
UNIT 7 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NGOs: ENVIRONMENT, ANTI GLOBALISATION AND GENDER

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

A social movement can be defined as a form of behaviour in which a large number of people **try** to bring about or resist social change. In most cases, the effort is quite conscious and deliberate, aimed either at producing new social arrangements or at restoring old ones. In order to understand when and why social movements emerge, it is necessary to investigate **the** social condition under which they usually appear. There are 3 basic elements necessary for the mobilisation of a social movement :

- 1) an ideology on which potential members can be united.
- 2) willing and able leadership
- 3) channels for communication and a network of cooperative relationships.

The principal building blocs for social movements in Canada are associational structures consisting of social groups organised for specifically stated purposes - occupational, religious, political, civic or economic groups. In social movements. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) play a very important role. They represent the interests of civil society and participate vitally in the political system. They contribute valuable information and ideas, advocate effectively for positive change, provide essential operational capacity

in emergencies and development efforts and generally increase the accountability and legitimacy of the governance process. NGOs are essential **partners** of government in the process of deliberation and policy formation as well as in the execution of policies. They do not claim to be perfect expression of the public interest. **Nevertheless**, NGOs can bring to the policy making process a vitally important voice that complements and widens the policy discourse, resulting in better and more legitimate decision.

7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Canada has a long term record of domestic and international action on environment and sustainable development issues, while recognising that many challenges still exist. Canada has worked to preserve a level of natural and social wealth that has earned it the number one ranking in the most recent Human Development Index of the United Nations Development Programme.

Canada acted quickly to sign and ratify the convention on biological diversity, climate change and desertification. It has been active in the development of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based activities. The Canadian Environment Assessment Act in 1995 was strengthened to integrate environmental consideration into all federal project planning.

Canadian governments consult widely with Canada's non-governmental and community based organisations. These groups play essential roles in informing the public and representing a range of perspectives on sustainable development issues. All these major groups and governments pursue consensus-based approaches in resolving the issues and in addressing specific sustainable development priorities. For example, in the Action Plans for the Great Lakes, Fraser River, St. Lawrence River and Atlantic Canada, Communities are partners with provincial and the federal government to address such issues as environmental protection and conservation. Quebec has regional environmental councils that bring different NGOs together. Another example is the Whitehorse Mining Initiative Leadership Council Accord of 1994 which was the result of consultations among governments, Aboriginal communities, industry, **labour** and environmental NGOs.

A number of NGOs are working for **environmental** protection and public awareness. **Green Peace** is building a broad based public support to demand that both government and corporate polluters begin shifting away from fossil fuels **as** a source of energy. **Earthroots** has used its grass roots expertise to organise, educate and mobilise public, conduct successful media events, **carryout** wildlife research projects and ensure proper forest management planning. It empowers thousands of Canadians each year to advocate for better environmental protection. Other major environmental NGOs include Earth Save Canada, Environmental **Defence** Canada, Festive Earth Society, Green Peace **Canada**, Go for Green and Sierra Club - Canada. **The** Canadian Environmental Network is a national network of almost 2,000 environmental NGOs. Its goal **is** to coordinate activities of the NGO networks across Canada and to facilitate discussion among the groups and government. The Canadian movement for environment protection and sustainable development can be discussed **sectorwise**.

7.2.1 Agriculture

Federal and Provincial agreements on environmentally sustainable agriculture are helping producers design and implement activities focussed on issues such as water quality, waste management and soil conservation. It is the farm sector that ultimately decides on how to protect the resources upon which it relies and in so doing, minimise environmental degradation. The Canadian vision of sustainable agriculture was expressed in *Growing-Together*, the discussion paper that initiated comprehensive Agri-food policy review in 1989. The 1990 agriculture committee report on environmental sustainability identified eight main environmental and natural resource issues facing the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector - conservation of soil resources, surface and groundwater quality, water quantity management, sustainable management of wild life habitat, air quality and climate change, energy efficiency, pollution and waste-management and conservation of genetic resources.

