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Grassroots Participation In Canadian Political Parties: An Examination Of Leadership Selection, Candidate Nomination, Policy Development And Election Campaigning

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GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION
IN CANADIAN POLITICAL PARTIES:

AN EXAMINATION OF
LEADERSHIP SELECTION, CANDIDATE NOMINATION,
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

by

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Abstract

This thesis is about grassroots participation in Canadian political parties.

The thesis identifies and examines tensions between two views of public decision-making. Traditionally, Canadian politics have been described as brokerage and consociational. Increasingly, however, voters are rejecting these elite-dominated processes and demanding increased opportunity for direct, effective participation. Some favoured methods of increased participation, however, lack the collective processes traditionally believed necessary to build consensus among Canada's strong regional and linguistic cleavages. This thesis identifies the essential characteristics of these two views, providing a framework for assessing the current practices of political parties and popular reform proposals.

The thesis identifies parties as institutions capable of offering both increased opportunities for effective participation and for consensus-building. Several of the most important activities engaged in by political parties are examined within this context: candidate nomination, leadership selection, policy-making and election campaigning. Data collected from a national mail survey of party activists is used to measure the participatory opportunities currently available to party members, the effectiveness of this participation and the attitudes of members towards the

participatory opportunities afforded them. Recent developments within parties, aimed at increasing member participation, and popular reform proposals are also examined. Consideration is given to the effect increased grassroots participation may have on the parties' ability to accommodate divergent interests.

The methodology employed in this study is largely empirical and theoretical. It is empirical as it draws upon data resulting from the mail survey, from party documents and from news reports of election campaigns and party activities. It is theoretical in that it suggests a new framework for the study of the tensions between two views of legitimate democratic decision-making. Historical events are used to illustrate that existing tensions are not new in Canadian politics and to assist in understanding and evaluating reform proposals.

The thesis concludes that Canadian political parties can become more participatory without jeopardizing their capacity to broker consensus among regional and linguistic interests. Given that elite-dominated processes are increasingly viewed by voters as being illegitimate, more transparent, participatory processes may actually increase voters' acceptance of arrived at accommodations.

Keywords: parties, participation, brokerage, candidate nominations, leadership selection, campaigns, elections

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Preface

This thesis is about grassroots participation in Canadian political parties.

The thesis finds substantial evidence of increased demand by voters for more effective participation in political decision-making. The thesis argues that the traditional view of Canadian politics as brokerage and elite-dominated leaves little room for active, effective citizen participation. Proponents of the brokerage model contend that politics dominated by grassroots activists would not provide sufficient opportunity for the consensus building and conciliatory activities necessary to govern a country as diverse as Canada. It is this dilemma that is the focus of this thesis: how to increase opportunity for effective grassroots participation while maintaining the accommodative practices present within Canadian political parties.

Chapter One provides the context for this discussion. It includes an examination of the evidence of increased support for more effective citizen participation, a review of the principal literature describing Canadian politics as brokerage and consociational, and identifies the tensions often believed to exist between these two different perspectives of public decision-making.

Chapter Two discusses the central position of political parties in both the brokerage model and in efforts to make Canadian politics more participatory. The argument in this chapter is that the national parties, as the only federal political institutions found in every riding of the country, offer the most likely vehicle for uniting active grass-roots participation with consensus building opportunities.

Chapter Three sets out a framework for the substantive examination of political party activities. This chapter identifies the essential characteristic of the two competing perspectives as _collective_ and _collected_ decision-making. The identification of the essence of each perspective serves to move the debate beyond traditional disputes over direct versus representative democracy and delegate versus trustee representation. The essential characteristics of both the collective and collected model are useful in assessing the current practices of parties and popular reform proposals. This model is not artificially imposed on a discussion of participation in political parties, but rather is descriptive of the essence of the existing tensions.

Subsequent chapters examine in detail several of the most important activities engaged in by political parties: candidate nomination, leadership selection, policy-making and election campaigning. Data collected from a national mail survey are used to quantify the participatory avenues

currently available to party members, the effectiveness of this participation and the attitudes of party members towards the participatory opportunities afforded them. Recent developments within parties, aimed at increasing member participation, and popular reform proposals are examined within the framework established in Chapter Three.

The methodology employed in this discussion is largely empirical and theoretical. It is empirical as it draws upon data resulting from the mail survey, from party documents and from news reports of election campaigns and party activities. The thesis is theoretical in that it suggests a new framework for the study of the tensions between traditional representative and participatory democracy. Historical events are also used to illustrate that these tensions are not new in Canadian politics and to assist in understanding and evaluating reform proposals.

The thesis concludes that Canadians have traditionally been given little opportunity for effective participation in their political parties. Parties are, however, beginning to realize that voters strongly desire more opportunities for meaningful participation and are beginning to respond to these demands. In particular, the Reform Party has enjoyed substantial success by presenting itself as a participatory party responsive to voters' demands. The thesis argues that the traditional brokerage parties can adopt more

participatory practices in each of the areas of party activity reviewed without jeopardizing their ability to serve as consensus builders. The processes of elite accommodation and brokerage are increasingly viewed by voters as being illegitimate. Accordingly, results of these processes are often rejected by voters. Participatory practices that result in more transparent and responsive collective processes may well increase the likelihood that any achieved accommodations are acceptable to voters.

Chapter One

Setting the Context: The Conflict Between Brokerage and Participatory Politics

The most basic tenet of democratic theory is that the people rule themselves. What separates a democracy from other forms of government is twofold: (1) at some regular point in the political process, the citizenry collectively exercises decisive political control and (2) opportunity exists for ongoing and effective consultation between the governed and their representatives. The range of variance of this collective control and consultation is great. At one end of the spectrum, Rousseau, remaining true to the Athenian experiment, argues that citizens are only politically free if they decide upon legislation directly and not delegate this authority to leaders or representatives.[1] At the other end, Joseph Schumpeter argues that democracy may mean little more than allowing voters an opportunity to periodically select their rulers from among a slate of potentials.[2] Debate concerning the optimum point on this spectrum has been with us as long as has the practical need for representation.

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[1] J. J. Rousseau, "The Impossibility of Representation," in Hannah Fenichel Pitkin, ed., Representation (New York: Atherton Press, 1969).

[2] Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (5th ed.; London: Allen and Unwin, 1976).

Evidence of Dissatisfaction with Existing Practices and Institutions

Currently in Canadian politics there exists considerable tension concerning the appropriate point on this spectrum. The evidence is strong that Canadians are not satisfied with the current strength of the relationship between their collective preferences and policy outcomes.[3] The Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (Lortie Commission), concurring with the Citizens Forum on Canada's Future, suggested there was evidence supporting the finding that "many Canadians are critical of their existing political institutions. Many are concerned that these institutions are not sufficiently responsive to their views and interests."[4] Polling numbers recounted in a study by Peter Dobell and Byron Berry substantiate these findings.[5] Berry and Dobell found that almost 80 per cent of Canadians agree that: "Generally, those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with

[3] Perhaps the strongest representations of this discontent were the public testimonials presented to, and the final report of, the 1991 Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future. See, Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future: Report to the People and Government of Canada (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1991).

[4] Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing volume 2 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1991), 229.

[5] Peter Dobell and Byron Berry, "Anger at the System: What Canadians Think About Their Political System," Parliamentary Government 39 (1992), 5.

the people," and 42 per cent agree with the proposition that "MPs are not responsive to the needs of constituents."[6] These findings, along with numerous similar ones, led the study's authors to conclude that:

> If Canadians have traditionally been Burkeans inclined to invest power and responsibility in their elected representatives, they appear now to be becoming Jeffersonians, constitutionally distrustful of government and insistent that their representatives respond more sensitively and directly to the voice of the people.[7]

Leslie Seidle points to the 1993 federal election results as evidence of voters' discontentment with existing political practices. Seidle suggests that voters' "anger extends beyond dissatisfaction with the previous government and its Prime Minister....the election results have to be seen more broadly as one result of the sharp decline in Canadians' confidence in their political institutions during the past decade or more."[8] As evidence of this declining confidence, Seidle cites Gallup findings showing a substantial drop in the number of Canadians expressing confidence in their political institutions. The percentage of Canadians expressing "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of respect for and confidence in the House of Commons has declined from 38 per

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[6]   Ibid., 8.

[7]   Ibid., 19.

[8]   F. Leslie Seidle, "The Angry Citizenry: Examining Representation and Responsiveness in Government," Policy Options v.15, No.6 (1994), 75.

cent in 1979 to just 16 per cent in 1993.[9] The decline for political parties has been even more severe -- from 30 per cent in 1979 to nine per cent in 1993.[10] A very modest increase was recorded in these numbers for 1995. The number expressing strong respect for parties rose to 12 per cent and for the House of Commons to 19 per cent.[11]

Seidle concurs with the sentiment that these findings are substantially the result of an increasing concern by voters that policy outcomes and governmental actions are not consistent with their wishes. Seidle concludes that public consultations by government must become more frequent, and, that "[i]maginative but clear-sighted changes to how they are carried out, along with reforms in other areas, should help narrow the gap between citizens' expectations and the way certain aspects of our public life are currently organized."[12]

Dobell and Berry cite similar findings of public opinion polling concerning Canadians' confidence in their political system. They report that for 55 per cent of Canadians, respect for political institutions is declining.[13] They

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[9] Ibid., 75.

[10] Ibid., 75.

[11] The Gallup Poll, v.55, No.38 (May 11, 1995).

[12] Seidle, The Angry Citizenry, 80.

[13] Dobell and Berry, Anger at the System, 5.

further report that "<u>Globe and Mail</u> and Decima polls of 1990 revealed that over three-quarters of all respondents thought government should be required to hold public consultations before making major decisions in Canada."[14]

Similar findings are reported in the study conducted by André Blais and Elisabeth Gidengil for the Lortie Commission. They found that 70 per cent of Canadians agree with the statement, "I don't think that the government cares much what people like me think."[15] This number is significantly higher than the 49 per cent who agreed with this sentiment in 1965. An even higher 79 per cent of Canadians agreed that "[g]enerally, those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with the people."[16] This marks a 19 point increase from 1965. Respondents to the Blais and Gidengil study also expressed their preference for MPs to vote in accordance with their constituents' views, with 78 per cent agreeing that MPs should vote free of party discipline,[17] and 63 per cent agreeing that MPs should follow the views of people in their

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[14] Ibid., 18.

[15] André Blais and Elisabeth Gidengil, <u>Making Representative Democracy Work: The Views of Canadians</u>, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 17 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 35.

[16] Ibid., 37.

[17] Ibid., 42.

ridings.[18]

Alan Cairns' makes reference to the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords as important events in fueling this voter disillusionment. It was during these two rounds of constitutional negotiation that voters strongly and openly began to question the legitimacy of behind closed-doors decision-making by governmental representatives, with little or no place for public consultation and functional representation.[19] Many Canadians appear to believe that first ministers cannot fully represent their interests. As Cairns notes, referring to voters' displeasure with the Meech Lake Accord: "They objected not only to the substance of Meech Lake, but also emphatically and truculently to the executive federalism process by which it was to be brought about."[20] The 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Cairns claims, encourages Canadians to view themselves as both individuals and as members of non-territorial functional groups who do not see themselves represented in first

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[18] Ibid., 61.

[19] Voter anger with the closed process in Meech resulted in a much more open and consultative process being followed in the Charlottetown round. The final accord in the Charlottetown round, reached during several days of private meetings of provincial representatives, was, however, soundly defeated by voters in a subsequent referendum.

[20] Alan Cairns, "The Charter Interest Groups, Executive Federalism and Constitutional Reform," in David E. Smith et al, eds., After Meech Lake: Lessons for the Future (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1991), 20-21.

ministers' meetings.[21]   In the forum of constitution
building, at least, closed, elite dominated politics are
being challenged as illegitimate. Cairns further notes the
"vehemence and bitterness with which the spokespersons for
various groups challenged the legitimacy of a closed door
elite bargaining process restricted to governments."[22]

The 1991 Report of the parliamentary committee
considering methods of constitutional amendment found that
the sentiments described by Cairns in 1988 had not subsided
in the three intervening years. The Committee reported that:
"A great number of witnesses took the position that the
Constitution belongs to the people and the people must be
enabled to pronounce on it"[23] and that, "[w]itnesses said
they felt they were being left out of discussions on
important issues that directly concerned them when a
constitutional agreement was negotiated exclusively by
federal and provincial political leaders without the public
being consulted in advance."[24]   Kathy Brock also finds a

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[21] See ibid., and Alan Cairns, "Citizens (Outsiders) and
Government (Insiders) in Constitution-Making: the Case of
Meech Lake", Canadian Public Policy special edition (1988),
121.

[22] Ibid., 125.

[23] The Process for Amending the Constitution of Canada:
The Report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and
the House of Commons, June 20, 1991, 36.

[24] Ibid., 53.

demand by voters for greater participation and consultation in constitution-making post-Meech Lake.[25]

Reginald Whitaker, commenting on the demise of the Meech Lake Accord, wrote in 1992, "[o]ld-style elite accommodation certainly failed. The ludicrous public convulsions of June 1990 were the visible manifestations of a set of discredited political elites trying desperately but ineffectually to paper over their own lack of legitimacy."[26] Their legitimacy was being questioned not because their actions were extra-constitutional, but rather because Canadians' notions of acceptable democratic practice and of their relationship with their political leaders and processes was evolving.

While much of the above commentary relates to constitutional politics, there is no valid reason to believe that this transformation in the way Canadians view their relationship with their politicians and political institutions is limited to constitution-making. Indeed, Cairns is correct in suggesting that one of the significant events of the 1993 federal election was the transference of

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[25] Kathy L. Brock "The Politics of Process," in D. Brown, ed., Canada: The State of the Federation 1991 (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1991), 57.

[26] Reginald Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 286.

this increasing desire for direct citizen participation in Canadian democracy to the arena of electoral politics.

In an article considering various explanatory factors of the 1993 federal election result, Cairns includes a rejection of elite-dominated brokerage politics and a desire by voters to play a more active role in public decision-making as two important contributing phenomena. He w ites that:

> The election confirmed the changed relations between citizens and governing (or would-be governing) elites that surfaced with and were stimulated by the successive defeats of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords....The attack on the constitutional accords was, among other things an attack on brokerage politics, especially of the kind that takes place behind closed doors.[27]

Emboldened by the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord and the elites' agreement to hold a referendum on the Charlottetown Accord, voters are increasingly challenging the legitimacy of Canada's institutions of representative democracy.[28] This proposition is supported by the polling data discussed earlier, popular support for the Reform Party of Canada's

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[27] Alan Cairns, "An Election t be Remembered: Canada 1993," Canadian Public Policy 3 (1994), 229.

[28] Of course, the rejection of elite-dominated processes was not solely responsible for the strong wave of disgruntlement with everything connected to government existing prior to the 1993 election. The roles of the Reform Party, Former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, the media, and the wide spread distrust of Prime Minister Mulroney were also all important factors.

platform planks supporting increased use of direct democracy, the somewhat hesitant support of the other parties for more participatory practices and the overwhelming support given by voters in British Columbia (BC) and Saskatchewan to institutionalizing direct democracy practices in their electoral systems.

A centre-piece of the Reform Party's 1993 election platform was a call for political reform including more free votes in the House of Commons, making public the results of caucus votes, support for binding referendums, citizens' initiatives in putting questions to a referendum and procedures for the recall of MPs.[29] The party's platform states:

> We believe in the common sense of the common
> people, their right to be consulted on public
> policy matters before major decisions are made,
> their right to choose and recall their own
> representatives and to govern themselves through
> truly representative and responsive institutions,
> and their right to directly initiate legislation
> for which substantial public support is
> demonstrated.[30]

While the Reform Party was at the forefront in the call for these reforms, the anger of voters with the existing political arrangements was not lost on the other parties. Prime Minister Kim Campbell, acknowledging voters' desire for

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[29] Blue Sheet: Principles, Policies and Election Platform, Reform Party of Canada (1993).

[30] Ibid., 3.

a change in the policy-making process, made a call for "doing politics differently" a central plank in both her campaign for the Progressive Conservative Party (PC) leadership and in the 1993 general election. While stopping short of endorsing more frequent use of direct democracy, the PC platform acknowledged that, "Canadians have had enough bickering and cynicism. They want to believe that government can and does work to serve their interests - that it respects their problems, opinions and tax dollars."[31] The PC platform included a promise to increase the power of individual MPs by allowing more free votes -- presumably to allow them to vote according to the wishes of their constituents.[32]

The Liberal Party included in its platform a section entitled "Governing With Integrity" that also included promises aimed at increasing the role played by individual MPs in the public policy-making process.[33] Mel Hurtig's National Party of Canada included in its platform promises for more frequent use of binding referendum and reform of the parliamentary process "so that our members of parliament are

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[31] Making Government Work for Canada: A Taxpayers' Agenda, Progressive Conservative Party of Canada (October, 1993), 29. See also, Progressive Conservative Party News Release, "Campbell offers a clear choice for Canadians," September 28, 1993.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada, Liberal Party of Canada (1993), 92.

much more important in our democratic process."[34] New
Democratic Party (NDP) leader Audrey McLaughlin joined in
this chorus, with vague general statements such as "we have
challenged elected politicians throughout the country to let
the people play a role, let Canadians have a say in their
future."[35]

Voters in two provinces, Saskatchewan and BC, have
expressed strong support for including methods of direct
democracy in their provincial democratic processes. Asked in
a referendum, held in conjunction with their 17 October 1991
provincial election, British Columbians overwhelmingly voted
in favour of measures calling on the provincial legislature
to enact legislation allowing for recall, referendum, and
citizen initiative.[36] Less than a month later Saskatchewan
voters overwhelmingly approved a similar ballot proposition

[34] Mel Hurtig, A New and Better Canada: Principles and
Policies of a New Canadian Political Party (Toronto:
Stoddart, 1992), 33-34.

[35] "Notes for an Address by Audrey McLaughlin, Halifax,
Nova Scotia, June 9, 1991," in Speeches: New Democratic Party
Convention, Halifax, June 1991 (Research Group, New
Democratic Party), 7.

[36] Voters were asked two questions: 1. "Should voters
be given the right, by legislation, to vote between
elections for the removal of their members of the Legislative
Assembly?" Yes 80.9 per cent, No 19.1 per cent. 2. "Should
voters be given the right, by legislation, to propose
questions that the government of British Columbia must submit
to voters by referendum?" Yes 83.0 per cent, No 17.0 per
cent. See Norman Ruff, "Institutionalizing Populism in
British Columbia," Canadian Parliamentary Review 4 (1993-94),
24-32.

offered in conjunction with their provincial election.

This support for more effective citizen participation in public decision-making is an apparent rejection of the traditional Canadian practice of brokerage politics. Before considering the manifestations and implications of this phenomenon it is necessary to examine the brokerage model and the aspects of its practice that have apparently led to its popular rejection.

The Brokerage Tradition

Popular enthusiasm for increased use of direct democracy and a larger policy role for MPs and grassroots activists runs counter to Canada's long-standing tradition of elite-dominated public decision-making. Canada's politics and political parties have traditionally been described as following the brokerage model. André Siegfried was among the first to observe how Canadian parties lacked strong ideological foundations, shifted policy positions rather routinely, and sought power by stitching together coalitions crossing a strong racial divide.[37] Siegfried identified ethnicity and religion as the principal factors in Canadian politics and as the primary chasms that parties had to bridge in order to achieve electoral success.

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[37] André Siegfried, The Race Question in Canada, Frank A. Underhill, ed., (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1966, original 1904).

R. MacGregor Dawson's classic treatise on Canadian government concurs with Siegfried's earlier observations. Dawson described Canadian parties as brokers that attempt to accommodate the interests of dissident, often regionally based, forces. He wrote that, "[t]he parties are the outstanding agents for bringing about cooperation and compromise between conflicting groups and interests of all kinds in the nation;"[38] and "[t]o gain power any party must have as its primary purpose the reconciliation of what may be the widely scattered interests of two or more of these areas."[39]

Political parties' preoccupation with accommodating racial and regional divisions has been further reinforced by Canada's use of a first-past-the-post, single member constituency electoral system. As Cairns has observed: "Divisions cutting through sections, particularly those based on the class system, have been much less salient because the possibility of payoffs in terms of representation has been minimal."[40] Thus, rather than appealing to interests that cross regional and ethnic divides, parties have attempted to

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[38] R. MacGregor Dawson, The Government of Canada, revised by Norman Ward, (6th ed.; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 7.

