

Prairie Manifesto Project

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Province: ☒ Alberta ☐ Saskatchewan ☐ Manitoba

Party: WCC Election Year: 1982

AA = Alberta Alliance
CON = Conservative Party
LP = Liberal-Progressive Party
PC = Progressive Conservative Party
SKP = Saskatchewan Party
UFM = United Farmers of Manitoba

CCF = Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
LIB = Liberal Party
NDP = New Democratic Party
SC = Social Credit
UFA = United Farmers of Alberta
WCC = Western Canadian Concept

Type of Document:

☒ Platform

☐ Constitution

☐ Speech

☐ Brochure / Leaflet

☐ Newspaper

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☐ Other: _____

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AB = Alberta
SK = Saskatchewan
MB = Manitoba

UofA = University of Alberta
UofC = University of Calgary
UofR = University of Regina
UofS = University of Saskatchewan
UofM = University of Manitoba
BU = Brandon University

PARC = Provincial Archives
LEG = Legislative Library
SPC = Special Collections
ULIB = University Library

***NEW CONCEPTS
FOR GOVERNMENT***



***RENEWED HOPE
FOR ALBERTANS***

DEDICATION

If you want the government to make all major decisions for you.....

If you think that government should control people instead of people
controlling government.....

If you are satisfied with Canada being a confederation of two central
provinces with eight colonial branch offices.....

If you want Western resources to be plundered for Eastern industrial benefit

If you want your legislature to function as an irrelevant and unresponsive
government institution without a balance between government and
opposition.....

If you think that political party allegiance is a hereditary trait.....

If you are a robot voter.....

If you participate in the political process for only patronage benefits.....

Then this booklet might upset you.

BUT

If you really believe that government should be the servant of the people..

If you would welcome innovative, bold, and constructive ideas and concepts
in politics as a breath of fresh air.....

If you are fed up with traditional political party rhetoric, evasion, and tactics

If you want your government to stress individual freedom, free enterprise,
economy in operation, and traditional moral values.....

Then this booklet is dedicated to you.

INTRODUCTION

It is essential for anyone who wants to understand the political philosophy of the Western Canada Concept Party to first fully understand the political and economic structure of Canada. Even the historical origins of Canada are important. The WCC Party is like no other political party this country has ever seen, because it is a party comprised of people who aspire to change some aspects of the basic political system, including some of the methods employed in government, while at the same time retaining all of the best features of our society. Above all, the WCC Party of Alberta advocates citizen participation in democratic processes.

Our forefathers came to this promised land of Western Canada, often from humble beginnings, to help build a nation and a new home for themselves. They brought with them some basic ideas concerning individual freedom, they brought their fundamental values of individual responsibility and self-reliance, and they brought their faith and hope in the future. Their only perceived need for government was to provide the essential services needed by all, and government was seen as the servant and not as master of the people. Over the years, the roles for government and citizen became confused, and changed considerably. The Western citizen found that the national government was elected not by him, but by the people of the central region, and government policies and programs were often devised not for his benefit, but primarily for theirs'. He saw his tax money, sent to the distant national government, used to finance programs he did not need or want, and to assist industrial development and employment in the central region. He saw his taxes increase constantly, and the purchasing power of his income decrease with time, due to government-induced inflation. He saw the national debt increase at an alarming rate during a time period when Western Canadians had virtually no representation in the national government. He listened to asinine government theories that unemployment was needed to battle inflation, but he remembered that in the early years, before government itself became such a sophisticated and bureaucratic monster, there was no inflation, and labour had to be imported. There were more jobs than people, now there are too many people and too few jobs. He became particularly disturbed that this should be the case, because he still saw the natural resource products of Western Canada transported from his region to provide industrial employment in Central Canada, and in other nations. He felt frustrated by the political mismanagement he witnessed, and by his impotence and inability to effect political and economic changes.

The Western Canadian eventually realized that he had little or no control over his own destiny. Instead of living in a new land of opportunity, he found himself living in a land slowly decaying from the affliction of creeping socialism. His pioneering and creative spirit turned to one of disappointment and dismay. His faith and hope for unlimited opportunities became a shattered dream.

In this booklet, arguments are presented as a brief analysis of the basic political and economic problems facing Alberta and Western Canada today. The need for change through the adoption of a new political philosophy is also presented, and that new political philosophy is outlined briefly. In many ways, the principles of the WCC Party resemble the values, the beliefs, and the convictions brought to this promised land by the first settlers. Our party philosophy is constructed on the four cornerstones of individual freedom, free enterprise, limited government, and traditional moral values. The WCC Party of Alberta is a reform political party movement that attempts to recapture the pioneering and enterprising spirit of our forefathers. We offer new concepts for government and renewed hope for Albertans.

