FRACTURED INTERESTS: ASSESSING THE CFS/CASA RIVALRY

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Table of Contents

Abstract

Currently, there are two national student organizations operating the federal level in Canada. Although both the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) claim to represent the interests of students, they often disagree on the proper way to maximize that interest. Since CASA was founded as a reaction to CFS in the mid-1990s, the two organizations have often competed for members, government ear and public opinion. This thesis seeks to explain the rivalry between two groups representing the same clients. Essentially, the answer boils down to two overarching factors. First, CFS and CASA advance different operationalizations of the student interest. To simplify, CFS has broader lobbying goals, which, at times, includes social justice issues. CASA criticizes this approach, calling for pragmatic policy objectives, fulfilled through a corporatist lobbying paradigm. Second, both CASA and CFS put a premium on the survival of their organizations. These organizational interests help perpetuate their simultaneous existence. These circumstances lead to the conclusion that, for the foreseeable future, the rivalry between CASA and CFS will continue.

Chapter One

Dual Unionism: Introducing the Canadian Student Movement

Introduction

When the Conservative Party of Canada released their federal budget in January 2009, the students of Canada responded. A point of interest for many students was the federal government's commitment of two billion dollars to fund university infrastructure, to be spent on Accumulated Deferred Maintenance.[1] The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), a national student lobbying organization representing approximately 300,000 Canadian Students, had been calling for, at minimum, a 1.2 billion dollar investment in deferred maintenance and was pleased by the announcement.[2] Zach Churchill, the National Director of CASA, stated that "students are impressed that the government has recognized the importance of investing in PSE [post-secondary education] infrastructure."[3] CASA also identified "lamentable" gaps in the budget's financial support for students, which is instrumental in maintaining the highest possible level of access through the current recession,[4] but this message was secondary to the fulfilment of their policy objective.

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[1] Accumulated Deferred Maintenance refers to maintenance projects being deferred from year to year to free up capital intended for building maintenance to cover other administrative costs considered to be more primary to the university's function. Much of the infrastructure currently found at Canadian Universities was constructed in the 1960s and 1970s and is beginning to require serious amounts of money dedicated to upkeep.

[2] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Policy Statement: Accumulated Differed Maintenance," 2001, www.casa.ca/pdf/principles/quality01.pdf (accessed December 7, 2008).

[3] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Government Answers Student Call for PSE Infrastructure Funding," 26 January 2009, http://www.casa.ca/index.php/government-answers-student-call-for-pse-infrastructure-spending.html (accessed January 27, 2009).

[4] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Students Endorse Infrastructure Spending; Lament Inaction of Student Support," 27 January 2009, http://www.casa.ca/index.php/students-endorse-infrastructure-spending-lament-inaction-on-student-support.html (accessed January 28, 2009).

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), representing approximately 500,000 Canadian students, responded to the budget with a slightly different message. To CFS, the "federal budget failed to make a balanced investment in education by ignoring core funding and student debt."[5] National Chair of CFS Katherine Giroux-Bougard stated: "Although we're satisfied to see money for campus buildings, we were expecting a better effort to tackle student debt and student unemployment."[6] CFS had not lobbied for the commitment of federal funds to deferred maintenance expenditures and focused their message on the failure to alleviate student debt.

The student organizations' response to the 2009 federal budget is a representative example of the dynamic that exists within the Canadian student movement. At first glance, the two national student organizations seem to have many similarities. The most fundamental of these is that both organizations seek to represent students on a national level by lobbying the government for student oriented benefits. Yet one does not have to dig very deep to uncover significant differences that leave CFS and CASA not only separate, but in many instances in opposition to one another. The National Director of CASA, Zach Churchill, was open about the competitive nature of the relationship between CASA and CFS. "We are, in certain circumstances, in competition with the CFS, whether it is for members, public attention or for government's ear."[7] Churchill noted that because competition was part of the dynamic between CFS and CASA, both organizations would use any advantages at their disposal to gain an edge.[8] Before delving

[5] Canadian Federation of Students, "Stimulus Falls Short of Obama's University Package," 27 January 2009. http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/html/english/media/mediapage.php?release_id=971 (accessed February 1, 2009).
[6] CFS, *Stimulus*.
[7] Zach Churchill, *National Director of CASA*, interview by Jeffrey Waugh, 16 January 2009.
[8] The advantages referred to include the number of students either group can claim to represent. Although CFS is the larger organization, CASA has at times claimed that they represent 600,000 students

into an explanation for the existence of rival student organizations, a brief introduction to CFS and CASA, as well as an overview of their governance structures will be given.

In the wake of several years of a fractured student movement, CFS was founded in 1981 when several provincial and national student organizations united on the basis of a collective decision that it was "vital to unite under one banner."[9] Since 1981, CFS has grown from representing seven provincial and national student organizations to representing 84 student unions and over 500,000 students across Canada, making it Canada's largest national student organization.[10] The membership of CFS consists of student associations from colleges and universities across the country, who acquire membership through federation referenda held on campus.[11] Once federated with CFS, individual members of the student association/union pay dues to CFS in exchange for lobbying and service benefits.

CFS, as it is commonly known, actually consists of three separately incorporated entities. The Canadian Federation of Students – Services (CFS – Services), which was incorporated separately for legal reasons, provides services to member unions and to individual members.[12] Federating in CFS means that the individual member will also become a member of a third body, best described as provincial counterparts of CFS that organize and lobby at the provincial level. For instance, all CFS members in Ontario also

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because of their partnerships and therefore their concept of the student interest should be given precedence over that of 500,000 students represented by the CFS.

[9] Canadian Federation of Students, "About the CFS: Overview of the Federation." http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/html/english/about/index.php (accessed 4 January 2009).

[10] CFS prides itself on being the largest student organization. They display this fact on every press release and mention it in all descriptions of the organization.

[11] These referenda are held by individual student unions and must be passed by student to federate with CFS. The referendum will be the subject of analysis in the third chapter.

[12] A full investigation of CFS services and their organizational importance will commence at the end of this chapter.

participate in CFS – Ontario, which may or may not decide to adopt national campaigns endorsed by CFS national, but operates under the principles of CFS national. Both CFS and CFS – Services are organized under the purview of the National Executive, which receives directives from national plenary. The National Executive consists of 17 elected representatives, all of which are elected by member associations, either at national plenary or through their respective provincial caucuses and constituency groups.[13] A representative from each province, a National Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson, a National Treasurer, a Women's Representative, a Students of Colour Representative, a Francophone Student Representative and an Aboriginal Students Representative make up the National Executive. The National Executive is responsible for, among other things, the "execution and implementation of all Federation decisions," observing and upholding the objectives of CFS, and coordinating its members and full time staff. At the end of the day, the National Executive is "bound and guided by the Federation in all the decisions made and positions taken."[14] Making decisions on policy and taking positions on issues are the main objectives of the General Meetings.

CFS holds two General Meetings every year, a semi-annual meeting in the spring and an annual meeting in the fall.[15] National plenary, which is essentially a council made up of a single voting member from each local organization or consistency that, subject only to constitutional provisions, is the "final and absolute decision-making authority in

[13] Constituency groups are "comprised of individual delegates attending Federation national general meetings who share a common characteristic as recognized by the national plenary" that receive funding and can present policy at plenary, as noted in the CFS constitution under Bylaw VIII Constituency Groups, 67.
[14] Canadian Federation of Students, "Constitution and Bylaws: Bylaw V National Executive" Last amended 2008, 43.
[15] Canadian Federation of Students, "Constitution and Bylaws: Bylaw II General Meetings," Last amended 2008, 31.

the organisation."[16] Policy can be proposed to plenary by "member local associations, provincial counterparts/caucuses, constituency groups, and the National Executive."[17] Each member is given equal weight at plenary by being afforded one vote, regardless of the size of the individual member associations. Plenary decisions override decisions made by the National Executive, unless that decision resulted in binding CFS to a legal contract. Pressing policy decisions can be made in the interim, but must be approved by members using mailed ballots.

Similarly to CFS, CASA is an organization comprised of autonomous organizations that represent Canadian student unions in the national arena. CASA's main decision-making body is the General Assembly, which meets at least twice a year to establish policy. CASA has a Board of Governance Officers, which consists of the elected positions of National Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer and the appointed National Director. The Board reports to the General Assembly and is tasked with overseeing the day-to-day operations of CASA, much the same as the relationship between the National Executive and national plenary in CFS.[18] Unlike CFS, CASA does not have anything analogous to provincial counterparts. Instead, CASA partners with autonomous provincial student organizations such as the Alliance of Nova Scotia Student Associations and the Council of Alberta University Students to gain additional clout.[19] There are other notable structural differences that highlight the difference between CASA and CFS, such

[16] Canadian Federation of Students, "Constitution and Bylaws: Bylaw II General Meetings," Last amended 2008, 32.
[17] Canadian Federation of Students, "Constitution and Bylaws: Bylaw III Policy of the Federation," Last amended 2008, 35.
[18] Kyle Steele, *National Chair of CASA*, interview by Jeffrey Waugh, (January 13, 2009).
[19] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Partners," http://www.casa.ca/index.php/partners.html (accessed February 1, 2009).

as the lack of a service element in CASA, as well as referendum procedures but they will be reserved for analysis in the chapters to follow.

It is important to note that competition between interest groups attempting to represent the same segment of the population is not limited to the student movement. David Kwavnick writes on conflicting interest groups in his book Organized Labour and Pressure Politics: The Canadian Labour Congress 1956-1968. In his analysis of the importance of interest group mandates, Kwavnick notes two internal problems of mandate. The first, which is outside the scope of this argument, deals with the impact of rival leaders vying for power within an organization. The second problem of mandate, which will play a central role in this thesis, comes from a rival organization seeking to represent the same clients. According to Kwavnick:

> Civil wars, it has been observed, are the most bitterly contested of all wars ... What is true of civil wars is true also of struggles between rival groups seeking to represent the same interest ... Leaders of groups representing opposing interests can easily compromise their differences and the struggle between them, insofar as there is a struggle, can be conducted for limited objectives. The real struggle of group politics is between groups attempting to represent the same interest. It is here that one encounters the strongest denunciations and the most bitter epithets.[20]

Kwavnick argues that interest groups value stability and continuity very highly, to the point that organizational objectives become the dominant motivation for their actions.

Cast in this light, it is understandable that rival organizations would perceive each other as a threat to their organizational interests and struggle with one another for recognition and legitimacy. Thus, cooperation is a "dangerous path."[21] Agreeing with

[20] David Kwavnick, *Organized Labour and Pressure Politics: The Canadian Labour Congress 1956-1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972), 19.
[21] Kwavnick, *Organized Labour,* 21.

Churchill, Kwavnick notes that a rival group represents competition for members and government concessions, or at least the ability to claim sole responsibility for such concessions. Kwavnick views interest group politics as an "exercise in mutual accommodation" where interests are reconciled when they come into conflict, for at least the partial benefit of all concerned, whereas an organizational struggle leaves much less room for cooperation. In his seminal work on interest groups, The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion, David B. Truman notes that this phenomenon is known as "dual unionism" and is the "equivalent of original sin, not only in the labour movement, but in all interest groups" because it disturbs the internal cohesion of the membership.[22] Both Truman and Kwavnick give examples of dual unionism. Truman notes the rivalry in the 1930s between the American Medical Association and the Committee of Physicians, referring to the Committee of Physicians as "insurgents," whose revolt was sparked over the issue of mandatory health insurance.[23] Perhaps the most famous American example is the creation of the Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in response to inadequate representation of industrial unions by the American Federation of Labour (AF of L) which traditionally promoted the interests of more specialized craft unions.

This thesis will not attempt to make a value judgement on whether CASA or CFS is more deserving of student attention, nor will it pursue an investigation of which organization's policy objectives have led to a greater number of government concessions. Evaluating the lobbying successes of CASA and CFS would seem to be essential to

[22] David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 181.
[23] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 176.

determining their relative strengths. Nevertheless, such an exercise is not practical. Proving the existence of causal links between an organization's policy objectives and a shift in government policy requires much speculation and conjecture. Graham Wilson, a scholar on American interest groups, notes the "limited utility" of assessing the effectiveness of interest groups on the basis of whether or not the government adopts the policy they support. "It is very rarely the case that we can isolate the effect of an interest group from the effects of other political forces."[24] In a report published by the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa, weighting the pros and cons of re-federation with CFS, the inability to draw a direct causal link was listed as a caveat in an assessment of the quality of CFS representation. "To what extent the CFS can take full credit is not tangible..."[25] At best, correlations can be drawn; we will do so where it is applicable, but it will not be the central aim of this thesis.

The argument presented in this paper will remain focussed on the reasons for two competing federal student lobbying organizations. The answer to this question can be reduced to two factors. First, different operationalizations of the "student interest" contribute to the fact that CFS and CASA often disagree. CFS and CASA often have differing and sometimes directly opposing interpretations of the "student interest," which lies at the core of their mandate and determines policy objectives. CFS members conceptualize the student interest in a manner that allows for action on a plethora of issues to which CASA does not speak. Furthermore, the tactics used to achieve the

[24] Graham K. Wilson, "American Interest Groups in Comparative Perspective," In *The Politics of Interests: Interest Groups Transformed*, ed. Mark P. Petracca (Boulder: Westview Press), 81.
[25] Student Federation of the University of Ottawa, *Ad-Hoc Committee on Student Advocacy Organizations Report Concerning the Canadian Federation of Students* (Ottawa: Student Federation of the University of Ottawa, 2008), 12.

student interest is a point of contention between CFS and CASA. CASA prefers a corporatist approach to lobbying, presenting logically structured arguments on pragmatic policy alternatives. The corporatist approach is a term used to "describe [an] understanding of interest groups, which values them as institutional mechanisms for representing interests."[26] Corporatist groups prize negotiation and deliberation and "link interest groups directly with state lawmaking and law-enforcing processes."[27] The best way to make public policy, in the corporatist paradigm, is to consult regularly with policy makers and promote understanding of both sides, taking a pragmatic approach to policy development and implementation.[28] CFS, on the other hand, tends to function outside the corporatist model by seeking less pragmatic policy alternatives.

Second, CFS and CASA have several organizational interests aimed at protecting and strengthening their respective organizations. These organizational interests are imperative to all interest groups and play a large role in maintaining the current rivalry between the two largest student organizations in the Canadian student movement.

The objective of the latter portion of the first chapter is to outline a brief history of the student movement in Canada. This investigation begins in the 1930s with the birth of the Canadian student movement in the aftermath of the depression and the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe. The trajectory of the student movement will be traced from its early days through the 1960s, where it was well-known for its radical activism. The first chapter will demonstrate the long history of social activism in the student movement, and how CFS inherited a social conscience, and thus a framework, from its

[26] Mansbridge, *Deliberative Theory*, 41
[27] Mansbridge, *Deliberative Theory*, 41
[28] Mansbridge, *Deliberative Theory*, 42.

predecessor organizations, through which it could operationalize the student interest. The chapter will conclude with an overview of the disaffiliation movement of the mid-1990s, which saw several student unions de-federate from CFS prior to forming CASA.

The second chapter will focus primarily on the operationalization of the student interest employed by CFS and CASA. This will be accomplished with an analysis of what CFS and CASA deem to be within the realm of the student interest, and how they go about promoting and defending those interests. To shed some light on this subject, attention must be given to the areas of CFS and CASA policy that show opposing interests. Specifically, we shall analyze issues that have led to conflicting policy between CFS and CASA, the issues that CFS lobbies on that CASA does not and the issues that align the student interest represented by CASA and CFS. CFS has a broader conception of the student interest, which includes social justice issues, and is known to seek dramatic policy concessions from government. On the other hand, CASA has a narrower understanding of the student interest, priding itself on pragmatic policy suggestions on post-secondary policy made by the federal government. This difference in philosophy was a primary contributing factor in the disaffiliation movement and remains a point of contention between CFS and CASA.