[39] Ibid., 21.

[40] Alan Cairns, "The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-1965," Canadian Journal of Political Science 1 (1968), 5.

win the support of various regions by appealing to their parochial interests and uniting them with one another in support of vague generalities on other issues.

The need to find common ground between disparate groups without risk of alienating them is expressed by John McLeod:

> It is not surprising that our parties
> are constantly preoccupied with the search
> for simple common denominators of slogans
> and policies on which it may be possible
> to unite enough of the diverse elements
> of the population to win elections....
> Issues for which no common denominator
> can be found tend to be evaded or solutions
> postponed.[41]

Historically, the two old Canadian parties have been similar to those found in the United States in that they may be accurately described as "big tent" parties on the major policy issues. Individuals with varying positions on important issues of public policy were welcomed into the parties and presumably fel quite comfortable with one another. This is in contras. to parties such as those in the United Kingdom, which polarize voters along strong ideological lines - often based on economic issues - and are not welcoming to those with differing views. Hugh Bone writes that "[a]lthough using British names, Canadian parties are more like American parties, for they are coalitions of regional, ethnic, and economic interest groups....One formula

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[41] John T. McLeod, "Explanations of Our Party System," in Paul W. Fox, ed., Politics: Canada (5th ed.; Toronto and New York: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1982), 311.

for explaining Canadian politics is that the voters support the party which divides them the least."[42]

Canadian parties have traditionally attempted to represent all of the major interests within their leadership structure and not to alienate any group, particularly ethnic and regional ones, by taking strong positions on controversial issues. As Dawson noted: "The differences within the parties can thus be more acute than between the parties themselves; and each party, if it is to command anything approaching general support from its members, must work out some kind of consensus within its own ranks."[43]

The brokering of interests has traditionally taken place among elites within each parties' leadership. As Thorburn has observed, "[w]e refer to the Liberals and Conservatives as parties of consensus because they are essentially brokerage parties or parties facilitating élite accommodation, which have no ideological perspective

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[42] Hugh Alvin Bone, _American Politics and the Party System_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 146-47. See also Frank Scott's famous poem "W.L.M.K." in Francis Reginald Scott and A.J.M. Smith, _The Blasted Pine: An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse, Chiefly by Canadian Writers_ (Toronto: Macmillan, 1957), which includes the following verse:
> He blunted us.
> We had no shape
> Because he never took sides,
> And no sides
> Because he never allowed them to take shape.

[43] Dawson, _The Government of Canada_, 21.

deviating from the status quo."[44]

There are two important results of the brokerage operations of Canada's traditional parties that affect the strength of the relationship between voters' desires and policy wants, and the agendas of parties and governmental outcomes. They are: (1) an unwillingness by the parties to focus on issues that may cut across cleavages and divide subgroups, and (2) the parties' failure to provide opportunity for effective participation by their grassroots supporters in policy development.

Joseph Wearing has written that brokerage politics leads parties to a "failure to enunciate clear policy alternatives during elections, while the fear of exacerbating the country's regional and linguistic divisions discourages party leaders from attempting any innovation in economic and social politics."[45] The parties have feared that clear and consistent statements on important policy issues would alienate groups whose support is necessary to form a winning coalition. Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson have explained that "although parties may sometimes develop quite coherent and even principled positions, these are fragile constructions

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[44] Hugh G. Thorburn, Party Politics in Canada (6th ed.; Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1991), 2.

[45] Joseph Wearing, Strained Relations: Canadian Parties and Voters (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), 228.

and easily reversed when conditions change."[46]   This idea has also been convincingly argued by the authors of the _Absent Mandate_ series on Canadian elections:

> The first consequence of a system of brokerage politics is, then, very few mechanisms for policy innovation and debate within the process of party competition....Recent elections have reflected this displacement, they have become events in which clear policy choices are rarely presented and where the range of choices is limited.[47]

A similar rationale has been used to explain the absence of strong class politics in Canada.   The near obsession of the traditional parties with coalition building and accommodation centered on regional and ethnic cleavages "severely restricted the potential of political parties trying to introduce a class cleavage into the federal system of partisan alignments."[48]

What is consistent in all of these discussions of the

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[46] Janine M. Brodie and Jane Jenson, "Piercing the Smokescreen: Brokerage Parties and Class Politics," in Alain-G. Gagnon and A. Brian Tanguay, eds., _Canadian Parties in Transition: Discourse, Organization and Representation_ (Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Canada, 1991), 33.

[47] Harold D. Clarke et al, _Absent Mandate: The Politics of Discontent in Canada_ (Toronto: Gage, 1984), 13.   See also Clarke et al, _Absent Mandate: Interpreting Change in Canadian Elections_ (2nd edition, Toronto: Gage, 1991) and Clarke et al, _Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring_ (3rd edition, Toronto: Gage, 1996).

[48] Janine M. Brodie and Jane Jenson, "Another Explanation - Class Differences Have Been Observed," in Paul W. Fox, ed, _Politics: Canada_ (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1991), 282.

implications of the brokerage practice for Canadian politics is that voters are often denied vigorous public debate on important political issues. The chances of each of the parties staking out and defending a distinct and consistent ideological perspective are slim. Instead the parties fight over the center ground and underplay any significant ideological differences that may jeopardize the support of blocks of voters necessary to build a winning electoral coalition. As a result, interested voters are likely to become discouraged at election time when the parties fail to take strong, clear stands on the major public policy issues, thus limiting their ability to choose from among different policy prescriptions.

The second relevant result is the old-line parties' lack of interest in, sometimes active discouragement of, policy debate and initiative among their grass roots supporters. This results from the fact that the brokering that takes place is done almost exclusively among elites and behind the secrecy of closed doors. S.J.R. Noel identifies this as a significant difference in the practice of brokerage politics between Canadian and American parties. Describing the US party system as belonging to the brokerage model, Noel observes that "[t]he Canadian System by contrast is 'closed;' like the British, it operates behind a screen of constitutional conventions which normally shades its crucial

areas of bargaining and decision-making from the public gaze."[49]

The practice of brokerage politics, while ensuring a limited range of policy positions taken by parties at election time, need not necessarily curtail opportunities for party activists to play a policy role. Even brokerage parties take some policy stands during elections, can engage in vigorous intra-party debate (e.g., US parties), and make policy decisions when forming a government. Rather, it is the elite-centered nature of Canadian brokerage politics that severely restricts and discourages citizens from playing a meaningful role in the development and evaluation of public policy positions within Canadian parties. As Clarke et al have observed, one of the results of the Canadian brokerage system is that:

> voters tend to become disillusioned with
> electoral politics and politicians. The
> displacement of policy discussion to
> bureaucratic and federal-provincial politics
> in combination with the short-term focus
> of federal electoral politics, is likely
> to leave voters with little hope that much
> will come out of the electoral arena.[50]

The closed and elite-dominated characteristics of Canadian

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[49]   S.J.R. Noel, "Political Parties and Elite Accommodation: Interpretations of Canadian Federalism," in J. Peter Meekison, ed., Canadian Federalism Myth or Reality (3rd ed.; Toronto: Methuen, 1977), 64.

[50] Clarke, Absent Mandate: The Politics of Discontent, 26.

brokerage parties have led some commentators like Noel to explain Canadian politics using the consociational model.[51] In the consociational model, accommodation among the various ethnic or racial sub-groups comprising the polity takes place exclusively among elites. Citizens from different sub-groups are not encouraged to engage in consensus-building activities amongst each other. Rather, the interests of recognized societal sub-groups are accommodated within parties among the parliamentary caucus or cabinet, and amongst governments at first ministers' conferences. Consistent with the consociational model, parties do not encourage sustained, vigorous policy debate among their grassroots supporters.

Consociational parties require the flexibility to permit accommodation on policy issues among their elites; thus, they cannot be wedded to policy positions decided upon by their extra-parliamentary party. Several authors have commented on the uneasy relationship between parliamentary caucuses and the extra-parliamentary wing of their party on matters of public policy.

The tensions between these two groups are greatest when the party is in power. Cabinets, for several reasons, including a feeling of restraint because of the need to broker interests, are unwilling to allow the party membership

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[51] Noel, "Political Parties and Elite Accommodation," 64.

a significant role in the making of government policy.[52] The tension between these two groups is described by Wearing in his study of the Liberal party.[53] Writing about the Trudeau government, he observes that even "[p]articipation in the more restricted sense of providing local party elites with more influence, had been difficult to incorporate into existing party structures and had encountered opposition from the Cabinet."[54] Pierre Trudeau has also written that the party membership has only an advisory role to play in government policy-making and that cabinet should in no way feel obliged to accept the suggestions of the party membership.[55] Wearing and Whitaker both describe a cycle in

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[52] The granting of an increased policy-making role to the extra-parliamentary wing of a political party also runs counter to Canada's tradition of parliamentary sovereignty. Several commentators have suggested that in the past 15 years Canadians have been in the process of asserting popular sovereignty. Certainly the demands for increased participation and consultation in the governing process support this claim. Many point to the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedom as an important step in the process of reclaiming popular sovereignty. See, for example, Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea, 297; and Peter H. Russell, Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Be a Sovereign People? (2nd ed.; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

[53] A more detailed discussion of this issue, including a broader historical perspective is included Chapter Two.

[54] Joseph Wearing, The L - Shaped Party: The Liberal Party of Canada, 1958-1980 (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1981), 172.

[55] Pierre E. Trudeau, "Pierre Trudeau on the Prime Minister's Relations with Policy Making Institutions and with his Party," edited by Thomas A. Hockin, in Thomas A. Hockin, ed., Apex of Power: The Prime Minister and Political

which parties out of power, or otherwise in need of revitalization - such as those forming consecutive minority governments, will often expand the authority of the mass membership only to once again become cabinet centered when returned to government.[56] In this context, to use the phraseology of Maurice Duverger, Canada's traditional parties function as cadre as opposed to mass membership parties.[57]

As evidenced in the first section of this chapter, pollsters, and other observers of Canadian politics, are finding record-high levels of voter alienation from political institutions and practices which to a large extent appears to result from a failure to involve citizen participation in a sufficiently effective way in the governing process. The practice of brokerage politics is not easily amenable to widespread public participation. Noel was among the first to identify the potential tensions between these two democratic methods, when he wrote that:

> the decline of 'elitism' in Canada
> and a growing popular acceptance of the
> Jacksonian myth of popular or 'participatory'

Leadership in Canada (2nd. ed.; Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1977), 145.

[56] Reginald Whitaker, The Government Party: Organizing and Financing the Liberal Party of Canada (Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977); and Wearing, The L-Shaped Party.

[57] Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State (London, Methuen; New York, Wiley, 1954), 63-71.

> democracy may be detrimental to the maintenance
> of Canadian federalism if it leads to a
> situation in which the mass of the people
> are unwilling to accept the inter-elite
> accommodations made by their political leaders.
> If inter-elite accommodations must be popularly
> ratified they may be impossible to achieve.[58]

Noel also warned that the continuance of elite dominated brokerage politics is dependent on the continued selection of elites from each sub-group willing to compromise their parochial interests for the national interest. This is a requisite clearly being challenged by the emergence of regional parties in the West and Quebec who explicitly question the legitimacy of elite-centered accommodative politics. As Noel wrote:

> the emergence within any one subculture
> of new eli , who, for nationalistic, economic,
> ideological or any other reason, are unwilling
> to provide overarching cooperation at the
> elite level with the deliberate aim of
> counteracting disintegrative tendencies in
> the system, will make the system inoperable,
> for there exists no mass consensus to which
> its defenders may appeal.[59]

As evidenced in the discussion of direct democracy that follows, Noel is correct in arguing that a demise in elite dominated practices may make compromise and accommodation more difficult to achieve.

The regional and linguistic tensions that initially made

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[58] Noel, "Political Parties and Elite Accommodation," 80-81.

[59] Ibid., 81.

brokerage politics necessary in Canada remain strong today Quebec is once again governed by the Parti québécois (PQ), a party committed to removing the province from Confederation. Similarly, Canada's official opposition party, the Bloc québécois (BQ), is equally committed to Quebec independence. Quebec separatists came within one percentage point of winning the October 1995 referendum.

The two most western provinces are overwhelmingly represented in the House of Commons by a party with a unilingual leader that managed to elect only two MPs east of the Saskatchewan border. The Reform Party won the majority of western ridings while contesting none in Quebec, and the BQ won the majority of Quebec ridings while contesting none outside the province. More than three decades of attempts to amend Canada's constitution have failed to reach an accord acceptable to a majority of Canadians from all regions. While first ministers have managed to reach constitutional agreement - the Fulton-Favreau, Victoria, Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords - they have not been able to see these through to fruition at least in part because of their inability to convince their citizens of the agreements' wisdom. The 1982 constitution round, resulting in patriation and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, was strongly opposed by the Quebec government. While the Charlottetown Accord referendum may have united English speaking Canadians in

their opposition to elite dominated decision-making, its results also evidenced that the Canadian populace is no more able to reach consensus on important national issues today than at any time in their past.

While political parties and the practice of brokerage politics have not solved Canada's unity problem, many authors credit them with playing an important role in integrating regional and linguistic interests into national policy.[60] The accomplishment of finding sufficient compromises to hold Canada together for more than 125 years should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, strong regional and linguistic tensions remain. The resulting continuing need for accommodative politics poses a serious problem for advocates of more participatory practices as it is not clear that greater participation will permit the necessary compromise.

The Shortcomings of Direct Democracy

One way to ensure a strengthening of the connection between voters' desires and policy outcomes would be to increase use

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[60] See, for example, Paul Thomas, "Parties and Regional Representation," in Herman Bakvis, ed., Representation, Integration and Political Parties in Canada, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 14 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 179-252. David Elkins suggests that we expect too much from our political parties if we expect them to solve our national unity problems. See David J. Elkins, "Parties as National Institutions: A Comparative Study," in ibid., 3-62.

of direct democracy -- particularly referendum and citizens' initiative. Representative democracy has long been criticized for distorting the views of voters. It is only through direct democracy that voters can be assured of a direct correlation between their preferences and policy outcomes. However, logistical problems of size, cost and efficiency prevent even strong supporters of direct democracy from arguing that it can feasibly, completely replace representative government. Instead they argue that increased use of direct democracy, on important issues, will ensure that voters' wishes dictate policy outcomes on these matters.[61]

The evidence recounted earlier in this chapter illustrates increased popular support for use of referendum and citizen initiative. David MacDonald wrote in 1991 that: "The perceived inadequacies of representation and parliamentary government in Canada have given rise to two waves of populist, anti-party movements, the first in the 1920s and 1930s and the second in the early 1990s. Each outbreak of populism has been accompanied by unabashed calls

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[61] Perhaps, the best known advocate of increased use of direct democracy in Canada is former MP Patrick Boyer. Boyer does not advocate replacing the Canadian system of representative government, rather argues that it can be improved by supplementing it with regular referenda and citizens' initiatives on important policy questions. See, for example, J. Patrick Boyer, Direct Democracy in Canada: The History and Future of Referendums (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992).

for the use of direct democracy."[62]   David Laycock has observed that support for direct democracy in the period 1895-1921 was largely based on dissatisfaction with contemporary forms of representation:

> When most fervently promoted, the measures of direct democracy - the initiative, referendum, and recall - have been seen as means of bringing the full force of the popular will into a political arena needlessly complicated by élitist, untrustworthy 'politicians.' In this sense, direct legislation is a quintessential expression of the twin attitudinal pillars of all populisms: distrust of all élites and deep faith in the common sense and ethical wisdom of the common people.[63]

Vincent Lemieux has argued, consistent with the critique of brokerage politics reviewed earlier, that referenda are sometimes needed to determine public will on policy issues as "an election does not permit citizens to express their opinions on specific problems."[64]   Lemieux further argues that:

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[62] David MacDonald, "Referendums and Federal General Elections in Canada," in Michael Cassidy, ed., Democratic Rights and Electoral Reform in Canada, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 10 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 302.

[63] David Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Provinces, 1910 to 1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 37.

[64] Vincent Lemieux, "The Referendum and Canadian Democracy," in Peter AuCoin, ed., Institutional Reforms for Representative Government, Research studies of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospect for Canada, volume 38 (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1985), 111.

> although the party system is necessary in
> representative democracy, it introduces what
> some people consider to be distortions in the
> election of representatives and in their
> deliberations in the assembly. The positions
> represented in both the electoral arena and the
> legislative arena are the parties' positions;
> they are no longer the citizens' positions,
> even if the parties attempt to adapt to the
> citizens' wishes. Some ideas may no longer be
> advocated and still others the parties cling to
> might run contrary to what some citizens believe.[65]

This rationale for direct democracy has also been expressed by Elizabeth Chambers: "With separate ballots for each issue and for the candidates, issues could be disentangled and men separated from measures; voters could vote according to their convictions without the fate of the party being involved."[66]

Chambers and others, such as W.L. Morton, have also explained support for direct democracy as being based upon fear that the will of the people was thwarted in representative democracy by "moneyed powers and privileged interests."[67] Morton explains that the prairie populists of the early twentieth century believed that "[t]he people was in its nature good, all power belonged to the electorate but existing government was bad and the will of the electorate

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[65] Lemieux, "The Referendum and Canadian Democracy," 112.

[66] Elizabeth Chambers, "The Referendum and the Plebiscite," in Norman Ward and Duff Spafford, Politics in Saskatchewan (Don Mills, Ontario: Longmans, 1968), 61.

[67] W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 15.

was thwarted....The evil was found to be in the party system of representative democracy."[68]

Support for direct democracy often revolves around a belief in the people being sovereign. Rousseau's writings include a belief in popular sovereignty, as did the views of the early Western Canadian populists and many present day supporters of direct democracy. Morton quotes R.C. Henders, the President of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, a leading group in the early prairie populist movement, as saying in 1912:

> The sovereign people ha⋅ , I might say, no direct efficient control. They are sovereign de jure but not de facto, except at election time. The actual power experienced by the people consists chiefly in the periodic choice of another set of masters who make laws to suit themselves and enforce them until their term of office expires, regardless of the will of the people.[69]

Henders is also quoted by Laycock as saying, "[t]he people of Canada have never abrogated their right to rule. If, therefore, custom has introduced a system of legislation by which our legislators, can if they desire place themselves at variance with the wishes of the people, for a period of four years irreparable damage may be sustained."[70]

A second argument in support of direct democracy

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[68] Ibid., 16.

[69] Ibid., 25.

[70] Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought, 38.

relevant to this discussion is that frequent use of it will bring more people into the political process as participants, and thus increase their confidence in the political system as a whole. Thomas Cronin notes that "proponents of direct democracy claimed that their innovations would increase civic pride and trust in government and thereby diminish apathy and alienation."[71] Lemieux concurs with this writing that:

> Still another advantage could result from using referendums more often in Canada: they might promote a greater sense of attachment on the part of Canadians, to the central institutions of the country, as well as a stronger feeling of participation in the decisions that concern us all. It is time to replace the executive style of federalism by a more participatory model.[72]

There is a strong correlation between the voter discontent reviewed earlier in this chapter and the benefits of direct democracy as outlined by its proponents. Canadian voters are disgruntled by what they perceive to be political elites concerning themselves with issues not of particular importance to voters and making decisions on important issues that are not consistent with voters' desires. Many voters also find insufficient meaningful opportunity to participate effectively in public decision-making.

Many analysts, however, reject increased use of direct

[71] Thomas Cronin, <u>Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum and Recall</u> (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 228.

[72] Lemieux, "The Referendum and Canadian Democracy," 139.

democracy in Canada. The Lortie Commission noted that "[t]he alternative to strengthening the institutions of representative government in Canada is increased support for the instruments of what has been traditionally described as 'direct democracy,'"[73] but goes on to conclude that "[a]lthough the instruments of direct democracy may provide citizens with more opportunities to express policy preferences...they are far less suited to accommodating and representing the many different interests of citizens. Effective reconciliation of these interests is crucial for any democratic government."[74] Lemieux concedes that referendums are often criticized for dividing rather than uniting people,[75] and concludes that use of referendum on "questions with a marked ethnic dimension...as was the case in the 1942 plebiscite, should be avoided."[76]

In the debate in the House of Commons in 1978 concerning the Canada Referendum Act, several speakers raised concern that increased use of direct democracy would result in a more divided populace. PC MP Flora MacDonald argued that:

Whatever reasons one can cite for favouring

[73] Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 2, 229.

