THE CHATEAU CABINET

A Case Study in Intra-Party Conflict

Submitted to: Prof. J.E. Anderson
Submitted by: Sean O'Sullivan

November 10, 1975.
The student of Canadian politics can easily encounter cases of internal conflict throughout the history of any of the major political parties. Just recent examples of such conflict come readily to mind: the policy battle of the 1956 Liberal Party and the development within the N.D.P. of a group (the Waffle Movement) so divisive that it was ultimately expelled. Certainly such internal conflict is no stranger to the Conservative Party. In the midst of one of his many feuds with colleagues, Sir John A. Macdonald described the Party he was leading as "the Party damned, everlastingly damned." Many years later, in the election campaign of 1974, a Liberal Cabinet Minister publicly poked fun at opposition divisions by quoting a punchline that had already made its way throughout Conservative Party ranks. "It's easy to tell when you are at a meeting of the Tories," said the Honourable Eugene Whelan, "you just ask them to form a firing squad and they all join up in a circle."
This essay will attempt to provide a case study in intra-party conflict by examining the development of a dissident group within the Progressive Conservative Party known as the Chateau Cabinet, and then outlining the internal reaction to such a group.
Given the history of the Conservative Party's difficulties and the evolutionary nature of politics, it is difficult to pinpoint an exact time of the initial discontent which would eventually lead to the formation of the Chateau Cabinet. However, for the purpose of this limited study, one might begin with July 9, 1974.

That was the day after the general election when Party supporters were analyzing the results and asking themselves "What happened?" It was a time of shock, for the Party had gone into the campaign with only two seats less than the Liberal Government... a Government just defeated in Parliament by all three opposition parties for its alleged failure to deal effectively with Canada's high rate of inflation.

The campaign of a strong opposition party, which had been preparing for this contest ever since reducing the Trudeau Government to a minority position, might predictably have been a straightforward attack on the Government. However, something had gone wrong and dramatically changed the tone of the race. The Conservative Party based its campaign on a programme to combat inflation, the heart of which was a 90-day period of price, wage and profit controls. Instead of defending his own Government's record, the Prime Minister chose to focus upon this opposition policy which he frequently termed "a disaster waiting to happen."

His strategy paid off. Conservative candidates were put on the defensive, and some even abandoned the policy as it became more and more controversial. The Party faithful, so optimistic at the start of the campaign, were dismayed on election night when their representation in the Commons was reduced to 95 and the Liberals
regained a majority.

Moreover, many Party members felt the Party had "snatched defeat from the jaws of victory" by staking its campaign on a policy never officially adopted by a convention, and which had been accepted begrudgingly by its Caucus only after persistent urgings of the National Leader. Indeed, Dr. Jim Gillies, chief economics spokesman for the Party, would relate in a magazine interview how he had pleaded with Mr. Stanfield, until the eleventh hour of the campaign, to abandon this political abatross of price and wage controls.

A longtime participant in Canadian politics once remarked that "a political party is a party until it chooses a leader...then it becomes and army." This attitude has led to a situation wherein the leader of a party not only sets the tone and theme of his party's campaign, but also has almost exclusive control over the appointment of national campaign manpower. In short, he decides what the campaign message will be and appoints the people to put it across. In an age when the mass media has such a strong impact on the electorate, individual candidates and party workers are, therefore, highly dependent upon the decisions of the leader and his hand-picked campaign crew for their own success.

And so it was, that on July 9, 1974, responsibility for the Conservative Party's third failure to form a Government under his leadership fell upon the shoulders of Robert Stanfield and the campaign group he had chosen. That defeat would also be the catalyst to unite the discontent heretofore felt individually
and quietly, by Party supporters who had grown increasingly uncomfortable with the policy direction, and centralization of power, during the Stanfield years.

On July 9, former Party President Donald Matthews began telephoning a number of his contacts within Party ranks across the country. Matthews, a London businessman, had been elected Party President in 1970 to the surprise of almost everyone, as the race had been seen as a contest between Roy Deyell, choice of the Party establishment, and former M.P. John Pallett, who had Caucus support as his base.