The final chapter will outline the organizational interests that help solidify CASA and CFS as separate and distinct organizations. The theoretical foundation of the final chapter comes from David Kwavnick, who argues that pressure groups must fulfill organizational interests to ensure their continued existence. Kwavnick argues that these interests are extremely important to the leadership and often supersede the central interest of their members, in this case the "student interest." Strong organization is an undeniable

benefit to interest groups because it leads to continuity and subsequently long-term access to policy makers. This argument applies to both CFS and CASA who invest much time and money into ensuring their organizational interests are fulfilled. To demonstrate these organizational interests, the third chapter will investigate the conditions of membership in CFS and CASA, the use of litigation to protect their interests and the investment in retaining members. In search of organizational stability, CFS and CASA must protect their organizational interests against each other.

As a whole, the Canadian student movement sits at the margins of Canadian political history. There have been relatively few academic forays into the origins of the Canadian student movement in the 1920s, a large amount has been written on the radical movements of the 1960s, and a negligible amount on the movement from the mid-1980s until the present. Facing this reality, the argument in this thesis relies heavily on primary sources. Official documents of CASA and CFS, including constitutions, meeting minutes, policy documents and media releases proved invaluable. Additional primary research presented in this thesis comes from interviews conducted with spokespeople from CFS and CASA in January 2009. The secondary research comes from the student media's presentation of CFS and CASA as well as general academic work on interest groups. The student media provides a unique angle on the subject because it is coming from the perspective of stakeholders who often present highly critical arguments. Finally, academic works covering the general topic of interest groups have allowed for connections to be drawn between the student movement, and the organizations that define it, and other interest groups and advocacy movements.

The following analysis of the student movement must begin by qualifying three terms that will appear frequently throughout this study. First, consideration will be given to the term "interest groups," "pressure groups," or "lobbying organizations," which will be used interchangeably. Over time, the conceptual terrain in the study of interest groups has altered significantly.[29] In the early days of interest group study, organized interests were known as pressure groups. The term has shifted away from pressure group because of the negative connotations that have been associated with this term and these organizations are now more widely known as interest groups or advocacy groups. Paul Pross, a scholar specializing in Canadian interest groups, offers a basic definition of pressure groups as "organizations whose members act together to influence public policy in order to promote their common interest."[30] Pross identifies the "chief characteristic" of pressure groups as the use of a range of tactics to influence government to adopt policy objectives endorsed by the members of that group.[31] David B. Truman, who is credited with bringing interest groups "into the mainstream of behavioural political science,"[32] classifies interest groups as organizations that, "on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of forms of behaviour that are implied by the shared attitudes."[33] The shared attitudes establish what is "needed or wanted in a given situation, observable as demands or claims upon other groups in society."[34] In Truman's view, the

[29] Mark P. Petracca, "The Rediscovery of Interest Groups," In *The Politics of Interests: Interest Groups Transformed,* ed. Mark P. Petracca (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 5.
[30] A. Paul Pross, *Pressure Groups in Canadian Politics,* McGraw-Hill Ryerson Series in Canadian Politics (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1975), 2.
[31] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 2,
[32] Petracca, *Rediscovery*, 4.
[33] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 33.
[34] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 33.

interests of a group are defined by a shared attitude at the foundational level of the organization.

Pross and Truman differ in their emphasis on which section of society interest groups are claiming their demands against. Pross favours the interpretation that the government is receiving demands from interest groups whereas Truman prefers to think of interest groups as demanding concessions from other shared attitude groups in society. Mark P. Petracca, writing on American interest groups in the 1990s, reconciles the definitions presented by Pross and Truman by saying that interest groups have "become a generic term used to refer to membership – or non-membership – based organizations or institutions that engage in activities to seek specific policy of political goals from the state," where the state is defined as not only government, but a broad range of social actors.[35] For the purposes of this paper, Petracca's definition will suffice as the paradigm on which we can proceed.

Within this definition, two classifications of interest groups have been identified. The first type of interest groups are known as issue-oriented groups, which are known for their weak organization, fluid membership, limited cohesion, as well as an "adherence to short range objectives."[36] Issue-oriented groups have limited knowledge of, and access to, relevant government organizations and focus on only one or two policy objectives. Institutional groups, on the other hand, have characteristics much the opposite. In Pross' view, institutional pressure groups are characterized by organizational continuity and cohesion, an extensive knowledge of the relevant sectors of government, stable

[35] Petracca, *Rediscovery*, 7.
[36] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 11.

membership, concrete and immediate operational objectives, and the fact that "organizational imperatives are generally more important than any particular objective."[37] Truman points to the work of George Lundberg to classify institutional groups as those that display a "relatively high degree of stability, uniformity formality, and generality."[38] CASA and CFS are more accurately classified as institutional interest groups. These criteria do not seamlessly dovetail with the organizational realities of CFS or CASA, but Pross admits that his "ideal" institutional group "rarely exists, and is probably non-existent in Canada."[39] CFS and CASA, however, demonstrate many of the characteristics of institutional groups and will be defined as such in this thesis. The classification of CFS and CASA as institutional interest groups has important implications, especially in the third chapter where it will be shown that a major component of institutional groups is their survival.

The second concept to be explained is the "student movement." Nigel Moses, in his Ph.D dissertation titled All that was Left: Student Struggle for Mass Student Aid and the Abolition of Tuition Fees in Ontario, 1946 to 1975, outlines two possible interpretations of the student movement. In the "traditional sense," the student movement should be understood to mean "those student-based popular movements that arise from time to time, usually with an anarchist or Marxist political orientation."[40] In this sense, the student movement presents short term, and often large scale challenges to the established public authority. This definition is appropriate in the more radical days of the

[37] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 10.
[38] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 26.
[39] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 11.
[40] Nigel Roy Moses, "All that was Left: Student Struggle for Mass Student Aid and the Abolition of Tuition Fees in Ontario, 1946 to 1975." (Ph.D diss., University of Toronto, 1995), 9.

student movement, and will be used in the historical survey to follow. The other definition utilized by Moses is influenced heavily by the French sociologist Alain Touraine.[41] In the Tourainian sense, a student movement can be defined as a "collective response involving the 'production' of social order" where it does not "passively 'consume' social order but organizes and pressures for social change."[42] When the articulation of demands helps produce a "broader public concern and action," a movement is formed.[43] Although this definition was useful in Moses' Marxist interpretation of the student movement, this thesis will not use the term student movement as Moses has defined it in the Tourainian sense, unless otherwise stated. Throughout the bulk of this thesis, the student movement will be used as a generic term to describe organized student activism operating at the national level. This is a very narrow interpretation of the student movement, but one that will allow for its continued use throughout this thesis.

The final central concept to be employed is the "student interest," which will be the central focus of the second chapter. The student interest is important because it creates the framework in which CFS and CASA operate, and helps contextualize policy objectives of the organizations. The "student interest" is in abstract concept that represents a pluralist aggregate of interests that are presented as a collective interest and then represented by either CFS or CASA. There is danger in simplifying the student interest and understanding it to be a single set of interests to which all students adhere. The principle of mutual accommodation allows for the presentation of a "student interest"

[41] The heavy influence of Touraine in Moses' understanding of the student movement can be understood considering that Moses is drawing heavily on Marxist theory of social relations in his dissertation.
[42] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 10.
[43] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 10.

by CFS and CASA. According to mutual accommodation, any mention of the student interest should be taken to mean a multiplicity of interests of member schools that, through discourse, are distilled into concrete manifestations of the student interest.[44] Not every policy objective of CFS and CASA will be in the interest of all of the individual members, but sum of benefits to members is in the interest of their clients. This thesis will work on the assumption that what the members of CFS and CASA perceive to be in their interests are, in fact, in their interests. As mentioned above, there will be no value judgement made when considering which operationalization of the student interest is more logical or which one is more worthy of support. The reason for avoiding this type of analysis is stated best by Truman when he argued that "the policies adopted by particular unions do not represent degrees of enlightenment but different ranges of choice."[45] The "range of choice" in this case is established by what members of CFS and CASA consider to be in the student interest. This explanation of the student interest will be adequate for our purposes until the second chapter, where a dissection of the student interest and a consideration of its abstract nature will take place to see how it contributes to the fracturing of the student movement.

Social Underpinnings: A Brief History of the Canadian Student Movement

Speaking of the "student movement" often invites visions of students with long hair, tinted glasses and bell-bottom jeans, standing on campus lawns protesting the established social and political order. There is no question that the student movement was

[44] These concrete manifestations are established through policy objectives and campaigns that are approved by membership and carried out by the membership of CASA and CFS.
[45] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 178.

popularized by such images, captured during periods of unrest in the 1960s on campuses across North America. Student activism of the 1960s precipitated an influx of academic study attempting to explain the ideological, social and demographic characteristics of student advocates in order to understand the sources of their discontent and to gauge the propensity of individuals to become activists.[46] The previous period of Canadian student activism is underrepresented in academia.[47] Despite the lack of sources on student activism outside of the 1960s, the remainder of this chapter will provide a brief history of the Canadian student movement. The purpose of a historical survey is to demonstrate the social foundations of the student movement, which will assist in the subsequent discussion of operationalizing the "student interest." Also, a historical analysis will provide important background information on the grievances and objectives of those disaffected CFS members who de-federated to form CASA, thereby establishing a new vision of the student interest.

The origins of the Canadian student movement have been traced back to the 1920s by Paul Axelrod, a leading scholar on post-secondary education in Canada. Since the 1920s, students have organized to allow for participation "in efforts to transform the political and social order of Canadian society."[48] Prior to the 1920s, universities were stable institutions and by no means loci of social discontent and protest. Axelrod notes that university administrations had been spared the "more serious challenges posed by politically militant youth."[49] The first organization to form was the Christian Student

[46] Lipsit, Seymour Martin, *Rebellion in the University* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1972), x.
[47] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 359.
[48] Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990), 128.
[49] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 128.

Movement (CSM), established in January 1921, with peace and social justice issues at the core of their Christian reform mandate. Combining promotion of Christian living with left wing politics,[50] the CSM was "committed to raising the political consciousness of Canadian Students" and is considered by Axelrod to be the "most important and enduring element of the Canadian student movement in the 1930s."[51]

The second national student organization to be formed was the National Federation of Canadian University Students (NFCUS). Founded in Montreal in 1926 by eleven student organizations under the leadership of Ralph Nunn May, an ex-president of the National Union of Students in England, NFCUS existed mainly as an apolitical service organization.[52] The purpose of the NFCUS was to promote campus cooperation in the dissemination of information regarding student related concerns and also to provide services, including an exchange program, debating tournaments and discounted railway fares for students. In its early days, the NFCUS was very hesitant to take stances on peace and social reform issues, preferring to "stand of the sidelines" and perform its apolitical duties.[53]

A final organization of note, founded in January 1938, is the Canadian Student Assembly (CSA). The CSA became an instant rival of the NFCUS because the CSA was politically active where NFCUS was unwilling to act. CSA opposed militarism, sought the protection of civil liberties and lobbied for greater access to education. The CSA adopted a political campaign in 1939 aimed at pressuring the federal government to

[50] The term "Left wing" politics must be placed in context of the 1930s. The CSM was not a radical organization and avoided adopting controversial policies.
[51] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 129.
[52] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 129.
[53] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 129.

increase the financial commitment to students in the form of government bursaries, which was only partially successful.[54] CSA deemed it important to create a mass student movement to inspire political change. Although it was not able to realize this goal, CSA did affect public opinion regarding the condition of students in Canada.

The national student organizations that were formed in the 1920s and 1930s met their demise in World War Two. The prospect of conscription was much debated by students in the national organizations, who were proponents of the peace movement. The CSA passed a resolution opposing conscription, which would be the "death-knell" of the CSA.[55] This resolution was used to organize opposition to the national student groups, and ultimately led to pull-out referenda and a massive decline in membership, leaving the Canadian student movement in shambles.

With the return of war veterans from Europe, NFCUS was re-established in 1946-47 and survived until 1969, while going through a re-structuring in 1963 under the new name of Canadian Union of Students (CUS). Between 1947 and 1963, the NFCUS maintained a national office, offering student services and lobbying for student bursaries.[56] The mid-to-late 1960s introduced a new phase of "radical" activism for CUS, signalling a fundamental break with its apolitical roots. There had been rapid political changes in the American student movement, precipitated by the Berkeley Free Speech Movement in 1964 and a range of radical student uprisings concerning civil rights. CUS embraced this new radical ideology, known as the "new left," emanating from the American student movement, evidenced by a succession of radical and socialistic

[54] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 129.
[55] Axelrod, *Student Life*, 144.
[56] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 5.

executives in CUS who distrusted federal politics.[57] During this time, the student movement aligned itself with other social movements, including the women's liberation movement, environmentalism, education reform and the free speech movement.[58] Rebellion, according to Moses, had become a cultural style that students embraced. A telling example of the radical shift in CUS ideology can be found in the struggle for financial assistance from the government. In the mid-1960s, lobbying efforts shifted from trying to establish a system of government funded bursaries, to the abolition of tuition fees.[59]

The radical shift in the student movement led to a backlash from conservative student groups, and many internal struggles ensued, contributing to the downfall of CUS in 1969. There was "constant mediation" between groups who felt that CUS was benefiting their interests, while others felt that it was not only a waste of time and money but also an "evil force of socialism."[60] Thus, the political climate in CUS began to polarize and anti-CUS students organized many successful "No-to-CUS" campaigns, leading to the collapse of this "socially critical" student organization.

The next phase of the Canadian student movement began in the mid-1970s with a newfound belief in the corporatist paradigm, dulling the radical edge of the student movement. In 1972, the National Union of Students (NUS) was established as the successor to CUS. The NUS was far more corporatist than its predecessor, ushering in an era of an "institutionalized" student struggle,[61] which remains to this day. Although the

[57] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 81.
[58] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 83.
[59] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 372.
[60] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 13.
[61] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 84.

student movement yielded to conservative forces, it remained an arena in which to voice social critiques and lobby for social justice issues. The NUS constitution outlined part of their mandate as "act[ing] as an agent of social change as defined by student associations at educational institutions which belong to the National Union of Students."[62] The first standing resolution of the NUS was the Declaration of the Canadian Student, which justified including a socialistic approach to student representation: "The principal goal of education is to serve society by developing the full potential of all citizens as free, creative, thinking and acting human beings and therefore to serve society by helping achieve equality of the essential conditions of human living."[63] The Canadian student had a duty and a right to contribute to the development of society by "engaging in fundamental action, as an individual or in a group, to confront society with discoveries and to promote consequent action to bring reforms into practice."[64] Still, the NUS signified a break from the earlier days of student radicalism and was criticized by radicals for remaining silent on the issues of environment, poverty and war.[65]

In 1978, the NUS affiliated with the Association of Student Councils (AOSC), a student service organization, to supplement student representation at the federal level with the benefit of cooperative services. The NUS was comprised mostly of smaller organizations and was very political, while the AOSC consisted of larger unions which traditionally functioned outside the realm of political activism.[66] Between 1978 and 1980, there were many discussions among student leaders regarding not only a closer working

[62]National Union of Students Constitution and Bylaws, Atlantic Federation of Students/Associated Student Union fonds, MS-2-473, Box 6, Folder 9, Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1.
[63] NUS Constitution, *NUS Standing Resolution No 1*, 14.
[64] NUS Constitution, *NUS Standing Resolution No 1*, 14.
[65] Jan Nicol and Mike Bocking, "BCSF and NUS seek $2 Levy," *The Ubyssey*, November 16, 1976.
[66] Kelly Lamrock, *CFS National Chair 1991-1993*, interview by Jeffrey Waugh, January 26 2009.

relationship between the NUS and the AOSC, but also the need for the inclusion of provincial representation through counterpart organizations. Subsequently, a conference held in Winnipeg in 1980 approved the basis of a new organization that would see the synthesis of the NUS, the AOSC and several provincial groups to form a united student movement. After hosting referenda at 48 campuses across the country,[67] the amalgamation of NUS and ASOC was carried out in October 1981 to form a sole national student organization in Canada: the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS).