[74] Ibid., 229.

[75] Lemieux, "The Referendum and Canadian Democracy," 137.

[76] Ibid., 139.

> referenda, the healing of wounds is not one
> of them. Referenda serve to set neighbour against
> neighbour, family member against family member
> and the cleavage remains long after the content
> of the referendum has been forgotten...The last
> thing we want at this time is to further bend the
> fragile fabric of confederation at a time when it
> is being subjected to greater strain than ever
> before in our history."

NDP Leader Ed Broadbent concurred with this sentiment, arguing that as elected representatives "it is our responsibility to face immensely complicated issues and to work out answers and compromises, because that is essential in a democracy, and normally referenda do not provide for compromise."[78] Even the Minister sponsoring the bill, Marc Lalonde, agreed that "Canada is a federation and a federation requires a careful balance between the central and provincial governments:" therefore, he argues, referenda should only be consultative as "[i]t is ... not a substitute for Parliament."[79]

There is a history of referenda use in Canada that MacDonald and Broadbent were alluding to in their remarks. Canada has had three national referenda. The first was held in 1898 on the issue of prohibition, the second in 1942 concerned conscription and the third in 1992 sought

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[77] House of Commons Debates, 1978 volume 2, 12 December, 2039.

[78] Ibid., 2043.

[79] Ibid., 2035.

ratification of the constitutional amendments in the Charlottetown Accord. All three of these experiences illustrate the dangers of division capable of resulting from use of national referendum in Canada.

Debate in parliament prior to the 1898 referendum suggested the difficulties in relying on direct democracy for public decision-making in Canada. Several MPs raised questions concerning the difficulty of using referendum in federal states with strong cleavages between the provinces. Bergeron inquired as to government intentions in the event that English Canada and Quebec voted differently: "I want to know whether in such a case, this Government is going to impose prohibition on Quebec."[80] Foster asked, "[i]s the government going to take the position ... that unless there is a majority in every province in the Dominion in the affirmative, it will not consider that it has a mandate from the electorate of this country to introduce a prohibition Bill and carry in out into law?"[81] Several other MPs opposed the use of referendum as being contrary to British parliamentary tradition.[82]

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[80] House of Commons Debates, 1898 volume 1, 21 April, 3933.

[81] House of Commons Debates, 1898 volume 2, 3 May, 4694.

[82] See, for example, Sproule, House of Commons Debates, 1898 volume 2, 3 May, 4712-13: "I am not in favour of the principle of a referendum. I have always held that it is un-British and utterly opposed to British parliamentary usage."

Bergeron and Foster's questions became more pressing for the government as the results of the referendum did reveal drastically different attitudes in Quebec and in English Canada. In the event, 278,487 votes were cast in favour of prohibition and 264,571 against. These totals are deceiving as English Canadians voted overwhelmingly for prohibition while 122,612 Quebecers voted against and only 25,582 in favour. Thus the government was faced with either imposing prohibition in Quebec or not acting in accordance with the expressed view of a majority of referendum voters. Unwilling to act in such a controversial area, with no clear public consensus, Laurier concluded "that the narrowness of the prohibition majority did not justify the Government taking any action."[83] This decision left the majority prohibition supporters outraged: "Prohibitionists felt betrayed, and were not convinced by Laurier's arguments that the slight majority for prohibition - slight because Quebec had voted overwhelmingly against it - was insufficient..."[84]

The 1942 referendum on conscription again divided English and French speaking Canadians. Under great pressure by military leaders and some in the English Canadian establishment to impose conscription, Mackenzie King sought

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[83] J. A. Stevenson, Before the Bar: Prohibition Pro and Con (Toronto: JM Dent and Sons, 1919), 87.

[84] J. M. S. Careless and R. Craig Brown, eds., The Canadians 1867-1967 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1967), 135.

a release from his earlier campaign promise not to impose
conscription. King was reluctant to move in this area as he
was well aware that the country was divided along linguistic
lines. On 27 April 1942 a national referendum was held on
the following question: "Are you in favour of releasing the
government from any obligation arising out of any past
commitments restricting the methods of raising men for
military service." The results were 2,945,514 in favour and
1,643,006 opposed. Troubling for the Government was the fact
that 73 per cent of Quebecers voted no as did a majority of
voters in every constituency in the country with a majority
francophone population.[85]   J. L. Granatstein and J. M.
Hitsman wrote that, "[t]he plebiscite results, however,
demonstrated that the two nations of Canada each had their
own - and separate - unity.[86]

The 1992 referendum on the Charlottetown Accord again
highlighted strong differences between English and French
Canadians.   While both groups rejected the package of
constitutional amendments by approximately equal proportions
they did so for almost polar opposite reasons.   A strong

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[85]   J. L.   Granatstein and J. M. Hitsman, Broken
Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada (Toronto:
Oxford University Press, 1977), 171.

[86]   Ibid, 171. For a full discussion of the tensions
between English and French Canada over the conscription issue
see Bruce Hutchison, The Incredible Canadian: A Candid
Portrait of Mackenzie King, His Work, His Times and His
Nation (Toronto: New York: Longmans, Green, 1952).

majority of Quebec francophones opposed the accord on the grounds that its terms were not generous enough to Quebec. At the same time, many English Canadians, particularly those in Western Canada, voted no complaining that the agreement ceded too much authority to Quebec.

None of the Canadian experiences with a national referendum offer any evidence of direct democracy being able to bring Canadians together. Canada's experiences with direct democracy illustrate the referendum's proclivity towards focussing on existing differences rather than building bridges among them. This characteristic of referenda is consistent with the common ci iticism of direct democracy that it is completely driven by the principle of majority rule at the expense of other, often essential, democratic tenets of consensus-building and protection of minority interests. Cronin identifies an inability of direct democracy to reconcile majority and minority interests as one of its substantial shortcomings and cites an American study reporting that "[a]t the local level there is evidence that direct legislation devices have impaired racial equality."[87] It is not difficult to imagine regional and linguistic minorities quickly rejecting the legitimacy of referendums

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[87] Thomas Cronin, 1989, Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum and Recall (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press), 18, 94. Cronin does subsequently note that legislators are not always protective of minority rights either.

after realizing that they may consistently come out on the short end on important issues.

Conclusion

It is this shortcoming of direct democracy, along with its inherent logistical impracticalities, that makes it unsatisfactory as a substantial substitute for representative government in Canada. While direct democracy answers voters' concerns regarding responsiveness of the policy process, it does not address the Canadian reality that political practices and institutions must constantly struggle to find common ground between at least two and often more linguistic and regional interests.

This is the dilemma facing those interested in reforming the Canadian party and electoral system: a need to increase the effectiveness of citizen participation, and the strength of the relationship between citizens' preferences and governmental outcomes, while preserving, and perhaps strengthening, the political system's ability to reconcile regional and ethnic differences in pursuit of the national interest. The elite dominated, brokerage and consociational practices are found wanting for a lack of effective participatory opportunities offered to voters. Likewise, instruments of direct democracy are not subtle enough to find common interest among Canada's disparate communities.

Chapter Two

Public Participation Within Political Parties

Efforts to increase effective citizen participation in the political process have not been restricted to support for direct democracy. There have been several occasions when grassroots activists looked to political parties as potential vehicles for widespread effective public participation. In these instances, activists have attempted to reconfigure the relationship between party leadership and the grassroots in efforts to increase their influence in party decision-making.

Vaughan Lyon has identified three examples in this century of attempts to increase the effectiveness of citizen participation by modifying the traditional party structure. Lyon describes efforts by the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in Saskatchewan and the federal Liberals to strengthen the relationship between the policy views of grassroots supporters and the positions taken by the parliamentary parties.[1] The literature reviewed in the following pages makes clear that efforts to give substantial and effective policy-making authority to grassroots party members have often fallen short of their objectives. This chapter reviews these three participatory movements, considers the reasons

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[1] Vaughan Lyon, "The Future of Parties -Inevitable... Obsolete? Journal of Canadian Studies 4 (1983-84), 119.

for their failure and examines the attractiveness of parties to those searching for a participatory vehicle.

Efforts to Increase Party Participation

According to David Laycock, the "most distinctive aspects" of the UFA type of populism was "[a] principled rejection of party politics and an insistence on functionally co-ordinated delegate democracy leading into a group government."[2] UFA supporters believed that the traditional parties, through their centralized structures, thwarted the will of the people. Accordingly, the UFA initially sought to avoid a party-like structure controlled by elites. The central tool for accomplishing this goal was delegate democracy. Rather than imposing party discipline on its elected representatives, the UFA encouraged each member to represent the will of his constituents. As the 1921 UFA provincial election platform stated: "Each elected representative is answerable directly to the organization in the constituency that elected him."[3] In the 1921 election, many local associations adopted their own platforms in addition to the provincial platform, and these local platforms "were held to

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[2] Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought, 21.

[3] As quoted in, C.B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System (2nd ed.; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 71.

be binding on the representative."[4]

When the UFA first came to power its caucus remained true to the spirit of delegate democracy and to the letter of their election platform, as they largely took their direction from their local constituents. Not surprisingly, however, the result of this practice was a complete inability by the government to anticipate the level of support within the legislature for any particular bill. According to Macpherson, "[d]uring the first month or two the government never knew, when it went into the house, what would happen before it came out."[5] Shortly after forming a government, however, caucus members began to forfeit their independence. Like governments before them, the UFA found it necessary for cabinet to be able to count on the support of their caucus in the legislature. This resulted in a shift of the members' primary responsibility from representing the views of their constituents to supporting the government.[6]

Ascension to power had apparently diminished the UFAs

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[4] W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 121.

[5] Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, 75.

[6] Macpherson wrote that, "fundamentally what compelled the members to give up their freedom was the need of the UFA to prove its ability to govern and to finance the province....Specifically, the primary responsibility of the member to his constituency association had to give way to his responsibility for mr.ntaining the government, that is, to his responsibility to the cabinet." ibid., 80.

desire for fundamental change in legislative practices. Lyon noted that, "[a]ll but a few of the die-hard democratic fundamentalists among the UFA membership were satisfied with the political status quo once its leaders were in power."[7] It did not take long for this change in attitude to affect grassroots participation in the party. Macpherson observed that local interest in the party and grassroots activity declined substantially prior to the 1926 election.[8]

Opinion on the UFAs ability to implement any sustained change on the prevalent political practice is at best mixed. Lyon concludes that, "[t]he record of the UFA government in implementing the political reforms during its years in office, 1921-35 was meagre. With token gestures in the direction of group government and electoral reform, it quickly slid into the conventional party-government mode."[9] Macpherson, while also concluding that the UFA failed to implement the sweeping democratic changes it initially advocated, noted that the grassroots party "had some influence."[10] The fate of the UFA's support for sweeping changes aimed at increasing the importance of the party's grassroots membership at the expense of its legislative

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[7] Lyon, "The Future of Parties," 119.

[8] Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, 81.

[9] Lyon, "The Future of Parties," 119.

[10] Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, 91.

leadership is best summed up by William Irvine: "Power has a wonderful fascination. Once enjoyed by a farmers' party it would be sought after to the exclusion of all else. In order to hold onto it, the party would have to cater to certain influences, and by and by would be as corrupt as its rivals."[11]

The Saskatchewan CCF attempted to fit together the apparent contradictory practices of intra-party democracy and parliamentary government. The CCF leadership reaffirmed their belief in the principles of parliamentary government including cabinet responsibility to the legislature, while maintaining that this was not inconsistent with intra-party democracy in which the grassroots played an important role in establishing party principles and policies. As Evelyn Eager noted, "[t]he Saskatchewan CCF admitted no such concessions in either direction. The government staunchly proclaimed its adherence to the principles and forms of British parliamentary government. At the same time, it was the deliberate policy of the CCF to maintain an identical structure of party democracy whether in power or in opposition."[12]

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[11] William Irvine, The Farmers in Politics (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1920), 288.

[12] Evelyn Eager, "The Paradox of Power in the Saskatchewan C.C.F., 1944-1961," in J.H. Aitchison, ed., The Political Process in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963) 118. David Laycock also notes that the CCF gave "support for a full ᴊtension of democratic rights and practices within the parliamentary system." Laycock,

The principal method through which this balance was struck appears to be one of communication. The parliamentary party and the membership party communicated with each other on an ongoing basis. This helped to ensure that neither group would get out front in support of an idea that the other was unable to support. There were several instruments used to facilitate these communications. Among the most tangible of these was the Legislative Advisory Committee established in 1941. This body, initially composed of three representatives of the party membership and two from the legislative caucus, had as its principal task the responsibility "to provide liaison between the party and M.L.A.s, and to exercise a voice in the selection of cabinet ministers."[13] According to Eager, the Legislative Advisory Committee "exercised mainly a watch-dog function, reminding caucus of party wishes, observing the fate of convention resolutions and reporting back to its parent body, the C.C.F. Council."[14] The communication flowed both ways as the Premier and cabinet appeared individually at the beginning of each legislative session before relevant committees of the

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Populism and Democratic Thought, 20.

[13] Eager, "The Paradox of Power," 124.

[14] Ibid., 126.

party membership to discuss legislative priorities.[15] Occasionally special committees were struck to ensure coordination between the party and government on particular issues or areas of government activity.[16]

The membership party took its responsibilities in helping to formulate party and government policy very seriously. Party activists spent considerable time informing themselves on and discussing the relevant policy issues. Engelmann wrote of the federal CCF in 1956 that, "[r]egular meetings are held in most constituencies west of the Ottawa River, and in a few of the others, and many of these meetings devote a fair amount of time to the discussion of resolutions on policy and organization."[17] While both wings of the party routinely communicated with one another on important issues, the legislative party, while always considering and giving considerable weight to the views of the party membership, did not believe itself strictly restricted by them. The party leadership accepted that if the legislative body allowed itself to be strictly controlled by the membership that this would violate the fundamental tenets of parliamentary

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[15] See Frederick C. Engelmann, "Membership Participation in Policy-Making in the C.C.F.," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 22 (1956), 172.

[16] Eager, "The Paradox of Power," 127.

[17] Engelmann, "Membership Participation in Policy-Making," 164.

government. Thus, the party constitution allowed that the government should only feel bound by the membership party within the bounds of what was "constitutionally and financially possible." According to Eager, the government was "afforded a considerable latitude in its interpretation of what was 'constitutionally and financially' possible."[18] When the legislative party did reach a decision different from that advocated by the membership, it would make a concerted effort to explain in detail the rationale for its decision to the membership.[19]

In another effort to strengthen accountability of the legislative party to the membership, the party amended its constitution to provide that the leader of the party was to be subject to re-election at each annual party convention.

The Saskatchewan CCF efforts to provide a more effective role for the membership in the establishment of party/government principles and policies resulted in mixed success. While the party remained more internally democratic during its time in government than did its predecessors, over time it witnessed grassroots' interest in party politics wane as decision-making became increasingly centralized. It is, of course, a common occurrence for party decision-making to be increasingly centralized during a government's tenure.

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[18] Eager, "The Paradox of Power," 132.

[19] Ibid.

Lyon observed that "[d]uring the long period of CCF government, 1944-64, the significance of membership policy-making activity declined; the cabinet and bureaucracy assumed the usual dominant role, although the membership continued to play a larger role than it did in the other major parties."[20]

The next significant movement to increase the scope and effectiveness of citizen participation in intra-party decision-making occurred in the Liberal Party following their 1958 election defeat. Wearing describes the central role played by the Liberal Party membership in the movement for increased citizen participation in politics and governing during this period.[21] Some of the manifestations of this movement were: (1) an effort to revitalize riding associations and make them more open and responsive to local concerns, (2) a reactivating and strengthening of the party's

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[20] Lyon, "The Future of Parties," 120. Eager reaches a more positive conclusion, finding that "the means developed for liaison between party and government, and the faithfulness and enthusiasm with which they were employed, resulted in a degree of consultation, over more than a decade and a half, unapproached by any other party in thoroughness and extent." Eager, "The Paradox of Power," 132. Engelman observed of the Saskatchewan CCF experience, "In that province, a balanced interaction between the membership organization and the Government has been attained. Elsewhere, and primarily in the national C.C.F., the lay organization is more likely to defer to the elected legislators." Engelman, "Membership Participation in Policy-Making," 173.

[21] Wearing, The L-Shaped Party.

standing committees, (3) a non-scripted 1966 national policy meeting, (4) a 1968 leadership convention where delegates were chosen by open competition at the riding level as opposed to being hand-picked by MPs, (5) an enhancing of communications between the party and cabinet, (6) a stronger role for the party in patronage, (7) policy oriented local groups - like Toronto's Cell 13 and (8) creation of youth and women's commissions.

Wearing provides details on many of these steps taken by the Liberals at the beginning of the Trudeau era to increase the role of the party in governing. Ministers were required to report at every national party convention on the policies adopted by their departments that differed from existing party policies.[22] Party members were then asked to adopt the government policy as party policy. This process did not turn out to be a deliberative one. Instead of having individual ministers report on their departments and allowing for debate on each report, Trudeau decided to present one report himself on behalf of the government. The result being that any criticism would have been interpreted as a direct assault on the party leader.

The Liberals also initiated something called a 'political cabinet.'[23] This was an expanded cabinet that

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[22] Ibid., 168.

[23] Ibid., 154-55.

included representatives from the party's non-parliamentary wing. Its purpose was to ensure that the political and policy concerns of the institutional party were considered in government decision-making. There was particular concern that the cabinet was not giving sufficient consideration to regional political concerns. Though this body had some early success, it gradually became little more that an opportunity for the cabinet to explain their policies and programs to the party officials. Wearing quotes a party official as saying that "the ministers seemed to believe that party representatives were naive or at best simplistic, chronic bitchers, disorganized, non-supportive of their efforts."[24]

The Liberals also attempted to increase the role of the party in many areas of decision-making, including the distribution of patronage through regional 'troikas.' These were three member committees established for each province, composed of a member of cabinet, a member of caucus, and a representative of the provincial wing of the party.[25] None lasted more than a couple of years. Ministers resented their infringement on what they considered their turf, and caucus members saw them as another buffer between themselves and their regional minister, and hence an attempt to reduce their influence over patronage in their ridings.

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[24] Ibid., 154.

[25] Ibid., 149.

The objectives of the activists were stated by two party members:

> their new concept of the role of a political party - the Liberal Party of Canada - is the recognition that the Party's main function is not restricted in fact to the election of Liberal Party members until a government is formed and thereafter to merely maintain the government in power...[but includes] the recognition that the organization Party... should be interested in not merely obtaining power but the use and exercise of this power... It is not enough to talk of democratizing the Party without ensuring that its role for policy making can be effective.[26]

Many Liberal party members believed their electoral defeats of the late 1950s and early 1960s resulted from "too elitist a reliance on experts, inadequate inputs from the ridings, undemocratic procedures at the policy conventions and a leadership that was arbitrary in its acceptance or rejection of policy views."[27] According to Clarkson, Trudeau's selection as leader was partly the result of "his more specific allure to the Liberal delegates who still felt isolated from the decision-making mechanisms of their own party."[28]

Liberal Party president Richard Stanbury initiated a

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[26] Jerry Grafstein and P. LaPointe, "Editorial," Journal of Liberal Thought 1 (1965), 2.

[27] Stephen Clarkson, "Democracy in the Liberal Party: The Experiment with Citizen Participation Under Pierre Trudeau," in Hugh G. Thorburn, Party Politics in Canada (4th ed., Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1979), 154.

[28] Ibid., 155.

four phase policy process meant to involve and reinvigorate the party's grassroots: (1) a November 1969 'Conference of Thinkers' at Harrison Hot Springs, BC, (2) a year-long grassroots discussion of papers presented at Harrison at the constituency level and the submission of relevant policy resolutions by party members, (3) a 1970 policy convention for ordinary delegates to make policy uncontrolled by caucus or cabinet and (4) resolutions passed in convention drafted into an election platform for the subsequent federal election.[29]

The process failed for one principal reason: the party's grassroots did not believe that their participation would be effective and determinative. As Clarkson notes: "The decision process within the party clearly had little credibility among the riding executives, who continued to suspect that the policy conventions were controlled by the party's elite. In any case, they had no expectation that the government would listen to the party's opinions."[30]

This sentiment among local activists is not surprising considering the lack of enthusiasm with which the national office attempted to engage the grassroots. An example of this is the party's failure to publish and distribute a collection of the papers presented at the Harrison conference

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[29] Ibid., 156.