Matthews ran as the "unity" candidate and set out soon after his election to prepare the Party for the 1972 election by trying to bridge the widening gap between the Party rank and file, including most of the Caucus, and the largely Toronto-based Party organizers chosen by Stanfield. This latter group responded to Matthews efforts not at all, and at the Party convention of spring 1974 they waged an expensive and intensive campaign which succeeded in denying Matthews' re-election by a very narrow margin. In this process of extending their control to include the Party Presidency, the establishment group caused the intra-party divisions to deepen. Two Members of Parliament even wrote out letters of resignation from the Party and at the next regular meeting of the Caucus, Mr. Stanfield had to apologize to his own Parliamentary supporters for the intervention of his personal staff and headquarters personnel, in the presidential contest. He told the Caucus that these efforts to defeat Matthews, on the part of traditionally neutral Party personnel, took place without his
While it was now a foregone conclusion that Mr. Stanfield would step down as National Leader, Matthews and those with whom he spoke agreed that the non-elected Party hierarchy should go with him...and as soon as possible. The fear was that these power brokers would delay the leadership convention long enough to consolidate their strength within the Party and thereby ensure that the new Leader would be of their choosing. The levers of influence at their direct disposal were considerable, including the incumbent Leader, his staff, the Party National Executive, Headquarters and Research Office personnel, control of funds, and a ready network of organizers throughout the country. If ever they were to be dislodged, it seemed most likely in this immediate post-election period of disgrace and vulnerability.

Since losses had been substantial in the densely-populated belt from Toronto to Niagara Falls, Matthews chose to sound out feelings among Party supporters in that area. Exactly three weeks after he began his telephone survey, the former Party President presided at a meeting of local activists who had been his supporters at the convention. Besides Matthews, those in attendance included two Members of Parliament, two former MP's who had been defeated on July 8, a riding president, and two fund raisers and campaign managers. Some present had also been delegated to represent other like-minded Party workers who could not attend.

After a wide-ranging discussion of the election results the group was of one mind: quick action was necessary to wrest
control from the Party brass who had fumbled the election. They were viewed, after the experience of the three campaigns, as political losers whose "Red Tory" philosophy and policies were out of touch with the Party rank and file, and of the electorate. Years of personal animosity on both sides helped to solidify the determination to rout this powerful group.

The strategy adopted at this meeting called for Don Matthews to draw up a resolution for presentation to Caucus by Allan Lawrence, a re-elected Member who had already been publicly critical of the campaign hierarchy. It urged the Caucus to establish a committee of twelve to "...carefully review the needs and circumstances of our Party with respect to Leadership, finances and organization..." The motion noted that "R.L.Stanfield has had 3 opportunities to challenge the Liberal Government of P.E. Trudeau using campaign strategy designed and executed by his Appointees..." Clearly, the intent of this move was to have Caucus assert its authority by challenging the efficacy and the policies of the non-elected Party strategists.

Soundings among Caucus members produced little support for the strategy, especially since Mr. Stanfield indicated his intention to summon a leadership convention within two years. Accordingly, the resolution was never presented and instead attention was focused on the leadership contest.

What had been established was a determination by a number of long-time Party workers to work together, and with others of similar views, to actively challenge the Party hierarchy, and toward the ultimate goal of changing the philosophical direction
of the Party.

That October, the convening of a new Parliament brought the 95 Conservative Members of the Commons to Ottawa. Matthews expanded his telephone campaign by contacting key Party supporters whom he had come to know and trust while National President. He also kept in touch with his friends who, in turn, were informally speaking with their colleagues to gauge support for a move against their common adversaries. The consensus was that any coordinated action should be aimed for the leadership convention, but that active organization for that confrontation should begin immediately.

One crucial problem presented itself at the outset. If the current Party hierarchy was to be deposed, it would take a new and unobeholden Leader to clear them out. For Matthews and his group, any organizational efforts seemed futile unless built around a plausible candidate.