THE ORIGINS OF WESTERN DISCONTENT

Canada is a nation developed from nineteenth century colonies. Both France and Britain left indelible colonial marks on our country, but it was the British influence in both politics and economics that had the greatest impact on Western Canada. In 1867 when the Fathers of Confederation formed a new nation by joining together the colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, colonial rule was an accepted practice throughout much of the world, and one of the greatest national institutions at that time was the British Empire. Their vision of Canada was not some enlightened concept of a new nation containing liberated people of many nationalities, with institutions of social justice as we now view them. They had no vision of a bilingual, bicultural nation extending from sea to sea. They were entrepreneurs, businessmen who recognized opportunities for making vast fortunes, by exploiting Canada's rich natural resources in much the same way that Britain exploited resources gained from colonies throughout the empire. Their pattern for government was the British Parliamentary system, with strong central control, used most successfully in the administration of the British Empire. The economic development of Canada was also patterned from British Empire experience and precedents.

It is not surprising that great concessions were made to the companies and entrepreneurs who opened up Western Canada with railroads, so that basic resource industry products could be transported to Central Canada for industrial processing. It is not surprising that the industrialists of Central Canada viewed the settlers of Western Canada as a captive market for their products. Indeed, throughout our entire history the people of Western Canada have desired free trade, but the people of Central Canada have always been successful in imposing trade restrictions and tariffs to protect their captive Western markets. It is not surprising that the institutions of government have changed little since Confederation. The economic and political "status quo" can easily be maintained when key appointments are made by political parties and ruling governments to continue existing systems that favour strong central control, and the continuation of the colonial nature of the Canadian federation. It is not surprising that the industrial heartland has been maintained in Central Canada, where the greatest density of population and political clout are located. If raw materials gravitate to the central industrial region, then it follows that many of the more

ambitious and skilled young people will also move to the central region in search of more rewarding careers. The end result is that Canada has changed little in basic structure since Confederation. We have a central industrialized region, located in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and the basic resource industry provinces beyond the central region have not progressed very far in developing diversified economies. Whether the economy is based upon furs flowing to Fort York, or Alberta's petroleum products flowing to Toronto for processing, it is a national economy based upon a colonial pattern. Canadian government institutions and structures, and political party systems have been retained to perpetuate this pattern.

Differences in the legal status of the four Western provinces before they entered Confederation should perhaps be clarified. They were all colonies, but they were not all responsible to the same authority. British Columbia was a British colony, as its name implies, and its people were in a position to negotiate their conditions of entrance into Confederation, and even to consider other options. On the other hand, the prairie provinces were actually colonial possessions of the Dominion government, as part of the Northwest Territories, and the residents were not given choices concerning their political futures. They eventually became provinces with political structures identical to those of the other provinces, but the "colonial possession" origin still seems to persist in the hearts and minds of some Canadians.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, when virtually all of the colonial empires in the world have failed and fallen, it is incredible that the internal colonial nature of the Canadian federation still survives. The WCC Party believes that the only way to change the centralized power and industrial structure of Canada is by changing the political party system, specifically by introducing a Western regional political party to champion Western interests. No political party, in existence prior to the establishment of the WCC Party, has ever advocated provincial or regional equality. The members of this party believe, with firm conviction, that the Canadian federation should be a partnership of provinces, with some measure of equal status accorded to each partner.

SOCIALISM AND ECONOMICS

In relatively recent years, there has been a trend in Canada towards policies and methods in government that is more socialistic than democratic in nature. We have seen government procedures withdrawn from parliament, where democratic checks and balances can be imposed. We have seen the concentration of power and control in government re-located to the prime minister's office and his staff. We have seen important and even controversial changes made, affecting all of us deeply, through orders-in-council without the benefit of public debate in parliament or a legislature. Dissenting views are often suppressed, and public outcry is often ignored. The traditional political parties all continue to operate under the delusion that they know what is best for the people, and by increasing government power and control, they all tend to tighten the

grip of socialism on our society and, ultimately on our economy. The WCC Party opposes strongly any and all trends in government towards socialism. We have a firm belief in less government involvement in people's lives, with less regulation and control, particularly in regard to the economy.

The redistribution of wealth, offered by socialists as seduction to win support for their cause, is really a cloak for the redistribution of power from the individual to the state. Although we have never had an avowed socialist government at the national level, we have observed former Prime Minister Trudeau implement many socialist policies, concealing his brand of socialism decently under a Liberal Party cloak. Under his administration, the national government changed considerably from a parliamentary system towards an authoritarian, bureaucratic state. Parliament becomes rather irrelevant to the process of government when major issues are decided without debate and orders-in-council are employed to implement the decisions taken. The style and form of government during the Trudeau years was particularly attractive to intellectuals, academics, and socialists who think in terms of increased government involvement in the economy, creating a need for increased staffs, like themselves, to control and regulate through government bureaucracies. Unfortunately, increased government controls detract from productivity, increase costs, and lead to greater taxation. These increases continue to escalate and spiral costs until government spending is beyond practical control.

