+2.5%	42.6%
early 1981**	+5.0%	(29.2)	-6.8%	(33.3)	-1.8%	42.4%

* Figure for whole group. Quebec breakdown not available.
** Calculation from figures for first 9 months of 1981. Percentages are calculated on the base figure for Quebec membership at the beginning of each 6 month period. "Early" 1976 means January to June; "late" 1976 means July to December.

9. The idea of a hierarchy of scientific thinkers who were to dispassionately evaluate all the gathered data in the

privacy of their studies and then emerge again with answers to all the problems put an incredible pressure on people in leadership posts. They still had to function with the same kind of input-output efficiency as the rank and file, in the sense that their individual thinking was subordinate to a collective process of "developing the political line". As a member of the Central Committee put it: "There were two key qualities you had to have to be a leader in IS. First you had to be able to concentrate all your energies on a single aspect of a single task and to master that way of thinking: "this is principal" and "that is secondary and must be set aside for now". Second you had to be prepared to work in a non-collective fashion, in isolation, usually in your own home and to still produce. You had to block out everything else". (Gerry, one of the 34 interviewees.) In the last period there was a conscious effort to move away from this "model".

10. The text was written in response to a concrete situation that had been developing in the previous year. The typical case: a woman got pregnant; there was a "reduction in the level of political involvement of the new mother"; right after pregnancy she tended to go into a period of depression and withdraw into herself; "private life was taking precedence over the demands of political life". This had to be fought: "There is a struggle to be waged after the birth of a baby. Some people fall back into the traditional role of the woman in the home and withdraw into the pettiness of daily life and into organizing it comfortably. ... Others welcome it as a joyous moment to be sure but realize that this is not the time to weaken in their determination and to "forget" the revolution for a few months. The future baby might perhaps be a little less well-clothed or less provided-for-in-every-way but all the necessary things will be done to the extent possible and as well as possible. They don't get caught up in reading an endless number of books about how to raise your baby or find the ultimate diet. They try to get a neighbour to help out or a girl friend or their mother or sister for the days after the birth [rather than taking their husband away from his political tasks]. Even when they are very young the children should be left with babysitters, because the longer it is put off the harder it is for the mother to do. It is also important that comrades return to their jobs as quickly as possible. If they don't they are in fact becoming "hidden" permanents, i.e. they aren't paying their dues as they were before and they are becoming housewives with all that comes with that role in terms of withdrawing into oneself. It is an objective basis for the development of individualism". The text just quoted was written by a female member of the Political Bureau.

11. "A person in leadership ought normally to be available at all times for political work. It is highly likely that these

comrades will see their children less, devote less time to their education and will have to have others babysit them more often. Those are part of the sacrifices that one makes to ensure that you are putting the interests of the proletariat first and serving those interests adequately". (June 1978)

12. The pre-1977 dues policy was supposedly based on the idea of confiscating all income in excess of an average "proletarian" income. It did not allow for saving for the future and hence ruled out such luxuries as buying a house or car of paying the bills if you suddenly lost your job. Workers therefore quite naturally refused to join the organization and be "proletarianized" by the dues system into financial insecurity.

13. In the case of the full-time IS employees, the dues system was one of several levers which gave the organization direct controls over both their "private" and "public" life activities. The "permanents" had their standard of living, detailed schedule (21-block weekly plan), city of residence, time allowed for an outside part-time job -- in short most of the key details of their life -- directly determined by the current objectives and priorities of the Organization. There is no record of complaints of abuse of this power. However it is a fact that the permanents had little or no material (economic) basis for autonomy and detachment from the organization they worked for. They had no time to cultivate friendships with people who had different interests and opinions or to carry out social and political activity independent of the organization. They had no career or job to fall back on, which reduced their leverage in protesting policies they disagreed with because the threat was always there of being "fired" or reassigned.

14. A text written in 1977 by an IS member in Quebec City puts the choice plainly:

> The principle of subordinating one's personal life ought to be understood as extending up to the point of the TOTAL negation of personal life. ... It is not the group, but our mortal enemy the bourgeoisie that places us in this dilemma where we must choose between prison or death and our ideals. ... How would someone react under torture who had always coasted along with the view that subordinating one's personal life shouldn't 'go to the extreme of negating it completely?' ... A clear stand against denying one's personal life would necessarily lead you to adopt political positions to rationalize this capitulation before it happened, positions rejecting all use of revolutionary violence, etc".

15. It should be noted that this line of argument was clearly rejected in the April 1981 Central Committee resolution on women. The implication of the argumentation of the Political Bureau member was that the feminist movement was a reactionary movement trying to get women to adopt "feminine values" and return to the home. The argument echoes some of the positions advanced by Marxists and others in response to the "wages for housework" movement in the early Seventies. See for example Marlene Dixon Women in Class Struggle (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1980) who makes a similar "Marxist" argument.

16. Both the Montreal and Toronto cell meetings already referred to proposed that IS henceforth insist that men take paternity leave and that routinely men's political tasks be limited on the basis of an evaluation of their fatherly responsibility in the home.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this thesis was to explain why women members of the Canadian Marxist group IN STRUGGLE changed political attitudes from opposition to the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement in 1972 to strong support by 1982.

The fact that women in IS did go through this change in attitudes was confirmed both by interview data and by the information drawn from documentary sources presented in Chapter 3. In addition it was demonstrated that the rise of a self-conscious movement of IS women starting in the fall of 1980 played a key role in bringing about the changes in IS policy. There were two sources to that movement: (a) contact with the autonomous women"s movement outside IS which was increasingly influential in the workers movement and in mixed movements of all sorts from 1978 on; and (b) the social experience of women within IS which led to stronger and stronger demands for a reorganizing of the political work as well as to a wave of resignations from leadership posts and IS membership in the latter part of 1980.

The hypothesis which was formulated to explain the adoption by IS women of a feminist political discourse was two-fold: (1) first, because IS women discovered through direct social experience that IN STRUGGLE reproduced the sexism (i.e.

systematic denial of autonomy and equality for women) of the broader society despite the commitment of its official ideology to equality for women; and (2) second, because the Marxist ideology of IN STRUGGLE, in contrast to feminist ideology, denied that "the personal is political". More specifically: (a) it ignored some of the material conflicts of interest and relations of domination that exist between men and women; and (b) it did not value or see many of the "invisible" activities carried out by women particularly in personal and family life.

(1) The Main Explanatory Hypothesis Has Been Upheld

The general conclusion based on the evidence presented in the first five chapters of this thesis is that the explanatory hypothesis has been verified. To demonstrate this we will now restate: (a) what the pattern of sexism in the broader society was; (b) in what ways the same kind of pattern was also evident in IS; and (c) in what ways the feminist ideology of the autonomous women's movement was particularly suited as a political discourse to articulating the contradictions in the social experience of IS women that the Marxist ideology of IS failed to address.

(a) The pattern of sexism in the broader society

In Chapter 3 the pattern of sexism existing for women in the broader society between 1972 and 1982 was described.

-- By 1980, the majority of women, including mothers of young children, were in the paid labour force but they carried a double or even triple load.

-- The number of women in posts with some power (technical, professional, or managerial) increased. However, there was much less of an opening up of posts of authority at the top and most women were stuck in "women's jobs" in addition to being held back by the demands of maternity and the double load.