When the next formal meeting was called by Matthews on December 11, 1974, he had assembled an impressive guest list and potentially powerful political force. Included in this group were senior representatives of those important but seldom public allies of the major political parties, the banking, publishing, advertising and business interests. Party "bagmen" and organizations, whose influence had been diminished during the Stanfield years, were also present. The four MP's invited to report on Caucus went to the downtown restaurant assuming that a number of potential candidates would be discussed. It was soon apparent, however, that Matthews already had a candidate in mind. After his opening remarks about the sorry state of Canada and the Conservative Party,
and the urgent need for a new and strong leader to take hold of both, Matthews asked his twelve luncheon guests for their views.

The first person called upon to outline what qualities were needed in the next Conservative Leader was the most experienced politician in the private dining room: former Ontario Premier John Robarts. The contributions which followed expanded upon his remarks and then got into the area which the former Premier assiduously avoided—the discussion of possible candidates. For those who chose to commit themselves, the choice was clear: their candidate was John Robarts. It became obvious that the luncheon had been staged by Don Matthews to demonstrate directly to Robarts what potentially widespread support his candidacy would attract. After absolving himself of any possible interest in seeking the leadership, Robarts excused himself and left the others to their dessert and further conversation about the best methods of changing his mind.

At this point it is perhaps important to allay any suspicion that the exercise was intended solely to replace the Party "in-group." Indeed, the very first point in the strategy outline circulated to the thirteen was headed "Philosophy" and stated, "it is vital that before we select a new leader we must have some idea of where we would like him to lead us." The enthusiasm for a Robarts candidacy went hand-in-hand with the consensus that the Party had been moved far to the left of its historical and proper place on the political spectrum, and that it would remain there as long as a "Red Tory" leader and his
entourage were in charge.

The luncheon group decided to follow the Matthews plan for organization, which included small sub-committees and initial funding from among those present. Two close friends of Robarts were delegated to convince him to stand as a candidate, and confident that he would change his mind, the group set about to sound out possible sources of further support. Those present agreed to meet early in the New Year, to report on their delegated activities, and expected to be transformed into the official Robarts-for-Leader campaign committee.

That meeting took place on January 18, 1975 and was probably the single most important development which would lead to the formation of the Chateau Cabinet. The smaller attendance (seven) reflected a fact that had become evident in the intervening weeks: there would be no Robarts candidacy. Speculation about his entry had, as planned, received favourable exposure in The Globe and Mail but had failed to generate significant enthusiasm within the Caucus or Party ranks. Robarts himself remained adamant: he would not be a candidate.

Faced with a cause, but lacking a leader, Matthew prepared for the January meeting a list of all potential candidates for the group's consideration. Five names were added at the meeting to Matthew's original count of 32 potential contenders. The discussion which followed quickly eliminated candidates obviously unacceptable to the group (e.g. Dalton Camp, Flora MacDonald) and then examined the relative merits of those considered as credible alternatives. At the end of several hours however, the only
agreement reached was that Robarts was still the most acceptable choice, and Matthews was authorized to make yet another, but more desperate, approach to him.

A faulty car battery then combined with that inconclusive meeting to accelerate the formation of the Chateau Cabinet. Following the meeting, as Parliamentary colleagues Tom Cossitt and Sean O'Sullivan stood talking in the hotel lobby, Kim Abbott reappeared from the parking lot with the news that his car would not start. While waiting for a tow truck, the three decided to continue talking over coffee. Their conversation set in motion the events which would lead to the formation of the Chateau Cabinet.

It was a meeting of three political activists who had only come into direct contact with one another through the meeting arranged by Don Matthews. Kim Abbott had been a career civil servant and had taken early retirement from his senior position with the Department of Immigration over differences with the policies of the Trudeau Government and once free of the constraints of the public service, Abbott began making political contacts, through the undertaking of a national political survey for business interests, and that brought him into personal contact with the National President of the P.C. Party, Don Matthews.