The impact of socialism in Canada is most apparent in matters of the national economy and the mounting national debt. The basic socialist delusion is that someone else will pay the costs to support any program. Many years ago, the French economist Bastiat described state control of the economy as " the great fiction by which everybody tries to live at the expense of everybody else." There are two sharp edges to the socialist sword that dismembers any national economy. The first edge is taxation, because government cannot inject anything into an economy except that which it has first removed. We would be deluding ourselves completely by thinking that we can obtain any advantage from government without paying for it ourselves, or having someone else pay the costs for us. The second edge of the terrible socialist sword is more insidious than the first, for it takes from us what we already have. It makes a fraud of all social programs that yield monetary benefits, and it is the most prevalent form of indirect taxation. It is the phenomenon of inflation: the method by which governments finance programs through accelerating deficits by disproportionate expansion of the money supply. In other words, it is the technique of reducing the value of money, by increasing the quantity of money in circulation. Other factors enter into the process of inflation, such as inflated compensation in some professions and trades, brought about by organized labour pressure, but the primary cause of inflation and culpability rests with government. The cure for inflation also rests with government, and the people who elect government. The cure is something that seems to be within their reach, but beyond their grasp.

With respect to the Canadian national debt, it is emphasized that it has spiralled out of control during a time period when very few Western Canadians were part of the national government. The exorbitant national debt has been

accumulated only since 1963, by Central Canadians, not Western Canadians directing and controlling the central government. During the accumulation period, Western Canadians also contributed a disproportionate and excessive level of taxation to the federal government. In Canada today there is a redistribution of wealth taking place, with three provinces injecting into the national economy, and seven provinces taking wealth from it, in the form of federal transfer payments. Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario all produce more and contribute most to the federal family. By far the greatest financial contribution is made by Alberta, if measured on a per capita basis. The communization of a large part of the Canadian petroleum industry under the National Energy Program has made it so. Perhaps no better example could be given of the socialist con game of "robbing Peter to pay Paul."

We of the WCC Party consider the socialist phenomena of a sick economy and a spiralling national debt to be a real national crisis. We now have a situation in which one third of the national budget expenditures must be financed by borrowed money, and one third of all tax revenue must be used to pay national debt interest. Our federal government has been following the insane policy of borrowing to pay interest on money it has already borrowed. It does not require much intellect to realize that if this trend is continued into the future, government, and Canada, and the provincial component parts of Canada, will eventually become bankrupt. Canada has already drifted downstream towards the socialist sewer, even without ever having an avowed socialist party in power in Ottawa. What is now needed in Canadians is the strength and the will to swim upstream, against the current, and that will take determination and effort. The WCC Party is comprised of people who believe that nothing is free, the work ethic is a healthy human characteristic, and healthy economic activity stems from free enterprise and the creativity of the individual, and not from government control and regulation.

No examination of the current Canadian trend to socialism and its impact on our economy would be complete without quoting the words of Lenin:...." the way to crush the middle class is to crush them between the grindstones of taxation and inflation." No-one could have expressed our present dilemma better. It is a crisis derived from socialism already entrenched in Canada.

The WCC Party correlates the federal government's downstream drift to socialism, the potentially disastrous consequences of federal expenditures and the mounting national debt, and the colonial political-economic structure of Canada, and recognizes the need for a new political philosophy to bring about economic recovery and stability. The path chosen by this party is the free enterprise route. The WCC Party believes that genuine economic activity is generated only through free enterprise, and the entire WCC economic policy position is based upon the creativity of the individual as the driving force in a free economy. Government involvement in economic matters is viewed generally as unproductive interference. The role of government is primarily that of referee.

If the socialistic trend towards national bankruptcy continues, and the Canadian ship of state becomes in danger of floundering on the sea of socialism, the WCC Party offers the lifeboat of independence to the people of Alberta and Western Canada as an option they can request. It is most unlikely that any other political party will ever make such an offer.

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE

The federal government's aspiration of creating a bilingual and bicultural national identity is a special problem in Western Canada where the population has a more homogeneous character than in Central Canada. The original provisions of the BNA Act permitted citizens of French origin to retain their own language, culture, and identity. This consideration for a significant segment of the population was a sensible measure to take when Canada consisted of only the original colonies that were joined in Confederation, and the original citizens were primarily British and French. Even the Official Languages Act, giving equal status to both English and French might be justified from a viewpoint in Central Canada, where the French segment of the population is so prominent and obvious. But the same situation does not exist in Western Canada where the French-speaking segment of the population is very small, and the citizens of French descent are fewer in number than the immigrants who came from the United States, the Ukraine, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and in some places fewer than our own original citizens, the native people. All of the people in the four Western provinces, including those of French origin, have quite successfully lived in harmony and cooperation throughout most of our history with the English language serving as a universally accepted medium of exchange in government, business, and cultural matters. This common language has also served to unify the people of Western Canada. In recent years, following implementation of the Official Languages Act, we have seen attempts made to divide Canadians into camps of "Anglophones" and "Francophones", we have seen attempts made to duplicate institutional services in two languages, even where all citizens are quite capable of functioning in the single common language of English, and we have seen attempts made by small minority Francophone elements to generate language conflicts.