-- Women won greater equality and autonomy within the family (companionate marriage) due to their involvement in the work force and improved legal and reproductive rights but female and male gender identities and roles remained fundamentally the same despite the "crisis of the family", more liberal attitudes towards sexuality, more diverse living arrangements, etc.

The indication is that women in the broader society faced two major barriers to fuller equality and autonomy: first, equality and autonomy in the public realm was held back by the lack of fundamental changes in the family and household; and second, although women had more formal political-legal rights and earning power they were still unequal everywhere in terms of the culture of gendered roles and statuses: "female" qualities and activities continued to be devalued although they were becoming more "visible".

(b) IS reproduced the same basic pattern of sexism

IN STRUGGLE's ideology was in favour of women's equality and autonomy in the family, in the economy, and in political life. In relation to the family, there was a recognition of the fact that women did an unequal amount of unpaid domestic labour and commitment to the ideal of companionate marriage (equal partners). In relation to the economy, women were encouraged to work and most IS members did. IS gave priority in its political work among women to demands related to giving women an equal role in the work force (equal pay, child care, maternity leave). In relation to political life, the slogan was "a woman can do whatever a man can do" and measures of all sorts were adopted to "free" women to become equally involved in political life.

IN STRUGGLE did better than the broader society in some respects, most notably in providing women with access to posts of power and authority in proportion to their numbers and in the degree to which individual men shared in housework tasks. Interview data about the relatively weak expression of overt forms of chauvinism which assert the superiority of the male sex and data showing that there was general acceptance of the authority of women leaders indicate that most IS men felt that women were equally capable of doing what men could do.

Despite these positive features, women in IS experienced the same pattern of de facto denial of full equality and autonomy as in the broader society, in some ways even more sharply.

-- Putting political work responsibilities ahead of both regular work and family responsibilities meant that IS women faced a triple load. The "opportunities" for women to take on more responsibility in political life within IS increased this pressure as did the impossibility of adequately fulfilling family responsibilities, especially the giving of quality care and attention to children.

-- Despite women's participation in posts at all levels, the leaders with greatest ideological authority (the "thinkers" leading in the development of theory) were still mostly male and women were over-represented in traditionally female infrastructure jobs.

-- IS women still had unequal responsibilities for household management and emotional support of children, mate, and kin. Chauvinist attitudes were more strongly expressed in private life. Interview and documentary data showed that socialized feminine qualities and women's activities in personal and family life continued to be devalued by the model of a good militant.

(c) Feminist ideology was particularly suited as a political discourse

The parallelism between the situation of women in Quebec and English Canada generally between 1972 and 1982 and that of IS women in the same period is apparent. However, there are also some points of difference: First, IN STRUGGLE's formal ideology

and the actual views of its members were more strongly egalitarian (less overtly sexist) and IS women were actually treated "the same as men" with respect to housework tasks and leadership posts (except for theory posts); Second, the devaluing of (women's activities in) personal and family life was more extreme in IS and IS women carried not just a double but a triple load. As a result of the first difference, IS women were especially aware of the distinction between the formal equality of "being treated the same as a man" and what is needed to have actual equality, i.e. to be treated equally on the basis of women's <u>different</u> socialized qualities and needs. As a result of the second difference, IS women were more sharply sensitive to the contradiction between women's responsibilities in the "public" realm of work and politics and the "private" realm of personal and family life. In short, the feminist notion of "the personal is political" spoke directly to the social experience of IS women and helped them make sense out of what was happening to them (which Marxist ideology alone was unable to do).

IN STRUGGLE's Marxist ideology denied both aspects of the feminist understanding that "the personal is political". It saw male powers and privileges over women as being the ideological expression of a class society rather than being material privileges justified by gender ideology as well as class ideology. It viewed issues of personal and family life as politically secondary and called for the maximum possible subordination of "private life" to political work.

The experience of IS women led them to the conclusion that their liberation as women would only come about when they were both equal and autonomous (i.e. treated the same but allowed to be different) in both the "public" and "private" realms.

(2) More Speculative Correlations and Inferences which are Suggestive of Avenues for Future Research

In addition to confirming the main hypothesis, the data in the preceding five chapters provide grounds for making more tentative inferences that may be suggestive of avenues for future research.

When the self-conscious movement of IS women succeeded in getting IS to change various aspects of its basic policy on women in 1980 and 1981 a number of changes ensued. IS men generally accepted the shift to a pro-feminist ideology. There was significant progress made in breaking down the horizontal sexual division of labour, especially in getting men to take on infrastructure tasks and to volunteer to do child care for meetings. Women demonstrated their ability to lead in the development of political theory and to win men as well as women to their theoretical positions.

Yet at the spring 1982 IS Congress many of the leading members of the IS women's movement saw no immediate prospect of working in a mixed political organization. Twenty Quebecois women, including most of the leaders of the IS women's movement

in Quebec, circulated a call for the formation of a socialist feminist collective so that IS women in Quebec could "seize our autonomy".

What did this indicate about the nature of the contradictions faced by IS women? What made such a large number of IS women judge that sufficient continued progress in resolving them was not possible in an organization like IS in the immediate future?

The documentary and interview data gave support to the following conclusions:

(1) Women in IS faced problems as a consequence of four hierarchies which both overlapped and appeared to reinforce one another.

(a) men over women, especially in personal and family life.

(b) political life over personal life.

(c) policy-makers over doers.

(d) abstracted knowledge over the direct knowledge and affective consciousness of individual participants in social struggles.

IN STRUGGLE's Marxist ideology was "blind" to important aspects of the "men over women" hierarchy. It explicitly sanctioned the other three for instrumental reasons as a necessary means to an end.

(2) Although most IS men took up feminist ideology seriously and were open to making changes in the way they acted in personal and family life as part of challenging the first (men over

women) hierarchy, their behaviour was in fact slow to change. To take up the responsibility of household management and emotional support for mate, children and kin meant to challenge their socialized male gender identities and roles. It meant to challenge the privileges and powers associated with the roles of father, head of the household and male protector which give men a sense of worth, authority, and self-confidence. It meant challenging the whole "sex-gender system" itself in a situation where alternative roles, identities and ways of organizing sexuality, childraising, etc. are not apparent. It is not surprising that IS women were pessimistic that IS men would change very quickly. The interview and documentary data indicated very clearly that the strongest form of chauvinism among IS men had always been a paternalistic contempt for "feminine" qualities as weaknesses.

(3) Challenging the first hierarchy necessarily leads to challenging the second, the hierarchy of political life over personal life. This means men consciously limiting the time spent on political work and achievement in the public realm in order to give greater time and priority attention to sharing personal and family life responsibilities. It means valuing the changes that need to be made in personal and family life enough to make the issues related to transforming the sex-gender system central issues in any political movement on a par with trade union, poverty, peace, or anti-imperialist issues. It also means making political life "personal" so that political activists are

not schizophrenic: finding ways of organizing the political work that encourage personal modes of expression, affirmation of emotional bonds of solidiatary, etc. This process was barely begun in IS, and as interview respondents noted, men hesitated to promote these changes too in practice.

(4) Challenging the first two hierarchies seems to have entailed confronting the last two. I base this correlation on the way women in IS tried to approach study and the development of theory in the research collectives and to redefine the concept of leadership at the regional and cell levels as well as the CC's "feminist" reforms of the organization of the work in the national and regional apparatuses in June 1980. It also makes sense given the observation from interview data that the higher one moved up in the thinker-doer hierarchy of IS the more male chauvinism appeared to be rewarded, reinforced, and expressed.

