

# BABY STUMPY AND THE WAR IN THE WOODS:

## *Competing Frames of British Columbia Forests*

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**I**N THE SUMMER OF 1993, the West Coast of Vancouver Island was the site of the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history; more than 800 protesters were arrested for blockading a road used by MacMillan Bloedel (MB) in its logging operations in Clayoquot Sound. Shortly thereafter, environmentalists toured a massive 390-year-old red cedar tree stump from British Columbia's temperate rain forest around Canada and Europe in order to publicize their campaign to preserve the province's forests. These and other events drew international attention to the dispute over the logging of British Columbia's forest and resulted in numerous boycotts of provincial forest products. By the summer of 1997, however, forest harvest interests had dropped their defensive posture and, using many of the environmentalists' own tactics, had systematically begun to undermine the forestry conservation campaign. In June, foresters prevented two Greenpeace ships from leaving Vancouver harbour for a week. In July, loggers and their families erected a 200-person-strong blockade on an old logging road forty-five kilometres north of Vancouver to prevent an environmental group from using the forest for civil disobedience and blockade training. While an agreement over logging in Clayoquot Sound was eventually reached in 1999, the so-called "War in the Woods" continues to be waged in other parts of the province.

This article seeks to explain why British Columbia's most important environmental dispute erupted into such high profile confrontation in the 1990s. Specifically, it asks why the opposing sides of the forestry debate are so polarized, why they use the tactics they do, and why the management of British Columbia's forests receives so much national and international attention. I argue that the War in the Woods was, and in large part still is, a reflection of how forestry

issues in British Columbia reflect two broad and divergent world views associated, on one side, with forest harvest and, on the other side, with forest conservation. These opposing frames emanate in part from the economic, cultural, and socio-political context of British Columbia. The province is unique within Canada with respect to (1) the importance of the forestry sector to the economy and the historic exclusion of environmental groups from decision making, (2) the influx of immigrants and tourists who value the forest for non-economic reasons, (3) the “exportability” of forestry issues in the marketplace of international public opinion, and (4) the strength of a provincial environmental counter-movement mobilized to preserve the status quo. Of equal importance, however, is that the framing of forestry issues is shaped by very different understandings of the relationship between people and the ecosystems of which they are a part. While these frames are derived in part from socio-political and economic factors specific to British Columbia, they are also the legacy of a broader set of ideas embedded in Western culture. As old growth forests diminish in size, the clash of these two frames becomes more intense, and mutual intolerance grows. This is not to say, however, that the War in the Woods must continue indefinitely, for a close examination of the two frames reveals some commonalities. But a solution to British Columbia’s forestry problems must begin with an analysis of the perspectives that both sides bring to the debate, with the end goal being to identify and to build upon shared values.

I begin by explaining the concept of framing and discussing two competing methods of conceptualizing forests. I then analyze the relationship between the frames and their adherents’ organizational structure and strategies. The forest industry (in particular MB, the undisputed king of British Columbia’s forestry industry in the 1990s) and British Columbia’s largest indigenous conservation organization (the Wilderness Committee, or, as it was more commonly known in the 1990s, the Western Canadian Wilderness Committee) serve as examples of adherents of competing understandings of the forest.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, these two actors have a long and bitter history of conflict and confrontation.

<sup>1</sup> By the close of the 1990s, both MB and the Western Canadian Wilderness Committee (WCWC) provide illustrative examples of how the BC forest industry has become increasingly less provincial. WCWC began calling itself the Wilderness Committee in a bid to shed its image of being a regionally based organization. In particular, it began to focus on the Province of Ontario in its efforts to expand its fundraising activities. A few years later, the American forestry giant Weyerhaeuser took over its Canadian equivalent, MB.

## UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISSUE FRAMES

Framing is a concept that is used in studies of new social movements (NSM) to explain how actors interpret or assign meaning to particular events or circumstances. For a NSM scholar, a common grievance is not sufficient to cause individuals to come together and articulate their interest; they must also “see” themselves as a group. In other words, individuals that make up a social movement need to have a shared understanding of the world around them; it is through conversations with one another that they create this understanding. Framing refers to “the collective process of interpretation, attribution and social construction that mediates between opportunity and action.”<sup>2</sup> Framing links opportunity with agency, identifying how ideas and cultural elements affect the manner in which an issue is conceptualized and articulated by individuals or groups. Frames can be thought of as views of the world, or perspectives of a situation that become “reality” for the viewer; these frames are socially constructed through discussion and argument. Within the context of a NSM, frames are contested not only by leaders and cadre who debate alternative visions for the movement, but also by counter-movement actors, bystanders, and state officials. Needless to say, the media play a critical role in promulgating the various frames of issues and of the actors that promote them.<sup>3</sup>

The preceding discussion should not be taken to mean that framing of issues operates exclusively at the conscious level; that is, that individuals “choose” how they will collectively “view” the forest. This discourse happens within the context of deeply entrenched cultural values. As Doug McAdam summarizes, the five components of the framing process are:

1. the cultural tool kits available to activists for framing purposes,
2. the strategic framing efforts of movement groups,
3. the frame contests that arise between the movement and other collective actors,
4. the role of the media in shaping these frame contests, and
5. the cultural impact of the movement in modifying the available “tool kit.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 2.

<sup>3</sup> William A. Gamson and Gadi Wolfsfeld, “Movements and Media as Interacting Systems,” in AAPSS, *Annals*, 528 (July 1993):114-25.

<sup>4</sup> Doug McAdam, “The Framing Function of Movement Tactics: Strategic Dramaturgy in the American Civil Rights Movement,” in Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on*

To explain the two competing forestry frames, I explore the first point – the “cultural tool kits” available to activists. However, I also examine the second and third points: the strategies used to promote a particular understanding of the forest. While the term “strategy” implies intentionality regarding the construction of the frame, it does not discount the importance of the historical legacy of socio-cultural constructions of nature that are buried within the actor’s subconscious. Indeed, these socio-cultural constructions are the foundations upon which a successful strategy rests. Nonetheless, I follow the lead of Snow and Benford,<sup>5</sup> who use the term “framing” to describe the conscious, strategic efforts of actors to assign meaning to events and conditions in order to legitimate their actions and to motivate others to support their position.

It should also be noted at this juncture that the strategic framing of issues is a dialectic process affected by the cultural context from which frames arise; that is, one cannot comprehend the issue frames of a social movement without understanding the relationship between the change-oriented social movement and its antithesis, the counter-movement that mobilizes in order to maintain the status quo and to resist (or reverse) social change.<sup>6</sup> Of even more importance is the original frame that the social movement rose up against. While movement activists promulgate particular frames, whether or not a frame is considered “radical” hinges on how well it resonates with the dominant culture. In the case of British Columbia forestry politics, the frame articulated by the Wilderness Committee is strongly dissonant with an important cross-section of the population, limiting the range of tactics available to it.<sup>7</sup>

The dissonant frame articulated by the Wilderness Committee might explain why it is not evolving in the manner of other interest groups. Research demonstrates that advocacy groups typically follow a particular lifecycle. They begin as ad hoc, single-issue, resource-poor protest groups that exist on the fringes of the policy process. As they mature, they assume a more formalized, bureaucratic structure and progressively

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*Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 339. McAdam summarizes the more expansive description of Mayer Zald in the same volume.

<sup>5</sup> David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” in Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney Tarrow, *International Social Movement Research 1* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988), 197–217.

