Legitimacy in Question:

Elite-Mass Relations, Constitutional Reform and Canadian Democracy

by

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ABSTRACT

During the 1980s and 1990s, Canadian political authority orientations underwent a significant transformation. Canadians are no longer deferential towards their political elites. Instead, they are autonomous, challenging, and increasingly participatory, and this continuing trend has brought the procedural legitimacy of the Canadian political process into question. The following study of elite-mass relations within Canadian democracy attempts to provide insight into the meaning of this change and how it should be addressed. An attitudinal-behavioural analysis of the electorate presents evidence that popular cynicism and alienation is rooted more deeply in a dissatisfaction with political institutions and traditions than with politicians. A structural analysis of the elected political elite reveals the failure of consociational traditions to provide effective representation as well as the minimal impact which the aforementioned orientation shift has had upon this elite. An event-decisional analysis, or case study, of elite-mass relations in the arena of constitutional politics augments these complementary profiles and illustrates how the transformed electorate has significantly restricted the elected political elite's role in constitutional reform. The study concludes that the lack of responsiveness, representativeness, and inclusiveness of Canada's elected political elite, political institutions, and political traditions has substantially eroded the procedural legitimacy of Canadian democracy during the 1980s and 1990s. Remedying these three deficiencies in the political system, which are the objects of increasing public demand, may restore legitimacy, but the likelihood that such reforms will be adopted is presently uncertain in the face of formidable difficulties and obstacles.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

FIGURES AND TABLES

I

OUT OF THE PAST . . .

Canadians are a lucky people. We have the luxury of living in a country without politics. Ottawa is just a stag party we weren't invited to.[1]

Prior to the closing decades of the twentieth century, Canadian history unfolded before a deferential public. The passivity and acquiescence Canadians traditionally displayed towards all institutions of authority and the elites who occupied the upper echelons within them have weighed heavily upon their collective identity.[2] Indeed, Peter C. Newman considers this trait to have been so universally ingrained and extolled amongst all aspects of society and manner of affairs that he feels the country "had turned deference into its state religion", "a gospel to live by for so many generations".[3] From 1867 until 1980, the relationship between elites and the mass populace was largely paternalistic. There is evidence of a gradual increase in popular discontent with elites in the 1960s and 1970s[4], but public

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[1]Leonard Cohen, in a CBC Television interview, 1966.

[2]See David V. J. Bell, The Roots of Disunity: A Study of Canadian Political Culture (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992). Among many "Canadian traits" examined by Bell is "a tendency to accept official decisions with little hesitation, even when we have felt powerless to affect the course politics have taken" (p. 56.). For a comparative analysis of this deferential orientation towards authority, see Seymour Martin Lipset, Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada (New York: Routledge, 1990).

[3]Peter C. Newman, The Canadian Revolution, 1985-1995: From Deference to Defiance (Toronto: Viking, 1995), 83, 6-7.

[4]Public opinion polling conducted during this period does support the widely-held notion of a generally trusting and deferential Canadian public, but it also demonstrates a modest decline of these attitudes which is most evident in the domain of politics. For polling data, see F. J. Fletcher and R. J. Drummond, Canadian Attitude Trends, 1960-1978 (Montréal, Québec: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1979); and Frank Kielty, Clara Hatton, and Peter Munsche, eds., Canadians Speak Out: The Canadian Gallup Polls (Toronto: McNamara Press, 1980). Also see Richard J. Van Loon and Michael S. Whittington, The Canadian

orientations towards authority underwent a fundamental transformation during the 1980s and 1990s.[5] In this relatively short period of time, elite-mass relations in every domain of interaction have broken down, likely altering their character permanently. Originally a neutral term identifying those inevitable few who rise to the most prominent and powerful offices within their field, today "elite" is overburdened with negative connotations which reflect how elites, long respected and trusted, have fallen into disfavour amongst the public.[6] No longer do highly influential elites essentially dictate public opinion, values, and the direction of society, as the citizenry is now self-directed and regularly criticizes the ideas and actions of its elites. Canadians, no longer deferential to their elites, have matured into an autonomous citizenry.

In no sphere of life is this metamorphosis more pronounced than in politics.[7] In his

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Political System: Environment, Structure, and Process (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1987), 164.

[5]For evidence and cross-time analysis of this significant attitudinal and value shift in all spheres of life see, especially, Neil Nevitte, The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1996). Also see Michael Adams, Sex in the Snow: Canadian Social Values at the End of the Millenium (Toronto: Viking, 1997); Angus Reid, Shakedown: How the New Economy is Changing Our Lives (Toronto: Doubleday, 1996); and Newman, Canadian Revolution. Though Newman is the only author to use the term "revolution" to describe this transformation, Nevitte, Adams, and Reid speak in similar tones.

[6]See Robert Fulford, "Elite, the New Scare Word," Globe and Mail, 8 June 1996, D3. In this adaptation of a commencement address before the University of King's College, Halifax, Fulford quotes a revised entry in the Oxford Companion to Philosophy as stating that "the term 'elitist' has lately become a term of abuse". Also, see William Thorsell, "Rising Above Philistinism," Globe and Mail, 10 June 1995, D3. Thorsell, in this adaptation of a commencement address delivered at the University of Alberta, declares that "There is no dirtier word in the 1990s than the word 'elite'."

[7]For an analysis specific to politics see Nevitte, Decline of Deference, Chapters 3-4; Reid, Shakedown, Chapter 8; Newman, Canadian Revolution, Part III; Michael Bliss, Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Mulroney (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1994); Susan Delacourt, United We Fall: The Crisis of Democracy in Canada (Toronto: Viking, 1993); and Jeffrey Simpson, Faultlines: Struggling for a Canadian Vision (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1993). Again, while Newman is the only author to use the term "revolution" when focussing on the changes in political culture, the other authors use a descriptive vocabulary of the same ilk. It is a testament to the rapid, incomprehensible nature of these changes that none of these analyses were published until the mid-1990s. It should be noted, however, that

analysis of the World Values Surveys of 1981 and 1990, Neil Nevitte found the shift in Canadian political authority orientations to be the defining characteristic of the turbulent value change of the 1980s.[8] Historically, Canadians trusted and respected their political elites, granting them a great deal of latitude to devise policy and manage the affairs of the country with minimal complaint or involvement. Confederation itself was a product of behind-closed-doors elite accommodation, as the political elites of the day neither consulted the electorate during the conferences preceding the British North America Act nor sought popular ratification of the resultant union. The design and practice of government has been so elitist that "consociationalism", a model of democracy emphasizing the central role of elites in governing and maintaining stability in segmented societies, has often been applied, in some form, to Canada.[9] During the decline in popular deference towards elites in the 1980s and

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during the 1980s and 1990s journalists sometimes observed that certain events were indicative of this larger trend. For example, see Thomas Courchene, "Death of a Political Era," Globe and Mail, 27 October 1992, A1; William Thorsell, "Line Dancing with Joe Public: Elitism Goes Down the Tube," Globe and Mail, 7 January 1995, D6; "The Great TV Rebellion," Globe and Mail, 7 January 1995, D6; and the collection of Jeffrey Simpson's Globe and Mail national affairs columns from 1984 to 1996 in his The Anxious Years: Politics in the Age of Mulroney and Chrétien (Toronto: Lester Publishing, 1996).

[8]Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 301-2.

[9]In a paper presented to the Canadian Political Science Association at Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1970, S. J. R. Noel was the first to apply the consociational model to Canada. A version of this paper was soon published in the Canadian Journal of Political Science. See S. J. R. Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," Canadian Journal of Political Science IV (1971): 15-8 or S. J. R. Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," in Consociational Democracy: Political Accommodation in Segmented Societies, ed. Kenneth D. McRae (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 262-8. Canada was subsequently analysed or described in consociational terms by numerous scholars including Robert Presthus, Kenneth D. McRae, Arend Lijphart, and Michael Lusztig. For example, see Robert Presthus, Elite Accommodation in Canadian Politics (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973); Kenneth D. McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System," in Consociational Democracy, 238-61; Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977), 119-29; and Michael Lusztig, "Constitutional Paralysis: Why Canadian Constitutional Initiatives are Doomed to Fail," Canadian Journal of Political Science XXVII, 4 (December 1994): 747-71.

1990s, however, the country's traditional political culture "cracked like river ice in spring"[10].

The trust, respect, and relatively unfettered autonomy enjoyed by political elites, three

commodities necessary for a successful consociational democracy, have all been revoked.

Today, politicians can no longer assume that their policies will be greeted by popular

acceptance or ambivalence. Furthermore, they must respond to a citizenry which finds the

established elite-dominated process of "doing politics"[11] unacceptable and demands a greater

voice within a more representative government. Newly autonomous of their political elites,

Canadians are also naturally becoming more participatory in deed as well as word.

These dramatic changes in citizen orientations towards political authority are a

primary element of what has become known as New Politics[12]. This wide-ranging

phenomenon of the last two decades is associated with a public exhibiting a substantial

increase in political interest and sophistication, protest behaviour, issue-based voting, electoral

volatility, partisan dealignment, new patterns of political participation, and new political

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[10]Simpson, Faultlines, 1.

[11]In a March 25, 1993 speech announcing her intention to contest the leadership of the federal Progressive Conservative Party before a breakfast reception at the Hotel Vancouver, Kim Campbell coined this phrase. See Kim Campbell, Time and Chance: The Political Memoirs of Canada's First Woman Prime Minister (Toronto: Doubleday, 1996), 267.

[12]For an analysis of New Politics in the Canadian setting, see Neil Nevitte, "New Politics, The Charter and Political Participation," in Representation, Integration, and Political Parties in Canada, Volume 14, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, ed. Herman Bakvis (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 355-417; and Nevitte, Decline of Deference, Parts I, II, and V. For an analysis of New Politics which stresses the decline of public respect for authority, see Scott C. Flanagan, "Changing Values in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Inglehart's Silent Revolution from the Perspective of Japanese Findings," Comparative Political Studies XIV, 4 (January 1982): 403-44; and Scott C. Flanagan, "Measuring Value Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: A Rejoinder to Inglehart," Comparative Political Studies XV, 1 (April 1982): 99-128. Examination of the related worldwide shift in authority from nation-states to global and "local" centres can be found in James N. Rosenau, "The Relocation of Authority in a Shrinking World," Comparative Politics, XXIV, 3 (April 1992): 253-71; and Robert D. Kaplan, The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century (New York: Random House, 1996).

concerns emphasizing marginal or quality-of-life concerns. At the root of these disruptions

of the traditional political landscape is an erosion of traditional cleavage structures, the

adoption of "elite-challenging" rather than "elite-directed" activities[13], and a dissatisfaction

with existing hierarchical representative institutions and the quality of participation. New

Politics encompasses a great number of complex, interrelated political phenomena, but it

presents, with definitive precision, a discontented public preoccupied with a paternalistic

political process which it feels must be reformed or replaced.

The vast area of study under the umbrella of New Politics is evident from the great

number and diversity of possible causes debated by observers. Some see this participatory

trend as a natural outgrowth of Canada's indigenous strains of populism[14] or republicanism[15].

Others blame Canada's elected political elite, either decrying a paucity of leadership[16] or

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[13]Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), 3.

[14]See André Blais and Elisabeth Gidengil, Making Representative Democracy Work: The Views of Canadians, Vol. 17, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991). Blais and Gidengil observe an "older populist tradition" (p. 19) in Canada which has a "pervasive" (p. 45) influence over citizen attitudes. Their 1990 survey discovered "a strong populist strain, which is to be found in every region of the country" (p. 31). Also see Abraham Rotstein, "A Difficult Transition: English-Canadian Populism Vs. Québec Nationalism," in Beyond Québec: Taking Stock of Canada, ed. Kenneth McRoberts (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 371-7.

[15]For a compelling revisionist analysis of Canadian political culture see Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds. Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory, or Republican? (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1995).

[16]See Robert J. Jackson and Doreen Jackson, Stand Up for Canada: Leadership and the Canadian Political Crisis (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1992). Also, see David Taras, "Polls, Politicians, and the Media," in Canadian Legislatures, 1992: Issues, Structures and Change, ed. Robert J. Fleming (Agincourt, Ontario: Global Press, 1992), 56-7. Taras claims that "politicians no longer have strong convictions" because of their "excessive dependency on polls" (p. 57). Criticism of the contemporary leadership, which was particularly prevalent in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sometimes implied that the quality of contemporary leaders paled in comparison to those of the past. See, for example, James Mallory, "The Malaise is in Our Heads," in Canadian Legislatures, 1992, 50-1. Mallory disapproves of the current expenses and perks of office as compared to the "generally austere style" of "the old elites" and argues for a return to civility in the House of Commons and other political arenas.

pointing singularly to former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney[17] for fomenting unprecedented,

widespread public discontent. There is an impressive amount of substantiating evidence for

Alan C. Cairns' widely-accepted suggestion that new patterns of population replacement and

the empowering influence of the <u>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</u> are behind the

relatively recent prevalence of elite-challenging behaviour among the populace[18], but these

new political undercurrents are not a uniquely Canadian condition which can be explained

solely by domestic factors.

A massive body of evidence detailing the presence of New Politics in over 24

advanced industrial[19] democracies, including Canada, demonstrates that international and

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[17]See Brooke Jeffrey, <u>Breaking Faith: The Mulroney Legacy of Deceit, Destruction, and Disunity</u> (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1992); Jackson and Jackson; and Stevie Cameron, <u>On the Take: Crime, Corruption and Greed in the Mulroney Years</u> (Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1994): "What this book is about is how the Mulroney regime caused Canadians to lose faith in their government and why voters crushed a party they had come to despise." (p. xi.).

[18]See Nevitte, "New Politics, The Charter". Nevitte considers Cairns' Charter Politics thesis to be "undoubtedly correct" (p. 355) and entirely complementary to New Politics. Also see Alan C. Cairns, "Citizens (Outsiders) and Governments (Insiders) in Constitution Making: The Case of Meech Lake," in <u>Disruptions: Constitutional Struggles, from the Charter to Meech Lake; Selected Essays by Alan C. Cairns</u>, ed. Douglas E. Williams (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990), 108-38; Alan Cairns, "A Defence of the Citizen's Constitution Theory: A Response to Ian Brodie and Neil Nevitte," <u>Canadian Journal of Political Science</u> XXVI, 2 (1993): 261-7; and Alan Cairns, "Citizenship and the New Constitutional Order," <u>Canadian Parliamentary Review</u> XV, 3 (Autumn 1992): 2-6. Cairns also argues that "an international explosion of rights consciousness stimulated in part by the United Nations" has been responsible for "a reduction in the deference accorded elites". (p. 148) See Alan C. Cairns, "Barriers to Constitutional Renewal in Canada: The Role of Constitutional Culture," in <u>Reconfigurations: Canadian Citizenship and Constitutional Change</u>, ed. Douglas E. Williams (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), 142-55. In a related observation, Charles Taylor sees the rise of rights-based liberalism as a reason for the recent decline in what is herein considered "Old Politics". See Charles Taylor, "Alternative Futures: Legitimacy, Identity, and Alienation in Late Twentieth-Century Canada," in <u>Constitutionalism, Citizenship, and Society in Canada</u>, Vol. 33, Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, eds. Alan C. Cairns and Cynthia Williams (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 183-229. John Meisel seems to agree with Taylor when he disdainfully discusses how "pluralism has run wild" (p. 52) in his "Seeking the Common Good", in <u>Canadian Legislatures, 1992</u>, 52-3.

[19]For a thorough discussion of advanced (or post-) industrialism, see Daniel Bell, <u>The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting</u> (New York: Basic Books, 1973). Bell defines an advanced industrial state as having half its labour force employed in the tertiary or service sector, a significant

domestic forces are acting in tandem to produce these significant new tensions within the Canadian political environment.[20] Many commentators consider the current globalization of national economies and cultures, accompanied by revolutions in technological development and information availability, to be the chief source of declining respect for political authority among mass publics. Working from this basis, some of the more narrowly-focussed explanations of the new style of citizen politics discuss the bankruptcy of the welfare state, the participation of women in the economy[21], changing patterns of employment and consumption[22], the new dominance of the consumer-driven service sector[23], and increased

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segment employed by the public sector, a stagnant or declining proportion employed by the industrial sector, and very low numbers employed by an almost nonexistent farming sector.

[20]For such cross-national analysis and evidence of New Politics, see Russell J. Dalton, Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies (Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House, 1996); Mark Franklin, Thomas T. Mackie, and Henry Valen, eds. Electoral Change: Responses to Evolving Social and Attitudinal Structures in Western Countries (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan, and Paul Allen Beck, eds. Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment? (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984); Ivor Crewe and David Denver, eds. Electoral Change in Western Democracies: Patterns and Sources of Electoral Volatility (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985); Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," American Political Science Review LXXV (1981): 880-900; Ronald Inglehart, Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990); Inglehart, The Silent Revolution; Flanagan, "Changing Values"; Flanagan, "Measuring Value Change"; and Nevitte, Decline of Deference. For a specifically American investigation see Stephen C. Craig, ed. Broken Contract? Changing Relationships Between Americans and their Government (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996); and Stephen C. Craig, The Malevolent Leaders: Popular Discontent in America (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993).

[21]See D. Dahlerup, ed. The New Women's Movement: Feminism and Political Power in Europe and the U.S.A. (Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1986); and D. de Vaus and I. McAllister, "The Changing Politics of Women: Gender and Political Alignment in Eleven Countries," European Journal of Political Research XVII, 3 (May 1989): 241-62.

[22]See Patrick Dunleavy, "The Urban Basis of Political Alignment: Social Class, Domestic Property Ownership, and State Intervention in Consumption Processes," British Journal of Political Science IX, 4 (October 1979): 409-44; and Patrick Dunleavy, Urban Political Analysis (London: Macmillan, 1980).

[23]Lothar Späth, "Facing the Future: The New Politics," in Canadian Legislatures: 1987/1988, ed. Robert J. Fleming (Ottawa: Ampersand Communications Services, 1988), 41-5.

urbanization[24] and educational levels. Even the wave of democratization following the demise of the Soviet Union has been seen as the inspiration for contemporary populist perspectives upon the citizen's role in democracy. Numerous people from all walks of life lay blame for public cynicism upon the expansive, intrusive media which they criticize for an overly negative and unconstructive approach to reporting. Others view the transformation of public orientations towards political authority as a maturation of the inherently anti-authority and nihilistic impulses of democracy.[25] The most cited and influential reason proposed for the rise of New Politics is Ronald Inglehart's post-materialist thesis that the unprecedented affluence and peace of the post-war years have led populations to abandon traditional material goals and values in favour of a variety of particularistic, quality-of-life interests.[26] The research supporting Inglehart's explanation is substantial, but the corroborating evidence for the other theories within this debate suggests that, to some degree, they are all valid and interdependent factors contributing to the decline of Old Politics and emergence of New Politics.

The extensive literature dedicated to investigating the origins of New Politics provides an enhanced understanding of the trend, but properly addressing the problems it causes for democratic life also requires thorough study of its manifestations and impact upon the political system. The transformation of political authority orientations which defines this

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[24]For an analysis of the negative impact of declining rural populations, rising metropolitan and suburban populations, and increased social and geographic mobility on institutional loyalties and traditional social networks, see Robert Dahl and E. Tufte, Size and Democracy (Stanford, Connecticut: Stanford University Press, 1973).

[25]See Samuel P. Huntington, "Postindustrial Politics: How Benign Will it Be?" Comparative Politics VI, 2 (January 1974): 147-77; and Samuel P. Huntington, American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981).

[26]See Inglehart, "Post-Materialism"; Inglehart, Culture Shift; and Inglehart Silent Revolution.

trend in the Canadian setting poses a serious challenge to Canada's established elite-dominated process, and there is sufficient evidence to assume that this orientation shift will continue to evolve and gather momentum into the foreseeable future.[27] These factors beg the question and stress the necessity of determining the impact this changed electorate has had upon the elite-driven political system and the elected political elite which occupies its public offices of power. Harry Eckstein and T. R. Gurr have demonstrated that concentrating upon patterns of authority orientations and relations is essential to ascertaining the dynamics of legitimacy and democracy within societies.[28] The following examination of the change in elite-mass relations in Canadian political life during the 1980s and 1990s is dedicated to these ends and discerning appropriate responses to it.

Since the major shift of political authority orientations among the public has given rise to a pervasive political discontent which is primarily directed towards the hierarchical, top-down political process[29], this study specifically focusses upon the players, institutions, and

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[27]See Nevitte, "New Politics Challenges the Parties," in Politics: Canada, eds. Paul W. Fox and Graham White (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 144; Newman, Canadian Revolution; and Greg Quill, "Peter C. Newman's Talking About a Revolution," Toronto Star, 1 December 1996, B1. Both Nevitte and Newman provide substantial evidence supporting their conclusions that this orientation shift has been accelerating as of late and appears likely to continue into the foreseeable future. For example, Nevitte found the spread of New Politics values amongst all segments of the population to have increased by 15% from 1981 to 1990. (p. 144.) By 1990, one in four Canadians adhered to New Politics values, and post-materialists outnumbered materialists. (p. 144.) Also see Nevitte, Decline of Deference, especially Chapters 3-4, and 9 for Nevitte's argument that the growth in New Politics values is partially driven by generational change. For evidence of post-materialist and New Politics values among Canada's "Generation X", see Michael D. Martinez, "Losing Canada? Generation X and the Constitutional Crisis," in After the Boom: The Politics of Generation X, eds. Stephen C. Craig and Stephen Earl Bennett (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 174-95.

[28]Harry Eckstein and T. R. Gurr, Patterns of Authority: A Structural Basis for Political Inquiry (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1975). See also Harry Eckstein, "Authority Relations and Governmental Performance," Comparative Political Studies II, 3 (October 1969): 269-325; and Harry Eckstein, Regarding Politics: Essays on Political Theory, Stability and Change (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1992).

[29]See Nevitte, "New Politics, The Charter". Nevitte emphasizes the prime importance of process, as opposed to policy, to those exhibiting New Politics values.

elite-mass linkages of the political system. In order to ascertain the meaning and impact of this change, it is necessary to provide a profile of both the newly autonomous Canadian electorate and the elected members of the Canadian political elite, as it is these political elites with whom the public have the most contact, influence, and linkages. In addition, a case study will provide a proper venue from which to examine the manifestations of the orientation shift in elite-mass interactions. These exercises highlight the changes in elite membership and behaviour which have likely been the product of this shift and allow insights into the reasons behind the serious gap[30] between the political priorities of the electorate and its elected political elites.

Before entering into a discussion of authority relations in Canadian representative democracy, however, the timeless democratic dilemma presented by the inevitable existence of political elites must be understood. Chapter II acknowledges the broader theoretical underpinnings of this study in a survey of elitist, pluralist, and radical democrat perspectives on the role of political elites within democracy. This review provides direction on how to approach and study elites and the public in democratic society in the context of elite-mass relations. Focussing specifically on the case of Canada, the consociational model of democracy is employed as an appropriate lens through which to examine the country's transformed authority orientations. The appropriate methodologies necessary for the ensuing analysis are also introduced in this chapter.

Chapters III and IV provide the profiles discussed above. Chapter III furnishes a

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[30]For evidence of this gap see Harold D. Clarke, Jane Jenson, Lawrence LeDuc, and Jon Pammett, eds. <u>Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring</u> (Vancouver: Gage, 1995), x; and Frank Graves, <u>Rethinking Government '94</u> (Ottawa: Ekos Research Associates, 1994), 13.

detailed interpretation of the change in public authority orientations during the 1980s and 1990s and its effects upon the legitimacy and functionality of the political system. Following this attitudinal-behaviourial profile of the mass public, Chapter IV presents the requisite structural profile of Canada's elected political elite which addresses questions arising from the preceding chapter regarding the degree of representation, the effectiveness of consociationalism, the quality of leadership, and the level of social and ideological homogeneity of this elite. This analysis allows greater insight into whether the elected political elite has been affected by this attitudinal shift among Canadians.

Chapter V provides a case study of elite-mass relations within likely the most significant political issue of the 1980s and perhaps the 1990s; constitutional reform. For the newly autonomous Canadian electorate, no other issue, despite its exhaustion with the topic, elicits such political interest, activity, or demands for involvement. Through the application of Michael Lusztig's "consociational constitutionalism" framework[31], the impact of transformed public authority orientations upon the roles of the electorate and elected political elites in this arena of politics is quite evident.

This study supports the thesis that the recent transformation of Canadian political authority orientations has called into question the legitimacy of the political system and significantly reduced the role of the elected political elite in the arena of constitutional politics. Based on insights arising from the analysis, Chapter VI examines reforms designed to restore legitimacy to the political process by increasing responsiveness, representativeness, and citizen participation.

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[31]Lusztig, 748-52.

II

THE DEMOCRATIC DILEMMA

Modernism set out to replace authority with another kind of authority. But post-modernism denies the need for authority, and sees it as somehow hostile to the free human personality.[1]

The substantial shift of Canadian political authority orientations has given rise to questions about the nature and presence of political elites within democracy. In everyday usage, democracy is often simply defined as government by a majority of the people. When applied to the nation-state, however, the requisite representative institutions necessarily create a dichotomy of rulers and ruled wherein the rulers are far less numerous than the ruled. Ironic though this may be, it is not surprising since elites are an inevitability in almost every sphere of life. This is certainly true of the political realm, as empirical evidence demonstrates that no known political system distributes power in a manner even approaching that which could be considered equal.[2] Despite the dilemma posed by the existence of political elites within democracy, democrats and democratic theorists long neglected the study of their influence, largely leaving this work to the domain of classical elite theory. Only recent democratic theory has properly acknowledged the role of political elites and contemplated the work done by classical elite theorists. Since doing so, democratic theorists have entered into a lively debate concerning the compatibility of political elites and democracy. By seriously addressing this issue, democratic theory expanded its scope of inquiry and allowed the development of

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[1]Fulford.

[2]Robert D. Putnam, The Comparative Study of Political Elites (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 8.

new models of democracy such as consociationalism. The following examination of the theoretical foundations and methodological approaches to studying political elites and their linkages to the citizenry within democracies will provide a thorough understanding of these subjects as well as direction for the ensuing analysis of elite-mass relations in the contemporary Canadian political system.

CLASSICAL ELITE THEORY

In eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe, the notion of democracy as the purveyor of government "by the people" through a truly equal distribution of power was widely accepted by politicians, activists, liberals, socialists, philosophers, historians, political scientists, and ordinary citizens.[3] This common assumption was supported by simplistic interpretations of the works of revered scholars including Aristotle, Niccoló Machiavelli, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, Henri de Saint-Simon, and Karl Marx.[4] By focussing on elite activity and criticizing popular misunderstanding of such concepts as majority rule and popular sovereignty, three twentieth-century Italian sociologists, Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and Roberto Michels, erected the foundations of classical elite theory. The declared purpose of their respective writings was to demolish the widespread

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[3]Geraint Parry, Political Elites (Winchester, Massachusetts: Allen & Unwin, 1969), 23-5; and Putnam, 2.

[4]Parry, 23; and Robert A. Dahl, "Further Reflections on 'The Elitist Theory of Democracy',", in Political Elites in Democracy, ed. Peter Bachrach (New York: Atherton Press, 1971), 94-5. Dahl admonishes those who generalize, and take out of context, the arguments of these and other early theorists, by pointing out that most writers of the time realized direct democracy was impossible. He also provides evidence that though Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasized increasing citizen participation, and thereby perpetuated confusion about the degree of actual popular involvement in government, he did not believe direct democracy to be possible.

myths of democracy[5] by revealing the absence and impossibility of true majoritarian or participatory democracy. These pioneers were later followed by James Burnham[6] and C. Wright Mills[7], who, for the most part, based their work upon the same core principles established by the original three.

Robert D. Putnam, in The Comparative Study of Political Elites, discerns five basic principles shared by Pareto, Mosca, and Michels.[8] First, elitist theory is premised upon the acknowledgement that all political power and social goods are distributed unequally. Equality is a perpetually elusive ideal and so elitists consider inequality to be one of the few constants in life. Second, arising from this basis is the central tenet of elitist theory, best explained by Mosca in The Ruling Class:

> Among the constant facts and tendencies that are to be found in all political organisms, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye. In all societies . . . two classes of people appear - a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first . . .[9]

Mosca refers to this pervasive dominant minority as the ruling or political class, while Pareto

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[5]Vilfredo Pareto, The Mind and Society: A Treatise on General Sociology, ed. Arthur Livingston (New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1935), #2244 (p. 1569); Gaetano Mosca, The Ruling Class: Elementi Di Scienza Politica, ed. Arthur Livingston (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1939), 52; and Roberto Michels, Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (New York: Dover, 1959), viii, 400.

[6]James Burnham, The Managerial Revolution (New York: Putnam, 1942).

[7]C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

[8]Putnam, 3-4.

[9]Mosca, 50.

prefers the term "elite".[10] Terms aside, classical elite theorists agree that history provides irrefutable evidence of the necessity and inevitability of a ruling elite within democracy.[11]

Putnam's third observed general principle of classical elitism is that the elite is internally homogeneous, unified, and self-conscious. Clearly, rulers are not defined in pluralist terms. The theory contends that the members of the elite share similar backgrounds, values, loyalties, and interests, and generally work as a collective towards a common goal. The corresponding fourth principle holds that the elite is largely self-perpetuating and is drawn from a very exclusive segment of society. Elite theorists are careful not to argue that citizens of merit from outside this segment are absolutely barred from joining the ranks of the elite, but they clearly view such recruitment as highly unlikely.[12] Instead, they find it more plausible that the cumulative nature of power will consistently offer access to more power. For example, the elite may utilize power to increase its influence, socio-economic status, and the educational advantages for the children of its membership, further entrenching its dominant and exclusive position and increasing the possibility of the emergence of a hereditary caste. At the very least, the fourth principle suggests the likelihood that the elite will impose standards for admission to its membership based on such characteristics as socio-

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[10]Ibid; and Pareto. Pareto provides the broadest and most imprecise definition for his "elite", as the implied meaning changes often throughout his work.

[11]See Parry, 34-5; and Michels, Part 6, Chapter 2 for his "Iron Law of Oligarchy". It should be noted that Mills does not make this historical argument.

[12]Pareto's Circulation of Elites Theorem, with its Foxes and Lions metaphor, displays the most openness to the likelihood of such recruitment and even seems deceptively pluralistic, but it actually does not allow for a multiplicity of elites. Instead, in a characteristic over-qualification of his theory, Pareto describes the ruling elite as being in a perpetual state of decline, the conclusion of which occurs coincidentally whenever a new elite emerges to replace it.

economic status, education, and ideology.[13]

The fifth and final general principle is that the elite, for all of the preceding reasons, is essentially autonomous in the realm of devising and enacting policy. Elite theorists recognize that political elites frequently attempt to produce satisfactory social conditions for the masses in order to strengthen its chances for re-election[14], but they look upon partisan politics and the electoral process which rests at the heart of democratic systems with a skepticism rooted in their singular, conspiratorial view of those in power. Though the electorate may vote for its political representatives (who, in turn, appoint and hire other members of the state elite), it is argued that the electoral choices available to the public are largely pre-approved and presented by the elite. Moreover, it is assumed that the elite will not balk at resorting to corruption of the electoral and policy processes in order to secure its objectives. Power may be ostensibly attained through elections, but elite theorists state that this achievement rests fundamentally upon the elite's superior material, intellectual, personal, and ascribed qualities.

Essentially a summation of the other inter-related core principles of classical elite theory, the fifth principle implies that any efforts by the ruled masses to act or exert influence within the political arena will fail to yield significant results.[15] Elite theorists assert that the elite's monopoly on power will not only be employed to serve its own interests but to prevent the masses from exerting control over it. With resources such as propaganda, think tanks,

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[13]Parry, 32-3.

[14]Putnam, 146.

[15]Ibid., 4.

and capital at its disposal, it is believed that the elite can manipulate the public to its advantage.[16] According to Mills, elite dominance also continues because the masses are atomized, preoccupied with the trivial routines of life, and lacking the elite's organizational abilities.[17] As may already be ascertained, the views which elite theorists hold of the masses range from incompetent to malleable to unruly threats to liberty, and they thus consider an autonomous elite necessary to maintain a stable political system. An ideal public, according to classical elitism, would be deferential, passive, and, if necessary, a source of new elites. Aside from the slight element of uncertainty introduced into the political system by elections, elite theorists feel only the remote possibility of a revolution need concern the ruling elite of a democratic society, and this merely requires that care be taken that the masses perceive the elite's actions to be generally legitimate. Elite theory describes a minimal, almost insignificant role for the masses and casts a cynical eye upon democracy.

DEMOCRATIC THEORY

In their purest incarnations, elite and democratic theory are most certainly separate and contradictory; the former contends the minority rules the majority and the latter claims the majority rules the minority. The raison d'être of the founders of elite theory, as outlined earlier, was to dispel the commonly held myths of democracy and thereby inform democratic theory. Yet it was not until the publication of Joseph A. Schumpeter's Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy in 1942 that democratic theory seriously addressed the presence of political

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[16]Mills, in particular, evokes a rather sinister image of an omniscient, omnipotent, monolithic elite. See Mills, Chapter 1.

[17]Ibid., 321-2.

elites within democracy. Schumpeter's work is considered the primary influence behind this transformation from a largely idealistic theory to a more realistic one.[18] Indeed, the field of democratic theory has been markedly different ever since.

"Democracy" is a word and idea often invoked though it appears no two people define it in the same way. Democratic theory eludes definition as well. It is properly described by Robert A. Dahl as "a large enterprise - normative, empirical, philosophical, sympathetic, critical, historical, utopianistic, all at once - but complexly interconnected"[19]. A cursory glance at the field impresses upon the observer that there is no single democratic theory. One way of approaching the numerous theories of democracy is to categorize them into differing schools of thought regarding the presence of elites within representative democracy.