Tom Cossitt had been a lifelong member of the Liberal Party, including service on the executive of the Ontario Liberal Federation. As riding president, he had led a walkout of the Leeds Constituency Liberal Executive just prior to the 1972 general election. The reason was summed up in one word: Trudeau.
Since his election as the Conservative M.P. for Leeds in 1972, Cossitt had specialized in attacking what he viewed as the socialist policies and imperial style of the Prime Minister, and had grown increasingly despondent over the lack of effective opposition by his new-found Party to the Trudeau administration.

Sean O'Sullivan was also elected to Parliament in 1972 and since then seemed to have engaged in more fights within his own Party than with the Government. This internal Party conflict was nothing new for him, as one of the unrepentent Diefenbaker loyalists who had been resisting since 1967 the manoeuvres of the Stanfield appointees to assume more and more control of their Party.

The three, who knew one another formally, discovered that they were of a common mind following the stalemate of the latest Matthews meeting. They agreed with Matthews on the need to alter the prevailing philosophy and hierarchy of the Party, but were now convinced that his real intention was to promote a candidacy (Robarts) they viewed as futile. In particular, the two Members of Parliament had been unable to discern among their Caucus colleagues enough support to encourage the candidacy of an already reluctant Robarts.

With other candidates, especially from the Party's left-wing establishment, already trying to secure convention support, the three decided to launch their own initiatives. They had no ready-made strategy, but agreed that the Matthews efforts were destined to continued frustration. So, simply, Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan determined to meet the following week in Ottawa and went their separate ways to consider possible avenues of action.
Starting in the third week of January 1975 the three met almost weekly and kept in touch by telephone frequently. Within a few weeks they had assessed the situation and developed an approach to achieve their common goal of "turning this thing around"—Abbott's favourite description of their goal for reform of the Progressive Conservative Party, and ultimately of the Country.

First, the three decided that the Party Caucus showed the most promise for potential strength at the Convention. From their personal contact with various Members, the trio sensed among a considerable number of the Caucus dissatisfaction with the very targets of their own criticism: the increasing power of an appointed hierarchy beyond Caucus control, yet at whose mercy they were for campaign strategy and even policy decisions.

Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan made another crucial assessment in establishing their strategy. Even if they could convince a powerful bloc of Members that the existing regime had to be routed, there was no one candidate on the horizon who could command unanimity of the dissidents' support. So, while the leadership convention would of necessity be their ultimate battleground, they decided to refrain from asking for allegiance to a common candidate and thereby risk the loss of potential allies. They decided the approach had to be more general in nature.

In a series of reviews of the Caucus list, the three drew upon their personal knowledge and assessment of each Member to determine potential associates. They were looking for Members who might be regarded as being "small-c" Conservatives, and therefore likely unhappy with the Party's current policies. A common
desire to move the Party to the right and an assertion of Caucus authority would be rallying points to transcend whatever commitments the M.P.'s might have to different leadership hopefuls.

The initial review produced a list of well over half the Caucus who might be regarded as "small-c" Conservatives. However, the list was quickly pared down by the elimination of Members who, despite philosophical preferences, were either aligned with the ruling "Red Tories" or considered unwilling to challenge the existing order. As proof that their efforts were not designed to favour any leadership candidate, all rumoured contenders were automatically eliminated. Similarly, arbitrary deletions were made of those Members considered unreliable or untrustworthy and of those simply considered ineffectual. The final number of potentially active allies was reduced to thirty-six, just over one-third of the entire federal Caucus.

It now fell to Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan to reach these Members privately and convince them that only a united effort would have any chance to bring about the change in Party direction they felt necessary. Generally, the Members' responses were both enthusiastic and encouraging, so the three decided to hold a meeting and try to bring these individual disaffected Members together.

The result was the evolution and first meeting of the Chateau Cabinet, on the evening of March 12, when thirty Progressive Conservatives came together on the basis of their common discontent. Incidentally, the name of this group came
about as the jocular suggestion of one participant, based on the locale of the meeting (Ottawa's Chateau Laurier Hotel) and as a pun on the "Shadow Cabinet" of Parliamentary spokesmen chosen by Mr. Stanfield.