<sup>6</sup> Tahī L. Mottl, “The Analysis of Countermovements,” *Social Problems* 27 (1980): 620–35.

<sup>7</sup> Erin Steuter, “Women Against Feminism: An Examination of Feminist Social Movements and Anti-feminist Countermovements,” *Canadian Review of Anthropology and Sociology* 29, 3 (1992): 289–90.

integrate into the policy process. Integration leads to moderation; protest activities are dropped in favour of discrete lobbying tactics.<sup>8</sup> From this perspective, the Wilderness Committee is an anomaly as it has the organizational maturity and financial stability required to eschew confrontational, media-oriented tactics in favour of behind-the-scenes political lobbying. As will be demonstrated in the following sections, the concept of framing is also helpful in explaining why some advocacy groups consciously choose to operate outside traditional political processes, relying on protest and confrontation to change public policy.

FRAMES OF THE FOREST:  
THE "RESOURCE-RICH FRONTIER"  
VERSUS "BEAUTIFUL BRITISH COLUMBIA"

British Columbia environmental politics are polarized between those who are satisfied with current resource management practices and those who are not. One cannot over-emphasize the importance of logging to the province's resource-based economy, nor can one over-emphasize the importance of opposing logging to the province's environmentalists. Forestry dominates the provincial environmental agenda, and the preoccupation with land-use issues is the defining characteristic of British Columbia's environmental movement. The discourse over forestry demonstrates the two sharply contrasting frames of what forests mean for British Columbia.

Two neighbouring communities in British Columbia, Ucluelet and Tofino, exemplify the deep provincial cleavage. These towns are located near Pacific Rim National Park; they are situated midway up the West Coast of Vancouver Island, about 170 kilometres from Victoria. Both share a common access road that takes in some of the most breathtaking scenery on the West Coast as well as some of its ugliest forest clear-cuts. At the time of the Clayoquot Sound confrontation, Ucluelet had a population of just over 1,500 and was the third largest fish-landing port in British Columbia. While tourism and government services contributed to its economy, the prosperity of this isolated village depended on the lumber and fishing industries.<sup>9</sup> Ucluelet has a long history of resource extraction and economic prosperity, and it makes little attempt to appeal to the "Granola Bar" set.

<sup>8</sup> A. Paul Pross, *Group Politics and Public Policy* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> "Ucluelet," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1985), 1862.

To residents of Ucluelet – particularly those descended from the area’s pioneer families – the forest not only provides a livelihood, it is also the centre piece of their lifestyle. Just as fishing leaves a particular cultural brand on many isolated communities in Newfoundland, so too does logging define the community of Ucluelet. At the time of the conflict in neighbouring Clayoquot Sound, there were no environmental, peace, or women’s groups located in Ucluelet. There was, however, an International Forest Products field office.

In contrast, the livelihood of Tofino’s 750 residents was, and still is, dependent primarily on tourism, which is based on the natural beauty of this community’s pristine surroundings. Tofino is the western “end” of the Trans-Canada Highway; it caters to the eco-tourist interested in bird and whale watching, ocean kayaking, diving, hiking, or camping in nearby Pacific Rim National Park. The centre piece of Tofino harbour is Meares Island, and tourists can hike through this symbolic triumph of a combined Native and environmentalist effort to protect tracts of rain forest from the logger’s chainsaw. Facing the harbour is one of Tofino’s most popular cafes, which posts wilderness petitions and ads for alternative medicines, has home-made everything, and requires that patrons pay for their muffins and coffee on the honour system, by depositing money in a bowl at the door. Tofino is also the home of Roy Henry Vickers’ art gallery, the Eagle Aeire Gallery. Vickers is a Tsimshian artist whose paintings and serigraphs have become known worldwide for their depiction of the scenery of the Northwest Coast. The Council for International Rights and Care for Life on Earth, as well as the now famous Friends of Clayoquot Sound, are based in the small community of Tofino.

Though Tofino and Ucluelet are unique in being two isolated communities that are virtually side-by-side geographically yet diametrically opposed ideologically, the cleavage itself is not particularly novel. Until recently, British Columbia’s natural resources, and in particular its timber supply, seemed endless. There was little concern over its heavy economic reliance on the forestry sector or over the impact of logging on the environment. Felling trees was an honourable method of earning a living; indeed, the lumberjack is a prominent feature of British Columbia’s outdoor mystique. The significance of the lumberjack to the provincial cultural persona is a legacy of its experience as part of the western frontier; the lumberjack symbolizes the settlers’ success in taming the land and prospering from its natural bounty. There is, however, a darker side to this proud legacy. Critics frequently point

to Fredrick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis as the cultural basis of the environmental crisis in North America. Specifically, settlers moving westward found seemingly endless resources and thus had no incentive to conserve them. As Moncrief observes, "if a section of timber was put to the torch to clear it for farming, it made no difference because there was still plenty to be had very easily." These settlers faced almost insurmountable physical challenges; "many of the natural resources that are now highly valued were originally perceived more as obstacles than as assets."<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the frontier was conceptualized as being "empty" and "untouched," despite the fact that Aboriginal peoples lived in this "undiscovered" land long before European colonists arrived. But as Elizabeth Furniss points out, this construction of the past both dominates and is celebrated in state-sanctioned accounts of British Columbia's history despite the devastating consequences that the "discovery" and subsequent "taming" of the wilderness had for Aboriginal peoples.<sup>11</sup> It therefore comes as no surprise that residents from logging-dependent families are proud of their pioneer past and see their province as a resource-rich frontier. Needless to say, they are disinclined to give up their way of life.

While the "forest harvest" frame is in no way monolithic, it contains a number of important elements. Foremost of these is the profound influence of free market economic theory, which is premised on the notion that it is human nature to maximize self-interest. From this perspective, if cutting down trees at the mouth of a watershed creates such erosion that drinking water for others downstream is contaminated, then so be it, as long as one's own interests are advanced. While this is obviously an extreme formulation of self-interest, neoconservative thought has recently been given much air play in Western democracies, and British Columbia is not immune. Some observers claim that "neoconservatism ... has shown itself to be consistently and vigorously anti-environmental."<sup>12</sup> Neoconservative thought, however, produces its own solutions to environmental problems. So-called "eco-capitalism"

<sup>10</sup> Lewis W. Moncrief, "The Cultural Basis for Our Environmental Crisis," *Science* (October 1970), 508-12. See also Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, 1947).

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth Furniss, "Pioneers, Progress, and the Myth of the Frontier: The Landscape of Public History in Rural British Columbia," *BC Studies* 115/16 (Autumn/Winter 1997/98): 7-44. Furniss's central point is that "frontier narratives convey implicit values, assumptions, and beliefs that reflect the legacy of Canada's colonial heritage." Specifically, the "frontier histories tell their readers that colonization has been in Native peoples' best interests and that Native peoples have been treated well by Canadians." See Furniss, "Pioneers," 41.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Paehlke, *Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 6.

is one example of how the political right is incorporating environmental goals with self-interested economic gain.<sup>13</sup> A whole school of economic thought now suggests that the primary reason for the over-exploitation of natural resources is that they are “common pool” resources – resources that can be used by all – and that, consequently, there is no reason for the self-interested individual to conserve them. Environmental degradation is a failure of costing common pool goods into the economic equation; thus we do not need to change our habits, we just need to pay for them.<sup>14</sup>

A second element within the forest harvest frame is the conception of humans as being separate from nature and, ultimately, the superiority of the human species. Lynn White Jr.’s classic essay “The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis” argues that “Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia’s religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.”<sup>15</sup> While it is debatable as to whether Christianity is any worse than other mainstream religions with respect to its treatment of nature, there is no doubt that Judeo-Christian thought has traditionally conceptualized “man” as the superior animal. Moreover the dualism that White describes is deeply ingrained – so much so that it even permeates the alternate conservation frame (a subject I deal with later). In the forestry sector, the notion of human superiority is evident in the idea of the forest company as “manager” of “our” natural resources. “Forest companies such as MB are the managers and stewards of much of the working forest, but the people of B.C. are its owners,”<sup>16</sup> claims a 1990 MB publication. According to the forest industry, a “working” forest is, by definition, one that is being cut down by humans for commercial use.