Casual references are often made to a classical theory of democracy which evokes Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideal of a participatory democratic government by the people as much like the mythologised city-state democracy of Ancient Athens as possible. Nevertheless, both Carol Pateman and Dahl effectively illustrate that there has never been a classical theory of democracy.[20] Instead, Pateman discerns at least two theories which might be considered classical; one in the work of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, and another in

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[18]Peter Bachrach, The Theory of Democratic Elitism: A Critique (New York: University Press of America, 1980), 19, 21-2; and Parry, 144. Both Bachrach and Parry indicate that most theorists agreed with Schumpeter's redefinition of democratic theory, but Bachrach pays particular attention to Henry B. Mayo's complementary proposal for a neutral approach to democratic political systems like that used in the discipline of economics. For example, see Henry Bertram Mayo, An Introduction to Democratic Theory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 33.

[19]Robert A. Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989), 8.

[20]Carol Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 17; and Dahl, "Further Reflections", 108.

the writings of John Stuart Mill, G. D. H. Cole, and Rousseau.[21] The former group of theorists expects the general populace to only vote in elections, make its will known, and exercise considerable influence over its elected representatives so that legislation tends toward the common good and the protection of its interests. Rather than leaving government in the hands of politicians, the latter group of theorists favours widespread direct popular participation in the political process in order to give the populace the greatest amount of control over its life and environment. Rousseau, in particular, promotes such populist and direct forms of democracy. He argues that participation should be regarded as a duty rather than a right, and believes such activity has beneficial effects upon the development of each individual's personal capacities and its sense of morality, discipline, civic responsibility, and freedom.[22]

The influential, value-laden approach emphasized by Rousseau is indicative of the state of democratic theory prior to Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy. Just one year before the appearance of Schumpeter's book, Carl Becker best described democratic theory in the following way:

> Modern liberal-democracy is associated with an ideology which rests upon something more than the minimum assumptions essential to any democratic government. It rests upon a philosophy of universally valid ends and means. Its fundamental assumption is the worth and dignity and creative capacity of the individual . . .[23]

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[21]Pateman, 18-43.

[22]See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract", in The Social Contract and Discourses, ed. G. D. H. Cole (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1968), 1-116; and Parry, 150.

[23]Carl Becker, Modern Democracy (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1941), 26-7.

Recognizing this, Schumpeter thought of classical democratic theory as an "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions which realizes the common good by making the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will"[24]. Though Pateman's study of early democratic theory never revealed a classical theory exactly like the one Schumpeter describes[25], the idealistic approach inherent in his definition is properly representative of the discipline at the time of his writing.

Peter Bachrach observes that Schumpeter is primarily opposed to this ideological aspect of democratic theory.[26] In Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, ideas like "the common good" and "the will of the people" are criticized as irrational, undesirable, and illusory notions.[27] Schumpeter refashions democracy into an "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people's vote"[28]. Resembling Mosca's view of stable, open political systems, this definition allows citizens to accept or reject leaders at election time and nothing else, as Schumpeter believes that voters must "respect the division of [labour] between themselves and the politicians"[29]. The specifics of his definition are not as significant as the approach he takes to the subject. Schumpeter's redefinition of democratic theory views

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[24]Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), 250.

[25]William N. Nelson, On Justifying Democracy (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 38.

[26]Bachrach, Theory of Democratic Elitism, 18.

[27]Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, 251-64.

[28]Ibid., 269.

[29]Ibid., 295.

the discipline from a realistic and more scientific perspective which is devoid of idealism and ideology. This decidedly neutral view of democracy transformed democratic theory, as it was thereafter adopted by a great many democratic theorists. This, in turn, has caused a division among the theorists in this field. Those refusing to abandon an idealistic approach to the discipline criticize those adopting a neutral approach for the ambivalence they display towards political elites. The disagreement between these two schools of thought does not centre around the existence of political elites but whether or not they are friends or foes of democracy.

The pluralist school accepts Schumpeter's realistic approach and is comprised of a large, diverse collection of democratic theorists expressing either resigned acceptance or outright gratitude towards political elites. Theorists occupying the reformist end of the pluralist spectrum, such as Dahl, argue for enhancing citizen involvement and increasing limits to elite power as much as possible, while those on the opposite end favour allowing political elites to act without interference from the masses. All pluralists recognize inequality to be inescapable and true participatory or direct democracy to be unattainable, but they generally feel that the other principles of elite theory as well as its sceptical outlook on democracy are seriously flawed and cannot be substantiated.[30] Though classical elite theory acknowledges only a single, cohesive, self-perpetuating political elite, pluralists have effectively demonstrated the presence of a multitude of political elites within democracy. For pluralists, the perpetual competition between these numerous independent elites acts as a negating or countervailing effect on each elite's power and influence within the political system. Thus,

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[30]See Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics, Chapters 16, 19, 22-3.

the presence of political elites can be seen to be compatible with and even beneficial to democracy. Besides Dahl, other prominent members of this school include Nelson W. Polsby, Edward C. Banfield, Robert Presthus, William Kornhauser, and Giovanni Sartori.[31]

The more notable writings representing the end of the pluralist spectrum which seems sympathetic to some of the beliefs of classical elite theory have been authored by Kornhauser and Sartori.[32] They view elite pluralism as a safeguard of liberty and a necessary component for a stable, functioning democracy, but, unlike the more reformist pluralists, Kornhauser and Sartori prefer that political elites play a dominant role unencumbered by the involvement of the masses. For Kornhauser, the social pluralist structure creates a buffer between the masses and elites which allows the public to become preoccupied with the concerns of everyday life. He argues that this reduces the likelihood that the masses will place ill-informed and extreme demands upon the elites or mobilize behind destabilizing and destructive counter-elites. Elite-controlled intermediate groups, such as political parties and pressure groups, are seen as vehicles for political participation which compete with one another, further insulate the elites, and moderate or filter the electorate's voice.[33] This is important to Kornhauser, as his notion of the populace's role is very similar to that of Schumpeter. If the elites are not ordinarily free

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[31]See Nelson W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1963); Edward C. Banfield, Political Influence (New York: Free Press, 1961); Robert Presthus, Men at the Top (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); William Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959); Giovanni Sartori, Democratic Theory (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962); Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1961); and Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics.

[32]Parry, 146. This is particularly true, though on a plural rather than a singular scale, as regards classical elitism's fifth principle of elite autonomy.

[33]Kornhauser, 76, 99.

from interference, Kornhauser does not believe they can act decisively and develop their governing skills.

Sartori also accepts Schumpeter's definition of democracy as a competition among leaders for the authority to govern for periods of time. In accordance with Kornhauser, he considers the masses to be mediocre and susceptible to the rhetoric of undemocratic counter-elites. The masses are viewed as the only threat to democracy, and Sartori, more so than any other pluralist, argues in favour of keeping them as obedient, deferential, and distant as possible. Furthermore, unlike Kornhauser, Sartori sees the key to democracy's survival as resting solely with the ruling elite. For him, "[d]emocracy is . . . so difficult that only expert and accountable elites can save it from the excesses of perfectionism, from the vortex of demagogy, and from the degeneration of the lex majoris partis."[34] It is this belief which leads Sartori to primarily concern himself with the quality of leadership in democracies. Unlike Dahl and other pluralists less sympathetic to political elites, Kornhauser, Sartori, and their ilk do not see the pluralist structure as protecting democracy from the emergence of a single, dominant ruling elite but from a mass electorate they perceive to be ignorant and irrational.

Vehemently opposed to the pluralists are the democratic theorists Geraint Parry dubs "radical democrats".[35] This smaller and less diverse school objects to Schumpeter's redefinition of democracy, arguing that it corrupts the democratic ideal because it absorbs elite theory into democratic theory. For them, this is exemplified in the works of those pluralists, such as Kornhauser and Sartori, who assert that active citizen participation in

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[34]Sartori, 119.

[35]Parry, 152.

politics subverts democracy. This is a thoroughly unacceptable contention for theorists of radical democracy, which prompts them to accuse pluralists of losing sight of democratic standards in an obsessive pursuit for stability and talented leadership. Hence, radical democrats use the terms "democratic elitism" or "the elite theory of democracy" instead of "pluralism" when describing the school of their opponents.[36] Some radical democrats, such as Jack L. Walker, also make unwarranted charges that all pluralists are elitists, wrongly ignoring the diversity within the larger school.[37] The ideas of radical democracy are obviously incompatible with those of the Sartori-Kornhauser brand of pluralism, but the Dahl contingent is certainly pursuing many of the same goals as the radical democrats[38].

Both pluralists and radical democrats acknowledge the presence of competing political elites, but, not satisfied with how pluralism prevents a single elite from subverting democracy, radical democrats consider these elites detrimental to democracy because they restrict direct citizen participation. Essentially reformist in nature, the theory of radical democracy aims to extensively limit the power of elites and, while pluralists think the presence of elites is inevitable, radical democrats hope to eliminate them. The ultimate goal of these theorists is truly participatory direct democracy, and they insist that pluralists are incorrect in proclaiming it impossible merely because it has not yet been achieved. They defend the utopian and idealistic nature of their writing, arguing it is valuable because of the democratic standards

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[36]Bachrach, Theory of Democratic Elitism; and Jack L. Walker, "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy," American Political Science Review LX, 2 (June 1966): 285-95.

[37]See Walker; and Dahl, "Further Reflections".

[38]See, for example, Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics, Chapter 23. Dahl proposes institutional reforms designed to increase citizen participation in the U. S. Congress which many would consider radical.

it sets for all to aspire to. Some of the more prominent radical democrats are Henry S. Kariel, T. B. Bottomore, Walker, and Bachrach.[39]

The theory of radical democracy perceives a need to revive a spirit of civic duty within society by reforming "decaying" democratic institutions in such a way that political participation of the citizenry is encouraged and maximized.[40] It posits that the ideals inherent in city-state democracy are viable today, and so almost all radical democrats favour decentralizing power so as to create many smaller-scale city-state-like groupings. Some radical democrats feel that the aim of society should be to strive for greater equality of opportunity, a more egalitarian community, a more accessible political system, and a politicization and democratization of contemporary non-political domains. For example, one of the primary goals of this school is the democratization of industry and the workplace, as they believe this to be the necessary first step towards achieving their grand vision of democratic society.[41] Radical democrats are clearly not averse to suggesting controversial reforms in the pursuit of their goals, despite the impossible and prohibitively difficult nature of most of them. The merits of the theory rest squarely on this idealistic emphasis on increased citizen participation and the innovation of democracy. Considering the major shift in Canadian political authority orientations, the reforms proposed by radical democrats may

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[39]Henry S. Kariel, The Decline of American Pluralism (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961); Henry S. Kariel, The Promise of Politics (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966); and T. B. Bottomore, Elites and Society (London: Watts, 1964).

[40]See Peter Bachrach and Aryeh Botwinick. Power and Empowerment: A Radical Theory of Participatory Democracy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), ix-x; and Dalton, 262.

[41]Bachrach and Botwinick, ix; and Bottomore, Chapters VI-II. Bottomore even calls for public ownership of all large industries. Most radical democrats criticize pluralists for not supporting their calls for increased accountability in the economic system and sanctions against the business elite.

very well become increasingly popular, and, if this dramatic change in public attitudes leads to an acute crisis of legitimacy or paralysis of the political system, their ideas may no longer be viewed as radical or controversial.

CONSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY

The various classical elitist and democratic perspectives discussed in the preceding examination of political elites within democracy together provide the understanding of this democratic dilemma necessary for assessing the character of elite-mass linkages within the Canadian political system. Each theory has its strengths and weaknesses. Though the efforts of reformist pluralists to develop models of increased citizen participation may appear mundane in comparison to the more idealistic, innovative, and often impractical ideas offered by radical democrats, they are worthwhile and should not be overlooked. The singular view of classical elite theory has been discredited by pluralists, but classical elitists deserve credit for calling attention to the importance of studying political elites within democracy. The serious acknowledgement of this subject within democratic theory led to the emergence of a broader, more complete discipline and a greater variety of democratic models to better understand the different incarnations of democracy. One such model which describes those democratic societies where political elites perform a crucial and dominant role is that of consociationalism. The word consociatio first appeared in 1603 in Johannes Althusius' Politica Methodice Digesta[42], but the term "consociational", derived from Althusius' concept,

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[42]Hans Daalder, "On Building Consociational Nations: The Cases of The Netherlands and Switzerland," in Consociational Democracy, 107; and Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977), 1.

was first introduced to modern social science by David Apter[43]. It was further elaborated

upon and popularized by Arend Lijphart[44], who pioneered its development as a model of

Western democracy.

In a "constructive attempt to refine and elaborate"[45] Gabriel A. Almond's highly

influential typology of political systems[46], Lijphart presents consociationalism as a proper label

and description for Almond's neglected third category of Western democracy. While Almond

and later theorists fully develop the first two categories, Anglo-American systems and

Continental European systems, the third type lacks both a useful title or classification and

instead is vaguely described as being occupied by those states which "combine some of the

features of the Continental European and Anglo-American political systems"[47]. Lijphart

considers that typology flawed, and by utilizing Almond's focus on the "relationship between

political culture and social structure on the one hand and political stability on the other hand"

he redefines the three categories with the following more appropriate and useful descriptive

labels: centripetal democracies (homogeneous and stable societies characterized by Anglo-

American systems such as Great Britain and the United States of America), centrifugal

democracies (fragmented and unstable societies characterized by Continental European

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[43]David Apter, The Political Kingdom in Uganda: A Study in Bureaucratic Nationalism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), 24-5.

[44]Arend Lijphart, "Typologies of Democratic Systems," Comparative Political Studies I, 1 (April 1968): 3-44; and Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," World Politics XXI, 2 (1969): 207-25.

[45]Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," in Consociational Democracy, 70.

[46]Gabriel A. Almond, "Comparative Political Systems," Journal of Politics XVIII (August 1956): 391-409.

[47]Ibid., 392-3.

systems such as Italy and the French Third and Fourth Republics), and, finally, consociational

democracies (fragmented and stable societies characterized by such systems as those existing

in Switzerland and Austria). [48] Thus, he establishes the consociational model of Western

democratic political systems, generally defined as "government by elite cartel designed to turn

a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy"[49].

As has been mentioned, consociationalism has often been applied to Canada since S.

J. R. Noel was the first to do so in 1970. Presthus argues that Canada "fits nicely into this

category"[50], and Lijphart himself specifically describes Canada as a "semi-consociational

democracy"[51]. Though Kenneth D. McRae disagrees and asserts that the "existing Canadian

political system must be viewed as a very imperfect example of consociational democracy"[52],

he still considers the model a useful classificatory device and normative framework to provide

cross-time analysis of the Canadian political system and direction on future policy.[53] Since

it resembles the traditional, hierarchical, elite-dominated Old Politics, consociationalism serves

as an excellent lens through which to examine the impact of the transformation of Canadian

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[48]Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," in <u>Consociational Democracy</u>, 70-5, 85.

[49]Ibid., 79.

[50]Presthus, <u>Elite Accommodation</u>, 7.

[51]Lijphart, <u>Democracy in Plural Societies</u>, 119, 129.

[52]McRae, "Epilogue," in <u>Consociational Democracy</u>, 300.

[53]McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 238; and McRae, "Epilogue", 300. Also, see Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", in McRae. Noel agrees that consociationalism has implications for normative and historical analysis (p. 267-268), but he also stresses that there are "advantages to be gained from occasionally viewing Canadian politics from a European perspective", as the emphasis upon the similarities between Canada and America inherent in the dominant American comparative perspective "too often obscure the significance of those differences which do exist, or cause similarities which exist with other countries to be neglected" (p. 262).

political authority orientations upon their political system.

McRae details three approaches to consociationalism from the existing literature.[54] One of these approaches, alluded to in the work of Gerhard Lembruch and more extensively developed in that of Hans Daalder[55], emphasizes elite accommodation and cooperation, but it does so from a historical-traditional perspective. Rather than view this behaviour, like Lijphart, as a learned pattern of rational responses to the potential of fragmentation in segmented societies, this approach sees it as a long-standing characteristic of the political system which itself aids in moderating tensions[56]. While Lijphart regards elites as dependent variables which counteract cleavages of an objective nature, Daalder argues that "the elite culture is in itself a most important independent variable which may go far to determine how cleavages are handled".[57] In accordance with Daalder's approach, William Ormsby and George F. G. Stanley both argue that Confederation and Canada's political system have historical roots in consociationalism.[58] Studies utilizing this approach also demonstrate that historical roots do not guarantee consociational democracy's perpetuity. The cases of Austria and Manitoba illustrate how consociational patterns can increase, decrease, and even

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[54]Kenneth D. McRae, "Introduction", in Consociational Democracy, 5-13.

[55]See Daalder, "Building Consociational Nations"; and Gerhard Lembruch, "A Non-Competitive Pattern of Conflict Management in Liberal Democracies: The Case of Switzerland, Austria and Lebanon," in Consociational Democracy, 90-97.

[56]McRae, "Introduction", 12.

[57]Daalder, "Building Consociational Nations", 122.

[58]See William Ormsby, "The Province of Canada: The Emergence of Consociational Politics," in Consociational Democracy, 269-74; and George F. G. Stanley, "The Federal Bargain: The Contractarian Basis of Confederation," in Consociational Democracy, 275-87.

disappear over time.[59] In fact, evidence in the mid-1970s from various countries indicated

that consociationalism had been eroding in Europe since the mid-1960s.[60] It is important to

keep this in mind when considering the implications of the newly autonomous electorate for

the future of consociational politics.

The second approach, as demonstrated in the work of Val R. Lorwin[61], views

consociationalism as a function of the structure of social cleavage. Such an emphasis on the

structural components of consociational democracy dictates that institutionalized cleavage

structures be examined to determine the levels of cohesion and cooperation in the political

system. It is difficult to identify the major line(s) of segmentation in Canada because of the

interrelated, ever-changing, and relatively weakly-organized "subcultural" cleavages of

province, language, ethnicity, and religion.[62] Noel, in his application of the theory to the

Canadian political system, acknowledges that it is necessary to "make certain adjustments in

Lijphart's consociational model":

> The term "subculture" could be interpreted in a number of
> ways - it could be taken, for example, to refer to English
> Canada and French Canada, or to a number of distinct regions
> such as the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, and the West - but
> most usefully perhaps as "province."[63]

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[59]See Janice Staples, "Consociationalism at Provincial Level: The Erosion of Dualism in Manitoba, 1870-1890," in Consociational Democracy, 288-99; and McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 238.

[60]McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 238.

[61]See Val R. Lorwin, "Segmented Pluralism: Ideological Cleavages and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies," Comparative Politics III, 2 (January 1971): 141-75.

[62]See McRae's "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System" for a discussion of these cleavages. McRae notes that Canada's cleavages are not organized to the same degree as those of classically consociational European countries.

[63]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," in Consociational Democracy, 265.

By taking this purely institutional approach to Lijphart's term "subculture" and adopting a provincial rather than regional interpretation, Noel acknowledges and emphasizes the significance of federalism and the realities of contemporary constitutional politics[64] in Canada.

Adherents of the third approach, such as Lijphart and, to a lesser extent, Gerhard Lembruch[65], direct the bulk of their efforts towards investigating the capacity and good will of elites to "counteract the disintegrative tendencies in the system"[66] and do not consider institutions, structures, or the methods of operationalizing cooperation to be of great importance. Through his use of this behavioural-attitudinal focus on elites, Lijphart establishes four requirements which elites must fulfill for consociational democracy to be successful:

> (1) That the elites have the ability to accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures. (2) This requires that they have the ability to transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elites of rival subcultures. (3) This in turn depends on their commitment to the maintenance of the system and to the improvement of its cohesion and stability. (4) Finally, all of the above requirements are based on the assumption that the elites understand the perils of political fragmentation.[67]

The role of leadership is critical, but Lijphart also stresses that widespread popular approval of a system of government operating by elite cartel is "a very obvious factor" which is of

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[64]For evidence that provinces within common regions often have conflicting interests, see Howard McConnell, "The Case for a 'Triple-E' Senate," Queen's Quarterly XCV, 3 (Autumn 1988): 694. Also see Canada, Shaping Canada's Future Together: Proposals (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1991), 18. The federal government's 1991 constitutional proposals appropriately declared that "[T]he reality of contemporary Canadian politics is that *province and territory, and not regions,* are basic to our sense of community and identity." The anomalous nature of the concept of region and the powerful institutional role played by provinces are illustrated by the fact that regions do not exist as political units as well as the emergence of a convention of provincial unanimity in the current constitutional "crisis".

[65]Lembruch, "Non-Competitive Pattern of Conflict Management".

[66]Lijphart, "Typologies of Democratic Systems", 21.

[67]Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," in Consociational Democracy, 79.

"considerable importance" to the establishment and maintenance of consociationalism.[68] He further observes the following additional factors which, though not essential, are strongly conducive to the successful functioning of consociationalism; a long period of operation as a consociational democracy, external threats to the country, a multiple balance of power among the subcultures, a relatively low total load on the decision-making apparatus, small size, distinct lines of cleavage between subcultures, internal political cohesion of the subcultures, and an adequate articulation of the subcultural interests.[69] The consociational view of the public as dangerous to the stability of the political system and the requirement that it not interfere with their governing elites is reminiscent of classical elitism and the pluralism of Sartori and Kornhauser.

In his application of the model to Canada, Noel focusses on Lijphart's four primary requirements of political elites and single requirement of the masses which are necessary for the operation of consociationalism in Canada. Since he believes that Canada suffers, like all consociational systems, from "a relative weakness of popular national sentiment" which can be overcome "through the process of elite accommodation", Noel stresses the importance that the masses accept the principle of an elite-driven and dominated system of government:

> For the masses . . . all that is required is that they be committed to their own subcultures and that they trust and support their respective elites. Since the more contact and interaction there is between the masses of the subcultures the greater the likelihood of friction between them. . . .[70]

This requirement is so significant to the maintenance of consociationalism that Noel cautions

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[68]Ibid., 84, 85.

[69]Ibid., 80-5.

[70]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," in Consociational Democracy, 264.

that "a decline in 'elitism' in Canada and its replacement by a general acceptance of the Jacksonian myth of popular or 'participatory' democracy may be detrimental to the maintenance of Canadian federalism" if it results in the public rejecting the products and concept of elite accommodation. The shift of Canadian political authority orientations which has occurred during the 1980s and 1990s is precisely the type of trend to which Noel is referring. Though it will undoubtedly have adverse effects upon the functioning of consociationalism, it does not necessarily have negative implications for Canada's federal system or the federation itself.

Canada's federal structure forces Noel to make further changes to Lijphart's original model. Noel argues that the country maintains stability and unity through networks of elite accommodation which exist at numerous levels within all branches of the political system, including federal boards and interprovincial bodies such as the Council of Education.[71] A convention of equitable provincial representation dictates membership on these boards and agencies in almost every instance.[72] Noel focusses upon the three most important institutions of consociationalism.[73] Unlike European consociational democracies[74], the combined effect of Canada's federal framework, party system, and electoral system forces elite accommodation to occur within the parties - especially those forming the government. Thus,

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[71]Ibid., 265.

[72]Ibid.

[73]See Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," in Consociational Democracy, 265-67; and S. J. R. Noel, "The Prime Minister's Role in a Consociational Democracy," in Apex of Power: The Prime Minister and Political Leadership in Canada, ed. Thomas A. Hockin (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 106-7.

[74]McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 248-50.

the representative character of the federal cabinet, with its firmly entrenched principle of provincial representation, makes it Noel's central focus for this activity. Second, the public office of Prime Minister, due to his or her role in choosing cabinet ministers, maintaining their loyalty to the national political system, and acting as national representative at First Ministers' Conferences, can be considered "the personification of inter-elite accommodation"[75]. Third, Noel acknowledges that First Ministers' Conferences have emerged as very significant institutions of consociationalism: "The summit meeting of Canadian politics is not a meeting of the federal cabinet; it is a Conference of First Ministers, which brings together, with much attendant fanfare and publicity, the *eleven* heads of governments."[76] A clear distinction is drawn between federal and provincial political elites which highlights the prominence of provincial Premiers within Canada's federation.[77] The implication of Noel's classification of these three primary institutions of the Canadian variant of consociationalism is certainly that, at least in consociational terms, Canada's elected political elite is defined as the Prime Minister, provincial Premiers, and federal cabinet ministers.

Not only does Noel define the institutional analysis of the following study, but his emphasis on the importance of federal-provincial relations as a subject of analysis within the context of consociationalism also provides direction. Michael Lusztig has adapted the consociational model to the Canadian case of constitutional reform. He illustrates that "mass input/legitimization" is incompatible with successful consociational constitutionalism, partly

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[75]Noel, "Prime Minister's Role", 107.

[76]S. J. R. Noel, "Leadership and Clientelism," in The Provincial Political Systems: Comparative Essays, eds. David J. Bellamy, Jon H. Pammett, and Donald C. Rowat (Toronto: Methuen, 1976), 197.

[77]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", 265.

because the public will no longer allow the secrecy necessary for elite bargaining and accommodation.[78] Agreeing with Noel's assertion that "if inter-elite accommodations must be popularly ratified they may be impossible to achieve"[79], Lusztig argues that constitutional reform will not occur in the foreseeable future because of the public's expectation that any constitutional changes be subject to a referendum. At the core of this argument is the consociational and elitist belief that only the political elites have the flexibility and foresight to settle such matters because the public is inherently hostile towards compromise.[80] In light of the rise of a newly autonomous Canadian electorate, consociational constitutionalism does appear to be inoperable, but the following analysis does not find this to be sufficient basis to preclude future success in the arena of constitutional politics.

ELITE ANALYSIS

The preceding discussion of the different approaches to the study of consociational democracy also touched upon some of the basic strategies to be used in elite analysis. Putnam details three available approaches to the empirical study and identification of elites: reputational analysis, decisional analysis, and positional analysis.[81] Reputational analysis aims to discover who has an informal reputation for power by polling people who are thought to have had an insider's view of the political machine. This difficult method of analysis is fraught with serious weaknesses because of the high probability of errors, bias, and distortion which may arise from the chosen informants. Decisional or event analysis involves getting close to

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[78]Lusztig, 757.

[79]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", 267.

[80]Ibid., 757.

[81]Putnam, 15-9.

the realities of power by examining how specific public decisions are made or influenced. Unfortunately, only a few important decisions can be investigated, the issues which the political elite keep off the public agenda tend to remain unexamined, and developing a broader structure of power can be problematic. David V. J. Bell has noted, however, that elite culture and attitudes can be best gleaned and understood from case studies.[82] In the case of the uniquely significant policy area of constitutional reform, a subject for which the Canadian electorate has demonstrated a special concern, much can be learned through this approach as regards the viability of Old Politics in the face of a major shift of public attitudes towards their political elites and the political process. Positional or structural analysis is the easiest and most common technique for examining the powerful, as it focuses on the formal institutional roles and positions, provides the most understandable results, and is the approach which is least susceptible to errors. As alluded to earlier, this is the best approach for the study of Canada's elected political elite in the context of the newly autonomous electorate's concerns about legitimacy. Richard Van Loon and Michael S. Whittington have also demonstrated that this sort of analysis provides some insight into the degree of cohesion, not only of socioeconomic characteristics, but also of attitudes[83] among the elite, allowing the questions raised by classical elitism to be addressed.

Before embarking upon any elite analysis it is necessary to develop a descriptive and comprehensible functional definition to easily identify and distinguish between members of

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[82]David V. J. Bell, 13, 352.

[83]Van Loon and Whittington, 440. Van Loon and Whittington assert that socio-economic analyses of the elite can provide some indication of the degree of attitudinal homogeneity. Also see John Porter, The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).

elite and non-elite groups. Defining "elite" and constructing a framework for judgment and analysis is crucial to maintaining the focus of the study. This is a difficult task when approaching the subject by way of decisional and, especially, reputational analysis. Even the relatively uncomplicated strategy of structural analysis demands awareness of the fact that some positions may be merely symbolic and that many powerful people do not hold any formal positions. Defining any subject of analysis can be difficult, but "elite" appears to be a particularly challenging word.

"Elite" is an oft-used word the meaning of which few people, much less social scientists, agree upon. Saint-Simon appears to have been the first modern social scientist to extensively utilize the term.[84] Anglicized from French for "the best", it means much the same today, referring to those who for any reason stand out from and high above the rest.[85] In the field of political science, an elite can be broadly defined as "a relatively small group of people who share a relatively large amount of power to influence policy decisions"[86] and may include elected representatives, senior bureaucrats, and superior court judges. These commonplace definitions, however, do not aid the identification of elites. The unprecedented political discontent which the Canadian public have directed towards their politicians has been the catalyst for this study, and so the elected political elite, as previously defined, is the focus of the elite analysis herein.

Culled from what Putnam considers the third general principle of the classical elitist

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[84]James H. Meisel, The Myth of the Ruling Class: Gaetano Mosca and the "Elite" (Toronto: Ambassador Books, 1962), vii.

[85]Ibid., vi.

[86]Van Loon and Whittington, 437.

school, James H. Meisel's "three C's", group consciousness, coherence, and conspiracy (meaning "common will to action")[87], are an accepted definitional framework for social scientists[88] investigating suspected elites. In <u>Political Elites</u>, Parry explains the significance such criteria hold for any foray into this field:

> To be of any relevance to a study of political influence the group must act together as a group, with some shared purposes. If the elite is the elite of the wealthy or of the products of private education they must act together *as* the wealthy or *as* the defenders of the private sector in education in order to count as an elite in politics. If the group does not act as a unified body it is less an elite than a category of the 'most wealthy men' in the United States of America or the category of 'public school products' in Britain.[89]

Clearly, according to Meisel, not every institution or establishment possesses an elite whose actions can properly be considered elite rule. The following criteria must be fulfilled before such a conclusion may be drawn: all members of the particular elite group in question must be "alert to their group interest or interests; that this alertness is in turn caused or affected by a sense, implicit or explicit, of group or class solidarity; and last, that this solidarity is expressed in a common will to action"[90].

As an adjunct to these "3 C's", a fourth criterion should also be met before a group's actions may be deemed elite rule. Building upon Meisel's mutually dependent definitional framework, the fourth "C" represents "careerist". This means that people must be committed and dedicated to the elite of which they are a member. For instance, voluntary departures

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[87]James H. Meisel, 4.

[88]See Putnam, 5; and Parry, 138.

[89]Parry, 32.

[90]James H. Meisel, 4.

from an elite should not occur after a very short period of time and such departures should not be followed by a move to a different elite group. For an elite group's integrity to be preserved intact, there must be some sense of permanence and loyalty to the elite. An elite cannot be in a constant state of flux. In The Vertical Mosaic, John Porter argues that individual elite groups merge and lose their distinct identity, or group consciousness and coherence, when their members move from one elite group to another without retaining simultaneous membership.[91] C. Wright Mills makes a similar statement when he declares that a more unified and singular elite can develop when interchange and proximity exists among institutions.[92] Therefore, a failure to meet the requirements of the fourth "C" is indicative of a failure to satisfy the first and second "C's" as well. An elite which is relevant to studies of power and influence possesses strong group consciousness and coherence, equally strong conspiratorial and careerist characteristics, and qualities which make it stand out from and high above the rest of their respective institution or placement in society. If the analysis of Canada's elected political elite meets these requirements then the anti-democratic implications of classical elite theory will be, in many ways, vindicated in the Canadian setting. If not, pluralism exists and reforms designed to restore legitimacy can focus solely on political institutions.

MASS ANALYSIS

Since this entire exercise has been prompted by a change in Canadian political authority orientations from deference to autonomy, these attitudinal transformations need to

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[91]Porter, 216.

[92]Mills, 288.

be examined for the implications they hold for consociational Old Politics. The most reliable source for discerning people's opinions regarding their elected political elites is certainly the most direct one, and so this study relies heavily upon credible and respected public opinion survey data in order to provide a profile of these attitudes during the 1980s and 1990s. This decidedly empirical, quantitative analysis is done with full awareness of the difficulties inherent in interpreting and generalizing about the opinions, behaviour, and political culture of a large and obviously heterogeneous population with a complex, multi-dimensional political culture[93]. It should also be noted that survey research is not the only source of information and understanding about the public, as qualitative analysis, though it is a definitely more subjective and difficult tool, can play a worthwhile, complementary role in such analyses.

The imperfections and possibilities for error inherent in public opinion polling must also be taken into consideration when engaging in this sort of empirical analysis. Polling was first introduced to Canada during World War II, but the results were minimal and generally undependable until the 1960s.[94] Since the mid-1970s, both accuracy and the breadth of data have increased substantially, and today's sophisticated polling firms often make startlingly accurate electoral predictions.[95] This does not mean that common concerns no longer exist regarding the fact that surveys ask for simple answers to complex questions and force

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[93]See David V. J. Bell, 26. Bell points out, that despite meaningful generalizations, it should be kept in mind that Canada does not actually have a single political culture.

[94]Peter C. Dobell and Byron Berry, "Anger at the System: Political Discontent in Canada," Parliamentary Government XXXIX (January 1992): 5, 10.

[95]The increase in accuracy is largely due to the adoption of increased sample sizes since the mid-1970s. See Fletcher and Drummond, 7. Examples of recent polling excellence include Pollara's near-perfect predictions in the general elections of 1988 and 1993 (off by one riding). Environics boasted similar accuracy during the 1997 federal election.

respondents to provide an opinion on a topic which they may not have previously considered. There are also more technical concerns which focus on issues such as sample size and interviewing methods. Problems of reliability and interpreting trends are significantly reduced within this study by examining surveys from firms such as Gallup Canada and Angus Reid which employ identical questions throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Efforts were also made to use conscientiously-produced surveys[96] and to find corroborating survey results from different polling firms before generalizing about public attitudes. Having acknowledged the limitations of public opinion polling, it should be reiterated that it is a valuable data resource for observing dominant attitudinal themes arising from a substantial proportion of the population.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, the evidence supporting the emergence of a newly autonomous Canadian electorate is particularly persuasive and the implications for the future of consociational Old Politics are quite serious. The public's preoccupation and dissatisfaction with the political process necessarily implies an erosion of legitimacy. Bell has classified two types of legitimacy; substantive and procedural.[97] Substantive legitimacy is an old though not entirely irrelevant concept which depends upon the perceived quality of policy decisions made by political elites. Procedural legitimacy is a modern democratic concept which largely prevents the exercise of authority solely on substantive grounds and which is dependent upon the

[96]For example, the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing took special steps to test the firmness and reliability of responses and Nevitte's findings are culled from the "unique and enormously rich body of data" arising from the cross-time, cross-national World Values Surveys. See Blais and Gidengil, 11-2; and Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 20-2.