The WCC Party accepts the premise that the use of a single language is a national and cultural mechanism that promotes unity, and that the use of two opposing languages will only lead to conflict, chaos, and disunity. The English language is not chosen by the WCC Party for Western Canada to promote English or British culture ahead of French culture, but it is chosen because virtually every citizen of Western Canada speaks English, all institutions are already based upon the use of English, and the upheaval and economic consequences of changing to include a second language are considered to be enormous and prohibitive. Acceptance of the language already in use, the language also in use by the United States, whose cultural and economic impact on Western Canada is simply overwhelming, is the only practical solution for Western Canada. The WCC Party does not want the racial and language problems of Quebec and Central Canada exported to the four western provinces, nor do we want to see Western Canada become a battleground in any Anglophone-Francophone conflict.

The WCC Party of Alberta endorses the concept of national unity that requires citizens to accept a single identity, to belong to one unified national group. The national identity can be either "Canadian" or "Western Canadian", with a single language serving as a common bond. The party recognizes that important cultural enrichment contributions have been made to our society by citizens from many lands, and very different origins. In this relatively new land, however, the origins of our people should not divide us or lead to conflict for equal status or even supremacy. We believe that the majority of the people of Western Canada want a single national identity, and that they do not want to be divided into different factions based upon racial origin.

REGIONAL POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

For many years, some individual Western Canadians who have seriously studied the Canadian federation have advocated the formation of lobby groups and even political parties to protect and advance unified Western interests. It should be readily apparent that a national political party cannot defend adequately regional interests and at the same time attempt to gain control of the federal government, particularly a federal government structured on the centralization of political and economic power on a colonial pattern, as it exists in Canada. Any resolution of conflict between the central and outlying regional interests would have to favour the central region, as that is where both political and economic power are concentrated. For any event in Canadian history, in which a conflict has developed between Western and Central interests, the outcome has always been decided in favour of Central Canada. The ultimate argument has prevailed, that the "national interest" must be served. The national interest is always that of the majority, consequently always that of Central Canada, and always the position taken or eventually assumed by any national political party, regardless of ideology. The only way that this situation can possibly change is through the formation of a distinctive regional political party. Such a party will not experience any conflict of interest in any matter with the national government, regardless of what national party forms the government. The regional party would also have the advantage of being able to work in cooperation with any national ruling party, regardless of its ideological base.

WCC BIRTH AND GROWING PAINS

It took some very significant developments to provoke the people of Alberta and Western Canada into forming the Western Canada Concept Party. For many of the founders, the most significant turning point was the frustration and indignation felt in February 1980 when 75 of the four Western provinces' 77 members of parliament were elected to oppose the government of Mr. Trudeau. The people of Central Canada elected his government with the promise of cheap gasoline prices becoming a major election issue. The election issue was primarily an economic conflict between regions, with Western petroleum wealth serving as a patronage election prize. As usual, the Central Canadian voter won the election, and at least temporarily, the prizes made available through the National Energy Program, and the subsequent socialistic involvement of government in the petroleum sector of the economy.

Another aspect of the 1980 federal election that infuriated many Westerners was the helplessness they felt as the election outcome was decided on television before their ballots were even counted, and in some extreme cases, before they even voted.

Following the 1980 election, the Trudeau government concentrated its efforts on developing and repatriating a Constitution for Canada, and in April 1982, the government did eventually succeed in this endeavor. The most disturbing aspect of the Constitution debates was the strong movement within the federal government, which had virtually no representation from Western Canada, to elevate the provinces of Ontario and Quebec to a superior status over all others. It was even proposed that these two central provinces be given a veto in the Constitution amending formula. Western Canadians who viewed Confederation as a partnership of provinces, based upon equality and cooperation, were shocked and dismayed.

There were many other disturbing developments initiated by the Trudeau government, that made many Western Canadians ponder their political futures. The introduction of bilingualism to a region where virtually all citizens speak English, and very few speak French, appeared illogical and unnecessary. The transition to metric units of measure, when the nearest neighbor and greatest trading partner, the United States, remained with imperial units, appeared to be a senseless change. The removal of the Crowsnest Pass freight rate advantage for Western farmers was most unpopular. The sum total of these and many more changes and developments was that it became most apparent that the federal government, elected by Central Canada, was governing without much regard or consideration for the views and circumstances of the people in the other parts of Canada. The national interest was apparently determined by the rule of the majority, which was essentially the electorate of Ontario and Quebec. For many people of the Western provinces, political action offered an attractive opportunity to stop the changes they disliked so intensely in the federal government. For many, even independence appeared to be both practical and desirable.