[30] Ibid., 157.

until after the party's next policy convention -- at which the grassroots were supposed to respond to the Harrison papers -- had adjourned.[31] Grassroots skepticism was well-placed, as cabinet ultimately told Stanbury to forget about adopting a party manifesto for the upcoming federal election. This about-face resulted in substantial disillusionment, as Clarkson discovered:

> When it became clear that none of their
> policy positions would be adopted for the
> 1972 election campaign platform the morale
> of the party core fell noticeably. A survey
> of the most active Liberals in Ontario showed
> that it had been far harder to recruit volunteers
> in the 1972 election than it had been in 1968
> and that campaign workers' morale had been far
> worse even in constituencies that successfully
> returned a Liberal member of parliament.[32]

The effort to involve greater grassroots participation was not without its critics. Viewing the role of parties as being essentially a collective one, cabinet member John Roberts claimed that "the attempt to make political parties mechanisms for effective participation in government decision making flies in the face of history and political experience... it misconceives the essential function parties have played in our political system. That function is the brokerage role of political parties."[33]

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[31] Ibid., 156.

[32] Ibid., 159.

[33] Wearing, The L Shaped Party, 170.

In the end, the movement had only limited success. Despite voicing support for the participatory cause, Trudeau expanded the political role of the PMO, which intruded into the party's former domain. An example of this was the introduction of regional political desks in the PMO. Wearing concludes that: "The public had shown little interest in using the party to gain access to government" and, "[p]articipation, in the more restricted sense of providing local party elites with more influence, had been difficult to incorporate into existing party structures and had encountered opposition from the cabinet."[34]

The failure of the participatory initiatives was summed up by two Liberal Party activists as follows: "The party wing has not solved the problem of continuing policy development within the party structure. There are still no signs of new initiatives for policy making in the party....The public wants to know what is being done. Participation must be on a day to day basis."[35]

As Stanbury wrote in 1970: "The political party has been seen by the public as a sinister machine. Governments in the past tended to treat is as 1 useful tool at election time and as a nuisance between elections. The elite have

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[34] Ibid., 172.

[35] Jerry Grafstein and Claude Frenette, "Editorial" The Journal of Liberal Thought 3 (1969), 8.

regarded it as being beneath contempt."[36]

These efforts by Liberal activists followed a long period of Liberal party rule in which the non-parliamentary party played virtually no role in determining either party or public policy. In his book on the Liberal Party in the first half of this century, Whitaker chronicles Mackenzie King's strong belief that governing was the proper preserve of parliament and cabinet, and therefore there was no role to be played by the party in policy decisions.[37] Whitaker found that, "[c]ertainly, throughout his long career as party leader, King never gave the slightest indication that he harbored any belief in intra-party democracy, especially when the definition of party was extended beyond the cabinet and parliamentary caucus."[38]

Parties Vehicles of Public Participation

Notwithstanding the somewhat disappointing results achieved by party activists in these experiences, it is not surprising that some voters have repeatedly looked to political parties as a possible vehicle for widespread effective public

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[36] Richard Stanbury "Why The Party," in Allen M. Linden, ed., Living in the Seventies (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1970), 246.

[37] Whitaker, The Government Party.

[38] Ibid., 171.

participation.[39] The principal reasons for this would

include the ready accessibility of the parties and the

central role played by parties in our representative

institutions.

Political parties exist to some extent in every

electoral riding across the country. The major parties all

have local organizations in each constituency that they

contest at election time.[40] The local parties are familiar

to voters: their volunteers communicate with many voters

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[39] Besides the three participatory movements discussed
in this chapter, activists in several other parties have
attempted to create a more effective participatory role for
themselves within the party structure. See, for example,
Graham Fraser, P.Q.: René Levesque and the Parti Québécois in
Power (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1984). Fraser recounts
events from several Parti québécois conventions at which the
Party membership was far ahead of the legislative leadership
in demanding sovereignty and denying language rights to
English speaking Québécois. Premier Levesque was constantly
walking a tightrope between concerns of alienating his active
party supporters and approving policies that were certain to
cause his government difficulties. Often by the sheer force
of his strong personality and popularity, Levesque was able
to persuade the party membership to back down from their more
radical demands. In the end, however, a large gulf developed
between Levesque and many party members over the issue of
fighting the 1985 election on the issue of sovereignty.

[40] As discussed in Chapter Four, shortly after the 1993
federal election the parties were able to provide a name and
a valid address for a riding association president in the
following number of ridings: Liberals 283, PCs 281, Reform
212, NDP approximately 211. The NDP number is approximate as
no mailing was made to NDP addresses, thus the number of
invalid addresses is estimated from Carty's earlier
experience. See, R.K. Carty Canadian Political Parties in
the Constituencies, Research studies of the Royal Commission
on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 23 (Toronto:
Dundurn Press, 1991).

during election campaigns, and they hold meetings and other events on an ongoing basis between elections. Many citizens may even be personally familiar with a local party official. The familiarity voters have with local party associations makes it less likely that voters will feel intimidated by them. These considerations are important in that they help to make local party associations easily accessible to interested grassroots activists. There is no need for long distance travel, or writing letters to unknown party officials; they can participate in politics by associating with the political party of their choice in their home community. The cost of this participation is very low.

Participation in parties is also perceived as potentially effective as parties are believed to play a significant role in public decision-making. Political parties select local candidates, they choose party leaders, they organize parliament and they help to determine which policy agenda will be followed -- all of which potentially has a significant impact on public policy outcomes.[41] The Lortie Commission's finding that three-quarters of Canadians

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[41] As Herman Bakvis wrote, "The selection of national party leaders and of candidates in constituencies, and the structure and management of party organizations all represent important and in recent years often controversial responsibilities of political parties." Herman Bakvis, "Preface," in Herman Bakvis, ed. Canadian Political Parties: Leaders, Candidates and Organization, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 13 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991) XVIII.

agree that "[w]ithout political parties there can't be true democracy" reflects a broad understanding of this central role of parties.[42]

Many students of political parties have written that an important function of parties is to serve as an intermediary between grassroots opinion and decision makers. Giovanni Sartori has written that, "[p]arties are the central intermediate and intermediary structures between society and government,"[43] and William Chandler and Alan Siaroff have written that, "[i]n democratic systems, parties operate as the crucial intermediaries linking rulers and ruled. The most basic party function is that of representation involving the translation of public opinion to political leaders"[44] Anthony King includes integration and mobilization of the mass public in his frequently cited list of the principal functions of political parties.[45] Considering the evidence

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[42] Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 207.

[43] Giovanni Sartori, Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1976), ix.

[44] William M. Chandler and Allen Siaroff, "Parties and Party Government in Advanced Democracies," in Bakvis, Canadian Political Parties, 192.

[45] Anthony King, "Political Parties in Western Democracies," Polity 2 (1969), 111-41. King's list also includes integration and mobilization of the mass public, recruitment of political leaders, formation of public policy and aggregation of interests.

reviewed in Chapter One, it is likely a failure in the fulfilling of this function that explains why Canadians view parties with increased skepticism, even while desiring more effective participation for themselves in those areas in which parties play such a central role.

The traditional parties failure to adequately serve as an intermediary between grassroots members and elite decision-makers results from their inability to bridge the important decisions made by the parliamentary parties with their role as mobilizers and intermediaries. The Lortie Commission found that:

> More and more Canadians, including party members, are critical of the way parties select their candidates and leaders, the control party leaders appear to exercise over their supporters in Parliament, the behaviour of the parties during elections, their failure to change party organization and membership to reflect Canadian society, and their short-comings in providing significant opportunities for political participation.[46]

Voters cannot be expected to participate vigorously in party affairs if they do not expect their participation to have some meaningful influence on party decision-making. Jon Elster has argued persuasively that citizens engage in politics in order to achieve a substantive goal and not for whatever personal benefits political participation may offer

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[46] Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 208.

as an end in itself.[47] It is implied in Elster's argument that citizens will only expend their best effort on public participation if they expect their efforts to have some impact on public policy. Participation in political activity is not seen by most voters as a good in itself, but rather as a necessary means to achieve a desired public result. This was evident in the experiences of the UFA and the federal Liberals -- voter interest in party participation dropped significantly as it became clear their participation was not effective.

This lack of confidence in the traditional political parties' ability to translate grassroots' opinion into party policy helps to explain why the desire for increased political participation today appears to be focussed not solely within the traditional parties but also outside of them. Some of the manifestations of this movement appear to be the proliferation of new political parties, an increase in interest group activity, increased direct lobbying of government officials and support for direct democracy electoral reforms.

The fact that voters are looking outside of the

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[47] Jon Elster, "The Market and The Forum: Three Varieties of Political Theory," in Jon Elster and Aanund Hylland, eds., Foundations of Social Choice Theory: Studies in Rationality and Social Change Theory (Cambridge, Eng.: University of Cambridge Press, 1986), 103-132. Elster writes that: "Politics is concerned with substantive decision-making, and is to that extent instrumental," 120.

traditional parties for participatory opportunities is at least partially the result of a lack of confidence in their ability to perform their representative role and to offer effective participatory opportunities. The Lortie Commission found that:

> Except at election time, political parties appear to provide only very limited opportunities for participation by ordinary citizens. At the level of the constituency association, which is virtually the only avenue for obtaining membership in one of the larger parties, participation in party affairs between elections is very limited.[48]

John Meisel provides additional rationale as to why political activists find party participation less appealing. Three factors identified by Meisel concern a decrease in parties' influence over public policy: (1) the rise of the bureaucratic state, (2) federal-provincial diplomacy and (3) a decline in ministerial responsibility.[49]

The rise of the bureaucratic state and decline in ministerial responsibility together result in an increase of influence over public policy by civil servants who are not controlled by the political parties. The result is that for those wishing to influence a specific area of public policy it is more efficacious to lobby bureaucrats than party

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[48] Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 228.

[49] John Meisel, "Decline of Party in Canada," in, Hugh G. Thorburn, ed, Party Politics in Canada (6th ed., Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1991).

officials or even, in some cases, government members.

Federal-provincial diplomacy, now commonly referred to as executive federalism, shifts the decision-making process from parliament to the first ministers. Participatory interest in parties was rooted in a belief that the caucus and cabinet would have strong communication with extra-parliamentary party leaders and would listen to their views on important policy matters. Executive federalism, however, lessens the importance of cabinet and caucus, and accordingly of any influence the party may have with them.

Another important factor in the decline of parties as participatory instruments is the 'Charterization' of Canadian politics. F. L. Morton has written on how the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has resulted in reducing the importance of parties and parliament by creating another point of entry into policy decisions for concerned citizens and groups, namely the courts. Morton describes how interest groups such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) and the National Citizens' Coalition are no longer limited to influencing parties and politicians in order to effect policy change but can direct their efforts toward the courts.[50]

While these phenomena may provide alternative sources through which activists can influence public policy, parties

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[50] F.L. Morton, "The Political Impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," in _Canadian Journal of Political Science_ 20 (1987) 31-55.

continue to play a central role. The Lortie Commission identified candidate nomination, leadership selection, election campaigns and policy development as four areas where political parties exercise significant influence. Candidate nominations and leadership selection are both very consequential events in Canadian politics that are largely dominated by the political parties. The parties also play a primary role in organizing campaigns and structuring the election debate. As well, while political parties do not dominate the field of policy development, they play an important role in this area.[51]

Conclusion

Concern with the atrophy of political parties and their being replaced by other groups and practices emanates from the fact that it is the traditional Canadian brokerage parties that have been the principal entities capable of bridging the many different interests, particularly those of region and language, found in Canada. Interest groups, the courts and the civil service while alternative avenues of participation and of influence on public policy, do not have the building of coalitions as one of their integral functions. It is because parties seek to govern, and because in Canada that

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[51] All four of these areas of party activity are examined fully in subsequent chapters.

requires the building of accommodative bridges crossing deep cleavages, that the traditional parties expend great effort at uniting divergent interests. As Schwartz wrote: "It is political parties in a heterogenous society which may overcome the critical cleavages and help build a sense of national identity."[52]

The importance to parties of bridging regional cleavages is summarized thus by Courtney and Perlin:

> No set of cleavages has been more central
> to the political life of Canada than those
> related to the country's regional diversity.
> Since the earliest days of Confederation,
> the effective representation and accommodation
> of regional interests have preoccupied federal
> parties, both in their efforts to develop
> national policies and in their efforts to
> develop a stable foundation of electoral
> support.[53]

As the traditional brokerage parties are increasingly challenged by other groups, their place of prominence in the political process is jeopardized and with it the brokering of interests that they facilitate. As citizens demand more effective participation and seek it outside of the traditional parties, the legitimacy of the parties and the results of their practice of elite accommodation are

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[52] Schwartz, Public Opinion and Canadian Identity, 127.

[53] John Courtney and George Perlin "The Role of Conventions in the Representation and Accommodation of Regional Cleavages" in George Perlin, ed., Party Democracy in Canada: The Politics of National Party Conventions (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1988), 124.

questioned.

Many of the failures of prior attempts to increase effective participatory opportunities within parties have resulted from reform efforts aimed at creating a direct and formal role for party members in the policy-making process. This is sure to lead to frustration and conflict between the parliamentary party and the grassroots. Party members in the Saskatchewan CCF, who were clear from the outset that this was not their objective, were significantly more satisfied with the participatory efforts afforded them than were their counterparts in the federal Liberal Party and the UFA.

Subsequent chapters of this thesis examine alternative methods of effective grassroots participation in political parties that aim to strengthen the connection between party policy and members' views while not directly challenging the primacy of the parliamentary party and the parties' ability to broker divergent interests. As discussed in Chapter One, the tensions that have traditionally required accommodative politics in Canada remain strong today, and there appear to be no alternative institutions ready and capable to effect these accommodations. Accordingly, efforts to increase party participation must be cognizant of maintaining the traditional parties' brokerage capacity.

To varying degrees all of the major federal parties are currently attempting to address this dilemma by increasing

opportunities for effective grassroots participation. For example, the Liberals, PCs, Reform and NDP have all recently amended their constitutions, to allow their membership a more significant role in the selection of party leaders. The Reform Party has made significant gains in public approval by calling itself a grassroots party devoted to serving as an intermediary between voters and parliament. While the data reviewed herein, indicate that Reform has succeeded in increasing effective participatory opportunities, the party has made little effort to accommodate divergent interests. The analysis herein considers the ability of parties to increase effective membership participation while maintaining their brokerage function.

Chapter 3

Two Perspectives of Public Decision-Making

This chapter provides a framework for understanding the two competing perspectives of Canadian public decision-making. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, there has been recurring tension between two different perspectives of public decision-making: one primarily concerned with the connection between citizens' views and policy outcomes; and the other with the need to accommodate divergent interests to preserve national unity.

The more traditional view of public decision-making in Canada is primarily concerned with achieving compromise and accommodation. As discussed in Chapter One, Canadian federal politics, for much of its history, was dominated by a concern with creating public decision-making processes that allow for the brokering and accommodating of regional and linguistic/cultural interests into national policy. The form of decision-making used was normally face-to-face meetings among indi'viduals representing different interests. At its best, this form of meeting encourages mutual respect and deliberation among decision-makers. This type of decision-making can be practiced in representative systems, if the d_ on-makers follow the trustee form of representation, or through some methods of direct democracy. For instance, the

direct democracy method of a town hall meeting would seem particularly conducive to this form of decision-making.

The essence of the participatory method, as currently manifested among its Canadian supporters, is concern for a stronger connection between public opinion and governmental outcomes.   As   the   evidence   reviewed   in   Chapter   One establishes, many Canadians believe that their views and the views of their fellow citizens are not adequately reflected in public policy decision-making.   This link between public opinion and public policy can be established through several methods including referendum, delegate style representation and more effective party participation.

The distinction between these perspectives is not one of representative   versus   direct   democracy.   Rather   the distinction centers around differing views on the objectives of public decision-making.   Supporters of the participatory method argue that the principal objective of public decision-making is to collect the policy preferences of all citizens and to determine which preference is supported by the largest number.   The traditional Canadian view is not concerned with numerical supremacy but rather with collective processes that will   lead   to   consensus.   These   two   views   can   best   be described as collected and collective decision-making.[1]

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[1]   Another possible approach to this discussion would be one of   delegate   versus   trustee   representation.   While   this captures part of the distinction under examination it too is

Before considering each type in greater detail, it is important to note that no public decision-making process is fully consistent with the tenets described as either collected or collective. No politically heterogenous society would benefit from a purely collective or collected process. Rather, the characteristics enumerated describe the central attributes of both decision-making processes and particularly the dir.inctions between the two. Individual democracies fall sc: where on the continuum between these two methods -- that is, they commonly include traits of both the collected and collective methods.

It is necessary to identify the essential characteristics of each of these perspectives in order to evaluate existing practices and proposed alternatives. Hence, in subsequent chapters, existing practices within Canadian political parties will be examined with a view to determining how they incorporate (or fail to incorporate) the

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incomplete. As described above, representation is not the only form of decision-making consistent with either side of this debate. Much has already been written on this question, and as Hannah Pitkin wrote almost thirty years ago: "In a way, what is most striking about the mandate--independence controversy is how long it has been going on, without being brought any nearer to a satisfactory solution." See Hannah Pitkin, "The Concept of Representation," in Pitkin, Representation, 18.
Michael Laver makes the distinction between collected and collective decision-making in a discussion of how "the collective preference may often differ from the collected preferences of all." Michael Laver, Invitation to Politics, (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1983), 145.

traits of collected and collective decision-making, the objective is to better understand the tensions found within those parties.

Collected Decision-Making

The participatory view of democratic decision-making is centered around the principle of individual equality: each individual is perceived to have a policy preference and each individual's preference is assigned equal formal weight in the determining of public policy.[2] Valid interest representation is not limited to groups but, rather, each individual is to be heard in the process.[3]

This form of decision-making can be described as collected. In its simplest form, decisions are made by collecting the preferences of all individuals and summing them. Whichever preference receives majority support becomes public policy. This method provides the greatest assurance of strong consistency between public opinion and policy

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[2] This is consistent with the arguments of Lemieux and others, including early supporters of direct democracy in Western Canada, that the preferences of individuals are distorted when filtered through the party system. See Lemieux, "The Referendum and Canadian Democracy," 112; and Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada, 15.

[3] Cairns' observation that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has encouraged Canadians to see themselves politically as individuals and not solely as members of groups is relevant to this point. See Cairns, "Citizens (Outsiders) and Government (Insiders), 121.

outcomes. The regional or ethnic breakdown of the vote is irrelevant in this process. All voters' preferences are counted equally and it does not matter which group or groups of citizens comprise the majority opinion. The only relevant consideration is which preference is supported by a simple majority.

The only decision-making rule consistent with this perspective is majority rule, since only majority rule respects the formal equality of all citizens. Only majority rule ensures that the winning combination is the sum of preferences of individual citizens -- not of interests or geographic regions.[1]

Some form of direct democracy is the most common manifestation of collected decision-making. A referendum, for example, allows for no filtering of citizens' views. Preferences are expressed by citizens in response to direct, and ideally at least, unambiguous questions that provide clear direction for governmental policy. The views of

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[1] Support for the arguments that majority rule is the decision rule that offers maximum responsiveness to individual preferences and assures that outcomes correspond as closely as possible to individual preferences can be found in Philip D. Straffin, Jr. "Majority Rule and General Decision Rules" in Brian Barry and Russell Hardin Rational Man and Irrational Society (Beverly Hills Ca.; London; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1982), 316.

citizens then directly determine the policy course taken.[5]

For many reasons we know that direct democracy often does not work so cleanly in reality. Problems of size, agenda setting, question wording, aggregation of interests, inconsistency of preferences, expense, lack of interest by many voters in continuously studying policy issues, and problems of administration make direct democracy a more complicated and cloudier process than the ideal suggests.[6] Nevertheless, considering modern technological advances, even in a large country like Canada, it is possible to use direct democracy to decide public issues.

If the intent of the collected process is to determine majority will, then it must observe two overarching principles. The first is that all citizens be able to participate in the decision-making process, and the second is that each participant have an equal chance of affecting

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[5] Other democratic perspectives share this fundamental concern with equality of individual preferences. Utilitarianism, for example, rejects any ranking of individual preferences and demands that each person's interest count as one and the overall preferred interest be determined by summing individual preferences. In this discussion, however, the emphasis is on the decision-making process. Direct democracy is the purest procedural reflection of the equality based participatory view found in Canada today.