Rejecting CFS: The Disaffiliation Movement

Under CFS, the Canadian student movement was united and presented a single operationalization of the student interest to government and the public. However functional to Canadian students this unity might have been, the solidarity lasted only four years before rifts began to form, evidenced by the formation of eight new provincial and federal student organizations between 1985 and 1995.[68] According to CASA, the rise of these groups was in response to "impatience and dissatisfaction that was found in the student movement in the mid-1980s."[69] In response to this dissatisfaction, all of these organizations entrenched mechanisms in their founding principles that "directly responded to the inadequacies found in the student movement of the 80s and 90s."[70] These inadequacies are cited by CASA as "accusations of scandal, mismanagement, and a

[67] 41 of these student unions voted in favour of the creation of a new federal student organization.
[68] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "How Does CASA Help Students?: A Little History." In *CASA Delegate Package.* 2008.
[69] CASA, *Little History*, 2008.
[70] CASA, *Little History*, 2008. This will be considered further in the third chapter when analyzing the organizational interests and the bleak outlook of reconciliation between CFS and CASA.

top-heavy organizational structure [that] prevailed throughout the student movement."[71] The "student movement" that CASA refers to in their document is clearly meant to represent CFS.

In an article published by the Canadian University Press (CUP) in November 1994 titled CFS: Bureaucrats or Student Activists?, the author noted the criticisms and allegations facing CFS had resulted in a "loss of confidence" for many member organizations.[72] In October 1994, three member associations revoked their membership amidst criticisms of providing poor financial accountability, being out of touch with educational issues and being unrealistic in their lobbying tactics.[73] The situation for CFS worsened in the following year when ten more member associations decided to organize de-federation referenda. Six of the ten schools voted to pull out citing the high cost of CFS membership, an oversized bureaucracy and left-wing policy approaches.[74] Darrell Hynes, a student executive member from Memorial University, argued that CFS had lost touch of the needs of Canadian students, saying that he was "tired of going to CFS meetings and arguing whether we should boycott Pepsi or have macaroni for dinner ... CFS is so concerned with solving all the problems of the world that they are forgetting their own members."[75] This sentiment was not reflected by all student leaders; there were many who were not offended by the operations of CFS. Several member associations

[71] CASA, *Little History*, 2008.

[72] Mouane Sengsavang, "CFS: Bureaucrats or Student Activists," *The Peak*, November 21, 1994, http://www.peak.sfu.ca/the-peak/94-3/issue11/cfs.html (accessed October 22, 2008).

[73] Sengsavang, *Bureaucrats*, 1994.

[74] John Besley, "CFS Continues to Fight Pull-Out Referenda," *The Peak,* May 29, 1995, http://www.peak.sfu.ca/the-peak/95-2/issue4/cfs.html (accessed October 18, 2008).

[75] Besley, *Fight Pull-Out*, 1995.

voted to remain in CFS and a coalition of student associations from Newfoundland organized a referendum to federate with CFS.

Many of the students who were disaffected by CFS recognized the value of student representation at the federal level but felt that CFS was hindering the ability of students to maximize their interests. Kelly Lamrock, the current Minister of Education for the Provincial Government of New Brunswick, played an instrumental role in the conferences that led to the establishment of CASA as an alternative organization to CFS. Lamrock was the National Chair of CFS from 1991-1993 as an undergraduate and became a vocal critic of CFS after his tenure. Lamrock notes that CFS had always been an uneasy alliance between service-oriented schools in AOSC that preferred a "corporatist culture of compromise" and the socialistic and politically active schools in the NUS. [76] There was no single catalyst that led to the exodus from CFS but rather a range of factors that built up over several years. In the words of Lamrock, the disaffiliation movement was "a trickle followed by a flood."[77] Many of the associations constituting the right-wing of CFS left early, shifting the moderate associations to the right end of the spectrum and making them less likely to impact decisions made in CFS.

Among these member associations, there was a desire to adopt more pragmatic solutions to problems facing students. The founders of CASA had a desire to debate the issues seriously "without screaming at politicians."[78] At the time, CFS was pushing for the abolition of tuition fees. In the view of the moderate schools in CFS, it was unreasonable to ask the government to incur an annual deficit of 40 billion dollars to fund

[76] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.
[77] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.
[78] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.

free university education.[79] Moving forward on the basis of a corporatist paradigm, Lamrock argues that there was no question that the newly formed CASA was able to get quicker and more substantial access to policy makers. There was a personal trust between politicians and student leaders representing CASA, because the politicians did not have to worry about being "pelted with eggs or having their kids followed to hockey practice."[80] After a series of conferences, known collectively as the Winds of Change, were held with moderate student associations, student leaders voted to found a new national student organization in 1994 at Carleton University and in June 1995, a second federal student group was formally set up as a rival to CFS.

This rivalry between CFS and CASA was well-documented in the student press in 1995. One article emphasized the dysfunctional nature of a divided student movement:

> Bitter in-fighting between Canada's two national student organizations has left the credibility of the student movement tarnished at a time when students are under a hail of fire from government attacks to post- secondary education. With no clear, unified, national student voice, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), have engaged in a bitter power struggle to see who will represent the student voice in future years, and there is no indication of any reconciliation in the near future.[81]

The rivalry between CFS and CASA was very antagonistic in the early years of their simultaneous existence. Proponents of CFS claimed that the existence of CASA was dysfunctional to the student interest, because only a united student voice would be able to convince policy makers and the public that concessions to students were necessary.

[79] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.
[80] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009. Lamrock recalled a protest in which CFS followed Lloyd Axworthy's son to hockey practice, protesting along the way, leaving Mr. Lamrock "mortified."
[81] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.

Under pressure from the newly formed CASA, Guy Caron, National Chairperson for the CFS in September 1995, publically rationalized the CFS's involvement in social issues to a reporter for the Canadian University Press. "It's very important to be involved in social issues," stated Caron. "It's impossible to achieve our goal for accessible and affordable post-secondary education if we're not looking at the larger perspective,"[82] This sentiment has direct lineage to CUS in the 1960s. A paper titled CUS and Unionism had argued that pursuing educational and social change simultaneously did not lead to a conflict of mandate, but were seen as "essentially complementary. Certainly the former will not be realized to any significant extent until the latter has been achieved."[83]

Alex Usher, the first National Director of CASA, made it clear that CASA did not agree with the fundamental tenets upon which the CFS social justice campaigns were founded. In an internal letter sent to the CASA board of Directors, dated 16 April 1995, Usher noted, "[as] hard as it may be for some of us in CASA to believe, there are indeed student associations who may prefer to be represented by an organization that takes stands on social issues, no matter how irrelevant to higher education they may seem." The letter continued its criticism of CFS, "the thing that galls me the most about the CFS attitude is their belief that there must be unity in the student movement, and we can't have two associations. Frankly, I haven't seen it [unity] in the student movement." said Usher. "If you don't agree with things and want to have a voice then what's the option? CFS is

[82] Lamrock, *Former Student Advocate*, 2009.
[83] Brian Hutchison, *CUS and Unionism*, 1968, Atlantic Federation of Students/Associated Student Union fonds, MS-2-473, Box 8, Folder 2, Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1.

not the only game in town."[84]As the evidence suggests, CASA emerged on the national scene of student lobbying as an alternative for those who were not satisfied with the student lobby movement in Canada and wanted to see it taken in a new direction. Subsequent chapters will revolve around two central concepts that allow for insight into the continued separation of CASA and CFS: different operationalizations of the student interest and the importance of organizational interests.

[84] Samer Muscati, "CFS and CASA Butt Heads over Students," *The Peak,* September 25, 1995. http://www.peak.sfu.ca/the-peak/95-3/issue4/cup.html (accessed December 19, 2008).

Chapter Two

A Self-determining Concept: Operationalizing the Student Interest

Since the Winds of Change conferences forged a mandate for a second national student lobby organization, the rivalry between CFS and CASA has persisted. To obtain a better understanding of the antagonistic relationship between CASA and CFS, this chapter will investigate the policy and lobbying tactics that distinguish the organizations from one another. The leaders of CASA's founding student unions felt a desire to ascribe a new focus to the student movement, arguing systemic drawbacks inherent in the structure of CFS prevented them from pursuing an appropriate conception of the student interest. At the core of the conversation to follow lies that familiar, yet tricky, phrase so often heard in the realm of student lobbying: the "student interest." The student interest sits at the very core of CASA and CFS and acts to propel their mandate, and subsequently their lobbying and policy goals. This key phrase, however, is an inherently ambiguous concept which exists only as defined by the national groups and, ultimately, their member unions and associations. Within the current reality of the Canadian student movement, there is no single universal principle uniting all students concerning what constitutes a worthy and pressing set of objectives to be presented to government on their behalf. The "student interest," as a concept, is operationalized differently by the members of CASA and the members of CFS, and this contributes a great deal to the continued simultaneous existence and rivalry between CFS and CASA. This chapter will be devoted to a comprehensive analysis of how CASA and CFS, through their member organizations, operationalize the student interest.

David Truman speaks of the implications of classifying a socially diverse group using an overarching label. Truman argues that such all-encompassing labels "involve certain hidden assumptions, assertions, or conclusions about the political life – and particularly the unity – of the interest group designated by such labels. These are at best shorthand expressions, simplifications, which avoid the awkward or embarrassing tasks of indicating which individuals are included under such terms ... such expressions take it for granted that the degree of cohesion in these groups is perfect."[85] In other words, the student interest is a shorthand way to describe a complex aggregation of individuals with differing aspirations; these differences cannot be subsumed under a simplified concept of the student interest. Thus, there are, in fact, many different understandings of the student interest, which are channelled through either CASA or CFS and delivered to the federal government. In an opinion article written for the Fulcrum, the University of Ottawa student newspaper, a student arguing in favour of membership in CFS placed Truman's argument into the context of the student movement.

> We speak so often of "the student voice." The CFS is not the student voice. The CFS is the student conversation. It is how we speak to each other across the nation, and how, when we have our consensus, we speak out. It is a conversation worth having, because it will be had without us, and our valuable words and ideas will be left unspoken and unheard ... Students can debate and change the message. Only by being part of the dialogue within the CFS can we help to choose the words.[86]

Zach Churchill, National Director of CASA, believes that the existence of separate conceptions of the student interest at the federal level is perfectly reasonable.

[85] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 112.
[86] Ted Horton, "'Yes to the CFS' A United Student Voice: Flawed by Functional," *The Fulcrum,* http://www.thefulcrum.ca/?q=oped/opinion-(%26%23039%3Byes%26%23039%3B-cfs)-(%26%23039%3Bno%26%23039%3B-cfs) (accessed November 15, 2008).

> We do not live in a world of black and white, we live in a very diverse country, and in the student sphere we work within a very diverse demographic and it's important that all those interests are able to be represented adequately... [students] are all free thinking people, we are critical thinkers who have the ability to disagree on something and pursue different avenues to achieve different goals, I do not think that's an insult to students at all.[87]

In this respect, Churchill is arguing that a flexible and subjective concept of the student interest is not only to be expected, but also will be beneficial because it gives students the ability to choose another option through which they can communicate their message to government.

This argument is rejected by CFS, which postulates that a divided student movement is dysfunctional to the interests of students and has negative consequences on lobby effectiveness.[88] Ian Boyko, CFS Government Relations and Campaigns Coordinator, rejected the existence of a wide enough range of student interests to warrant the existence of two organizations. "We used to have a united voice. A minority of students could not get their way, could not win the argument, and splintered off ... they should have won over 51% of the plenary floor with an argument, not split off."[89] The student movement had been successfully united from 1981-1995, which demonstrates that students are capable of uniting under a single understanding of the student interest. Boyko also asserted that there is really not much difference between what CFS and CASA were pursuing and proposing to government, and that the common interests between CASA and CFS members was greater than their diverging interests.[90] Currently,

[87] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, 2009.
[88] Ian Boyko, *Canadian Federation of Students Government Relations and Campaigns Coordinator*, Interviewed by Jeffrey Waugh, 15 January 2009.
[89] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 2009.
[90] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 2009.

however, there remain two national mechanisms through which students can express their concerns to the federal government and to the public.

Disentangling the different factors contributing to the operationalization of the student interest depends on understanding that the student interest is defined subjectively, and according to the issues that member schools decide to declare within their interests. According to Anthony King, "a group's beliefs about its interests are its interests."[91] In the case of the Canadian student movement, where there are two rival organizations that at times compete for members, public support and government attention, King's statement is especially revealing. When asked how the operationalization of the student interest is manifested within their organizations, CASA and CFS officials stressed that the individual member unions and associations were the supreme arbiter of the interests which they decide to advance. Although the individual members vote on the creation of policy, there are systemic limits on the potential definition of the student interest, which stem from the founding principles and precedents set within CFS and CASA.

Demonstrating how CASA and CFS prescribe meaning and value to a concept fundamental to the student movement, as well as how the student interest affects the creation of policy objectives will be accomplished through a review of official policy, lobbying tactics and national campaigns. With these resources, we can determine how CFS and CASA operationalize the "student interest." This will involve understanding what CFS and CASA have in common, what issues involve both organizations but leave them on opposite sides of the debate, and what issues one organization agrees on but the other ignores. This exercise reveals that the crucial distinction between the

[91] Anthony King, "Ideas Institutions and Policies of Governments: a Comparative Analysis Part III." In *British Journal of Political Science*. Vol .3. No. 4 (October, 1973), 414.

operationalization of the student interest by CASA and CFS relates to the scope of the concept, and the route taken to defend and promote the student interest on a national basis. Since the successful national movement to unite Canadian student advocates under one national voice created CFS, its members have operationalized the student interest in a broader sense, to include issues which CASA would not classify as a student interest. A function of differing operationalizations of the student interest is a difference in lobbying tactics that has acted as a divisive force preventing reconciliation. As we discovered in the previous chapter, the widely defined concept of the student interest and tactics used to achieve objectives were the major qualms the originators of CASA had with CFS.

The first items to be examined are official documents, produced by CFS and CASA, which state the raison d'être of each organization. The preamble to the CFS constitution and by-laws asserts that CFS members are striving for a nationally unified student movement, guided by overarching principles that all students can strive for and adhere to. "We, the students of Canada, recognizing the need to speak with one voice in asserting our legitimate needs and concerns, wish to express our support for one national student organization."[92] The statement of purpose highlights the desire in CFS to be a strong united movement to "represent Canadian students in the federal level of decision making and to do so by speaking on their behalf with one united voice."[93] For CFS, national unity and solidarity is central to their existence and is directly tied to their success in lobbying for their policy objectives. The website of CFS reminds members and informs prospective members that "to be truly effective in representing their collective interests to the federal and provincial governments, it was vital to unite under one

[92] CFS, "Constitution and By-Laws: Preamble," Last Amended 2008, 5.
[93] CFS, "Constitution and Bylaws: Statement of Purpose," 9.

banner."[94] Aside from the desire for a cohesive and all-encompassing movement, founders of CFS hinted at the wide boundaries of the student interest. The first basic aim of CFS listed in the preamble is "to organize students on a democratic, cooperative basis in advancing our own interests, and in advancing the interests of our community."[95] The implications of this statement can shed light on CFS operationalization of the student interest. Entrenched in this founding sentiment is the flexibility for CFS to consider issues not directly related to post-secondary policy. As demonstrated in chapter one, the founders of CASA saw themselves as the antithesis of CFS and set up their mandate in objection to the practices of CFS,[96] and this has played a big role in breeding antagonism between CFS and CASA.