Three participants were from outside the Caucus---Abbott, a Party organizer from British Columbia, and the Commons' only independent M.P., Leonard Jones.

Without any leadership candidates, the group was composed of M.P.'s largely unknown outside Parliament or their own ridings. Only two were official Party spokesman---or members of the "Shadow Cabinet." So, assembled in the Quebec Suite that evening were men who had been elected to Parliament and had come to Ottawa only to find that their Party was really controlled by a non-elected clique whose "Red Tory" philosophy was almost as repugnant as that of the formal enemy---the Government. Their frustration had grown as the Party's fortunes continued to slide, and especially since they felt more representative of the general Party membership. Their performance to date as loyal Parliamentary troops had not been rewarded, only taken for granted. But now, with the high stakes of a leadership convention looming, they decided to challenge the Party powers. They might easily have adopted as a motto the quote from Death of a Salesman, "Attention must be paid."

In his opening remarks Abbott stressed that the meeting was called to discuss the leadership convention, but not the individual candidates. He expressed the hope that this group would work together to fill the existing void within Canadian
political life or traditional conservative thought. If they, as elected representatives, could formulate guidelines (or, in Abbott's vernacular, "touchstones") representative of their philosophical approach to government, the various leadership candidates would have to respond to their united call for a return to these conservative principles and policies.

The strategy then, appeared simple. A sizeable bloc of the Caucus, representative of the Party grassroots support, would issue a call for the Party to return to its historic base of "small-c" conservatism. By their public demand, and by exerting pressure through their various constituency and Party contacts, the Members would then force the leadership contenders to "stand up and be counted" by declaring their own philosophical preferences.

At first this may seem to have been a rather limited goal for the group. But, having decided it would be impossible to unite Caucus dissidents behind any known candidate, Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan saw it as the farthest they could go initially. What they counted on was their firm belief that the Party regulars were also disgruntled and ripe for revolt. All they needed was to "smoke out" the candidates, to identify those of the establishment left and those closer to the now-rebellious right. The rest would be left to the politics of a Party choosing a new leader, on the assumption that, once identified, the leading candidate of the right would command the final ballot support of this Caucus group and the bulk of the riding delegates.

With acceptance of this approach, the inaugural meeting of the Chateau Cabinet faced the technical task of drawing up a
manifesto and then the strategic problem of how best to promote it within the Party. Fearful of both reprisals from the Party hierarchy and the danger of being portrayed as rebellious right-wing fanatics, the group decided that their meetings—indeed the Chateau Cabinet's very existence—should remain secret until a manifesto had been completed. Then they would consider the most advantageous means of presenting it for Party and public attention.

Having been arbitrarily put forward as chairman of the inaugural meeting, Kim Abbott took it upon himself to prepare the agenda. Further, to keep discussion by so many politicians relevant to the task at hand (the development of a set of "touchstones") Abbott prepared his own draft manifesto. It was truly Abbott's document for he had not shown it to anyone prior to its presentation and the twenty points reflected his own priorities, e.g. four of the points dealt with reform of the civil service. It lacked both the rhetoric and subtlety of a politician's touch and came complete with a misprint which rendered point number 11 innocuous.

The politicians were grateful for Abbott's draft outline, but regarded it as woefully inadequate. During three hours of discussion they added, deleted, debated and amended so that their idea of a manifesto bore only the slightest resemblance to the Abbott document. M.P. Ron Huntington was appointed to act as secretary for the first meeting and delegated to produce a more representative expression of the many views on just what it meant to be a modern Progressive Conservative. The Chateau Cabinet
agreed to meet once the Huntington revised draft was ready for further consideration. It was their intention to produce a more extensive, definitive and politically astute document than the Abbott guideline. Several weeks later, Huntington was still putting all the points into the jargon of politicians, and had already written over seventy-five pages.