The Western Canada Concept Party of Alberta stems from an amalgamation in December 1981 of the membership of two organizations: the Western Canada Federation (West-Fed) and the Western Canada Concept Party. West-Fed was not a political party, but a lobby type of organization, in which the members could retain separate political party allegiance, yet promote the interests of all Western Canadians by working in cooperation with any party. This lobby group was formed in Alberta by Elmer Knutson in 1980. The original Western Canada Concept Party was founded by Douglas Christie of British Columbia, also in 1980, with the actual origin extending back to 1975. Christie envisaged a new nation, comprised of the four Western provinces of Canada, joined together in a new Western unitary government structure. When it became evident that both groups had the same common interests and objectives, the Alberta membership of both organizations amalgamated to become the Western Canada Concept Party of Alberta. It is emphasized that this is a distinctive, Alberta political party that is not subsidiary to parties of the same name in any of the other three Western provinces. Much of the party philosophy, principles, and policies are common across the four Western provinces, but each

provincial WCC Party must retain its own independent status, as each must comply with its own provincial regulations and separate election acts.

The real test of any political party is its success at election time. The WCC Party of Alberta received significant voter support on the two occasions its popularity has been tested : the Olds-Didsbury by-election of 17 February 1982, and the Alberta general election of November, 1982. In the by-election, the WCC candidate, Gordon Kesler, won the election and became the first WCC member of any Western legislature. In the 1982 general election, the results did not include any victories, but they were most encouraging. The WCC Party received 111,131 votes, or 11.76 % of all votes cast, an unprecedented level of support for a new political party in recent times. In 27 constituencies WCC candidates placed second, and they placed third in another 44 constituencies. Ten WCC candidates received popular vote support extending from 20 % to over 36 %. One candidate received more votes than the votes that were required to elect each of three sitting members of the legislature.

ALBERTA WCC AND INDEPENDENCE

There is no doubt within the WCC Party of Alberta that the Olds-Didsbury by-election victory of 1982 was won because the party at that time advocated independence for Western Canada. The people of the Olds-Didsbury Constituency reacted to the unpopular policies and programs of the Ottawa government, and the apparent impotence and reluctance of the Edmonton government to intervene and protect Alberta's interests. The voters reacted with the only weapon that was available to them, the ballot, and gave a warning to both governments that they had had enough of socialist federal measures and measures that discriminated against Westerners. When the Alberta general election followed later in the year, and the WCC Party did not elect a single candidate, it became most apparent that the independence issue had a reverse effect on some of the electorate. It had been quite acceptable to elect a single, and perhaps even a few " separatist " members to the legislature, to give voice to popular Western viewpoints, but when there were 78 candidates with the potential of forming a government, some of the electorate shied away from the party, apprehensive about the consequences of having a separatist government in power. Indeed, the largest voter turnout ever achieved by Alberta occurred in 1982, and there is no doubt that many people voted primarily to prevent the election of a separatist government.

The WCC Party has from the beginning claimed itself to be a " grassroots " party, and to be receptive to popular opinions and demands. Public opinion on the independence issue may vary with time and circumstances. The majority of Albertans seem to prefer to remain within Confederation, and they do not want to become a separate nation of Western Canada, comprised of the four Western provinces, at this time. There is, however, a considerable number of Western Canadians who are firmly convinced that independence should be a political objective of the WCC Party. Many of these citizens are also party members. The independence issue can be both a divisive force within the party, and it can repel voters from the party during elections. However, the matter does have a real and practical solution, and that

is to recognize that independence is such an important issue, that it should not and cannot be a policy objective of a political party. It must be placed beyond the reach of party politics, and be a matter that only the people of Alberta can request and decide, if they ever have a mind to do so. The only reference to independence, and the stand now taken by the WCC Party of Alberta is contained in paragraph 2 (c) of the party constitution, reproduced in this booklet. It is emphasized that the WCC Party of Alberta does not advocate independence or separation, but it does make provision for the possibility of the people of Alberta to make such a request in the future. A WCC Party government would respond to such a request by conducting a referendum to determine if independence is truly the desire of the majority, and it would be compelled to follow the wishes of the majority.

GOVERNMENT OF, BY, AND FOR THE PEOPLE

Contained within the fundamental objectives of the Alberta WCC Party Constitution are the basic differences that distinguish our party from all others. The founders and members of our party are firm in the conviction that government exists solely as the servant of the people, to be responsive to the wishes and desires of the majority. Other political parties may speak in terms of majority rule, assuming that election to government represents a mandate to govern and implement party policies in all matters of public interest. We of the WCC Party see little correlation between election mandates and many of the policy implementations of governments. In fact, we feel very strongly that governing political parties implement their own party policies often knowing full well that those policies are opposed by the majority of the people. Government itself can be a minority of elected members, individual members of a legislature are often elected with a minority of votes cast, and most government policies are never even presented as election issues. The WCC Party believes that changes are needed in the basic system of government, to give citizens access to the system, and to ensure that government policy on major issues is a true reflection of majority opinion. Our party policy provides for making government instruments available to the public, to achieve true democratic majority rule, and this is one of the most important concepts we have to offer.