A superficial investigation of the purpose of CFS and CASA, reveals many similarities. CFS exists "to represent, promote and defend the common interests of Canadian post-secondary students" as well as "to promote and support the interests and activities of democratic student organisations in all provinces and at all educational institutions in Canada."[97] CASA's purpose is to "represent and defend the interests of post-secondary students to federal and interprovincial levels of government."[98] These broad and general statements seem rather similar in meaning, but that similarity does not reflect the reality of the national Canadian student lobby. To discern how the operationalization of the student interest is executed, we turn to an analysis of policy objectives and campaigns carried out by each organization.

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[94] Canadian Federation of Students, "About the CFS: An Overview of the Federation," http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/html/english/about/index.php (accessed July 7, 2008).
[95] CFS, *Overview*.
[96] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, 2009.
[97] CFS, "Constitution and By-Laws: Statement of Purpose," 9.
[98] Canadian Alliance of Student Association, "About CASA: What is CASA?," 26 April 2008, http://www.casa.ca/index.php/what-is-casa.html (accessed; July 19, 2008).

In order to compare and contrast the different policies put forth by CFS and CASA, it is important that a framework is developed to give our analysis some direction. First, we will look at the issues where CFS and CASA differ in their stance, which will feature a case study on the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Second, there will be an investigation of the issues that capture the attention and resources of one group but are ignored by the other. Finally, consideration will be given to those issues that see an overlap in policy objectives between CASA and CFS.

Polarizing the Student Interest: The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation

In a study of the extent to which two groups, claiming to represent the same interest, can have such differing opinions, no recent issue is more salient than that of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF). This policy issue highlights how CASA and CFS have different interpretations of the impact of the CMSF on the student interest. According to CASA: "The Millennium Scholarship is a prime example of how different we both are."[99] The CMSF is an arms-length organization that blurs the distinction between private and public; six of fifteen trustees and directors are appointed by the federal government. [100] The CMSF is technically a private organization, but it was created by an act of parliament and is subject to reviews to ensure the mandate is being executed as intended by the government.[101] The CMSF is responsible for delivering

[99] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, 2009.
[100] Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. "Governance: Members and Administration," http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/aboutus/Governance.asp (accessed November 17, 2008).
[101] Samson & Associates. "Value for Money Review of Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation." 17 September 2007. http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/learning/postsecondary_education/CMSF/samson_report.shtml#concopcmsf (accessed September 28, 2008).

federal funds to students in the form of merit and need-based bursaries.[102] When it was announced in the federal budget of 1998, it was endowed with $2.5 billion which, combined with the interest incurred over 10 years, would permit the distribution of $350 million annually for a decade.[103]

According to CASA, the CMSF was unquestionably serving the interests of students, and by partnering with several other student organizations, it had over 600,000 students willing to agree with them.[104] Churchill accredited the CMSF as being "more efficient and more effective than any other mechanism [of delivering student aid] that has ever existed in Canada."[105] Kyle Steele, Chair of the General Assembly of CASA, echoed that sentiment, saying that the CMSF was the "most successful grant program in the history of Canada."[106] Clearly, CASA valued the program and believed it was making progress and that its existence served the student interest. Thus, a budget announcement in February 2008, which revealed the Conservatives' plan to discontinue the CMSF and replace it with a system of student grants,[107] was unacceptable to CASA. Ensuring the continuation of the CMSF became a top lobbying priority of CASA.

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[102] According to the CMSF website, 95% of the funds delivered to students are delivered under the auspices of the Millennium Bursary Program, while only 5% is dedicated to merit-based scholarships.
[103] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. "Time is Running out for Students: The need to renew the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation," http://www.casa.ca/pdf/policy/background02.pdf (accessed December 17, 2008)
[104] Zach Churchill, response to "New Federal Grants may Exclude Quebec" by Jennifer Freitas and Ben Ngai. Posted 3 June 2008 on the concordian.com. In his blog post Churchill lists the partners of CFS on this particular issue as follows: http://www.theconcordian.com/home/index.cfm?event=displayArticleComments&ustory_id=f75f68e0-151f-4aea-ad66-361cd6e4c6f6 (accessed 22 August 2008).
[105] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, 2009.
[106] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, 2009.
[107] Joey Coleman, "Budget 2008: Thats it? Budget 2008 Offers no Big Moves in Higher Education" *Maclean's On Campus*, February 26, 2008, http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2008/02/26/budget-2008-thats-it/ (accessed September 18, 2009).

In stark contrast to CASA, CFS had actively opposed the program and ran a campaign decrying the CMSF for inefficiency, ineffectiveness, and partisanship, calling for a system of government administered student grants to replace it.[108] In the view of CFS, the CMSF has been dysfunctional to the student interest for several reasons. Boyko notes that although the CMSF did have a certain degree of potential, it was "very poorly and hastily designed."[109] In polar opposition to CASA, CFS took the position that the CMSF was not effective in getting money to students because it was not accountable to government, and subsequently to students.[110] The CMSF also "abused their third party status. It was stacked top to bottom with Liberal appointees," essentially rendering the CMSF a partisan think tank and apologist able to "mask [Liberal] ineffectiveness" in dealing with access to post secondary education.[111] While the student interest represented by CFS shouted good riddance to CMSF, the interests of students represented by CASA cried foul.

The official resolution passed in 2002 by the members of CFS reads: "The Federation is opposed to the Millennium Scholarship Foundation as a simple solution to the student debt crisis. The Federation supports the transfer of federal funding from the Millennium Scholarship Foundation to help fund a Canadian Student Grant Program."[112] CFS communicated its position through a "fact-sheet" published in the summer of 2007, with the expiration date of the CMSF looming. Titled Millennium Scholarship Foundation: A Failed Experiment in Student Aid, the document railed against the

[108] Canadian Federation of Students, "Campaigns and Lobbying: The Canada Student Grants Program vs. the Millennium Scholarship Foundation," (accessed December 14, 2008).
[109] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 15 January 2009.
[110] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 15 January 2009.
[111] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 15 January 2009.
[112] Canadian Federation of Students, "Policy Manual: Issues Policy – Post-Secondary Policy." Last Amended November 2007, 77.

ineffectiveness of the CMSF, reinforcing many of the concerns expressed by Boyko. The argument presented by CFS against the CMSF can be boiled down to four central criticisms. First, CFS claims that the hasty construction of the CMSF made the provinces "resentful participants" in the scheme to involve them in specialized programming designed to meet provincial needs.[113] Second, CFS dismisses the CMSF as a "public relations smokescreen" that is pretending to act in the interests of students but has an underlying motive of pursuing partisan goals. Third, CFS asserts that the CMSF misuses research to "downplay the crisis of student debt and the harmful impact of student debt."[114] Finally, CFS has major qualms with the fact that the CMSF is not directly under the purview of government, rendering it unaccountable, even though they are spending millions of tax dollars.

CFS officials and members were sceptical of the research function of the CMSF that was launched in 2001 with the intention to improve their services and to self-evaluate their progress.[115] In a document titled Does Money Matter? the CMSF outlined the objectives of the first instalments in the research series. In order to gain insight into the issue of post-secondary access in Canada, the CMSF set out to determine the primary factors that discouraged youth from pursuing a university education. With a number of studies commissioned, the CMSF endorsed a report authored by Acadia University Professor Dianne Looker titled Why Don't they Go On? Factors Affecting the Decisions

[113] Canadian Federation of Students, "Millennium Scholarship Foundation: A Failed Experiment in Student Financial Aid, Summer 2007. These special programming needs refer to efforts by the foundation to establish programs tailored to particular needs of the provinces. For example, in Nova Scotia programmes were focused on low income students, in British Columbia they were focused on Aboriginal Students and in Saskatchewan they were focused on rural students.
[114] CFS, *Failed Experiment*.
[115] Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation. "Does Money Matter?" www.millenniumscholarships.ca/images/Publications/money.pdf (accessed January 20, 2009).

of Canadian Youth Not to Pursue Post-Secondary Education. This report asserted that 77% of young Canadians by-passing a university education did so for non-financial reasons. Other "sociodemographic variables" were cited as the daunting barriers, and CMSF took the position that "Canada must move beyond student financial assistance" as the primary means of making university education accessible. It should be noted that a 23% plurality of respondents to the surveys, cited financial barriers as the primary factor in their decision not to attend university, while the other non-financial barriers included indecision about future goals, disinterest in a degree, wanting to take some time off, insufficient grades and having a good job upon high school graduation. With the publication of this report, the CMSF took the position that although money does matter in access to post-secondary education, it was by no means the primary barrier.

According to CFS, this argument was an attempt to legitimize the ineffective Liberal handling of access to education. In response, CFS published Strategy for Change: Money Does Matter in October 2007, a 64 page document presenting a contrasting argument to that of the CMSF. The underlying aim of the study was identical to that of Does Money Matter? It was intended to study accessibility to post-secondary education and give recommendations on how it could be improved. It was argued that money does matter and that the federal government should increase its role in minimizing tuition fees and resist the temptation to privatize financial assistance. Creating a hierarchy of barriers,

which CFS believes the CMSF has done, will oversimplify the issue of access in the face of a much more complicated and interconnected set of factors. [116]

In response, CASA published a document arguing against the criticisms of CFS titled Time is Running Out for Students: the Need to Renew the Canadian Scholarship Foundation. To CASA, the CMSF was an effective mechanism that had the ability to improve access to post-secondary education in Canada. CASA cited the CMSF 3-4% overhead, the fact that it delivers $350 million annually to students, and that 95% are distributed based on need as strengths of the CMSF. As for the public relations smokescreen, Churchill believes the argument is absurd. CASA is willing to give the researchers the benefit of the doubt and assume that they are objective researchers; allegations that the CMSF is serving a conspiratorial research role are entirely unfounded. To CASA, the expiration of the CMSF was very troubling to the student interest. In the latter half of the document, CASA attempts to directly refute all of the arguments put forth by CFS against the CMSF. Every single argument made by CFS is briefly summarized under the heading "myth," and is then argued against under the heading "fact." This document demonstrates the extent to which CASA and CFS can view the same policy and come to drastically different conclusions.

Over the course of its decade-long existence, the CMSF has undergone four public audits. These independent audits are pointed to by CASA to support their position, because they generally credit the CMSF as being an efficient channel through which to disperse government funds. These audits, however, are just as easily deflected by CFS

[116] Canadian Federation of Students, "Strategy for Change: Money Does Matter: An Alternative for Accessible, High-Quality Post Secondary Education," October 2007, http://www.cfsadmin.org/quickftp/Strategy_for_Change_2007.pdf (accessed July 16, 2008), 33.

members. The final public audit of the CMSF, published on 17 September 2007, explicitly stated in the introductory paragraphs that if people were to criticize the CMSF, they should first think about criticizing the statute under which it was created. "If indeed the Foundation carried out activities that some might conclude inappropriate, then the fault in our opinion lies in the fact that the governing Act was not sufficiently clear on the expectations laid out for the Foundation. We do not believe that the Foundation acted outside of the conditions laid out in the Act."[117] The essential purpose of the audits was to determine if the CMSF was functioning properly within its mandate. This allows CFS to sidestep the implications of a positive review by claiming that the mandate set out for the foundation was inherently flawed.

As it turns out, the CMSF is set to expire beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year, and the Conservatives government have made clear their intention of replacing it with a system of federal grants known as the Canada Student Grants Program.[118] As previously noted, there is no telling the extent to which CFS members are responsible for this change, but there is no doubt that the CFS message reached government in some capacity and ended up becoming policy. Furthermore, CFS members have acclaimed this government decision as a "crucial victory"[119] and will likely use it in their arsenal against CASA by pointing out that preferred policy alternative of CFS was supported by government, not to mention a Conservative government.

[117] Samson & Associates, *Value for Money*, 2007.
[118] Coleman, *Budget 2008*, February 26, 2008
[119] CFS, *Grants vs. Scholarships*.

The Student Interest in Practice: CASA and CFS Principles of Lobbying

In the 2008 Canadian federal election, the Liberals revealed a post-secondary education platform, which was supported by CASA, but criticised by CFS. The Liberals promised students 200,000 need-based bursaries worth up to $3,500, and an additional 100,000 access grants for minority groups, as well as making sure that all students were eligible for a $5000 loan, regardless of the income level of their parents.[120] Churchill enthusiastically told one reporter that the platform "represents the greatest investment in recent history, and probably in the history of Canada," and that it "reflected a lot of the things that CASA has been pushing for the past few years."[121] Katherine Giroux-Bougard, speaking for CFS, was pleased with an increased financial commitment of the federal government to students, but was concerned that the program was not going far enough to alleviate the burden on students. Giroux-Bougard noted that "the only concern is that it doesn't address rising tuition fees" and argued that rising tuition costs mitigated the benefit of the grants and loans.[122] This is a useful example of the difference between the smaller, more pragmatic benefits fought for by CASA and the broader policy goals of CFS, which are sometimes criticized by CASA for being antagonistic and tarnishing relations between policy-makers and students.

A major distinguishing characteristic between CFS and CASA lies in the principles and ideology about what makes for the most effective lobbying. The difference

[120] Liberal Party of Canada, "Liberal Support for Students and Research will Build 21st Century Economy," http://www.liberal.ca/story_14632_e.aspx (accessed September 20, 2008).

[121] Matthias Lalisse, "CASA Applauds, CFS Criticizes Liberal Post-Secondary Policy Platform: Huge Spending Promises from Liberals Draws Mixed Reaction from Student, Experts," *The Manitoban,* September 29, 2008. http://www.themanitoban.com/news/casa-applauds-cfs-criticizes-liberal-post-secondary-platform (accessed November 18, 2008).

[122] Lalisse, *Mixed Reaction*, 2008.

in lobbying techniques is directly related to their distinct operationalization of the student interest. In other words, their end goals and policy objectives are reflected in the way they pursue those objectives. Typically, CASA prefers to present well thought out arguments on pragmatic policy suggestions. There is no doubt that part of the explanation of differing policy is foundational philosophy, which was established in the previous chapter. CASA recognizes policy principles are ideologically based, stating that "[policy principles] are broad and primary categories, usually ideologically based, in which CASA creates policy."[123] CASA is often seen as being politically moderate when compared to CFS, which is quite often associated with the broader conception of an advocacy movement, encompassing many issues that cannot be found on CASA's radar.

In his investigation of the Canadian student movement from 1946 to 1975, Moses makes a distinction that is useful in explaining the different lobbying principles held by CFS and CASA. Moses argues that there is a difference between a student movement and a student organization. Moses places criteria that have to be satisfied in order to classify as a student movement. In Moses' Marxist-inspired view, "a student movement does not just passively consume social order but organizes and pressures for social change according to the student subjects own, often distinct, interests."[124] The primary distinction between a student movement and a student organization is the degree to which "its members and leaders accept the social order and the relations defined by it ... [and] develop collectively the capacity to transform themselves and the social order and its

[123] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "The CASA Policy Principles," http://www.casa.ca/index.php/the-casa-policy-principles.html (accessed October 18, 2008).
[124] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 10.

relations."[125] A movement is concerned about the broader social context in which they are operating and seeks to bring about change though fundamental changes to the system. An organization, on the other hand, more or less accepts the social order and uses the established channels to secure concessions for its members.

Moses believes that although a single organization may not represent all of the interests within a single movement, an organization can "have movement." When Moses published his dissertation in February 1995, he credited CFS, which was the sole national student interest group, for "having movement" because they were a "collective response involving the production of social order."[126] Although Moses admits that class had been "washed out" of the student movement, there are still connections between his definition of movement and the mandate of CFS, to unite the student movement and to defend their interests though advocacy and services.