The Chateau Cabinet had thus been founded on the basis of intra-party discontent. Its first meeting adjourned on a note of high enthusiasm as individuals who previously felt powerless and alone sensed a new strength in numbers. The new faction enjoyed the refreshing hope that finally they had a chance to put the Party back on the "right track." With "principles" as a battle-cry, and a straight-forward, almost benign strategy, they expected that, when the time for publicity came they would be viewed more as crusaders than insurgents. The exhilaration of that March evening was to be very short-lived.

Indeed, by the time the Commons met the following afternoon, word of the meeting had spread among the rest of the Party Caucus. Within the next few days the sudden existence of this group known as the Chateau Cabinet was portrayed as a group of right-wing malcontents determined to speed the exit of Robert Stanfield as Leader and bent on reversing whatever progress he had made among the French Canadian voters. All the rumours came to a head at the next regular meeting of the Progressive Conservative Caucus, exactly one week after the Chateau Cabinet's inaugural session. After emotional attacks on the group, and appeals for unity by some of his frontbenchers, Robert Stanfield personally addressed himself to the matter. With typical restraint he acknowledged the
diversity of political thought and the need for intra-party debate, but held that the proper place for such discussions was in the Caucus, and he therefore "expected Members to refrain from holding any more secret meetings."

Genuinely surprised by the immediacy and intensity of the attack on their group, the three organizers began another series of consultations to decide what to do. Stanfield's implicit message to the group, supported vocally by some of the Party's leading Members, was to cease and desist. Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan interpreted this as indicative of the hierarchy's fear that an organized challenge to their control would not only be new...it might be successful. They decided to continue to pursue their objectives but tempered with caution that was marked by silence about the group, and about any possible future meetings.

With the Chateau Cabinet known to the Caucus, it would only be a matter of time before some version of its purpose also came to the attention of the news media. Cossitt was the first to be interviewed and the first reports, although they included some of the now-common distortions about the group, were not totally damaging. Cossitt stuck to the pre-determined strategy of refusing to identify the members of the Chateau Cabinet (with the exception of himself and O'Sullivan, as its organizers) and describing it simply as a group of M.P.'s concerned about the country's future, who met, and would continue to do so, to discuss policies and principles. After initial stories describing the group's existence and purpose, the press lost interest with a lack of any "hard news" about its support or specific policies.
However, this publicity and the Caucus counter-attack had taken their toll on the enthusiasm of some of the Chateau Cabinet members. Although privately giving assurances of their continued commitment, some M.P.'s stopped attending the meetings ...four of which were held in the ensuing weeks of April and May. The attendance never again reached its original thirty, and one meeting, for which Abbott had "definite" commitments from twenty Members, was held with only eight present.

Whatever concern the original three might have had about lagging attendance was soon to be overshadowed by a new and unexpected burst of unfavourable publicity. It was due to a set of circumstances almost as unpredictable as the results of a dead car battery on that Saturday in January.

Douglas Alkenbrack, M.P. for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington in eastern Ontario, was to address a service club in his constituency during the week of March 24th. Alkenbrack felt no need to prepare a speech since he agreed wholeheartedly with every point in the Abbott draft document. So, he simply announced to the assembled club members that he was a member of the Chateau Cabinet they had been reading about and proceeded to read the document, point by point, as being the objectives of this group. Alkenbrack was so pleased with the reception to his address that he decided to personally deliver a copy of the Abbott document to every weekly newspaper in his riding. Had publication of the points been limited to the Napanee Beaver, the Chateau Cabinet might have enjoyed for some time yet the relative lack of media interest of the preceding few weeks.
That, however, was not to be.

The editor of the Napanee weekly was also regional correspondent for the Globe and Mail. And on June 28, 1975, under the headline "Chateau Group Eyes Plan to Drop Fully Bilingual Civil Service" the more controversial points of the Abbott document were presented as the policies of the Chateau Cabinet.