The last, but equally important element of the forest harvest frame is the unwavering faith that technological advancements will provide solutions to difficult environmental problems. This reverence for technology is pervasive within the forestry industry worldwide as

<sup>13</sup> Robert Collision, “The Greening of the Board Room,” *Report on Business Magazine* (July 1989).

<sup>14</sup> Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons: The Population Problem Has No Solution; It Requires a Fundamental Extension in Morality,” *Science* 162 (1968): 1243-8; G. Bruce Doern, *The Environmental Imperative: Market Approaches to the Greening of Canada* (Calgary: C.D. Howe Institute, Policy Study 9, 1990).

<sup>15</sup> Lynn White Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” *Science* 155 (March 1967): 1203-7.

<sup>16</sup> MacMillan Bloedel, *Forest Perspectives* (Vancouver: n.p.), September 1990.

well as among many government officials who make decisions vis-à-vis the allocation of Crown land to forest companies. In their comprehensive study of the building of the massive Alberta-Pacific pulp mill in Alberta, Pratt and Urquhart observe that approval for the mill was largely based on assurances that technology would mitigate any potential environmental problems.

The importance of scientific critique in this episode resulted primarily from the fact that, in the twentieth century, science has been deified ... As such, science, scientific credentials, and scientific information all bequeath important legitimizing and symbolic powers to those who use them in public policy debates. According to (the federally appointed environmental scientist), for example, it had been the material submitted to a large extent by federal and provincial scientists which influenced the (Environmental Impact Assessment) review board's conclusions, not the "fairy stories from eco-freaks with no professional credentials."<sup>17</sup>

Forest companies in British Columbia acknowledge that changing attitudes and increasing pressure on forests have necessitated changing timber harvest practices, and technological advances are cited as a central feature of this change. "Through research and experience, companies are learning how to be more environmentally responsible, and more responsive to people's sensitivities."<sup>18</sup> MB also asserts that "forest management, like any science, is based on a body of knowledge that is expanding rapidly. MB forest managers are always learning and changing, adapting new technology and new methods." These technological innovations allowed Ray Smith, former president and CEO of MB, to state confidently that his company would "continue to ensure there will be trees for future generations to enjoy both the economic and recreational benefits of the forests."<sup>19</sup>

The forestry harvest frame has not had complete hegemony in British Columbia, however, particularly in recent decades. In Canada, the realization that resources were exhaustible and might need public management culminated in the decision to create the country's first national park in 1885. A hundred years after this first conservation initiative, the world's forests were diminishing at an increasingly rapid

<sup>17</sup> Larry Pratt and Ian Urquhart, *The Last Great Forest: Japanese Multinationals and Alberta's Northern Forests* (Edmonton: NeWest, 1994), 196-7.

<sup>18</sup> MacMillan Bloedel, *Forest Perspectives*.

<sup>19</sup> MacMillan Bloedel, *Beyond the Cut: MacMillan Bloedel's Forest Management Program*, Vancouver: n.p., n.d.

rate and forest industry activity on Crown lands came under increasing scrutiny. Much of British Columbia's lumber comes from some of the world's last remaining stands of ancient temperate rain forest, and a large number of British Columbians primarily value these forests for non economic reasons. These citizens passionately oppose logging despite its economic importance to the province. In addition, British Columbia has long been regarded both from inside and from outside the province as a natural wonderland: a prime place to enjoy outdoor pursuits. While some outdoor enthusiasts adhere to the forest harvest frame, many others espouse a worldview that emphasizes personal empowerment, the rights of non-human species, and the preservation of natural areas as places of spiritual rejuvenation. These ideas are consistent with British Columbia's reputation for attracting people who view the world differently from those in the mainstream. Traditionally, British Columbia has been a magnet for immigrants who embrace citizen-based democratic values and alternative lifestyles, such as the orthodox religious Doukhobors who settled in south-central British Columbia between 1908 and 1912, American academics escaping McCarthyism in the 1950s, draft dodgers in the 1960s, and back-to-the-landers in the 1970s. In recent decades, British Columbia has also attracted many people who are enchanted by the province's physical beauty and relatively unspoiled wilderness. These people embrace the "Super Natural, Beautiful British Columbia" frame promoted by the provincial department of tourism.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, the appeal of the "super natural" reflects the deep roots of the concept that humans exist in isolation from nature – a concept that was first discussed with reference to the forest harvest frame. In other words, "nature" and the "wild" are considered to be diametrically opposed to the human. The wilderness is not a place for humans to live and work but, rather, is a place to visit in order to find the solitude necessary for personal reflection. As such, nature is most valued in a pristine state.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> For the period between 1988 and 1991, every province in Canada (except British Columbia) was a net loser to interprovincial migration. See 1994 *Corpus Almanac*, 5-7.

<sup>21</sup> A comprehensive discussion of the juxtaposition of "nature" and "civilization" can be found in William Cronon's "The Trouble with Wilderness" in William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* (New York: Norton, 1995). Cronon's analysis is interesting in that it illuminates some of the cultural antecedents of both the forest harvest and the forest conservation frames. Cronon writes that the "wilderness experience" is a cultural invention that evolved from the notion of wilderness as a desolate and barren wasteland. Before the closing of the frontier, wilderness was seen as "the antithesis of all that was orderly and good" (71). Later, wilderness became a sacred place, symbolizing a space within which humans could be "free" of the constraints of oppressive modern life.

While it may be difficult to describe the forest harvest frame as a monolithic entity, it is even more difficult to describe the conservation frame as such. Nonetheless, contemporary environmentalists generally question whether unrelenting economic growth is desirable, regardless of how the benefit of that growth is distributed.<sup>22</sup> Early conservationists recognized that natural resources were not infinite and they advocated the efficient, wise use of these resources so as to produce maximum long-term yields. Conservationists such as George Perkins Marsh, John Muir, and Aldo Perkins were among the first to question whether wilderness should be viewed simply as a collection of resources to be used and exploited by humans. Later, social ecologists argued that the political and economic systems of the human species are in disequilibrium and that the ability to live in ecological harmony could only be achieved through radical social transformation.

By the 1970s Arne Naess pushed the notion of human interrelatedness another step. Naess coined the term “deep ecology” and argued that “all beings have intrinsic worth apart from their usefulness to humans.”<sup>23</sup> Naess criticized previous political strategies, such as anarchism and socialism, for their emphasis on inequality between humans and their indifference to the relationship between society and nature. Deep ecology questions the anthropocentric ethics of industrial society and has become a major stream of alternative environmental thought and radical social activism.