[6] See C.B. Macpherson, The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) 94-98; and David Butler and Austin Ranney, Referendums: A Comparative Study of Practice and Theory (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978).

public policy outcomes. Six furtner requisites can be deduced from these. The first three deal with the issue of equal access to participation and the last three with equality of effectiveness of participation

1. With very few exceptions, all adult citizens must be permitted to participate in collected decision-making. One of the fundamental tenets of the collected method is that decision-making be based on the preferences of all interested citizens. This objective can only be achieved if all citizens are provided an opportunity to express their preferences. While some limitations on participation may be allowed, for example on the basis of age or mental incompetence, these would only be acceptable in cases in where individuals are found to be incapable of determining their own preferences on public questions.

2. Costs of participation in the process must be kept to a minimum. While there should be no direct financial cost to participation, all public activities entail some cost. Participation in collected decision-making must not be overly time consuming and must be readily available to all. It should not require long distance travel or be restricted to particular times of the day. The objectives of achieving maximum participation and equal opportunity of participation are jeopardized if there are substantial obstacles to

participation.[7]

3. Adequate opportunity must exist for all participants to form opinions. In order for citizens' opportunity to express their preferences to be meaningful, they must have an opportunity to educate themselves on the issues and the possible alternatives. Preferences cannot be determined in an information vacuum.

4. Preferences of all individuals must be weighed equally in decision-making. No increased or diminished weight is given to the preference of any participants, regardless of their status within the community. The rationale motivating one's preference is not relevant to the weight to be given to that preference. One voter's preference based on purely selfish motivations must be as decisive in the decision-making as another's based solely on their concept of the group interest.

5. Outcomes should be determined by individual preferences and should not be influenced by extraneous factors. For example, regulations should ensure that there is no advantage available to those with substantial financial

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[7] See Jane J. Mansbridge, Beyond Adversary Democracy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 47-76. Mansbridge observes that the costs of participation in town meeting democracy present obstacles to participation for many citizens who are unable to leave home or work to attend a several hour long meeting, who might otherwise be able to participate if a standard election were held -- requiring little more than a quick trip to a nearby polling place.

resources. Participants should also not fear any private repercussions or sanctions as a result of the preferences they express.

6. The only decision-rule consistent with the equality of participant preferences inherent in the collected method is majority rule. Any other rule, such as plurality, super majority, or unanimity, leaves open the possibility that a minority might thwart the wishes of a majority. Such outcomes are unacceptable as they give greater weight to the preferences of those in the minority than to those in the majority.

Finally, there must be a strong positive correlation between decisions reached and govern-ental decisions and actions. The legitimacy of public decision-making is dependent upon the effective participation of all interested citizens. Individuals are motivated to participate by the possibility of influencing public policy, and cannot be expected to fully participate in a decision-making process, which inevitably involves some personal cost, if there is not a substantial relationship between the decisions reached and public policy.[8]

Collective Decision-Making

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[8] For a full discussion of this idea, see Elster, "The Market and the Forum," 120.

As described in Chapter One, public decision-making in Canada has been concerned more with considerations of regional and ethnic interests than with individual preferences. All recognized important interests were supposed to be represented in the decision-making process and preferences were supposed to be formulated only after consideration of all interests. In this way, more emphasis was placed on the process through which preferences were formed and expressed than in the collected method.

This method of democratic decision-making can be described as collective. Decision makers collectively go through the process of attempting to determine the best public policy. In a large society, the goals of accommodation and consensus building are best fulfilled by limiting participation in the ultimate decision process to a small number able to meet in person and discuss issues face-to-face. As Mansbridge argues in her work on unitary democracy, these goals are more likely accomplished when decision-makers deliberate together.[9] Collective decision-making, then, concentrates on providing opportunities for constructive interaction between decision-makers engaged in the process of informing themselves on issues of public policy and the forming of personal preferences. Legitimacy of decision-making is dependent upon deliberation and

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[9] Mansbridge, Beyond Adversary Democracy, 23-35.

thorough consideration of all interests.[10] While collected decision-making is a reflective process, in that it aims to reflect the public will; collective decision-making is a creative process -- affecting outcomes through the operation of the decision-making procedures.

Some assistance in understanding what is meant by collective decision-making can be found by briefly considering the growing literature on deliberative democracy and consociational democracy -- two types of collective decision-making.

While much of the literature on deliberative democracy must be characterized as utopian, it gives us a particularly clear example of the collective ideal. Deliberative democracy falls within the collective model as it requires decision-makers to jointly consider the various interests involved in any public decision prior to collectively making a decision. Deliberative decision-making focusses on the

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[10] It is this requirement, for example, that results in regional balance within cabinet. The interests that need to be represented change over time according to what interests must be accommodated for the process to be viewed as legitimate. For example, while religious balance used to be a primary consideration in cabinet formation it receives little attention today, while gender representation i' becoming increasingly important. See Andrew Heard Canadian Constitutional Conventions: The Marriage of Law and Politics (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991), 48-50. For a discussion of cabinet as a focal point of accommodation in Canadian politics see K.D. McRae "Consociationalism and the Canadian Political System," in Kenneth McRae, ed., Democracy: Political Accommodation in Segmented Societies (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 251.

process of deliberation among de :ision-makers. It suggests a model of political debate and decision-making that aims at having all citizens act in a collective fashion before forming their opinions. In the end majority rule decides issues, but only after all interests have been heard, and their arguments jointly considered by all citizens solely on their merits. The principle justification for this process is legitimacy.[11] Decisions are perceived to be more legitimate if all voters actively participated in them and if all interests were carefully considered. While consensus is sought, it is not essential provided that the decision process is perceived to be a fair one. If this condition is met, those on the losing side are expected to consider the process fair and accept the outcomes.

Bernard Manin has identified the deliberative process as the exchanging of evidence related to proposed solutions, thus permitting individuals to discover information they did not previously have.[12] Manin also recognizes that diverse interests need to be represented within the deliberative process in order to encourage majority forces to consider minority views. He argues, in words that make clear the collected - collective distinction, that "... a legitimate

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[11] Bernard Manin, "On Legitimacy and Political Deliberation," <u>Political Theory</u> 15 (1987), 338.

[12] Ibid.

decision does not represent the will of all, but is one that results from the deliberation of all. It is the process by which everyone's will is formed that confers its legitimacy on the outcome rather than the sum of already formed wills."[13]

Joshua Cohen agrees with Manin that the deliberative process is a necessary component of legitimate public decision-making: "outcomes are democratically legitimate if and only if they could be the object of a free and reasoned agreement among equals."[14] Cohen's conception of deliberation requires participants to provide reasoned defenses for the positions they advance in order to mitigate self-interest and help focus the process on the common good.[15]

The consociational model, while fitting within the collective model, is quite different from the deliberative method. It is far less utopian, being grounded almost completely in the difficult reality of trying democratically to keep two or more quite disparate communities together within one nation-state.[16] The consociationalist is not

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[13] (emphasis added); ibid., 352.

[14] Joshua Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," in R. Bruce Douglass, et al, eds., Liberalism and the Good (New York: Routledge, 1990), 22.

[15] Ibid.

[16] The concept of consociationalism was first introduced in Arend Lijphart, The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands (Berkely, Ca.: University of

concerned with improving the participatory opportunities afforded citizens, but rather with forging policy outcomes capable of placating disparate groups and finding some common ground.[17] The consociationalist believes that this is best achieved through face-to-face meetings among elites committed to finding accommodation.[18] The rationale for this deliberation is not to create a fair process to placate losers, but rather to ensure that no participant consistently loses on all issues -- thus, deliberation aims to achieve compromise.

The consociational and deliberative processes of decision-making share a fundamental commonality. In both, the decision-making process brings individuals into contact with one another to facilitate listening to the interests of others and the consideration of interests before making decisions. The building of consensus among the different interests is an objective.[19] This is what makes them both collective processes and distinguishes them from the

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California Press, 1968).

[17] Ibid.

[18] See S.J.R. Noel, "Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism," Canadian Journal of Political Science 4 (1971), 15.

[19] While both methods seek accommodation and consensus building, they differ in that consociationalism seeks accommodation among representative elites, while deliberation aims at achieving it among the entire population.

collected method.

There are two central principles of collective decision-making. First, all significant interests must be represented in the decision-making process; and second, the process must aim at consensus building The following four requisites amplify these principles.

1. In order for collectiv⌐ decision-making to succeed in fulfilling its objectives of consensus building and legitimizing the decision-making process, no significant groups can be excluded. One of the legitimating factors of the collective method is that all groups, particularly those in the minority, are more likely to view outcomes as just if they are given a fair opportunity to participate in the process leading to the decision.

2. If the decision process is to maximize the possibility of finding common ground there must exist opportunities for constructive interaction among participants. Only through communication and interaction with others unlike themselves will participants begin to understand and appreciate the concerns of others. Througl· this interaction there emerges the possibility of achieving common ground.

3. After the presentation of all interests and arguments, time must be allowed for deliberation. All participants should engage in a collective process of

evaluating the strength of various arguments and the weight to be given disparate interests. Deliberation might resemble the interaction of court-room juries. Participants should not enter into the process with their minds firmly made up. Only after the presentation of all the relevant information should individuals begin the process of forming a decision. This process should be engaged in collectively to maximize the possibility of reaching consensus and minimize the effect of narrow self-interest.

4. The procedures must facilitate consensus and highlight common interests among citizens. The process must operate in such a way so as to encourage participants to seek common ground and to focus on shared interests. If the process merely reinforces particularist interests it will have failed.

Finally, similar to collected decis'on-making, there must exist a strong positive relationship between outcomes of the collective decision-making process and governmental decisions and actions. Decision-makers will commit themselves fully to the process only if they believe their efforts will have substantial impact on public policy.

The Canadian Experience

Traditionally in Canada, public decision-making processes have encompassed many of the traits of the collective model.

For several reasons, participation in this process was limited to a very small number of elites. For much of our history, face-to-face deliberation necessarily meant that participation was limited to a number that could meet in one room. Simply on practical considerations, all or most Canadians could not come together in one place to jointly consider public issues. More importantly, there was no acceptance of the collected objective of allowing all voters a direct voice on all important matters.[20] The rejection of this collected ideal partially resulted from the belief that only elites committed to the successful continuance of the federation were likely to be able to reach consensus on difficult issues.[21] Because of concern that the masses themselves would be unable to accommodate their differences, a political process evolved in which important public decision-making was concentrated among a small group of elites representing the country's divergent regional and linguistic/cultural interests.

Public decision-making in Canada has traditionally been

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[20] To some extent this resulted from the inheritance of the British tradition of parliamentary and not popular sovereignty. For a discussion of this and the recent movement towards a more popular sovereignty, see Reginald Whitaker, A Sovereign Idea: Essays on Canada as a Democratic Community (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992) and Peter H. Russell, Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

[21] Noel, "Political Parties and Elite Accommodation."

focussed on the need for conciliation and the brokering of interests among divergent groups often at the expense of participation by other interests and groups not viewed as fundamental to the maintenance of the federation. One of the results of this has been the traditional exclusion of many groups frc… the decision-making processes.[22]

Consistent with the consociational model, little effort was made to address the underlying political and social cleavages by engaging the populace in political debate and deliberation. Instead, consociational practices were adopted under the assumption that only elites concerned with maintaining the federation would be able to reach consensus. Thus emerged the practices of intra-state federalism.[23]

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[22] Russell has identified the traditional absence of many groups from the constitution-building process, and recent demands by these groups for inclusion. He writes of governmental elites: "They did not appreciate how seriously those groups of what Alan Cairns calls 'Charter Canadians,' especially women's groups, aboriginal peoples and the multicultural community, took their recent enfranchisement as constitutional players." Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, 134.

[23] Cairns has written the following concerning national governments in intrastate federalism, "it will tend to be viewed as an arena for the open clash of regional interests and their attempted harmonization within central institutions. The political institutions of the centre, therefore, will not operate by simple majority rule based on representation by population but by policy compromises between the representatives of competing territorial interests whose capacity to bargain and block is not based entirely on the size of the electorates behind them." Alan C. Cairns, From Interstate to Intrastate Federalism in Canada (Kingston, Ont.: Queen's University, Institute of Intergovernmental Affairs, 1979), 4-5.

Federal institutions, such as the cabinet and senior civil service, were comprised of elites representing the various recognized segments of Canadian society, who were committed to a federalism based upon accommodation. Practices of accommodation such as first ministers' conferences, at which Premiers representing the interests of their respective provinces brokered national accords, also emerged from this elite-centered view of federalism.

The concern that all significant interests be represented in the decision-making process may at first glance appear consistent with the collected model. However, in traditional Canadian practice the concern for expression of interests was limited to those groups who were significant stake-holders in Canadian society and whose participation was believed necessary in order for the process to aid in maintenance of the federation and to be viewed by voters as being legitimate. There was never a concern that all Canadians be able to participate equally and effectively as individuals in the decision-making process.

Some early changes in party decision-making, such as the decision to expand participation in leadership selection from the parliamentary caucus to a wider group of party activists and elites, while certainly expanding the pool of effective participants, were primarily driven by collective concerns. For example, in 1919, Laurier was concerned that his Quebec

dominated caucus may be unable to select a leader who would appeal to broader interests.[24] His concern was not with expanding participation so that the leader would be responsible to the broader party membership. This helps to explain why King, after being chosen leader by the Liberals' 1919 convention, did not find it necessary to convene another national gathering of the party membership until his retirement nearly 30 years later.[25]

While genuine debate may exist concerning the success of this form of public decision-making, at a minimum it has accomplished the perhaps under-appreciated task of preserving Confederation for more than 125 years. As established in Chapter One, however, the legitimacy of decisions made through these elite-dominated practices is increasingly being challenged.

Many of the traits of collected decision-making are also present in Canada. Virtually all adult Canadians are able to vote in federal elections and the votes cast are meaningful in that they determine which political party forms the

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[24] For a detailed account of events leading to the 1919 Liberal convention see John C. Courtney, The Selection of National Party Leaders in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973), 59-72.

[25] Whitaker, The Government Party, 171.

government.[26] The essential shortcoming of the Canadian process, from a collected perspective, is the lack o. a strong connection between the opinions expressed by voters and public policy outcomes. As discussed in Chapter One, many Canadians find the strength of the relationship between their policy views and governmental outcomes to be insufficient.

It is worth noting that the suggestion that the connection between policy preferences and governmental outcomes is insufficient is not a relative one. In comparison to many countries in the world, perhaps most, Canadians have a strong, effective say in the running of their country and certainly are not denied self-determination. The room between Rousseau's and Schumpeter's visions of democracy mentioned at the outset is great. Many democratic political systems fall at different points on this spectrum. Canadians evidently are not comparing themselves with others, rather they are dissatisfied specifically and absolutely with the effectiveness of their political participation.

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[26] As Cairns has illustrated, however, the Canadian electoral and party system prevents a direct correlation between votes cast and election results; Cairns, "The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada."

Conclusion

An understanding of the models of collected and collective
methods of democratic decision-making contributes to a better
understanding of the current tensions in, and the merits of
potential changes to, the existing Canadian political
process, particularly within the structure of political
parties. If collective and collected decision-making lie at
opposite ends of a continuum, are the benefits of one lost as
attributes of the other are adopted? If so, in considering
expansion of direct political participation, one must
consider what benefits are foregone by losing the opportunity
for face-to-face decision-making.[27] Because regional and
linguistic tensions remain strong, the need for parties to
act as brokers and to accommodate interests remains, yet the
demands for greater participation cannot be ignored without
further jeopardizing the legitimacy of public decision-making

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[27] The idea that political parties might have a role in
bridging the two views is not new. For example, the American
political scientist James Fishkin suggests such a role for
American parties in his work on the deliberative opinion
poll. Fishkin is attempting to resolve a problem in American
politics similar to the one identified above; namely, "how to
bring power to the people under conditions where the people
can think about the power they exercise." The answer, he
claims, is "to reconcile democracy and deliberation" within
the parties' presidential nominating processes. See James S.
Fishkin, Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for
Democratic Reform (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991),
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processes and their outcomes.

CHAPTER 4

Survey of Party Constituency Associations: Methodology

Because political parties are easily accessible to voters, have significant impact on important areas of public decision-making and are experienced practitioners of brokerage politics, they appear capable of combining the characteristics of collective and collected decision-making. Thus, the next four chapters examine four central areas of party decision-making: leadership selection, candidate nomination, policy study and development and election campaigning.[1] The discussion of each of these areas includes examination of the existing processes, the scope and quality of grassroots participation, reform proposals aimed at increasing participation, and an evaluation of how these reforms effect the parties' role in helping to achieve accommodation.

The first challenge is to quantify existing grassroots participation in political parties and attitudes concerning both the effectiveness and meaningfulness of the participation -- in other words, both the quality and the quantity of existing participatory opportunities need to be

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[1] Leadership selection, candidate nomination, policy study and development and election campaigns are chosen for examination as they are the areas of party activity through which members might exercise the most effective participation.

measured. There is a gap in the Canadian literature in this regard. A 1991 study by Carty, conducted under the auspices of the Lortie Commission, has provided for the first time a good deal of important information on the activities and organization of local party associations.[2] However, there exists no systematic examination of the types of effective participatory opportunities available through parties to voters. As well, there in no information available concerning the views of local activists towards the participatory opportunities afforded them.

To fill this gap, a national mail survey of party constituency association presidents of the Reform, Liberal and PC Parties was conducted. Several factors were considered in deciding to survey these three parties and not others -- particularly the BQ and the NDP. The BQ did not have many established constituency associations for the two year period prior to the 1993 election. The NDP's list of association presidents included 49 ridings for which no name and address of a president was included. This, coupled with Carty's experience in his 1991 survey of 35 NDP mailings being returned as undeliverable, meant that approximately 25 per cent of NDP associations that ran candidates in the 1993 election would have to be excluded from the survey, thus

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[2] Carty, <u>Canadian Political Parties in the Constituencies</u>.

significantly skewing any findings.

The data was gathered between January 7 and March 30, 1995. Ideally, the information pertaining to the 1993 election campaign would have been collected immediately after the election. This, however, was not possible. One benefit of collecting the data later is the gathering of information on association activity in both pre and post-election years.

The survey was mailed to riding association presidents, as it is believed they are most likely to be able to furnish the information sought. Rather than surveying the general population as to their views of participatory opportunities available through the parties, which would likely result in findings similar to those reviewed in Chapter One, it was decided to survey those who are already involved in party politics. If this decision has any impact on results it should be in the favour of the parties, as those sampled have already decided that participation in political parties is a worthwhile experience.

Donald Dillman's "Total Design Method" of mail survey construction and implementation was used a guide.[3] All association presidents were mailed an initial package including a cover letter, survey instrument, and self-addressed stamped envelope. The first mailing to PC

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[3] Donald Dillman Mail and Telephone Su ·eys: The Total Design Method (New York: Wiley, 1978).

association presidents also included a letter from the party's national Executive Director. The party insisted on the inclusion of this letter. The content of the party letter was carefully scrutinized and negotiated to ensure that it have as limited an effect on respondents as possible. Two weeks later, a second mailing was sent that included a more strongly worded cover letter along with another survey instrument and another self-addressed envelope.[4] Where applicable, a bilingual survey instrument and cover letters were mailed.

Accounting for mailed surveys returned as undeliverable and ridings for which the national party offices were not able to provide a name and address of a local president; 776 associations were surveyed - 283 Liberal, 281 PCs and 212 Reform. Where finances allowed, Dillman's total design method of questionnaire construction and execution was followed.

As illustrated in Table 1, 400 completed surveys were returned, for an overall response rate of 52 per cent.[5] The

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[4] The survey instrument, the first and second cover letters and the PC cover letter are attached as Appendices A, B, C and D.