In support of sustainable agriculture, farmers are forming rural conservation clubs and developing environmental farm plans in Ontario, Atlantic Canada and Quebec. In the Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta) the farmer-owned Wheat Pools (Grain marketing cooperatives) have developed guides to environmental farm planning to be used in conjunction with other on-farm conservation planning processes. Alberta has launched a campaign "Growing - Alberta," to increase the awareness of the impact of agriculture on the environment and the economy. British Columbia and Alberta have established codes of practice for the management of animal waste. In Quebec, initiatives include a sustainable development policy for the agriculture sector and new regulations for the reduction of agricultural pollution. Many NGOs are working to accelerate development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices and to promote awareness of the need for an agriculture based on sustainable principle. Canada has also initiated a number of soil conservation and habitat conservation programmes over the years such as the Permanent Cover Programme in Western Canada.

Agriculture sector has made substantial progress in achieving the environmental objectives. Some 29 compounds affecting more than 2000 agricultural related products have been controlled or eliminated. This sector is working towards meeting the terms of Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete Ozone layer by reducing production and use of methyl bromide, a fumigant.

7.2.2 Atmosphere

Under Canada's constitution, the responsibility for clear air is shared among the federal and provincial governments. Environment Canada is the leader in safeguarding the Canadian environment, including the atmosphere by developing regulations on substances such as those that deplete the Ozone layer, informing Canadians and providing the science needed to understand and respond to atmospheric issues such as climate change. Natural Resource Canada, Environment Canada and Transport Canada are involved in varying degrees in the educating and spreading awareness aimed to reducing the vehicle fuel use and emissions. Environment Canada focusses on 3 broad categories of air pollutants:

- 1) Pollutants that alter the atmosphere itself, including the emission of green house gases that cause climate change, and emission of substances that deplete the stratospheric ozone layer.

- 2) Pollutants that use air as a pathway, such as acid rain precursors and persistent organic pollutants.
- 3) Pollutants that reduce air quality, such as ground level ozone and particulate matter.

Environment Canada seeks to take action with its partners and key stakeholders such as industrial, health and environmental associations to address several pollutants simultaneously.

7.2.3 Climate Change

Immediately after the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, Canada's First Ministers recognised the importance of climate change. The National Climate Change Process established 16 working Groups involving 450 experts from industry, academia, NGOs and government.

Canada continues to invest in research on climate change to better understand its scope and impact. Canadian scientists are making important contribution to scientific work on climate change, through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Under the Kyoto Protocol, Canada has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012. From 1997 to 1998, total greenhouse gas emission grew only by 1 percent. Efforts through NGOs are being made to help Canadians become more energy efficient in houses, transportation and workplace. Canada has developed -

- 1) World-leading expertise in energy-efficient residential and commercial buildings.
- 2) More efficient industrial processes and equipment
- 3) Technologies that allow the use of alternative fuels and renewable sources of energy.
- 4) Agricultural and forestry practices that store more atmospheric carbon in cropland and forest ecosystem instead of emitting it into the air.

Canada was among the first countries to ratify the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer. Canada has also banned the production and consumption of CFCs since 1996, Carbon tetrachloride since 1995, trichloroethane since 1996 and is phasing out other ozone depleting substances in accordance with the Montreal Protocol. Women, youth, indigenous people, NGOs, local authorities and business and industry, have all been represented on the Canadian delegation to the United Nations Framework on climate change.

7.2.4 Bio-Diversity

Federal and provincial governments, industries, aboriginal groups, scientific societies and NGOs - all play important roles in the decision-making process on the management of biological resources. In October 1996, the Endangered Species Protection Act was signed to prevent the extinction of wildlife species and secure their recovery. Other similar legislations include National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk & Oceans and Endangered species legislation. In 1995, Canadian Bio-diversity strategy has been signed based on extensive consultation with all the sectors of the Canadian society. NGOs participated in the strategy implementation. The forest and agricultural sectors have done much work to identify bio-diversity indicators. The Canadian Pulp and Paper Association have created a position and budget for the purpose of developing a biodiversity strategy for industry. In 1996, the federal government, in cooperation with the provinces, territories

and aboriginal communities created two new national parks. The National Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) is providing opportunity to develop inventories and engage in long term biodiversity monitoring at many locations across Canada.