Taken to its extreme, deep ecology contains some very anti-human and anti-social elements. Unlike the social ecologists who see the rise of hierarchical and exploitative human societies as the primary source of ecological problems, deep ecologists point to the human species as the primary problem. Some deep ecologists advocate doing nothing to avert famine or epidemic disease in humans in order to allow “nature to take its course.” Earth First! deep ecologist Dave Foreman had a more proactive stance: “It is time for a warrior society to rise up out of the Earth and throw itself in front of the juggernaut of destruction, to be antibodies against the human pox that’s ravaging this precious beautiful planet.”<sup>24</sup> To the social ecologist, this aggressive, authoritarian talk and indifference to human suffering is

<sup>22</sup> Robert Paehlke, *Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 7.

<sup>23</sup> Arne Naess, “The Shallow and The Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements: A Summary,” *Inquiry* 16 (1973): 95-100.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Christopher Manes, *Green Rage: Radical Environmentalism and the Unmaking of Civilization* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), 84.

reminiscent of the destructive attitudes of corporate elites. Indeed, deep ecologists have been attacked for being both sexist and racist.<sup>25</sup> Once again, the deep ecology's dualistic frame is similar to that of the forest harvest frame: neither sees humans and nature as integrally related or mutually dependent. What differentiates the two frames is the assessment of species superiority.

The 1989 arrest of Dave Foreman by the Federal Bureau of Investigation on charges of terrorism sent shock waves through the environmental movement, and, as is often the case, the perceived external threat (in this case, the American government) served to unite the movement. For our purposes, the resulting consensus on basic objectives can be said to underpin the conservation frame of British Columbia forests. First, there is agreement that human survival is dependent upon a new attitude towards nature, one that is not predicated on domination and exploitation. As long as society is based on hierarchical social arrangements, the destructive exploitation and domination of nature will continue. Second, the promotion of this new ecological sensibility, which includes a moral concern for other species, is seen as an urgent and paramount task for the environmental movement.<sup>26</sup> The critical point here is that while there may be disagreement among adherents of the conservationist frame as to what exactly constitutes the forests' greatest utility, they do not view the forest as a resource whose only utility is based on its economic benefit for humans.

The division in British Columbia society between "tree fallers" espousing the forest harvest frame and "tree huggers" espousing the conservation frame is best illustrated on Vancouver Island. The North is comprised of communities that have been dependent upon resource extraction for generations, while the South is comprised predominantly of urbanites who are committed to preserving forests intact and many of whom are recent migrants. At the time of the Clayoquot confrontation it was predicted that the population of Vancouver Island would grow by 51 per cent by the year 2020 and that the pressure on local resources (and, presumably, the conflict over resource management) would undoubtedly grow with the population.<sup>27</sup> Both types of citizens, however, can be found in various parts of the province

<sup>25</sup> Dana Alston, ed., *We Speak for Ourselves: Social Justice, Race and Environment* (Washington: Panos Institute, 1991), 20.

<sup>26</sup> A discussion of this consensus can be found in Murray Bookchin, *Defending the Earth: A Debate Between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1991), 3.

<sup>27</sup> Eberts, Tony. "The Great Outdoors," *The Province* (Vancouver), 1 June 1994, A37.

and often “lock horns” with their fellow residents. As the chair of a Robson Valley conservation group (himself a migrant from Atlantic Canada) observes: “it’s a lifestyle choice, people have moved here for this beautiful valley and they will not see it destroyed.”<sup>28</sup> In contrast, the spouse of a tree faller in Pemberton opined: “I am tired of hearing these hoodlums and dole collecting radicals being called environmentalists. Most loggers are environmentalists.”<sup>29</sup> Clearly these two individuals have little tolerance for one another, and when people with these opposing views come together in large numbers the mix is explosive.

#### FALLERS AND FOREST HARVEST FRAMES: THE HARVEST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA’S TIMBER

To appreciate the strength of the frame of those who harvest the forest, it is necessary to examine the historical importance of forestry to British Columbia’s economy. The year after the Clayoquot confrontation, the Price Waterhouse “report card” on British Columbia’s logging industry reported that 116 of the province’s communities were completely dependent upon the forest industry for survival and that another 200 communities were dependent upon it as their primary employer.<sup>30</sup> The forestry industry is not only important to the provincial economy, it is also of considerable importance to the Canadian economy: 60 per cent of Canada’s lumber and almost all of its plywood come from British Columbia. In 1991, 74.7 million cubic metres of trees were felled in the province, almost 30 million cubic metres more than in Ontario and Quebec combined. Small wonder that Jeremy Wilson observed at the outset of the 1990s that the public interest and the interests of forest companies traditionally were seen to be the same thing.<sup>31</sup>

The present forest tenure system in British Columbia was introduced in 1947. Featuring tree farm licences, this system was designed to promote the long-term sustainability needed to spur capital investment and job creation. Wilson notes that “industry officials have aggressively campaigned against the environment movement” in part

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Peter Amyoony, chair of the Canoe Robson Coalition, spring 1994.

<sup>29</sup> *The Whistler Question*, 28 April 1994.

<sup>30</sup> Price Waterhouse, *Report Card* (spring 1994).

<sup>31</sup> Jeremy Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC: The Business Dominated State and the Containment of Environmentalism,” in William D. Coleman and Grace Skogstad, eds., *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada: A Structural Approach* (Mississauga: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990), 162.

because “forty years of investment decisions – and, quite literally, the postwar construction of the province’s corporate sector – have been based on the assumption that this program of liquidation would be pursued to its culmination.”<sup>32</sup> Commenting on the dominance of the forestry sector in land-use management decisions, Wilson predicted well before the NDP came to office that a “NDP victory ... might precipitate major change in the positions of various actors in the [environmental] policy community. No new government, however, could ignore the measures the industry would use to protect its position, including threats of capital withdrawal.”<sup>33</sup> At the time of the Clayoquot confrontation, the forestry industry provided a total of 92,200 jobs in British Columbia; this industry spun off an additional 276,000 indirect jobs, or 18 per cent of the work force. The average salary of a forestry worker was \$41,193, which was 41 per cent higher than the average provincial wage.<sup>34</sup> When one considers that most loggers live in isolated communities and do not have high levels of formal education or easily transferable skills, it is not difficult to imagine the importance of forestry to this sector of society as well as to the overall health of the provincial economy. It is also clear why successive governments have been reluctant to give equal time to the viewpoints of environmental stakeholders in the forestry-sector policy process.

A further restraint on the state’s autonomy is that capital in the forestry sector is concentrated and is subject to forces beyond provincial borders. The Pearce Commission on British Columbia Forest Policies reported in the 1970s that the province’s twelve largest forestry companies controlled 60 per cent of the cutting rights in British Columbia. Half of these companies were foreign-owned, a situation that has not changed significantly since that time.<sup>35</sup> The companies may have had their origins in British Columbia, but they are now part of larger corporate entities with international holdings. Foreign influence is also apparent within organized labour; most forestry workers belong to an American labour union – the International Woodworkers of America. Most important, the buyers of British

<sup>32</sup> Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC,” 143.

<sup>33</sup> Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC,” 164.

<sup>34</sup> Lush, Patricia, “B.C. Forest Industry Flourishing,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 June 1994, B4; British Columbia, *British Columbia’s Forest Renewal Plan*, Victoria: Queen’s Printer, 1994.