[5] This response rate compares favorably with two other recent national mail surveys of constituency associations. Surveying riding association "official agents" on matters concerning candidate nomination in 1989, Carty and Erickson received a response rate of 41.5 per cent. Using the resources of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, which allowed two advance mailings, as well

response rate varied among parties with 62 per cent of Reform presidents responding compared to 54 per cent of Liberals and 41 per cent of PCs. The difference between the Liberal and Reform response rate is almost completely attributable to a low response rate from association presidents in Quebec. Despite the mailing of a bilingual survey and cover letter to Quebec associations, the response rate from that province was approximately 32 per cent.[6] The PC response rate is also somewhat lower in Western and Atlantic Canada, though the PCs had the highest response rate from Ontario. It should be noted, however, that while a significantly lower percentage of responses were received from PC presidents than Reform presidents, the difference in actual returns was only 17.

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as two follow-up mailings and a telephone call to respondents. Carty was able to increase this rate to 54 per cent in his 1991 survey. See Carty, <u>Canadian Political Parties in the Constituencies</u>; and R. Kenneth Carty and Lynda Erickson, "Candidate Nomination in Canada's National Political Parties," in Bakvis, <u>Canadian Political Parties: Leaders, Candidates and Organization</u>.

[6] This occurrence is similar to Carty's 1991 experience in which the response rate from Quebec was almost twenty points lower than the average of the other provinces.

Table 4.1. Respondent associations by party affiliation for each province.

	Liberal	PC	Reform	Totals
Newfoundland	2	0	2	4
Prince Edward Island	3	1	0	4
Nova Scotia	7	7	5	19
New Brunswick	5	4	3	12
Quebec	33	10	1	44
Ontario	55	60	58	173
Manitoba	9	6	8	23
Saskatchewan	4	1	12	17
Alberta	19	11	22	52
British Columbia	16	15	21	52
Totals	153	115	132	400

The respondent associations appear representative in regards to their performance in the 1993 election. 62 per cent of Liberal, two per cent of PC and 31 per cent of Reform respondents reported having finished first in their riding in the 1993 election.

The survey was structured so as to gather data relating to both the quantity and the quality of participation afforded to political party members at the grassroots level. The survey collected data concerning participation in four areas of party life: candidate nomination; leadership selection; policy development; and constituency campaigning. For each of these areas, respondents were asked questions

that both measure participation and allow them to comment on the adequacy of the participatory opportunities. Respondents were asked to provide what they believed to be the sense of their membership rather than simply their personal opinions. It is impossible to determine with any certainty how rigorous respondents were in this regard. While a good number of respondents included notes detailing the actions they undertook to determine their membership's views, including personally polling a cross-section and discussing the questions at an association meeting, certainly some respondents merely reported their own views.

In the following chapters the information received from the survey is used in several ways: (1) to provide a benchmark description of the practices used by the parties, (2) to quantify the numbers participating, (3) to assist in measuring the effectiveness of the participation and (4) to determine party activists' level of satisfaction with the participatory opportunities available to them. Data from several other sources is also used in the analysis including: (1) party documents, (2) news reports and (3) existing literature. Special emphasis is placed on recent developments affecting the participatory opportunities afforded party members. While the survey was limited to three federal parties, when relevant the experiences of other federal and provincial parties are also examined.

This thesis accepts the conventional wisdom of the discipline, as reviewed in previous chapters, that the brokerage parties have played a key role in promoting consensus-building. Rather than re-examining this conclusion, the analysis identifies particular aspects of each party process studied that assist in consensus-building. This is accompanied by consideration of how these practices may be affected by implementation of more participatory reforms. Differences between the parties, especially between the Reform Party and the brokerage parties, are highlighted.

The survey data is used for both descriptive and explanatory purposes. The statistical methods used are primarily descriptive and bi-variate, although, where appropriate, more sophisticated techniques such as multiple regression analysis are used. In all instances the reported statistics have been tested for significance. All tables include the significance level of the information reported. The variance between some means and proportions reported in the text is not significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. When this is the case, the significance level is provided in a footnote -- otherwise, all reported differences are significant at least to the .05 level.[7] This study is

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[7] .05 confidence level means that there is 95 per cent certainty that the reported difference is not due to sampling error. Though some researchers work at the 99 per cent level, the 95 per cent confidence level is widely accepted in social science research as sufficient for rejection of the

not meant to be solely quantitative in nature, but rather uses the data collected as part of an empirical and theoretical exploration into the issues being examined.

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null hypothesis. See Anthony Walsh, <u>Statistics for Social Sciences</u> (New York: Harper Row, 1990), 90.

Chapter 5

Leadership Selection

Leadership selection is one of the most important and consequential functions of Canadian political parties. Leaders dominate political campaigns, largely determine which issues will be discussed during the course of election campaigns, have significant influence over their party's parliamentary agenda, and, when forming a government, become Prime Minister and select cabinet members.

For the first 50 years following Confederation, Canadian political parties followed the British model of leadership selection. The parties' parliamentary caucuses, in consultation with the Governor General for governing parties, selected the party leaders. While all caucus members had a formal participatory role in the process, the decision was ultimately made by the parliamentary elites. As Courtney has written, "the contemporary observer of the first half-century of post-confederation Canadian politics would rightly have gained the impression that Canadian party leaders were chosen in essentially the same ways as their British counterparts."[1]

This method of leadership selection appears to have been abandoned for good with the Liberal's selection of William

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[1] John C. Courtney The Selection of National Party Leaders in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), 31.

Lyon Mackenzie King by a party convention in 1919. According to Courtney: "A peculiar combination of intra-party developments led the Liberal Party into a convention in 1919."[2] These developments included: (1) a desire by the outgoing leader, Laurier, to unite a party badly divided along regional and linguistic lines by the conscription battles of World War I, (2) the realization that in order to accomplish this objective the new leader should be from English Canada and (3) the belief that the party's parliamentary caucus, with 62 of its 82 members from Quebec, was not sufficiently representative of the party membership to successfully undertake the tasks of leadership selection and party unification.[3]

In 1927 the federal Conservatives chose Arthur Meighen's successor, R.B. Bennet, by a party convention. Courtney writes that the Conservative decision was prompted by the following considerations: "The provincial experience with conventions; the 'unrepresentativeness' of the parliamentary group; the desire to replace the elitism of the earlier informal selection processes by a more 'democratic'

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[2] Ibid., 5^

[3] For a more detailed account of events leading to the 1919 Liberal Convention see Ibid, 59-72; John C. Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 5; and Henry E. Brady and Richard Johnston, "Conventions versus Primaries: A Canadian-American Comparison," in George Perlin, ed., Party Democracy in Canada: The Politics of National Party Conventions (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice Hall of Canada, 1988), 245.

and structured system; the need to develop a more effective party organization; the hoped for boost in party morale, the vacancy in the party's leadership; [and] the closing of the party's ranks."[4]

Since 1927 every leader of the major federal parties has been chosen by a convention comprised of representatives of the party membership and party elites. However, it appears unlikely that future leaders will be chosen by party conventions. Just as parties abandoned selection by their parliamentary caucuses early this century in favor of what was perceived to be the more representative and democratic party convention, as the century ends conventions appear ready to be replaced by the direct election of leaders by the party membership.[5] Because all of the federal parties have

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[4] Courtney, The Selection of National Party Leaders, 77. Dawson has written the following of the Conservative's decision to hold a 1927 leadership convention: "The disastrous reverse which the Conservatives had just suffered in the election and the contrasting success of the Liberals (who had used the convention system in 1919, also, when in a weakened state in opposition) convinced the majority of the conference that some greater effort should be made to identify the Conservative party as a whole with the selection of a new leader. The obvious way to achieve this end was to hold a national congress of the party." R. MacGregor Dawson, The Government of Canada, Norman Ward, ed., (fifth ed.; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 462.

[5] There is a growing body of literature considering individual direct election leadership contests. See, for example, Yvon Thériault, "New System for Choosing the Party Leader," Canadian Parliamentary Review 8 (1985-86), 27-28; Daniel Latouche, "Universal Democracy and Effective Leadership: Lessons From the Parti Québécois Experience," in R. Kenneth Carty et al, eds., Leaders and Parties in Canadian

adopted some form of direct election (with the exception of the BQ) and because a great deal has previously been written on delegated leadership conventions, most of this chapter will consider the procedures and implications of direct election. The distinctive feature of direct leadership selection is the direct correlation between party members' preferences and the selection of the leader, as opposed to the filtering of preferences through delegates in the traditional convention model.

This chapter will consider the pressures parties face to adopt methods of direct leadership selection and the experiences of provincial parties that have used direct election. The switch from the delegate leadership convention to direct election will be shown to be a move towards collected decision-making. Pure direct election allows for the unmediated participation of all interested party members.

Politics: Experiences of the Provinces (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992), 174-202; Peter Woolstencroft, "Tories Kick Machine to Bits: Leadership Selection and the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party," in Carty et al, Leaders and Parties, 203-225; Agar Adamson et al, "Pressing the Right Button: The Nova Scotia Liberals and Tele-Democracy," presented to meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, Ottawa, 1993; Leonard Preyra, "The 1992 Nova Scotia Liberal Leadership Convention," Canadian Parliamentary Review 16 (1993-94), 2-11; David K. Stewart, "Electing the Premier: An Examination of the 1992 Alberta Progressive Conservative Leadership Election," presented to meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, Calgary, 1994; and, Donald E. Blake and R. Kenneth Carty, "Televoting for the Leader of the British Columbia Liberal Party: The Leadership Contest of 1993," presented to meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, Calgary, 1994.

As Courtney has written:

> The siren call of direct democracy was
> beginning to be heard at the same time
> that party conventions were coming under
> attack. Indeed the latent, previously
> undiscovered appeal that direct, unmediated
> politics held for many was itself one of
> the reasons that conventions came to fall
> into disfavour. If conventions were being
> dismissed as undemocratic and unrepresentative
> (an irony given the reasons they initially
> were adopted) and costly, it was because
> the universal ballot was being seen as the
> alternative whereby every interested
> individual could participate directly and
> inexpensively in the selection of a party
> leader.[6]

Much of the criticism of the movement away from conventions concerns a decrease in direct election's collective decision-making capacities. Opponents of direct election are concerned with the loss of the convention as a deliberative body, just as much of the initial criticism of selection by convention focussed on the deliberative and consensus building capacities of the parliamentary caucus. The result has been that some parties have moved only partially towards direct election, preserving some aspects of collective decision-making in their leadership selection processes.

This chapter will consider the motivations and experiences of parties that have switched to direct election, and will compare delegate conventions and direct elections on the following criteria relevant to the collective-collected

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[6] Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 4.

distinction: (1) the number of voters participating in these contests, (2) the ease of participation, (3) equality of participatory opportunity, (4) the representativeness of the participatory group to the entire universe of voters (with special consideration of gender, level of education, age, regional representation and socio-economic status), (5) the range of choices and type of information available to voters, (6) the role of elites and (7) opportunity for consensus building.

Before considering direct election, some consideration will be given to the state of delegate selection meetings in the Liberal and PC parties as portrayed by survey respondents. The data in the following section relates to the 1993 PC and the 1990 Liberal leadership selection processes. (The Reform Party has not held a traditional leadership selection contest with contested delegate selection meetings, thus the information in this section pertains only to the Liberals and PCs).

Current Levels of Grassroots Participation

Only a few thousand party members actually attend leadership conventions and cast votes for their preferred candidate. The primary method of participation in leadership selection available to most party members is participation in delegate selection meetings. Leadership convention delegates are

chosen at meetings held by constituency associations some time prior to the leadership convention. Only paid up party members are eligible to participate in the meeting. No vote is directly taken on the question of which leadership candidate association members prefer; rather, members cast votes only to choose which delegate candidates will attend the convention.

Relatively few party members participate in leadership convention delegate selection meetings. Half of the Liberal and PC associations had less than 100 members attend their most recent delegate selection meetings. The mean attendance at these meetings was 206 with the median being 100. Only three per cent of associations had more than 1000 members participate in their delegate selection process. PC meetings were considerably smaller than Liberal ones. The average attendance at PC meetings was 142 compared with 266 at Liberal meetings. This is surprising considering tha. the PCs were selecting a Prime Minister and that their leadership selection process occurred during an election year.

An important question to be examined is how effective or consequential is participation in a party's leadership convention delegate selection process? This question can be answered by examining the information available to party members at the time of their participation and the connection between their choosing of delegates and votes cast at a

subsequent leadership convention.

A sizeable number of association presidents, 20 per cent, report that it is not customary for delegate candidates in their association to disclose which leadership candidate they prefer prior to the selection of delegates. Thus, in one-fifth of associations there appears to be no connection between the choosing of delegates and members' preferences for particular leadership candidates.[7]

Even in those associations where it is customary for delegate candidates to disclose which leadership candidate they prefer, this information is not the most important factor in selecting delegates. As illustrated in Table 5.1, 50 per cent of associations reported that the most important factor in determining who wins a delegate election is how active the various delegate candidates have been in party affairs, while only 29 per cent said the preferred leadership candidate of the delegate candidate was the most important factor. For both Liberal and PC associations the delegate candidates' level of activity in party affairs is the most important factor.

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[7]   Data from other sources is consistent with this finding. Courtney reports that 83 per cent of successful delegate candidates for the 1990 Liberal convention disclosed who their preferred candidate was before being selected as did 58 per cent of delegates to the 1993 PC convention. These numbers are both considerably higher than those for the parties' 1983 and 1984 leadership contests. Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 326.

TABLE 5.1 Most important factor in determining which delegate candidates are chosen to attend a leadership convention by party affiliation. Actual number and column percentages given. N=240.

	Liberals	PCs	Totals
length of time as party member	8 6%	5 5%	13 5%
declared support for a leadership candidate	44 33%	25 23%	69 29%
number of new party members signed up	19 14%	20 19%	39 16%
how active the candidate has been in party affairs	61 46%	58 54%	119 50%
Totals	132	108	240

The weakness in the relationship between voting for delegate candidates and preferring particular leadership candidates may be partly attributable to the lack of information concerning the leadership candidates available to party activists at the time of delegate selection. While parties now routinely sponsor debates among their leadership hopefuls, these debates are usually held after the selection of delegates by constituency associations. In 1990, the Liberals held four of their six leadership candidate debates after local associations began selecting their delegates. In 1993, after much internal party discussion over the 'iming, two of five leadership debates were held during the period when delegates were being chosen and the other three were held afterwards. Leadership candidates have typically only just begun to engage one another in debate over policy issues

prior to the only opportunity party activists have to participate in the selection process.

Thus, it is not surprising that only 28 per cent of respondents strongly agreed with the following statement: 'A leadership candidate's policy positions play a significant role in the outcome of our local association's election for leadership convention delegates.' A strong majority in both parties indicate that their membership is not satisfied with this state of affairs. 63 per cent of Liberals and 80 per cent of PC respondents report that members of their constituency association would prefer to have more information concerning leadership candidates' positions on the major issues before selecting their delegates.

A majority of respondents in both parties also support strengthening the connection between party members' leadership preferences and the selection of a leader. 51 per cent of Liberals and 76 per cent of PCs believe that their party should replace the delegate convention system of leadership selection with election through a direct vote of all party members. Reform respondents also favor a switch to direct election by a two to one margin.

These findings help to explain recent decisions by the federal PCs, Liberals and Reform to adopt varying forms of direct election procedures for the selection of their future

leaders.[8] The processes adopted will be considered in the subsequent discussion on collected and collective concerns.

It appears likely that direct election will be the common method of Canadian party leadership selection by the end of this decade. Thus, the remainder of this chapter examines direct election making frequent references to convention experiences for comparative purposes. As none of the federal parties have yet chosen a leader through direct election, most of the data presented in the remainder of this chapter reflects provincial party experiences.

The Movement Towards Direct Election

"To fashion a more 'representative' and 'democratic' leadership selection process, Canadian parties early in the twentieth century abandoned the parliamentary caucus in favor of the leadership convention as the body responsible for choosing party leaders."[9] To increase party vitality and in

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[8] See The Liberal Party of Canada Constitution article 17(8)(9); Reform Party of Canada Constitution section 6(a)(b); and The New Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada section 11.4.6. The federal New Democrats used a hybrid system of direct membership vote and a delegate convention to choose their current leader. This method cannot be considered direct election as the membership vote was not binding on the convention delegates who ultimately chose the party leader virtually unencumbered by the result of the membership vote. See "New Democratic Party Leadership Rules 1995."

[9] John C. Courtney, "Leadership Conventions and the Development of the National Political Community in Canada," in R. Kenneth Carty and W. Peter Ward, eds., National

response to a growing demand for increased direct democracy. Canadian political parties at the end of the twentieth century are abandoning the delegate leadership convention in favour of direct election of their leaders.

The primary motivation behind adoption of direct election has been a desire to revitalize a party following either a disappointing election result or a sharp decline in public support, and to adopt a system that more closely parallels popular perceptions of participatory democracy.

Fourteen provincial party leaders have been selected through direct election processes.[10] In 1985, the PQ became the first major Canadian political party to select its leader through direct election. The PQ and the BC Social Credit Party have used direct election methods to choose two leaders (the PQ in 1985 and 1988 and the BC Social Credit in 1993 and 1994). In addition, listed chronologically, the Ontario PCs (1990), Prince Edward Island PCs (1990), Ontario Liberals (1992), Nova Scotia Liberals (1992), Alberta PCs (1992), Manitoba Liberals (1993), BC Liberals (1993), Alberta Liberals (1994), Saskatchewan PCs (1994) and BC Reform Party (1994) have each used direct election in the selection of one

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Politics and Community in Canada (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986), 94.

[10] Except where otherwise noted, information concerning direct election processes is drawn from party leadership rules, news accounts, and information provided by party officials.

leader.[11]

To understand the motivation of parties adopting direct leadership selection, one must consider the competitive positions of the parties at the time of their decision. Only two of the 12 parties were in power when they decided to select their future leaders through direct election (the Alberta PCs and the PQ). While both held a majority of the seats in their respective provincial legislatures, both trailed opposition parties in published public opinion polls.[12] Of the other ten parties to adopt direct election, six formed their province's official opposition and four were third place parties. It is significant that none of these 12 parties were clear favourites to win the subsequent election when they decided to opt for direct leadership selection. Many of the parties, including the PCs in Ontario, Prince

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[11] The second PQ direct election resulted in the acclamation of Jacques Parizeau, thus the tables and analysis herein examine 13 contests. For results of each of these contests, see Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 368-70. Courtney does not provide the results of the December 31, 1994 BC Reform Party contest which were:

Jack Weisgerber 1,387
Ron Gamble 350
Wilf Hanni 279
Terri Milne 250
Joe Leong 110

[12] In 1984, the PQ consistently trailed the Liberals in published opinion polls. In 1991, the Alberta PCs were losing ground in published opinion polls and trailing in some. See "Liberals Jump to 69%, PQ sinks to 23%: Poll," Montreal Gazette, June 9, 1984, A1; and "Leading by Default: Decore's Reform-Minded Grits Pull Ahead of Competition," Alberta Report, December 2, 1991, 6-7.

Edward Island (PEI) and Saskatchewan; the Liberals in Manitoba, Ontario and Alberta; and the BC Social Credit made the switch to direct election following a disappointing general election in which their party won significantly fewer seats than anticipated. Many of these parties saw direct leadership selection as a way to attract new members and to generally revitalize.[13]

Parties adopting direct election have also argued that it is more democratic than the delegate-convention method. Many point to the easy accessibility of direct election to all party members and its one member/one vote characteristic as evidence of the process being more democratic than the traditional delegate convention.[14] These objectives and the

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[13]   See, for example, "Members Can Vote For Leader Over Phone," <u>Vancouver Sun</u>, March 6, 1993, G3, reporting that BC Liberal Party President Floyd Sully said "party officials hope the new process will swell its membership and its financial coffers"; "Tories Pick Leader New Way," <u>Calgary Herald</u>, April 7, 1991, A4, reporting that Ralph Klein supported the move to direct election because it will "bring more people into the party"; and "Eight-Seat Grit Haul Seen," <u>Winnipeg Free Press</u>, March 15, 1993, B1, reporting that Manitoba Liberal Party President Tim Ryan stated "Instead of just 800 delegates deciding who will be the next Liberal leader, about 15,000 members will vote." Courtney has written that: "Party officials are also attracted to the idea of a universal vote because of the possibilities it presents for recruiting new supporters and organizers and for substantially expanding the party's membership lists." Courtney, <u>Do Conventions Matter?</u>, 241.

[14]   See, for example, letter to author from Nova Scotia Liberal Association Executive Director Anna Redmond, April 5, 1995, including in a list of reasons motivating the party's switch to direct election it "gives all members an opportunity to voice their vote" (full text attached as

ability of direct election to accomplish them will be considered below in more detail.