[97]David V. J. Bell, 52.

process from which policy arises. The ensuing analysis is concerned foremost with the procedural legitimacy of the Canadian political system, as the public discontent in Canada is a product, not of individual policy initiatives, but of the political process.

III

THE CANADIAN ELECTORATE IN THE ERA OF NEW POLITICS

In a real democracy there are not leaders and followers, only citizens. The best leader hurries to help the other citizens make their way in the directions they choose.[1]

Canada's highest levels of political discontent since the advent of public opinion polling have been recorded during the last two decades. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, polls have consistently provided snapshots of a Canadian population increasingly alienated, dissatisfied, and even angry with the people, institutions, and processes of representation available to them within the political system. The trust and support necessary for the stability and legitimacy of any democratic government is eroding, indicating the serious consequences inherent in the transformation of Canadian political authority orientations. Observing Canada from a consociational perspective, one of the few requirements Noel places on the "masses" is that they "trust and support their respective elites" and their policies, as he argues a decline in support for elite-driven politics in favour of more populist mechanisms could impair the successful functioning of consociational politics and Canadian federalism.[2] The following examination of the decline of public attitudes towards politicians, parties, and Parliament and their frustrations with party discipline and the electoral system during the 1980s and 1990s will illustrate the meaning, manifestations, and impact of the transformed Canadian authority orientations. The emergence of a newly autonomous and increasingly populist citizenry calls

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[1]Bliss, 315.

[2]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," in McRae, 264, 267.

the elite-dominated political system into question.

POLITICIANS

The public has directed its highest levels of cynicism and dissatisfaction towards politicians. Public opinion polls conducted by Decima and Gallup and the studies of the 1990 Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing found that politicians have lost the trust and confidence of Canadians. During the 1980s, Allen Gregg, founder of Decima, observed this significant shift in attitudes towards those holding public office:

> In the early 1980s, most Canadians described them as hardworking (70%), principled (63%), and competent (57%). And 51% said that they held somewhat (or very) favourable feelings toward politicians. But by March 1990, that faith had dramatically eroded. Now, 57% of respondents say politicians are unprincipled; 81% think they are more concerned with making money than with helping people; 65% call them incompetent; and only 32% of the population say they hold generally favourable views about them; 64% say their opinions are unfavourable. . . . In September 1984, only 45% said politicians could be trusted to do what was best for the country; in December 1988, only 37% did. And two-thirds agreed that "the ethical and moral standards of politicians have really gone down in recent years".[3]

With the benefit of data from surveys taken by the Canadian National Election Studies, various media outlets, and the Commission itself, the 1990 Royal Commission also saw considerably high levels of public cynicism and mistrust directed at politicians.[4] The highest degrees of cynicism were registered regarding the honesty of politicians (79% cynical) and

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[3]Allen R. Gregg and Michael S. Posner, The Big Picture: What Canadians Think About Almost Everything (Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1990), 54.

[4]Blais and Gidengil, 34-40. It should also be noted that the Commission, in congruence with the observations of Decima, found only "rather modest" differences in levels of political cynicism among the regions of the country. On a scale of 0 (low level) to 1 (high level), with .67 being the mean score for Canada as a whole, the Atlantic provinces scored .69, Quebec; .62, Ontario; .68, Manitoba/Saskatchewan; .70, Alberta; .74, and British Columbia; .68. Only modest, mostly insignificant, regional variations were discovered in response to any of the Commission's questions on politicians. (p. 50.)

their intention to fulfill campaign promises (82% cynical). It is also noteworthy that 79% of Canadians believed successful candidates "lost touch with the people" soon after election and that over 60% of the public believed MPs both did not care about ordinary people and made a lot of money misusing their elected position. Cross-time analysis demonstrates that since 1965 there has been a substantial increase of approximately 20% in levels of cynicism and mistrust towards politicians in general and that this occurred primarily during the 1980s.[5]

This decline in public levels of general "political trust" in politicians has continued into the 1990s and occurs at all levels of government. Professor George Perlin, Director of the Centre for the Study of Public Opinion at Queen's University, notes in his cross-time analysis of numerous Canadian public opinion surveys that, from 1968 until 1988, 57% of Canadians felt they could trust their political elites most or all of the time, but, in 1990, this percentage dropped dramatically to 41%.[6] In 1992, Decima found that only 24% of Canadians held favourable opinions of politicians, marking a significant further decline from those of 1988 (32%) and 1980 (51%).[7] Perlin's analysis of Decima surveys from 1980 to 1993 reveals a steady decline of public confidence in those "who run the federal government", accompanied by a steady increase in those expressing no confidence at all.[8] Levels of political trust in

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[5]Ibid., 37-8.

[6]George Perlin, April 28, 1995 keynote address to Canadian Study of Parliament Group seminar at Queen's Park, Toronto, as quoted in Canadian Study of Parliament Group, Parliaments and the People: Improving Public Understanding (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1997), 2.

[7]Ibid., 3.

[8]Ibid.

provincial governments were similarly low and exhibited the same pattern of decline.[9] Few

federal or provincial leaders since 1979 have been able to sustain high approval ratings or

inspire positive sentiment towards politicians in general.[10] Gallup public opinion polls which

guaged public attitudes towards leaders throughout the 1980s and 1990s provide a cumulative

image of an increasingly dissatisfied and mistrustful electorate.[11] In 1995, the Bibby Report

also found low and steadily declining rates of confidence in political leadership at both the

provincial (1985, 31%; 1995, 22%) and federal (1985, 30%; 1995, 25%) levels, "with 45%

of us going so far as to say that government incompetence is a "very serious" national

problem".[12]

Employing a comparative approach, Gallup confirms the view presented by Decima,

Bibby, and the 1990 Royal Commission that, over the course of the last two decades,

Canadians have had a consistently unfavourable impression of the general character of

Members of Parliament. On April 18, 1997, Gallup reported for the sixth consecutive time

that when asked for their perceptions of honesty and ethical standards among 15 professions,

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[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid.

[11]See, for example, Lorne Bozinoff and Peter Macintosh, "Canada's Political Leaders Fail to Impress Public," The Gallup Report, 30 September 1991: "As has been stated many times in recent years, politicians have come to be held in disrepute by Canadians. . . . In particular, many party leaders have been the object of much public vitriol." (p. 1.) Gallup's questions, to which no leader ever received 50% support, included the following: "Which person do you think would make the best Prime Minister?", "Who is a leader you would be proud to have as Prime Minister?", "Which leader is honest and trustworthy?", "Thinking of Prime Ministers over the past years, how would you rate the current Prime Minister?", "Do you approve or disapprove of the way each particular party leader is handling their job?", and "Do you have a favourable or unfavourable impression of each particular provincial Premier?".

[12]Reginald W. Bibby, The Bibby Report: Social Trends Canadian-Style (Toronto: Stoddart, 1995), 110, 118.

Canadians gave MPs the lowest scores.[13] Among the 14 occupations ranked consistently above MPs are doctors, pharmacists, business executives, advertising executives, and, even though they are commonly the subject of often humourous derision, lawyers. The negative net score of MPs (-25%), though reaching significantly high levels in the early 1990s (-38% in 1992), was the same discouraging number in 1997 as it was in 1982. Both the number of Canadians expressing high (17%) and those with low (42%) opinions of the integrity of Members of Parliament increased by 3% since 1982, rendering the same negative net score. Closer scrutiny reveals that public opinion did fall somewhat, as the proportion of the population believing that MPs had average ethical standards (36%) declined by 10% and those with no opinion (6%) increased by approximately 5%. MPs briefly rose above labour union leaders to claim the second worst ranking in 1982 and 1987, but they have otherwise been relegated to the bottom of these integrity rankings throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Public opinion polls consistently and unequivocally demonstrate the mistrust and low regard which the Canadian public apparently has for its politicians, but the more revealing survey data arise from questions which probe deeper into the complexity of these sentiments. Peter Dobell and Byron Berry illustrate the "fragility and ambivalence" of these attitudes by pointing to what may be interpreted as contradictory polling results within the same year.[14] Despite the negative opinions which Canadians hold of politicians in general, whenever questioned about their local or another recognized MP they provide significantly more

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[13]R. Gary Edwards and Jon Hughes, "Pharmacists, Doctors Again Top Gallup Honesty and Ethics Poll," The Gallup Poll, 18 April 1997.

[14]Dobell and Berry, 7-8.

positive responses. The 1988 Canadian National Election Study found that 56% of the electorate who knew the name of their MP were well satisfied with the attention paid by their MP to their constituency's interests.[15] The 1990 Royal Commission corroborates these findings:

> [C]ynicism may not be as deep as a quick reading of the results may suggest. As we have pointed out, the more abstract the object, the greater the cynicism; but as the object becomes more concrete (that is, when we refer to MPs or invite a comparison to business or ordinary people), that cynicism becomes more moderate. . . . [W]hen reminded of the severe constraints politicians are faced with, people expressed understanding and sympathy. There is no doubt that cynicism is the spontaneous, visceral reaction, but Canadians are willing to temper their judgements when asked to think concretely about politicians they know, and to consider the constraints of the job.[16]

That Canadians hold a better opinion of individual MPs than they do of politicians collectively does not mean that they are overwhelmingly satisfied by them. Nor does the "spontaneous, visceral" nature of the public's mistrust and dislike of their politicians in the "abstract", even when tempered, deny the significance of the high levels of such opinion. These observations do indicate, however, that the reason for such high levels of anger and cynicism towards politicians lies less with the quality of these elected men and women and likely more with the quality of representation afforded by Canadian political traditions and institutions. Since they are the most easily accessible, visible, and comprehendible avenues of representation available to Canadians, MPs appear to bear the brunt of the public's dissatisfaction with the quality of responsiveness and participation allowed by the existing

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[15]1988 Canadian National Election Study, cited in Ibid., 7.

[16]Blais and Gidengil, 36-7.

political system.

PARTIES

One of the most important representative institutions of Canada's parliamentary democracy and consociational-style politics is the political party system, as elite accommodation has had to largely occur within parties and primarily within the parties forming the government.[17] Thus, it is noteworthy that numerous polling firms, the 1990 Royal Commission, and the Political Support in Canada Studies from 1983 until 1993[18] found Canadians were also highly and increasingly cynical about parties over the course of the last two decades.[19] Figure 3.1 demonstrates the drastic erosion of respect and confidence in political parties from 1979 to 1996 recorded in Gallup public opinion surveys. During this period of study, the number of Canadians expressing outright respect and confidence dropped to a low of 7% in 1991 but has since rebounded somewhat to a dismal 11% in 1996. Those expressing "very little" or "no" respect and confidence more than doubled by 1991 (46%) and 1993 (49%), and have averaged 43% throughout the 1990s. Looking at the net scores of respect and confidence, the 1979 low yet positive rating (+8%) reversed by 1984 (-8%), fell

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[17]McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 250-1. See also Dalton, 193-4. Dalton stresses that any study of democracy "must examine political parties as foundations of the electoral process" because they are "the primary institutions of representative democracies". He considers partisanship to be "a central variable in the study of citizen political behaviour".

[18]The Political Support in Canada Studies (1983-1991, 1993) were conducted by Harold Clarke and Allan Kornberg. For analysis, see Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett; and Harold Clarke and Allan Kornberg, "Evaluations and Evolution: Public Attitudes Towards Canada's Federal Political Parties, 1965-1991," Canadian Journal of Political Science XXVI, 2 (June 1993): 287-312. The results of the Political Support in Canada Studies of the 1980s and 1990s indicate an upward trend of public mistrust of the political parties.

[19]Blais and Gidengil, 44, 50. As with the data on politicians, it is worth noting that any regional variations found in the survey data pertaining to political parties were modest and mostly insignificant.

Figure 3.1

Respect and Confidence in Political Parties by Percentage, 1979-1996
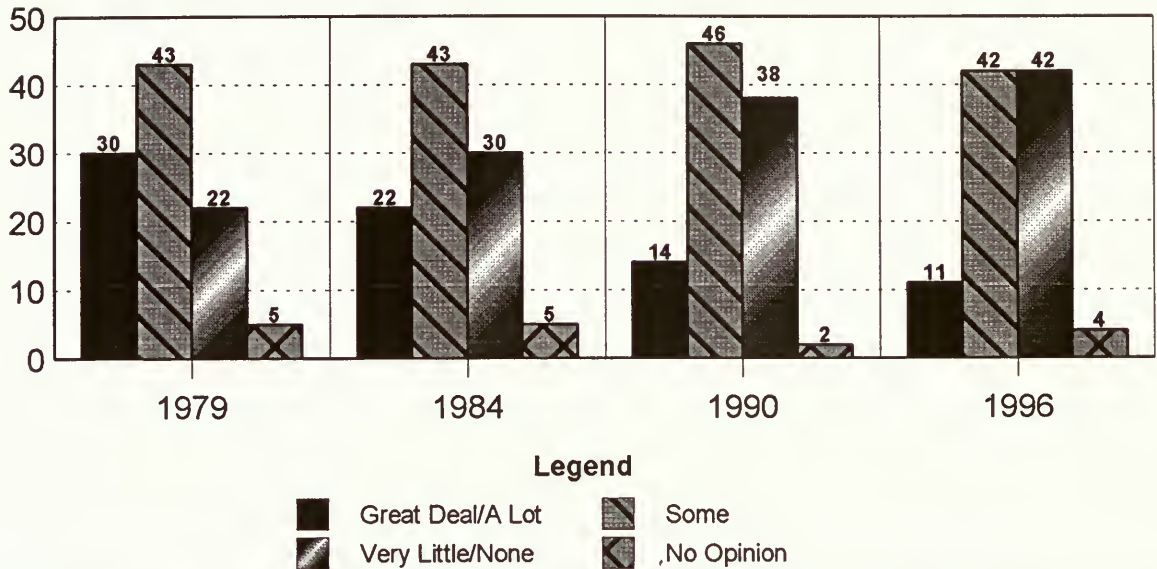
Legend

| | Great Deal/A Lot | | Some |
| | Very Little/None | | ,No Opinion |

into a rapid decline over the next 5 years (1990, -24%), and the momentum has continued into the late 1990s (1996, -31%).[20] The number of Canadians providing the rather noncommital answer of "some" respect and confidence in political parties has held steady throughout the 1980s and 1990s, hovering just above 40%. From a comparative perspective, Gallup polling of public trust and confidence has witnessed political parties consistently ranked last among the 12 institutions mentioned in their query from the late 1980s through to 1996.

In order to gauge general feelings towards each political party, the Canadian National Election Studies have had voters rate each political party on a "thermometer" scale since

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[20]From 1979 to 1984 and from 1984 to 1990, 8% declines in those expressing a "great deal" or "a lot" of respect and confidence in parties within both time periods corresponded exactly to 8% increases in those expressing "very little" or "none" within the same time period. Similarly, from 1990 to 1996, the decline in a "great deal" or "a lot" of confidence was 3% and the corresponding increase in "little" or "none" was 4%.

1968, and the Political Support in Canada studies have adopted this practice since 1984. On this 100-point scale, scores have exceeded 60 only twice of 23 times and not since 1974[21], indicating the seriously low levels of public affection for the major political parties. Average combined scores for the Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, and New Democratic Party were at their highest in 1968 (56%), gradually dropped to approximately 50% for most of the 1970s and 1980s, and experienced a relatively abrupt fall to 43% (39% if Reform and the Bloc Québécois are included) in 1993.[22] Public disaffection with all the political parties appears to be rising at rapid rate, as newcomers Reform (39% including Quebec, 43% excluding Quebec) and the Bloc Quebecois (59% Quebec only, 27% Canada-wide) failed to yield significantly better results than their "old-line" opponents.[23] Perhaps the most telling and devastating public verdict on parties was reported by a late November 1996 poll which asked "Does any federal political party have concrete solutions to some of the major challenges we are facing as a nation?" 76% responded "No" or "None", a scant 10% chose the Liberal Party, and less than 5% chose each of the remaining parties.[24] Political parties appear to be failing to satisfy the expectations and demands of the electorate.

Canadian political parties have not only fallen into disrepute amongst the public, but the degree of citizen attachment and loyalty they garner has been consistently low throughout

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[21]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 66-7; and Blais and Gidengil, 43.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 66-7.

[24]"Sounding the Nation's Mood," Maclean's, 30 December 1996/6 January 1997, 46-7.

the modern period[25] and increasingly so during the last two decades. Though it was long before the appearance of public opinion polling in Canada, by most accounts and available evidence there was a high degree of party loyalty and identification amongst the population prior to the end of World War I. Dobell and Berry have found that:

> ... for a couple of generations after Confederation, most Canadians retained a fierce loyalty, through thick and thin, to one or other of the two political parties that had been on the scene since 1867. Until the end of World War I, "Rouge" and "Bleu" in Quebec, Grits and Tories in the rest of Canada, could generally count on the votes of their loyal supporters.[26]

Following the war, however, the traditional party system underwent unexpected changes. The new United Farmer movement won provincial elections in Ontario and Alberta, and in 1921 the new Progressive Party succeeded in having 65 members elected to Parliament. Soon followed by the significant appearance of Social Credit and the permanent arrival of the CCF (forerunner of the NDP), these disturbances of the political scene signalled a period of volatility vis a vis political party attachments the products of which are visible today in the powerful emergence of the new Reform Party and Bloc Québécois as well as the poor electoral fortunes of the long-established Progressive Conservatives[27].

Since at least the 1960s, "a lack of widespread affection for the parties, and the

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[25]See Lawrence LeDuc, "The Changeable Canadian Voter," in The Canadian General Election of 1988, eds. Alan Frizzell, Jon H. Pammett, and Anthony Westell (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989), 103-13. Perhaps due to the availability of National Election Studies and polling data, LeDuc sees "the modern period" as beginning approximately in 1957 (p. 106).

[26]Dobell and Berry, 11.

[27]Considering that they either formed the government or Official Opposition since 1867, the Progressive Conservatives have had poor electoral fortunes in the last two general elections in terms of parliamentary seats (2 in 1993, 20 in 1997). In terms of popular vote (18.8% in 1997), however, they have received almost the same amount of support as the Reform Party (19.4% in 1997), which achieved Official Opposition status in 1997 with 60 seats.

weakness, instability, and cross-level inconsistency of partisan attachments [have been] long-standing features of Canadian politics".[28] Despite the public's well-documented low electoral ideological commitment, weak partisan ties, and high responsiveness to short-term forces, Canada's political party system was characterized as one of "stable dealignment" during the 1970s and 1980s.[29] Though these factors contributed to the Canadian electorate's very high potential for major electoral swings and upsets, the aggregate fluctuation from election to election was surprisingly low and superficially stable. This was not due to any partisan alignments, but to the difficulty political parties had in effectively harnessing the highly influential short-term forces of leader, issues, and political events to their advantage within a large, diverse country such as Canada with its many distinctive regional political trends.[30]

During the 1990s, levels of negativity, vote switching, and the gradual pace of the decline of already low partisan attachments increased somewhat and the potential for visible, aggregate electoral upheaval has been obviously more fully realized.[31] Canadians with a "very strong" degree of identification with longstanding federal political parties dropped by more than half from 30% in 1980 to 14% in 1991 while those claiming "no" party identification

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[28]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 67. Also, see Lawrence LeDuc, "Canada: The Politics of Stable Dealignment,"in Dalton, Flanagan, Beck, 402-24.

[29]LeDuc, "Politics of Stable Dealignment"; and Lawrence LeDuc, "The Flexible Canadian Electorate," in Canada at the Polls, 1984: A Study of the Federal General Elections, ed. Howard Penniman (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1988), 37-54.

[30]LeDuc, "Politics of Stable Dealignment".

[31]See Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, especially Chapter 3; LeDuc, "The Changeable Voter", 113; Lawrence LeDuc, "Citizens' Revenge: The Canadian Voter and the 1993 Federal Election," in Fox and White, 147-62; Lawrence LeDuc, Harold Clarke, Jane Jenson, and Jon Pammett, "Partisan Instability in Canada: Evidence From a New Panel Study," in The Ballot and Its Message, ed. Joseph Wearing (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991), 471-83; and Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 49.

increased from 10% to 30%.[32] In 1993, 76% of Canadians, a 10% increase from 1984, could

be classified as flexible partisans.[33] The 1993 general election was an occasion of surprisingly

*un*stable partisan dealignment, as the long-established Progressive Conservatives who had

enjoyed two successive majority governments were reduced to only two seats while two new

regionally-based parties, one -the separatist Bloc Québécois- forming the Official Opposition,

together captured 106 seats. Further evidence of growing partisan volatility among

Canadians, this election was witness to a dramatic increase and unprecedented level of vote-

switching; only one-third of Canadians voted for the same choice as in 1988.[34] Commenting

on this visible manifestation of high levels of electoral volatility, Peter C. Newman observed

that, as regards partisan loyalty, Canada has the "largest proportion of floaters of any

democracy. Almost everyone is undecided, even many of those who indicate choices to

polling organizations."[35] These are just some signs of the public's disengagement from the

political parties and the political system as a whole, and how it has accelerated during the

1990s.

Since Canadian voting behaviour is influenced much more by individual perceptions

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[32]Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 49. Also, in a speech before a November 2, 1996 Canadian Study of Parliament Group conference, quoted in Canadian Study of Parliament Group, Interactive Government: Sorting Out the Fads and Fundamentals (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1997), Heather MacIvor noted that reliable estimates of actual Canadian party membership levels are less than 2% of the electorate and among the lowest in the Western world. (p. 5)

[33]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 54. Flexible partisans are those who identify with different federal and provincial parties, or have weak attachments to whichever federal party they currently identify with, or have changed their federal party identification over time. Durable partisans share the same federal and provincial identification, are loyal to the party they identify with for a long period of time, and are at least "moderately intense" in their attachment.

[34]LeDuc, "Citizens' Revenge", 156.

[35]Peter C. Newman, "Upsetting Chrétien's Electoral Applecart," Maclean's, 31 March 1997, 48.

about which party is "closest" to them on election campaign issues than the almost non-existent impact of ideology, region, socio-economic background, or ethno-religious affiliations, political parties compete during election campaigns to temporarily "broker" the most public support solely on an issue and image basis.[36] Thus, Canada's brokerage parties have contributed to rising public cynicism because of their apparent ideological rootlessness, unpredictable short-term focus, abrupt leader-based image alterations, and history of reversing major policy positions from election to election or ignoring campaign promises once in office.[37] This is evident in the 1991 installment of the Political Support in Canada studies on electoral politics, as it was found that Canadians commonly agreed that parties avoided telling "people about the really important problems facing the country" (69%), "are more interested in winning elections than in governing afterwards" (81%), and "often" exhibit a "big difference" between their election promises and actual policy initiatives (91%).[38] Many Canadians did not see a "real choice" and thought the federal parties and their policies were "basically" or "pretty much" the same (1990, 47%; 1991, 63%).[39] An overwhelming proportion of the public thought the parties wasted most of their time "bickering" and "squabbling" (1990, 81%; 1991, 89%). These polling and electoral results describe an

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[36]LeDuc, "Politics of Stable Dealignment", 149-150; Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 116, 174-84; and Richard Johnston, keynote address at October 27, 1994 Canadian Study of Parliament Group conference in Ottawa, quoted in Canadian Study of Parliament Group, The Election and Parliament: What Voters Sought, What Voters Got (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1996), 8: "Canada is not a simple left/right party system - it's more complicated and multidimensional. There's always a turnover that seems to transcend the extremes, Conservatives to NDP, NDP to Conservative."

[37]Ibid.

[38]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 180-1.

[39]Blais and Gidengil, 42; and Ibid., 181.

electorate which is repulsed by the level of policy debate and innovation as well as the lack of responsiveness and integrity within their electoral system.

Most significantly, brokerage politics contributes to public discontent and disengagement from the political system by preventing governments from having a true policy mandate. During election campaigns (practically the only time they are active), Canada's political parties have similar policies, discuss issues abstractly, and offer simplistic solutions to complex problems.[40] They also intentionally minimize the depth of policy debate by emphasizing leader-image politics and other trivial events so that it is impossible for there to be clear, specific, well-publicized, and widely-understood policy programmes from which to choose.[41] The large number of oft-conflicting policies introduced by parties in their attempt to broker as many interests as possible also serves to corrupt the mandate concept, as the priority of these planks in their electoral platforms is often open to a number of differing and contradictory interpretations. These problems are further compounded by the fact that the highly cynical public does not view the brokerage parties, which lack strong historical ideological stances and have checkered pasts of broken campaign promises and policy reversals, as highly credible and does not expect them to actually deliver on their election pledges.[42] Thus, much of the Canadian vote is a reluctant, even disillusioned, one which should not be viewed as empowering any government. Governments claiming that their actions are legitimate solely because they were "elected on a platform" or have been given the

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[40]See Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, especially Chapter 6.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

"mandate to govern" only serve to heighten public feelings of alienation as well as the crisis of legitimacy surrounding Canadian political institutions.

PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT

Not surprisingly, respect and confidence in Canadian representative state institutions have fallen to unprecedented low levels. Upon analysis of the World Values Studies of 1981 and 1990, Neil Nevitte discovered a "quite substantial" decline of public confidence in governmental institutions over this "relatively short time span for evaluating shifts in this kind of broad-scale system support".[43] From 1981 to 1990, the number of Canadians expressing either "a lot" or "quite a lot" of confidence in their country's armed forces, police, parliament, and civil service dropped from 36.9% to 29.4%.[44] While this question encompasses more than public attitudes towards institutions of political representation, it nevertheless reveals a decline in confidence in these and other institutions of state authority which has negative implications for the validity of consociational Old Politics in Canada. Gallup public opinion surveys which focus specifically on the House of Commons report still lower levels of support. Of 12 institutions, including the public school system, organized religion, the Supreme Court, banks, and newspapers, the House of Commons was, generally consistent with previous polls, ranked tenth in terms of respect and confidence among Canadians in an April 1996 Gallup poll. Figure 3.2 illustrates the decline of respect and confidence in the

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[43]Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 55-6.

[44]Ibid., 56-7. This erosion of confidence occurred amongst Anglophone and Francophone Canadians. Though neither group had high levels of confidence in governmental institutions, there were notable differences between them. Francophones consistently expressed higher levels of confidence (1981, 46.3%; 1990, 38.6%) than Anglophones (1981, 33.4%; 1990, 26.7%), but it is also noteworthy that the degree of their declining confidence was higher (7.7%) than that of Anglophones (6.7%) and closer to that of Canada as a whole (7.5%).

Figure 3.2

Respect and Confidence in the House of Commons by Percentage, 1974-1996

Legend
- ■ Great Deal/A Lot
- ▨ Very Little/None
- ▨ Some
- ▨ No Opinion
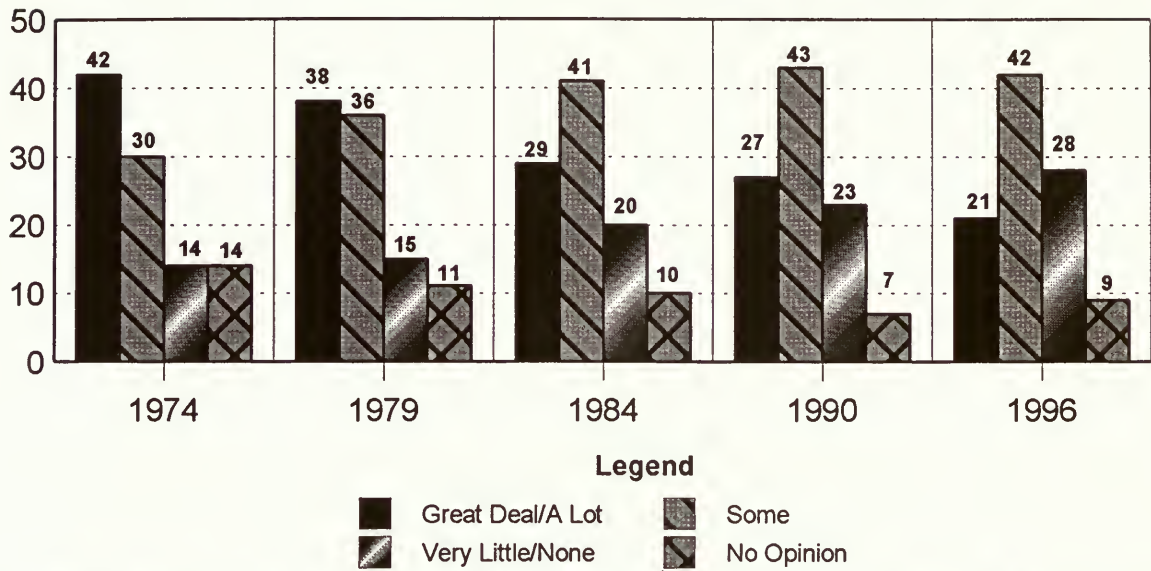
Source: Peter Dobell and Byron Berry, "Anger at the System: Political Discontent in Canada", p. 6, based upon *Gallup Report* data
Updated with *Gallup Report* data

House of Commons from 1974 to 1996, particularly during the 1980s. During this period of

study, the number of Canadians expressing outright respect and confidence fell by half while

those expressing "very little" or "no" respect and confidence doubled and eventually

outnumbered the outright supporters. Looking at the net scores of respect and confidence,

the 5% decline from 1974 (28%) to 1979 (23%) was relatively small, but a significant 14%

drop occurred over the course of the next five years (9%, 1984) and continued unabated into

negative territory by 1996 (-7%). The number of Canadians with "some" respect and

confidence in the House of Commons has held steady throughout the 1980s and 1990s,

averaging 41%. These results indicate a public which is gradually, perhaps reluctantly, losing

faith in Parliament, but there also seems to be some foundation of support for reform and

improvement. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that Perlin's analysis of public opinion

regarding Parliament led him to the conclusion that people are uninterested in Parliament

because they no longer have a clear understanding of what it does or how it is relevant to their lives.[45]

The public's confidence in government in-general has also been on the wane throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In a December 12, 1996 Maclean's interview, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien accurately observed that reliance upon and expectations of government had decreased in Canada: "People know that there is nobody who will have the magic wand and solve all the problems. They know that we live in a global world, that governments in many ways are not able alone to solve the problems."[46] Allen Gregg, formerly of Decima and founder and current Chairman of The Strategic Counsel, concluded on the basis of a late November 1996 public opinion poll that Canadians had evolved into "borderline nihilists" in their attitudes towards government's role in and ability to positively influence their lives.[47] While Gregg may be overstating the case, it is undeniable that public cynicism towards government has risen, particularly during the 1990s. This is quite a transformation of attitudes when compared to polling data from the end of the 1980s which indicated that a majority of Canadians still had faith in the potential and role of government.[48]

This change in attitudes, however, is more than just a change of perspective on government or ideological orientation towards public policy. Decima polling on public trust

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[45]Perlin, 4-5.

[46]Jean Chrétien, quoted in Robert Lewis and Anthony Wilson-Smith, eds. "'It's Never Enough'," Maclean's, 30 December 1996/6 January 1997, 73.

[47]Allen Gregg, quoted in Anthony Wilson-Smith, "Future Imperfect," Maclean's, 30 December 1996/6 January 1997, 18.

[48]Dobell and Berry, 6; and Gregg and Posner, 65.

and confidence in federal and provincial government recorded neutral and barely positive net scores which dropped into negative territory within a year and remained there, despite momentary positive spikes during periods of electioneering, throughout the 1980s.[49] Gallup reported very similar findings and found that by 1991 55% of Canadians expressed "very little" confidence in the federal government.[50] These findings of increasing rates of mistrust were accompanied by increasing perceptions of favouritism and corruption in Ottawa (1966, 36%; 1974, 42%; 1990, 65%), steadfastly negative cross-time net ratings, very low levels of confidence in government ability to address important economic issues and concerns, and increasing beliefs that "government does not care" (less than 50% in 1965; almost 70% in 1990).[51] Gallup public opinion polling regarding public respect and confidence in institutions found that from August 1990 to April 1996 net scores for the federal government and provincial governments were very negative throughout the early 1990s and barely achieved single-digit positive scores by 1995 and 1996 respectively.

PARTY DISCIPLINE

Close scrutiny of the unprecedented negativity directed towards politicians illustrates

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[49]Gregg and Posner, 57.

[50]Canadian Institute of Public Opinion, "People Satisfied with their Provincial Governments," The Gallup Poll of Canada, 3 April 1965; and various releases of Gallup Report.