Canada signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1992. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was ratified in 1995. In November 1995, Montreal was chosen as the site for the Permanent Secretariat of CBD which was **officially opened** in May 1996. Canada has been very active internationally in support of the Bio-diversity Convention. It has participated in and hosted meetings of the UNEP expert panels and co-hosted a Biodiversity Technical Fair. Through the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, Canada has **entered** into cooperative bio-diversity programmes with its North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) partners. The Canadian Museum of Nature is assisting other countries in the **production** of bio-diversity country studies. Finally, Canada is collaborating in an Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) project under its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to develop bio-diversity indicators; and with **Germany**, Australia and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, on the creation of an **international** clearing-house mechanism for scientific and technical information exchange.

7.2.5 Energy

In general, Canada's energy policy is developed and implemented in cooperation with the energy industry and other key parties at the federal, **provincial/territorial** and local government levels, with First Nations and with environmental ~~and~~ other non-governmental organisation. This approach ensures that energy initiatives are thoroughly reviewed and enables all parties to use their resources more efficiently.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act requires an **environmental** assessment of all federal projects. The Nuclear Safety and Control Act provides a modern framework for regulating the nuclear industry. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is the federal regulator that ensures health, safety, security and **environmental** protection. Sustainable Development of energy economy requires that Canada's present energy needs be satisfied without **compromising** the ability of the **future** generations to meet their needs.

7.2.6 Forest

Canadian governments have undertaken several initiatives to implement the principles of sustainable forest ecosystem management including the need for full participation of partners and interest groups in the design of strategies and integrated land use plans. The Canadian Forest service (CFS) of Natural Resources Canada manages a national forest research Programme encompassing ten strategic areas: forest health, climate change, forest diversity, forest ecosystem processes, effects of forest practices, landscape management, pest **management methods**, free biotechnology and advanced genetics and socio-economic research. There has been a shift to ecosystem-based forest management. i.e., integration of economic, environmental and social interests in the forest management. Public participation in the sustainable forest management is legislated in most of the provinces.

7.2.7 Freshwater

Governmental agencies and NGOs play an important role in the water management in Canada. The Canadian Water Resources Association is an association of water professionals that stimulates public understanding of water issues, including sustainable development through workshops, consultations and publications. 'Water Can' is a non-profit organisation that supports projects for clean water and sanitation in developing countries, has also provided leadership in educating the Canadians through its work with municipalities and World Water Day events. The Canadian Water and Waste Water Association brings together Canadian expertise in these areas, and has taken a leadership role in promoting water conservation by coordinating the implementation of the CCME National Action Plan to Encourage Municipal Water Use Efficiency. The Soil and Water Conservation Society Promotes the application of an integrated ecosystem approach to water issues. To aid conservation efforts the private sector, through Canadian Plumbing and Heating Association and other NGOs, is represented on the team implementing the Environmental National Action Plan. Canada has made significant progress in cleaning up and preventing pollution, and in moving towards integrated management and ecosystem approaches in protecting freshwater resources, but considerable work remains. Specific challenges include the reduction of water use which remain among the highest per capita in the world; reducing the amount of untreated industrial and municipal waste water entering the environment and continuing efforts to curb the release and deposition of contaminants in surface and groundwater.

7.2.8 Waste and Hazardous Materials

In 1990, CCME endorsed the National Packaging Protocol to reduce packaging waste by 50% by the year 2000 compared to 1988. Canadian governments have endorsed a national pollution prevention strategy and are pursuing numerous individual initiatives to meet waste reduction goals. Governments are committed to integrated waste management; strategies based on the 4Rs : reduction at source, reuse, recycling and energy recovery. In 1994, the federal government amended its Ocean Dumping Regulation to ban the disposal of radioactive waste and industrial waste into sea.