For most parties, the decision to adopt direct election is not particularly divisive. The exception to this occurs in parties that consider adoption of direct election during the course of a leadership campaign or in the run up to a leadership contest, when prospective candidates are already organizing. Debate concerning adoption of direct election during such circumstances is more likely to be taken over by the strategic concerns of the leadership candidates.[15]

This phenomenon was evident in the 1993 BC Liberal

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appendix E); Alberta Liberal Party's Proposal for Amendment to ALP Constitution, recommending that the existing leadership process "needs to be opened up and made more generally accessible"; "Weisgerber Acclaimed Socred Head," Vancouver Sun, March 9, 1992, B1, quoting interim leader Weisgerber as saying "One step towards democratization would be allowing all party members to vote on 'he next party leader through a universal ballot"; Latou ., "Universal Democracy," 180, "It seemed a natural thing u do and fitted perfectly with the ideology of absolute democracy so dear to the PQ"; Woolstencroft, "Tories Kick Machine to Bits," 213, "The party's president, Tom Long; the party's House Leader, Michael Harris; and Dennis Timbrell, a leadership candidate in the two previous conventions, spoke fervently in favour of 'letting the people decide'"; and Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party News Release, 9 November 1994, quoting Party President Dwight Dunn as Saying, "On November 19, the PCs are going to have the biggest political convention ever held in this province....Our goal was to make this the most inclusive leadership process in Saskatchewan history, and we have achieve that goal."

[15] Some parties, however, such as the Ontario and Nova Scotia Liberals, made the move away from the traditional delegate-convention method after some candidates had begun organizing their leadership bids without creating significant conflict among the candidates.

decision to adopt direct election and in the 1988 decision by the Alberta Liberals to reject direct election. The BC Liberals held a party convention in July 1993, several months after the leadership campaign officially began, at which a vote was taken to adopt direct election. Of the three leading candidates, one preferred a traditional delegate convention (Wilson), one favoured direct election by tele-vote (Campbell) and the third favoured a direct election process with votes weighed by riding (Gibson). The debate at the convention was very acrimonious, and ultimately the motion to adopt direct election succeeded by only one vote.

When the Alberta Liberals debated adoption of direct election in February 1988, the principal prospective leadership candidates had begun organizing their campaigns. The debate divided the four leading candidates--two in favour and two opposed. Discussion at the party convention was very heated, and by a narrow vote the party decided not to adopt direct election.[16]

Opposition to the direct election of leaders has often centered around concern for the integrity of constituency associations and the relative weight given to urban and rural voters. Party members have expressed concern that more urban

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[16] The vote in favor of continuing with the delegate convention was 298 for and 255 opposed. Prospective leadership candidates Taylor and Mitchell voted against the delegate convention and Decore and Chumir voted to continue using it.

voters will participate in direct elections, thus swamping the votes of rural members. These concerns have been raised by the Liberals of BC, Manitoba, Alberta and Ontario and the Alberta and Ontario PCs. As discussed herein, three of these parties have addressed these concerns while the remaining parties have made no accommodation for rural voters.

Some have opposed direct election because they are concerned that media coverage will not be as extensive or as exciting as for a delegate convention.[17] They have argued that parties, particularly those in a weak competitive position, need to maximize the beneficial publicity received from their leadership selection. They fear that doing away with the excitement and the often uncertain outcome of a delegate convention will decrease media attention and, therefore, public interest in the race.

An Overview of Direct Election Methods

Just as normative studies of leadership conventions have drawn upon detailed studies of convention procedures and delegate selection processes, the implications and effects of direct leadership election cannot be appreciated without first thoroughly understanding the procedures used. This

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[17] See, for example, "Tories Pick Leaders New Way," Calgary Herald, April 7, 1991, A4, reporting that "former Solicitor General Roy Farran urged delegates to reject the direct vote, saying the party will lose the excitement generated by a leadership convention."

section presents an overview of the methods of direct election used by provincial parties.

Each of the 12 parties has used a slightly different direct election method. There are four variables to consider when categorizing direct election methods of leadership selection: voting mechanisms, eligible voters, vote weighing and run-offs. As illustrated in Table 5.2, four different voting mechanisms have been tried and three different rules adopted concerning who is eligible to vote--resulting in eight different processes. The four voting mechanisms employed are: riding-based ballot box, tele-voting, open convention and mail-in ballot.

The riding-based ballot box method, used by the PQ, the Ontario and Alberta PCs, the Ontario Liberals and the BC Social Credit, requires that voting take place at a location within each riding at which voters deposit their ballots in a ballot box--similar to general election voting. Tele-voting, used by the Nova Scotia, BC and Alberta Liberals and the Saskatchewan PCs, requires voters to dial a central telephone number and punch in additional numbers identifying the candidate of their choice, after which a computer tallies voters' preferences. The open convention method, used only by the PEI PCs, allows all eligible party members to participate in the leadership convention and to vote (i.e., there is no prior delegate selection process). The mail-in

ballot method, used by the Manitoba Liberals, the BC Reform and the BC Social Credit, requires all eligible party members to mail a ballot to the party for centralized counting.

Rules concerning who is eligible to vote generally revolve around two criteria: (1) is there a cut-off date for party membership? and (2) is there something more than party membership required for voting eligibility? The extra requisite usually requires members to register to vote and pay a voting fee. The Alberta PCs have the most lenient rule concerning voting eligibility--all members of the party may vote without having to pay a voting fee, and membership may be purchased right up to the day of voting (including the day of any run-off balloting). The PQ, Ontario Liberals, BC Social Credit, Saskatchewan PCs and BC Reform charge no voting fee, but they restrict voting to those who joined the party by a cut-off date ranging from 90 days (Ontario Liberals) to 14 days (Saskatchewan PCs) before balloting. The most restrictive rules limit voting to those who have both paid a voting fee and joined the party prior to a membership cut-off date, the Ontario and PEI PCs and the Nova Scotia, BC, Manitoba and Alberta Liberals are all in this category. The Nova Scotia Liberals and PEI PCs charge a $25 voting fee, the BC Liberals $20 and the Manitoba and Alberta Liberals and Ontario PCs, $10.

Table 5.2. Direct election voting procedures and eligible voters, 1985-1995.

	tele-voting	riding-based ballot box	open convention	mail-in ballot
all party members		Alberta PCs		
party members by cut-off day	Sask. PCs	Parti québécois Ontario Liberals BC Social Credit 1		BC Reform BC Social Credit 2
party members by cut-off day who pay voting fee	NS Liberals Alberta Liberals BC Liberals	Ontario PCs	PEI PCs	Manitoba Liberals

Parties have also adopted differing rules governing the weight given to each vote and the procedure for run-offs in the event that no candidate receives a first-ballot majority. Four different procedures are used for weighing votes. The most popular method counts each vote as one and the winning candidate is the first to receive a simple majority of votes cast. This method is employed by all but three parties. The Ontario PCs use a riding-based method in which votes cast are counted by riding with each riding total converted to 100 votes. These converted totals (effectively percentages) are then totalled riding by riding and the winner is the first

candidate to receive a majority of these adjusted votes. The Manitoba Liberals use a slightly different method limiting each riding to a maximum of 100 votes. In ridings with more than 100 votes cast, the raw totals are converted to total 100 votes, these votes are then combined with the raw totals from those ridings in which less than 100 votes are cast and the winner is the first candidate to receive a majority of these votes.[18]

The Ontario Liberals use a completely different method. This complex method can best be described as a direct election/delegate convention hybrid. Liberal party members vote separately for their preferred leadership candidate and for delegate candidates. The result of the vote for leadership candidates determines, on a proportional basis, how many delegates pledged to each leadership candidate are selected from each riding. The votes for particular delegate candidates determine which party members become actual delegates.[19] Delegates are required to either vote as

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[18] In the 1993 Manitoba Liberal leadership contest there were no ridings in which more than 100 votes were cast.

[19] For example, if leadership candidate X receives 50 per cent of the vote in a riding, then 50 per cent of that riding's delegates are chosen from those delegate candidates pledged to X. The actual identity of the delegates is determined by the second vote for delegate candidates. Since each riding is allowed 16 convention delegates, the eight delegate candidates pledged to X with the most votes would receive delegate status.

initially pledged on the convention's first ballot or to abstain from voting.

Three different procedures are employed for determining a winner when no candidate receives a majority of votes on the first ballot. The most popular method, used by the Ontario, Saskatchewan and PEI PCs and the Nova Scotia, Ontario, BC and Alberta Liberals, is to hold subsequent ballots on the same day until a candidate receives a majority of the votes.[20]

The Alberta PCs and the PQ both provide a second ballot, if necessary, to be held one week after the first ballot. In both parties the second ballot is limited to the top three finishers on the first ballot, and a preferential ballot is used on the second ballot to ensure a winner.

The BC Social Credit, Manitoba Liberals and BC Reform use a preferential vote on the first ballot. Voters rank order all candidates and if no candidate emerges with a majority of first place preferences, the candidate with the smallest first ballot support is dropped and their votes are redistributed according to the indicated second preferences and the process is repeated until a majority winner emerges.

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[20] While most parties drop only the candidate receiving the fewest votes on the preceding ballot, some ensure that no more than two ballots are necessary by either limiting the second ballot to the top two finishers on the first ballot (Nova Scotia Liberals), or by using a preferential vote on the second ballot (Alberta Liberals).

Table 5.3. Direct election vote weighing and run-off procedures, 1985-1995

	Each vote counts as 1	Each vote counts as 1 and each riding limited to 100 votes	Riding totals converted to percentages then totalled	Hybrid direct election/ delegate convention method
Same day run-off	PEI PCs NS Liberals BC Liberals Sask. PCs Alberta Liberals		Ontario PCs	Ontario Liberals
Run-off one week after first ballot	Parti québécois Alberta PCs			
Preferential first ballot	BC Social Credit BC Reform	Manitoba Liberals		

Collected Considerations

Consistent with the Collected decision-making objective of achieving wide-spread effective political participation, three of the prime motivating factors in the switch to direct election were: (1) a desire to attract new voters to the party by inviting them to participate in the party's

leadership selection, (2) a desire to increase the percentage of existing party members participating in the process and (3) to strengthen the connection between party members' leadership preference and the ultimate selection of a party leader. The success of direct election in achieving the first two of these objectives can be measured in three ways: (1) the total number of voters participating, (2) the increase in party membership during the course of the direct election campaign and (3) the percentage of party members voting in the direct election. When possible, comparison will be made with the delegate-convention selection method.

It is difficult to know with any certainty how many voters have participated in t'.~ traditional delegate selection meetings. While there is little concrete evidence available, Perlin reports that, "[i]n 1983 and 1984 more than half the meetings were attended by fewer than 200 party members."[21] Perlin further estimates that as many as 50,000 Canadians participated in these contests, and as many as 75,000 to 100,000 in the 1990 Liberal delegate selection meetings.[22]

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[21]   George   Perlin   "Leadership   Selection   in   the Progressive Conservative and Liberal Parties: Assessing the Need for Reform" in Hugh G. Thorburn, ed., Party Politics in Canada (6th ed.; Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1991), 202.

[22]   George Perlin, "Attitudes of Liberal Convention Delegates Toward Proposals for Reform of the Process of Leadership Selection," in Bakvis, Canadian Political Parties,

As discussed earlier, respondents to the 1993 election survey indicated that the average turnout at delegate selection meetings for the last Liberal and PC leadership conventions was 206 party members. Assuming that the data in this regard is representative, the total number of participating party members would be 78,470 for the Liberals and 41,890 for the PCs.

As will be illustrated herein, this does not compare particularly favorably with turn-out in direct elections. While there is great variation in the number of party members participating in direct election contests, depending on factors such as the size of the province, the type of process used, and the competitive position of the party holding the contest, many appear to outperform the participation rates realized in the national parties' delegate selection meetings.

More than 252,000 Canadians have participated in direct leadership elections.[23] The number participating has varied from a high of 97,389 in the 1985 PQ race to 887 in the 1990 PEI PC contest. Of course raw voting numbers are

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[23]   The actual number is slightly higher, reflecting those who participated in the first ballot of the Alberta PC and Nova Scotia Liberal races but not the second ballot. While it is impossible to determine how many voters fit this category, the number is likely small as the number of total votes increased significantly from the first to second ballot in Alberta and by one in Nova Scotia.

significantly influenced by the size of the province and by the competitive position of the party. However, some generalizations can be made regarding the relationship between the process used and voter turnout.

The five parties that use the riding-based ballot box voting method had the largest voter turnout. All of these parties, except the Ontario PCs, also charged no voting fee. The BC Social Credit, while in a far less favourable competitive position than the BC Liberals, managed to draw more than twice as many voters to their riding-based ballot box process than did the Liberals to their tele-vote.

Turnout rates range from a low of 24 per cent of party membership for the Manitoba Liberals to a high of 75 per cent for the Alberta PCs.[24] The average participation rate for riding-based ballot box elections is 57 per cent compared with 41 per cent for mail-in processes and 39 per cent for tele-votes. The average participation rate for parties charging no voting fee is 55 per cent compared with 39 per cent for parties charging a fee.

Participation rates are strongest in parties holding power at the time of their leadership contest, followed by parties forming the official opposition and lowest in third

[24] The BC Social Credit participation rate of 5 per cent in their 1994 mail-in leadership vote is excluded from this discussion. This number is misleading, as many of those who the party considered members had already deserted the party.

place parties. Parties in government averaged a 70 per cent turnout rate. Turnout for official opposition parties, BC, Ontario, Alberta and Nova Scotia Liberals and PEI and Saskatchewan PCs, averaged 44 per cent. Third place parties, the Ontario PCs, BC Social Credit and Reform and Manitoba Liberals, had an average participation rate of 41 per cent.

Information on the rate of increase in party membership is not uniformly available. Some parties do not have central membership lists and thus are unable to disclose total membership numbers at the beginning of their leadership campaigns.[25] In those parties where the numbers are available, a significant increase in membership is found. The BC Reform experienced the most significant membership increase. The party claimed only 200 members at the start of its leadership contest and 4,116 on voting day. While this is an increase of 2,000 per cent, the small size of the initial membership makes the percentage increase deceptively large. The Alberta PC membership increased by 365 per cent, membership in the BC Liberal Party by 265 per cent and in the

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[25] For instance, the Ontario Liberals, without a central membership list, estimated party membership at between 25,000 and 35,000 at the outset of their leadership contest; see "Ontario Liberals Endorse Voting Limits," The Globe and Mail (Toronto), May 27, 1991, A6. However, by voting day the party was claiming a membership of only 18,006. It is unlikely that membership decreased during the course of the campaign.

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PQ by 57 per cent.[26] The PQ started its contest with a significantly larger number of party members than did the other parties.

Table 5.4. Total number of voters and participation rates in direct elections.

	Total number of voters	Voters as percentage of party membership
Alberta PCs	78,251[27]	75
Parti québécois	97,389	64
BC Liberals	6,540	49
Ontario PCs	15,850	48
NS Liberals	6,999	42
BC Social Credit 1	14,833	33
Manitoba Liberals	1,938	24
PEI PCs	887	44[28]
Alberta Liberals	11,004	28
BC Social Credit 2	1,871	5
BC Reform	2,376	58
Saskatchewan PCs	3,298	36
Ontario Liberals	11,296	63

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[26] Blake and Carty, "Televoting for the Leader," 12; and Latouche, "Universal Democracy," 182.

[27] The Alberta PC number represents the number of second ballot voters. The actual total is somewhat higher, including first ballot voters who did not participate in the second ballot.

[28] The PEI PCs do not have any official record of the total membership in November 1990. The Party Secretary, who was responsible for the central recording of party memberships in 1990, estimates that there were 2,000 party members at that time.

Besides absolute numbers of participants it is necessary to consider who participates. As long as participation is not universal there remains the question of how representative those voting are of the entire population. The legitimacy of collected decision-making lies in its ability to accurately gather the opinions of all citizens. When some citizens do not participate concern arises that some interests may not be represented.

Direct elections appear to offer the possibility of being more representative and accessible than delegate conventions. While parties have made considerable progress towards more equitable representation, leadership conventions generally continue to over-represent men, the well educated, higher income groups and youth.[29] Studies of direct election voters in the Alberta PC and BC and Nova Scotia Liberal races all measure slightly different voter characteristics but generally show direct elections to have more representative electorates than conventions. Female voters comprised 47 per cent of the 1992 Alberta PC direct election electorate compared with only 33 per cent of the delegates to the party's 1985 convention.[30] Likewise, the percentage of women

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[29]   For instance, the last traditional leadership conventions of the federal NDP, Liberals and PCs had female representation respectively of 37, 44 and 34 per cent. See Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 336.

[30]   Stewart, "Electing the Premier," 6, n.17.

in the 1993 BC Liberal leadership electorate was 42 per cent, up from 34 per cent at the party's 1987 convention.[31] The percentage of voters under age 25 dropped for the Alberta PCs from 16 per cent in 1985 to five per cent in 1992.[32] For Nova Scotia Liberals the percentage of students in the electorate dropped from 15 in 1986 to six in 1992.[33] The percentage of voters over age 65 increased for the Alberta PCs from six in 1985 to 14 in 1992.[34] Similarly, the percentage of retired voters in the Nova Scotia Liberal contests increased from seven in 1986 to 23 in 1992.[35] Finally, the percentage of voters with a univers. y education decreased from 61 to 50 in the BC Liberal races.[36]

As mentioned above, concern has been raised that direct election will result in urban voters dominating the process. In the case of the Nova Scotia Liberals, however, party members from Cape Breton were supportive of the move to direct election, believing that members from outlying regions would be more likely to participate in a direct election in their home ridings than to travel significant distances to

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[31] Carty and Blake, "Televoting for the Leader," 14.

[32] Stewart, "Electing the Premier," 6.

[33] Adamson et al, "Pushing the Right Button," 12.

[34] Stewart, "Electing the Premier," 6.

[35] Adamson et al, "Pushing the Right Button," 12.

[36] Carty and Blake, "Televoting for the Leader," 14.

participate in a convention.[37] Research conducted on two direct election races suggest that the fear of urban voter domination may not be well founded. Stewart found that in the 1992 Alberta PC direct vote, "[t]he proportion of voters from Edmonton, Calgary and the rest of the province was roughly identical to the delegate proportions Hunziker found for the 1985 convention."[38] In the 1992 Nova Scotia Liberal direct vote the proportion of the electorate from Cape Breton increased slightly over the proportion participating in the 1986 leadership convention. Adamson et al note, however, that the 1986 convention was won by a Cape Breton candidate, while the 1992 direct election contest included no Cape Breton candidates, and hence it is likely that adoption of direct election significantly increased the share of the vote cast by Cape Bretoners.[39]

While direct elections appear more representative in terms of gender, education and age, a point of concern is the significant number of party members who choose not to participate. As illustrated in Table 5.4, in only four of 13 direct elections did a majority of party members vote. In all four of these contests party members were not charged any

[37] See "Dial-a-vote has Graham Reconsidering Intention to Seek Liberal Leadership," Halifax Chronicle Herald, March 31, 1992, A4.

[38] Stewart, "Electing the Premier," 5.

[39] Adamson et al, "Pushing the Right Button," 15-16.

fee to vote. Concern has been expressed by at least one party official that charging a voting fee keeps substantial numbers of potential voters from participating. As Paul MacEwan, Liberal Member of the Legislative Assembly and Speaker of the Nova Scotia House, stated,

> We only achieved suffrage on the part of
> those who could pay $25 or $45 respectively
> .... The disadvantage is obvious. Those
> who cannot afford $25 or $45, or those to
> whom it does not appear to be a sufficient
> priority, will not participate. I regret
> the disincentive to those who lack the
> means to afford that fee to participate.[40]

Tele-voting requires that members vote from a touch-tone telephone, effectively disenfranchising those with rotary telephones. In several methods of direct election, particularly tele-voting, voters must not only be party members but must also register separately for the leadership vote to be eligible to participate.

While prior registration and payment of a $10-$25 fee are modest requisites compared with travelling to a convention and paying a substantial delegate fee, it must be remembered that in the delegate convention method all party members can participate, at least minimally, by simply atten⁻ing a delegate selection meeting. Several methods of

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[40] Roundtable discussion, "Reforming the Leadership Convention Process," _Canadian Parliamentary Review_ 16 (1993), 6. The $45 fee was charged to those who both voted in the leadership contest and attended the concurrent party convention.

direct election remove this avenue of minimal participation; while they make participation more consequential, they demand more of a commitment from voters.