[51]Dobbell and Berry, 7. Data from Gallup Report on questions including "Do you think the federal government is effectively handling the country's economic situation? (1973, 33%; 1996, 35%"Yes"), "How much confidence do you have in the way the federal government is handling the issue of unemployment?" (1983, 4%; 1996, 5% "Quite a lot"), "How much confidence do you have in the federal government to help the economy recover from the recession?" (1991, 57% "Very little"), and "How much confidence do you have in the way the federal government is handling the issue of deficit reduction?" (1994, 4% "Quite a lot", 25% "Some", 34% "A little", 31% "None", 6% "No opinion"). For corroborating data of such public dissatisfaction found in the Canadian National Election Studies and the Political Support in Canada studies conducted in 1979, 1988, and 1993 see Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 7.

that this is primarily a manifestation of a greater frustration with Canadian political traditions and with the political system itself than with the politicians themselves. CBC television journalist Don Newman rejects making a distinction between public attitudes towards politicians and their attitudes towards the institution of parliament, as he sees no difference in the public's perception of the two: "when people think about parliament, they think about politicians".[52] Newman's observation that the public is actually dissatisfied with the quality of representation and responsiveness rather than the quality of their politicians appears to be supported by polls in which Canadians clearly declare greater confidence in individual Members of Parliament than in the parties or the leadership of parties. 78% of Canadians agreed that "We would have better laws if Members of Parliament were allowed to vote freely rather than having to follow party lines".[53]

In fact, some of the highest levels of dissatisfaction pertain to the strict discipline which prevents MPs from representing the interests and views of their constituency. In 1995, Fred Fletcher reported that his survey research and that of the 1990 Royal Commission have found that for approximately 30 years Canadian ideas of representation have been contrary to those practised in Parliament; two-thirds to three-quarters of the population believe MPs should vote as delegates accurately representing the majority view of their constituents, 25% are supportive of MPs voting their conscience, and less than 10% think MPs should vote

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[52]Don Newman, comments to Learned Societies panel at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario on June 2, 1991, quoted in Canadian Study of Parliament Group Public Attitudes About Parliament / Parliament, Parties, and Regionalism (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1997), 3.

[53]Blais and Gidengil, 41-2.

according to their party's demands.[54] The Gallup Omnibus Poll found very much the same results as early as 1983.[55] The public's moderate support for MPs to vote their conscience in the face of a minute level of support for party-based voting highlights how repulsed the electorate is by party discipline's effects on the political system. It is reasonable to assume that many of the increasingly prevalent public criticisms, such as Members of Parliament "lose touch with the people" after election (1979, 65%; 1993; 80%), that the public has "no say in government" (1979, 57%; 1993, 65%), and that governments "don't care" (1979, 53%; 1993, 67%), arise from dissatisfaction with the unresponsiveness of the Canadian political system induced by party discipline.[56]

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The 1990 Royal Commission did not discover strong public dissatisfaction with the electoral system, yet found that many of the public's expressed frustrations were directed at problems created by the first-past-the-post plurality electoral system.[57] It has been well-documented that this system of translating votes into seats in the House of Commons often distorts the results of the popular vote in its allocation of seats by rewarding parties which do well with a positively disproportionate number of seats and penalizing parties which do not do well with a negatively disproportionate number of seats. One of the sources of public discontent and alienation from the political process is the inability of the electoral system,

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[54]Fred Fletcher, quoted in Canadian Study of Parliament Group, Parliaments and People, 9.

[55]Gallup Omnibus Poll, quoted in Dobell and Berry, 9.

[56]Polling data from the Political Support in Canada Studies. See Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 178.

[57]Blais and Gidengil, Chapters 7 and 8.

coupled with the vote splits inherent in multi-party systems, to provide governments with a true popular mandate. The plurality-based electoral system provides an inaccurate picture of electoral opinion in the House of Commons and allows the formation of majority governments by parties which receive less than 40% of the popular vote. Since 1945, only Diefenbaker's 1958 victory and Mulroney's 1984 victory were based on a popular vote of 50% or more, and the Chrétien Government was formed in 1997 with only 38.4% popular support. In the Canadian parliamentary system of government where party discipline is among the strictest in the world, this means that quite often a majority of the population is largely excluded from effective representation and voice within government policy for a long period of time, as its MPs sit on the largely ineffectual Opposition benches. Government policies can thereby serve to increase public dissatisfaction with their political system, as their legitimacy is highly questionable. The lack of a popular mandate compounds the inability of governments to claim a policy mandate.

Furthermore, the electoral system can work against the goals of consociationalism and serve to heighten regional tensions within the federation because it distorts each party's distribution of seats by region. Regional tensions are unnecessarily exacerbated because the system simultaneously exaggerates regionalism and stifles adequate regional expression.[58] In fact, Mikael Antony Swayze's analysis of this problem argued that "for the individual voter, very little distinguishes the regions across Canada or the voters over time. . . . However, the

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[58]See Alan C. Cairns, "The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-1965," Canadian Journal of Political Science I, 1 (March 1968): 55-80; and David M. Rayside, "Federalism and the Party System: Provincial and Federal Liberals in the Province of Québec," Federalism in Canada: Selected Readings, ed. Garth Stevenson (McClelland and Stewart, 1989), 379.

electoral system creates significant regional differences where they are in reality, minor, and heightens the importance of relatively small vote swings, particularly within regions."[59] As Cairns has demonstrated, this aspect of the electoral system encourages parties to pay particular attention to the regions where they have higher levels of support and neglect those where electoral support is weak. Not only are these types of regional politics a detriment to national unity, but those regions which are ignored by particular parties also exhibit increased levels of political discontent, alienation, and feelings that the political system lacks legitimacy.[60] The present highly-regionalized Parliament[61] is a product of this electoral system, and, while governments often act as if seat distribution in the House of Commons is accurately reflections Canadian political attitudes, it is a very distorted version of the actual popular vote breakdown. For evidence that the electoral system causes alienation it is not necessary to look further than the strong sense of Western alienation which arose during Trudeau's long-running government which had poor representation from the Western provinces and for its last four years (1980-1984) had only one elected MP from this region. The present electoral system, though Canadians have not specifically criticized it, is the source of much of their frustration and discontent.

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[59]Mikael Antony Swayze, "Continuity and Change in the 1993 Canadian General Election," Canadian Journal of Political Science XXIX, 3 (September 1996): 556.

[60]Cairns, "Electoral System and Party System".

[61]The governing Liberals are primarily-based in Ontario (101 of 155 seats), the Reform Party is entirely based in the Western provinces, the separatist Bloc Québécois is based solely in Québec, and the seats occupied by the Progressive Conservatives primarily represent the Atlantic provinces (13 of 20 seats and none west of Manitoba). Interestingly, the NDP seat distribution is fairly evenly balanced throughout the western (though none in Alberta) and maritime (though none in Prince Edward Island) provinces while they were shut out of Ontario and Québec.

CONCLUSION

As previously mentioned, the late 1980s and early 1990s saw the news media[62],

pollsters[63], political pundits, and academics often declare the existence of a "crisis of

leadership". Political public opinion polls reached their lowest points of satisfaction during

the height of the Mulroney government's decline in the early 1990s[64], but, while he certainly

does share some of the blame[65], this world-wide phenomenon cannot be placed entirely on his

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[62] Knowlton Nash, "Giving the Public More Ice Time," in Canadian Legislatures, 1992, 54: "Across the country changing values and lack of leadership have made Canadians both rootless and rudderless, intensifying their distrust of politicians to an unprecedented level." National bestseller lists were, and are, often populated by highly personalized, informal, and anecdotal exposés of Canada's political elites usually written by journalists. See, for example, Ron Graham, One-Eyed Kings: Promise and Illusion in Canadian Politics (Toronto: Collins, 1986); and Dave McIntosh Ottawa Unbuttoned, Or Who's Running this Country Anyway? (Toronto: Stoddart, 1987). These books deliver scathing attacks on the quality and ethics of the country's leadership by recounting "heretofore unreported happenings within my personal knowledge, with a revisionist assault on accepted scripture about some reported happenings. . . . This book is therefore designed to illuminate our governance by unclothing our governors." (McIntosh, p. 6.)

[63] See for example, Lorne Bozinoff and Peter Macintosh, "Political Leaders Fail to Impress Canadian Public," The Gallup Report, 11 April 1991: "The leaders of the 3 largest federal political parties appear unable to capture the imagination of the public. . . . This apparent vacuum in national political leadership . . ." (p. 1.)

[64] For example, in the Angus Reid Group's 1992 Canada and the World Study, Canadians tied South Koreans for expressing the second highest level of dissatisfaction (behind Italy and France, where only 15% were satisfied) with their national government; 17% satisfied, 82% dissatisfied. See Angus Reid Group, Canada and the World: An International Perspective on Canada and Canadians (Toronto: Angus Reid Group, 1997).

[65] See Robert Fife and John Warren, A Capital Scandal (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1991); Jeffrey; and Cameron, xi: "Almost every Conservative interviewed for this book admitted that the party had earned its reputation for corruption, and that the defeat it received on election night, October 25, 1993, was just.". Also see Carol Goar, "The Mulroney Years", The Toronto Star, Thursday, February, 25, 1993, B1-B3: "More than any prime minister in recent memory, Mulroney has lived like a member of the privileged class. . . . To add to Canadians' uneasiness, Mulroney has displayed a American-style enthusiasm for the trappings of office: fleets of limousines, high-speed motorcades, heavy security, a portable lectern and banks of flags behind him whenever he speaks. Mulroney's assumption that his friends should share in the spoils of office has also cost him the respect of the public." (B1); James Travers, "After the 'Gotcha' Years, a Time for Honesty", The Ottawa Citizen, Tuesday, October 26, 1993, A12: "After a summer of hiding their feelings from pollsters, millions of Canadians cast ballots Monday to defeat a government which, rightly or wrongly, had come to symbolize all that is wrong with politics in the 90's. . . . Under Mulroney, the Tories failed to notice that politics was changing, that Canadians were tired of being treated like rubes who could be conned during elections and then fleeced for the next four or five years. . . . The Tories discredited themselves and destroyed a governing dynasty by abusing power and the people who gave it to them."; and Bliss, xiii. Bliss

shoulders[66]. The Chrétien government benefited from an inevitable and brief upturn in public

attitudes upon Mulroney's departure and the cathartic punishment which voters exacted upon

the Progressive Conservatives in the 1993 election. Polling numbers, however, have since

levelled off and continued their gradual decline. Simple prognoses of a leadership crisis fail

to adequately examine and consider the nature of the public's discontent. This analysis of

attitudinal data and electoral behaviour suggests that the failure of the Canadian political

system to be responsive to the electorate is at the heart of the high levels of discontent and

alienation. Don Newman has noted that strict party discipline has relegated Members of

Parliament whose party enjoys majority status to a role of government ambassador or public

relations officer rather than constituency representative.[67] This political process, which

George Woodcock has called "five-year fascism"[68], effectively shuts out the public so that the

only official opportunity for input and clear expression of its discontent is used to "throw the

rascals out" at election time as a form of punishment for ignoring it.[69]

Despite the high levels of public discontent and alienation, there is no evidence that

argues that Mulroney "possessed many of [John A.] Macdonald's political skills and some of his personal characteristics" but his failing was his preference for practising the elitist politics of the 1800s during the populist 1980s and 1990s.

[66]See Stephen C. Craig, "The Angry Voter: Politics and Popular Discontent in the 1990s," in Broken Contract, 46-66. The prevalence of this phenomenon among the world's advanced industrial democracies was discussed in Chapter I, but a cursory glance at the United States highlights remarkable coincidences which further demonstrate that this is not a solely Mulroney-related event. For example, in a Gallup poll published on February 24, 1992, Mulroney received the lowest recorded Prime Ministerial approval rating (11%). Canadians also expressed the highest levels of political discontent in the history of Canadian polling in 1992. Curiously, political discontent also reached an unprecedented "fever pitch" in 1992 in the United States. (p. 47.) Another noteworthy similarity is that, just as in Canada, the transformation of authority orientations did not gain notable momentum until 1979. (p. 46.)

[67]Don Newman, 3.

[68]Quoted by John Robert Colombo in "A Problem of Spirit,"in Canadian Legislatures, 1992, 43-44.

[69]LeDuc, "Citizens' Revenge", 148.

the electorate has become apathetic or withdrawn from politics. On the contrary, they are more interested and active than ever before. One small yet noteworthy example of this is that the number of letters written to the Prime Minister has increased from 46,600 in 1983 to 3,583,831 in 1991.[70] The election results of 1993 and 1997 underscore the apparent permanence of political dealignment in Canada, but also illustrate the electorate's willingness to try new parties, such as Reform and the Bloc Québécois, in their search for proper representation in the federal government. Cairns has also found that Canadians have become increasingly susceptible to parties and politicians speaking the "rhetoric of the new".[71] Based on his analysis of World Value Surveys, Neil Nevitte has observed a Canadian electorate exhibiting a greater level of political interest and sophistication, a greater likelihood to engage in various forms of political protest, a significant increase in utilizing alternative and unconventional avenues of political participation, and a demand for greater input in the political process through various populist devices such as recall, referenda, and constituent assemblies.[72]

While it is a sign of a healthy democratic spirit that Canadians have not allowed their sense of discontent and alienation to render them apathetic and withdrawn, their increased political activities are noticeably not taking place within the arena of traditional political

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[70]Garth Turner, Garth! What the Hell is Going On in Ottawa? (Orillia, Ontario: Hemlock Press, 1993), 201.

[71]Alan C. Cairns, "An Election to be Remembered: Canada 1993," Canadian Public Policy XX, 3 (September 1994): 225-26. Cairns discusses how it has become almost mandatory for political parties and their leaders to escape the(ir) elitist past of Old Politics by, at the very least, invoking populist "New" catch-phrases.

[72]Nevitte, Decline of Deference, Chapters 3 and 4. For supportive data, see Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett.

institutions. Since the political process does not allow the public an effective role or an appropriate level of responsiveness, Canadians are actively seeking out new avenues of political participation. The popularity of such empowering mechanisms as constituent assemblies and referenda coupled with the very low levels of public trust in politicians indicate an electorate which is becoming less interested in reforming existing government structures and more interested in directly "doing politics" itself and reinventing the system. Voter turnout has remained fairly steady in Canada, but perhaps the low 66.7% turnout in the 1997 election should be viewed with concern.[73] If the political system does not change to meet the concerns and demands of the newly transformed public it may very well lose whatever legitimacy remains and lack the authority to function.

Consociationalism is certainly incompatible with this newly and increasingly autonomous and populist Canadian electorate which neither trusts its elected political elites nor accepts that these elites should be allowed to "do politics" without greatly increased citizen involvement. Noel's warning about the adverse effects of a decline in deference to elitism has been proven valid, as traditional elite-driven Old Politics can no longer properly function in Canada. Perhaps the most significant finding of the preceding analysis, however, is that Canadian political traditions and institutions such as strict party discipline and the first-past-the-post electoral system have never permitted consociationalism to function smoothly.[74]

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[73]Canada can be said to have an average 75% voter turnout at general elections. According to Elections Canada, turnout since 1974 is as follows: 1979, 76%; 1980, 69%; 1984, 75%; 1988, 76%; 1993, 70%. The only turnouts lower than that of 1997 were 1896 (61%) and 1891 (65%). See also Herman Bakvis, ed. Voter Turnout in Canada, Vol. 15, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991).

[74]Also see David V. J. Bell, 188. Bell discusses how party discipline has prevented federal politicians from adequately solving regional conflicts through elite accommodation at the federal level.

In 1992, after extensive analysis of two decades of tracking data on public attitudes, the

President and senior researchers at the Environics Research polling firm concluded that

Canada's political process has rapidly become antiquated in the age of New Politics:

> . . . this growing crisis of confidence in politicians is indicative of a deeper
> crisis of confidence in the system of representative government and party
> politics that evolved out of British colonial rule in the nineteenth century.
> Environics has further concluded that the institutions and practices that have
> characterized the political process for 125 years are no longer suited to the
> values and expectations of Canadians and that in the absence of democratic
> reforms the Canadian political system is in danger of losing its legitimacy in
> the public mind. . . . The governing institutions that have served Canada since
> Confederation required a relatively passive electorate, one that was willing to
> let the political elites work out the compromises that kept the country
> together. However, the massive shift in Canadian social values since the
> 1960s - away from deference to authority and deferred gratification to values
> that emphasize increased self-confidence and a sense of individualistic
> empowerment - has meant that many of Canada's political institutions seem,
> if not anachronistic, then increasingly ill-suited to serve the needs of a better
> informed and less deferential electorate. We are in the throes not only of a
> constitutional crisis but of a crisis of confidence in our democratic
> institutions.[75]

Claims of a "leadership crisis" and yearnings for "better" leaders to arrive on the political

scene to properly control and orchestrate public opinion are rooted in a complete

misunderstanding of the public's disengagement from the present system of government.

Canadians are not simply asking for better leaders, they are demanding greater involvement

and responsiveness from the political process. The legitimacy of the existing elite-dominated

political system has not only been eroded by a lack of both a policy mandate and a popular

mandate, but, above all, by the absence of a "process mandate"[76]. Canada needs a more

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[75]Michael Adams, "Current Political Processes: A Public Perspective," in Canadian Legislatures: 1992, 36-7.

[76]Nevitte, "New Politics Challenges", 164. Nevitte emphasizes and coins this term.

responsive and inclusive political process which will better reflect and serve the interests of its citizens.

IV

THE CANADIAN ELECTED POLITICAL ELITE

No matter who you vote for, a politician always gets in.[1]

A compulsory component of this study of elite-mass relations in Canadian politics is a profile of the elected elite to complement the preceding profile of the electorate. This exercise will shed light on the other principal subject of the study and allow some of the questions raised in the previous chapter to be addressed. First, the validity of the public's tendency to derisively generalize about their politicians and perceive them to be a homogeneous entity in terms of both ideology and socioeconomic background[2] requires analysis, as the existence of an insular, homogeneous elite would hold negative consequences for the health and future of Canadian democracy. Second, the representativeness of the elected political elite and the functionality of consociationalism need to be examined in light of the electorate's new, critical perspective on the quality of representation and the degree of legitimacy and accessibility within the political system. Third, the unprecedented levels of

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[1]Attributed to an anonymous elector upon casting his vote, quoted in Jackson and Jackson, 126.

[2]According to Richard Ogmundson, the exceptionally exclusivist "imagery" of John Porter's The Vertical Mosaic has been the dominant source of the "conventional wisdom" concerning all of Canada's elites since 1965. For Ogmundson's critique of the work of Porter and his protégées, Wallace Clement and Dennis Olsen, see R. Ogmundson, "Perspectives on the Class and Ethnic Origins of Canadian Elites: A Methodological Critique of the Porter/Clement/Olsen Tradition," Canadian Journal of Sociology XV, 2 (Spring 1990): 165-77. For dispatches from the ensuing debate also see Wallace Clement, "A Critical Response to 'Perspectives on the Class and Ethnic Origins of Canadian Elites'," Canadian Journal of Sociology XV, 2 (Spring 1990): 179-95; Harvey Rich, "Observations on 'Class and Ethnic Origins of Canadian Elites' by Richard Ogmundson," Canadian Journal of Sociology XVI, 4 (Fall 1991): 419-23; R. Ogmundson, "Perspectives on the Class and Ethnic Origins of Canadian Elites: A Reply to Clement and Rich," Canadian Journal of Sociology XVII, 3 (Summer 1992): 313-21; and R. Ogmundson and J. MacLaughlin, "Trends in the Ethnic Origins of Canadian Elites: The Decline of the BRITS?" Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology XXIX, 2 (May 1992): 225-42.

public discontent directed at politicians and the numerous pronouncements of a leadership crisis made by members of the media and academia also demand investigation of this elite for changes in its membership which may have contributed to these criticisms. Lastly, and most importantly, the following profile of the Canadian elected political elite aims to provide insight into the degree of impact which transformed popular authority orientations may have had upon the socioeconomic background and career patterns of this elite.

Based upon the loci of power within the Canadian political system and S. J. R. Noel's categorization of Canada's most significant consociational institutions, the Canadian elected political elite is structurally defined as Prime Ministers, provincial Premiers, and federal cabinet ministers. This positional approach allows an analysis of the socioeconomic backgrounds and career patterns of the members of these three elite segments, first independently and later as a whole. Comparing this data to Canadian Census numbers aids in determining the representative character of the elected elite and the functionality of consociationalism. Compositional trends which may affect the quality of political leadership are revealed, and applying the "four C's" test developed from the work of James H. Meisel measures the degree of socioeconomic homogeneity among this elite. This profile of the elected political elite provides some indication as to the possibility and degree of ideological congruence among their ranks.

The format of the following structural profile of Canadian Prime Ministers, provincial Premiers, and federal cabinet ministers from July 1, 1867 to July 4, 1996 is based in large part on that of W. A. Matheson's statistical analysis of the Canadian cabinet[3]. Therefore, the study

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[3]W.A. Matheson, The Prime Minister and the Cabinet (Toronto: Methuen, 1976), Chapter V.

is divided into five time periods. The first period, July 1, 1867 to July 8, 1896, coincides with the first 29 years wherein the Conservative Party dominated the federal government primarily under the leadership of John A. Macdonald. The second period, July 8, 1896 to December 29, 1921, covers the following 25 years which included the longest-lived federal ministry under Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Party and a Unionist coalition government during wartime. The third period, December 29, 1921 to November 15, 1948, corresponds to the 27 years of Liberal domination of the federal government under the leadership of William Lyon Mackenzie King. The fourth period, November 15, 1948 to October 30, 1974[4], parallels 26 years of continued Liberal predominance in the federal sphere, their reign only briefly interrupted by John G. Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservatives. The fifth and final period, October 30, 1974 to July 4, 1996, covers 22 years during which time the Liberals and Conservatives were in power for approximately the same amount of time.

PRIME MINISTERS

The Prime Minister occupies an enormously important and powerful position in Canadian politics and government. While it is arguable to what degree cabinet government in Canada has become prime ministerial government, the modern pre-eminence of the office cannot be denied.[5] Upon observing the electoral system's propensity for majority governments and the Prime Minister's authority to lead his or her party, select cabinet, chair

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[4]Matheson's analysis includes the 379 Canadian federal cabinet ministers who were appointed from July 1, 1867 to October 30, 1974. For reasons of congruency, the fourth period has not been altered to continue his practice of beginning and concluding time periods upon the resignation of a ministry. If this time period were extended to include the statistically insignificant number of cabinet ministers (16) sworn-in prior to the resignation of Trudeau's first ministry in 1979, then the fourth and fifth time periods would inappropriately cover 31 and 17 years respectively.

[5]See R. M. Punnett, The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977), Chapter I; and Rand Dyck, Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches (Toronto: Nelson, 1996), 480.

Table 4.1 Years of Prior Legislative and Executive Experience Among Canadian Prime Ministers (Including Party Affiliation*, Provincial Base, and Tenure), 1867-1996	Provincial		Federal	
	Legislative	Executive	Legislative	Executive
1867 - 1996 (Average) *Province ♦ Tenure*	3.5	1.2	10.2	4.8
1867 - 1896 (Average)	9.4**	4.1**	12.6	6.3
Macdonald, John Alexander (C) ONT ♦ 19.0yrs.	23.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Mackenzie, Alexander (L) ONT ♦ 4.9 yrs.	7.0	1.0	6.0	0.0
Abbott, John Joseph Caldwell (C) QU ♦ 1.4 yrs	10.0	1.0	17.3	4.0
Thompson, John Sparrow David (C) NS ♦ 2.1 yrs.	4.5	3.8	7.3	7.3
Bowell, Mackenzie (C) ONT ♦ 1.4 yrs.	0.0	0.0	27.0	16.3
Tupper, Charles Hibbert (C) NS ♦ 0.2 yrs.	12.0	7.0	18.0	10.3
1896 - 1921 (Average)	1.0	0.0	16.3	2.7
Laurier, Wilfrid (L) QUE ♦ 15.3yrs.	3.0	0.0	22.0	1.0
Borden, Robert Laird (C) NS ♦ 8.8 yrs.	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0
Meighen, Arthur (C) MAN ♦ 1.8 yrs.	0.0	0.0	12.0	7.0
1921 - 1948 (Average)	4.0	0.0	8.3	1.4
King, William Lyon Mackenzie (L) ONT ♦ 21.0yrs.	0.0	0.0	5.5	2.3
Bennett, Richard Bedford (C) ALB ♦ 5.3 yrs.	8.0	0.0	11.0	0.5
1948 - 1974 (Average)	0.0	0.0	10.2	4.1
St. Laurent, Louis Stephen (L) QUE ♦ 8.6 yrs.	0.0	0.0	7.0	6.5
Diefenbaker, John George (C) SASK ♦ 5.8 yrs.	0.0	0.0	16.8	0.0
Pearson, Lester Bowles (L) ONT ♦ 5.0 yrs.	0.0	0.0	14.5	8.8
Trudeau, Pierre Elliott (L) QUE ♦ 15.4yrs.	0.0	0.0	2.5	1.0
1974 - 1996 (Average)*	0.4	0.0	4.3	6.1
Clark, Charles Joseph (C) ALB ♦ 0.8 yrs.	0.0	0.0	7.0	0.0
Turner, John Napier (L) ONT ♦ 0.3 yrs.	0.0	0.0	4.2	9.8
Mulroney, Brian (C) QUE ♦ 8.8 yrs.	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0
Campbell, Kim (C) BC ♦ 0.3 yrs.	2.0	0.0	0.3	4.4
Chretien, Joseph Jacques Jean (L) QUE ♦ 2.7 yrs.	0.0	0.0	9.1	16.5

*   A "C" in brackets beside a Prime Minister's name indicates his or her membership in the Conservative Party, which was renamed the Progressive Conservative Party in December 1942 upon the rise of John Bracken to its leadership. A "L" in brackets beside a Prime Minister's name indicates his membership in the Liberal Party.
**   These numbers include experience gained in the colonies prior to Confederation.
*** This table would not be affected by altering Matheson's fourth time period so as to continue the practice of beginning and concluding time periods upon the resignation of a ministry since Trudeau's initial appointment to the Prime Ministership took place in 1968.

Sources: Derek Black, *Winners and Losers: The Book of Canadian Political Lists*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
R. M. Punnett, *The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics*

cabinet meetings, devise and supervise policy, dispense appointments, control government organization, "advise" the governor general (on matters including dissolution of parliament), dominate the House of Commons, and act as the country's chief diplomat, it becomes obvious why he or she is regarded as the primary representative and very embodiment of the government of the day.[6] In a consociational context, the Prime Minister also represents the national perspective in the arena of federal-provincial relations. In this context, the office performs a function crucial to the operation and maintenance of federalism. As *the* promoter and broker of elite accommodation, the Prime Minister has the unique responsibility of "extracting the necessary national commitment from provincial elites (grudging and minimal though it may sometimes be)" without which consociationalism would fail.[7]

The following analysis of Canada's 20 Prime Ministers from 1867 to 1996 examines the politically relevant characteristics of provincial origin, ethnicity, gender, education, and occupation in an effort to determine their socioeconomic backgrounds, and their prior elected political experience, method of achieving office, length of tenure, exit route from office, and post-Prime Ministerial fate in order to observe their political career patterns. As a point of general reference, Table 4.1 serves as a useful introduction to the Prime Ministers, their party affiliations, provincial political base, length of tenure, and the time period in which they were first appointed.

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[6] Witness how governments are commonly defined by their Prime Minister, such as the "Chrétien Government". For a concise yet comprehensive discussion of the sources of Prime Ministerial power see Dyck, 480-84.

[7] Noel, "The Prime Minister's Role", 107.

PROVINCIAL ORIGIN

The importance and national character of the role occupied by the Prime Minister makes his or her provincial background a significant characteristic in the context of Canadian federalism and consociationalism. A television campaign advertisement produced by the Reform Party during the 1997 general election campaign, which was interpreted by many to suggest that the next Prime Minister should not be from the province of Québec, was particularly illustrative of the tensions surrounding the provincial origins and ethnicity of Canadian Prime Ministers. The usual political stresses present in other federations regarding equitable provincial or state sharing of the office of the chief executive are compounded in Canada by the presence of the relatively populous and predominantly Francophone Catholic province of Québec within the federal equation. In Canada, provincial origin, ethnicity (particularly in terms of language), and religion are politically intertwined variables of considerable significance, and the office of the Prime Minister must not appear to be dominated by one province, region, or ethnicity lest this tarnish public perceptions of influence or representation within the federation. More tangibly, R. M. Punnett has noted that provinces or regions receive "some practical advantage from having a local boy as Prime Minister".[8] Such benefits, arising from the personal perspective of the most powerful decision-maker, the extensive patronage powers of the office, and the increased profile of his or her constituency and province, are also enjoyed by the Prime Minister's ethnic and language group.

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[8]Punnett, 11.

Table 4.2 Prime Ministers by Province of Residence, 1867-1996 (including Provincial Dates of Entry into Confederation)							
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	Total	%
Ontario (1867)	3	0	1	1	1	6	30
Québec (1867)	1	1	0	2	2	6	30
Nova Scotia (1867)	2	1	0	0	0	3	15
Alberta (1905)	n/a	0	1	0	1	2	10
British Columbia (1871)	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Manitoba (1870)	0	1	0	0	0	1	5
Saskatchewan (1905)	n/a	0	0	1	0	1	5
New Brunswick (1867)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newfoundland (1949)	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0
Prince Edward Island (1873)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	3	2	4	5	20	100

Sources: Derek Black, *Winners and Losers: The Book of Canadian Political Lists*
            Canadian Parliamentary Guide

In the earliest period of study, two Prime Ministers were born in Scotland (Macdonald and Mackenzie) and one in England (Bowell). In the most recent period of study, English-born John Turner is the only other Prime Minister to have been born outside of Canada. Of the twenty Prime Ministers from 1867 until present, only Joe Clark (Alberta) and Kim Campbell (British Columbia) were born west of Ontario. It should be noted, however, that though Meighen and Diefenbaker were born in Ontario and Bennett in New Brunswick, each moved to and established their political careers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta respectively. Despite their candidacies in various provinces, King and Turner are considered

Ontario-based politicians.[9]

Table 4.2 presents the provincial distribution of Canada's Prime Ministers. Ontario and Québec appear to have received more or less equitable representation at the pinnacle of federal politics. Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan have also apparently succeeded in providing an appropriate, if not slightly overstated, number of Prime Ministers as regards their respective populations. Not surprisingly, no Prime Minister has been based in the three smallest provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland (which only entered into Confederation in 1949). The fourth smallest province seems to have been noticeably over-represented, but, keeping in mind historical population patterns, Nova Scotia's Thompson and Tupper held office at a time when their province's population, being one of only four provinces, comprised a much greater percentage of the national population. Quite out of proportion to British Columbia's population and importance within the federation, only one British Columbian has ascended to the Prime Ministership. Notably, this Prime Minister, Kim Campbell, arrived on the scene in the latest period of study.

When judging the equitableness of the provincial distribution of Prime Ministers and other members of the elected political elite, it is also necessary to consider the method of achieving the office and the length of tenure. A number of factors will have immeasurable impact upon popular perceptions of influence and representation, but it is reasonable to

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[9]Ibid., 10-1. Interestingly, King briefly represented a riding in Prince Edward Island prior to becoming Prime Minister. For 14 of his 21 years in this top post he held the Prince Albert seat in Saskatchewan, but he began and concluded his political career where he could claim the majority of his political connections; Ontario. Turner is a similarly complicated case in that he held seats in Québec and Ontario before being appointed Prime Minister without a seat in Parliament and concluded his career representing the constituency of Vancouver Quadra in British Columbia while Leader of the Official Opposition. Nevertheless, he was always regarded as an Ontario-based, if not Bay Street-based, politician.

assume that these variables are the most immediate and powerful. The strongest evidence supporting complaints of unfair domination of the federation by Ontario and Québec lies in the fact that Prime Ministers from these two provinces have held power for a combined total of 103.8 of the 129 years of Canadian history between 1867 and 1996. The 52.2 years during which time Prime Ministers from Québec were in office have been reasonably well spread out over 4 of the 5 time periods studied, but the same cannot be said of the 51.6 years attributed to Prime Ministers from Ontario. Since the resignation of the last King ministry on November 15, 1948 only 5.3 years (since April 20, 1968, only 2.5 months) can be attributed to Prime Ministers from Ontario. Despite their historical over-representation in this office prior to 1948, residents of the most populous province have reasonable grounds for complaint. Furthermore, Ontario-based King held a seat in Saskatchewan for 14 of his 21 years as Prime Minister, presumably allowing that province some ancillary benefits and even more positively disproportionate representation at the expense of Ontario. It has been Québec though which has been the greatest beneficiary of Ontario's dramatic decline in influence over the Prime Ministership, as this province has dominated the most recent period of study.

British Columbians have the strongest case supporting claims of alienation, as the only Prime Minister from their large province, Campbell, only held office for 4.5 months and failed to achieve electoral success. Though Alberta has provided two Prime Ministers, together they account for only 6.1 years, in large part because of Joe Clark's embarrassing parliamentary defeat after almost nine months in power. While there has been a Prime Minister from Manitoba, Arthur Meighen merely held power for two brief unelected periods totalling 1.8 years. In comparison to the under-representation of these more populous

provinces, Nova Scotians have occupied the office of the Prime Minister for 11.1 years, Borden accounting for 8.8 of these years. Interestingly, and not insignificantly, the constituency of Prince Albert in Saskatchewan has been host to both King (14 years) and Diefenbaker (for his entire 5.8 year tenure), perhaps granting this single constituency disproportionate benefits and influence over the political affairs of the country. Clearly, there are some serious and somewhat complicated discrepancies regarding the issue of equitable provincial representation in the very powerful office of Prime Minister.

ETHNICITY

As has been explained, ethnicity is another important element in any examination of the representative character of the office of Prime Minister, as it is interconnected with the issues of provincial and religious representation when considering Québec. Determining ethnicity in a nation of immigrants such as Canada can be a very difficult endeavour[10], complicated further by the labels individuals choose to apply to themselves and others. For example, St. Laurent is widely considered a French Canadian but his ancestry is actually both French and Irish. Still, in the case of Canada's Prime Ministers this analysis is remarkably easy since they are almost all members of one of the two "charter"[11] settler groups; British

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[10]For example, 35.8% of respondents in the 1996 Census reported multiple ethnic origins. Also, as many researchers such as Jerome H.. Black have discovered, indications of ethnicity have been provided infrequently and decreasingly since the 1800s, where the country of birth is provided it can be misleading when attempting to discern ethnicity, and etymological approaches which analyse surnames often exclude lineages because of the practice of adopting or altering surnames according to the dominant gender or ethnic group. See Jerome H. Black, "Minority Women in the 35th Parliament," Canadian Parliamentary Review XX, 1 (Spring 1997): 17-22.