7.3 ANTI-GLOBALISATION MOVEMENT

Canada has been at the forefront of anti-globalisation movement. Anti-Globalisation is a political stance of opposition to the perceived negative aspects of capitalist globalisation. It is a largely grassroots effort with support from some intellectual elites. The movement could be seen as a critical response to the development of the global economy and capitalism that started with the neo-liberal policies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and continued with the change of policies of global institutions especially after the end of Cold War. The movement opposes the conviction that the increase of free trade and the reduction of the public sector would bring benefits to the poor countries and to the disadvantaged people of the rich countries. After September 11/2001 attacks, the movement has been very critical of American response to terrorism and war in Iraq. The movement also supports Palestinians in their struggle for self-determination.

7.3.1 Ideology and Issues

The anti-globalisation movement is a heterogeneous one and includes diverse and sometimes opposite understanding of the globalisation process, alternative visions, strategies and tactics. The groups and organisations associated with the movement have their roots in **different** social and political experiences.

Several intellectual works have inspired the anti-globalisation movement. They are:

- 1) Naomi Klein's No Logo which criticised the production practices of the MNCs and the omnipresence of brand-driven marketing in popular culture.
- 2) Vandana Shiva's Biopiracy, which documented the way the natural capital of indigenous people and eco-region is converted to a form of intellectual capital, recognised as commercial property.
- 3) Amartya Sen's "Development as Freedom" observes that the Third World development must be understood **as** the expansion of human capability and not simply as the increase in national income per capita and, thus, requires policies attuned to health and education.

There are many **issues/causes** championed by the members of the movement. Generally, they try to **promote** awareness for human rights. NGOs advocate socialist or social democracy as an alternative to capitalist economies and seek to protect the public interest and world's ecosystem from what they believe to be the damaging effects of globalisation. They struggle for labour rights, environmentalism, feminism, freedom of migration, preservation of the cultures of indigenous people, bio-diversity, cultural diversity, food safety, organic farming, opposition to green revolution and genetic engineering and ending or reforming capitalism. Many protests are single issue campaigns such as forest / anti-logging activism, homeless solidarity campaign **etc.**

Anti-globalisation movement believes that the global financial institutions and agreements undermine local decision-making methods. Many free trade institutions are perceived to cause damage to the natural capital and bio-diversity of a nation and impose a kind of "global monoculture". Therefore, a common goal of the movement is to dissolve or drastically **reform** World Bank, OECD, International Monetary Fund and WTO. Their popular slogans include "People and Planet before Profits", "The Earth is not for sale". The free trade treaties like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Free Trade Area of Americas (FTAA), the Multi-lateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATs) are also opposed as they are perceived to promote neo-liberalism without ethics. They claim that the "free trade" would not be free considering the economic gap between the rich and the poor countries.

Some aspects of the movement's agenda are shared even by some major pro-capitalist economic theorists who argue for much less **centralised** systems of money supply, debt control and trade law. They include George Soros, Joseph E. Stiglitz and David Korten. They have made strong arguments for improving transparency and accountability. In 2003, the movement showed wide and deep opposition to the war in Iraq.

7.3.2 Organisation

Although over the past few years, emphasis has been on the **construction of grass roots** alternatives to capitalist globalisation, **the** movement's largest and most visible mode of

organisation remains mass decentralised campaigns of direct action and civil disobedience. The mode of organisation, sometimes, under the banner of the People's global Action networks, tries to tie many disparate causes together into one global struggle. Despite the lack of formal coordinating bodies, the movements manage to successfully organise large protests on global basis using information technology. They organise in affinity groups, non-hierarchical groups of people who live close together and share common goals. These demonstrations come to resemble small societies in themselves. Many protestors take training in first aid and act as medicos to other injured protestors. Some organisations like National Lawyer's Guild provide legal witness in case of law enforcement confrontation. They also create Independent Media Centres.

7.3.3 Main Demonstrations in Canada

- 1) November 20, 2000 - Montreal, Quebec, G-20 Meeting.
- 2) April 20, 2001 - Quebec City, Canada, Summit of the Americas (FTAA).
- 3) June 26, 2002 - Calgary, Alberta and Ottawa, Ontario, G-8 Summit at Kananaskis.
- 4) July 28, 2003 - Montreal, Quebec - global protests against war on Iraq.