Feminism, in seeking to make the personal political and the political personal, tends to question the validity of <u>any</u> hierarchization based on abstracted or functional/instrumental criteria.

It also seems from the data about IS women rejecting the "male model" of what a good militant should be like that feminist ideology necessarily rejects the possibility of there being a single model of behaviour for a class of people viewed purely as objects with "objective interests" and "rational ideology" in common. No one suggested that the solution was to have two models one for men and one for women. This is arguably

because the process of distinguishing "male" from "female" gender identities and roles, the socialization of individuals through the sex-gender system, is also the core of the process of constituting one's personality and cultural identity in general. In other words, in defining what interests people share and where interests differ feminism insists that classes of people be also viewed as groupings of historical subjects with individual socialized identities and an affective consciousness (internalized culture).

Thus feminism seems to provide a key to understanding and challenging more than just the ways men have powers and privileges over women. It also challenges the various hierarchies which are at the core of authoritarian and bureaucratic forms of domination over both men and women. When men begin to recognize this fact they may change their attitude to feminism. Instead of supporting women in "their" struggle with teeth clenched (because the only outcome of that struggle will be loss of privileges and powers for men), men may see feminism as a movement and a theory that are also challenging and authoritarianism and depersonalization of social life that oppresses both men and women. The case study of IN STRUGGLE indicates that at least some men are beginning to open their eyes to this. One hopes that it is the sign of things to come.

APPENDIX A

Interview Schedule

Introduction

(1) This interview is being taped so that I can go back over the tape later and make detailed notes. I am the only person who will have access to that tape. Because of the nature of the organization being studied my supervisory committee has agreed that I will be the only person to see the primary data, i.e. the interview tapes and the organization's internal files.

(2) The thesis is a sociological study, not a political analysis. The focus is not on IN STRUGGLE's political line as such or on competing lines about how to deal with sexism or how to best organize women. So you needn't stretch your memory to remember what happened at this meeting or what political ideas were being debated or that sort of thing. Try instead to recall examples of the situation of women in the group, of male-female social relations. I am trying to do a study of sexism within IN STRUGGLE, a study of which aspects of sexism were reduced compared to the broader society, which remained untouched and which got even worse than in the broader society.

I assume for the purposes of this study that the broader Canadian society is sexist, something that not all sociologists take as a given.

Secondly, I assume that IS, while not feminist, wanted to eliminate women's oppression in the broader society in the long term and to reduce it in its own ranks as much as possible in the short term.

Finally, I assume that IS managed to reduce certain aspects of sexism, failed to touch other aspects and may have made certain aspects even worse than in the larger society. I would ask you to mention the "successes" in reducing sexism as well as the negative results because that is the only way to see whether there is a pattern in what changed and what did not.

PART ONE

Section one: verification of sampling

The first set of questions are personal in nature. They are necessary in order to verify that the sampling is representative.

1. sex?

2. age at present?

3. highest educational level attained?

4. class origins? Explain if it is ambiguous or complicated.

5. your present occupation?

6. your present family situation (single or couple, children or not, etc.)?

7. your family situation most of the time you were in the group? Was it the same? If not, explain. (e.g. explain when first child was born, etc.)

Okay, that is all for the questions to check the sampling.

Section two: basis for rallying and range of experience within IS.

(Here I am using the "film technique" of getting the respondent to review their historical experience rapidly in chronological order with the hope that it will stimulate some memories for the rest of the interview. I asked lots of supplementary questions and often let the respondent ramble on or introduce points of their own. This is the part of the interview where people with access to specialized information due to their post or task were asked to give that information, e.g. many were asked to suggest documents in the files which would back up their statements of the facts.)

1. In what year did you "rally to" IS (i.e. start working closely with IS on a regular basis)?

2. Was it your first contact with a left group? If not, could you list the left organizations you have been involved with in rough chronological order?

3. What were your main reasons for joining IS?

4. Had you had any contact with groups putting forward women's demands, either women's groups or mixed organizations like unions with women's committees?

5. What was your attitude to women's demands before joining IS? What was your attitude towards "feminism"?

6. After you joined IS and found out what its line was on fighting women's oppression did you find it more or less acceptable at the time or did you have disagreements with it or significant questions about it from the beginning?

7. Could you give me a rundown of all the posts you held and tasks you performed while in IS, starting from the beginning? At least the main ones. The reason I ask is to find out where you have expertise and to get an idea of what experiences you base your opinions on.

8. Did you have any particular responsibilities for internal or public work in relation to women?

PART TWO

Section one: discrimination and chauvinism.

Okay, now we come to the strictly "sociological" questions about sexism in the internal life of IS. Remember to mention the "successes" in reducing sexism as well as the negative results. We have to see both in order to get at the pattern of what changed and what did not.

1. Which of the following three statements comes closest to the truth?:

   a. men and women in IS had equal rights in all respects

   b. there was negative discrimination (based on sex) against women in IS

   c. there was a conscious policy of positive discrimination in favour of women within IS.

   Explain your answer.

2. The next question is about how IS men acted as individuals, not about the organization or its policies. (Many respondents had to be reminded a second time of this fact in the course of their reply.) Did individual IS men exhibit any form of male chauvinistic behaviour? If so, what forms of chauvinistic behaviour were the strongest and most widespread? Which were the least strong, or least widespread? (People were allowed to answer this general question first without further prompting or any attempt to define what was meant by "male chauvinist." When the respondent had concluded or reached an impasse I then asked the follow-up.)

3. I want you to comment on each of the following forms of chauvinism to say whether they existed in IS, were weak or strong, etc., and to give concrete examples where you can:

   a. sexual objectification: everything on a continuum from treating women as sexual objects by making sexual "comments" or jokes through to the extreme of sexual harassment or violence.

   b. ridiculing women who were assertive of women's specific concerns or insisted on their autonomy. In society generally this usually takes the form of calling an assertive woman a "frustrated bitch", etc. behind her back.

   c. passivity or actual resistance by men to efforts to bring women into "traditionally male" tasks in the organization or to get men to take up "traditionally

female" tasks in the household.

d. failure to see "women's issues" as genuinely collective issues where both men and women should take initiative; hence the failure to take the initiative in criticizing other men for chauvinism or even to raise women's demands in their union except in response to a directive from IS or an initiative by (IS) women.

e. failure to really regard women comrades as equals in practice. This can take the relatively mild form of picking up what a male comrade says at a meeting while ignoring the fact that a woman had said the same thing half an hour before. It can go to the extreme of men only talking serious politics with other men to the point where an informal "old boy network" is created of men consulting one another, recommending one another for posts, etc.

(Generally I asked for reactions to each of the above one at a time rather than reading the whole list.)

4. Were some categories of IS men more chauvinistic than others?

a. For example, compare men in the higher echelons, in leadership, to men in the cells and committees.

-- Were the men in the higher echelons less chauvinistic because they were more "politically advanced"?

-- Were they more chauvinistic because they had more power and used it?

-- Or, was the chauvinism of IS men something which varied independent of the post occupied by these men?

b. What about men from working class backgrounds versus petty-bourgeois men?

c. How would you rate the chauvinism of IS men compared to the progressive men in the unions, in community groups and in other left groups? Was it more? Less? About the same?