CFS has long been recognized as having a mandate that is socially oriented, as evidenced in the preceding chapter. It is clear that CFS has a social conscience as an organization, highlighted by their affirmative action,[127] self-governing aboriginal caucuses, social policy and child care initiatives for delegates with children. A review of CFS policy demonstrates that CFS is concerned with the pecuniary interests of students, but there are also aspects of the organization that are related to broader issues of social justice and the interests of society in general. This focus on issues of social justice was disconcerting for the founders of CASA, and remains a point of division. "Although they share many of the same goals, the two organizations have very different ideologies. CFS

[125] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 10.
[126] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 10.
[127] The policy manual outlines that when local member unions send two or more delegates to a conference, they should strive to ensure that half of the delegation are women (CFS, Policy Manual, 17)

traditionally has organized social-justice campaigns on human rights, women's, Lesbian-gay-bisexual, and aboriginal issues, while CASA's mandate focuses strictly on educational issues."[128] Steele, representing CASA, expressed concern over the way CFS operationalizes the student interest: "They are dealing with the seal hunt; why do students have a vested interest in that?" Steele presented the difference in lobbying principles as "the radical versus the practical" arguing that the practical and pragmatic route is more adept at impacting government decision makers.[129] CFS members, by contrast, have decided that a wider social agenda is completely within the purview of the student interest.

One such campaign, representing CFS' notion of the student interest, is known as the "No Means No" campaign, which was established to "end date rape and dating violence."[130] The full description of the campaign presents the far more realistic objective of raising date rape and domestic violence awareness and reducing the frequency of such assaults. Student Unions can purchase merchandise such as coasters, buttons, stickers decorated with the campaign's logo and slogan to distribute to their members. CFS was also granted money by the BC Ministry of Women's Equality in 2001 to produce a fact sheet, that explained the need to address this issue and gave a brief synopsis of the legal rights and responsibilities that accompany sexual activity.[131] This campaign is interpreted to be in the interests of students by CFS and its member schools who voted to establish the campaign.

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[128] Muscati, "Butt Heads," 1995.
[129] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, 2009.
[130] Canadian Federation of Students, "Date Rape: Not Understanding No," http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/nomeansno/home.html, (accessed December 15, 2008).
[131] CFS, "Date Rape."

Another campaign that illustrates the social orientation of CFS is the "Where's the Justice" campaign established after the federal government's "insufficient response" to the recommendations made by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples in 1999. Similar to the "No means No" campaign, the "Where's the Justice" campaign was initiated to educate people on the violence, poverty and racial discrimination faced by aboriginal peoples.[132] The thrust of the campaign is to prove that systemic racism against aboriginals has led to the creation of insurmountable socioeconomic barriers.[133] CFS is home to the National Aboriginal Caucus (NAC), which is responsible for setting CFS policy direction on aboriginal issues in order to ensure equitable educational policy from the government and CFS.[134] It was the NAC who originally implemented the long-standing "Where's the Justice" campaign. Another example of a social justice campaign established by the NAC, in partnership with Amnesty International, is the "Stolen Sisters" Campaign to protect young aboriginal women from racially charged violence by sending postcards to the federal government urging them into remedial action.[135]

A recent CFS campaign demonstrates their socially oriented operationalization of the student interest. CFS, in partnership with Sierra Youth Coalition and the David Suzuki Foundation orchestrated the "Students for Sustainability" campaign. Commencing in the fall of 2008, a campaign bus visited 21 campuses in 30 days to lobby government to develop sustainable environmental and economic policies and to mobilize students to take action in pressuring the government and to lead an environmentally sustainable

[132] Canadian Federation of Students – British Columbia. "Campaigns and Lobbying: Where's the Justice?" http://www.cfs.bc.ca/campaigns.php?id=25. Internet: accessed 20 September 2008.
[133] Jay LaRochelle, "CFS - Ontario Passes Pro-Life Ban Motion," *The Gazette*, February 5, 2008, 1.
[134] Canadian Federation of Students, "Aboriginal Students: National Aboriginal Caucus," http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/aboriginal/english/index.php (accessed November 16, 2008).
[135] CFS, "Aboriginal Students."

lifestyle.[136] CFS and its partners left no ambiguities on the subject of the connection between the student interest and the environment: "As with peace and the civil rights movements, students have played a critical role in the environmental movement for decades ... members of the Canadian Federation of Students have long prioritized environmental and social sustainability as an issue of importance for the organization."[137]

The value of social justice is also visible in official CFS documents. Their most recent policy manual on post-secondary policy issues contains a resolution on the subject of peace (passed in November 1991, and amended twice in 1992) declaring that "the Federation looks forward to the day when students have every access to curriculum and funding for basic research in Canada's post secondary institutions that enable institutions to make valuable contributions to peace initiatives between nations and people. The Federation opposed any cuts to social and educational programs in order to subsidise military spending."[138] The CFS's policy document also contains a statement on poverty. Linking the adverse effect of poverty on not only entering the post-secondary educational system, and the quality of the post-secondary experience once accepted, led CFS to call for a "minimum income level for individuals based on the National Council on Welfare."[139] CFS uses language in their post-secondary policy documents that would leave many CASA members feeling uneasy.

The social justice campaigns have often been adopted by the provincial CFS counterparts. Many have adopted the campaigns sponsored by the national organization,

[136] Canadian Federation of Students, "Students for Sustainability: A Joint Project between the Canadian Federation of Students, The Serria Youth Coalition, and the David Suzuki Foundation," http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/sustainability/tour.php (accessed January 3, 2009).
[137] CFS, "Students for Sustainability."
[138] CFS, "Policy Manual," 85.
[139] CFS, "Policy Manual," 97.

but some have adopted their own stance on issues of a broad social nature. At a conference of CFS – Ontario (CFS – O) in January 2008, the organization joined the abortion debate when the membership approved a contentious motion to lend support to student councils in the event that they should decide to forbid official sanction of pro-life groups from their union.[140] The Lakehead University Student Union (LUSU) submitted the motion to the agenda for review by the membership because it was seeking to deny the pro-life group known as "Life Support" official sanction, and thus funding, from the union. Presumably, the LUSU wanted backing from CFS – O to help legitimize their decision.

In Churchill's understanding, the "spirit of the CFS is driven from the labour movement, and activist movements that came up through the 70's and 80's. The governing philosophy of all that was 'united we stand.'" They are more likely to believe that the only way to meet their objectives is through mass demonstrations by a united student front. "What we do is counter to that philosophy."[141] CASA believes that if they present decision-makers with sound policy, created by the students themselves, they are more likely to be granted government access: "Because of our respected reputation as pragmatic thought leaders on post-secondary policy, our members have been granted continued access to Canada's top decision-makers."[142] In 1995, there was a "strong desire to be at the table discussing the issues with decision-makers, to effect change by being there, and having those direct conversations, because our power is in our argument, and

[140] The motion labelled these clubs as "anti-choice" groups. The potential vagueness of such a label encouraged Heather Kere, a member of the Ryerson Student Union to attempt to clarify the definition of "anti-choice" group, but the amendment failed to pass.
[141] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 19, 2009.
[142] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Advocacy: How CASA Lobbies." http://www.casa.ca/index.php/how-casa-lobbies.html (accessed August 6, 2008).

in our policies."[143] According to Churchill, the most important route to good government relations is to have holistic policy, that is developed thoughtfully and logically and that "everything you are doing is solution-oriented."[144] As demonstrated in the first chapter, CASA strategy was established in an atmosphere of perceived ineffectiveness of CFS initiatives.

Although the "foundation of [CASA] has always been in strong policy and strong government relations" Churchill recognizes that is not always the best strategy. CASA recognizes the need to impact public opinion, usually accomplished through demonstrations and media attention. CASA has dabbled in grassroots style advocacy campaigns over their history, usually preparing a campaign annually to grab public attention. What distinguishes these grassroots campaigns from those carried out by CFS is the fact that CASA's public demonstrations stay within the parameters of governmental post-secondary education policy while CFS carries a more diversified portfolio of interests to represent. Clearly, the differences between CASA and CFS in respect to lobbying are a major reason for the rivalry.

Common Ground: Overlapping Operationalizations of the Student Interest

The preceding portion of this chapter highlighted many differences between CFS and CASA. Although the differences do seem striking, the organizations have similar objectives. It is important to remember that CFS has a wide range of post-secondary educational policies; the preceding section was meant to highlight the wider social

[143] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 19, 2009.
[144] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 19, 2009.

context in which CFS sees the student movement. There is certainly reason to believe that the student interest is reconcilable, not only because CFS was once the sole organization representing students at the federal level, but also because there are some policies on which CASA and CFS align, although there are no temporary alliances, or partnerships between CASA and CFS. With that said, the examples of difference seem to outweigh the similarities. Partly, this is due to the differences in philosophy mentioned above, under which the organizations may perceive a similar problem, but they have varied ideas of a resolution to the problem, both in their lobby response and their policy recommendation. CASA and CFS tend to agree on the major issues in post-secondary policy from the government, but CFS tends to be more likely to tackle the underlying social issues that perpetuate these problems. For instance, both CASA and CFS lobby with the objective of improving access to post-secondary education, where no qualified person[145] should be denied access to education for any reason.

One issue the CASA and CFS can agree on is implementation of a dedicated transfer. CFS and CASA are both lobbying for the federal government to stipulate that a certain percentage of the funds be dedicated to post-secondary students, much the same as federal funding delivered to the provinces be dedicated to healthcare. Another issue that leaves CFS and CASA in agreement about the student interest is the issue of privatization of post-secondary education. Both organizations have both passed resolutions at plenary that condemn, to varying degrees, the amount of privatization of post-secondary institutions. CASA is opposed to for-profit post-secondary institutions and defends the

[145] Qualification simply refers to a potential student having an academic average required for enrolment in post-secondary institutions.

continuation of the current, publically funded system.[146] CFS is also opposed to privatization of post-secondary institutions, but creates a much broader category of privatization that stretches far beyond that set out by CASA. To CFS, privatization is made to include tuition fee increases, partnerships with the private sector for sales and transfer of services to a private provider.[147]

A final recent issue to be considered is the agreed negative impact on the student interest by Bill C-61, proposed amendments to Canada's copyright legislation by the Conservative government. These amendments, which would make for more stringent rules regarding downloaded copyright material, do not sit well with either CFS or CASA. The Campaign for Fair Copyright, orchestrated by CFS is based on the assumption that students have a "critical stake" in preventing a tightening of Canada's copyright legislation. "To study, research and write, students also need ready access, at a reasonable cost, to the copyrighted works of others."[148] CASA believes that Bill C-61 did "not strike its purported balance between the Canadians who use digital technology and those who create content ... if implemented, [Bill C-61] will stifle the very foundation of knowledge building and knowledge transmission at Canada's learning institutions."[149] Both student organizations found the copyright legislation to be overly restrictive to students and professors and called for parliament to strike it down. Perhaps in testament to the strength

[146] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Policy Statement: Condemnation of Private For-Profit PSE institutions." December 14, 2001, http://www.casa.ca/pdf/principles/quality02.pdf/ (accessed January 4, 2009).
[147] CFS. "Policy Manual," 99.
[148] Canadian Federation of Students, "Campaigns and Lobbying: Campaign for Fair Copyright," http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/html/english/campaigns/copyright.php (accessed December 20, 2008).
[149] Zach Churchill, "Unintended consequences of Bill C-61," August 11, 2008, http://www.casa.ca/index.php/The-Unintended-Consequences-of-Bill-C-61.html (accessed December 20, 2008).

of close to a million students declaring their interests, the bill has still not made it beyond the first reading.

CASA and CFS also share an opposition to ancillary fees which are levied on students by universities. CASA and CFS hold that these fees are often used to overstep provincial tuition fee regulations, and are established through non-consultative processes. CFS claims that between 2000 and 2005, ancillary fees have risen by 38.6%.[150] CASA passed a resolution in November 2002, amended March 2007, stating that CASA "oppose[s] the use of ancillary fees as a substitute for other resources of revenue at post-secondary education institutions."[151] CFS – O is supported a class-action lawsuit in January 2008, begun by two Ontario students who want to challenge the fees in court.[152] What is of note here, however, is that while CFS tried to prove that ancillary fees are illegal,[153] CASA would accept the use of ancillary fees as long as they were "accompanied by a substantive student consultation and approval process" as well as "documented justification as to the need and reasons for the additional fee."[154] Again, a more pragmatic stance was taken by CASA, even though the basic objective was very similar. This investigation of a few overlapping policy objectives leaves us with the critical point that even though CFS and CASA are aligned on some of their policy issues, the means used to meet those objectives, or the criteria for satisfying those objectives contribute to a continued division and perpetuate the existence of two student lobby organizations.

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[150] CFS. "Strategy for Change: Money Does Matter," 20.
[151] CASA. "Ancillary Fees."
[152] The plaintiff's claims were dismissed by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.
[153] Anthony Capuano, "CFS Digging Deep to Uncover 'Illegal' Fees." *The Ryersonian*, October 3, 2007, http://www.journalism.ryerson.ca/online/masthead/oct0307/Oct.3-07page6.pdf (accessed November 16, 2008).

Economies of Scale: Servicing the Student Interest

In terms of the scope of CASA and CFS, there is one fundamental difference between the two organizations; CFS offers a well-developed service component to its members and CASA sticks strictly to lobbying. An analysis of the service component of CFS, and conversely the lack of such a component within CASA, can help to understand the different concept of "student interest" lying at the core of the respective groups. The Canadian Federation of Students – Services (CFS – S), is a separately incorporated entity, created with the aim of providing member students with a range of services administered by CFS to help students save money.[155] CFS – S is essentially a co-op that uses the buying power of their members to gain benefits for all students. The network of services provided by CFS to its members is rather extensive and offers financial benefits to both individual students and member unions.

Using economies of scale to procure services for students has a long history in the student movement. There is evidence of an orientation to create such a service in the first meeting minutes of the NF(CUS) in 1927, where efforts to obtain discounted railway fares were reported. In fact, there were students who believed that services should be the central focus of the organization.[156] By 1955, there were ten services offered to students by the NF(CUS), including student life insurance plans, discount cards, study exchange programs and a travel service for students. Services were important to not only the student who received their benefits, but also the leaders of the NF(CUS) who felt that it

[154] CASA, "Ancillary Fees."
[155] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, 15 January 2009.
[156] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 262.

was something tangible that played an important role in demonstrating to students that their membership was worthwhile. There was a certain degree of "propaganda value that even the more activist elements recognized as still being in the 'student interest.'"[157] An investigation of the legitimizing force of services will be carried out in detail in the following chapter; for now, the analysis will focus briefly on what services CFS offers its members, and how this helps differentiate CASA from CFS.

The mandate of CFS – S is to expand the portfolio of CFS to include discounts on a variety of services that are seen to be central to the life of a student. To CFS, services are directly linked to the student interest because the members of CFS have identified the benefit of a cooperative purchase of services, and because these services have a positive financial impact on members of CFS. Mike Conlon, CFS Director of Research in 2005 summarized the dual mandate of CFS: "Our primary mandates are to offer students political representation in an integrated way at the provincial and national levels, but also to offer students a comprehensive set of services. Essentially we exist for two reasons: to do political work on a variety of issues, and in addition to that, provide services through Travel CUTS (an acronym for Canadian University Travel Service) and the International Student Identity card."[158] This demonstrates that the services are not a secondary consideration to CFS members, but a primary reason for their existence as an organization.

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[157] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 265.

[158] Kyle Lamothe, "Alliance vs. Federation: Policy Splits and Seperates Canada's Student Lobby Group" *The Manitoban.* February 9, 2005, http://web.archive.org/web/20050404041459/http://www.umanitoba.ca/manitoban/20050209/article.php?section=features&article=01 (accessed October 14, 2008).

The student executive at the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa (SFUO) believed that the existence of a service element in CFS was clearly in the student interest. In a report created by an ad-hoc committee charged with exploring the merits of re-federation with CFS, the SFUO Board of Administration spoke positively of the structure and policy of CFS. The SFUO saw the service element of CFS as a major selling point of membership with CFS, noting that "the simple economic power of buying with more than 500,000 people is clear."[159]

Individual members of CFS can find discounts on trips by using Travel CUTS, a travel agency owned and operated by CFS. This service is directly tied to the "student interest" as it is defined by CFS. On the Travel CUTS website, CFS officials have framed that particular service in the context of the student interest. An introduction to the program explains that "Canadian students have long recognized that education goes beyond the classroom and that travel can be an intrinsic part of the educational process." Travel, CFS argues, provides an "opportunity for increased learning and helps broaden cultural contact and enhance understanding."[160] Moses notes that in 1995, Travel CUTS was the fourth largest travel company in Canada.[161] Travel CUTS also has a social conscience, shown by CFS operations policy which states that Travel CUTS will "include

[159] Student Federation of the University of Ottawa, *Ad-Hoc Committee on Student Advocacy Organizations Report Concerning the Canadian Federation of Students,* Committee Report, Ottawa: Student Federation of the University of Ottawa Board of Administration, 2008, 13.