<sup>35</sup> Peter H. Pearce, *Timber Rights and Forest Policies in British Columbia: Report of the Royal Commission on Forest Resources*, 2 vols. (Victoria: Queens Printer, 1976), B7. Quoted in Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC,” 144.

Columbia wood products are concentrated outside the province's borders, making the industry heavily dependent upon foreign markets. As one observer notes: "Historically, one of the most enduring characteristics of the [forestry] industry is multinationality."<sup>36</sup>

Because of its dependence upon external markets, British Columbia is especially vulnerable to a conservationist strategy that focuses on the international arena. The large presence of multinational corporations in the economy, the mobility of capital in the forestry sector, and the dependence upon exports limits the capacity of the provincial government to act autonomously from capital interests and stifles the voices of those who disagree with the dominant fame of British Columbia's forests. The dependence upon exports, however, creates opportunities for the marginalized to use international public opinion to force both corporations and the state to consider alternatives to the dominant forest harvest frame. Environmental groups are very effective in promoting boycotts of British Columbia's forest products – a strategy that has generated tremendous controversy within the province and that has also spawned major counter offensives from both labour and industry groups.

Some companies are responding to the changing forestry frame with considerable innovation; they believe that increased measures to protect the environment can be turned into a business advantage that will pay dividends in the future. The most proactive of these measures include relinquishing cutting rights in old-growth forests.<sup>37</sup> Other logging companies have responded to conservation demands by mounting public relations counter-offensives that include blaming environmentalists for layoffs in the forestry industry. To this end, the Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia spent millions of dollars on major public relations initiatives. The most aggressive industry counter-movement tactic to date, however, is the launching of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP) suits. Following the lead of their American counterparts, some corporations in British Columbia filed lawsuits against environmental groups and individual activists. These suits are often dropped before going to

<sup>36</sup> Drushka, Ken. *Stumped: The Forest Industry in Transition*. (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1985), 202.

<sup>37</sup> For example, in 1994 West Fraser Timber Company relinquished its rights to cut old-growth forest valued at \$12 million in order to help preserve 317,000 hectares of the world's largest unlogged temperate rain forest. While this decision will cost the company's shareholders money in the short term, the public relations benefits are immeasurable. Cernetig, Miro, "No chainsaws in Kitlope rain forest, Harcourt vows," and "B.C. coastal valley to be preserved," *Globe and Mail*, 17 August 1994, A1, A2.

court; environmentalists claim they are used to stifle public debate by intimidating people into silence.<sup>38</sup> Environmentalists are not alone in this opinion. According to the Committee for Public Participation, which includes Canada's authority on the topic, University of Victoria law professor Chris Tollefson, "Slapps transform issues of public debate into private claims in court. Typically victims have included those objecting to irresponsible development, environmental destruction, hazardous materials abuse, consumer deception and tenant exploitation. Claims often allege libel, defamation, conspiracy, and interference with economic gain."<sup>39</sup> Needless to say, SLAPPS have done much to embitter an already hostile debate.

The most unfortunate casualties in the war between British Columbia's environmentalists and logging companies are the forestry workers, who are losing their jobs in increasing numbers. While many forestry layoffs are attributable to factors other than environmental concerns, the perceived tradeoffs between environmental protection and employment hurts the ability of British Columbia conservationists to forge strong links with the labour movement, as environmentalists in other jurisdictions have done.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, relations between the two groups are often overtly hostile. Large numbers of forestry workers mobilized against environmental interests under the auspices of the "SHARE BC" movement. The SHARE movement made its way to British Columbia via the United States and a group known as the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise. It bills itself as a grassroots response from forestry workers and other concerned citizens, particularly those whose economic livelihood is dependent upon resource extraction. The SHARE movement claims that increased environmental protection will cause untold economic deprivation in resource-dependent communities due to job losses in the forestry sector.<sup>41</sup> Terry Tate is a spokesperson for the Save Our Jobs Committee, an ad hoc Williams Lake forest company employee group. He argues that preserving the forests in the Cariboo Mountains would spell certain doom for the

<sup>38</sup> "Join the Conspiracy for Committing Democracy," circular produced by the Vancouver Island SLAPP Defense Fund, Courtney, British Columbia.

<sup>39</sup> British Columbia Environmental Network, *Environmental News* (October 1993), 17.

<sup>40</sup> Laurie Adkins, "The Prospects for Eco-Socialist Convergence: An Investigation of the Relations between the Environmental Movement and Two Canadian Industrial Unions," PhD diss., Queen's University, 1989.

<sup>41</sup> Whether the SHARE BC movement was instigated and subsequently bankrolled by forest companies is a subject of ongoing debate. Wilson reports that the Share the Stein group received \$200,000 in 1988 from the Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia and BC Forest Products. See Wilson, "Wilderness Politics in BC," 154.

forestry-dependent towns and cities in the region. According to Tate, conservation proposals for the Cariboo show "contempt for the forestry industry and the workers and their families that depend on them in order to maintain our quality of life."<sup>42</sup>

The slow pace with which many industries in British Columbia are integrating environmental values into their everyday work places is probably due to their reluctance to let go of the frame that emphasizes the primacy of economic development – a paradigm that was unchallenged in British Columbia even a decade ago. No doubt this reluctance to change is in no small part a consequence of the financial difficulties that forestry companies have experienced in recent years; undertaking policy change that involves increasing costs is not palatable to beleaguered shareholders. Nonetheless, forest companies were unprepared for the environmental assault on the entrenched forest harvest frame and have yet to drop their defence of the status quo.

#### ENVIRONMENTALISTS AND ECOLOGY FRAMES: CONSERVING BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FORESTS

Those who promote a conservationist frame of British Columbia forests are numerous and diverse. British Columbia boasts the largest number of environmental groups in Canada and is the birthplace of the world's largest and most high profile environmental group – Greenpeace International. A decade later, another controversial environmental organization was born in Victoria – the Wilderness Committee. Like its older sibling, the Wilderness Committee is an excellent example of an advocacy organization that resists organizational maturation, continues to rely on confrontational tactics, and is suspicious of the political opportunities the state is now presenting to it. The Wilderness Committee is not inclined to moderate its tactics, having realized considerable success utilizing sensational tactics despite the vigorous efforts of its opponents. While the Wilderness Committee may be somewhat unique in the extent to which it is avoiding institutionalization, many British Columbia forest conservation groups exhibit similar tendencies.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *EverWild* (May/June 1994), 18.

<sup>43</sup> Lorna Stefanick, "From Protest to Participation: Environmental Activism in BC and Ontario." Paper presented at the Canadian Political Science Association's 1995 annual meeting in Montreal.