Section two: sex-typing of posts and tasks.

Now we come to questions about the sex-typing of tasks and posts, the sexual division of labour in the organization. We'll get to the sexual division of labour in the household later on.

1. I want you to comment on IS' record in getting women into posts and tasks. I distinguish between posts of authority or leadership in a vertical chain of command and the breaking down of the "horizontal" segregation of traditionally male and traditionally female tasks, if you understand what I mean. (If they didn't I explained what I meant in more detail. Most said they understood.)

   a. First of all, how well did IS do in getting women into leadership posts at all levels?

   b. Second of all, how well did IS do in integrating women into traditionally male tasks?

2. What problems did those women who did manage to get into leadership posts at a level higher than those generally occupied by women in the broader society or who got to perform traditionally male tasks have? Can you give some concrete examples?

3. Some people would argue that the pattern of who got into what posts or tasks or the problems they had once they got there can be explained by factors other than sexism. For example, perhaps a woman didn't get a post because she was less educated, less of an intellectual, or because she was working-class. To what extent can factors like class and education explain things? What makes you think that sexism is a cause in its own right?

Section three: triple load.

1. Let's say that your day can arbitrarily be divided into three sorts of activities -- political tasks, both household tasks and emotional support responsibilities (for mate, children, family) rolled into one, and work for wages or full-time school. Pick any period you were in IS and estimate if you can how many hours a week you put into each activity. If that is too difficult, just run down a typical weekday from when you got up in the morning to when you went to bed at night, then do the same thing for a weekend day and we'll figure out the number of hours from there.

2. Did your mate share both household tasks (cooking, cleaning, etc.) and nurturant responsibilities for emotional support of mate, children, and kin (taking mother to hospital, etc.) equally? If the division of labour between you changed over time what caused it to change? (Most people answered the question at this point. Others required prompting so I asked the supplementaries which follow.)
   Was it IS policy or actual intervention by IS that caused the degree of sharing to change? Was it struggle within the

couple (led by the woman)? If it was struggle within the couple, was IS basically supportive (of the woman) or did it not get involved at all?

3. Would you describe the sharing situation in your couple as typical of couples belonging to IS? If not, what was the situation for others?

Section four: content of politics.

1. The top leadership (Political Bureau) of IS was mostly men. The bodies responsible for providing the ideological and political orientations (political commission, theoretical journal, newspaper, etc.) were made up almost exclusively of men. Based on facts like these some people have argued that the content of IS politics -- its programme, strategy and tactics as opposed to its style of doing politics, its view of the role of the political militant, which we will come to in a minute -- was male. Extreme examples of other left organizations whose politics mainly reflect male experience are those which concern themselves exclusively with blue collar workers at the point of production or promote romantic myths about the heroic guerilla while ignoring the activities of women. IS may not have had these extreme narrow preoccupations but some people argue that the content of its politics was still "male."

   Looking at the choices IS made about which social and political demands to highlight and which to downplay, which social strata or terrains of struggle were principal and which secondary, and which power structures needed to be changed to get to socialism and which could be left until after, would you agree with this assertion or are there other factors that can explain the same political choices?

Section five: how to do politics.
Now we come to the style of doing politics, the idea of the role of a revolutionary militant in people's struggles.

1. From your experience what were the most common criticisms, positive and negative, that you heard of IS' approach to doing politics, of its conception of what a model revolutionary militant was supposed to be like, of its role in people's struggles made by the activists in those struggles?

2. What were the criticisms raised by women in the women's movement on the same subject?

3. What were the criticisms raised by the people close to IS

such as the active sympathizers who never joined or the people who resigned from membership but remained close?

Section six: view of feminism before June 1980.

1. Before June 1980 IS said it was opposed to "feminism." If you had to sum up in a couple of sentences the essence of what IS' concept of "feminism" was before June 1980 what would you say?

2. What were the implications of that concept of feminism for the effectiveness of efforts to fight male chauvinism in and outside of the (IS) organization?

Section seven: points to highlight.

1. In all that you have said in the interview (this morning/afternoon/evening), is there a particular thread running through it that you would like me to pay attention to in going back over the tape to make notes? Or is there perhaps some specific example or point that should be highlighted?

APPENDIX B

Comments on Sampling and Field Experience

Fourteen of the 34 interviews were conducted in English (1 by mail) and 20 in French, all of them following the interview schedule which is reproduced in Appendix A. Although confidentiality guidelines which I have set for the study prevent mention of the exact membership figures it can be stated that the 34 people represent between 4% and 10% of the total membership as it stood when IN STRUGGLE dissolved in the spring of 1982.

Comments on sampling

The respondents could not be chosen at random because the master list of former members has been destroyed. An attempt was made to interview people who represent a cross-section of ex-members in terms of their social characteristics (sex, class, nationality, etc.), political views (in both the majority and minority at the final Congress) and type of experience with the organization (leadership and non-leadership, in base units or internal apparatus, etc.). This was done by categorizing people according to those criteria, deciding on how many people in each category I wanted to interview, and then asking people in the order of those I needed to fill out my quotas. Hence if a person in the category of "known member of the political minority at the final Congress" refused, I would ask another person in that category before proceeding to find any more in the political majority. The result is a pretty well balanced cross-section of informants with the exceptions noted below.

First of all there was a willed bias introduced into the sample in order to focus on the issue being investigated: what was the social experience of women in IS that underlay the change in consciousness from anti-feminist to feminist. Hence more than twice as many women (24) as men were interviewed. The 10 men interviewed act as a kind of control group to check that female respondents were not distorting their recollection of the facts due to an anti-male attitude. The 2 groups are compared in more detail below. A second conscious bias in the selection process was to choose more people who had experience in the national and regional apparatuses in tasks with the highest and lowest degrees of power and authority attached to them (political leadership and clerical or routine organizational tasks respectively). This did not in fact distort the sample too much because all persons with tasks in the apparatuses were also members of the base units (cells) and were at least somewhat aware of what the experience of women in the cells was too.

In some respects persons working in the national and regional apparatuses, even those in infrastructure tasks,

enjoyed higher prestige than people in the cells. When first recruited a new member worked in a territorial cell and distributing the newspaper was likely their main activity. Selection on the basis of one's specialized skills or political qualities to go "up" to the regional or national level from the local unit level conferred prestige. For this reason, when women in the apparatus experienced problems living up to the model of a good militant they were less likely to blame their own lack of competence. They were more likely to be able to distinguish to what extent their problems were due to the existence of male power and privileges and to what extent to the existence of an intellectual hierarchy as opposed to being due to a faceless bureaucracy (which is the way people in the cells would tend to perceive it).

Hence the sample includes 17 persons whose main involvement was with the national apparatus, 7 from regional apparatuses, and 10 (29%) from the cells. Seventeen of the people interviewed (50%) held leadership posts -- 6 top-level (2 women) 10 middle level (6 women) and 1 female cell secretary.[1] Fourteen of the respondents (41%) were non-leaders performing routine organizational or clerical tasks; they were evenly divided between those in the cells and those in the apparatus. Another 7 persons were leaders in charge of "infrastructure" (organizational and clerical) type work. The other 13 persons interviewed were in political agitation or "thinking" tasks, 10 of them being in leadership positions.