[160] Canadian Federation of Students, "Services: Travel Cuts," www.cfs-fcee.ca/html/english/programmes/travel_CUTS.php (accessed October 4, 2008).

[161] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 269.

information for the consumer about the human rights record in the country or region of destination."[162]

Another well recognized student service provided by CFS is the Student Work Abroad Program (SWAP), which is Canada's largest international exchange program.[163] The list of services continues, including offers discounts on cell phone plans, through a partnership with StudentPhones.com, health and dental plans as well as a tax filing service. Besides the individual members, student unions are also offered services by CFS. Such services include a Student Union Directory for easy communication between member unions, a website building service and a streamlined student planner/handbook. From a brief investigation of the services offered by CFS, it becomes clear that the manner in which their services are tied to the student interest demonstrates that in the proper mindset, a diverse range of issues can be shown to be within the student interest.

With no comparable service element, CASA remains an organization that lobbies solely on post-secondary issues and does not concern itself with such matters. The decision to exclude a service element from their organization was deliberate and responds to the perceived inadequacies of CFS:

> CASA's only and most important service will always be national lobbying for the students of Canada. CASA has intentionally stayed away from providing services or businesses that fall outside of federal post-secondary lobbying, as it is the current belief of members that CASA should not veer-off its focus on lobbying and advocating for students.[164]

[162] Canadian Federation of Students, "Policy Manual - Operational Policy," Last Amended 2008, 33.
[163] Canadian Federation of Students, "Services: Student Work Abroad Program," (accessed December 6, 2009).
[164] Canadian Alliance of Student Organizations. *How Does CASA Help Students?: A Little History*. In CASA delegate package 2008.

The inclusion of services in CFS and the exclusion of such services in CASA is yet another example of the differing operationalization of the student interest that can be traced not only to the different policy objectives of CASA and CFS, but also to the manner in which they lobby for those policy objectives.

Offering services to members can also be interpreted as a carrot to attract potential members and retain members by offering them material benefits. Moses argues that the services offered by student organizations were a "legitimation mechanism" used to help the organizations stay relevant to their members. "Services were something tangible. They were something that students could relate to in positive ways."[165] Moses interviewed several officials from the NFCUS who attested to the organizational importance of services. One former NFCUS president stated, "[services] were important because they were the concrete, the specifics you could lay out and say this is what you got for your money."[166] While offering services would seem counter intuitive to the movement mentality in CFS, maintaining the existence of the organization cannot be ignored. Moses, on the basis of his personal experience within CFS, argues: "On the one hand, the activists don't care in the least about 'services' and a travel company, but on the other hand they become aware of the legitimation role that these institutions play."[167] Although the student interest acts to propel the official mandate of CFS and CASA, there is an implicit understanding that the continued existence of the organizations is a very high priority. The following chapter will discuss the role of organizational interests and

[165] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 265.
[166] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 265.
[167] Moses, *Student Struggle*, 269.

how, at times, they can come into conflict with the interests of individual member organizations.

Chapter Three

The Unwritten Mandate: Prioritizing Organizational Interests

Student vs. Organizational Interests: Constructing the Theoretical Framework

Student politics is widely known for its high turnover rate. Every year, elections are held to replace executive members of the student unions that make up CASA and CFS' membership. Often, candidates in the elections have contrasting visions regarding the role of external lobbying. Thus, philosophy regarding external lobbying is subject to change every year upon the election of executives of student associations across the country. During the 2009 student elections at the Alma Matter Society (AMS) at the University of British Columbia, the country's largest student union, membership in CASA or CFS hung in the balance. AMS had voted to drop to associate membership within CASA in the fall semester, making the future of external lobbying an election issue. While two presidential candidates vowed to stay away from CFS, even though they were not satisfied with the benefits of CASA, a third candidate supported the possibility of CFS membership.[168] Zach Churchill recognized the potential instability of political philosophy of student executives in any given year. "Sometimes you will have a very activist group come in, who will say that CASA is not doing anything on poverty, or the Afghan war." On the other hand, "you will have groups come in that are more moderate. It depends on the sentiment any given year."[169] For CASA and CFS, the high turnover rate in student politics is a source of inconsistency and has negative consequences for their organizational strength and well-being.

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[168] Maggie Zelaya, "The CASA-CFS Conundrum: Results of Election could Influence AMS Lobbying for Years," *The Ubyssey,* February 3, 2009. http://www.ubyssey.ca/?p=7259. Internet; accessed 4 February 2009.

[169] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.

In 2008, both CASA and CFS faced campaigns from member schools that sought either to de-federate from the latter or to reduce the status of their membership within the former. CFS had to deal with four disaffiliation referenda in March, organized by member schools, which resulted in the de-federation of three student associations and the loss of $700,000 in membership fees.[170] CASA was faced with votes to downgrade from full to associate membership from the student associations at the University of British Columbia and the University College of Fraser Valley, despite Fraser Valley's initial commitment to CASA in February 2008.[171] These types of situations are not rare in the Canadian student movement, and help illustrate the unstable nature of membership in CFS and CASA. This chapter will focus on how CFS and CASA protect their organizations from the ever present threat of instability, and will argue that organizational interests help cement CFS and CASA as distinct organizations that rival for members, government ear and public attention.

The inspiration for the theoretical framework used in this chapter comes from the work of David Kwavnick. Although Kwavnick's argument was briefly summarized in the preceding chapters, we must address Kwavnick's theory in greater detail in order to apply his model. In Organized Labour and Pressure Politics: The Canadian Labour Congress 1956-1968, Kwavnick sets out to identify the "operative factors" and "basic determinants" of group politics. In his identification of the fundamental motivation behind interest groups, Kwavnick builds a case for the primacy of organizational interests, which can be defined as an organization's vested interest in maintaining and

[170] Cape Breton University Students Union, Simon Fraser Student Society, the University of Victoria Grad Student Society all voted to pull out of CFS. Kwantlen Student Association also held a referendum, but students voted to remain members of CFS by a vote of 56% to 44%.
[171] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, January 13, 2009.

strengthening organizational well-being. Kwavnick's theory on group politics defies many assumptions that are made about interest groups and their goals:

> [The] aims of interest group leaders go beyond mere articulation of demands and obtaining some measure of satisfaction of those demands ... Among the more important determinants of the activities of organized interest groups, on the same plane as substantive demands of the group as outlined in its constitution its public manifestos and in the statements of its leaders, are the organizational goals of the group's leadership ... The most important of these goals are the preservation and continued growth of the organization itself.[172]

According to Kwavnick, all organized interest groups possess a "ubiquitous instinct of organizational self-preservation" and he continually refers to the goals intended to serve the interests of the members as "ostensible aims."[173] The protection of the organization's legitimacy and mandate are at the top of the hierarchy of organizational interests. If a group is not perceived to be legitimate to the public or to government, it will not be able to push for benefits to their members, and will soon collapse. In Kwavnick's words, "legitimacy does not maintain itself, it must be assiduously serviced."[174] Protecting legitimacy is not cheap, often becoming a drain on resources of the organization, and at times conflicting with the mandate to advance the interests of the groups the organizations are representing. The initial split from CFS and the formation of CASA can be traced to a loss of legitimacy of CFS, which alienated a group of student leaders to the point that they formed a rival student group. Questions of legitimacy also arise within the individual members associations, who routinely display scepticism as to the tangible benefits of national student organizations. In light of this, CFS and CASA keep a

[172] Kwavnick, *Organized Labour,* 2.
[173] Kwavnick, *Organized Labour*, 3.
[174] Kwavnick, *Organized Labour*, 7.

watchful eye on the status of their legitimacy and are prepared to defend it when necessary.

The importance of organizational interests for CFS and CASA becomes even more applicable when, as in the first chapter, they are defined as institutional interest groups. Institutional groups place a premium on protecting and enhancing organizational interests. For institutional groups, "organizational imperatives are generally more important than any particular objective."[175] Institutional interest groups value predictability and stability in the political arena, for it contributes to credibility in the eyes of government and helps establish lasting relationships with policy makers. Also, institutional interest groups thrive on organizational continuity and cohesion. Pross notes that "organizational characteristics determine the capacity of pressure groups to develop the coherence and continuity necessary for negotiating with government over a period of time."[176] In other words, the organizational strength of interest groups is directly connected to the success of an interest group in impacting public policy. Truman tends to agree with Kwavnick and Pross when it comes to the importance of organizational cohesion. In Truman's view, "the degree of unity in the group is probably most fundamental in determining the measure of success it will enjoy."[177] Overall, interest groups prize organizational interests, the most important of which are stability and internal cohesion.

Using this theoretical framework, we will analyze several tactics used to safeguard the organizational interests of CFS and CASA, as well as how those tactics have the potential to overshadow the desires of member associations. Fulfilling

[175] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 10.
[176] Pross, *Pressure Groups*, 9.
[177] Truman, *Governmental Process*, 167.

organizational interests is extremely important to the survival of CFS and CASA. Tactics used to service organizational interests separate CFS and CASA beyond their operationalizations of the student interest, further reducing the prospect of cooperation. The protection of organizational interests has drawn considerable criticism from members, who have claimed that their interests are secondary to the organizational health of CFS or CASA. Evidence of the importance of organizational interests can be found in the conditions of membership, the use of litigation to enforce the conditions of membership and the lack of cooperation between CFS and CASA. This chapter will consider the above examples in detail to prove the importance of organizational interest and will conclude by using the investigation of organizational interests to speculate on the probability and desirability of re-uniting the student movement

The Stabilizing Influence: Conditions of Membership

One of the more salient factors illustrating the importance of organizational interests in CFS and CASA are the conditions of membership, specifically the conditions surrounding the process of revoking membership from CASA and CFS, which have different procedural mechanisms for admitting and dismissing member associations. There is strong evidence to suggest that these processes were designed to protect organizational interests. Becoming a member of CFS requires a referendum among the individual members of the prospective association, which must follow the regulations established in CFS Bylaws. CASA, on the other hand, requires that prospective member associations follow the rules established by the individual student association. Often, a majority vote of council would suffice to be granted membership.

The difference in conditions of admittance between CASA and CFS can, in part, be explained by the different definitions of membership found in the CASA and CFS constitutions. By-Law I of the CFS constitution establishes "two types of members of the federation, individual members and voting members."[178] The term "individual member" refers to each and every student who is a voting member of the affiliated student union. "Voting members" are the student associations as a whole, represented by elected delegates at plenary sessions. In contrast, CASA only has one type of membership. Unlike CFS, there are no individual members of CASA narrowing their definition of membership as "limited to Canadian, autonomous, corporate entities at accredited, public post-secondary institutes having entered into a membership agreement as members in accordance with the processes to be outlined and approved by the General Assembly."[179] This conceptual difference between CASA and CFS has important procedural implications for membership policy.

CFS has two tiers of voting member status: full member and prospective member. Defined as a "trial membership of limited duration," prospective membership can be granted after the approval of a motion passed by an executive or a council at the individual member association. If approved at plenary, the prospective member is given full voting rights and access to CFS services, while paying only 5% of regular CFS fees.[180] In return for these benefits, the prospective member is contractually obligated to hold a referendum within 12 months of being accepted as a prospective member on adopting full membership status with CFS. The contractual obligations extend to cover

[178] CFS, "Constitution and Bylaws," 17.
[179] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "The Constitution of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations," Last amended 2008, 1.
[180] CFS, "Constitution and Bylaws: Bylaw I Membership," 18.

the procedure of referendums. Hosting a referendum on the question of CFS membership must meet several criteria, established in By-law 1, Article 4 of the CFS constitution. The initiation of a referendum requires a petition signed by 10% of individual members and presented to CFS. The administration of the referendum is the responsibility of the Referendum Oversight Committee, which consists of two members appointed by the individual student association and two representatives appointed by CFS.

The Referendum Oversight Committee is responsible for ensuring that the procedural criteria of the referendum are carried out. These criteria include a public notice of the referendum to students at least two weeks before it is set to take place, no less than ten days of campaigning, specification of the parties eligible to participate in the campaign, rules regarding the use of campaign materials, rules on voting procedure, and rules regarding the appointment of poll attendants (one from CFS and one from the individual organization). Referenda concerning "continued membership," which euphemistically refers to referenda held by members associations trying to de-federate, have many of the same regulations. After 10% of students sign a petition requesting a continued membership referendum, CFS has 90 days to acknowledge receipt of the petition.[181] The referendum must then take place between 60-90 days subsequent to the National Executive having received the petition. The Referendum Oversight Committee again consists of four members, two from CFS and two from the member local organization. Although the regulations for federation and continued membership are very similar, they have a different effect. In federation referenda, it is often the case that member organizations favour federation with CFS, leaving all four members of the

[181] CFS, "Constitution and Bylaws," 21.

Referendum Oversight Committee with similar goals. In continued membership referenda, the goals of CFS appointees and those of the appointees of the local organization can be quite different. In these situations, running successful continued membership referenda would be notably more difficult than federation referenda.

Over the years, continued membership referenda have become a source of criticism from member associations, who claim that the established criteria are too limiting, and as a result they infringe upon the autonomy of the local member associations. In February 2008, a period of controversy began over the de-federation campaign to be held in March at the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS). A document referred to as a top secret "war plan" by CFS critics was leaked to the student media from the offices of CFS – BC. This unofficial document, titled Referendum Campaign Plan and Task List, detailed the "aggressive plan of counteroffensive activities at SFU, designed to help persuade students to vote against leaving the federation." [182] For CFS critics, the document proved the "longstanding allegations about the organization's supposed secretive and mendacious tactics" [183] Under the heading "campaign tactics," the document suggested that it would be wise to "determine availability of anti-CFS domain names" which led many to believe that the CFS would purchase any potential domain names in order to undercut any anti-CFS campaigns that may arise. The document also outlined plans to give speeches in classrooms, set up information tables, draft letters of support from surrounding member organizations, campaign in residence, fly in CFS friendly campaigners from surrounding local member organizations, identify CFS

[182] Shara Lee, "Controversy Erupts after Secret CFS Documents made Public," *The Peak*, Vol. 128, Issue 6, 11 February 11, 2008, http://www.the-peak.ca/article/1968 (accessed September 15, 2008).
[183] Lee, "Controversy Erupts."

supporters, as well as spread the "yes to CFS" message in campus media and "community dailies."[184] This document shows that the CFS – BC planned to be heavily active in the referendum and there was an obvious effort put into protecting their organizational interests.

The Kwantlen Student Association (KSA), which was also planning a de-federation referendum in March 2008, was quick to use the document in their campaign to leave CFS. Titus Gregory, a KSA staff member and a known anti-CFS advocate, stated that the leaked document was "indicative of the top down control nature of the Federation ... The fact that they're rallying so many executives and staff of other student unions to fly down [to be] on SFU campuses . . . means that they're doing whatever they can to keep control."[185] Another student leader from KSA echoed these sentiments, saying that the document demonstrated how "focussed the CFS is on organizational stability; making sure they keep members, and have people in place at every member local that are loyal ... it's about membership. It's not about grants or tuition fees."[186] A similar reaction came from a student executive at the Student Society of McGill University. "Fundamentally, the CFS' only goal is fighting for CFS' own self-interest rather for student's interest."[187] With these criticisms surfacing in many student media outlets across the country, CFS had to act to protect the reputation of their organization, or face the prospect of a decline in membership.