Founded in 1980 by activist Paul George, the mandate of the Wilderness Committee is to work “for the preservation and protection of Canadian and international wilderness through research and education.”<sup>44</sup> The Wilderness Committee is involved in wilderness preservation campaigns in all regions of British Columbia. Its head office in the Gastown district of Vancouver sells all manner of “save our forests” products and distributes free “Wilderness Reports.” These reports focus on provincial forestry issues and encourage citizens to protest logging activities in various wilderness areas. The Wilderness Committee activists have been involved in virtually every major wilderness conservation protest in the province, including the Valhalla, Meares Island, South Moresby, Stein Valley, Carmanah, and Clayoquot Sound conflicts. During the 1990s, the Wilderness Committee had over 25,000 members<sup>45</sup> and its annual budget fluctuated between \$1.6 million and \$2.8 million,<sup>46</sup> making it one of the province’s wealthiest environmental groups. In addition to its head office in Vancouver, the Wilderness Committee has five local chapters in British Columbia, a chapter in Edmonton, and fundraising offices in Toronto and Winnipeg.<sup>47</sup>

As was noted in the previous section, the conservation frame of British Columbia forests varies among groups, and even within the Wilderness Committee it varies considerably. According to the Wilderness Committee’s literature, one of its core beliefs is that “wilderness, with all its natural biodiversity, [is] absolutely vital to the continuing health of the planet and human survival.” To this end, the Wilderness Committee calls for a whopping 40 per cent of British Columbia to be protected as wilderness in order to “truly conserve biodiversity, wildlife and wilderness, forever.”<sup>48</sup> Other than supporting the concept of “value-added” manufacturing, nothing in the Wilderness Committee’s literature addresses the issue of what forestry-dependent communities will do after such a sizable portion of British Columbia is made off limits to logging. In true deep ecology

<sup>44</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, “wccw Mission Statement,” *Educational Report* 11, 10 (1992): 8.

<sup>45</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, “wccw Membership Distribution 1993-96,” *Educational Report* 15, 15 (winter 1996): 15.

<sup>46</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, “wccw Comparative Income Statement,” *Educational Report* 15, 15 (winter 1996): 14.

<sup>47</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, “wccw Membership Distribution 1993-96,” *Educational Report* 15, 15 (winter 1996): 15.

<sup>48</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, “wccw Mission Statement,” *Educational Report* 15, 15 (winter 1996): 16.

fashion, the committee does not appear to care about the devastating human cost associated with a massive conservation initiative. It would be incorrect, however, to conclude that the committee has a purely deep ecology approach to wilderness conservation. The Wilderness Committee does not advocate the complete elimination of logging in British Columbia, nor is it insensitive to the difficulties facing forestry workers. According to a 1991 newsletter, "the Wilderness Committee believes in value-added because it offers the hope of employing more woodworkers in more satisfying jobs" and because "if we do more with what we cut we can reduce the high number of trees we cut down in B.C. each year and we can simultaneously switch to environmentally-friendly logging practices."<sup>49</sup>

Social ecology sensitivities are also apparent with respect to the Wilderness Committee's concept of the relationship between Aboriginal and environmental issues. The Wilderness Committee recognizes Aboriginal title, stating that "the rights of indigenous peoples to their homelands are inalienable; their traditional stewardship of Earth's resources can serve as examples of how we can live in sustainable harmony with our natural world."<sup>50</sup> But this statement in and of itself belies the influence of both variants of the ecological frames; on the one hand, the Wilderness Committee seems to recognize Aboriginal rights only when Aboriginals are existing in pre-modern, hunter-gatherer societies. This is in keeping with the deep ecology perspective as only this type of human society would be allowed to inhabit a wilderness space.<sup>51</sup> Yet, on the other hand, the Wilderness Committee claims to promote social justice and states that Aboriginal rights to land are inalienable. To this end, it has devoted considerable energy to encouraging partnerships with Aboriginal groups in areas it wishes to see protected.<sup>52</sup> It is also noteworthy that the Wilderness Committee

<sup>49</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, "Wild wilderness is the last dream," *Educational Report* 10, 7 (summer/fall 1991): 13.

<sup>50</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, "Clayoquot Rainforest Coalition," *Educational Report* 15,15 (winter 1996): 2.

<sup>51</sup> This kind of thinking has led some observers to conclude that denying the rights of Aboriginal people to anything other than a pre-modern lifestyle is nothing more than a new, albeit sophisticated, form of imperialism. See Bruce Willems-Braun, "Colonial Vestiges: Representing Forest Landscapes on Canada's West Coast." *BC Studies* 112 (Winter 1996-97): 5 - 40.

<sup>52</sup> These relationships include working with the Haida to pressure the provincial government to provide statutory recognition of Duu Guusd Tribal Park, working with the Haisla Nation to protect the Kitlope temperate rain forest Tribal Park, and building a boardwalk trail into the heart of the Clayoquot River Valley with the permission of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. More recently, WCWC secured support from Youth Services Canada to begin a seven-month joint project with the Ahousaht First Nation. This project trained twenty Native and non-Native youth in the field of ecotourism.

is involved in overseas work with the Canadian International Development Agency. In one project in Chile, considerable energy was expended "at the local level developing community capacity and involvement in ecotourism near a nature reserve."<sup>53</sup> Clearly the Wilderness Committee is not completely oblivious to human needs; it has carefully cultivated local connections in order to avoid the charge that has been frequently levelled at Greenpeace: environmentalists are "outsiders" meddling in the affairs of local communities.

Along with many social ecology environmental groups, the Wilderness Committee is generally disdainful of hierarchical organizational arrangements. It has long espoused the merits of a decentralized organizational structure and grassroots activism, and it actively encourages the formation of local chapters that have considerable autonomy. Unlike most chronically under-funded environmental groups, however, the Wilderness Committee experienced rapid growth in a short period of time, giving rise to questions of accountability. Combined with a massive debt incurred in the early 1990s due to overspending, this necessitated some minor restructuring within the organization.<sup>54</sup> The small shift towards the adoption of traditional institutional forms has provided endless fodder for internal debate concerning whether the merits of the new structures will offset the problems associated with hierarchical forms.<sup>55</sup> The Wilderness Committee has also avoided formalizing its relationships with other leading conservation groups in British Columbia. It is the only major provincial organization, for example, that does not belong to BC Wild, the major coalition of wilderness protection groups in British Columbia.<sup>56</sup> The general atmosphere in the Wilderness Committee's office remains casual, and even the most high-profile activists are accessible to the general public. Appeals in its newsletters for members to donate such items as scissors, staplers, and tape dispensers help to dispel concerns that the Wilderness Committee is turning into a large bureaucracy that takes its grassroots support for granted.

<sup>53</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, "Wild Wilderness is the Last Dream," *Educational Report* 15, 15 (winter 1996): 13.

<sup>54</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, *Educational Report* 11, 10 (winter 1992): 13. At the 1992 annual general meeting, it was resolved that WCWC would change its management style from a ten-person consensus-based "team leader" approach to an executive structure made up of four members who report directly to the Board of Directors.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with WCWC activist Joy Foy, spring 1994.

<sup>56</sup> In fact, WCWC passed a resolution at its 1995 annual general meeting stating that it "does not join coalitions." Western Canada Wilderness Committee, <<http://www.web.net/wcwild/welcome.html>>.