" Initiative ", the mechanism whereby private citizens can petition for legislation, and " referendum ", the mechanism whereby citizens can vote to force government action and legislation in a particular matter are the main instruments we offer to return political power to people. " Recall " is the instrument that will permit citizens of any constituency to vote their elected representative out of office, using a reverse election procedure. Under existing laws, these instruments are not available to Albertans, and it is most unlikely that any of the old-line political parties will make them available. The traditional pattern in Canadian politics is for the ruling party to make all decisions and laws affecting people without referring any matter, even the most controversial social issues, to the people for a majority vote. The existing government process can best be described as . . . " government of, by, and for the party." We of the WCC Party aspire to change the process to . . . " government of, by, and for the people." A WCC government would function normally, and for routine matters, in much the same way that any provincial

government currently functions, by implementing party conceived policies and programs. However, a WCC government would be responsive to any initiative or petition by the citizens, and if sufficient support is obtained for the initiative, the matter would be placed before the citizens and be decided by referendum. No other political party in Canada has made such an offer, yet these procedures are common and used quite successfully by other more democratic nations and states of the world.

By offering to the public the instruments of initiative and referendum, a WCC government would be making available solutions to complex, difficult, and currently, even some unresolvable problems. Problems such as the legality of abortion, paying the costs of abortion, advisability of the death penalty for convicted murderers, taxation levels, government expenditure levels and deficit financing, major government capital investment programs, and the implementation of bilingualism and metric conversion programs are all matters that could be settled by referendum. The settlement would certainly not be to the satisfaction of all citizens, but at least they would be comforted by knowing that the final decision was made by true majority vote. In some matters, it would probably be best to repeat the referendum as a part of subsequent general elections, in case public opinion changes, and laws need to be adjusted accordingly.

A PARTY OF PRINCIPLE

The WCC Party of Alberta believes that the electorate should be given some assurance and guarantee by any political party, concerning the positions it will take on issues after election to office. This party offers a Statement of Principles, outlined in the following pages of this booklet, to serve as a basis for both the pattern and style to be followed by a WCC government. Each of the 24 principles adopted by the party received very close study and scrutiny before final adoption. We feel that they represent the values Albertans want to see in a political party and government. In order to govern effectively, we believe that a political party itself should be governed by principles. The reader will easily be able to identify each of the principles, and ~~be able~~ to categorize them according to the four cornerstones of this party, which are: individual freedom, free enterprise, limited government, and traditional moral values.

No attempt has been made in this booklet to make any distinction between provincial and federal jurisdictions. Mention has been made of critical issues that are quite clearly federal matters, and on first inspection, the reader may think that the WCC Party has confused the two levels of government. This is not the case, because although the WCC Party has confined its main activities to the provincial level of politics, the new concepts for government outlined by the party in this booklet can be applied at all levels of government. Furthermore, if the people of Western Canada ever decide that they should become independent and separate from the rest of Canada, the WCC Party does offer the mechanisms to achieve independence, and the methods and issues that need to be addressed by the new federation beforehand. It would be most important for the governments of each of the four Western provinces to be prepared and have

a clear plan on how to function in federal matters before becoming independent.

Another aspect of the WCC Party that may require special clarification is its apparent tendency to eliminate any requirement for its own continued existence. Like the dentist who advocates dental hygiene procedures that will ultimately reduce the need for his own future business, the WCC Party advocates many policies that could make the future existence of the party unnecessary. For example, one basic aim of the party is to achieve some measure of equality between each of the provincial partners in Confederation. This objective could be achieved by having a Senate that has a clearly defined role as provincial and regional protector, that is democratically elected, and that gives equal representation to each province. Any political party could advocate this type of change, but all of the old-line parties are reluctant to do so in case the colonial supremacy of Ontario and Quebec is disturbed, and their own party's influence is diminished. Another example is that any party could adopt the instruments of initiative and referendum as policies they will adopt to return political power to people, but the old-line parties are unwilling to do so because there are tremendous economic and influence advantages to retaining power within a political party and to keep it in very few hands. Traditional political parties are certainly not democratic institutions. They have the one aim of achieving power and control, and the concept of majority rule government is completely irrelevant and foreign to them. The only concept of majority rule that they understand is that of obtaining the majority of votes needed to win an election, and they spare no effort or expense to obtain those votes. In all of the principles and policies outlined in this booklet there is the seed of self-destruction for the WCC Party. If other parties would adopt the same principles, the WCC Party would become redundant. However, the members of this party believe that the traditional parties are unlikely to support or advocate any significant reforms that will reduce their own grip on government and society, in much the same way as the leopard will not change his spots. We are confident that the need for the WCC Party will continue for a long time into the future.

CONCLUSION

Although the WCC Party of Alberta was formed by Albertans who were motivated by feelings of alienation, frustration, and indignation, these characteristics served primarily to harness energy and bring about action of a constructive nature. Today, the party is comprised of people from all walks of life, who have a very noble and healthy desire to make Alberta a better place for the following generations. Throughout the world today, there is a strong trend towards centralized control in government, in the pattern and often the name of socialism. This trend has even become apparent in Canada. For Alberta and the other provinces of Western Canada, the colonial pattern of government and national economic structure remain as unresolved problems, and they are the root cause of many Western grievances. The place to start in reversing the drift to socialism and correcting long-standing inequities in Confederation, is with a new political philosophy. The WCC Party of Alberta has such a new philosophy, and it is not

too surprising that it involves many of the qualities and characteristics our forefathers possessed, and which were vital to the initial development of this promised land. The concepts for government presented in these pages are the essence of the WCC political philosophy, and they can represent a renewal of hope for Albertans, in a troubled land, during troubled times.