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[184] "Referendum Campaign Plan and Tasklist: Simon Fraser University Student Society," 23 January 2008. Http://www.cfstruth.ca/documents/23-Ref-Plan-2008-01-07.xls (accessed May 3, 2008).
[185] Lee, "Controversy Erupts."
[186] Misha Warbanski, "Canadian Federation of Students Campaign Plans Exposed: Concordia Student Leaders are Considered Allies as CFS tries to reign in Separatist BC Unions," *The Link*, http://thelink.concordia.ca/view.php?aid=40475 (accessed December 16, 2008).
[187] Warbanski, "Campaign Plans."

CFS chose to pursue legal measures to safeguard their reputation, although they may have lost favour in the court of public opinion. Legally, CFS and its provincial counterparts are separate organizations. Thus, when media outlets use the label CFS when talking about one of the separate provincial counterparts, CFS can protect its reputation from damaging statements with the threat of litigation. The author of the controversial campaign document was a Staff Organizer employed by CFS – BC, yet many of the responses found in the student media credited CFS for the distribution of the SFSS referendum strategy. Legally speaking, this statement is false; the letter came from CFS – BC, not CFS. The KSA was one organization that made this mistake, drawing the attention of CFS lawyers, who demanded a "public apology." Justifying the use of legal action in this case, the letter sent to the KSA stated:

> Canadian Federation of Students – British Columbia is an autonomous provincial organization which is legally and operationally separate and distinct from the Canadian Federation of Students. The document was not authored by any official or employee of the Canadian Federation of Students. Your press release is incorrect and these facts were known to the executive of the Kwantlen Student Association at the time the Press Release was issued. It would appear that the Kwantlen Student Association deliberately misrepresented the authorship of these statements so as to level false accusations about the activities of the Canadian Federation of Students in the context of a referendum with respect to ongoing membership in that organization.[188]

Students who are critical of CFS claim that although legally CFS and its provincial counterparts are separate, in reality they are inherently linked to one another. For example, when a member organization votes to become a member of CFS in a

[188] Todd J. Burke, representing Gowlings Lafluer Henderson LLP "Legal Letter to the Kwantlen Students' Assoications Re: Canadian Federation of Students," February 5, 2008, http://www.cfstruth.ca/documents/2008_02_05_cfs_legal_demand_letter.pdf (accessed December 16, 2008).

referendum, they are automatically members of the provincial counterpart of CFS. It is impossible to be a member of a provincial unit of CFS without also being a member of the national organization. Also, the national and provincial organizations share the same name, endorse similar campaigns and have very similar websites. The legal argument, which is often advanced by CFS supporters,[189] is that they are separate legal entities, and that no control mechanism exists that gives power over the provincial counterparts to the national CFS office.

The KSA was not the only critic of CFS that was legally warned about the fundamental difference between CFS national and their provincial counterparts. Joey Coleman, a blogger on post-secondary issues for Maclean's Online, and a critic of CFS, was also warned about this distinction. Coleman authored an article describing a contribution CFS gave to strikers at York University, when it was actually CFS – O that gave the financial contribution to CUPE Local 3903. This statement on Coleman's blog compromised the public image of CFS because it implied that CFS was supporting a strike, which can have a negative impact on students. Soon after the article was written, Coleman received a letter from lawyers retained by the CFS. The letter asserted that the statements made by Coleman were false, and demanded that he remove the posting and publish a retraction and apology on an equally conspicuous section of the Maclean's website.[190]

[189] CFS critics are quick to point out that the distinction between the national and provincial organizations is made only in times when CFS faces criticism.

[190] Joey Coleman, "CFS: Didn't make 'any such Financial Contributions to York Strikers," November 27, 2008, http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2008/11/27/cfs-has-not-made-any-such-financial-contributions-to-york-strikers/ (accessed December 15, 2008). Searches on the internet found no statement from Coleman retracting his statements.

CFS has also used the threat of legal action pre-emptively to protect its reputation in the student media. In April 2007, the Eyeopener, Ryerson's student newspaper, received formal warning from CFS lawyers, hours before the publication of an issue that could have potentially misrepresented facts about CFS. Eyeopener staff were warned not to "repeat certain false and potentially defamatory statements which have been recently published in the student press ... In the event that it does, be advised that CFS will consider all legal remedies available to it." [191] Allegations had recently surfaced that CFS – BC, referred to only as CFS by other student newspapers, had given questionable loans to the Douglas Students' Union. Ian Boyko argued that legal action such as this is necessary to "ensure accurate representation" of CFS in the student press.[192] Eyeopener representatives, on the other hand, interpreted the threat of legal action as an intimidation tactic used by CFS to prevent reporting negative stories that could tarnish their name.

The use of legal action extends beyond the realm of clarifying "misrepresentations" by student associations and the media. There are also several instances of litigation contesting the legality of de-federation referenda. An article in the Guelph University student newspaper, The Ontarion, stated that "one the most consistent aspects of the [2008] referendum campaigns has been the threat of litigation as the student unions grapple over charges of non-adherence to CFS referendum bylaws."[193] In March 2008, the CFS filed a petition with the BC Supreme Court in order to have the KSA's de-federation referenda postponed until the fall. CFS argued that the KSA did not

[191] Erin Millar, "CFS Threatens Legal Action against Eyeopener: Canada's Largest Student Group warns Ryerson Student Newspaper, and others" April 5, 2007, http://www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20070405_142226_1620 (accessed October 20, 2008).
[192] Millar, "Legal Action."
[193] Greg Benteau, "CFS: The Fractured Federation, Lawsuit, Mystery Campaigner and Leaked Document Mar Referendums." *The Ontarion*, March 28, 2008, http://www.theontarion.ca/viewarticle.php?id_pag=1575 (accessed November 13, 2008).

live up to the contractual obligations of organizing a referendum, as outlined by CFS By-laws.[194] The Referendum Oversight Committee was not able to resolve substantive issues under their purview, including the wording of the referendum question and voting procedures. [195] The Oversight Committee soon found itself in a stalemate, essentially disabling their purpose as administrators of the referendum. In light of this, KSA hired an independent Chief Returning Officer, a move that was protested by CFS for being contrary to the established referenda procedures. Additionally, CFS claimed KSA representatives had began the campaign in September, which constitutes a further violation of CFS referenda scheduling procedures. The judge assigned to the case decided on a compromise, postponing the referendum until later in the semester, while allowing the use of the independent election official.[196]

The referendum held by the Cape Breton University Students' Union (CBUSU), which saw 92% of ballots marked in favour of de-federation, was also declared null and void by CFS. According to CFS, the vote was simply a non-binding opinion poll. "Whatever vote that may have taken place at Cape Breton University would not relieve Cape Breton University Students' Union of its contractual obligations to the other student

[194] Erin Millar, "CFS goes to Supreme Court to Postpone Membership Referendum," March 11, 2008 http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2008/03/11/cfs-goes-to-supreme-court-to-postpone-membership-referendum/ (accessed November 21, 2008).

[195] The KSA was arguing that the questions proposed by CFS representatives on the Referendum Oversight Committee were loaded questions. The two examples given by the KSA in a press release were: a) Are you in favour of the Kwantlen student body maintaining formal relations with student bodies at the following institutions: [two page list of all CFS members] through a democratic framework called the Canadian Federation of Students? b) Are you in favour of stopping the further fragmentation of Canada's student movement through a democratic framework called the Canadian Federation of Students?

[196] Kwantlen Student Association, "Canadian Federation of Students Fails in Supreme Court: CFS Sought to delay Vote until the Fall and Restrict Free Speech on Campus" March 18, 2008, http://www.cfstruth.ca/documents/2008_03_18_ksa_media_release.pdf (accessed August 20, 2009).

unions which comprise the Federation."[197] CBUSU officials claim that they followed proper procedure, and blame CFS for neglecting their request for a referendum. Allegedly, the referendum held at Cape Breton University was not recognized because it was not in accordance with CFS By-laws, which require six months notice of referendum.[198] CBUSU holds that their referendum was valid and they would not remit payment to CFS. When confronted by the prospect of legal action on behalf of CFS, CBUSU President Ian Lindsay was baffled by CFS conduct surrounding the botched referendum, which could possibly further reinforce the negative sentiment toward CFS: "Why they are suing their own students' union? I don't understand it. Why should [students] pay fees to an organization that either sues their own students' union, or only comes when it's advantageous for that organization?"[199]

The threat of legal action is not confined to continued membership referenda. During a federation referendum hosted by the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) (which was both a member of CASA and a prospective member of CFS) in 2005, the union was caught between litigation from an individual student and the potential of litigation from CFS. Following the successful federation referendum, a USSU student sought legal action to declare the referendum of no force or effect. The argument was based on allegations of procedural inadequacies of the referendum, specifically conflicts between CFS procedure and the procedure established by USSU. The default referendum question outlined by CFS Bylaws, unless otherwise determined by the

[197] Jon Dykeman, "Cape Breton Student Vote to Leave Federation: Federation Denies Legality of de-Federation Referendum, Union Withholds Fees" *The Muse*, Vol.58, Issue 23, March 27, 2008, http://www.themuse.ca/view.php?aid=41100 (accessed November 13, 2008).
[198] The newspaper article cited this as being one condition for hosting a CFS referendum, but no such condition could be found in the latest version of the CFS constitution.
[199] Dykeman, "Denies Legality."

Referendum Oversight Committee, is "are you in favour of membership in the Canadian Federation of Students," while referendum procedure established by the USSU constitution requires that the question explicitly state any fee increase associated with membership in CFS.[200] Due to the fact that CFS and USSU had conflicting regulations on referenda procedure, the USSU created an independent elections board with the intention of "melding the Bylaws of the CFS and the USSU."[201] The independent board declared the referendum invalid, citing a strong CFS bias in the Referendum Oversight Committee, but the results were ratified by council in disregard to the ruling due to fears that CFS would launch legal action against USSU if they did not accept full membership.[202] Despite the procedural mishaps, CFS had listed USSU as full members on their website. The judge decided that the referendum was of no force or effect, agreeing with the student's claims of procedural inadequacy. During the initial trial, CFS became an intervener in the case and eventually filed an appeal after the referendum was struck down, seeking a ruling that would recognize the validity of the referendum. This case demonstrates that when a "successful" referendum does not line up with CFS Bylaws, they are willing to accept its validity, and even pursue legal action to have it verified.

These cases only scratch the surface of the legal action resulting from breaches in referenda procedure. The Acadia Students' Union (ASU) and CFS faced off in a drawn out saga, which began in 1996 over outstanding fees that allegedly were not remitted to

[200] Jeanette Stewart, "CFS Referendum Invaild: U of Saskatchewan Student Union Remains Prospective Member," *The Carillon,* November 8, 2006, http://www.carillon.uregina.ca/11.02.06/news4.html (accessed February 4, 2009).
[201] Macleans.ca Staff, "Canadian Federation of Students Loses an Appeal and U of S Membership: Precedent setting Decision may affect McGill's upcoming Membership Referendum," August 28, 2007, http://www.macleans.ca/education/universities/article.jsp?content=20070828_185640_5748 (accessed February 6, 2009).
[202] Macleans.ca Staff, "Precedent Decision."

CFS, and was finally settled in 2008.[203] Engaging in legal battles with member associations who wish to de-federate from CFS has drawn criticism from member schools, and although CFS can present a sound legal argument regarding procedural inadequacies, they risk damaging their reputation in the eyes of the public and of students.

Criticisms of the stringent CFS referendum guidelines, which can assault the individual autonomy of member unions, date back to the disaffiliation movement. Early members of CASA had major qualms about the conditions of CFS membership and sought to incorporate a new membership strategy in CASA. In response, CASA was founded on a policy of "Easy-in, Easy-out." This policy stipulates that member unions need not have a referendum to decide whether or not to join CASA, unless otherwise specified in the constitution of the member school.[204] Typically, a vote of council would allow a student association membership in CASA, which could be revoked using the same method. In 2003, a review of CASA by the Federation of Students at the University of Waterloo reported that many members of CASA had joined in this manner; several member associations have never held referendums regarding their membership in CASA.[205] The Easy-in, Easy-out policy assumes that elected representatives of students can legitimately decide whether or not a particular student association should become members of an external lobbying group.

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[203] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, January 13, 2009.

[204] Each individual member school has their own criteria, established in their constitutions, outlining the proper procedures for accepting membership in external organizations. Some may require a referendum while others simply require a vote of council.

[205] Federation of Students, University of Waterloo, "Federation of Students – Student Council OUSA/CASA Review Committee Final Report" January 5, 2003, http://feds.ca/docs/reportsToCouncil/2003ousaCasaReview.pdf (accessed February 2, 2009).

The spirit behind the Easy-in, Easy-out policy was to allow member organizations to decide, free of direct influence from CASA, if membership in CASA is appropriate. However, after experiencing the potential for unstable membership, CASA realized that although Easy-in, Easy-out might be positive in theory, in reality it threatened their organizational interests, and had to be altered to protect the organization.

> Over the years the process has changed a little bit. We still abide by the principle that member schools are autonomous organizations, we do not control anything that happens on campus, or any process that happens on campus ... there has been an internal process that has changed in CASA, that all the members have signed off on. It now takes two years to get out of the organization. Again, just to protect the finances.[206]

This change to the Easy-in Easy-out policy occurred after CASA lost three of its biggest members in 2005: the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU), the University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) and the University of Saskatchewan Student Union (USSU), amounting to the loss of $150,000 from the operating budget.[207] Faced with this challenge, CASA decided they needed a mechanism of protection to avoid being put in a position where the organization would have to fold. According to Churchill, CASA sought to establish something that was fair and maintained the principle of respecting membership autonomy, but that also protected the organization. It was decided that members who wanted to leave would need a majority vote in council or in a referendum, and then would drop to Associate Membership. That member would be an associate member of CASA until the next Academic year, paying half the normal fees. The drawback is that the member school has no vote at general meetings. In the subsequent year, the member would have to hold another vote of council/referendum to

[206] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[207] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.

leave CASA, or to re-accept full membership. Given the high turnover rate in student politics, this move will certainly be beneficial to CASA's organizational interests in the future.

The members of CASA felt that this was a fair balance between respecting member autonomy and protecting the organization from sudden fluctuations in membership. The member schools who left in 2005 before the implementation of the new conditions of membership escaped having to go through a two year withdrawal process, but two of the schools faced legal battles brought to them by CASA to force them to meet their contractual obligations. On 19 July 2007, Maclean's reported that CASA had filed law suits against two member unions, the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU) and the University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) for neglecting to pay membership fees of approximately $28,000 in 2005, inducing criticisms of hypocrisy from representatives of those unions.[208] Max Silverman, Vice-President External at SSMU commented: "[CASA] regularly, and I think rightfully, criticize the fact that the CFS, while claiming to represent students, sue students associations. I think that's absolutely a legitimate criticism of CFS. However, now that CASA is engaging in it, they lose all creditability in terms of the ability to have moral high ground."[209] In contrast, Zach Churchill was eager to emphasize:

> [Legal action] was not a device to keep them in and retain their membership fees year after year; it was not an intimidation tactic. They left and they did not fulfil their responsibilities for membership fees the year they left, and that had significant financial implications

[208] Joey Coleman, "Student Lobby Group Sues Student Unions: CASA could lose Credibility over the Suits: Student Leader," July 19, 2007, http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2007/07/19/student-lobby-group-sues-students-unions/, (accessed February 3, 2009).
[209] Coleman, "Lobby Group Sues."