In contrast to other large British Columbia conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited or the World Wildlife Fund, the Wilderness Committee does not accept government operating grants. Nor are its activists particularly interested in participating in government decision-making processes, which are perceived to be part of inherently flawed institutional structures. Both the state and industry in British Columbia traditionally ignored conservation interests. While this is no longer the case, Wilderness Committee activists greeted invitations to participate in the policy process with suspicion. Consultation is referred to as the “talk-and-log” approach – a tactic whose purpose is perceived to deplete environmentalists of energy and resources while logging companies continue their activities unencumbered.<sup>57</sup>

The Wilderness Committee’s reluctance to work within governmental policy-making processes stems from the difference in worldviews between activists and their counterparts in government bureaucracies. As Jeremy Wilson observes, “few environmentalists manage to bridge consistently and effectively the cultural chasm separating the movement from the professional foresters who populate the [Ministry of Forests] bureaucracy.”<sup>58</sup> Given the differences in the way these two groups frame forestry issues, this division is hardly surprising. One prominent Wilderness Committee activist argues that environmental groups must always remain the “ballast” for industry advocacy; activists must be careful not to moderate their demands because the state will always try to adopt a middle ground between opposing viewpoints. The goal of activists is to pull the state as far away from the industry position as possible,<sup>59</sup> even if that requires taking an extreme position. And, as Wilson notes, “wilderness groups are imbued with a zeal coming from the ‘once it’s gone, it’s gone’ reality of logged forests, and thus are not as vulnerable to the temptation of accepting compromised positions in exchange for state funding or improved access to decision-makers.”<sup>60</sup>

Along with other British Columbia forestry groups, the Wilderness Committee has devoted considerable attention in recent years to reaching international audiences in its efforts to solidify opposition

<sup>57</sup> Interview with WCWC activist Joy Foy, spring 1994. This attitude is also evident among other forestry activists. See Jeremy Wilson, “Green Lobby,” in Robert Boardman, ed., *Canadian environmental policy: ecosystems, politics, and process* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992), 31.

<sup>58</sup> Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC,” 151.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with WCWC activist Joy Foy, spring 1994.

<sup>60</sup> Wilson, “Wilderness Politics in BC,” 165.

to the logging of British Columbia forests.<sup>61</sup> Many Canadians recall the numerous news clips featuring Greenpeace parading the famous Clayoquot Sound old-growth tree stump around Europe. This stump is a 390-year-old red cedar from the temperate rain forest and, with a weight of only 3,600 kilograms and a diameter of only two metres, is considered young in a forest that has trees that are over 1,500 years old with trunks of up to six metres in diameter. "Baby Stumpy" was "discovered" by the Wilderness Committee and made its celebrity debut by touring communities in British Columbia (many of them logging-dependent). It then worked its way slowly across Canada, appearing at environmental events along the way. After its arrival in Ottawa, the Wilderness Committee leased the stump to Greenpeace, which spirited it away on a European tour. Baby Stumpy galvanized environmental communities in the rest of Canada and abroad. In Britain, activists were arrested for chaining themselves to the door of Canada House; and in Germany, Sweden, Australia, Italy, Japan, and India groups protested the logging of Clayoquot Sound outside Canadian embassies and consulates.

Other strategies to mobilize opposition to logging include hosting film and slide shows and building "educational" boardwalk trails through rain forests slated for clear-cut logging, thus encouraging people to "come see for themselves." One of the Wilderness Committee's most ambitious projects was the construction of a canopy research station in the Upper Carmanah Valley, an area that was held by land tenure by MB. The purpose of the station is to encourage scientists to carry out research on the temperate rain forest; it consists of five wooden platforms strapped into the canopies of sitka spruce trees at an average height of 53.4 metres. The station generated significant interest in the international scientific community, attracting attention from well known commentators like David Attenborough (the host of numerous BBC nature programs), who visited the station with his film crew in 1993. Approximately 25,000 specimens discovered at the station were sent to sixty-two insect identification experts worldwide, who proceeded to identify sixty new species.<sup>62</sup> These strategies again demonstrate the influence of social ecological perspectives within the

<sup>61</sup> While the Wilderness Committee does not focus on international audiences to the same extent as do groups like The Friends of Clayoquot Sound, its newsletters are an important vehicle through which other environmentalists publicize their efforts in the international arena. See, for example, "International Pressure Continues," in Western Canada Wilderness Committee, *Educational Report* 15, 12 (summer 1992): 2.

<sup>62</sup> Western Canada Wilderness Committee, "A New Species Every Day," *Educational Report* 12, 6 (summer/fall 1993): 4.

Wilderness Committee; building boardwalks and encouraging scientific study of affected areas make the forest more accessible and thus more “useful” to humans. But it should also be noted that while humans are invited into the forest as guests to observe nature, they are not invited to become residents, nor are they invited to engage in any behaviour that might be construed as altering the “natural” state of the forest.

The most ambitious activity of British Columbia environmentalists was the legendary 1993 Clayoquot Sound “Peace Camp,” which culminated in the arrest of hundreds of demonstrators. Situated on an MB clear-cut, this site provided a camping venue for supporters of the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, which included the Wilderness Committee activists and hundreds of other people from all walks of life. Over 10,000 people visited the Clayoquot Peace Camp over the four months of its operation, many of them coming from across North America and overseas. This camp, along with the promotional activities of the Wilderness Committee and other BC conservation groups, was so successful in raising awareness of the Clayoquot dispute beyond provincial borders that, in the spring of 1994, then premier Mike Harcourt spent \$1.5 million touring Europe to conduct “damage control” on behalf of the province’s forestry industry.<sup>63</sup>

The focus of forestry groups in British Columbia on audiences outside the province was very effective for a number of reasons. First, old-growth forests provide stunning visual imagery, particularly when juxtaposed with a clear-cut. For those who lost their old-growth forests many years ago, the idea that one of the world’s last temperate rain forests is being cut down is deemed to be tragic. Second, outside audiences are, in many respects, much easier for environmentalists to mobilize than local ones as the former are not usually subjected to a countervailing movement of opposing opinion. Third, citizens in other jurisdictions will not suffer the economic consequences of an action taken by a foreign government to limit the activities of an offending industry. While interest groups are not typically well served by focusing their efforts on mobilizing public opinion, the unique nature of British Columbia forestry issues makes mobilizing national and international public opinion a very useful strategy.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> One public servant from Nanaimo who was intimately involved in the Clayoquot Sound resource allocation process claims that, after this trip, a colleague of his in the Ministry of Forests had his job description informally expanded to include touring bus loads of foreign dignitaries through the contested area. (Interview with district manager of the Fish and Wildlife Branch in Nanaimo, spring 1994.)

<sup>64</sup> As noted, WCWC has not been as aggressive in mobilizing international public opinion as have other BC groups. The Baby Stumpy tour, however, reflects its interest in mobilizing

Because of their previous exclusion from decision-making processes and their lack of useful “connections” with appropriate public servants and politicians, environmental advocacy organizations in British Columbia are bereft of experience “on the inside” and are unfamiliar with the responsibility that comes with political power. In the case of the Wilderness Committee, increased attention from the public and political leaders, growth, and moves toward a more centralized organizational structure have not produced significant modifications to its forestry frame. It has chosen not to moderate its tactics and has resisted being drawn into political decision making. The Wilderness Committee’s reliance on unconventional tactics could be linked to its critique of, or inexperience with, traditional decision-making processes. But in reality, its methods are largely the result of the disjuncture between its conception of the utility of forests and that of the harvest frame, a frame which until recently had hegemony in British Columbia. To date, efforts to mollify the increasingly vociferous adherents of the conservation frame have not been particularly successful.

#### FRICION AND FALLOUT: NO CLEAR-CUT WINNERS

Since the early 1990s, the war in British Columbia’s forests has captured the attention of the world. For many British Columbians, this outside interest is not only unwanted, it is a resented intrusion into local affairs; this viewpoint is represented by former premier Glen Clark’s assertions that environmentalists are “enemies of BC.” Nonetheless support for British Columbia’s largest indigenous conservation organization, the Wilderness Committee, remains strong. A solution to land-use conflicts remains illusive as environmentalists gear up for yet more assaults on industry operations throughout the province, and foresters launch their own civil disobedience campaigns aimed at circumventing environmental activists.