CONSTITUTION
of the
Western Canada Concept Party of Alberta

1. a. The name of the Party, as registered under The Election Act of the Province of Alberta, is the "Western Canada Concept Party of Alberta", otherwise known as WCC.
- b. The operations of the Party are to be centralized in the Province of Alberta within the stipulations of The Election Act.
2. THE FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTY ARE:
 - a. To ensure Albertans have the right to prosperity, justice, and participation in government through democratic means.
 - b. To ensure to all Albertans the inalienable right to life, liberty, security of the person; and the right to ownership and enjoyment of property; and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law.
 - c. To ensure that major issues affecting society as a whole, such as political or economic independence, will be decided by the electorate through referendum.
 - d. To ensure that every elector has the right to initiate legislation and take it to referendum.
 - e. To ensure that the electorate has the right of recall of elected officials.

Our Statement of Principles

WE BELIEVE IN: Responsibility and Self-Reliance
Private Enterprise
Smaller Government
Simplified Laws
The Right to Own Property
Freedom of Speech
Freedom of Religion

WE BELIEVE THAT: Albertans know what is best for Alberta
The creativity of the individual is the driving force in a free economy
Private initiative is best
Jobs and wealth are the product of **private** enterprise
The strength of the family is the strength of the nation
The family farm is essential to a healthy agricultural economy
Bilingualism and metrication should be voluntary
The community should support the deserving needy

CITIZENS MUST: Have the right to initiate legislation
Have the right of referendum on critical issues
Have the right to recall elected officials

GOVERNMENT SHOULD: Be simple in structure and function;
Be a referee in a free economy;
Be accountable to the citizens;
Stop competing in the private sector;
Be committed to a fixed term of office;
Practice fair and simple taxation.

Many people throughout Alberta have shared in the development of these principles. Albertans from all walks of life have found that there is general agreement on what is needed for a healthy economy and a more democratic society. A full re-

view of these discussions was begun in November, 1983, resulting in these 24 principles which were officially adopted by Alberta WCC on April 28, 1984.

Albertans want a government

based on firm principle, rather than short-term partisan advantage. The Alberta WCC therefore invites all political parties to join us in pledging to abide by these principles, in letter and in spirit, for the present and future benefit of our Province.

The Thought Behind The Words

1 We believe in responsibility and self-reliance.

We believe that responsibility and self-reliance is the first requirement for a healthy society. Personal and public honour are needed as a basis for trust, and freedom must prevail so that everyone may exercise initiative, and be responsible for the results.

2 We believe in private enterprise.

Private enterprise is the best basis for organizing the efforts of individuals because the rewards are directly controlled by the purchaser of the goods or services produced. The buyer-seller relationship is the key to the higher productivity of private enterprise.

3 We believe in smaller government.

A smaller government is obliged to concentrate its efforts on essentials, because it has fewer people and a smaller budget. Such a government intrudes less into the business of the people, and allows greater political and economic freedom. Every person unnecessarily employed in government is one person lost from the wealth-producing private sector.

4 We believe in simplified laws.

No law should be written unless it is needed to deal with a problem which cannot be solved locally by well-informed citizens. Every law should be written in clear and simple language. Every law should be reviewed at regular intervals, so that it can be done away with when it has outlived its purpose.

5 We believe in the right to own property.

The power of the state to occupy, seize or expropriate private property is a violation of personal freedom. Any limi-

tation of the freedom of the individual to own what he or she acquires, reduces the freedom and prosperity of the whole society.

6 We believe in freedom of speech.

Freedom of speech is a necessary guarantee of the freedom of the individual. It is also a deterrent to rash and inconsidered action. The suppression of free speech is tyranny, regardless of the reason for its suppression, and will lead to errors which freedom of speech would have prevented.

7 We believe in freedom of religion.

Everyone must be completely free to decide what they believe, and what religious group to support. Freedom of religion must apply equally to all religious and non-religious viewpoints - otherwise it is not true freedom.

8 We believe Albertans know what is best for Alberta.

Decisions should be made by the people most affected, because only they have the first-hand knowledge and motivation to think the decisions through. If Albertans do not decide Alberta's future, others will, and their decisions may have little to do with what is best for Alberta.

9 We believe that the creativity of the individual is the driving force in a free society.

A climate of freedom liberates all individuals for creative activity which benefits the whole society. By allowing everyone to keep the reasonable rewards of their creativity, the maximum incentive is provided to increase productivity. This releases creative energy which starts new businesses and makes existing businesses more competitive.