Secondly, there is some unwilled bias due to a significant number of refusals. Thirty-four of the 62 people approached agreed to be interviewed; hence the refusal rate was 45% (28 of 62) overall. The 2 most significant characteristics of those refusing are: support for the political minority view, and belonging to the B.C. branch (all of whom were in the political minority). Seventeen of the 28 refusals were made by political minority people (61%). Eleven out of 12 people approached in B.C. refused (92%). Overall between 74% (17 of 23) and 89% (17 of 19) political minority types refused, the first figure including the "soft" wing[2] of the political minority who generally agreed to be interviewed. The refusal rate is thus 45% (28 of 62) overall, 34% if you exclude B.C. people (17 of 50) and 28% if you exclude all B.C. and political minority people (11 of 39).

According to Professor Julian Leslie, guest lecturer in Statistics for the Mathematics Department at Simon Fraser University in the summer of 1983, 25% rejection is a normal expected level when potential respondents are approached in person (said in lecture). The refusal rate is higher than that for this sample if IS members from the political minority (which includes all B.C. members) are included. Therefore no claim is made that the data from the interviews is representative of the situation in IS as seen by political minority people. There is a possible bias due to the political views of the respondents (we shall evaluate the consequences of that bias below). Once this disclaimer is made however the refusal rate is within the

acceptable limits.

Comparisons were made to see if there was any significantly higher or lower refusal rate according to class, language group, sex, or leadership status. Keep in mind that the refusal rate is normal if it is near 45% overall, 34% when B.C. people are excluded and 28% when both B.C. and the rest of the political minority people are excluded.

Class: 22 (65%) of the respondents are presently in petty-bourgeois occupations, while 12 (35%) are in white or blue collar working-class jobs. A higher number (17, 50%) have working-class origins but we will take their current status. The 35% figure corresponds exactly to the percentage of IS members said to be in working-class jobs in the internal membership reports I have consulted. There is a slight difference in the number of workers refusing to be interviewed compared to petty-bourgeois (50% vs. 44%). But when B.C. and political minority people are excluded, we see that the rejection figure for workers remains high (6 of 14, 43%), while the number of petty-bourgeois refusing goes down to 5 out of 25 or 20%.

This indicates that there is a significant reluctance among workers in the political majority to be interviewed while workers in the political minority are less reluctant than petty-bourgeois in the minority to be interviewed (4 out of 10 workers agreed to be interviewed, only 2 out of 13 petty-bourgeois). I would hypothesize that the relatively high refusal rate among political majority workers is due to the fact that they experienced the contradictions of not being able to live up to the "model" of a good (male intellectual) militant more intensely than the petty-bourgeois who accepted. The fact that the political conceptions which contributed to defining that model have been rejected doesn't alter the impact of that experience radically or right away. The petty-bourgeois who accepted are much more quick to attribute the problems they experienced to incorrect political conceptions or to sociological factors and find it easier to talk about the experience in a somewhat detached way. The petty-bourgeois in the political minority felt that there was nothing wrong with the basic principles of Marxism and are therefore a bit at a loss to explain their experience in the organization in an interview. Workers in the political minority on the other hand see the problems in a more personal way as yet another experience with structures that treat them in the same way as a class as they are treated in the broader society despite the "proletarian" ideology.

Region and language group: 27 (79%) of the respondents are from Quebec, 7 (21%) from English Canada, which corresponds to the regional breakdown of the membership in the internal reports. However, 7 of the 27 Quebec people are anglophone; albeit ones whose political experience before joining IS was largely in the francophone left, and who are presently assimilated socially into francophone Quebec by marriage and friendship ties,

language spoken at their place of work, etc. All of the Quebec anglophones approached were members of the political majority, and 7 of 8 agreed to be interviewed. In B.C. all of the 10 anglophones approached were in the political minority and all of them refused. If you exclude B.C., Quebec, and political minority people then the refusal rate for anglophones is about the same as the general average (33%, 2 of 6). Thus the relevant factors are still region and political tendency, not language group. The same pattern holds true for francophones, where the rejection rate is 43% (15 of 35) overall but drops to 38% when people outside Quebec are excluded and to 32% when B.C. and political minority francophones are excluded.

Sex: The sample contains 24 women (71%) and 10 men. The refusal rate among women is 45% (20 of 44) overall but that goes down to 34% (12 of 35) when you drop the 8 of 9 B.C. women who refused and to 33% (10 of 30) when both B.C. and political minority women are excluded. The refusal rate for men is 44% overall but when you exclude B.C. and political minority men it drops way down to 11% (1 of 9) refusing. However the greater readiness of political majority men to be interviewed may partly be confounded with the greater readiness of leadership people to be interviewed since 8 of 9 of them were also leaders.

Leadership and non-leadership: 17 of the respondents (50%) held leadership posts, 9 of which were women leaders.[3] This group is intentionally over-represented. The refusal rate for leaders overall is 35% (9 of 26) which drops to 26% if you exclude B.C. and to only 20% (4 of 20) if you exclude B.C. and the political minority leaders. For women leaders the overall refusal rate is 40% (6 of 15), is 31% (4 of 13) if you exclude B.C. and 25% (3 of 12) if B.C. and political minority women leaders are dropped. For leaders the overall refusal rate is 27% (3 of 11) which drops to 20% (2 of 10) without B.C. and 11% (1 of 9) if you exclude B.C. and political minority people.

Thus leaders are more responsive than average, particularly male leaders. Conversely the refusal rate among men non-leaders is 75% (6 of 8) overall, 67% (4 of 6) if you exclude B.C. and 50% (1 of 2) if you exclude B.C. and political minority people. The refusal rate among non-leadership women is a bit lower than for non-leadership men at 48% (14 or 29) overall, 36% (8 of 22) excluding B.C. and 39% (7 or 18) excluding B.C. and the political minority. So although more responsive than men non-leaders, rank and file women are a bit more reluctant to be interviewed than leadership women. However, in the final analysis this does not show up in the proportion actually interviewed which was a representative 63% (15 of 24) of the women who gave their views.

Thus there is a conscious over-representation of women and apparatus people at the highest and lowest statuses. There is an unwilled bias insofar as the interview includes only 18% (6 of 34) political minority people whereas voting results at the final Congress indicated that they represented well over

one-third of the membership.

How important are these biases, willed and unwilled, likely to be in distorting the picture we get from the interviews?

First, political bias. Although the political majority and political minority were at loggerheads in their evaluation of Marxist principles and Leninist strategy (incorporated in the IS programme that the majority voted to reject) they both took formal positions in favour of feminism. The difference was that the political minority, especially in B.C., was generally less willing to admit the extent to which feminist principles and strategy contradict Marxist principles and Leninist strategy. They wanted at all costs to maintain the "class persepctive," i.e. to affirm that the ideological principles of Marxism were scientific and true. Thus we can expect that the interview findings will not be very much affected in terms of a greater or lesser feminist slant due to the absence of the views of some B.C. or political minority women. But political minority people are more likely to say that the problems women experienced reflect back on the political and organizational line. They are less likely to blame short-term "external factors" (the political conjuncture, pre-existing socialization, or class origins of members) or the individuals (bad leadership, insufficiently devoted "petty-bourgeois" membership) for the problems encountered.