> for the organization; we had to cut staff. We also could not fulfil the plans for the national campaigns that year.[210]

Thus, when these three schools left, the threat to CASA was immediate and demonstrated that safeguards needed to be established to "make sure we are all protected ... because it could destroy CASA. Something like that happens on any given year and the organization could be gone just like that. Protecting the interests of our members and making sure that anyone who signed on to this has an obligation to fulfill their responsibilities until they were gone."[211] CASA recognizes its vulnerability in regards to the potentially fluid nature of membership. "CASA is a very small, not-for-profit organization. At that time we were functioning on about $300,000 or $400,000 dollars ... [lawsuits] are protecting everybody, they are protecting the organization, the members, staff, everybody."[212]

Despite the claims that CASA does not involve itself in the happenings on campus that could be interpreted as an infringement of autonomy, there are examples where CASA, facing separatist unions, have defended their organizational interests by sending executives to visit the campus in hopes of persuading student councils to remain full members. In the fall semester of 2008, the Alma Mater Society at UBC dropped down to associate membership with a vote of council after dissatisfaction with a CASA conference.[213] In response, CASA sent their National Chair, Treasurer, Vice-Chair, National Director and their Government Relations Officer to try and flip the decision in CASA's favour. The National Chair of CASA, Kyle Steele, explains that CASA sent representatives to UBC "to appeal to their council and make sure that they hold their

[210] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[211] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[212] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[213] The letter highlights concerns regarding food, social events, and staff involvement in policy conversations.

executive accountable for what they are saying, which are falsities in some cases. We went out there and addressed all the issues, but unfortunately, trying to address issues to an executive that are CFS friendly, in fact they just got back from a CFS conference in Ottawa, is like talking to brick walls."[214] Zach Churchill noted that "[AMS] have a very activist group this year, that holds any group up to certain standards that they have. They had concerns that precipitated a drop in membership, so we flew out to address those concerns."[215] In the same semester, CASA representatives also visited the University College of Fraser Valley, which contemplated reducing the status of their membership. The impact of these trips will be measured when the member unions vote to disaffiliate in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Another example of CASA defending their organization on campus comes from the USSU referendum fiasco mentioned above. Recall that USSU was both a member of CASA and a prospective member of CFS at the time the referendum campaign was taking place. CASA sent representatives to the University of Saskatchewan campus in order to have a voice in the debate because there were allegedly misconceptions about CASA that needed to be clarified.[216] The National Director of CASA sent letters to executives of member student unions asking them to fly to Saskatchewan to help with the campaign. The president of USSU, who was a member of CASA's Board of Directors, "expressed concerns that CASA's involvement in the campaign was inappropriate, even unconstitutional, as the organization is supposed to be member driven, and the USSU was

[214] Kyle Steele, *CASA Chair*, January 13, 2009.
[215] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[216] Tessa Vanderhart, "University of Saskatchewan votes on CFS: Controversy Inextricable from Referendum Debate." *The Manitoban*, October 5, 2005: 5

not notified in advance."[217] Clearly, although CASA sought to distinguish themselves from CFS by offering more respect for membership autonomy, that autonomy cannot be unrestricted, for it presents a serious threat to organizational interests.

Strength in Numbers?: The Prospect of National Unity

In the world of student lobbying, size matters. Claiming to be the largest coalition of students is used by CFS and CASA not only to gain political advantages, but also to attract member organizations. The number of students each organization represents is calculated by adding up all the students who belong to each member association; having the largest total is a highly marketable asset. In a report written by an ad-hoc committee of the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa, presenting the merits of organizing a referendum to re-federate with the CFS, the committee reported that "it is a powerful statement to claim to be part of the largest union of students in the country."[218] In the debate over the benefits of maintaining the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF), Zach Churchill used the power of numbers to argue against students sceptical of the CMSF. In an attempt to clarify the argument of the authors, who "gravely misrepresent[ed] the facts," Churchill pointed to nine student associations who had partnered with CASA representing over 600,000 students, who lobbied for the continuation of the program.[219] According to Churchill, to claim that to back up his point that "dissolution of this program bodes well for students is a misrepresentation of what

[217] Vanderhart, "U of S Votes."
[218] Student Federation of the University of Ottawa Board of Administration, *Student Advocacy Groups,* 11.
[219] Zach Churchill posted these comments online in response to the following article: Jennifer Freitas and Ben Ngai, "New Federal Grants may Exclude Quebec: Quebec may have to Sacrifice Student Grants to Maintain Provincial Jurisdiction over Post-Secondary Education.," *The Concordian*, 4 March 2008. Available at http://www.theconcordian.com/home/index.cfm?event=displayArticle&ustory_id=f75f68e0-151f-4aea-ad66-361cd6e4c6f6. Accessed 14 October 2008.

the majority of students and the post-secondary community have been saying."[220] Using these figures, CASA has tried to gain a slight edge on CFS by calling itself the "largest national education partnership."[221]

Logically, it would follow that were CFS and CASA to forge a partnership, they could present a message to government with the force of over 1,000,000 Canadian students. However, the chances are slim of a long-term partnership between CFS and CASA, despite occasional instances of cooperation. Even on issues where their messages overlap, CFS and CASA rarely coordinate their efforts. In 1997, there was a motion passed at CFS national plenary that essentially quashed the potential for formal partnership between CFS and CASA. The motion reads:

> In order to achieve its goals, the Federation works in coalition with other groups and organisations which share the Federation's objectives. The Federation shall refuse to work in coalition with groups and organisations, when work in such a coalition results in the production of materials that contradict the goals and objectives of the Federation or may serve to legitimise organisations whose goals and objectives are contradictory with those of the Federation.[222]

Partnership with CASA would be against the organizational interests of CFS because it would help to legitimize CASA, which would prevent CFS from carrying out their mandate of uniting the student movement. It is clear that CASA recognizes the strength of numbers, and uses those numbers to their advantage when possible. CASA is not clamouring for a united Canadian student movement.

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[220] Churchill, "Comments to The Concordian."
[221] Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, "Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union Joins CASA," April 28, 2008, http://www.casa.ca/index.php/wilfrid-laurier-university-students-union-joins-casa.html (accessed January 13, 2009).
[222] CFS, "Operations Policy: Coalition Work," 1997, 9.

CFS also subscribes to the power of numbers, and has traditionally advocated for student unity. Part of the mandate of CFS is to unite the student movement under a single banner, and they often refer to their organization as the Canadian student movement. Ian Boyko told the Eyeopener that although CFS is technically registered as a lobby group, it is more accurately described as a social movement.[223] As mentioned in the second chapter, one major difference between CFS and CASA that precludes national unity in the Canadian student movement is the differing perceptions of the functionality of two national student organizations. CASA believes that having two national organizations is functional to the student interest. According to Zach Churchill, "what we have had happen in Canada over the last fifteen years, as far as student advocacy goes, has been a tremendous benefit to students. We have had a number of policy and funding successes because of it."[224] This statement is unverifiable, because there is no way to test what would have happened if CFS had continued to be the only national student group. Alex Usher, the first National Director of CASA, also emphasized the functionality of two national student organizations. "Arguably, students actually win with that kind of good-cop, bad-cop thing. It is not coordinated. It is not what either side wants, but I suspect it ends up working in the student's favour."[225] This mentality is consistent with CASA supporting the legitimacy of their organization, against the denunciations from CFS.

When asked about the prospect of national unity in the student movement, Ian Boyko noted that CFS would welcome the members of CASA back into the organization

[223] Robyn Doolittle, "Breaking Rank," *The Eyeopener*, April 3, 2007, http://www.theeyeopener.com/article/3350 (accessed November 15, 2008).
[224] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.
[225] Doolittle, "Breaking Rank."

at any time.[226] Because CFS views their organization as the core of the student movement, uniting the student movement means re-uniting student organizations under CFS. Churchill was highly sceptical of this attitude, pointing out the difference between subsuming and uniting.

> I do think that in Canada we have a diverse group of students from various political spectrums, non-partisans from different countries who want different things, have different ideas and are not always going to agree. Whether that diversity will continue to be represented in a diverse advocacy movement, I'm not sure ... A lot of people talk about uniting the student movement, but when it comes from one side of the student movement, and this is usually pushed by CFS proponents to speak candidly, I don't believe that it's about uniting the student movement or uniting the diversity. I think it's about absorption, that's not an evolutionary or progressive process. What won't happen is that students will say 'yes, we are ready to have the CFS, as they currently operate absorb the rest of us.'[227]

Thus, to the members of CASA, student unity could only occur through the founding of a new organization, or a major restructuring of CFS. CFS proponents want a united student movement, but since they want to unite under the banner of CFS, the prospects of unity at this time are bleak. In this way, organizational interests work to prevent unity between the two federal student organizations in Canada.

[226] Ian Boyko, *Government Relations*, January 15, 2009.
[227] Zach Churchill, *National Director*, January 16, 2009.

Conclusion

This thesis has highlighted the competitive, and at times conflicting, nature of the relationship between Canada's national student organizations. Although conflict does not consume every aspect of the dynamic between CFS and CASA, it has been presented here as the major reason for their initial separation, and their continued existence as separate organizations. In the preceding pages, two overarching sources for the persisting rivalry between CFS and CASA have been identified: differing operationalizations of the student interest and importance of organizational interests. During the disaffiliation movement from CFS in the mid-1990s, it was clear that a philosophical disconnect between groups of student leaders, which was irreconcilable within the political atmosphere of CFS, led to the creation of CASA. The founding principles of CASA were deliberately designed to ensure that CASA would live by the principles that opposed those practices of CFS they had deemed inadequate.

Interpreting the student interest within CFS has been an ongoing source of disagreement between student advocates. CFS believes that there is no reason for CASA to exist, because the student voice would be stronger if united under the purview of one organization. Also, CFS holds that the differences between CFS and CASA are not so large that they necessitate the existence of another student organization. The common ground between all students in Canada would allow for the functioning of a single organization, which could then present a more unified, and thus stronger, message to government. CFS believes in a social movement of students, and they seek to embody that movement. CASA, on the other hand, believes that the students of Canada make up a very diverse demographic. Due to this diversity, having two national organizations is

beneficial to the student interest in general because it offers a choice to students to pursue another understanding of what an organized group of students should be working toward.

There are many noticeable differences between CASA and CFS in their interpretation of the student interest and the suitability of mechanisms used to promote and defend the student interest. The second chapter focused on several of these differences. The most noticeable gap in the understanding of the student interest is the role of student organizations in adopting a broader social agenda. To CFS, social justice issues are within the student interest. The value of promoting a common good in CFS can be understood when the history of the student movement is analysed. The student movement has a long history of promoting issues beyond the distribution of equitable loans and grants. The 1960s saw North American students contributing to the civil rights, environmental and peace movements. Social justice was institutionally embedded in the national student groups in the 1960s and 1970s. CFS, being a descendant of these groups, still values the link between the student interest and the interests of the society in which students exist. The focus of CFS on social issues should not be seen as their central focus. In no way does CFS disregard lobbying government on matters of post-secondary policy. The majority of their lobbying is spent on solidifying funding commitments from government and protesting the rise of tuition fees. The purpose of this thesis was to examine the reasons for the operation of two interest organizations occupying the same social space. Thus, the explanation required a focus on the tendency of CFS to focus on issues concerning social justice, which CASA refuses to involve itself with.

Although CASA may agree with many CFS social justice crusades, they do not believe that it is pertinent to the student interest. The maximization of student interests

will be better achieved by focusing solely on post-secondary policy issues within the federal government. This corporatist style of lobbying was entrenched in the operational structure of CASA from the beginning and persists to this day. Moreover, CASA approaches the government differently from CFS, and emphasizes well-established and stable relations with government representatives, arguing that this lobbying style is more desirable for students because it is more effective. The lobbying styles of CFS and CASA are indicative of the philosophy that guides their organizations.

Emphasising the differences between CFS and CASA runs the risk of reinforcing some of the stereotypes of the organizations. These stereotypes are prevalent throughout the student media and in the minds of students. CFS has been presented as a leftist organization that fights for the common good by tackling social justice problems, while CASA is seen as the non-progressive capitalist right that clings to corporatism to acquire small benefits from government. It is important to note that CASA has staged public demonstrations for media attention and, on occasion, has taken a demanding tone with government. Conversely, CFS often produces research reports that are submitted to parliamentary committees for consideration. There is certainly common ground between the message that CFS and CASA are sending to the public and to government. Also, there is common ground between the way in which CASA and CFS go about obtaining benefits. CFS and CASA are more accurately presented as two organizations that are defined by different philosophical spectrums. There is overlap between these political spectrums, but in many instances, CFS and CASA operate with different understandings of the specifics of the student interest.

There is more to the story than just a difference in understandings of the student interest, and how to go about defending and promoting those interests. In the third chapter it was demonstrated that organizational interests are very important to interest groups, and can take precedence over the interests of their members. Both CFS and CASA value the continued existence of their organizations, and often act to protect their organizations from external and internal threats. The use of litigation to protect the financial viability and internal cohesion of CFS of CASA is the most noticeable example of protecting organizational interests. Institutional interest groups strive on stability, but too often this stability is threatened by the fluid nature of membership. In response, both CFS and CASA have established mechanisms that protect their organizational interests. The conditions of membership that CFS and CASA place on individual student unions have provoked harsh criticism from student politicians in the past, but these allow for a greater level of predictability in their organizations. Perhaps the most telling illustration of the importance of organizational interests is the decision made by CASA to tweak its membership agreement. Although the Easy-in, Easy-out policy was established in response to the referenda conditions of CFS, it had to be re-tooled because it threatened the survival of their organization.

Organizational interests are also significant because of the effect they have on perpetuating the rivalry between CFS and CASA. Faced with an opposing group, organizational interests often manifest in ways that help distinguish and legitimize an organization from its competition. CASA justifies its existence by arguing that the diversity of the student movement is more accurately represented by having two national student organizations. CFS, on the other hand, has regarded the disaffiliation movement,

as a menacing threat to their organizational interests. They have argued that the student interest is better served by one organization, which can promote the student voice in solidarity. With organizational interests being of utmost importance to CASA and CFS, reconciliation in the near future seems unlikely. Even if some of their principles were to align, organizational interests would still go a long way in preventing amalgamation of CFS and CASA.

The theoretical framework employed did not perfectly fit the context of the Canadian student movement. David Kwavnick was focusing on the role of labour leaders and their pursuit for legitimacy in the eyes of government. The role of leaders in the Canadian labour movement, and their ability to protect organizational interests, played a large role in Kwavnick's thesis. The pursuit of organizational interests is not something that usually makes it to the official record, or that can be found in the policy statements. In a more detailed study, it would be interesting to engage in a closer survey of the role of leaders in CFS and CASA. Although CASA and CFS officially value the "grass-roots" and democratic decision making process of their organizations, there is some reason to believe that there is an active minority of people who make policy. In further studies of the Canadian student movement, it would be valuable to investigate the influence of student leaders in the interpretation of the student interest. It would be interesting to study the connection between CASA /CFS and individual students on campus to evaluate the sincerity of the grass-roots nature of the organizations.

Also, the functionality of two federal student organizations would be worthy of scrutiny. Such a study, however, would be very challenging and does not fit into the scope of this argument. It is difficult to discern any causal relationships between the

actions of interest groups and the policies of government, but that has not stopped a multitude of authors from attempting to draw strong correlations. Theories of different paradigms of lobbying could be used to discern which lobbying style is more appropriate in the Canadian context.

Attempting to investigate the Canadian student movement through secondary sources yielded very disappointing results. There is a serious lack of academic attention to the student movement after the 1980s. While information and analysis on other social movements have proliferated extensively over the past few decades, the student movement has gone largely unstudied. Perhaps the majority of scholars that would study this subject prefer to work with the benefit of hindsight and try to avoid publishing on a topic that is still unfolding. Additionally, the fact that individuals are only students for a limited time probably does not help the interest level in society more generally. There are sources on the origins of the Canadian student movement and the happenings of the student movement in the 1960s. Secondary literature on the student movement since then is negligible; thus, this thesis relied on the student press and official documents. This thesis has attempted to start filling the void, and did so by focusing on the two national organizations and the reasons for a fractured student movement. Hopefully, the future will bring increased academic attention to the student movement, which is still very much a dynamic movement and promises to go through several interesting developments in years to come.

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