[11]For the most extensive application of this concept to the Canadian case, see Porter, Chapter 3. He describes "charter" members of society as the first ethnic group(s) to settle, sometimes after conquering an indigenous population, a generally unpopulated territory, and, through their demographic dominance and role in founding a new society, retain exclusive "privileges and prerogatives" within the power structures of that society.

and French.

During the first period of study, all Prime Ministers were of British background (3 English, 2 Scottish, 1 Irish). The second period of study is comprised of two Prime Ministers with British ancestry (1 English, 1 Irish) and the first French Canadian to hold the post; Wilfrid Laurier. The third period of study has only two Prime Ministers, both of British descent (1 Scottish, 1 English). The fourth period of study is witness to the third Prime Minister of Irish descent, and the only three Prime Ministers claiming multiple ethnic origins; St. Laurent, Trudeau and Diefenbaker. St. Laurent and Trudeau's (French and Scottish-French) roots are based in both charter groups, but Diefenbaker (German and Scottish) is the only Prime Minister with an ancestry partly outside of the charter groups. The fifth and final period of study includes four Prime Ministers with British origins (2 English, 1 Scottish, 1 Irish) and one French Canadian.

Obviously, the office of Prime Minister has been dominated by Canadians of British descent (7 English, 4 Scottish, 4 Irish). 15 (75%) Prime Ministers, in office for a total of 81.2 (62.9%) of the 129 years in this study have been of British origin. Even when taking into consideration historical population patterns[12], this ethnicity has been over-represented. Canadians of French ancestry, on the other hand, have been more equitably represented. As of July 4, 1996, Laurier and Chrétien held office for a combined total of 18 (14%) of the 129

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[12]Despite the inherent problems of Census ethnicity questions and the incompatibility of some data sets (For example, there was a significant change in survey methodology from 1991 to 1996 as regards the ethnicity section of the questionnaire.), Census data can still paint an informative picture of historical demographic trends. The largest reported ethnic proportions of the population were 57% British, 30.7% French, and 7% German (including Dutch and Scandinavian) in the 1901 Census; 51.9% British, 28.2% French, 8.2% German (including Dutch and Scandinavian), and 9.4% Other European in the 1931 Census; and 43.8% British, 30.4% French, 10.3% German (including Dutch and Scandinavian), and 12.3% Other European in the 1961 Census.

years in this study. When considering Prime Ministers with any French ancestry, however, Laurier, St. Laurent, Trudeau, and Chrétien held the post of Prime Minister for a combined total of 42 of the 129 years (32.6%) in this study. Keeping in mind historical population patterns, this is very much proportionate to the segment of the population claiming French descent prior to the 1980s.

Including those Canadians reporting, like St. Laurent and Trudeau, multiple origins from within the charter groups, 55.5% of the Canadian population in 1996 can be classified as having only charter group ancestry.[13] Yet all but 5.8 years of Canada's history, have been presided over by a Prime Minister of charter group-only lineage. Even the one exception, Diefenbaker, had an ethnic background which was partly rooted in a charter group (Scottish) and partly rooted in the traditional European immigration source (German) which has long been Canada's largest non-charter ethnic population.[14] In this respect, Diefenbaker was not unlike the 16.1% of the 1996 population which had multiple origins which include a charter group and a non-charter group.

The Prime Ministership should not remain the domain of those of British, French, or

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[13]The sum of "Canadian" (18.7%), British-only (17.1%), French and/or Acadian-only (9.5%), and the 10.2% who reported multiple origins from within these three groups. Statistics Canada maintains that "virtually all" respondents claiming "Canadian" origins in the 1996 Census were born in Canada and had English or French ancestry. Including those who reported multiple origins from a charter and a non-charter group (16.1%), 71.6% of the population has some charter group ancestry.

[14]According to Statistics Canada, one of the most effective methods of determining the ethnic composition of the country is to tally every origin reported by those of single and multiple origins. For example, a respondent who reports his or her ethnicity as both "Chinese" and "Dutch" will be included in both of these ethnic categories. In the 1996 Census, the following largely European ethnic origins were the most frequently reported after the charter groups (Canadian, 8,806275; English, 6,832,095; French, 5,597,845; Scottish, 4,260,840; Irish, 3,767,610): German (2,757,140), Italian (1,207,475), Aboriginal (1,101,955), Ukrainian (1,026,475), Chinese (921,585), Dutch/Netherlands (916,215), Polish (786,735), South Asian (723,345), Jewish (351,705), and Norwegian (346,310). Also see Note 12 for historical trends.

even European ancestry, especially when these demographic segments are in substantial decline. Since 1961, the Canadian population has become increasingly multicultural as immigration from exclusively traditional European and American sources has been rapidly supplanted by non-traditional sources such as Asia, South and Central America, Africa, and the Middle East.[15] Even the relatively small number of Europeans coming to Canada today do not arrive from traditional sources such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. Instead they originate in Eastern European countries such as Romania and the new Russian Federation. Furthermore, over 50% of immigrants since the 1970s and 75% in the 1990s are visible minorities. In 1996, 28.5% of Canada's population did not have any charter heritage and 11.2% of the population was a member of a visible minority.[16] The history of this important public office has been one of under-representation of even the traditional, more numerous non-charter European ethnicities[17], and the fairly recent and significant changes to the country's ethnic composition cause the questions of equity and legitimacy surrounding this matter to become still more pressing.

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[15]According to data compiled by Immigration and Citizenship Canada and the 1996 Census, Asian countries accounted for 7 out of the 10 most frequently reported countries of birth for immigrants arriving from 1991-1996 while European countries accounted for 8 out of the top 10 countries prior to 1961. Asian-born immigrants, from Eastern and Southern locales such as Hong Kong, China, India, and Sri Lanka, represented only 3% of arrivals before 1961, 12% during the 1960s, 33% during the 1970s, and 57% between 1991 and 1996.

[16]The 1996 Census defined the "visible minority" population as non-White and non-Aboriginal. Keeping differences in Census survey methodology from 1991 to 1996 in mind, these percentages are up from 9.4% in 1991 and 6.3% in 1986.

[17]See Christopher Ondaatje and Donald Swainson, The Prime Ministers of Canada (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1975), p. 138. Even though Diefenbaker was part Scottish and part German, an ethnic population enjoying the largest non-charter proportion of the population, he was pressured by Toronto Conservatives to change his name to something "less foreign" more than ten years before he ever became leader of the party.

GENDER

There is a significant under-representation of women in the country's top public office, as the position has been held almost solely by men. Though the 1996 Census reported that the female gender comprised, not surprisingly, 50.9% of the population, Kim Campbell has been the only woman Prime Minister and her unelected 4.5 months in power are a minute consolation to the women's movement. After the 1993 general election, NDP Leader Audrey MacLaughlin blamed her own unsatisfactory results upon a nationwide underbelly of sexism, but Campbell vigorously opposed this allegation when accepting her own electoral rout. In the NDP leadership convention following her resignation, however, MacLaughlin was succeeded by another woman, Alexa McDonough, who led her party to an impressive showing in the 1997 general election. A Gallup public opinion poll released prior to Campbell's nomination as Conservative leader seems to support her perception of the levels of sexism, as it reported that the gender of party leaders did not matter to Canadians (77%, "No difference"; up from 73% in 1975) and that 17% (up from 13% in 1975) would actually be more inclined to vote for a female party leader whereas only 4% (down from 11% in 1975) would be less inclined.[18] Notably, the first female was not appointed to the Prime Ministership until the most recent period of study, and none of the three female party leaders heading a general election campaign have been successful.

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[18]Lorne Bozinoff and André Turcotte, "Effects of a Woman Party Leader on Electorate Remains Stable," The Gallup Report, 14 January 1993. The results from other Gallup surveys are also supportive of such an interpretation. See Lorne Bozinoff and Peter MacIntosh, "Feminist Movement Strongly Supported by Public," The Gallup Report, 25 June 1992: 60% of Canadians supported the women's movement as opposed to only 29% who did not. Portentously, 71% of those respondents aged 18 to 29 expressed support while only 47% of those over the age of 65 did so.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION

The great majority of Canada's 20 Prime Ministers received education at the university level. Only Macdonald (lawyer), Mackenzie (businessman), Thompson (lawyer), and Bowell (journalist) in the first period of study and Borden (lawyer) in the second time period did not, because a university degree was not then necessary for them to pursue their chosen careers. Since Borden, all Prime Ministers have received education at a university. Comparatively, the 1996 Census found that almost half of all Canadians over the age of 15 had not received any formal education beyond secondary school.[19] University enrollment and the number of degrees granted in Canada have increased considerably since the 1970s[20], but still only 15.6% of the population aged 15 and over held a university degree[21] in 1996. Despite the fact that the population became better educated during the 1980s and 1990s, Prime Ministers are still highly unrepresentative in this area, many possessing law degrees.

OCCUPATION

In fact, 14 (70%) of Canada's Prime Ministers have been lawyers. Table 4.3 indicates that during the first period of study the post was held by three lawyers, but also one

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[19]The 1996 Census found that 34.8% of those Canadians over the age of 15 had not completed secondary school and that 14.3% held a high school diploma only.

[20]In 1993, Statistics Canada reported that 31% of 18-24 year-olds attended university as compared with only 18% in 1976. 1996 Census data revealed that approximately one-third of 20-29 year-olds were receiving education and the number who were doing so on a full-time basis (39%) had more than doubled since 1981 (19%), even though part-time attendance rates remained constant (9%). From 1981 to 1986, the proportion of women and men between the ages of 20 and 29 holding a university degree increased from 11% to 21% and 12% to 16% respectively. Between 1986 and 1996, the number of female and male university graduates aged 20 to 29 increased 43% and 17% respectively.

[21]10.8% of Canadians over the age of 15 had received *some* post-secondary education in 1996, and 24.6% had completed a *non*-university post-secondary education.

businessperson, one journalist, and one doctor. Since then the position has been dominated by lawyers, though it should be noted that two Liberal civil servants, King and Pearson, wielded significant influence in fairly recent history. Of course, many of those in the legal profession, such as Meighen, Bennett, and Mulroney, were also active in the business world, though law was the primary career in which they established themselves before public life. Others, like Abbott, Thompson, and Trudeau, practised law but also entered the field of education from time to time. Trudeau was also involved in journalism, co-founding and writing for the activist academic journal Cite Libre, and enjoyed a stint as a civil servant in the Privy Council Office. The other Prime Ministers who have dabbled in journalism are Mackenzie and Clark. Mackenzie owned a stone masonry business, and later in life succeeded George Brown as editor of The Globe. Before entering public life, Joe Clark had brief dalliances with journalism, education, and assisting two Conservative politicians. He never established a career for himself in the private sector and essentially spent all his years after university as a politician. Clark is the only career politician to ascend to the pinnacle of federal politics, and it should be noted that he did so during the latest period of the analysis.

The people who have occupied Canada's top political office have not been average Canadians. Instead, Canada's Prime Ministers have been highly educated, high-income professionals, some of whom had sizeable personal fortunes. Bennett, Trudeau, Mulroney and others were millionaires when they were first appointed. Several, including Tupper, King, St. Laurent, Turner, and Mulroney, had extensive corporate connections.[22] King, Pearson,

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[22]Dyck, 485.

Table 4.3 Occupations of Prime Ministers, 1867-1996													
	Lawyer		Business-person		Journalist		Civil Servant		Doctor		Politician		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1867-1896	3	50.0	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	6
1896-1921	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3
1921-1948	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2
1948-1974	3	75.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4
1974-1996	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	5
1867-1996	14	70.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	2	10.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	20

Sources: Derek Black, *Winners and Losers: The Book of Canadian Political Lists*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

and Trudeau share elitist academic-public service backgrounds. Childhood origins aside, all Canadian Prime Ministers have been members of the small upper echelon of society when they entered office. There is certainly ample reason for concern about this, as the positions of political influence and power should not be the exclusive preserve of the wealthy.

PRIOR ELECTED POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Aside from acting as an introductory reference, the primary purpose of Table 4.1 is to illustrate the prior legislative and executive experience of Canada's Prime Ministers. On average, Prime Ministers have had 3.5 years legislative and 1.2 years executive experience provincially. Closer scrutiny highlights the fact that provincial experience of any kind is practically non-existent after the first 29 years of Confederation. The provincial experience listed from 1867 to 1896 is partly due to the public life led by Prime Ministers in the colonies of British North America prior to Confederation, as this claims some share of the first six

Prime Ministers' provincial experience aside from Mackenzie.[23] Since 1896, only Laurier (3 years), Bennett (8 years), and Campbell (2 years) had provincial experience and none of it was executive in nature.

Former Premiers only ascended to the office of Prime Minister in the 1800s, and only one (Thompson) was actually a Premier of a province after Confederation. Macdonald led coalition ministries in the United Canadas with his ally George-Etienne Cartier, and both Thompson and Tupper were former Premiers of Nova Scotia who never received electoral approval of their appointment. Though the Liberals have never chosen a former provincial Premier as leader, the Conservative Party has chosen three other former provincial Premiers besides those already mentioned, John Bracken (Manitoba), George Drew (Ontario), and Robert Stanfield (Nova Scotia), to be party leaders. The lack of provincial experience among Prime Ministers and the failure of these three Conservative leaders to achieve an electoral victory demonstrates that provincial experience is definitely not considered a prerequisite or asset for those vying for this office.[24] When that experience is of an executive nature, the public may even regard it as an impediment to the Prime Minister's responsibilities as unbiased national figure and mediator at the cabinet table and federal-provincial conferences.[25]

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[23]Mackenzie gained his provincial experience as Treasurer in Edward Blake's cabinet in the new province of Ontario.

[24]While a political career path from provincial to federal spheres is unusual in Canada, it is common in the United States. See Peverill Squire, "Career Opportunities and Membership Stability in Legislatures," Legislative Studies Quarterly XIII, 1 (February 1988): 65-82; and Wayne L. Francis and John R. Baker, "Why do U. S. State Legislators Vacate their Seats?" Legislative Studies Quarterly XI, 1 (February 1986): 119-126.

[25]In a February 1, 1997 Canadian Parliamentary Affairs Channel (CPAC) interview, Preston Manning expressed his opinion that Premiers are effectively "disqualified" from achieving election to the national post of Prime Minister because the public has already seen them "grind the axe" for the benefit of one particular province. Manning's viewpoint is certainly complementary to this previously-discussed consociational perspective of the Prime Minister's representational duties.

Federally, Canadian Prime Ministers have had an average of 10.2 years legislative experience and 4.8 years executive experience. When the only three Prime Ministers with double-digit executive federal experience, Bowell (16.3 years), Tupper (10.3 years), and Chretien (16.5 years), are ignored, these overall averages drop to 8.8 years legislative experience and 3.1 years executive experience. Excluding Bowell and Tupper from the first period of study causes the average legislative experience from 1867 to 1896 to decline to 7.7 years and the average executive experience to fall to 3.1 years. An examination of the most recent period of study without Chretien, a noticeable deviation regarding prior experience as well as age, reveals a reduced average of 3.2 years legislative experience and 3.6 years executive experience from 1974 to 1996. In the first four time periods studied, the level of legislative experience is quite high in comparison with the rather low level of executive experience. This is due to the historical tendency of the Canadian government to be dominated by one party or, more precisely, one Prime Minister for long periods of time, as many years are logged by the party waiting in Opposition.

The most recent time period (1974-1996) has been witness to a considerable decline in federal legislative experience among Canada's Prime Ministers. This notable break with past trends has essentially occurred in tandem with the advent of the current generation of party leadership conventions. Prior to the first convention in August 1919[26], leaders of the two parties to have governed Canada were chosen by the most influential members of caucus while in opposition or by a small party elite in consultation with the governor-general while

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[26]The Liberals were the first party to hold a full-fledged national leadership convention in August 1919. The Conservatives followed suit in 1927 when Bennett was selected.

in government, only the most experienced parliamentarians receiving consideration.[27] With

the exception of Diefenbaker, Canada's early leadership conventions were not much different,

as only a small number of prominent MPs, senators, and party notables effectively controlled

the choice of leader until 1967.[28] The first generation of conventions were much smaller with

"half the delegates, half the candidates, and required far fewer ballots"[29] as compared to the

huge, multi-million dollar media events of the post-1967 variety wherein the advice of

communications experts is often a decisive factor. According to Heather MacIvor, today's

televised convention process has magnified the importance of leadership selection and made

the personalities contesting them the focal point of leadership conventions.[30] Significantly,

the result of this transformation has been conventions which favour those candidates with the

least amount of experience.[31] In fact, of the eleven party leaders chosen at a convention who

went on to become Prime Minister, three had or were tied for the least federal experience

(Mulroney had none), four had or were tied for the second least federal experience, and only

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[27]Heather MacIvor, "The Leadership Convention: An Institution Under Stress," in Leaders and Leadership in Canada, eds. Maureen Mancuso, Richard G. Price, and Ronald Wagenberg (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 14-16; and John C. Courtney, Do Conventions Matter? Choosing National Party Leaders in Canada (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 175-177.

[28]Courtney, Conventions Matter, 12.

[29]Ibid., 17. Also see MacIvor, "Leadership Convention", 17-20. Both Courtney and MacIvor see two definite generations of leadership conventions; the first beginning in 1919 and concluding in 1958 or 1961, and the second beginning in 1967 and continuing on until 1990 or 1993.

[30]MacIvor, "Leadership Convention", 19.

[31]See Courtney, Conventions Matter, Chapter 8; R. Kenneth Carty, "Choosing New Party Leaders: The Progressive Conservatives in 1983, the Liberals in 1984," in Canada at the Polls, 1984: A Study of the Federal General Elections, ed. Howard R. Penniman (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1988), 55-78; John Courtney, The Selection of National Party Leaders in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), Chapter 6; MacIvor, "Leadership Convention", 16-7; and Punnett, 14, 37.

two had the most federal experience of their rivals on the night of their convention victory.

METHOD OF ENTRY

Table 4.4 focusses upon each Prime Minister's first appointment to the office. Of the seven Prime Ministers who never won an election, three (all from the 1867-1896 time period) never fought a general election campaign anytime after appointment. Senator Abbott resigned the position after 1.4 years, and Senator Bowell was forced to resign when a cabinet coup dislodged him 1.4 years following his appointment. Thompson, on the other hand, died while in office, concluding his Ministry of 2.1 years. It should be noted that a fourth Prime Minister from this category, Arthur Meighen (from the 1896-1921 time period), was appointed twice (1920 and 1926) and lost both subsequent general elections. The other 3 Prime Ministers, Tupper, Turner, and Campbell, failed miserably in their bids to receive a mandate from the public after being appointed to the Prime Ministership from the cabinet table first.

Most (63.6%) Prime Ministers who have been appointed prior to making their first request for a general election have lost the ensuing campaign, and the most successful route to the office is to win a general election while Leader of the Official Opposition. Excluding the special cases of Macdonald and Mackenzie, the only Prime Ministers to successfully win a general election after first achieving the office by appointment have been St. Laurent and Trudeau. Closer examination of the Prime Ministers appointed before leading their first general election campaign reveals that all of them held portfolios in their predecessor's cabinet and that almost all of them were appointed after their previously elected predecessor held power for a rather long period of time. The implication is that the numerous electoral failures of people achieving the Prime Ministership through this internal route may be a result of their

Table 4.4 Entrances of Prime Ministers (as percentage of total), 1867-1996*							
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996 #	1867-1996 %
Appointed After General Election Victory	0	2	2	2	3	9	45
Appointed But Never Won General Election	4	1	0	0	2	7	35
Appointed Before General Election Victory	2**	0	0	2	0	4	20
Total	6	3	2	4	5	20	100

* Each Prime Minister is counted only once. This table only takes into consideration each Prime Minister's first entry to that office, and this dictates the time period to which each Prime Minister belongs. Thus, while it is notable that Macdonald, King, Meighen, and Trudeau returned to the office after previously losing it, only their initial appointment to the position is recorded in this table.

** Macdonald was appointed Prime Minister at Confederation. Mackenzie was appointed following the Macdonald Ministry's resignation during the Pacific Scandal, and almost immediately asked for a dissolution of Parliament.

Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
R. M. Punnett, *The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics*
Who's Who in Canada

membership in a ministry and party which has already lost public support. Certainly Tupper, Turner, and Campbell were passed the torch at a time when their respective party futures were bleak. The one exception, Trudeau, inherited the post from Pearson after only 5 years in power and subsequently enjoyed a general election victory.

TENURE

The average length of tenure for Canada's Prime Ministers as of July 4, 1996 is 6.4 years. The low 4.8 year average for the first time period is a result of the 4 Conservative Prime Ministers who briefly held office following Macdonald's death. Macdonald was Prime Minister for 19 years, though not consecutively as his government was once brought down amid the Pacific Scandal. After Macdonald, the double-digit tenures belong solely to the Liberal party, whose Prime Ministers have enjoyed an average tenure (9.2 years) which is

Table 4.5 Average Years of Service (as of July 4, 1996) of Prime Ministers, 1867-1996						
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
All Prime Ministers	4.8	8.6	13.2	8.7	2.6	6.4
Conservative Prime Ministers	4.8	5.3	5.3*	5.8*	3.3	4.6
Liberal Prime Ministers	4.9*	15.3*	21.0*	9.7	1.5	9.2

*One individual

Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
R. M. Punnett, *The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics*
Who's Who in Canada

double that of their Conservative opponents (4.6 years). Merely 8 (40%) Liberal Prime Ministers have governed Canada for 73.2 years (56.7%) while 12 (60%) Conservative Prime Ministers have ruled for just 55.7 years (43.2%). King is the longest-serving Prime Minister, as he held power for 21 non-consecutive years. The other Prime Ministers with double-digit tenures are Laurier, with 15.3 consecutive years, and Trudeau, with 15.4 non-consecutive years. These 4 (20%) Prime Ministers have cast an impressive shadow over Canadian history, as they held office for a combined total of 70 (54%) of the 129 years in this study.[32]

Interestingly, every time period studied has one Prime Minister who can claim a tenure of at least 15 years except for the most recent period wherein Mulroney's tenure of 8.8 years is the lengthiest. Table 4.5 demonstrates the drastic decline in tenure experienced by Prime Ministers elected between 1974 and 1996, as the average is only 2.6 years during these years. Even if the tenures of Turner and Campbell are ignored, the average tenure for this time period is still a low 4.1 (7.1 overall) years. Three of the four Prime Ministers with the shortest

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[32]General election victories were as follows: Macdonald had 6, King had 5, Trudeau had 4, and Laurier had the longest unbroken string with 4.

Table 4.6 Final Exits of Prime Ministers (as percentage of total), 1867-1996						
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
Government Defeated	33.3	66.7	50.0*	50.0	60.0	50.0
Resigned	33.3	33.3*	50.0*	50.0	20.0*	35.0
Died in Office	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Still in Office	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0*	5.0
Total	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*One individual
Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
R. M. Punnett, *The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics*
Who's Who in Canada

tenures can be found in the most recent period of study. The shortest tenured Prime Minister was Charles Tupper (approximately 2 months) in the first time period of 1867 to 1896. He is followed closely by other appointees to the office from the most recent period of study who also failed to achieve election; Turner (approximately 2 months) and Campbell (approximately 4 months). Clark has the fourth shortest overall tenure and the shortest of those Prime Ministers who were appointed after winning a general election, as his government was defeated in Parliament in 1980 after approximately 9 months. Since 1979, Prime Ministers have been unable to maintain the long tenures of the past.

EXITS

It is evident from examining Table 4.6, that very few Canadian Prime Ministers have left the office voluntarily. When Chrétien is removed from the calculation since he is still in office, 52.6% (10) of Canada's other 19 Prime Ministers left office because of electoral or parliamentary defeat, 36.8% (7) resigned, and 10.5% (2; Thompson and Macdonald) died in

office between 1867 and 1896. The 7 Prime Ministers who resigned the position did not

necessarily do so gracefully or unselfishly. Abbott and Borden resigned because of health

problems, Mulroney and Trudeau had lost the public support necessary for re-election, and

Bowell resigned only after Canada's sole successful cabinet coup[33] deposed him. Notably,

the highest proportion of government defeats and lowest proportion of resignations occurred

during the last period of study. These 1974-1996 proportions are even more pronounced if

Chrétien is ignored, as 75% (3) of the Prime Ministers then left office because of a

parliamentary or government defeat and 25% (1; Mulroney) then resigned during this time.

FATE

According to Table 4.7, 64.3% of those Prime Ministers who held a seat in the House

returned to private life upon resignation or defeat while 35.7% remained in the House for at

least a year or two after they stepped down from the top federal post. In the past, this return

to private life often meant retirement or even imminent death because of the age of the Prime

Ministers, whereas contemporary former Prime Ministers are still young enough that they

must pursue careers. Still, there were those, like Tupper, Laurier, and Diefenbaker, who

continued on as Leaders of the Official Opposition and unsuccessfully attempted to regain

their post.[34] In the most recent period of study, Clark, though removed from the party

leadership following the party's 1980 defeat, stayed on in the House and eventually became

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[33]Diefenbaker's cabinet attempted to remove him as leader in 1963, but he successfully appealed to caucus for support.

[34]Macdonald, King, Meighen, and Trudeau each managed to regain the Prime Ministership following electoral or parliamentary defeats. King actually did so twice, but Meighen's return to the post was a brief (less than 3 months) appointment during the King-Byng "constitutional crisis" which preceded his second general election loss.

	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
Table 4.7 **Fate of Prime Ministers** **Holding Seats in the House of Commons Who Resigned** **or whose Government was Defeated (as percentage of total), 1867-1996**						
Returned to Private Life	0.0	66.7	100.0	75.0	66.7	**64.3**
Remained in House of Commons	100.0	33.3	0.0	25.0	33.3	**35.7**
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Sources: Derek Black, *Winners and Losers: The Book of Canadian Political Lists*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

a high profile and respected Minister in his rival Mulroney's cabinet, holding the External

Affairs and Unity portfolios before retiring to a private life of lecturing, writing, and business.

After resigning, Mulroney returned to a lucrative career in law as well as in business,

ostensibly as a consultant and director. Upon losing her seat in the 1993 rout of her party,

Campbell taught at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University for

approximately a year before accepting an appointment to the Canadian consulate in Los

Angeles.

PREMIERS

Canada's provincial Premiers occupy powerful positions which have a special

consociational significance, and are a necessary element of any definition of the country's

elected political elite. S. J. R. Noel, in an essay on the origins of provincial political

leadership, explained their importance within the Canadian political system:

> Each in his own province has a standing and public visibility unmatched by any
> federal politician except perhaps the Prime Minister himself. Debates on
> major national issues, and the symbolic representation of opposing views and

interests, more typically involve the Prime Minister and Premier of a province than a federal Minister and his opposition critic in the House of Commons.[35]

As the federation has become increasingly decentralized since Noel made this observation, the prominence he attributed to the provincial Premiers has grown substantially. Noel has also underscored their importance to consociationalism with a rather ominous stipulation that the system cannot remain operable if provincial elites are not committed to cooperating for the sake of the national interest.[36]

Only Premiers appointed between November 15, 1948 and July 4, 1996 are examined herein due to the paucity and questionable nature of available information on Premiers prior to 1948, the fact that not all provinces joined Confederation in 1867, and, most importantly, the absence of a stable, disciplined party system within most of the provinces until the 1930s and 1940s. The following analysis of Canada's 67 provincial Premiers from November 15, 1948 to July 4, 1996 focusses on the politically relevant socioeconomic characteristics of ethnicity, gender, education, and occupation as well as the political career pattern variables of prior elected political experience, method of achieving office, length of tenure, exit route from office, and post-First Ministerial fate.

ETHNICITY

The relative scarcity of concrete ethnic origin data for the Premiers creates difficulties for the study of this characteristic. Still, patterns can be discerned and generalizations can be

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[35]Noel, "Leadership and Clientelism", 197.

[36]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", in Consociational Democracy, 266-7. This is particularly true in light of the erosion of the federal government's ability to enforce national standards and the current dominance of the Bloc Québécois and Parti Québécois in their respective arenas.

made about many of the provinces. From 1948 until 1996, a preponderance of Premiers across the country has had British ancestry. Québec, as a consequence of the large majority of that province's population having French origins, has been the exception, as 8 of their 11 Premiers since 1948 have had solely French origins. In this period, almost all the Premiers from the Atlantic provinces and Ontario have been of British descent, reflecting the predominance of British ancestry in the respective provincial populations. The notable exceptions are New Brunswick's Louis Robichaud (Acadian), Ontario's David Peterson (Norwegian), and especially Prince Edward Island's Joe Ghiz (Lebanese), whose ethnicity was without charter-group or traditional European roots. Most Western Premiers have had a British background in common as well, though Manitoba's Ed Schreyer and Gary Filmon had German and Ukranian-Polish ancestry respectively and British Columbia's Bill Vander Zalm was Dutch. Canada's provincial Premiers, while somewhat less monolithic in their ethnic origins, still fit the theme of British dominance of the elected political elite.

While this may reflect the fact that those of British descent comprise the largest ethnic group in every province besides Québec, there are other sizeable ethnic communities in every province which may understandably begin to question the legitimacy of a political system which appears to exclude them from political leadership roles. This is likely not the case for Manitoba's relatively large German, Ukranian, and Polish populations, British Columbia's moderately-sized Dutch community, Prince Edward Island's small numbers claiming Lebanese descent, or Ontario's almost non-existent Norwegian community, as these groups have received equitable representation. Of the few exceptions to the British dominance of Canada's provincial Premierships outside of Québec, all but two occurred in the most recent

period of study. The only non-traditional or visible minority Premier, however, was Prince Edward Island's Joe Ghiz. As with the Prime Ministership, the charter groups continue to dominate Premierships.

GENDER

Similar to the Prime Ministership, almost all provincial Premierships have been the domain of men. Rita Johnston was appointed the first female First Minister in Canada upon replacing her predecessor, Bill Vander Zalm, in British Columbia in 1991. She failed to win the following election, however, and was only Premier for approximately 7 months. Catherine Callbeck became the only elected female First Minister in Canadian history upon becoming appointed Premier and subsequently winning the provincial election in Prince Edward Island in 1993. Like Kim Campbell's rise to the Prime Ministership, both these women achieved the highest office within their sphere of politics in the last years of the most recent time period studied.

EDUCATION

Table 4.8 illustrates an overall trend favouring increasingly well educated provincial Premiers over the course of the 2 periods of study. On average, 83.6% of the Premiers have been educated at a University. All Premiers from Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan fall into this category. It is notable that electors in Nova Scotia, Alberta, and British Columbia have chosen Premiers whose education levels are contrary to this trend. Interestingly, Alberta and British Columbia display remarkably lower education levels than the remainder of the provinces, with only 50% and 42.9% of their respective Premiers holding a University degree. While this may be an indication of greater accessibility to political power

Table 4.8 Educational Background of Premiers by Province, 1948-1996							
	1948-1974		1974-1996		1948-1996		
	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	% Univ.
Total	26	6	30	5	56	11	83.6
Ontario	3	0	4	0	7	0	100.0
Prince Edward Island	3	0	5	0	8	0	100.0
Saskatchewan	3	0	2	0	5	0	100.0
Québec	5	1	5	0	10	1	90.9
Nova Scotia	5	0	3	1	8	1	88.9
Manitoba	2	1	3	0	5	1	83.3
Newfoundland	1	1	4	0	5	1	83.3
New Brunswick	2	1	1	0	3	1	75.0
Alberta	1	1	1	1	2	2	50.0
British Columbia	1	1	2	3	3	4	42.9

Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

structures in the provinces as compared with the federal sphere, provincial Premiers are still far more educated than the Canadian electorate.

OCCUPATION

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 demonstrate the accessibility offered by provincial premierships to people of varying occupational backgrounds. Premierships have been held by economists (Liberal Robert Bourassa and PQ Jacques Parizeau in Québec), career politicians (NDP Ed Schreyer in Manitoba, PC Richard Hatfield in New Brunswick, and NDP Bob Rae in Ontario), a social worker (Dave Barrett in British Columbia), and a union organizer (Glen

Table 4.9
Occupations of Premiers by Province, 1948-1996

	Lawyer	Business-person	Educator	Journalist	Civil Servant	Farmer	Doctor	Professional	Politician	Other	Total
Québec	5	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	11
Nova Scotia	5	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	9
Prince Edward Island	3	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	8
British Columbia	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7
Ontario	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7
Manitoba	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Newfoundland	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Saskatchewan	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Alberta	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
New Brunswick	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Total	25	18	5	5	1	4	2	3	3	1	67

Table 4.10
Occupations of Premiers, 1948-1996

	Lawyer		Business-person		Educator		Journalist		Civil Servant		Farmer		Doctor		Professional		Politician		Other		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1948-1974	16	50.0	7	21.9	1	3.1	2	6.3	1	3.1	1	3.1	0	0.0	2	6.3	2	6.3	0	0.0	32
1974-1996	9	25.7	11	31.4	4	11.4	3	8.6	0	0.0	3	8.6	2	5.7	1	2.9	1	2.9	1	2.9	35
1948-1996	25	37.3	18	26.9	5	7.5	5	7.5	1	1.5	4	6.0	2	3.0	3	4.5	3	4.5	1	1.5	67

Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

Clark in British Columbia , the "other" in the Tables). Similar to their federal counterparts, most (37.3%) Premiers between 1948 and 1996 have been lawyers, but they have only comprised a majority proportion of Premiers in the province of Nova Scotia (Table 4.9). According to Table 4.10, businesspersons (26.9%) also account for a considerable and increasing percentage of Canada's provincial Premiers while representation of the legal profession has dropped significantly since 1974. Correspondingly, educators, farmers, doctors, and journalists have also achieved greater representation in Premiers' offices in the last 22 years of this study. Clearly, there has been a general diversification of the occupational backgrounds of Premiers from 1948 to 1996. Though many Premiers have had sizeable personal wealth and income, Premierships do appear somewhat more accessible, particularly in certain provinces like British Columbia, to average Canadians than the Prime Ministership.