The willed over-representation of women, leaders and apparatus people will not deny us access to information about what went on at the cell level. But it will provide a focus on what we most want to look at: the contradictions experienced by women where their participation was at its most intense level, in both high status traditionally male leadership posts and low status traditionally female specialized tasks.

Field experience

As for the field experience, my comments will be brief. The interviews were requested at a week or two's notice over the telephone and took place generally in the respondent's home in Montreal, Toronto, or Vancouver. I felt like I was pressuring everyone I asked against their will, including those who agreed to be interviewed. I used a fairly "hard sell" approach: "Hi, I'm in town doing my thesis. What time shall we meet for the interview?". To say no was to refuse to help an old friend or comrade. People of all political persuasions and personal situations were apprehensive before the interview began, because they anticipated it would be some kind of political summation. They were generally relieved after they had done it, because they realized it really was an attempt to reconstruct the sociological and psychological dimension of the experience. Why were they apprehensive about participating in a political review of what happened? (The following portrait is based on information obtained from many discussions with people who I

asked for interviews.) To begin with, most people's personal lives are in turmoil. The political movement they had expected to devote their lives to promoting is dead. Many people are in bad economic circumstances, have recently separated, and/or have lost their jobs or are retraining. They see no hope for the immediate future, socially or politically. Most of all they are going through a painful period of re-thinking and indeed re-feeling their most fundamental values, and are doing so in isolation from any movement or even set of friends who share fundamental values and views. Forced to make major changes in their lives despite the confusion of values puts them all under a lot of psychological pressure. They are trying to look forward and not back. Most of them would be willing to review the experience of IN STRUGGLE at some time in the future, in a political context where they could see something practical coming out of this or at least achieve a better understanding of what mistakes should not be repeated. For some people the political context in which that kind of clarification is likely to take place is the women's movement. For others it is a re-organized or revived left. For most there is no obvious way that could happen for some time yet. Thus, from the point of view of the people I wanted to interview, this thesis -- seen as a process of political clarification -- was premature and out of context. It was out of 'sync' with the most pressing preoccupations they have in reorganizing their personal lives. Under such conditions it is amazing how many people accepted. Those who did accept more readily were women and men leaders active in the political majority. They saw the need for feminist lessons to be drawn from the experience and communicated to a broader audience, even if the vehicle -- an academic thesis instead of a political grouping, a male sociologist instead of a group of women activists -- was not exactly the right thing at the right time.

It was eventually possible to get a representative cross-section of working-class men and non-leader women from the political majority in the sample, but that required asking more people. The reason for the higher refusal rate in my view is that they were just that much more alienated from a whole political process in which leadership, and petty-bourgeois male intellectuals in particular, had played a major role in "summing up" experiences and drawing lessons from them, using dry, academic, and impersonal methods for doing so. I am grateful to all those people who managed to overcome all of these concerns, many of them legitimate, to provide the documentation for the thesis.

Notes -- Appendix B

1. I am defining top leader as someone who is both elected to the Central Committee and heads a national or regional apparatus committee or serves on the Political Bureau. A middle-level leader is someone who heads a committee in either the national or regional apparatus but is not on the Central Committee. A local-level leader is a cell secretary.

2. The "soft" wing of the political minority refers to the persons who by and large withdrew from the organized efforts of the "collective of 30" to continue as a political grouping after the dissolution of IS. Most of them have since evolved in their thinking to positions closer to those of the political majority.

3. A leader is defined as someone who is a cell secretary, head of a committee in the regional or national apparatus or elected member of the regional committee or Political Bureau (executive body of the Central Committee; PB members are made into permanents and are the senior management in the national apparatus). Elected leaders oversee the work going on in the apparatuses and have authority to intervene directly in the cells. The definition excludes persons who are elected to the central committee but who are otherwise just ordinary members of a base unit or apparatus committee.

Table B.1: Portrait of group accepting to be interviewed

Respon.	Political stand	Class	Sex	Language	Region	Attach.	Tasks	Status
1.	Minor.	WC	M	French	Que.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
2.	Minor.	WC	F	French	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
3.	MInor.	PB	F	English	Ont.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
4.	Minor.	WC	F	English	Ont.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
5.	Minor.	PB	M	English	Ont.	Region.	Agit	Leader
6.	Minor.	WC	F	French	Ont.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
7.	Major.	WC	F	English	Que.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
8.	Major.	PB	F	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
9.	Major.	PB	F	English	Sask.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
10.	Major.	PB	F	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
11.	Major.	WC	F	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
12.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
13.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
14.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Cell	Prop	Non-L
15.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
16.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Region.	Infra	Non-L
17.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
18.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Region.	Infra	Non-L
19.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
20.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Cell	All	Leader
21.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
22.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Agit	Leader
23.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Regior.	Infra	Leader
24.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
25.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Prop	Leader
26.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Agit	Leader
27.	Major.	PB	M	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
28.	Major.	PB	M	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
29.	Major.	PB	M	English	Que.	Nation.	Prop	Leader
30.	Major.	WC	M	English	N.S.	Region.	Agit	Leader
31.	Major.	PB	M	English	Ont.	Region.	Agit	Leader
32.	Major.	PB	M	English	Ont.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
33.	Major.	WC	M	English	Que.	Nation.	Agit	Leader
34.	Major.	PB	M	English	Que.	Region.	Agit	Leader

MINORITY means person voted <u>for</u> programme at 1982 Congress,

MAJORITY means person voted against.

WC means working class,

PB means petty-bourgeois. Both refer to present status not class origin.

REGIONAL means any committee in the regional apparatus.

NATIONAL means main work was in a committee in the national

apparatus.

INFRA means infrastructure task (administrative. clerical or routine organizatical).

AGIT means agitation.

PROP means propaganda (theory).

ALL means person was cell secretary.

NON-L means person did not occupy a leadership post.

The group of respondents interviewed therefore contains 6 persons who voted for the programme at the 1982 spring Congress and 28 who voted against it (or would have done so if they had not resigned in the case of 4 of the 28). Twenty-four are women, 10 are men. Fourteen have English as their native language (although 7 of those are assimilated into francophone Quebec and use French more often than English) and 20 have French as their mother tongue. Twenty-seven spent most of their time in the organization in Quebec; 7 were active with IS mainly in English Canada. Ten were active mainly at the cell level, 7 were in the regional apparatus and 17 were in the national apparatus. Twenty-one were in infrastructure tasks, 10 in "political" tasks (i.e. either agitation-propaganda or research-analysis).