10 Private initiative is more effective than government initiative.

The performance of private enterprise is supervised by the customer who pays the bill - but government work rewards those who increase expenditure. Decisions made by businessmen result in profits and losses - but these incentives are missing in government work. Incompetent government managers are often promoted, whereas in business they fail. Competition is steadily becoming more intense in the world economy. Alberta should make maximum use of the superior performance provided by private enterprise.

11 Jobs and wealth are the product of private enterprise.

Entrepreneurs look at economic shortages as business opportunities. Their vision sets the pattern of socially necessary jobs which are rewarded fairly out of the proceeds of production. Raw materials of relatively low value are converted into goods and services of higher value, thus increasing the total wealth of society.

12 The strength of the family is the strength of the nation.

Healthy, close-knit, nurturing families assure the future of a society by molding responsible, self-reliant, hardworking citizens. Healthy families transmit healthy values - which strengthen the community and the nation.

13 The family farm is essential to a healthy agricultural economy.

The family farm is more than a source of income. It is the main asset which a farmer and his wife pass along to the next generation. For this reason, it is operated with a long-range view to improving the soil, livestock and equipment. Methods of conservation are taught to the younger generation. Such farms promote a healthy agricultural economy.

14 Bilingualism and metrication should be voluntary.

Alberta has a distinctive culture, and its official language is English. Those who voluntarily choose to become bilingual should be free to do so, at their own expense, but those who choose to remain unilingual should not be subject to discrimination.

Those who prefer to follow North American practice for weights and measures are taking a reasonable course of action. Precedent and custom have established the right of businessmen to use the language and measuring units of their customers.

15 We believe in community support for the deserving needy.

Restoring the dignity, independence and productivity of needy individuals is part of the task of restoring the whole economy. The situation of the needy person is best understood at the community level. The members of the community can be more effective, and more compassionate, at a fraction of the cost of present government services.

16 Citizens must have the right to initiate legislation.

Democracy does not work when people are apathetic. The means must be found to keep the citizens involved in the political well-being of society. Allowing concerned citizens to initiate legislation and referenda will draw them into an active and responsible role in the political process.

17 Citizens must have the right of referendum on critical issues.

From time to time it will be necessary for society to consider a new direction. Decisions of this kind must not be imposed on the citizens. Governments which are out of touch with the people, or callous to the wishes of the majority, will not cope successfully with the need for change. The citizens' right of referendum is the best remedy for this shortcoming.

18 Citizens must have the right to recall elected officials.

Full accountability in government and public bodies can only be assured when public officials who ignore or oppose the wishes of the voters are subject to recall. This procedure, even if it is not often used, will ensure that elected officials represent the voters who elected them, and will put the voters' intentions ahead of partisan interests.

19 Government should be simple in structure and function.

Government should concentrate all of its efforts on the tasks which it alone can perform, and extricate itself wherever it is not strictly needed. It should constantly seek to provide maximum scope for individual citizens, while minimizing its own expenditures. Where it does become involved, it should look for the simplest and fairest means to put the citizens' wishes into effect. A simple, streamlined government is the most efficient for this purpose.

20 Government should be a referee in a free economy.

In any economy, there must be somebody to resolve disagreements and settle disputes in important areas of policy and practice. This role of referee is logically filled by government as part of its mandate from the voters. Any referee must be scrupulously impartial, in order to be effective. This is possible only if government can remain "at arm's length" from all parties involved.

21 Government should be accountable to the citizens.

The citizens lend authority to their government, but that authority belongs to the citizens. The citizens are entitled to know what the government is doing on their behalf. Public scrutiny is the best insurance against government scandal. Any government which is truly interested in getting the best

value for the taxpayers' money will be truly interested in providing continuous, comprehensive public accountability.

22 Government should not compete in the private sector.

When governments set up their own corporations, they harm private businesses and they weaken the economy's self-correcting forces. Government corporations are not competent to play by the rules of private industry, and governments do not hesitate to enact legislation which gives unfair advantages to their own corporations.

The presence of the government corporations creates a "mixed economy" which underperforms in comparison with free economies. The mixed economy has only weak corrective forces, because the government corporations are not controlled by profit and loss. The mixed economy suffers from confusion in direction, due to misleading economic signals generated by government corporations which are controlled by unbusiness-like objectives.

23 Government should be committed to a fixed term of office.

The attempts of parties in power to shift election dates for purely partisan reasons are unbecoming to the role of government, and are a source of costly confusion. Governments should be elected for regular, fixed terms of office.

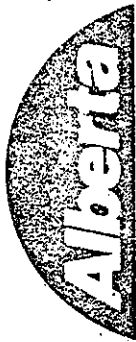
24 Government should practice fair and simple taxation.

Complicated and discriminatory taxation is a highly inefficient means of collecting government revenues, as it requires an army of clerks, accountants and tax specialists to administer. Beyond the basic exemption, all citizens should pay the same rate of income tax. All taxes which are invisible to the consumer should be eliminated.

Your voice counts in Alberta WCC !



The Western Canada Concept



"...dedicated to obtaining a fair deal
for Alberta and Western Canada
within confederation."



A History