A new and unfavourable wave of media coverage was given the Chateau Cabinet, especially since this apparently official document was interpreted as concrete evidence that the group was anti-French Canada. The chief Ottawa correspondent of the Globe and Mail, Geoffrey Stevens, devoted two successive columns to ridiculing what he termed "A Peculiar Political Manifesto" produced by "...a funny band of mavericks and disgruntled right wingers." With the publication of this controversial document, renewed interest was paid the Chateau Cabinet, both by the press and the Party hierarchy.

For the first time in their seven years as Parliamentary colleagues, Robert Stanfield held a private conversation with Douglas Alkenbrack. It lasted long enough for Stanfield to request a copy of the reported Chateau Cabinet manifesto. Alkenbrack, delighted by the sudden attention of the press and his Leader, sent him two.

Stanfield decided it was time to actively counterattack. Within days of the manifesto's publication, the executive committee of the Party in Quebec was summoned into emergency
session. They issued a press release demanding the expulsion of the Chateau Cabinet members from the Party, describing them as "unworthy of being called "Conservatives." Their press release further interpreted the group as an anti-Stanfield movement. It did not mention that this executive for the Party in Quebec was not the same one as had been elected at the last annual meeting of the Quebec association. Following the 1974 election, and the discovery of misuse of campaign funds, Stanfield had dismissed the Quebec provincial executive and replaced it by a hand-picked committee to serve as trustees. The emergency meeting, then, and the resultant call for the purge of the Chateau Cabinet members, came from another non-elected group chosen by Stanfield.

Curiously, the National Leader then wrote to O'Sullivan expressing concern about "seeing references in the press to a group referred to as the Chateau Cabinet of which you are said to be a member or founding father," and asking for a copy of the manifesto. O'Sullivan's refusal to comply with the request was based on the explanation he had already given of the Abbott document to the press. He wrote:

"The media reports have dealt with a draft document presented by one participant for discussion purposes only. As such, the document has no official status nor does it represent the views of all in attendance. Should an official statement be compiled for release you will, of course, be the first to receive a copy."
he expected O'Sullivan to publicly repudiate the document which had, he said, "taken on a life of its own." Stanfield wrote:

"The document could therefore be circulated, and will be, by our enemies as representing the views of what our enemies would refer to as a substantial proportion of the Caucus... Possibly you have some suggestion to make as to how Caucus might remove what is potentially a very heavy millstone around the neck of the Party."

The Stanfield letter arrived one the eve of the summer recess for Parliament and O'Sullivan had learned that Stanfield was to leave Ottawa for a six-week vacation almost immediately. He considered it unlikely that Stanfield, expecting a reply to his second letter, would make any further moves before going away. The reply was not forthcoming.

In addition to the Stanfield demands, O'Sullivan was under pressure from the press for explanations of the document and the Chateau Cabinet ever since Cossitt had named him co-founder. The interviews were numerous following publication of the Abbott document and directed to him since Abbott had yet to be publicly linked to the group, and Cossitt had suffered a heart attack in July which removed him from the Ottawa scene.

Of the many interviews perhaps the one which gave the best overview of the situation was a CBC radio discussion held at the request of John Gray, Parliamentary correspondent for Southam newspapers. Prior to the radio interview, Gray had done considerable research into the Chateau Cabinet for a series of newspaper articles. He discovered the identity of a number of
M.P.'s who had attended one or all of the meetings and convinced one, Stan Schumacher, to abandon previous anonymity by appearing on the show with himself and O'Sullivan. Gray confronted the two M.P.'s with what had become generally accepted features of their group—-that it was "...a coalition of alienated backbenchers..." with "...all the earmarks of a cabal..." an "...assumed hostility to bilingualism..." and "...a certain defiance of Mr. Stanfield..."

These points and other difficult questions were dealt with by the two M.P.'s who were satisfied that they had at least gotten a fair hearing because Gray concluded his broadcast by saying of the Chateau Cabinet:

"Their gamble, their faith, is that... they can capture the essential right-wing soul of the Conservative Party... The crucial test will be whether any leader will run on the kind of minority platform that the Chateau Cabinet finds appealing. That's of course, the way minorities become majorities...sometimes...and only sometimes."