Table B.2: Portrait of group refusing to be interviewed

Respon.	Political stand	Class	Sex	Language	Region	Attach.	Tasks	Status
1.	Minor.	WC	F	English	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
2.	Minor.	WC	F	English	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
3.	MInor.	PB	F	English	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
4.	Minor.	PB	F	English	B.C.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
5.	Minor.	PB	F	English	B.C.	Region.	Infra	Non-L
6.	Minor.	WC	F	English	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
7.	Minor.	PB	F	English	B.C.	Cell	All	Leader
8.	Minor.	PB	F	English	B.C.	Region.	Agit	Leader
9.	Minor.	WC	M	English	B.C.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
10.	Minor.	PB	M	English	B.C.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
11.	Minor.	PB	M	French	B.C.	Region.	Prop	Leader
12.	Major.	PB	F	English	Ont.	Region.	Agit	Non-L
13.	Major.	PB	M	English	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Leader
14.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
15.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
16.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
17.	Major.	PB	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
18.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
19.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Infra	Non-L
20.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Agit	Non-L
21.	Major.	WC	F	French	Ont.	Cell	Agit	Non-L
22.	Major.	WC	F	French	Que.	Nation.	Agit	Leader
23.	Minor.	WC	M	English	Ont.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
24.	Minor.	PB	M	French	Ont.	Region.	Prop	Leader
25.	Minor.	PB	F	French	Que.	Cell	All	Leader
26.	Minor.	PB	F	French	Ont.	Cell	Infra	Non-L
27.	Minor.	PB	M	French	Que.	Region.	Agit	Non-L
28.	Minor.	WC	M	French	Que.	Cell	Infra	Non-L

MINORITY means person voted <u>for</u> programme at 1982 Congress,

MAJORITY means person voted against.

WC means working class,

PB means petty-bourgeois. Both refer to present status not class origin.

REGIONAL means any committee in the regional apparatus.

NATIONAL means main work was in a committee in the national apparatus.

INFRA means infrastructure task (administrative. clerical or routine organizational).

AGIT means agitation.

PROP means propaganda (theory).

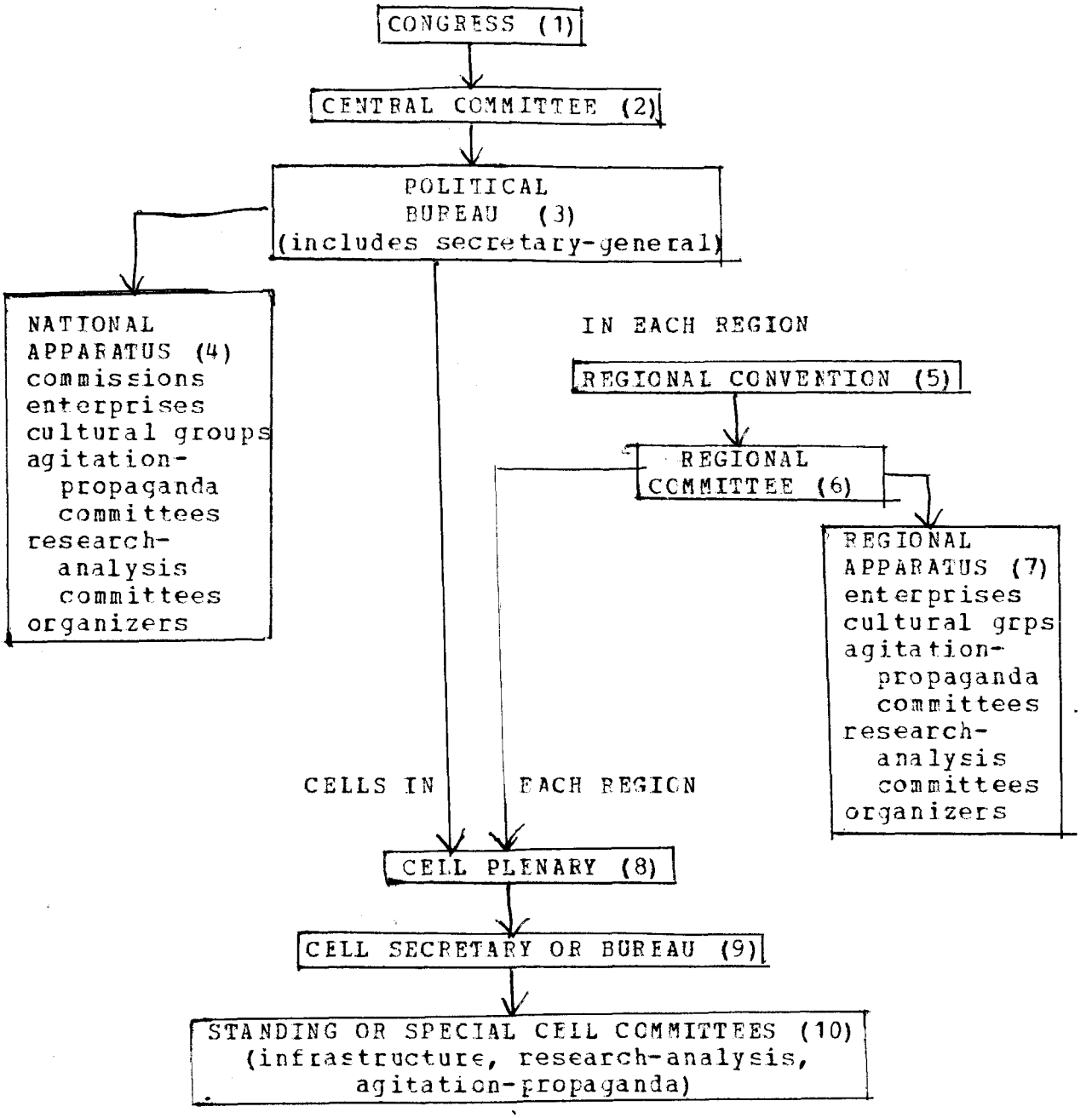
ALL means person was cell secretary.

NON-L means person did not occupy a leadership post.

The group of persons refusing to be interviewed includes 17 persons who voted for the programme at the 1982 spring Congress and 11 who voted to reject it (two of those for the programme actually resigned before the Congress as did 2 of those against the programme). Twenty are women, 8 are men. Fifteen have French as their mother tongue, 13 are English-speaking. Twelve spent most of their time in the organization in Quebec, 11 in B.C., and 5 in Ontario. Fourteen were active mainly at the cell level, 8 at the national level, and 6 at the regional level. Fourteen were in infrastructure tasks, 14 in political tasks (either research and analysis or agitation-propaganda).

APPENDIX C

Basic Organizational Structure of IN STRUGGLE



1. The national CONGRESS is the highest leading body. It is convened at least once every 3 years by the Central Committee and is presided over by a presidium elected by the

Congress (the CC is dissolved when the Congress begins). All delegates are elected from the cells. Only the Congress can modify the Programme and Constitution. It elects the new Central Committee.

2. The CENTRAL COMMITTEE is the highest leading body between congresses but it must act within the terms set by the Programme and Constitution as well as Congress decisions. It meets at least twice a year and can require all lower bodies, including the Secretary-General and Political Bureau which it elects from its ranks, to account to it for work done. Both the CC and PB will receive regular reports from the regions, cells, and apparatus committees as well as letters from individual members and are empowered to issue policy directives.

3. The POLITICAL BUREAU is the executive body of the Central Committee and directs the organization in between meetings in accordance with CC decisions. It convenes CC meetings and proposes the agenda. The PB oversees the work in the national apparatus and the heads of apparatus committees report to an individual PB member responsible for their area.

4. The NATIONAL APPARATUS includes commissions (e.g. the National Women's Committee, International Commission), legally separate enterprises (e.g. print shop, bookstores, film distribution company), cultural groups (e.g. rock band, theatre troupe). It also includes infrastructure, agitation-propaganda and research-analysis committees. All IS members in the apparatus belong to a committee or commission which meets every week or two under the leadership of the appointed (by the PB) head. Committees are instruments of the elected central leadership and do not vote policy although they will review the work, debate the application of policy and make criticisms.