7.3.4 Criticism

The anti-globalisation movement has been heavily criticised on many fronts by the politicians, members of right wing think tanks, mainstream economists and other supporters of capitalist globalisation:

- 1) One of the most common criticism is that the movement lacks coherent goals and the views of different protestors are often in opposition to each other.
- 2) People who are genuinely concerned about the plight of the Third World should actually be encouraging free trade and WTO's effort to remove trade barriers.
- 3) Although the movement protests against the human rights violation, genocide and global warming, it rarely proposes detailed solutions.
- 4) Some also criticise the movement's claim to be non-violent and question the motives of the organisers.

Anti-globalisation activists counter these criticisms on the ground that the free trade policies create an environment for workers similar to prisoner's dilemma in which workers in different countries are tempted to 'defect' other workers by undercutting standards on wages and work conditions. Anti-globalisation movement supports a strategy of cooperation for mutual benefits and argues for free trade which is specifically aimed at providing Third World farmers with better terms of trade. They also point to the existence of web resources like the Philadelphia IMC alternative site and the annual World Social Eora where numerous solutions are proposed and debated and empirical data on the social experiments are exchanged.

7.4 GENDER (WOMEN'S MOVEMENT)

Historically, the British Conquest of Canada had threatened not only the progressive French society which was established in the 17th and 18th century, but also the unique place that women had enjoyed within it. The British settlers brought with them the "protestant -

Victorian' view that a woman's proper place was in the home and imposed restrictions and **limitations** on women's lives. In 1849, a law was also passed which excluded women from **franchise** in both upper and lower Canada. Gradually women lost all their freedom. By the terms of the confederation (1867) women were expected to remain "true women" by confining themselves strictly within the private sphere of home, pursuing women's work such as child bearing and housekeeping. Those who worked outside home, could take up only 'true womens' jobs - teaching, nursing and domestic service (Even the wife's property belonged to husband).

Towards the last quarter of the century, women in Canada raised their voice in assertion of their rights. In the **first** phase of the women's movement in Canada, there were three major turning points - industrialisation, World War I and World War II.

The First independent female association in Canada was formed by missionary societies. In Nova Scotia, the Baptist Women, inspired by Hannah Morris formed the first female missionary society in 1870. The objectives of the female Benevolent Society of Kingston, Upper Canada, the "Women's Baptists Missionary Union" or the "The Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada" were not feminist, but they gave women a chance to develop confidence in their own abilities and act independently of men. They raised their own **funds** which were exclusively controlled by women.

The success of the female missionary societies encouraged women to form secular organisation in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1870, the first Canadian branch of Y.M.C.A. was formed in St. John's. The Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) started in 1882 and in 1886 the American inspired Dominion Order of **Kings' Daughters** (DOKD) was **organised**. The largest and perhaps the most influential women's organisation was the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) established in Ontario in 1874. These organisations did **charitable and** philanthropic work in the cities protecting and supporting young immigrant girls and ran adult education classes for women, recreation centre, girls' club, creches for babies of working mothers etc. They did not advocate any revolutionary change in the **social** or economic order.

With the growth of communication links, national level associations started emerging. Women's organisations in Canada in the first phase of the movement, were concerned initially with the issues of male-intemperance, liquor trade, prostitution, gambling and **later** education and **suffrage**. The period from 1870 to 1920 witnessed progressive reforms in Canada. Letitia Youmans **pioneered** the "prohibition of liquor" campaign through her organisation 'Women's Christian Temperance Union' **Emuly Stowe**, who was refused admission in the medical course, became an activist and through her organisation 'Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association (DEWA)' Championed the cause of women's entry into the medical **course** and the medical profession.