31

After the series of earlier misleading accounts the Gray interview allowed members of the Chateau Cabinet to feel that their true intent was finally being understood.

With Members dispersed for the unusually long summer recess, the Chateau Cabinet also took a vacation. Abbott, Cossitt and O'Sullivan kept in touch by telephone, but much less frequently. They believed that the group had successfully weathered the storm of adverse publicity and that they could hold meetings of the group quietly and with renewed confidence once Parliament returned in October. With the convention less than five months
away, they intended to finalize a "real manifesto" acceptable to as many members of the original group as possible. Then they could implement their original strategy of publicizing these conservative principles and having the candidates questioned on these points as they travelled in search of delegate support.

Again they were to be surprised, however, by renewed attacks on them, and the Abbott document. Just as Parliament was reconvening, and before the Chateau Cabinet was to meet again, former Party President Dalton Camp denounced the group as,

"...an element in the Party determined to destroy it, who made Stanfield's leadership untenable, who hurried the party prematurely to convention, and who are, at this writing, determining to manage the proceedings." 32

in his syndicated column. On a nationally televised broadcast, Camp said: "I don't see how the Party can live with...the Shadow (sic) Cabinet..." and portrayed the Abbott document as "either an expression of supreme stupidity or it comes very close to neo-fascism." 33 Upon hearing these comments one of the panel interviewing Camp responded: "You're really talking about a purge here." 34

It seemed to his targets more than chance that this former National President of the Party, one of Robert Stanfield's closest friends and chief advisor, should suddenly---literally months after its last flurry of publicity---discover the Chateau Cabinet and view its existence as a danger in terms similar to the resolution of the Quebec P.C. Executive and the Stanfield letters to O'Sullivan.
As this essay is written the feud within the Progressive Conservative Party continues. Inasmuch as there is a faction of its Caucus actively working to change both the hierarchy and its policy stance, the Chateau Cabinet still exists. Inasmuch as that hierarchy is actively resisting this challenge to the established order, there is direct conflict between the two sides. The battle will probably continue right up until the final ballot of next February's leadership convention.

More likely, it will continue beyond that, for as this essay has attempted to show, internal discontent---be it based on philosophical or personality differences---leads to intra-party conflict---and the roots of such discontent are indeed strong within the Progressive Conservative Party.


6. Quote from private conversation with the Hon. Paul T. Hellyer.

7. For an examination of the personalities and authority of the campaign group during the Stanfield period, see Stevens, Geoffrey, *Stanfield* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1973).

8. The one resignation of M.P. John Lundrigan was withdrawn after a conversation with Mr. Stanfield. The other letter, from Jack Horner, never reached that stage as he was talked out of the move by some of his colleagues.

9. The 1974 Annual Meeting of the P.C. Party, etc., could in itself be the subject of study as an example of intra-party conflict. Among the allegations from supporters of both candidates were charges of forged delegate credentials, political threats to delegates, and even "bugging" of Matthews' convention headquarters.


11. Appendix I.

12. Ibid.

13. Appendix II.

14. Appendix III.

15. Ibid.

18. Jones had received the Progressive Conservative nomination in Moncton for the 1974 election but his candidacy was rejected by Mr. Stanfield over their differences on bilingualism policy. Despite this lack of official Party backing, Jones went on to win the election as an independent M.P. and defeating the incumbent P.C. Member by over 14,000 votes.


20. Appendix V.


26. Appendix VI.

27. Appendix VII.

28. Appendix VIII.

29. Ibid.

30. Transcript appears as Appendix IX.

31. Ibid.


33. From transcript (pp Q.P.4 - Q.P.5) of CTV programme "Question Period" which was broadcast on that network on October 12, 1975. (Published by CJOH-TV, 1500 Merivale Rd., Ottawa.)

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., Comment made by Eric Malling, Parliamentary correspondent for CTV News.