The intensity of the War in the Woods is in large part due to the divergent frames of British Columbia’s forests. To foresters, the forest

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the larger Canadian public, and, in the last few years, it has begun to focus its attention on expanding its membership base in Ontario. Indeed, wcbc has recently begun referring to itself as the “Wilderness Committee” in order to facilitate its expansion into other areas of Canada. Whether or not wcbc will follow the path of Greenpeace (which was established in Vancouver but whose Canadian and international head offices are now located in Toronto and Amsterdam) remains to be seen.

is a resource to be used by humans; this is the natural order of the world. To conservationists, forests are of value because they provide psychic joy for humans as well as important habitat for a wide variety of species. Biodiversity is valued for its own sake, but for groups such as the Wilderness Committee it is also valued because of the belief that humans cannot survive in an environment where a critical mass of other species has been eradicated. The evolution of such divergent issue frames is a result of the cultural, socio-political, and economic context of British Columbia. The dominant cultural legacy of British Columbia's residents is one in which humans are conceived of as being separate from, rather than a part of, a natural ecosystem. This dualism is the basis upon which the conceptions of nature as either an economic resource or a source of spiritual rejuvenation is conceived. British Columbia is a resource-dependent province with a population deeply divided over the desirability of continuing to promote resource extraction as a mainstay of the economy. The province's previously unquestioned economic focus on resource extraction created a frame within which the interests of the public and industry were indistinguishable. State and capital interests made decisions with respect to resource extraction; they completely excluded representatives of "the environment" from the process and ignored those who questioned unabated resource extraction as this challenged the very assumptions upon which the economic foundation of the province rested. The dissident voices resorted to radical tactics in an effort to promote and attract attention to their frame of British Columbia's forests.

Despite later efforts by the provincial government to include environmental interests in the policy process, groups like the Wilderness Committee maintained their strategic orientation and began enlisting support from outside the province. In the case of wilderness preservation in British Columbia, the latter strategy was very effective because of the province's dependence upon foreign markets for its forest products, its promotion of the image of "Super Natural British Columbia," and the fact that an external audience is comparatively immune to the economic repercussions of forest conservation. Once the alternative frame of forests had increased in currency at the provincial, national, and international levels, the adherents of the "resource-rich, forest harvest frame" mobilized. The movement promoting the conservation frame was, and is, increasingly challenged by an equally vociferous status quo counter-movement. Given the animosity that the clash of the two divergent forestry frames has

produced, the increased polarization that has come as a result of it, and the formidable counter-attack that has formed, there is a danger that the two frames of British Columbia's forests will move even farther apart.

The deep divisions between residents over the appropriate role of resource extraction in fostering provincial economic prosperity has three major consequences for environmental politics in British Columbia. First, the polarization encourages radicalism as some environmentalists feel that the only way they can effectively counter those who oppose them is by advocating extreme positions and using dramatic and confrontational tactics to promote their position. Second, cleavages are created within the movement between those who advocate the extreme positions and those who do not wish to be identified with the radical elements. This fragmentation makes it difficult to identify who "speaks" for the environment. Finally, the internal polarization of citizens over forestry practices has encouraged environmental activists to focus their attention on a wider national and international public. This complicates the debate by introducing actors who are not personally affected by resource management decisions. Given these realities, it will be difficult for the government to incorporate both forestry issue frames into state decision making. Yet given the vociferous presence of those who advocate the divergent frames, it is clear that attempts must be made to find some common ground.

While the gulf between the two issue frames appears huge, it should be noted that the philosophical underpinning of groups such as the Wilderness Committee is not nearly as "radical" as it could be. While the committee may be criticized for paying little attention to the plight of forestry workers who depend upon forest harvest for their livelihood, it does at least conceptualize humans as being interconnected with the natural environment. Humans cannot survive independently of their environment; while nature can exist in its own right as a "wilderness space," humans are nonetheless conceived as being a legitimate feature of the earth's ecosystem. This is in direct contrast to a more extreme version of wilderness conservation that shows considerable contempt for the human species and does not conceive of any place for humans in "natural" wilderness areas.

The most fertile ground for the cultivation of commonality between these divergent frames of the forest rests with the notion that humans are inextricably connected to their natural environment. Specifically,

efforts must be made to overcome the assumption within both frames that there exists a dualism with respect to the human condition and the state of nature. This dualism is evident in the variants of both frames of the forest: the forest harvest frame conceives of humans as harvesters of a product; and the deep ecology conservation frame conceives of humans as being “unnatural” interlopers in a natural place. But there are elements within each frame that suggest that humans cannot divorce themselves completely from their environment. Within the forest harvest frame, it is not a huge leap to modify the notion that humans are “caretakers” of a resource to the notion that the well-being of the caretaker is ultimately dependent upon the health of the ecosystem. Similarly, within the conservation frame it is not a huge leap to modify the notion that humans cannot engage in economic activities under any circumstances to the notion that humans have a place within nature and that a healthy “wilderness” ecosystem does not, by definition, preclude such activities

The culmination of the Clayoquot Sound dispute is illustrative of this point. In June 1999, Natives, environmentalists, and MB signed an agreement that sought to end the two decades of protest over logging in the Clayoquot Sound. Under this agreement, all parties agreed that clear-cutting would be prohibited and that small-scale logging, the sale of non-timber forest products (such as herbs, flora, and medicinal), and ecotourism would not only be allowed, but that they would be encouraged. Indeed, environmentalists agreed to help market the new products. To this end, all parties agreed to “support First Nations in their aspirations to fully participate in a diversified and sustainable community economy and in their aspirations for ecologically sound governance and management over their traditional territories.” The environmental groups “support the emergence of a new model of ecoforestry in Clayoquot Sound through marketing of timber certified through an internationally recognized certification system.” A representative of MB asserted: “It’s been a long journey with all the controversy [over Clayoquot]. The challenge from our perspective to design with other interests a new model, a non-industrial model based on conservation objectives. Clearly the old industrial model would not work in Clayoquot.”<sup>65</sup> What is notable about this agreement is that all parties recognized that there is a

<sup>65</sup> “Natives, Enviros, MacMillan Bloedel Sign Clayoquot Truce” posted by the *Environmental News Service*, 1999. Downloaded February 2001 at <http://ens.lycos.com/ens/jun99/1999L-06-17-03.html>.

relationship between healthy human communities and healthy ecosystems and that human and non-human species can coexist.

So while the concept of framing goes some way to explaining the polarized positions of forestry actors in British Columbia, an analysis of these frames suggests that there exists some common ground from which people can begin to resolve these conflicts. What surely must be frightening for moderates on both sides of the debate is that the inflammatory rhetoric of provincial leaders serves only to undermine the recognition that forestry frames share one fundamental assumption – that, as part of the natural environment, humans must engage in some kind of economic activity in order to sustain life. While this may appear to be a self-evident “truth,” the Wilderness Committee is somewhat unique among radical conservation organizations in that it accepts this idea, encouraging local communities to be involved in decisions regarding the perceived trade-off between jobs and the environment. Creative attempts to marry the needs of the human species to the preservation of biodiversity are lost when so much energy is placed on demonizing one’s forestry opponent. Unless sincere attempts are made to discover and build upon the common values that can be found within the forestry frames, Baby Stumpy (and phenomena like it) will continue to be major players in British Columbia’s War in the Woods.

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