A **large** number of laws protecting **women** was passed between 1870 and 1920. The Ontario Statute in 1872 gave women the right to own **property** and have control over their own earnings. The **Married** Women's Property Act, 1884, by which no husband could sell property without the consent of his wife, the Federal Divorce Law, 1925 allowing women to divorce on the same grounds as men, the Ontario statute of 1892, permitting women to study and practice **law**, the Factory Acts for improving the service conditions of working women and in 1929 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which **declared** women **legally** as 'persons', were some of the successors of the first wave of the women's movement in Canada.

In Canada, the movement for the vote began at the local and provincial levels. The Toronto Women's Literary Club, founded in 1876, was the first suffrage organisation. It lobbied not only for the right to vote but also for the opening of schools and universities for women. The Toronto Women's Literary Club achieved its first victory in 1882, as Ontario law gave the right to vote at the municipality level to unmarried women and widows with the requisite property and qualification. It was renamed Canadian Women Suffrage Association in 1883. In 1884, full franchise was extended to unmarried and married women with property and qualifications. The Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association (DWEA) was founded in 1889. This equal right group believed that only the right to vote could bring about social change. DWEA put pressure on the Ontario legislature to pass a law making it possible for women to study law. Women's Christian Temporary Union (WITCU) also endowed the suffrage campaign. Between 1895 and 1910, suffrage leagues were formed in all major urban areas. Women were given the right to vote first in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1916 in the provincial elections and within the next six years, all the provinces of Canada with the exception of Quebec, had granted women the right to vote. With the passage of the women's Franchise Act 1918, all women over the age of twenty one became eligible to vote in the Federal elections.

The Dominion Election Act, 1920 granted women the right to run for public office. The first woman MP was elected in 1921; fewer than a hundred followed her in the next seventy years.

One more battle was won in the 1920s, over the judicial interpretation of the word "Persons". Specifically, did the word "Persons" in law refer to women as well as to men! The first persons case in Canada was brought in 1905 in New Brunswick. Mabel Perry French had all the qualification necessary to practice law in that province, but she was barred from doing so because of her sex. The Supreme Court of New Brunswick ruled that women and men had separate spheres ordained by nature, and that the practice of law was clearly outside that sphere of activity for women. Fortunately for Mabel, the provincial legislature disagreed and passed a law in 1906 that Permitted the entry of women into the legal profession. The "mother of all persons cases" was launched in 1927, when 5 Alberta women asked the federal government to appoint women to the Senate. In October 1929 the Judicial Committee ruled that Canadian Women were indeed 'persons' under section 24 of the Constitution and for all other legal purposes. One year later, the federal government appointed the first female senator, liberal, Cairine Wilson.

The First and the Second World Wars were the major turning points in the Canadian Women's movement that brought profound changes in their lives. The World war I marked the beginning of a new era of 'working girls' who were bold, brave and confident. They came out to work in factories, offices and banks. The World War II brought changes in the lives of married women who came out to work in factories, while men were fighting on the front.

7.4.1 Second Wave

In the post-war Canada, women seemed to be doing well in both economic and political terms. Equal wages were guaranteed in 1956. Even in Quebec, women were enfranchised. Canadian women, now came forward with two major complaints. One pertaining to the private sphere, where they resented that they got no help from men and their valuable domestic unpaid work was not recognised. Also, they were not protected against domestic

violence. Another grievance relating to public sphere, was that women faced a "glass ceiling". They could become lawyers but few could become judges; they could vote but few could become legislators. These grievances led to the second wave of feminism in Canada. 'Voice of Women' was founded in 1960 which initially protested against nuclear weapon testing and over the years, became political and more feminist and took up environmental issues too.