Table 4.11 Average Years of Prior Legislative and Executive Experience Among Provincial Premiers, 1948-1996				
	Provincial		Federal	
	Legislative	Executive	Legislative	Executive
1948 - 1974	6.1	4.0	0.9	0.2
1974 - 1996	4.2	4.0	0.9	0.3
1948 - 1996	5.1	4.0	0.9	0.2

Sources: Derek Black, *Winners and Losers: The Book of Canadian Political Lists*
  Canadian Parliamentary Guide
  Canadian Who's Who
  Who's Who in Canada

PRIOR ELECTED POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Correlating to the findings of low provincial experience among Prime Ministers, Table

4.11 exhibits the lack of substantial federal experience among Premiers. Considering this in combination with the noticeable increase in municipal experience[37] among Premiers, it is clear that the provincial and federal spheres of politics are very much segregated. As for provincial experience, Premiers have had relatively little legislative or executive experience in this area as well, and, similar to Prime Ministers, this has been in decline. This may be indicative of greater accessibility, but it also may have a negative impact upon the quality of leadership.

Table 4.12 Entrances of Premiers (as percentage of total), 1948-1996				
	1948-1974	1974-1996	1948-1996	
			#	%
Appointed After General Election Victory	18	18	36	53.7
Appointed But Never Won General Election	8	10	18	26.9
Appointed Before General Election Victory	6	7	13	19.4
Total	32	35	67	100.0

Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

METHOD OF ENTRY

Similar to the same analysis of Prime Ministers, Table 4.12 illustrates that those initially arriving at the post of Premier by method of appointment are much more likely (58.1%) to be rejected by the electorate. 53.7% of the Premiers from 1948 to 1996 were appointed following an election victory. Only 19.4% have been appointed prior to leading a successful provincial election campaign. Whether a product of increasingly widespread

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[37]The amount of municipal experience among provincial Premiers has almost doubled over the course of the two time periods studied. From 1948 to 1974, 4 of the 32 (12.5%) Premiers had municipal council or alderman experience. From 1974 to 1996, 8 of the 35 (23%) Premiers had municipal experience and 4 (Bill Vander Zalm and Michael Harcourt in British Columbia, Ralph Klein in Alberta, and John Savage in Nova Scotia) of these had mayoral experience.

populism or increased electoral volatility, the electorate has a pronounced tendency to choose

leaders of the opposition over incumbent Premiers.

Table 4.13 Average Years of Service (as of July 4, 1996) of Premiers by Province, 1948-1996			
	1948-1974	1974-1996	1948-1996
National	8.0	4.3	6.0
New Brunswick	11.7	8.7*	11.0
Newfoundland	15.0	4.4	8.0
Alberta	8.5	5.2	6.9
Saskatchewan	6.8	7.1	6.9
Ontario	11.9	2.9	6.7
British Columbia	11.8	4.1	6.3
Manitoba	6.5	6.2	6.3
Prince Edward Island	8.5	3.6	5.4
Nova Scotia	4.9	4.4	4.7
Québec	4.2	2.3	3.3

*One individual
Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

TENURE

According to Table 4.13, the average length of service for provincial Premiers is 6.0

years. The highest average is 11.0 years (New Brunswick) and the lowest average is 3.3

years (Québec). The decline in tenure from the 1948-1974 period to that of 1974-1996 is

also quite drastic; 8.0 to 4.3 years. Even after excluding those governments who were still

in office as of July 4, 1996, the decline is still significant; 6.5 to 4.6 years. Every province

saw a noticeable to extraordinary decline in tenure during the last time period except for Saskatchewan (which increased slightly). The longevity of provincial governments, as with their federal counterparts, appears to have been curtailed during the last 22 years of this study.

Table 4.14 Exits of Premiers (as percentage of total), 1948 - 1996			
	1948-1974	1974-1996	1948-1996
Government Defeated	62.5	37.1	49.3
Resigned	28.1	31.4	29.9
Died in Office	6.3	0.0	3.0
Appointed:	3.1	2.9	3.0
Judiciary	(3.1)*	(0.0)	(1.5)*
Senate	(0.0)	(2.9)*	(1.5)*
Still in Office	0.0	28.6	14.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1

*One individual
Sources: Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
R. M. Punnett, The Prime Minister in Canadian Government and Politics
Who's Who in Canada

EXITS

Table 4.14 demonstrates that, though to a lesser degree than Canada's Prime Ministers, most provincial Premiers have not left office voluntarily. On average, 49.3% of Premiers left office because of a government defeat and 29.9% resigned. Excluding those Premiers still in office, 57.9% were defeated, 35.1% resigned, and 3.5% received an appointment. Interestingly though, the most recent time period of the study indicates a trend contrary to that of the Prime Ministers. Examining those who were no longer in office, the

last 22 years have seen fewer government defeats (52%), more resignations (44%), and an

increase in the proportion of appointments (4%) in the provinces.

Table 4.15 Fate of Premiers Who Resigned or whose Government was Defeated (as percentage of total), 1948-1996			
	1948-1974	**1974-1996**	**1948-1996**
Returned to Private Life	25.9	66.7	**45.1**
Remained in Legislature	44.4	20.8	**33.3**
Appointed to Patronage Position	11.1	8.3	**9.8**
Federal Politics	11.1	4.2*	**7.8**
Appointed Governor-General	3.7*	0.0	**2.0***
Appointed to Senate	3.7*	0.0	**2.0***
Total	**99.9**	**100.0**	**100.0**

*One individual
Sources: *Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
Canadian Who's Who
Who's Who in Canada

FATE

On average, 45.1% of those provincial Premiers who resigned or were defeated from

1948-1996 returned to private life and 33.3% remained in their provincial legislature. Once

again, there were remarkable differences between the two periods of study, as the percentage

of Premiers who returned to private life increased from 25.9% between 1948-1974 to 66.7%

between 1974-1996. Those remaining in the legislature dropped from 44.4% to 20.8%.

Also, the number and prestige of appointments for former Premiers have decreased over the

course of the study. Further accentuating the rift between the federal and provincial political

domains, the proportion of Premiers moving to a career in federal politics has dropped from

11.1% to 4.2%. Only one Premier, W. Bennett Campbell, entered federal politics[38] between 1974 and 1996, highlighting the segregation of the two spheres of politics in Canada.

CABINET MINISTERS

According to Noel, elite accommodation within the Canadian brand of consociationalism occurs, "above all", in the federal cabinet.[39] For him, Canadian federalism cannot function if this powerful institution does not, more so than its policy role, act as a visible mechanism of consociational accommodation.[40] The implication of this contention is that if the federal cabinet continuously fails to fulfil this role, the national political system will cease operating in a stable manner and ultimately grind to a halt. The federal cabinet must act with national purpose and be the national voice of Canadians in federal policy. In order for it to be legitimate and accommodative, the electorate expects the cabinet to be provincially representative as well as representative across a number of socioeconomic variables such as ethnicity and gender.[41] Therefore, the following analysis of Canada's 540 cabinet ministers from 1867 to 1996 includes the politically relevant socioeconomic characteristics of provincial origin, ethnicity, gender, education, and occupation as well as the career pattern indicators

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[38]Campbell successfully contested a federal by-election in Prince Edward Island in April 1981, and was appointed to Trudeau's ministry the following September.

[39]Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", in Consociational Democracy, 265. Also see McRae, "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System", 250-1. As stated earlier, McRae emphasizes that the focal point of elite accommodation is the party system and ultimately the party in power (i.e. the cabinet).

[40]See Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism", in Consociational Democracy, 265-6. Noel briefly discusses how the failure of both the Diefenbaker and Laurier ministries to perform this representative and accommodative function was a major reason for their respective electoral defeats.

[41]See Matheson, Chapters II and V; and Dyck, 485-9. Religion was also a very significant factor in cabinet selection and voting patterns in the early 1800s and, to a lesser extent, until the 1950s.

of prior elected experience, method of first achieving office, tenure, exit route, and subsequent fate.[42]

PROVINCIAL ORIGINS

Table 4.16 provides an analysis of the federalist character of the cabinet from the perspective of 1996 population proportions, without simultaneous consideration of tenure and the importance of ministerial portfolios. The most obvious characteristic in this respect is Ontario and Québec's dominance of the cabinet with a combined total of 63% of its membership. Still, Ontario, as well as British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, are under-represented while Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland have been over-represented. Prince Edward Island's small population and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick's larger share of the national population in the early days of Confederation are the main reasons for the over-representation of these provinces. Even when taking into consideration their date of entry into Confederation and historic population patterns, British Columbia and Alberta have been greatly under-represented at the cabinet table.

Among the more interesting trends relating to provincial representation are Québec's significant drop in percentage of cabinet ministers from 34.5% for the 1948-1974 period to 28.6% for the 1974-1996 period. While British Columbia has been historically under-

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[42]This analysis includes the Secretary of State portfolios held by junior Liberals in the Chrétien cabinet. Most governments, particularly in the last 30 years or so, have had "inner" and "outer" cabinet structures of varying degrees of official status. In this case, portfolios previously held by full-fledged Ministers are now the responsibility of Secretaries of State, though the duties are very much the same. Thus, this study agrees with Lucien Bouchard's criticism that this is a "Byzantine distinction between cabinet ministers, but the reality is that they are all ministers". See "Bouchard Criticizes Two-Level Cabinet," Ottawa Citizen, 5 November 1993, A3.

represented, its proportion of cabinet membership has increased from 5.2% during the 1921-1948 period to numbers approaching 10% in the last two periods of study. Since 1948, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have seen their respective shares of cabinet seats fall by more than 50%. It is also noteworthy that the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory each had one cabinet minister in the most recent period of study.

Table 4.16 Membership of the Canadian Cabinet by Province of Residence, 1867-1996							
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	Total	%
Québec	32	24	29	41	46	172	31.9
Ontario	23	25	31	36	53	168	31.1
British Columbia	3	3	5	11	16	38	7.0
New Brunswick	9	7	10	5	6	37	6.9
Nova Scotia	14	6	8	3	6	37	6.9
Manitoba	2	6	5	6	7	26	4.8
Alberta	n/a	4	2	6	9	21	3.9
Saskatchewan	n/a	2	4	3	5	14	2.6
Prince Edward Island	2	1	3	3	4	13	2.4
Newfoundland	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	7	12	2.2
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.2
Yukon Territory	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.2
Total	85	78	97	119	161	540	100.1

Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

A general perusal of the provincial distribution of cabinet ministers from a government-by-government perspective reveals serious problems with the political health of the country, primarily arising from the electoral system. For example, largely due to the inability of the Liberal party to achieve the election of MPs across all regions, the western provinces did not have suitable representation in the cabinets of Pearson, Trudeau, and Turner. Due to similar electoral fortunes, Clark's cabinet could not provide Québec with equitable representation. For decades now, the Canadian experience has been one of provinces and entire regions being shut out of equitable cabinet representation for long periods of time. Thus, the populations of these provinces and regions may believe that they do not have an effective voice in government policy and that the government is unrepresentative and illegitimate.

ETHNICITY

The previously mentioned difficulties with analysing ethnicity preclude a very definite survey of this characteristic of Canadian cabinet ministers. Matheson's total findings from 1867 to 1974 were 70.2% British, 27.4% French, 0.8% Germanic, 0.5% Icelandic, 0.3% Ukrainian, and 0.8% "Other".[43] Dyck's less thorough analysis, which also observes a cabinet dominated by Canadians of "English" and, to a lesser extent, French descent only lists approximately 11 "ethnics"[44]. Though Dyck's findings underestimate the actual numbers, any examination of the ethnicity of cabinet ministers will reveal a similar picture. It is essentially only in the most recent period that the ethnic composition of the cabinet has begun to

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[43]Matheson, 109.

[44]Dyck, 490.

gradually diversify. The cabinet appointments of J. T. Thorson (Icelandic) in the 1940s, Michael Starr (Ukrainian) in the 1950s, and Herb Gray (Jewish) in the 1960s were among the few notable exceptions to the Charter group domination of the Canadian cabinet. During the 1980s and 1990s, a handful of people of non-charter and visible minority ancestry were appointed to cabinet. Examples include Jake Epp, Don Mazankowksi, Otto Jelinek, Charles Caccia, Sergio Marchi (Argentinian-born Italian), Leonard Marchand (Aboriginal), Lincoln Alexander (Black), Raymond Chan (Asian), Ethel Blondin Andrew (Aboriginal) and Herb Dhaliwal (Indian). By and large, these breakthroughs have not been placed in very prominent portfolios, but appointments such as Marchi (International Trade) and Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, Finance) may be promising developments.

GENDER

Ellen Fairclough became the first female federal cabinet minister on June 21, 1957, 36 years after the first female provincial cabinet minister was appointed. She even held the post of Acting Prime Minister for two days in 1958, but between the years of 1948 and 1974 only two more women achieved cabinet rank; Judy LaMarsh and Jeanne Sauve. The period from 1974 to 1996 saw an improvement, however, as 26 more women became members of cabinet. In the 1980s, women were appointed to high profile portfolios such as Justice (Kim Campbell), Foreign Affairs (Barbara Macdougall), and Deputy Prime Minister (Sheila Copps). With over 50% of the Canadian population, however, women are still greatly under-represented at the cabinet table.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Table 4.17 illustrates the relatively high level of education attained by most cabinet

ministers. 72.2% have received education at the university level. 3.1% received education at the classical colleges in existence primarily in the 1800s. Some of those listed without a university education in the first two periods of study had careers in law or other professions which did not require a university degree at that time. The proportion of non-university-educated cabinet ministers is quickly declining, and it is becoming evident that such a level of education is essentially becoming compulsory for membership.

OCCUPATION

As commonly assumed, cabinet has been dominated by lawyers. 46.1% of Canada's federal cabinet ministers have come from that profession, but Table 4.18 indicates the rapidly declining presence of those in the field of law over the last two periods, though particularly during the most recent period, of study. Businesspersons (24.3%) have always comprised a significant proportion of the cabinet over time. Journalists (4.1%) have had stable though low representation over the years, and doctors (3.5%) appear to be on the decline. Civil servants (3.7%) and farmers (3.7%) have steadily increased their presence over the years. Educators (6.5%) have noticeably increased representation within cabinet, particularly over the last period of study. In fact, there have been many notable developments in the elected political elite as regards occupational status between 1974 and 1996. Professionals, such as economists, scientists, engineers, and pharmacists, have made significant gains in representation within cabinet over the most recent period of study. This is also true of the "Other" category, which includes a foreman, nurse, admiral, actress and two clergymen in the period covering 1974-1996. A new category also had to be created for the fourteen career

Table 4.17

Educational Background of Cabinet Ministers by Province and Territory, 1867-1996

	1867-1896			1896-1921			1921-1948			1948-1974			1974-1996			1867-1996			
	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	Clas. Coll.	Univ.	Non-Univ.	% Univ.
National	13	31	41	3	49	26	1	70	26	0	99	20	0	141	20	17	390	133	72.2
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	100.0
Yukon Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	100.0
Quebec	13	12	7	3	19	2	1	26	2	0	37	4	0	42	4	17	136	19	79.1
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	1	0	3	0	0	4	1	0	11	3	78.6
British Columbia	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	4	1	0	9	2	0	14	2	0	29	9	76.3
Manitoba	0	1	1	0	4	2	0	3	2	0	5	1	0	6	1	0	19	7	73.1
Ontario	0	9	14	0	15	10	0	22	9	0	30	6	0	46	7	0	122	46	72.6
Newfoundland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5	2	0	8	4	66.7
New Brunswick	0	3	6	0	4	3	0	6	4	0	4	1	0	6	0	0	23	14	62.2
Alberta	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	3	3	0	7	2	0	12	9	57.1
Nova Scotia	0	5	9	0	2	4	0	5	3	0	3	0	0	6	0	0	21	16	56.8
Prince Edward Island	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	7	6	53.8

113

Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

Table 4.18
Occupations of Cabinet Ministers, 1867-1996

	Lawyer		Business-person		Educator		Journalist		Civil Servant		Farmer		Doctor		Professional		Politician		Other		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1867-1896	48	56.5	22	25.9	1	1.1	4	4.7	2	2.3	2	2.3	4	4.7	1	1.2	0	0.0	1	1.2	85
1896-1921	44	56.4	15	19.1	0	0.0	6	7.6	2	2.6	2	2.6	7	9.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.6	78
1921-1948	52	53.6	20	20.6	4	4.2	1	1.0	5	5.1	4	4.2	6	6.2	3	3.1	0	0.0	2	2.1	97
1948-1974	57	47.9	35	29.4	10	8.4	4	3.4	2	1.7	5	4.2	0	0.0	3	2.5	0	0.0	3	2.5	119
1974-1996	48	29.8	39	24.2	20	12.4	7	4.3	9	5.6	7	4.3	2	1.2	9	5.6	14	8.7	6	3.7	161
1867-1996	249	46.1	131	24.3	35	6.5	22	4.1	20	3.7	20	3.7	19	3.5	16	3.0	14	2.6	14	2.6	540

Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
            Canadian Parliamentary Guide
            Canadian Who's Who
            Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
            Who's Who in Canada

politicians[45] who were appointed during the most recent period of study. The Canadian

federal cabinet has become slightly more diversified and representative over the course of the

last 22 years of this study, but ministers are still generally members of the upper-middle class.

TENURE

Table 4.19 illustrates that the most recent period of study has been a volatile one with

much shorter ministerial tenures than usual. Even after excluding the short-lived though

relevant Clark, Turner, and Campbell ministries, the exceptionally brief appointment of Roger

Simmons, and those still in office as of July 4, 1996, the 1974-1996 average rises no higher

than 3.9 years and the overall average is extended to just 5.2 years. The already short tenure

of Canadian cabinet ministers was fairly consistent until the 1974-1996 time period, during

which time there has been a remarkable drop which is perhaps indicative of increased electoral

volatility and unstable dealignment.

On a provincial basis, ministers from Saskatchewan remain in cabinet the longest,

followed by Nova Scotia and Ontario. Prince Edward Islanders and Newfoundlanders remain

in cabinet for the shortest amount of time. Table 4.20 provides closer scrutiny of the tenure

of cabinet ministers from Québec, highlighting the significantly shorter tenures logged by

French Canadian cabinet ministers as compared to their non-French Canadian colleagues.

Matheson has indicated that this is due to the fact that French Canadian ministers receive

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[45]This is defined as those making their livelihood from elected politics, without having established themselves in a career prior to entering public life. Since Jean Charest gainfully practised law for approximately 2 years before entering public life, this study considers him a lawyer. Jeffrey Simpson has called him a "careerist" politician because he feels he never had time to "build" a law career during that time. See Simpson, Anxious Years, 189. Presumably Simpson is referring to such matters as clientele and reputation, but this study does not consider these subjective factors.

Table 4.19 Average Years of Service (as of July 4, 1996) of Cabinet Ministers by Province and Territory, 1867-1996						
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
National	5.4	5.5	5.7	6.0	3.6	**5.1**
Saskatchewan	0.0	2.0	11.0	8.2	4.2	**6.7**
Nova Scotia	4.3	6.5	5.4	11.8	3.5	**5.3**
Ontario	7.4	6.1	5.7	5.5	3.6	**5.3**
Alberta	0.0	7.3	10.0	4.0	4.1	**5.2**
Manitoba	2.0	8.2	2.8	4.8	4.8	**5.0**
British Columbia	3.0	6.7	6.0	6.5	3.3	**4.8**
Québec	4.3	4.2	6.1	5.7	3.8	**4.8**
New Brunswick	7.4	3.3	3.6	5.6	3.6	**4.7**
Newfoundland	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	2.5	**3.7**
Prince Edward Island	2.5	5.0	3.3	5.7	2.7	**3.7**
Northwest Territories	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	**2.7***
Yukon Territory	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	**2.7***

* One individual
Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
    Canadian Parliamentary Guide
    Canadian Who's Who
    Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
    Who's Who in Canada

more appointments than Anglophone Québec ministers, there are fewer Anglophone Québec MPs to choose from, and, more disconcerting from an elite accommodation perspective, Québec MPs have opted for provincial political careers upon feeling uncomfortable or disaffected with their experience in Ottawa.[46]

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[46]Matheson, 115-7.

Table 4.20 Average Years of Service (as of July 4, 1996) of Cabinet Ministers from Québec by Party and Ethnic Origin, 1867-1996						
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
Total for Province	4.3	4.2	6.1	5.7	3.8	4.8
Total French Canadians	4.7	3.2	6.1	5.5	3.6	4.6
Total Non-French Canadians	3.6	6.8	6.3	6.8	4.3	5.6
Total Conservatives	4.7	3.3	2.4	2.9	5.0	3.5
French Canadian Conservatives	5.6	1.9	2.1	2.6	5.0	3.4
Non-French Canadian Conservatives	3.6	6.7	5.0*	6.0*	5.2	5.3
Total Liberals	3.3	5.6	7.8	6.7	2.6	5.2
French Canadian Liberals	3.2	5.0	8.3	6.6	2.4	5.1
Non-French Canadian Liberals	4.0*	7.0	6.5	7.0	3.3	5.6

*One individual
Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

EXITS

Table 4.21 illustrates the mode of exit for Canadian cabinet ministers. The numbers leaving due to their government being defeated (37.2%) have remained fairly consistent over time. Though resignations have increased over the course of the last two time periods, the most noticeable change is the marked decline in appointments within the most recent period of study. This could very well be a response to the greater media focus upon this issue, the public's rabid dislike of patronage, and the previously-mentioned popular impression that Ottawa is rampant with corruption and favouritism. The number of cabinet ministers who have died in office has also declined because of the younger age of ministers at appointment

Table 4.21 Exits of Cabinet Ministers (as percentage of total), 1867-1996						
	1867- 1896	1896- 1921	1921- 1948	1948- 1974	1974- 1996	1867- 1996
Government Defeated	37.8	32.1	41.2	35.3	38.5	37.2
Resigned	22.4	28.0	22.7	25.2	30.4	26.3
Appointed:	31.7	29.6	26.8	24.4	6.8	21.6
Judiciary	(10.5)	(9.0)	(12.4)	(4.2)	(1.9)	(6.7)
Senate	(3.5)	(10.3)	(8.2)	(11.8)	(1.2)	(6.5)
Lieutenant-Governor	(17.7)	(2.6)	(1.0)	(2.5)	(0.6)	(4.1)
Other	(0.0)	(7.7)	(5.2)	(5.9)	(3.1)	(4.3)
Died in Office	7.1	10.3	7.3	3.4	0.0	4.7
Lost Seat	1.0	0.0	1.0	8.4	4.3	3.3
Not Renominated	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.7	0.0	0.6
Still in Office	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	19.9	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.1	99.9	100.0

Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

and their shorter tenures. The increase in the formerly rare occurrence of ministers losing their seats in an election may be indicative of the public's declining deference towards elites.

FATE

A significant decline in patronage-related post-cabinet careers can be observed in Table 4.22. A gradual increase in the numbers of cabinet ministers choosing to remain in the House of Commons upon resignation or government defeat is also evident. The small number of federal cabinet ministers who pursued a political career in the provincial or municipal

Table 4.22 Post-Cabinet Careers of Ministers Holding Seats in the House of Commons Who Resigned or were Members of a Government which was Defeated (as percentage of total), 1867-1996						
	1867-1896	1896-1921	1921-1948	1948-1974	1974-1996	1867-1996
Returned to Private Life	35.1	53.3	45.2	45.1	62.6	**48.3**
Remained in House of Commons	27.1	17.8	24.2	26.8	29.9	**25.2**
Appointed to Patronage Position	8.1	6.7	4.8	14.1	3.7	**7.5**
Appointed to Judiciary	8.1	8.9	0.0	2.8	0.9	**4.1**
Appointed to Senate	10.8	6.7	14.5	4.2	0.9	**7.4**
Appointed Lieutenant-Governor	5.4	4.4	6.5	1.4	0.0	**3.5**
Provincial or Municipal Politics	5.4	2.2	4.8	5.6	1.9	**4.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0

Sources: W. A. Matheson, *The Prime Minister and the Cabinet*
Canadian Parliamentary Guide
Canadian Who's Who
Guide to Canadian Ministries since Confederation
Who's Who in Canada

spheres underwent further decline in the most recent period, indicating an increasing isolation of the provincial and federal political domains. The most popular post-ministerial fate, returning to private life, increased notably (62.6%) in the 1974-1996 period.

CONCLUSION

The preceding structural profile of the socioeconomic background and career patterns of the Canadian elected political elite has provided further insight into four significant issues in the study of elite-mass relations in Canadian politics. First, despite the elected elite's rather exclusive membership, it does not satisfy the requirements of the "four C's" test developed from the work of Meisel and is therefore not a threat to Canadian democracy. Having stated this, the degree of socioeconomic homogeneity in the elected elite is high enough to

generalize that the members of this elite are typically university educated, high income-earning White male lawyers or businessmen of British and, to a much lesser extent, French ancestry who largely reside in Ontario or Québec. Of course, such stereotyping does not acknowledge lesser yet significant themes such as a very gradual erosion of this homogeneity since 1974, but it is still an accurate depiction of a typical member of Canada's elected political elite.

Most importantly, it can also be said that this typical member of the elected elite is not a typical Canadian. Women, who comprise over half of the Canadian population, have had almost no presence within the elite until the most recent period. This, like the disparities regarding provincial and ethnic representation, questions the authority and effectiveness of Canada's consociational traditions and the representativeness of the political system. Practically all of the significant breakthroughs for women have been achieved during the most recent period of study, though representation has still not approached an equitable level.

Canada's elected political elite has both received education and practised occupations which are exceptional by average Canadian standards. Indeed, many members of the elected elite entered political life from the upper echelon of society and have access to a breadth of personal wealth or corporate connections. Certainly, this is an issue of concern for Canadians, as it raises questions of accessibility as well as legitimacy. It is notable that during the most recent time period of this study the occupational composition of the elite became somewhat more diversified with the addition of more educators, professionals, and a few people employed in some "other" lesser renumerated capacity such as nurse, clergyman, or foreman. The new category of "career politician" also emerged between 1974 and 1996, though there were only seventeen such careerists. It is intriguing that public discontent

reached unprecedentedly low levels simultaneously with the advent of this new type of politician.

Though the socioeconomic backgrounds of the members of the elected elite are very similar, there does not appear to be a pronounced group "consciousness" or sense of solidarity. Certainly, the members of the elite do not act as a unified body in a "common will to action" in support of "coherent", commonly understood group interests. Instead, the Canadian political arena is one of competitive pluralism and pronounced partisanship, leaving the elected elite in a constant state of flux. Nor is the elected elite "careerist" in nature, as there have been only seventeen career politicians in its ranks, the combined average tenure from 1867 until 1996 was a mere 5.8 years, and the combined average who resigned their position in the elected political elite was 30.4%. Careerists are dedicated and would not voluntarily depart their elite after a short period of time as have a large proportion of the Canadian elected elite. The high degree of social homogeneity which exists amongst the elected Canadian political elite, even if it means a similar or common set of values, does not mean that its members necessarily share the same ideological values or policy leanings.[47] Also, the degree of social homogeneity has been undergoing a very gradual erosion over the course of the last time period. The tendency of Canadians to perceive their politicians as if they were a faceless collective of ideologically identical members pursuing the same ends is understandable but incorrect.

Second, consociationalism has been ineffective in terms of representation and elite accommodation. From the important consociational perspective of provincial representation,

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[47]This is implied in the work of Porter and Clement.

the elected political elite (in this case, Prime Ministers and cabinet ministers) is dominated by the two largest provinces. Though predominant in the first part of Canadian history, Ontario has been slightly under-represented overall. Québec, though having a remarkably low level of representation in the first part of Canadian history, has been slightly over-represented overall and has enjoyed increased representation in recent decades. While these two provinces are the most populous, their dominance of the elite results in the shutting out of many of the other provinces from an equitable presence. In particular, British Columbia and Alberta are very much neglected despite their considerable populations and importance within the nation. This is in large part due to the electoral system's tendency to exaggerate regional political trends and distort popular vote results. Despite more widely distributed popular vote percentages in recent history, the Western provinces have provided very few MPs from which Liberal governments can appoint cabinet ministers. British Columbia, it should be noted, has seen a somewhat increased profile in the most recent period of the study.

As explained earlier, another significant consociational element when considering representation in Canada is ethnicity. The dominance of those with British ancestry is troublesome, especially as this ethnic group has been rapidly losing its proportion of the population to those from non-traditional and visible minority immigration sources. The relative prominence of Canadians of French descent in the elected elite should also be noted, as all other ethnic groups of non-charter, especially non-traditional and visible minority, ancestry remain highly under-represented within the elected elite. Most of the few non-charter breakthroughs have occurred during the time period of 1974 to 1996. The relatively small number of such occurrences, however, underscores the failure and growing illegitimacy

of consociationalism and the political system in providing equitable representation.

By and large, the Canadian elected political elite is exclusive rather than reflective of the country's demographic composition. Provincially and ethnically, it has not had an equitable composition and it is important to remember the significant role played by the electoral system in producing this result. Thus, consociationalism cannot perform the representative, accommodative, and integrative roles its advocates claim it does so well. This is evident in the presence of such problems as western alienation, Québec separatism (and the presence of the Bloc Québécois and Parti Québécois), and the essentially regional distribution of parties in the present Parliament.

Third, claims of a leadership crisis, while referring to qualities which cannot be objectively quantified, are not supported by the analysis of developments and trends in the elected elite's membership. Those who decry a lack of leadership in Canadian politics may be concerned with a number of subjective political talents such as innovation, persuasiveness, and the ability to interpret the will of the people, but this profile allows the quality of leadership and the leadership pool to be examined on the basis of its more easily measurable elements such as socioeconomic background and career patterns. It can thereby be observed that these characteristics of the elected elite have changed too minimally to warrant concerns that there has been a sudden and dramatic change in the leadership pool's membership and the type of people attracted to it. Perhaps the relatively homogeneous character of the elected political elite restricts its ability to understand different perspectives on policy issues, though recent developments hinting at a gradual diversification of its occupational, ethnic, and social characteristics hold promise that the elite's mind set may be improved in a way which was not

possible when it was more compositionally monolithic. In other areas, the qualities of the elite have undergone a more tangible development, as it is certainly better educated than ever before.[48] This is an encouraging trend which should theoretically improve the quality of leadership.

The career patterns of the elite are a valid reason for concern. Prior elected experience of the legislative or executive variety has declined notably in the most recent period of study, and the already brief tenures of Canada's elected elite have also suffered declines since 1974. This combination of little experience and short tenure, leaves the political elite to simultaneously grapple with policy development and a learning curve. It also often negates the likelihood of long-term policy planning and innovation.[49] Though contemporary leaders are better educated than their predecessors, their parliamentary amateurism and short tenure may hamper their ability to put these improved qualities to work.[50] Proclamations of a leadership crisis may be the simple result of the fact that with such

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[48]The data presented in this chapter bears this out, but for further discussion of the increased quality of federal politicians see Bliss, xii: "[I]n recent years prime ministers have had better Cabinet material to work with, and better-educated, harder-working MPs to choose their Cabinets from, than Macdonald, Laurier, or Borden did. The quality of MPs elected in 1993, for example, was very high. I think we are attracting better, more idealistic Canadians into politics." Also see Don Boudria, contributions to a panel discussion at a Canadian Study of Parliament Group conference in Ottawa on October 28, 1994, quoted in The Election and Parliament, 32. In response to a workshop participant's comment that "the Liberal caucus has quite possibly the best group of MPs ever elected to the House of Commons, in terms of education, experience, and personal qualities", Boudria agrees that there is "a lot of talent in a lot of areas" and explains that Chrétien has praised the "very high calibre" of the parliamentary secretaries.

[49]See David C. Docherty, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Career Decisions of Members of Parliament", in Leaders and Leadership, 246; and Maurice Pinard and Richard Hamilton, "The Leadership Roles of Intellectuals in Traditional Parties: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives," in Canadian Parties in Transition, eds. Alain-G. Gagnon and Brian Tanguay (Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson, 1989), 287-309.

[50]For evidence that "amateur" federal cabinet ministers have had a disproportionate tendency to resign over personal errors, see Sharon L. Sutherland, "The Consequences of Electoral Volatility: Inexperienced Ministers, 1949-1990," in Representation, Integration, and Political Parties, 303-53.

high levels of electoral volatility, it is difficult for politicians to remain on the political scene long enough to accomplish anything of significance. The tenures of the elected elite in previous time periods, however, were only lengthier by approximately two years. They too could largely be considered amateurs.

If the leadership pool is essentially the same in terms of socioeconomic characteristics and career patterns, then there must be more subjective reasons behind the claims of a leadership crisis. Either the political and economic transformations of the last two decades have simply produced irrational public anxiety or the elected elite have demonstrated an inability to properly address these new, ever-evolving, and arguably more complex issues. Michael Bliss argues that political discontent and claims of a leadership crisis are a result of "raising our expectations of public life faster than the politicians can respond"[51], in which case the cynical, alienated, and increasingly participatory nature of the transformed electorate is especially evident.