5. The REGIONAL CONVENTION is the highest level of regional leadership in each region and meets at least once a year. All delegates are elected from the cells. It reviews the work of the cells and Regional Committee and elects a new Regional Committee. It determines the orientation of the work to be done in the region within the framework set by the Congress and Central Committee decisions and CC and PB directives.

6. The REGIONAL COMMITTEE oversees the work of the cells and organizers in its region as well as the committees of the regional apparatus.

7. The REGIONAL APPARATUS is like the national apparatus on a regional level.

8. All IS members are assigned to a cell which has CELL PLENARY meetings at least once every 2 months. The plenary decides on on how to apply the policies set by higher bodies creatively on a given territory or in a given sector of intervention (e.g. public sector unions, youth). It elects the cell secretary or bureau for a 1-year mandate and establishes special and standing cell committees to distribute the newspaper, organize agitation, etc.

9. The CELL SECRETARY or BUREAU directs the work of the cell between plenary meetings and regularly presents an activity report reviewing work done and proposes plans of work to plenary meetings for debate and adoption. The cell secretary or bureau will routinely "centralize" all information, criticisms and suggestions coming from cell members, plenary debate and decisions and cell committees to the central and regional leaderships.

10. The CELL COMMITTEES carry out the work of the cell on a day to day basis and will meet as work committees when necessary.

The attempt to maximize democracy

IN STRUGGLE tried with the structure described above to be as democratic as possible while still upholding the principle of "centralized leadership commands once policy is set."

-- At each level (national, regional, and cell levels) the plenary body (Congress, Regional Convention, Cell plenary) meets frequently and sets policy for the executive and bureaucratic bodies to implement.

-- There is a strong stress on leaders adhering to the basic ideological and political line set by the Congress in the form of the Programme and Constitution.

-- There is a regular system of leaders reporting back to the membership and accounting for what has been done to implement the policy set by the plenary bodies.

-- There is a system of quick "centralization" of information and reports from individual members and lower-level leaders so that the top leaders on a regional or national level can lead on the basis of data and suggestions coming from below.

-- There are various mechanisms for regularly "de-centralizing" information (apart from the activity reports already mentioned). The two main ones are the weekly IS newspaper and the bimonthly internal bulletin.

None of the above measures contradicts or challenges the three principles of Leninist organization described in Chapter 2, Section 3 -- or alters their practical consequences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources

Interviews were conducted in Montreal and Toronto between April 4 and May, 1983 and recorded on cassette tapes currently in the author's possession.

Internal IN STRUGGLE documents were borrowed from ex-IS members or xeroxed from originals kept in the archives of the Universite du Quebec a Montreal. No decision had been made at the time this thesis was written about which documents could be quoted publicly. For that reason the few documents which have been quoted are not referred to by title but only by date in the main body of the text.

Secondary sources

Books

Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, The Double Ghetto Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1978.

Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, A Working Majority (Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1983).

Michele Barrett Women's Oppression Today London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1980.

Michele Barrett and Mary McIntosh, The Anti-Social Family London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1982.

Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex. New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1952.

August Bebel, Women under socialism. New York: Schocken Books, 1971.

Violette Brodeur, et. al., Le Mouvement des Femmes au Quebec. Montreal: Centre de Formation Populaire, 1981.

Cambridge Women's Studies Group, The, Women in Society London: Virago Press, 1981.

Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1975).

Day Care Research Group, The Day Care Kit Toronto: no publisher, 1982.

Marlene Dixon, Women in Class Struggle. San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1978.

Micheline Dumont, et al., L'Histoire des Femmes au Quebec Depuis Quatres Siecles Montreal: Les Qunize, 1982.

Zillah R. Eisenstein, editor Capitalism, Patriarchy, and the Case for Socialist Feminism, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979.

Frederick Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State New York: International Publishers, 1975.

Feminist Anthology Collective, editors, No Turning Back, London: The Women's Press, 1981.

Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex. New York: William Morrow, 1970.

Elizabeth Fisher, Women's Creation: Sexual Evolution and the Shaping of Society. Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979.

Maureen Fitzgerald, Connie Guberman and Marjorie Wolfe, editors, , Still Ain't Satisfied, Toronto: The Women's Press, 1982.

Ann Foreman, Feminity as Alienation. London: Pluto Press, 1988.

Roberta Hamilton, The Liberation of Women. London: Allen and Unwin, 1978.

Alix Holt, editor, Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai. London: Alison and Busby, 1977.

Annette Kuhn and Ann Marie Wolpe, editors, Feminism and Materialism. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

Peter Laslett, The World We Have Lost. London, Methuen, 1965.

Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, editors, Household and Family in Past Time. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

Vladimir Lenin, On The Emancipation of Women. Moscow: Progressive Publishers, 1965.

Ellen Malos, editor, The Politics of Housework. London: Alison and Busby, 1980.

Kate Millett, Sexual Politics. New York: Doubleday, 1969.

Juliet Mitchell, Psychoanalysis and Feminism Harmondsworth: Penguin Publishers Ltd., 1975.

Anne Oakley, Sex, Gender and Society. London: Temple Smith, 1972.

Anne Oakley, Subject Women (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

Veronique O'Leary, and Louis Toupin, editors, Quebecoise Debouttes, 2 vols. Montreal: Less editions de remue-menage, 1982.

Rayna Reiter, editor Toward An Anthology of Women, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975.

M.Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, editors, Women, Culture and Society, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Sheila Rowbotham, Women, Resistance and Revolution. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972.

Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright, Beyond the Fragments London: Merlin, 1979.

Lillian Rubin, Worlds of Pain: Life in the Working-Class Family. New York: Basic Books, 1976.

Lydia Sargent, editor, Women and Revolution: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism. London: Pluto Press, 1981.

Janet Sayers, Biological Politics London: Tavistock Publications, 1982.

Natalie J. Sokoloff, Between Money and Love New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980.

Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977.

Barry Thorne and M. Yalom, editors, Rethinking the Family, New York: Longman, 1982.

Kate Younger, et. al., editors, Of Marriage and the Market, London: CSE Books, 1981.

Eli Zaretsky, Capitalism, The Family and Personal Life. Santa Cruz: Loaded Press, 1973.

Articles

Michele Barrett and Mary McIntosh, "'The Family Wage': Some Problems for Socialists and Feminists" in Capital and Class no. 11, 1980.

Veronica Beechey, "On Patriarchy", Feminist Review no. 3, 1979.
Margaret Benston, "The Political Economy of Women's

liberation", in Monthly Review, vol. 21, no. 4, September 1969.

Margaret Coulson, Branka Magas and Hilary Wainwright, "The Housewife and Her Labour Under Capitalism: Critique", in New Left Review no. 89, January-February 1975.

Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, "The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community", (Pamphlet), Bristol, Falling Wall Press, 1972, reprinted 1975.

Jean Gardiner, "Women's Domestic Labour", in New Left Review, no. 89, January-February 1975.

Maurice Godelier, "The Origins of Male Domination," New Left Review, no. 127 May-June 1981.

Chris Middleton, "Sexual Divisions in Feudalism," New Left Review no. 113-114, January-April 1979.

Resources for Feminist Research, vol. 10, no. 2, July 1981.

Wally Seccombe, "The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism", in New Left Review, no. 83, January-February 1974.

Leon Trotsky, "Women and the Family", (pamphlet), New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970.