In 1966, 32 women organisations in English Canada formed the Committee for the Equality of women (CEW), whose purpose was to lobby for the establishment of a Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Women in the French and English language media began to support the idea of a commission. Laura Sabia, the leader of the CEW, threatened Prime Minister Lester Pearson that one million women would march on the Parliament Hill if he did not accede to their demands. Pearson finally set up the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) in 1967. The RCSW was a gigantic national consciousness raising exercise. It helped to build a bridge between the older, more traditional feminists of YWCA and the younger, more radical feminists emerging from the campuses and the new social movements. The Commission's report became the blueprint for the new women's movement that emerged during its gestation. The very existence of the RCSW had legitimised the demands that women were beginning to place on the state. More than quarter of a century later, the RCSW report has not been fully implemented in Canada. The clearest example of failure is the recommendation for a national child care programme. But many of the less expensive and controversial measures recommended by the RCSW have been put into practice including the measures to redress the wage gap. Monitoring the government's action on the RCSW report was the principal motivation for the founding of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women in 1971, and the federal government itself established the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) as an internal watchdog. All in all, the appointment and the work of the RCSW were seminal events in the "second wave" of the Canadian Women's movement.

Since 1970, and particularly since 1980, the number of women in position of political, economic, cultural and legal influence have increased significantly. The first Female justice of Supreme Court (Bertha Wilson) was appointed in 1982; the first Female leader of a national political party (Audrey McLaughlin of the NDP) was elected in 1990; the first female leader of a governing provincial party (Rita Johnston, British Columbia) was elected in 1991; the first female premier elected by the people (Catherine Cellbeck PEI) took office in early 1993. Perhaps the most powerful symbol of change occurred in June 1993, when Kim Campbell took over as leader of the National Progressive Conservative Party and Prime Minister.

7.4.2 1990's : Backlash or Revisionism

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was much talk about a backlash against feminism. The second wave of the women's movement provoked a reaction from some groups and individuals who were not comfortable with the change in women's position. This reaction was most evident in the political arena, though not confined to politics. When a social movement seeks to change something as fundamental as gender roles, it is normal for it to encounter resistance. The revisionists argue that radical feminism, particularly the idea that men are naturally aggressive and violent and women are naturally passive and nurturing is not only mistaken but also harmful. According to Camille Paglia, feminism has taught

young women that they are not responsible for their own mistakes. It has blinded them to the truth about masculine sexuality; that young men cannot control themselves. She said that 'blaming the victim makes perfect sense if the victim has behaved stupidly.' Katie Roiphe argues that women should learn to live with male sexual aggression as an everyday occurrence, and handle it as best as they can: women are victimised not by men, but by feminists.

Christina Hoff takes a more academic approach. She argues that gender feminism has become dangerously influential in the academia. The influence of gender feminism is dangerous not because it transforms women into victims, but because it leads to shoddy research and misleading "facts" in the service of an ideology.

Every political movement has to reassess itself periodically, to make sure that its ideology is not overwhelming in its standards of truth and its grip on social reality. By the 1990s, mainstream feminism was ripe for such a reassessment. Women's movement inspired by feminist theories, has done a great deal to change the lives of the Canadian women in the past hundred and fifty years. Young women in 21st century Canada lead very different lives and face very different choices, from those of their mothers, grand mothers and especially great grandmothers.

7.5 SUMMARY

Canada has been playing an active role in addressing the issues related to environment and sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity protection of massive environment with co-operation from its NGOs and community based organisations. Canada has been able to mobilise the public and spread awareness, organise the expertise and ensure proper management of the issues concerned. Some of the notable areas in which Canada has been constantly working include agriculture, safeguarding of environment, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protection of endangered species, co-operative biodiversity programmes, tackling land degradations, conservation of fishery resources, control the use of toxic chemicals and tackle hazardous wastes etc. There have been active movements regarding anti-globalisation and improving the status of women and ensuring gender equality. The role of NGOs has been praiseworthy as they had complemented and widened the policy discourse, resulting in better and legitimate decisions for the welfare of all.

7.6 EXERCISES

- 1) Examine the efforts of the Canadian government towards environmental protection and conservation of biodiversity.
- 2) Discuss the factors that have inspired the anti globalisation movement in Canada. What are the issues involved?
- 3) Trace the evolution and nature of gender (women's) movement in Canada.
- 4) Discuss the role of NGOs in complementing the government policies towards the environmental protection in Canada.
- 5) Assess the nature and role of anti-globalisation movement in Canada.
- 6) Write an essay on the nature and role of NGOs in social movements in Canada.