Lastly, as alluded to above, the public authority orientation shift of the 1980s and 1990s has had a minimal impact upon the socioeconomic background and career patterns of Canada's elected political elite. While this analysis does not permit definite conclusions as regards the electorate's impact upon the elected elite, it can highlight relevant coincidences. Among the more noteworthy developments in the socioeconomic background of the elected elite was a very gradual diversification of ethnicity, gender, and occupation beginning in a meaningful way in the most recent period of study (1974-1996). This trend closely corresponds with the advent of the newly autonomous electorate (1979-1996). At the

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[51]Bliss, xii-xiii.

executive level, the most recent period of study included the first female Prime Minister, first British Columbian Prime Minister, first career politician Prime Minister, youngest Prime Minister (both entering and exiting; Clark), first female Premier, and first Premier from the "other" occupational category (union organizer; Glen Clark). The slightly increased presence of First Ministers and cabinet ministers from "other" occupations generally indicates a small increase in members of the elected elite with a middle to lower class societal position. These gradual changes and historical "firsts" are still not enough to provide truly equitable representation within this elite.

Among the more notable career patterns are the curtailed tenures of the elected elite and the increased rates of government defeat in the most recent period of study, both of which are likely partly caused by the unprecedented electoral volatility and discontent expressed by Canadians since 1979. From 1974 to 1996, three of the four shortest-serving Prime Ministers held office, the highest proportion of federal government defeats occurred, and it was the only time period which did not have a Prime Minister with a 15-year or longer tenure. The rise of populism and cynicism may also be partly behind the accelerated decline of patronage appointments. These developments correspond quite reasonably with the transformation of the Canadian electorate.

This profile of the elected political elite does not detail monumental changes, but it does highlight some promising developments which are a notable break with the past. These changes have occurred primarily during the same time period as the transformation of the public's authority orientations towards their elite-dominated political institutions. The

findings could be coincidental but some of the correlations are quite persuasive.[52] Whether or not the public authority orientation shift during the 1980s and 1990s is in some way responsible for this minimal change in the elected political elite, a question remains as to why this elite, which has an electoral connection with the public, has not undergone greater change in the face of such a significant transformation of the electorate.

The answer may be found in barriers to accessibility within political parties and other traditions and institutions of Canadian democracy. This would support the fourth principle of classical elite theory, which emphasizes the elite's ability and willingness to take action to perpetuate their hold on power. The answer may also be as simple as the elite has chosen to ignore the populist demands of the newly autonomous electorate since they threaten elite autonomy and power. Other similar factors behind this choice may be a lack of faith in the capabilities of the public as well as an opposition to the public's priorities for government. A 1994 year-long survey on governance values and priorities conducted by Ekos Research discovered a "profound" values gap between the electorate and the elite, as the public focussed on more humanistic goals and the elite solidly favoured fiscally conservative and minimalist policies.[53] This conservative mind set alone may render the elite less susceptible to pressures promoting change, but the survey also concludes that elites "are clearly disconnected from the views of the mass public"[54]. Regardless of the reasons for the elected

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[52]Certainly other general societal trends are partly responsible for some of the changes in the elected elite as well.

[53]See Graves, Rethinking Government, 12. 2,400 Canadians "at large" and 1,000 members of the corporate, political, and bureaucratic elite were surveyed. Thus, the survey data arising from the elite is not entirely applicable to this study.

[54]Ibid., 13.

elite's minimal response to the newly autonomous electorate, their reluctance to change does a disservice to the public which they are suppose to represent. Though this profile concluded that the elected political elite does not constitute a subversive oligarchic threat to Canadian democracy, its failure to effectively represent, include, and respond to the electorate has threatened the legitimacy which the elite require to govern and the political system needs to function.

V

THE DECLINE OF ELITE-DRIVEN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

[The failure of the Meech Lake Accord] is the most recent illustration of the inveterate Canadian tendency for the substantive issues of constitutional change to be embroiled in a debate about the legitimacy of the process of their attempted resolution. Indeed, fundamental disagreement about the rules that govern the process of constitutional change has acquired the status of a Canadian tradition . . .[1]

The story of Canadian constitutional politics[2] in the 1980s and 1990s has been a story resolutely about process. Policy, the specifics of reform initiatives, is certainly not irrelevant to the plot, but it has been very much relegated to a secondary role. For the newly autonomous Canadian electorate, process is the primary issue[3], and, regardless of the contents of any proposed constitutional agreement, its impressions concerning the legitimacy of *how* such an agreement has been achieved, determine its success or failure. Prior to the last two decades, the public did not request or expect inclusion in constitutional affairs, allowing the elected political elite to monopolize this arena through the traditions of executive federalism[4]

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[1]Cairns, "Barriers to Constitutional Renewal", 149.

[2]This chapter focusses on the macro-level or, as Peter Russell has called it, "mega-constitutional" politics. See Peter H. Russell, Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People? (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) for a comprehensive historical account of Canadian constitutional politics.

[3]The tepid public support Québec residents provided the Meech Lake Accord (see Note #44) and their reasons for voting No on the Charlottetown Accord may indicate that the actual specifics of constitutional change are more important to Québecers than the process. If this is the case, it does not diminish the significant impact upon constitutional politics of the tendency of Canadians outside of Québec to be preoccupied with the process.

[4]See Donald V. Smiley, Canada in Question: Federalism in the Eighties (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), 91; Smiley coined this term to describe federal-provincial relations which occur at senior political and bureaucratic levels, without public supervision or input, in the operation of the Canadian federal system. Also see Stefan J. Dupre, "Reflections on the Workability of Executive Federalism," in Intergovernmental Relations, Vol. 63, Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, ed. Richard Simeon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 1-33; and Richard Simeon,

and elite accommodation in a process characterized as "democratic elitism tempered by occasional populist anger"[5]. The constitutional reform process has also been described in terms of consociational theory by Michael Lusztig, who arrives at the conclusion that "consociational constitutionalism" cannot function successfully because of Canadians' increasing expectations of "mass input/legitimization" during the 1980s and 1990s.[6] In no other policy area has the transformation of public political authority orientations been more evident, and Lusztig's pronouncement of the end of elite-dominated constitutional politics is borne out in the following analysis of the evolving roles of the citizenry and elected political elite during the pre-patriation, patriation, Québec, and Canada "Rounds" of Canada's continuing constitutional "crisis". Despite the fact that the constitution is not a top priority for Canadians, when their elected political elite have forced[7] it to the forefront of the political agenda the public has increasingly expressed and acted upon an insistence that it be an integral part of any such endeavour.

"Why Did the Meech Lake Accord Fail?" in Canada: The State of the Federation, 1990, eds. Ronald L. Watts and Douglas M. Brown (Kingston, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1990), 15-40. Due to the great emphasis placed on macro-level issues and First Ministers' Conferences (especially when few or no advisors are present) during the 1980s and 1990s, Dupre has thought "summit federalism" to be a more apt description and Richard Simeon has preferred to use "First Minister federalism" (p.30.).

[5]Keith Banting and Richard Simeon, And No One Cheered: Federalism, Democracy and The Constitution Act (Toronto: Methuen, 1983), 18.

[6]Lusztig, 748.

[7]See, for example, Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 150. In 1992, 77% of Canadians agreed that it would be preferable to "concentrate on solving the country's economic problems". Though the constitution and national unity have been a primary element of the national political agenda since World War II, public opinion polls consistently indicate that it is not a topic of great concern for the public in comparison to other issues.

OPENING ROUNDS

Until 1967, Canadian constitutional politics was the exclusive domain of elites, as the Canadian public expressed almost no interest in constitutional affairs and no criticisms of the practices of executive federalism.[8] For the most part, it was a relatively unambitious and micro-level constitutionalism exemplified in the numerous meetings and continuing committees of federal and provincial ministers. At the macro-level, efforts to devise an amending formula and patriate the constitution were undertaken in 1935, 1950, and 1964. The Fulton-Favreau amending formula of 1965, a product of a string of committees of Attorneys-General and gradually more intensive closed-door First Ministers' Conferences, was ultimately a failure. Québec Premier Jean Lesage succumbed to political pressures, primarily from Union Nationale leader Daniel Johnson but also from other nationalist elites in academia and the media, and withdrew his province's support in Janurary 1966.[9] Even in an era of public disinterest, consociational constitutionalism was not effective or successful with the macro-level[10] challenges facing Canada's constitution.

A new era of heightened public interest and declining elitist practices was not ushered into the constitutional arena in 1967, but there were some notable events after the failure of Fulton-Favreau. In the Fall of 1967, Canadians were allowed to observe for the first time the proceedings of their elected political elites at Ontario Premier John Robarts' interprovincial

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[8]Russell, Chapters 5 and 6. Of course, the events leading to Newfoundland's entry into Confederation in 1949 included a constitutional convention and 2-ballot referendum process. Canada's Parliament, however, merely amended the constitution unilaterally.

[9]Ibid., 73-4.

[10]For evidence that even simpler, micro-level executive federalism has had a mixed record of success, see Smiley, 116.

Conference of Tomorrow via their televisions. Many Canadians were not particularly impressed, and this non-consultative gesture to the electorate did little to change the lack of popular interest in constitutional issues.[11] A full-fledged First Ministers' Conference was televised in 1968 which, followed by numerous secret negotiations, further closed-door meetings of First Ministers, and another televised First Ministers' Conference in 1971, resulted in the Victoria Charter agreement on June 17, 1971.[12] Immediate and vocal nationalist opposition in Québec, under such banners as the Corporation of Québec Teachers, the Confederation of National Trade Unions, the Federation of St-Jean-Baptiste Societies, and, most importantly, René Lévesque's Parti Québécois, pressured Premier Robert Bourassa into revoking Québec's support for the agreement only five days later.[13] The degree of mass public opposition to the Victoria Charter in Québec should not be overstated, but Québec's nationalist elites did effectively appeal to and stir public opinion to their advantage through the use of mass advertising.[14] Though this had the effect of increasing public interest in constitutional matters in that province and making public opinion there "a significant factor in beginning and ending the discussions, public interest outside of Québec - largely through the agency of television - was just beginning to develop. The formal set pieces remained thoroughly elitist"[15].

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[11]Russell, 77, 81-2.

[12]Though much of a three-day conference of constitutional debate was televised, the agreement was actually devised and brokered in a fourth-day 13-hour closed session. See Ibid., 79-87.

[13]Ibid., 90-1.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid., 81.

Québec nationalism proved to be the catalyst behind an increased country-wide public interest in constitutional reform. This interest was primarily confined to what Peter Russell has referred to as the "chattering classes" and interest groups, and public involvement in the traditional elite processes was effectively non-existent. That the Molgat-MacGuigan Committee's 1972 report on Canada's first public constitutional consultations were wholly ignored is evidence of elite dominance during this time. An uninterested public was still the norm, as is evident in the relatively low turnout recorded by the Molgat-MacGuigan Committee; only 1486 witnesses, 8000 pages of evidence, and 13,000 attendees despite visits to 47 cities from 1970 to 1972.[16] The electoral victory of the separatist Parti Québécois in Québec in November 1976, however, caused the emergence of numerous concerned citizen groups[17]. In October 1977, the University of Toronto held a week-long conference and produced 500 pages of grass-roots suggestions and discussions of greater citizen participation.[18] The public's gradually growing interest and lack of trust in the secret negotiations between Ministers and officials resulted in calls for a popularly elected constituent assembly to write the new Constitution.[19] These were among the first public calls for citizen involvement in constitutional reform and the first indications of serious public interest in constitutional issues, but aside from insincere, perfunctory consultations the Canadian public was not engaged.

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[16]Ibid., 82, 92.

[17]Banting and Simeon, 4.

[18]Russell, 99.

[19]Banting and Simeon, 19-20.

The Trudeau Government responded to growing interest group pressure by establishing the Pepin-Robarts Task Force on National Unity in 1977 to survey the Canadian population at large, but this appeared to be mere lip service as Trudeau simultaneously developed his own constitutional proposal. Before the Task Force issued its 1979 report of publicly-inspired constitutional proposals, which was effectively ignored, Trudeau introduced his Constitutional Amendment Bill (C-60) into the House of Commons in 1978. This began a process of closed-doors elite accommodation, entailing a Continuing Committee of Ministers on the Constitution and a February 1979 First Ministers' Conference, which ultimately led to failure. Peter Russell has properly characterized the constitutional politics of the 1970s as "highly elitist, and it was the aspirations of governments, not people, that really counted"[20].

THE PATRIATION ROUND

In 1980, Trudeau initiated a round of constitutionalism which involved Canadians in an unprecedented way. Initially, the process looked to be not unlike past attempts at devising a new amending formula, as it utilized the familiar elitist mechanisms of First Ministers' Conferences and the Continuing Committee of Ministers on the Constitution. Upon the failure of the 1980 First Ministers' Conference, "one of the most acrimonious on record"[21], Trudeau decided to use a different tactic to achieve the entrenchment of his constitutional vision. In a clear break with the past, he appealed to the Canadian public rather than the provincial Premiers as the source of legitimacy for a unilateral patriation of the constitution

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[20]Russell, 98.

[21]Ibid., 110.

amended with a new "people's package" which included a referendum provision in the amending formula and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. His populist strategy even incorporated a mass advertising campaign.

Furthermore, Trudeau, in order to build public support for his initiative in the face of political elite opposition, established a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House to hold public hearings on the new constitutional proposals which would be the first to be fully televised.[22] Over the course of 56 days spanning the fall of 1980 and the winter of 1981, the Committee heard not only from the usual academic and government witnesses, but from a bevy of newly emergent interest groups. While only five individual "ordinary citizens" were allowed to make presentations, this was the first time that such a committee was instituted which was more than a glorified public relations campaign. From these hearings, the Trudeau government readily adopted many additions to the Charter as specifically suggested by the interest groups appearing before the committee. In particular, feminist (sections 15.1, 15.2, and 28), aboriginal (sections 25 and 35), multicultural (section 27), minority language (sections 16-23), handicapped (sections 15.1 and 15.2), and ethnic (sections 15.1 and 15.2) groups achieved specific mention in the new constitution as a result of this genuine consultative process. In fact, Cairns has highlighted the fact that the initial Charter proposal of the federal government was weak until pressure from the public hearings resulted in it being strengthened.[23] For the first time, Canadians other than the elected political elite were

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[22]The total running time for the televised hearings was 267 hours. See Ibid., 114.

[23]Alan C. Cairns, "The Charter, Interest Groups, Executive Federalism, and Constitutional Reform," in Reconfigurations, 271.

effectively involved in constitutional reform, and public opinion polling at the time consistently indicated massive popular support for the Charter despite the fact Canadians knew little about its specific contents.[24]

Little over a year after the failure of the last First Ministers' Conference, another was called to achieve an agreement based on Trudeau's proposals. It was here where Trudeau again used a populist appeal, or at least the threat of one, to his advantage against the provincial Premiers. The federal government threatened to use a referendum in order to settle their differences, knowing that the provincial governments were afraid of opening up the process or campaigning against the popular Charter.[25] Behind-closed-doors, secretive constitutional manoeuvring resulted in what many referred to as the "kitchen accord", which had dropped the referendum mechanism in the amending formula and added a "notwithstanding clause" (section 33) to the Charter. Curiously, the deletion of the referendum aspect of the amending formula was not met with any public protest.[26] Two other changes, the application of section 33 to section 28 and the total exclusion of constitutional recognition of aboriginal rights, did meet with public agitation organized by women's and aboriginal organizations respectively, and were subsequently reversed. The ability of these groups to effectively act as powerful players on the constitutional scene spoke volumes of

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[24]For polling data see Robert Sheppard and Michael Valpy, The National Deal: The Fight for a Canadian Constitution (Toronto: Fleet Books, 1982), Chapter 7. Also, see Russell, 146-7. Russell argues that the Québécois are not opposed to the Charter's contents, but to its symbolic meaning as an agreement which they were not a party to and which limits the scope of their linguistic policy.

[25]Russell, 120; and Roger Gibbins and David Thomas, "Ten Lessons From the Referendum," Canadian Parliamentary Review XV, 4 (Winter 1992-1993): 3.

[26]Russell, 121.

how the process was opened up during the patriation round.

The patriated constitution was primarily a product of consociational constitutionalism, as can be seen in Trudeau's dominant role and the bargains appearing from behind-closed-doors, but it was also partly the product of public input. As a victory for consociational constitutionalism, it is a tarnished one for two reasons. First, Québec's refusal to sign the new constitution has left it a problematic, questionable, and still incomplete document. Second, as Cairns has effectively stressed, it was achieved "in spite of executive federalism"[27], as overwhelming public support for the Charter overcame opposition from most provincial governments. As the beginning of the erosion of consociational constitutionalism, the process of the patriation round can be viewed from two perspectives. First, the interest groups which wrote much of "their" sections into the new constitution have since become proprietary stakeholders of, and permanently linked to, these sections and the Charter in general, and thereby assume a primary and legitimate role in the constitutional reform process. Second, the unprecedented and constructive opening up of this process to the public has been, when combined with the transformation of authority orientations, a populist pandora's box, creating "a new public expectation about popular participation in constitution making"[28].

Alan Cairns has argued that the Charter itself has had a profound impact on Canadian attitudes towards citizenship and sovereignty outside of Québec.[29] According to him, the Charter has changed the source of constitutional legitimacy, in the minds of most Canadians,

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[27]Cairns, "The Charter, Interest Groups", 268.

[28]Russell, 115.

[29]For a succinct explanation of his "Charter Canadians" concept see Alan Cairns, "Citizenship and the New Constitutional Order," Canadian Parliamentary Review 15, 3 (Autumn 1992): 2-5.

from governments to the people because it "speaks directly to Canadians in terms of citizen-state relations".[30] As mentioned earlier, there is substantial evidence to support Cairns' argument that the Charter has promoted a sense of citizenship and cultivated the population's democratic potential to a point where Canadians are more active in pursuing judicial protection of their rights and find meaningful involvement in constitutional reform essential. Upon observing similar attitudinal patterns among other advanced industrial democracies during the 1980s and 1990s, however, it becomes evident that the Charter cannot be the only determining factor in this change of public attitudes. Neil Nevitte has demonstrated that, in Canada, the influence of the Charter is working in tandem with other factors associated with the New Politics phenomenon to transform public authority orientations in the constitutional and other political and non-political arenas.[31]

THE QUÉBEC ROUND

Apparently oblivious to the transformation of public authority orientations and the populist changes introduced to Canadian constitutionalism during the Patriation Round, the Mulroney government and its provincial counterparts initiated a new round of constitutional negotiations in 1986 which were "more secret than ever"[32] and, according to Cairns, managed like a "military operation"[33]. Relying solely upon the old machinery of executive federalism

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[30]Cairns, "The Charter, Interest Groups", 262. Also see Alan C. Cairns, Charter Versus Federalism: The Dilemmas of Constitutional Reform (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 68, 76.

[31]See Nevitte, "New Politics, the Charter"; Nevitte, "New Politics Challenges the Parties"; and Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 104-5.

[32]Russell, 135.

[33]Cairns, Charter Versus Federalism, 103.

and elite accommodation, the elected political elites took great steps to exclude the public in every way. The process which created the Meech Lake Accord began without the public's knowledge, as Québec officials secretly travelled to the provincial capitals to discuss their five announced "minimum conditions" for constitutional reform, and thereafter continued into 1987 entirely behind the closed-doors of numerous bilateral meetings, one major multilateral ministerial negotiation in March, a First Ministers' Conference at a government conference centre on Meech Lake in April, and a second late-night, sixteen hour-long First Ministers' Conference which was billed as a meeting to merely "clarify" the language of the Accord reached in April.[34] Not only were Canadians not consulted, but the actions and demeanour of the elected political elites party to the Accord implied they thought the public was irrelevant to the process and its product. In particular, the Mulroney Government clearly indicated that it considered involving or educating the public in regards to the deal a pointless exercise.[35]

This elitist and exclusionary process ran directly counter to the constitutional currents and precedents created during the patriation round. The tone and events of the process were even more elitist than the macro-constitutional efforts before the 1980s. Both the Fulton-Favreau and Victoria Charter episodes were less secretive, and at least First Ministers' Conferences were partly televised from the Victoria Charter negotiations onwards. Also, parliamentary committees which consulted the public prior and during the constitutional efforts, though mere patronizing exercises which were ignored by the elected political elites,

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[34]Russell, 135-6.

[35]Cairns, Charter Versus Federalism, 103.

were a norm of Canadian constitutionalism since the Victoria Charter round. That the

Québec round did not even pay the public lip service during this stage is a testament to the

elitist attitudes of the First Ministers involved.

After the deal had been made, only Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario, and

Parliament chose to hold the public hearings which the legislative ratification aspect of the

amending formula arguably implied was necessary for the process to be legitimate. The

placatory and worthless quality of these hearings was clear at the outset, as the finalized

Meech Lake Accord was proudly presented as an untouchable "seamless web" of which only

the correction of "egregious errors" would be entertained.[36] Thus, these sham proceedings

could not build support and legitimacy for the Accord, but instead served to erode it.[37] Over

90% of the witnesses appearing before the public hearings in New Brunswick and Manitoba

attacked the Accord and called for extensive changes[38], yet all such concerns were ignored

or rejected. The hearings served to reveal public anger at elite monopolization of the

amending process and consequent feelings of being cheated, misled and betrayed.[39]

This closed "consultation" process only served to further anger the membership of the

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[36]Conditions imposed by Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Lowell Murray, quoted in Michael B. Stein, "Improving the Process of Constitutional Reform in Canada: Lessons from the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Constitutional Rounds," Canadian Journal of Political Science XXX, 2 (June 1997): 319. Also see Russell, 141. Russell quotes Bourassa as similarly saying "Québec will not consider any proposed changes that may arise out of public hearings in other provinces.".

[37]See Stein, "Improving the Process", 320. Also see Russell, 143, 153. Russell argues that the insistence that the Meech Lake Accord must be passed and be passed "as is", regardless of the outcome of the public hearings, greatly reduced the legitimacy of parliamentary institutions by shattering perceptions that they served to represent the views of "the people".

[38]See Russell, 147.

[39]Cairns, Charter Versus Federalism., 116.

Charter interest groups, already bitter about their exclusion from the earlier stages of this round of constitutional reform. Following the patriation round, these groups expected to be involved in a meaningful way in any future constitutional initiatives and were protective of the constitution which "eleven white men in suits" had secretly re-written while hiding behind-closed-doors, "trading legislative, judicial and executive powers as if engaged in a gentlemanly game of poker"[40]. Thus, the Charter groups, women's groups in particular, demonstrated their power by dominating the legislative hearings[41] and acting as one of the most significant mobilizers of public opinion against the Accord[42]. In his analysis of the Meech Lake process, Michael B. Stein determined that once the First Ministers "committed themselves to a ratification process which did not permit meaningful substantive amendments, genuine, open, nonpartisan legislative hearings and broad consultation with conflicting interests and public opinion in each of the provinces, the Accord was no longer politically viable"[43].

Despite the atmosphere of massive public opposition to the Meech Lake Accord,

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[40]Deborah Coyne, August 27, 1987 testimony before the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, cited by Thomas J. Courchene, "Forever Amber," in After Meech Lake: Lessons for the Future, eds. Donald E. Smith, Peter MacKinnon, and John C. Courtney (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Fifth House, 1991), 41.

[41]For attendance figures and categories from the federal Charest Committee hearings, see Cairns, "The Charter, Interest Groups", 277.

[42]Stein, "Improving the Process", 320. Also see Cairns, Charter Versus Federalism, 125: "The Charter and the constitutional identities that it created, along with the participatory impulses that it stimulated, were largely responsible . . . for repudiation of the executive federalism-style Meech Lake process."

[43]Stein, "Improving the Process", 320-1.

supported by polling results[44] and presentations at the hearings, the First Ministers, and especially Mulroney, still continued to pursue unanimous legislative ratification of the constitutional deal until its demise in Newfoundland and Manitoba. This perseverance highlights how the Québec Round was the most elitist constitutional effort to date, particularly when considering that less substantial public opposition in Québec to the Fulton-Favreau and Victoria Charter agreements forced Lesage and Bourassa respectively to revoke their support for them. Yet the fact that a large majority of the public opposed the Meech Lake Accord did not deter Mulroney from striking a parliamentary committee to devise a companion accord and calling two more First Ministers' Conferences[45] to attempt to reach an elite accommodation on the Meech Lake Accord. It is this disregard for the public which makes the Québec Round the antithesis of the previous Patriation Round, and the difference is simply summed up by Thomas J. Courchene: "Whereas Trudeau went over the heads of business and the provinces to the people in implementing his agenda, . . . Mulroney went over the heads of Canadians and appealed directly to business and provincial elites."[46] He did so at a time when survey data depicted an increasingly better informed, more egalitarian, and less

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[44]See Michael Adams, "The October 1992 Canadian Constitutional Referendum: The Socio-Political Context," in The Charlottetown Accord, the Referendum, and the Future of Canada, eds. Kenneth McRoberts and Patrick Monahan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 190: Just weeks prior to its June 23, 1990 demise, the Accord only had the support of 35% of Canadians. Also see Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, 152: In April 1990, 59% of Canadians opposed the Meech Lake Accord and an analysis specific to Québec revealed only 49% support.

[45]See Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, pp. 149-150. The June 1990 First Ministers' Conference, in particular, was a constitutional marathon of 7 days and nights of desperate efforts to resuscitate the Meech corpse.

[46]Courchene, "Forever Amber", 40.

deferential public[47], 71% of whom declared a desire for a referendum on the Accord in an April 1990 poll[48]. This ultimate example of consociational constitutionalism in the Canadian context was seen as illegitimate in the eyes of the people, and this was a primary cause of its failure.

THE CANADA ROUND

The Mulroney government learned from its mistakes in the Québec Round and acknowledged the power of the populist shift in political authority orientations among the public by structuring an intentionally more inclusive Canada Round of constitutionalism which began with the establishment of two consultative bodies prior to the negotiation phase. The Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future (Spicer Commission) served as a cathartic lightning rod for Canadian political discontent and disillusion, which was especially directed at the elected political elite and the political process. It encouraged public workgroup discussions, had a toll-free suggestion line, and held six electronic town hall meetings in the course of engaging 700,000 (300,000 of which were part of a special Student's Forum) Canadians primarily outside of Québec.[49] Canadians expressed overwhelming disapproval of the non-participatory constitutional process of First Ministers' Conferences, preferring a non-partisan constituent

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[47]Michael Adams and Mary Jane Lennon, "The Public's View of the Canadian Federation," in State of the Federation, 1990, 104.

[48]See Russell, 152.

[49]Likely due to the fact that the Québec population was already very much engaged in the consultative efforts of that province's Bélanger-Campeau Commission (and to a much lesser extent, the Québec Liberal Party's Allaire Constitutional Committee), a relatively low 11% of the Forum's participants were from Québec. For the Spicer Commission's final report see Canada, Citizen's Forum on Canada's Future (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1991).

assembly and referendum process for amending the Constitution.[50]

Meanwhile, the more narrowly-focussed Beaudoin-Edwards parliamentary committee focussed on this process and the amending formula. The dominant theme among the public submissions to the committee was one of the sheer illegitimacy of closed-door First Minister federalism.[51] The pressure of this public dissatisfaction resulted in the committee's recommendation of a consultative referendum, but did not prevent them from rejecting calls for a constituent assembly. Instead, the committee recommended striking another parliamentary committee to hold public hearings on any constitutional proposals arising from the federal government as well as to interact with the legislative committees actively engaged in public consultations in all the provinces.

In September 1991, the federal government issued just such a set of proposals, but it did so on a tentative basis reflective of potentially volatile currents of democratic constitutionalism and its low standing with the Canadian public.[52] With these proposals as a starting point, the Castonguay-Dobbie "Unity" Committee was established to travel the country and consult the public, but it was a mismanaged, acrimonious, and unattended affair which had to be terminated.[53] To salvage this severely botched attempt at public consultation and secure the partisan support necessary to renew the committee's efforts, the government

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[50]See Ibid; and Russell, 165.

[51]Canada, Report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the Process for Amending the Constitution of Canada (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1991), 26.

[52]These proposals can be found in Canada, Shaping Canada's Future. Also see Russell, 171: The Mulroney government had fallen to 14% support in the polls by the fall of 1991.

[53]Russell, 175.

agreed to supplement the committee's new round of public hearings with six constitutional conferences to consider their proposals. By all indications, this was not a move welcomed by elites, but one they felt forced to make in order to preserve a faltering process.[54] It was hoped that these conferences would provide direction, a reading of public attitudes, as well as legitimacy for the proceedings.

The conferences were an unprecedented constitutional experiment. They brought together interest group representatives, constitutional experts, "ordinary citizens" who answered newspaper advertisements, and politicians who were present primarily as observers and as tangible connections to the political world.[55] Great efforts were made to achieve a linguistic, regional, gender, ethno-cultural, and socioeconomic balance among the participants, and screening of the citizen applicants effectively reduced the so-called "yahoo factor". Procedurally, the freedom to debate and recommend was much greater than any legislative hearing, and there was a great emphasis placed on workgroup sessions. The primary concern arising from the conferences was that the boycott by most Québec sovereigntists may have created an artificially cooperative and pleasant atmosphere[56], but this does not tarnish the experiment's unblemished, resounding success.

These "mini constituent assemblies were more conciliatory than the Premiers and proved a success. . . Many came with well-formed positions but in a more accommodating

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[54]David Milne, "Innovative Constitutional Processes: Renewal of Canada Conferences, January-March 1992," in Canada: The State of the Federation, 1992, eds. Ronald L. Watts and Douglas M. Brown (Kinston, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1992), 28-9.

[55]For the specifics of the representative guidelines and formats for the conferences, see Ibid., 31-7.

[56]Ibid., 39.

mood"[57] than those who had been excluded from the Meech process. Jeffrey Simpson,
writing in the Globe and Mail, lauded the success of this experiment in public participation
in constitutional reform:

> Against the odds, these gatherings in Halifax, Calgary,
> Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver worked splendidly. Indeed,
> they rescued constitutional reform, at least temporarily. When
> they began, no one could predict how they would unfold. But
> they took on a dynamic of their own, and that dynamic was
> one of intense debate coupled with a genuine desire to find
> accommodations. Instead of the usual shouting and
> insinuation, the discussions were civil and constructive, a
> rediscovery of much-ballyhooed but infrequently observed
> Canadian compromise and tolerance.[58]

The conferences were noted for their civilized, moderate, thoughtful, and open-minded tone.[59]
In exit polls, over two-thirds of the delegates stated that they had modified their views
significantly over the course of the conference.[60] The focused, face-to-face discussions,
augmented by experts, lent themselves to serious, rational, and informed dialogue which was
educational for both those attending and those viewing. Indeed, the group workshop format
reduced the likelihood of single individuals or groups setting the tone and agenda, as is often
the case with legislative-type hearings.[61] Rather than encouraging people to develop and
pontificate upon their own stances in a vacuum as parliamentary hearings have done, this
format forced the participants to be collaborative, understanding, and accommodating of

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[57]Russell, 177.

[58]Jeffrey Simpson, February 17, 1992 Globe and Mail column, quoted in Milne, 38.

[59]Milne, 38.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Ibid.

differing perspectives.

The proceedings were televised on CBC Newsworld, and were covered by most newspapers and TV news programs. Millions upon millions of Canadians were kept abreast of the conferences' events and results[62], and very high numbers of Canadians actually watched the conferences live on Newsworld. For example, 650,000 viewers tuned into the Halifax conference and 1.3 million viewers tuned into the Toronto conference.[63] David Milne, in agreement with Gordon Robertson, has argued that the conferences had a beneficial, as well as educational, effect on Canadians:

> While it is true that polls had indicated that public opinion was beginning to shift towards a more accommodating stance towards Québec by the end of 1991, there can be little doubt that these conferences accelerated the shift in mood. . . . In short, the constitutional conferences turned out to be more focussed and effective vehicles for the expression of the public on the proposals than any that the government had planned. . . . Above all, the conferences injected a spirit of accommodation, even of optimism, on the constitutional file.[64]

The publicity these conferences received certainly had them serve a more informative and educating role than that of the traditional parliamentary committee.

The optimistic, populist, and cooperative aura which the conference episode had left hovering over the reform process was quickly dissipated by Constitutional Affairs Minister Joe Clark's announcement that "no one should confuse the success of these conferences with

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[62] Ibid., 36, 40.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., 46.

success in the country"[65] as well as by subsequent actions of the Béaudoin-Dobbie Unity Committee (Castonguay had resigned). Though the Government had established these constituent assemblies, it betrayed and tainted the fresh, admirable gesture, and, indeed, the spirit of the conferences themselves by digressing into the out-of-date vagaries of executive federalism. The Unity Committee received the results of the conferences and retreated behind closed doors for two weeks to devise new reform proposals, in what was essentially a negotiation between the three leaders of the old-line national political parties.[66] This patriarchal inspection of the delegates' findings was, quite simply, an insult. Elite accommodation was at work again.

Still, the conferences were so unexpectedly successful and popular, it was clear that the Unity Committee could not ignore many of the conclusions arising from them. The Committee's final report recommended changes to the original federal proposals in accordance with many, though not all, of the conferences' decisions. While the Committee did not listen to everything the constituent assemblies had to say, by and large it was caught off-guard and had to recommend most of the policy directions suggested by the conferences. An exercise which was originally introduced merely as a device to gauge public opinion[67] had effectively shown the political elites the power and capacity of the newly autonomous electorate.

Upon the issuance of the "Unity" Committee's recommendations, the tired wheels of

[65]Ibid., 47.

[66]Russell, 180.

[67]Milne, 29.

executive federalism again began to grind. They ground on for five gruelling months of posturing and compromising behind closed-doors before the First Ministers and, for the first time included at these conferences, the leaders from the Yukon, Northwest Territories and four aboriginal organizations emerged with an agreement. It was a "drawn-out and Byzantine affair that taxed public patience" and "virtually guaranteed disappointments".[68] The Charlottetown Accord was made in secrecy and the numerous stories of political intrigue, particularly surrounding Premier Bourassa, did not sit well with the public. It sapped all the positivism and vitality which the conferences had instilled into this round of constitutional reform, as growing "suspicion over process would then feed on doubts over the integrity of the constitutional compromise."[69]

While the political elites followed much of the advice of the conferences, they failed to adopt some of the most salient and important points. The Accord did not include an asymmetrical distribution of powers to Québec as advocated at the Halifax conference. Instead, it allowed provinces to "make a deal" bilaterally with the central government to gain exclusive jurisdiction or more autonomy over certain areas of legislation. This method of increasing provincial autonomy, however, did not give Québec the constitutional security for which it had been striving.[70] Also, the Accord established an economic union, an idea which was decisively rejected at the Montreal conference.[71]

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[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Russell, 186-8.

[71]Milne, 42; and Canada, "Consensus Report on the Constitution, Charlottetown, August 28, 1992: Final Text," in Constitutional Predicament: Canada After the Referendum of 1992, ed. Curtis Cook

Another major element of the Accord which was contrary to the results of the conferences was the inclusion of an equal, elected, and weak Senate. The Calgary Conference had preferred an equitable, proportionally elected, and powerful Senate which put an increased emphasis on representing Canada's social diversity rather than only its territories. Judy Rebick, of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, expressed outrage at this betrayal of the Calgary conference. She pointed out that the agreement on Senate reform which was reached during the first stage of the five-month elitist bargaining period was less legitimate than that of the Calgary conference because the Calgary conference involved participants from Québec while the early phase of elite discussions did not.[72]

These are three very significant constitutional reform items about which the public's opinion was solicited and blatantly ignored. In fact, the elites moved in the opposite direction of the compromises reached at the conferences in every one of these instances. There was also the inclusion of compromises which were never previously subject to public discussion, such as the 25% seat guarantee for Québec in the House of Commons.[73] This is a different experience from that of the patriation round legislative hearings where almost all interest groups won constitutional gains.

After the Accord was signed, the Mulroney Government announced the precedent-setting October 26, 1992 consultative referendum which would allow the public to pass non-binding judgement on the agreement. Again, the government appeared to be forced into this

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(Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 231-2.

[72]Milne, 43.

[73]Alain Noël, "Deliberating a Constitution: The Meaning of the Canadian Referendum of 1992," in Constitutional Predicament, 79.

somewhat populist move, as British Columbia, Alberta, and Québec already had legislation

in place requiring referenda for the ratification of constitutional change.[74] What followed was

total endorsement of the deal by the nation's traditional elites, everywhere from politics to

business to the media.[75] According to Globe and Mail columnist Jeffrey Simpson, Canada's

elites had not been so united since Canada's entry into World War Two:

> Four Aboriginal leaders, two territorial leaders, ten provincial
> premiers, three federal parties, all but two official opposition
> leaders in the provinces, the political arms of the large- and
> small-business communities, the leading trade unions, the
> editorial boards of all major newspapers in English-speaking
> Canada, the majority of women's groups, the leading
> mouthpieces for multicultural groups - the elite consensus
> outside Québec was quite overwhelming and quite
> ineffective.[76]

Against the advice of pollsters who warned that such tactics would backfire, Mulroney

and others set out to intimidate the public into voting for the deal by warning of the dire

economic consequences of rejecting it.[77] Instead of talking to Canadians on an equal footing

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[74]Unlike Alberta and British Columbia, Québec did not have legislation requiring referenda before legislative ratification of *any* constitutional amendment. Québec had more specific legislation (Bill 150) which obligated the government to hold a constitutional referendum by October 26, 1992. This law was amended so that the question before the voter would be on the Charlottetown Accord rather than Québec sovereignty. The Charlottetown Accord referendum was governed by the federal Referendum Act in every province except Québec, where the event was regulated by its provincial legislation which has been in place since 1980.

[75]Courchene, "Death of a Political Era".

[76]Jeffrey Simpson, "The Referendum and Its Aftermath," in Charlottetown, the Referendum, and the Future, 194.

[77]Edison Stewart, "Fear Won't Sell Deal, Pollsters Warn," Toronto Star, 8 September 1992, A11; and Michael Stein, "Tensions in the Canadian Constitutional Process: Elite Negotiations, Referendums and Interest Group Consultations, 1980-1992," in Canada: The State of the Federation, 1993, eds. Ronald L. Watts and Douglas M. Brown (Kingston, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1993), 109.

by arguing the advantages of the deal, Mulroney talked down to Canadians and labelled those

who opposed the Accord "the enemies of Canada". The Canadian populace did not take

kindly to any of this constitutional blackmail, and it only served to heighten feelings of elite

manipulation which already existed. They felt they were "being courted by salespeople whom

they don't really know or especially like and who are asking them to say Yes or No to a

product that they neither solicited nor altogether understand"[78].

The initially positive attitude of the electorate (70% approval) and the consequent shift

in public opinion, proved that Canadians are open and willing to consider complex proposals

in light of what is good and fair for themselves and their community.[79] When weighing these

concerns, the public did not think in narrow or economic terms, but responded to arguments

anchored in conceptions of justice.[80] Polling done immediately following the referendum

indicated that three-quarters of those voting No did so because of dissatisfaction with

elements of the Accord, while only 10% indicated their No vote was an anti-Mulroney vote.[81]

Even those supporting the agreement were lukewarm on its merits and merely wanted an end

to the constitutional crisis.[82] Polling data has indicated that the Charlottetown Accord failed

to survive the referendum because Canadians disliked both the contents and the disparaged

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[78]"Wrong Question, Wrong Time," Globe and Mail, 27 October 1992: A6.

[79]Noël, 78, 81; and Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 155.

[80]Ibid., 77.

[81]Patrick J. Monahan, "The Sounds of Silence,"in Charlottetown, the Referendum, and the Future, 238.

[82]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 153. Only 11% could actually cite a reason for their Yes vote, as opposed to 64% of No voters.

old-style process which produced them.[83] The Accord actually set out to enshrine these elite-driven processes of amending the Constitution, in total disregard for the new constitutional order. Canadians could not be expected to accept this.

The agreement was attacked for being overly comprehensive, and yet insufficiently fleshed out, incomplete, and only available in a draft legal form 17 days before the referendum.[84] Canadians were insulted when a leader of the Yes campaign, after defending the absence of a legal text despite the fact that the agreement had undergone six massive changes in the prior 12 months, said: "Canadians cannot even read their own VCR manuals!"[85] Canadians did, however, make a concerted effort to learn about the Accord. Upon request, the government mailed out 10 million copies of the Charlottetown consensus agreement during the campaign.[86] This number is astonishing when it is taken into consideration that the entire Canadian population was approximately 28 million. The draft text, released after much protest late in the campaign, was admittedly imperfect. The Accord stated that it still had many facets which needed to be settled through further First Ministers' Conferences. So, the elites were asking the Canadian public to say Yes to an unfinished deal and grant them carte blanche to come to a settlement of these important issues by utilizing precisely the exclusionary and secretive institutions and traditions Canadians had grown to

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[83]Richard Johnston, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte, "The People and the Charlottetown Accord," in State of the Federation, 1993, 40; Curtis Cook, "Introduction: Canada's Predicament," in Constitutional Predicament, 4; and Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 159-61.

[84]Stein, "Tensions in Canadian Constitutional Process", 92; and Canada, "Draft Legal Text, October 9, 1992," in Charlottetown, the Referendum, and the future, 312-61.

[85]Robert J. Jackson, "Comments on Janet Ajzenstat's Essay," in Constitutional Predicament, 130.

[86]Monahan, 238.

despise and reject.

The Charlottetown Accord was rejected by the public in the referendum. Though the No vote cannot solely be considered a vote against the elites, it most certainly was a bold statement of the electorate's new political autonomy. Despite massive elite support for the Accord and an endless amount of scare tactics by the Yes campaign team, Canadians refused to be manipulated or deferential and made up their own minds on the Accord. Thus, the No vote was empowering for the Canadian populace. The low credibility Canada's political elites had prior to the vote is evident in the fact that only 7% of Canadians reported believing claims that a No vote would breakup the country.[87] Upon the continuation of the status quo after the referendum, public opinion of politicians decreased still further.[88] The referendum allowed the public to pass judgement on the "perceived legitimacy of our system and the accord as a product of this system . . . We have seen the passing of the old political order. The Constitution of Canada now belongs to the people."[89]

CONCLUSION

There are four important themes arising from this study of changing citizen and elected elite roles in Canadian constitutional politics. First, as Lusztig argues and Noel warns, a decline in deference towards the country's elected political elite has occurred among the public which has resulted in increasing expectations of extensive and meaningful citizen involvement in the arena of constitutional reform. This essentially prevents consociational

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[87]Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 149-50; and Cook, 23.

[88]Ibid.

[89]Courchene, "Death of a Political Era", A1.

constitutionalism from acting as a workable mechanism in this policy area for the foreseeable future. The gradual emergence of this newly autonomous electorate has been traced from its deferential beginnings during Fulton-Favreau and the Victoria Charter, on through the tumultuous 1980s, to the ultimate expression of their autonomy in the October 26, 1992 referendum. This is evident in the rhetoric of contemporary politicians who carefully discuss the constitution in terms of the people rather than governments. For example, during the meetings which led to the Calgary Declaration, Ralph Klein went to great pains to emphasize that the political elites were not "doing" the constitution and that there had to be "an open and transparent people process" which could not be "hijacked by the special interests or the politicians".[90] Clearly, elite-driven constitutional reform has suffered a great decline during the 1980s and 1990s.

The second important theme emerging from this analysis is that the history of consociational constitutionalism in Canada has been one of almost utter and complete failure. Thus, arguments, like those of Lusztig and presumably many of the elites themselves[91], that only the elected political elites can be relied upon to achieve the compromises necessary for unity and success in this unique policy arena are unfounded. Canadian constitutional history demonstrates that the opposite is true. Alan Cairns has stressed how the pervasive mistrust

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[90]Ralph Klein, in CBC Newsworld interview with Don Newman on August 7, 1997. Also see Preston Manning, in CPAC-televised media scrum following October 31, 1995 Question Period. Referring to the Montreal "Unity Rally" held prior to the 1995 Québec referendum on sovereignty, Manning claimed that "Canada came within a hair's breadth of falling apart. And it was not the government, but the people of Canada who saved us." Attended by Canadians from across the country, this large rally demonstrated the positive impact which the public could have on national unity and was indicative of increased public interest and action in political, and especially constitutional, issues.

[91]See, for example, Lusztig; and Gibbins and Thomas, 5.

and paranoia at the heart of intergovernmental relations is a primary cause of the long line of constitutional failures.[92] The frequent references to the courts, backroom intrigue, threats, and ultimatums are not part of a healthy negotiating process. More so though, the failures of elite-driven constitutional politics rest upon the fact that the modus operandi in this arena is for governments to pursue more than they want in a high-stakes lose-lose game of compromise. Due to this posturing and stubborn exaggeration of claims, the elected political elites have actually become less accommodative and less able to compromise than the populations they represent. For these reasons, the failed and no longer viable practice of consociational constitutionalism can be quite easily relegated to the dustbin of Canadian constitutional history.

Third, citizen-driven constitutional reform appears to be a juggernaut. Lusztig wrongly concludes that constitutional reform is impossible in the foreseeable future because consociational constitutionalism can no longer function. The preceding analysis demonstrates the importance of process in Canadian constitutional politics; it has been and can be both a dealmaker (patriation round) and a dealbreaker (Québec round). Where the problem is the process, the solution exists in changing that process. The irresistible precedents of the Canada Round, the constitutional conferences and the referendum, already dictate that future constitutional change will occur through a fundamentally different reform process; one which is citizen-based. The developing transformation of Canadian authority orientations has mirrored the rise of the citizen's role in Canadian constitutional politics during the 1980s and 1990s. The emergence of the newly autonomous Canadian electorate has placed the future

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[92]Cairns, "Barriers to Constitutional Renewal", 152-4.

of Canadian constitutionalism largely in the hands of the citizenry.

Finally, the Canada Round demonstrated the Canadian public's impressive capabilities and sophistication in constitutional matters. The preceding analysis illustrated the electorate's inclination towards deliberation and making informed, rational decisions on constitutional issues. The constitutional conference exercise demonstrated the ability of the Canadian public to achieve compromises and promote understanding amongst the public where the elected political elites have previously failed. Of course, it is reasonable to assume that the participants at these conferences were not, despite the illusory nature of the term, "ordinary Canadians". Obviously, and inevitably, they were people with a great degree of interest in constitutionalism and their community. This certainly does not diminish the value or legitimacy of their accomplishments, especially considering the high degrees of success achieved by conference organizers in otherwise ensuring that the participants were representative across most variables. Citizen-based constitutionalism which rests sovereignty in the people rather than governments is both the only practicable option available and the only solution to the problem of process and legitimacy which currently clouds the constitutional landscape. This chapter provides good reason to be confident and supportive of this new direction.

VI

... INTO THE FUTURE

In late August 1965, the Progressive Conservative Party held a policy forum at Fredericton, New Brunswick. Marshall McLuhan addressed the participants. "The medium," he said, was "the message." I felt instinctively he was saying something relevant and important. But, in all honesty, I didn't know what it was all about. . . . Nobody really understood or appreciated. Twenty-six years later, I am beginning to understand and appreciate.[1]

The preceding chapters have illustrated the political authority orientation shift among Canadians during the 1980s and 1990s and their minimal impact upon the elected political elite, the significant decline in this elite's ability to dominate the constitutional reform process, and the accompanying questions about the legitimacy of the political system. The consociational traditions which have governed Canada for so long have been shown to be both seriously flawed as well as repulsive to the newly autonomous Canadian electorate. The public is no longer trusting, supportive, or deferential towards its elites[2], and it is demanding meaningful inclusion in the political system. Consequently, as Noel warned, consociational Old Politics can no longer function in Canada.

Many observers of this orientation shift and the difficulties it presents for governance

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[1]Heward Grafftey, Why Canadians Get the Politicians and Governments They Don't Want (Toronto: Stoddart, 1991), 207.

[2]It is not necessary to look further than the 1996 Census to notice the continuing trend of an increasingly more educated Canadian population. There is a substantial yet growing body of evidence supportive of the contention that the expansion of educational opportunities is accompanied by a public which is more interested in politics, more informed about politics, more sophisticated politically, more active politically, more apt to resort to forms of political protest, more volatile in terms of partisanship, and generally less compliant. See, for example, Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 38-9, 83; Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, and Pammett, 55; Reg Alcock, workshop report presented at Canadian Study of Parliament Group conference in Ottawa on November 2, 1996, quoted in Interactive Government, 18; and Richard Johnston, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte, The Challenge of Direct Democracy: The 1992 Canadian Referendum (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

throughout the world's advanced industrial democracies, Samuel P. Huntington in particular, consider it a crisis of democracy attributable to excessive acceptance and practice of the democratic creed.[3] Since they believe the problem is caused by too much democracy, they suggest that democratic processes be more restricted so as to limit public demands on the political system. This approach to the problem is understandable, as accommodating expectations brought about by increased public inputs to the political system could lead to an unmanageable, exponential increase in demands which would overload it. It is this possibility, which they strongly believe will occur if democracy is not reined in, which presents a serious threat to democratic systems of government.

The primary theme arising from this analysis, however, is that of a crisis of legitimacy chiefly caused by a lack of democracy. It is a crisis which has been caused by a relatively sudden disruption of citizen-elite linkages in the political arena, and the elected political elite's slowness or unwillingness to reform political institutions and processes to meet the demands of a public whose attitudes towards political authority have undergone a rapid transformation during the 1980s and 1990s. This newly empowered and autonomous Canadian public would certainly not stand for any restriction of democracy. Thus, it is necessary to view this crisis as a challenging opportunity to expand democracy. The only way to reverse the erosion of legitimacy is with political reforms which increase responsiveness, representativeness, and citizen participation. The preceding study identified some of the key problem areas in these respects as well as provided some direction as to possible solutions.

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[3]See, for example, Huntington, Promise of Disharmony; and Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, Joji Watanuki, The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

RESPONSIVENESS

Chapter III illustrated the Canadian public's disengagement from the political system and their demands for increased responsiveness and participation. Party discipline was found to be one of the greatest sources of the public's discontent with their MPs and the political system, resulting in increased calls for free votes in the House of Commons. Peter C. Dobell and John Reid have demonstrated that it is highly unlikely that the parties will voluntarily relax party discipline for anything but the most contentious moral or thoroughly uncontentious political issues.[4] There is no incentive for a governing political party to either modify the strictness of the confidence convention to one which is more akin to the more lax British standard or adopt the German convention of constructive non-confidence. Canada does not have the number of safe seats as the British House of Commons[5], and, more importantly, the Canadian practice of choosing party leaders at conventions is a source of independence and enormous power for the Prime Minister to wield over his or her party's MPs. The reason such strict party discipline exists on both sides of the House is less a matter of the confidence convention than a matter of the necessity of presenting a strong unified image to the public.[6] It is because of this that party discipline is largely an exercise in self-discipline for most MPs, but it is noteworthy that Chrétien had to discipline more caucus members in his first four years than either Mulroney (8.8 years) or Trudeau (15.4 years)

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[4]Peter C. Dobell and John Reid, "A Larger Role for the House of Commons," Parliamentary Government XL (April 1992): 11-4.

[5]Ibid., 13.

[6]Ibid.

during their entire respective tenures in office.[7] This may be the beginning of a trend of increasing numbers of MPs, in response to public pressure, breaking party lines and challenging the conventions of party discipline.

MPs can alleviate the alienating effects of party discipline somewhat by committing themselves to fulfilling their information and consultation responsibilities. Mandatory regular constituency ("town hall") meetings, cable access call-in shows, or a regular information and opinion column in the local newspaper would help remove common feelings that MPs "lose touch" with the people as well as inform people as to the origins and options behind policies. Such consultative exercises might aid MPs to better represent their constituents in caucus.

Chapter III also illustrated that likely the primary cause of the public's sense of alienation is the first-past-the-post plurality electoral system. As discussed, the electoral system results in a distorted allocation of seats in the House of Commons which does not accurately reflect the popular vote and tends to exacerbate regional tensions and alienation by often leaving entire regions under-represented in governments for long periods of time. Majority governments are formed by parties which regularly have popular support in the 30 - 40 % range, and clearly do not have a popular, nor policy, mandate. It may well be that Canada needs minority government in a House of Commons where parties are forced to work together. Individual MPs might have a better chance to act on behalf of their constituents, and legislation might be more carefully crafted in order to attain widespread support. Certainly Canadians want better representation and more deliberation.

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[7]Paul G. Thomas, "Caucus and Representation in Canada," Parliamentary Perspectives 1 (May 1998): 7. John Nunziata's defiance of party discipline over the Liberal failure to eliminate the GST resulted in his exile from the party. His constituents, however, still re-elected him to Parliament in1997 as the sole sitting Independent.

It has been suggested in this study that one of the greatest problems of Canadian democracy is an excessive concentration of power in one person; the Prime Minister. This arises from the Canadian coupling of parliamentary tradition with increasingly open and democratic leadership conventions, and seems to result in Canadians placing far too many expectations upon their newly appointed Prime Ministers.[8] Prime Ministers and their parties campaign by emphasizing leader-image politics, and they inevitably fail to fulfill the expectations they and the media help to inspire. They still, however, continue to govern without an adequate popular or policy mandate, contributing to growing public discontent and alienation. Dobell and Berry see the consistent decline in public approval experienced by all Prime Ministers in recent history as a predictable consequence of the Prime Minister being "saddled with responsibility for all the important decisions of government. And, since every decision involves compromises in which various interest groups are adversely affected, the Prime Minister attracts the anger of the losers. The process is cumulative and ultimately fatal."[9] An examination of the personal popularity of Prime Ministers Diefenbaker, Trudeau, and Mulroney confirms that they each enjoyed a brief meteoric rise and honeymoon followed by a generally consistent and relatively quick decline.[10]

The Prime Ministership of Pearson is quite telling. While he did not enjoy the highs in popularity of Diefenbaker, Trudeau, and Mulroney, he did not experience the same decline

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[8]A dilemma exists in the fact that increased democratization of leadership conventions results in leaders with decreasing experience and a high degree of media hype. In this case, the benefits of increased participation are debatable.

[9]Dobell and Berry, 14.

[10]See LeDuc, Clarke, Jenson, and Pammett, "Partisan Instability,"; and Ibid.

which they did. The public never considered him a strong leader, but they found him responsive.[11] Despite Gallup polls at the time indicating a public dislike of minority government because of the frequency of elections, "one of the features of minority government that the Canadian electorate seems to like is that it forces governments to consult and to make their compromises publicly"[12] rather than act in the manner of a parliamentary dictatorship. Canada had six minority governments from 1957 to 1979 which averaged two years in length each. Three were "strictly transitional" (1957, 1962, 1979), but the two led by Pearson (1963, 1965) and Trudeau's Government in 1972 were generally well regarded because they allowed a "larger role for the House of Commons".[13] One solution to the potential problem of frequent elections is to adopt fixed election dates, as in New Zealand.[14]

An oft-suggested solution to the flaws of the existing electoral system which could favour minority government is the introduction of a form of proportional representation (PR). The most popular form of PR to be currently considered appropriate to Canada is that of Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP), which New Zealand recently adapted from the German example. Under the electoral rules of MMP, half the MPs are elected from first-past-the-post plurality constituencies and the other half are from party lists which are nominated either provincially or federally[15]. This system provides each party that achieves at least 5% of the

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[11]Dobell and Berry, 14.

[12]Ibid., 15.

[13]Ibid., 21.

[14]New Zealand has a three-year fixed term, but, as with many reforms, this may create more problems than it solves in the Canadian context.

[15]An alternative option known as the Single Transferable Vote (STV) would allow electors to rank candidates preferentially rather than merely choosing between pre-ordered party lists. This would provide voters with more control over the democratic process, but countries utilizing the party list variant elect far more women and visible minorities than those where STV is used. See Note #22.

popular vote an overall number of seats proportional to its share of the popular vote, yet each constituency retains only one MP. For the first time, the House of Commons would be an accurate reflection of the popular vote. Thus, depending on the exact formula, the results of the most recent 1997 general election would not have been such a regionalized House of Commons, as the Liberals would have most likely received 115 seats, with Reform in second place with 59, the Conservatives in third place with 58, and the NDP and BQ would have tied with 33 each.[16] Such an electoral system would actually encourage parties to campaign meaningfully in all regions of the country.

The fact that PR tends to result in minority governments may be a beneficial factor. Some criticize PR because it does not allow the public to choose a government, but the same is also true of the first-past-the-post system wherein, for example, the present Chrétien majority government was elected with only 38.4% of the popular vote[17]. PR allows coalition governments to form which would, in combination, represent at least 50% of the public's popular vote. R. Kent Weaver has criticized MMP for its "fatal flaw" of being a reform proposal with little chance of adoption by Canada's political elites because it is not in their best interests, particularly those who are currently in government.[18] He also points out that the typical MMP system creates an inefficient representational body, as only half of the total seats represent constituencies because the other half are designated compensation seats arising

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[16]See Henry Milner, "The Case for Proportional Representation in Canada," Inroads 7 (May 1998): 43. For a comprehensive and current discussion of the various types of electoral reform and their advantages and disadvantages, see this issue of Inroads.

[17]Yet they received 155 seats; 51.5% of the seats in Parliament.

[18]Kent Weaver, "MMP is Too Much of Some Good Things," Inroads 7 (May 1998): 59; and Kent Weaver, "Improving Representation in the House of Commons," Canadian Journal of Political Science XXX, 3 (September 1997): 473-512.

from the "second" party list vote.[19]

Weaver's more modest proposal is designed to increase proportionality, decrease regional alienation, and be more attractive to parties so that it might be adopted. He proposes increasing the number of seats in the House of Commons by only 10% with compensation seats on the MMP model, comprising only 9% of the total seats. The priority for awarding these additional seats would be to provide the party with the highest national popular vote with a provincial seat share as proportionate to its provincial vote share as possible. Where the provincial seat share and provincial vote share for the party with the highest national popular vote are proportionate, the remaining compensation seats go to the second and third parties on the same basis. Through this formula, Weaver mutes MMP's tendency to allow the growth of numerous regional parties and rewards parties which broaden their appeal, as it provides:

> strong disincentives to make regional appeals that would attract votes in one region but repel them in others, because doing so would likely move a party downward in terms of its rank order in total national popular vote, and thus dramatically lower its prospects for winning some of the limited number of compensation seats in regions where it was relatively weak.[20]

This system minimally limits the current system's propensity to create majority governments, but it would provide Prime Ministers with a more regionally representative caucus from which to choose cabinet ministers.[21] For example, the Chrétien government re-elected in 1997

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[19]Weaver, "MMP is Too Much", 61.

[20]Ibid., 63. For example, Weaver demonstrates how Reform's "Tough on Québec" stance during the 1997 general election campaign would have been ill-advised and detrimental under the rules of his proposed electoral system.

[21]Ibid., 62, 64. In simulations of the past ten elections under Weaver's reform proposal, the Liberal majorities of 1974 and 1997 would have been reduced to razor-thin margins and the Liberal government of

would have increased representation from Alberta (+3), British Columbia (+3), Nova Scotia (+1), Québec (+3), and Saskatchewan (+1).

REPRESENTATIVENESS

Chapter IV reveals an elected political elite which has begun a minimal though promising process of diversification during the last two decades. The Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing found that Canadians were concerned about the lack of women and visible minorities among their elected political elite, but, at the same time, were not supportive of quotas or other such measures to alleviate this deficiency.[22] Similarly, Blais and Gidengil, in their work for the 1990 Royal Commission, found that, though people thought the under-representation of visible minorities and women was a serious problem, only 40% were in favour of forcing parties to nominate more.[23] Many female MPs and MLAs in Canada have cited the electoral system and nomination process as major obstacles to the increased presence of women. This dilemma may also find its solution in the adoption of a form of PR, as countries with a PR electoral system, particularly where there is a party list element, consistently elect noticeably more women and visible minorities than those with a first-past-the-post system.[24] PR, as already mentioned, also helps remedy the problems of

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1980 would have been two seats short of a majority. The remaining results were similar, though the Trudeau Liberals would have had a greater Western contingent and the Conservatives would have had a greater Québec contingent during the times they lacked such seats.

[22]For example, see Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, Final Report: Reforming Electoral Democracy, Vol. 2 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 229-247; and Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, Final Report: What Canadians Told Us, Vol. 4 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 39-59.

[23]Blais and Gidengil, 79.

[24]See Donley Studlar, Will Canada Seriously Consider Electoral Reform? Women and Aboriginals Should," Inroads 7 (May 1998): 52-8; and Shirley Dysart, "Barriers to Women's Participation in Parliament," Canadian Parliamentary Review XXVII, 13 (Autumn 1994): 14.

regional under-representation in the cabinet.

In light of the fact that education is the only characteristic of the elected political elite which has actually been reinforced, the concerns raised in Chapter IV about achieving greater socioeconomic diversity within the elected political elite may be combatted through increasing accessibility to post-secondary education. It is also important to eliminate barriers to accessibility which may exist within political parties and other institutions of Canadian democracy, including the maintenance of strict limits upon electoral, leadership, and nomination campaign spending. A "level playing field" is necessary to prevent Canada's elected political elite from being only accessible to the wealthy. Increasing accessibility leads to more equitable representation.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Many Canadians, including members of the Reform Party, are looking to direct populist mechanisms such as recall, referendum, and initiative to solve the democratic gap between the newly autonomous citizenry and the political system. A constituent's ability to recall their MP through a petition-initiated by-election could provide some measure of a check against party discipline. Not surprisingly, 75% of Canadians supported legislating recall in a 1994 Gallup poll.[25] Interestingly, a Member of the British Columbia Legislature, Paul Reitsna, recently gave up his seat to avoid becoming the first recalled Canadian politician, as that province has such a mechanism in place[26]. Referenda allow Canadians to decide major

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[25]Canadian Study of Parliament Group, Accommodating Mechanisms of Direct Democracy in the Parliamentary System (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1994), 4.

[26]For further details on the forced resignation of Reitsna, see Chris Wood, "Testing the Recall Law," Maclean's, 4 May 1998, 28; For a brief history of recall and referendum legislation in British Columbia see Norman Ruff, "Institutionalizing Populism in British Columbia," Canadian Parliamentary Review XVI, 4

and relatively straightforward policy questions, and citizen initiatives would allow Canadians to circumvent their politicians when they want a certain policy legislated. The 1992 Charlottetown Accord referendum has since been followed by referenda in Newfoundland (school reform), Québec (sovereignty), and Prince Edward Island (fixed link). The high threshold of people usually required to invoke these instruments of direct democracy means they cannot be used quickly or often, but they do allow some citizen involvement and control of the political arena which is most likely why they have become increasingly popular concepts.

Still others look to technology to bring democracy closer to the mythologized Athenian ideal. The current use of email has enhanced the accessibility and efficiency of MPs in communicating with their constituents. Teledemocracy, the use of telephony technology in the political arena, has allowed parties to have their leaders selected by a universal membership vote (UMV) and has been used in situations such as the "megacity" referenda in regions of the former Metro Toronto. This has raised hopes that telephony or internet technologies can be used to create a truly direct democracy. These developments raise a host of serious issues, not least of which are the questions surrounding the capability and security of such technology.[27] For example, a participant in a recent Nova Scotia Liberal leadership review voted 260 times and the tele-balloting phone network has crashed during UMV "conventions" held by both the Nova Scotian and Albertan Liberal parties.[28] The most serious

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(Winter 1993-1994): 24-32.

[27]For discussion of these issues see Canadian Study of Parliament Group, <u>Direct Democracy: We Have the Technology</u> (Ottawa: Canadian Study of Parliament Group, 1997); and Canadian Study of Parliament Group, <u>Interactive Government</u>.

[28]In the case of the Alberta Liberals' leadership selection process, the event had to be delayed for two

deficiency in many of the futuristic plans of cyberdemocracy rests in the fact that face-to-face interaction is necessary to achieve reasonable compromises and to prevent stubborn political positioning which is ignorant of other perspectives.

Chapter V illustrated the significant decline of the role of elites in the constitutional reform process. It also detailed the remarkable increase in citizen interest and involvement in this political arena. During the 1992 Canada Round of constitutional negotiations, a large majority (72%) of Canadians, including 69% of Québecers, preferred a constituent assembly process for amending the constitution[29], and polls consistently indicated that two-thirds of Canadians within and without Québec wanted to vote on any constitutional changes[30]. With the lack of public trust in the elected political elite, the demonstrated inability of these elites to successfully amend the constitution, and the remarkable success of the six citizen constitutional conferences, the future of constitutional reform plainly rests predominantly with the citizens and constituent assemblies.

A constituent assembly process should be placed atop the existing amending formula and be allowed to direct the traditional agenda-setting and negotiation phases, and the product of the process should be ratified by a referendum. Much can be learned and borrowed from the Charlottetown constitutional conference experience. The process must be transparent (televised) and genuinely citizen-driven. To ensure legitimacy and

embarrassing weeks. For detailed discussion of the pros and cons of UMV teledemocratic leadership selection, see Courtney, Conventions Matter, especially Chapter 11; and Ibid.

[29]October 16, 1991 Toronto Star-CTV poll, quoted in Dobell and Berry, 19. It is also noteworthy that in the recent years an advocacy group by the name of C.onstituent A.ssembly N.ow! has been established with a mandate to promote a constituent assembly-driven constitutional reform process and discuss the intricacies of putting such a process in place. The group's membership and popularity are gradually growing.

[30]See, for example, the April 22, 1991 Globe and Mail poll and October 16, 1991 Toronto Star poll cited in Ibid.

representativeness, there should probably be an element of elected independent members as well as appointment of the various representatives of the socioeconomic, ethnic, and special interest groups. As in the Canada Round, the workgroup/workshop format should be emphasized and politicians and constitutional experts can be present to aid the discussion. There should also be efforts to constantly inform and educate the public on what is occurring and why. Only when the constitutional reform process is so clearly in the hands of "the people" will it be deemed legitimate, and greatly enhance the likelihood of a positive referendum result.

CONCLUSION

Clearly, Canadian democracy is in a tenuous position. There appear to be many obstacles to achieving the changes which the Canadian public seems to be demanding, and reforms are often the source of still more problems. The resiliency of the status quo presents a great challenge to those wanting significant change, especially when the reforms have to be introduced by those who will undoubtedly lose political power because of them. Perhaps the elected political elite will only respond to the necessities of the newly autonomous electorate when, as in the case of constitutional reform, it truly has no other option. The Reform Party, on the other hand, aims to gain political power by advocating and promising to institute such populist reforms, which places pressure on the current elected elite. While the constitutional issue is a topic which understandably sparks citizen demands for involvement, the same may eventually become true of many other issues as New Politics values continue to spread.

The era of New Politics is not, as Huntington advises, a time to run away from democracy. Instead, it is a time to run towards democracy. That is the only option, as a crisis

of legitimacy may threaten the viability of the Canadian political system. Democratization is very much the genie which cannot be put back into the bottle. The current crisis may very well be symptomatic of one of democracy's great transformations[31] which, in this case, is leading towards greater citizen participation and system responsiveness. Democracy, like all alternative systems of government, is imperfect, but its greatest strength is its ability to evolve and adapt to changing societal conditions. The current situation should not be approached pessimistically; it can only be approached for the great, admittedly precarious, opportunity it presents for democracy. It is time for the elected political elite to shed their long-held consociational and Burkean[32] principles, to ignore the outdated elitist concerns of Sartori and Kornhauser, and to trust the people. This may finally be a time for the radical democrats. If reforms which are instituted fail, at least they will err on the side of democracy. The people can learn from their mistakes and, most importantly, they are the best judges of their own destiny.

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[31]Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics, especially Part VI. Dahl provides a comprehensive description of the historical stages of democracy, and discusses what he considers the "third transformation" towards a "democracy for tomorrow".

[32]See Bliss, Right Honourable Men. Bliss discusses the dominance of this tradition in Canadian politics.

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9454