The relative ease of participation is important, as there exists the possibility of direct elections vesting the power to select party leaders in a participatory elite. Mansbridge observes that by increasing the directness and significance of participation - for example, by moving from the election of town councilors to direct decision by town meeting - significantly more effort is required in order to participate. The minimal-cost opportunity of casting a secret ballot is replaced by the day-long town meeting.[41] This is of particular concern in leadership selection systems which require travel to a convention site, such as the PEI PC direct election; and in those processes providing for multiple ballots on the same day--which require that voters remain available for participation over a period of several hours. For instance, under the Ontario PC rules, voters are required to travel to their voting location every few hours to vote in consecutive ballots. In the less burdensome procedures used in tele-voting systems, voters need to stay 'tuned in' after casting their votes so that they can dial in again several hours later if necessary. In a survey of BC Liberal voters, seven per cent of respondents "indicated that

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[41] Mansbridge, Beyond Adversary Democracy.

they would not have been available to vote at noon had a second ballot been necessary."[42] Several parties have addressed these concerns by using preferential balloting or by holding second ballots one week after the first.

The delegate convention method of leadership selection has been criticized for not complying with the collected tenet of limiting all voters to one vote.[43] Direct election can help address this problem. All forms of direct election practiced by provincial parties attempt to limit party members to one vote. As we have seen, however, many party members are given no vote in the direct election process. As well, concerns have been expressed that some members are able to vote more than once. Due to the fact that telephone voting takes place from the privacy of one's own home, it is difficult to safeguard against a person voting multiple times. All that is required is that a person have a different personal identification number (PIN) for each vote cast. There have been allegations made that individuals have purchased dozens of memberships, registered and paid the requisite fee for each membership, and then cast all the votes themselves. For instance, in the Alberta Liberal race it was revealed that 92 PINs were issued to the same address

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[42] Blake and Carty, "Televoting for the Leader," 5.

[43] See, for example, Courtney, "Leadership Conventions," 96.

and phone number.[44] The system of mailing a ballot to each member to complete and return to the party, and the riding-based ballot box method where voters must actually turn out and identify themselves help eliminate these problems.

Most direct election processes count all votes equally. However, in the systems used by the Ontario PCs and Manitoba Liberals this is not the case. The Ontario PCs conversion of all riding totals to 100 means that the 23 votes cast in Cochrane North in 1990, carried the same weight as the 961 cast in Nipissing.[45] Each voter in Nipissing counted for .1 final vote while each Cochrane voter counted for four final votes. The Manitoba Liberal system discounts votes cast in ridings with more than 100 voters. This is similar to the result in delegate selection meetings. Most parties allocate the same number of delegates to each riding regardless of the number of party members in the riding or the attendance at the delegate selection meetings. In most direct election methods this circumstance is remedied by simply adding together all votes cast and counting each as one.

The question of the effectiveness of participation is directly related to the relationship between votes cast and the ultimate determination of a winner. In the traditional

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[44] See "Crash and Burn," Alberta Report, November 28, 1994, 6-10.

[45] Woolstencroft, "Tories Kick Machine to Bits," 215.

delegate convention process the relationship is very weak. Party members' preferences are filtered through convention delegates who are not at all restrained by the desires of party members in determining which leadership candidate to vote for at the convention. The relationship, and thus the effectiveness of participation, is much stronger in direct election contests.

In considering the effectiveness of participation consideration must also be given to the scope of choices available to party members. To address this concern, consideration is given to the number of candidates in direct election and convention races and to the backgrounds of these candidates.

Both the total number of candidates and the number of strong candidates (i.e., those receiving first ballot support equal to at least 50 per cent of the total received by the first ballot leader) can be examined and compared.

In all, between 1985 and 1995, 59 candidates have competed in the 14 direct elections, an average of 4.2. In comparison, in the ten previous conventions held by these parties there was a total of 31 candidates, an average of 3.1.[46] When the data is expanded to include the previous two

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[46] The PQ and BC Reform did not hold prior leadership conventions. The ten conventions studied thus represent the last traditional delegate-style leadership convention held by the other ten parties.

conventions for all ten parties, the total increases to 73 candidates, an average of 3.7. Thus, direct elections attract marginally more candidates than delegate conventions.

When the analysis is restricted to strong candidates, direct elections do not compare as favourably; 24 of the 59 direct election candidates (41%) can be classified as strong candidates compared with 42 out of 73 candidates (58%) in conventions. This pattern is also ref'·cted in the competitiveness of leadership races, measured by the number of ballots needed to select a winner. Direct election contests were won on the first ballot in nine out of 14 contests compared with 12 out of 20 conventions. Thus direct elections attract fewer strong candidates and, therefore, are less likely to require multiple ballots than are delegate conventions.

The backgrounds of candidates attracted to direct elections, in terms of their experience in public office, do not appear to differ significantly from those of delegate convention candidates.[47] While direct elections attract a modestly higher percentage of candidates from outside the legislative caucus, outside candidates have a higher winning

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[47] See R. K. Carty and Peter James, "Changing the Rules of the Game: Do Conventions and Caucuses Choose Different Leaders," in Carty et al, Leaders and Parties, 19, for a discussion of different career paths of provincial leaders selected by caucus and by convention.

percentage in delegate conventions. Leadership candidates can be divided into three categories: (1) members of the provincial legislature, (2) other party officials, including former members of the provincial legislature, members of parliament, big city mayors and provincial party presidents and (3) those holding no significant political office. In direct election contests 29 out of 59 candidates (49%) were current members of their provincial legislature, compared with 19 of 31 candidates in delegate conventions (61%). Direct election contests attracted 13 candidates (22%) who held some other significant office, compared with three convention candidates (10%); and 17 direct election candidates (29%) held no significant elected office, compared with nine convention candidates (29%).

A higher number of direct elections than delegate conventions have been won by a current member of the legislative caucus (eight out of 14 compared to four out of 10). Outside candidates holding some significant political office have won four direct elections compared with three convention contests. Candidates with no experience in elected office have won two direct election contests and three delegate conventions. The category of candidates with the highest winning percentage in both types of races is the second--those who are not current members of caucus but who hold some significant political position--four out of 13

direct election candidates in this category have been successful, and three out of three in delegate conventions.

An important concern relating to a leadership selection process's ability to attract candidates is the cost of financing a campaign. The experience thus far with direct election does not appear to indicate a significant increase in the cost of running for provincial party leadership. Candidates appear to have stayed away from general mass advertising and have instead concentrated on telephone and mail communications with party members. As well, candidates are saved the expense of putting on an elaborate convention display. Candidates in several contests have been restricted by spending limits, for example: PEI PCs $30,000, Manitoba Liberals $75,000, Nova Scotia Liberals $143,750, Alberta Liberals $250,000, Ontario Liberals $250,000, PQ $400,000 and Ontario PCs $500,000. These numbers are not significantly different from those in delegate convention contests. Any serious candidate with potential for broad-based support should not find it overly difficult to compete within these limits.

Collective Considerations

The principal opposition to direct election has centered around a concern for maintaining the collective benefits of a convention that may be lost in a direct election process.

Two specific concerns reflective of the collective view of democratic decision-making have been raised by opponents of direct election.

Firstly, some party members have expressed concern that many more urban voters will participate in direct elections, thereby swamping the votes of rural members. The concern is that if all voters are given equal weight in the leadership selection process, representation for rural interests will be diluted. This concern derives from the collective view of decision-making: that effective decision-making requires strong representation of regional interests. It was raised in at least the following parties: BC, Manitoba, Alberta and Ontario Liberals; and Alberta and Ontario PCs. As mentioned above, three of these parties have addressed these concerns by either giving all ridings the same number of votes or by capping the number of votes a riding may cast.

Courtney has identified the change in the leadership selection constituency as threatening the convention practice of ensuring equitable voting representation for all regions. Courtney has written:

> Second-generation party conventions of the two
> older parties have been marked by the extent
> to which they have attempted to accommodate
> the country's linguistic, cultural, and
> regional divisions through a combination of
> mixed representational categories and equal
> voting power to all federal constituency
> associations. How many of those gains

would be forfeited by the change [to direct
vote] remains unclear...[48]

The federal PCs, on revising their leadership selection rules
in April 1995, faced this question. They were not primarily
concerned with the urban-rural split but rather with
preserving their character as a national party. Concern was
expressed during debate on the new selection rules that pure
direct election would not allow sufficient voice for those
regional and linguistic interests where the party was not
strong and would not likely attract large numbers of voters
to a direct leadership election. This concern is similar to
the one that initially lead to the adoption of leadership
conventions. The PCs were concerned that direct leadership
contests would be centered in English Canada, where the party
has its greatest su port and where candidates would find the
largest number of voters. Specifically, the party was
concerned that candidates would neither spend sufficient time
attempting to understand the concerns of Québec nor work
towards building electoral strength in the province, as the
cost in terms of both time and resources would not likely be
commensurately rewarded in terms of leadership votes.

To address this concern the party adopted a system
similar to that used by the Ontario PCs. The new rules
provide for the allocation of an equal number of votes to

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[48]   Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 246.

each riding and for those votes to be cast proportionate to
the preferences of voters within the riding. The relevant
sections of the party's new constitution read as follows:

> 11.4.6 The election for the Leader shall be carried
> out as follows:
>
> 11.4.6.1 The By-laws will provide for the
> designation to each constituency association
> of an equal number of selection-votes to be
> allocated from each constituency association
> among candidates for the Leader;
> 11.4.6.2 Each Constituency Member is entitled
> to cast one (1) vote in that Constituency
> Member's constituency association on any
> ballot in the election for the leader;
>
> 11.4.6.3 The percentage of votes cast by such
> Constituency Members in each constituency
> association for each candidate for Leader
> shall be applied to the selection-votes from
> each constituency association and the selection-
> votes determined in that manner will be
> allocated to each candidate; and
>
> 11.4.6.4 The Leader shall be elected by receiving
> greater than fifty (50%) percent of all allocated
> selection-votes.[49]

The federal Liberals addressed this same issue by adopting
the hybrid system used by the Ontario Liberals. This system
maintains the convention practice of giving an equal number
of votes to each riding.[50]

The second concern resulting from the collective model
of decision-making is the lack of opportunity direct election

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[49] "The New Constitution of the Progressive Conservative
Party of Canada," April, 1995.

[50] See Liberal Party of Canada Constitution, Articles
17.(8) and 17.(9)(a).

processes offer for brokering of interests and consensus building. This concern revolves around the types of information available to voters in direct election and the lack of opportunity for face-to-face discussion among voters while making the leadership decision.

Voters in direct election campaigns appear dependent upon the media for most of their information. When the electorate expands to tens of thousands of voters it is impossible for leadership candidates to personally meet them all. In the contests with the largest electorates it is very costly for candidates to even communicate with all voters by mail or telephone. There is very little hard data available on this question, but that which does exist confirms these assumptions. In the 1992 Alberta PC contest, Stewart found that only 30 per cent of the electorate had met any of the candidates while the majority of delegates to the party's 1985 convention had met at least one candidate, and 60 per cent had met the winning candidate. 20 per cent of direct election voters attended an all candidates forum compared with a strong majority of convention delegates; and even the campaigns of the strongest candidates were not able to personally contact even half of the direct election voters, while more than half of the 1985 delegates were personally contacted by the campaign organization of the weakest

candidate.[31]

Voters in direct elections have information sources more similar to voters in delegate selection meetings than to leadership convention delegates. Convention delegates are able to observe the candidates in person during bear-pit sessions, candidate speeches and various social functions hosted by the candidates.

As important as the opportunity to observe candidates in person is the collective nature of decision-making in leadership conventions. Convention delegates mingle in the same hotels and convention halls for several days, sharing opinions concerning the leadership candidates in both formal and informal meetings. Delegates have the opportunity to hear and consider the concerns of others from different socio-economic backgrounds and from different regions of the province. When voting day arrives, all delegates are assembled in one hall and there can develop a sense of collective decision-making.

In direct leadership elections individual preferences of all party members are accumulated with little opportunity existing for voters to communicate with one another. Unlike convention delegates, party members do not have the

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[31] Stewart, "Electing the Premier," 12; and M. Hunziker, "Leadership Selection: The 1985 Alberta Progressive Conservative Leadership Convention" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Calgary, 1986), 116.

opportunity to benefit from informal discussions with other members. In rejecting a pure system of direct election, the Ontario Liberal Party's Leadership Procedures Review Committee suggested that:

> A convention allows delegates from northern
> Ontario and southern Ontario to get together
> and share their views and concerns; it
> allows delegates from rural ridings to try
> to convince delegates from urban ridings,
> and vice versa. Delegates can share their
> impressions of the candidates with each
> other -- with their views unfiltered by
> the media.[32]

In parties with deep regional, linguistic or rural/urban cleavages the loss of collective decision-making opportunities may cause great difficulty in attempts to build consensus. Courtney has found that:

> The responsiveness of candidates to regional
> concerns was clearly a factor for some,
> though not a majority, of the delegates
> attending the 1983 and 1984 conventions.
> A candidate's perceived responsiveness to
> regional interests was 'very influential'
> in the first ballot vote decisions of 40
> per cent of the Liberal delegates and 45
> per cent of the Conservative delegates.[33]

Without the opportunities provided by the convention, leadership voters are unlikely to have as much opportunity to assess a candidates 'responsiveness to regional interests.' For example, it is likely that the relatively high number of

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[32] Report of the Leadership Procedures Review Committee, March 20, 1991, Ontario Liberal Party, 7.

[33] Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 278.

PC delegates concerned with this issue at the 1983 convention was related to John Crosbie's difficulty in attracting Quebec support. While English Canadians may not have shared the concerns felt by Quebec delegates, the convention highlighted this issue and certainly brought it into focus for those delegates concerned with regional inclusiveness in the party.

The degree to which conventions foster consensus-building is difficult to ascertain. There are several characteristics of conventions that bring into question their ability to unify a party. At some point during nearly every contested convention a movement develops to try to block one candidate, often the one perceived to be in the lead, from winning. The last ballot of multi-candidate conventions often is contested by two competing blocks of candidates, with those having dropped off the ballot being aligned with one of the two remaining candidates. These divisions are sometimes ideologically driven; and on other occasions are personal and bitter. Of course, these animosities are created by the leadership contest itself and not by the convention method. However, it is difficult to see how they are lessened by the convention. The convention does offer an opportunity for a display of party unity after the results are announced as all candidates gather together on the stage, and the defeated candidates traditionally move that the results be made unanimous. These events, however, are often

mere formalities that in no way address the party divisions created by the contest.[54]

In an effort to increase the opportunity for consensus building and to ensure that leadership candidates are exposed to the concerns and interests of party members from across their province many parties have successfully organized a series of regional all candidates meetings. For example, the PQ held ten regional all candidates meetings, the Ontario PCs six, the Alberta Liberals nine, the Alberta PCs seven, the Nova Scotia Liberals ten, the Ontario Liberals 13 and the Saskatchewan PCs eight.

The hybrid system adopted by the Ontario Liberals unites collective and collected decision-making. All party members' views are collected and determine delegates' first ballot votes. The gathering of delegates at the convention allows

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[54] Perlin and Courtney have found that a substantial relationship exists between region and voting choice at conventions. While the strength of the relationship decreases after the first ballot, it remains significant on subsequent ballots. They go on to argue that, "[i]f accommodation does not occur within the process of leadership selection as such, the fact that conventions have been constructed to achieve regional balance remains vitally important....Were it not for the presence of Quebec delegates at the 1983 convention, the Conservative Party would probably have chosen as its leader John Crosbie, a unilingual Anglophone who demonstrated during the campaign that he was not in touch with the concerns of Quebec." John C. Courtney and George Perlin, "The Role of Conventions in the Representation and Accommodation of Regional Cleavages," in Perlin, Party Democracy in Canada, 1988, 142-43.

for collective decision-making on subsequent balloting.[55]

The federal NDP attempted to unite collective and collected decision-making in their 1995 leadership selection -- somewhat less successfully than the Ontario Liberals.

The NDP boasted that under its new selection rules "[f]or the first time in Canadian history a national political party will directly involve its membership in the selection of its leader. Between 300,000 and 400,000 New Democrats will have the opportunity to cast a ballot next September as the party heads to its leadership convention in October."[56] In the event, however, the NDP process maintained the collective benefits of the traditional leadership convention without satisfying demands of collected decision-making. The votes of party members who participated in the leadership selection were in no way effective as they had no connection with the leadership decision ultimately made by convention delegates chosen in the traditional manner.[57]

The party's rules provided that six primaries (five

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[55] This process is similar to Fishkin's "deliberative poll" referred to in Chapter Three. See Fishkin, Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reform.

[56] "Canada's New Democrats: Renewal '95 Update," Issue 1, February, 1995, 1.

[57] The only direct consequence of the voting by party members was the denying of long-shot candidate Herschel Hardin a place on the convention's first ballot.

regional and one for affiliated union locals) be held in which party members would express their preference for party leader. Candidates must either win one of these primaries or receive a cumulative total of 15 per cent of the votes cast in order to be eligible to be nominated at the subsequent leadership convention.[38] At the same time as the primaries, party members were also electing delegates to attend the leadership convention. Delegates were chosen in the traditional manner at delegate selection meetings. Convention delegates then, completely unencumbered by the results of the primaries, selected the party leader at the leadership convention.

In the event, the candidate who easily won the most support in the primaries, Lorne Nystrom, finished last at the convention. The winning candidate, Alexa McDonough, finished a distant third in the primaries with 17 per cent of the vote.

If anything, it can be argued that the existence of the primaries diminished the influence of rank-and-file party members in the NDP leadership selection process. In the traditional delegate selection process, party members are only given one opportunity to participate -- in the selection of convention delegates. In this process it is clear to

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[38] "New Democratic Party Leadership Rules 1995," s.4.i & ii, Nominating Ballot Rules.

party members that if they wish to aid in the election of a preferred candidate that they should vote for delegates who pledge their support to the favoured candidate. We know from the survey results that a significant minority of party members behave this way. In the new NDP system some voters likely felt that they increased their favoured candidate's chances of victory by voting for them in the primary, and, not realizing how inconsequential primary votes were, may not have been as concerned with knowing the preferred candidates of delegate hopefuls.

A further concern with the movement to direct election that emanates from the collective position is concern over the diminishing role of party elites in the selection process. The concern is that by allowing all party members equal participation, direct election does not give sufficient weight to the informed opinions of the parties' parliamentary caucus and experienced activists.[39] The rationale supporting this argument is two-fold. The first argument is consistent with the consociational position outlined in chapters One and Three. The successful selection of an effective party leader often requires the brokering of various interests in order to select a candidate acceptable to the competing interests within the party. In the Canadian context this usually involves building consensus among party members from

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[39] See Courtney, Do Conventions Matter?, 246.

different regions and across the linguistic divide. As described in the consociational method of collective decision-making, consensus-building among divergent groups is much more easily achieved at the elite level. When tens of thousands of Canadians participate in leader selection it becomes much more difficult for a single candidate to unite the party and bring all the divergent interests together.

The second rationale supporting this argument is that the party elites, such as MPs, provincial party leaders and party officials, are in a better position to select a leader capable of uniting the party. This concern is not specifically with the need to bring groups together in the selection process, but rather with the leader's ability to subsequently bring the party and the country together. The argument is that party elites are going to be both more concerned with leadership candidates' abilities in this regard than will rank-and-file party members, and will have better information about the candidates allowing for sounder judgment in this regard. For instance, MPs will likely have served with most if not all of the leadership candidates and will have witnessed first-hand their capacity for consensus-building. Some also argue that party elites are more concerned about the leaders' ability to win the next election than are the rank-and-file. Elites realize the necessity of having a leader able to unite the party if they are to be

electorally successful. While these arguments are made against the adoption of direct election many of them have also been made against the leadership convention by those favouring caucus selection.

Stewart provides convincing evidence that conventions do not always choose candidates preferred by party elites and that when they do the party is less likely to be electorally successful than in instances when outsiders - tne choice of rank and file delegates - are chosen.[60] Of the seven federal Conservative leaders chosen since World War Two, four - Bracken, Drew, Stanfield, and Campbell - were the choice of party elites. None of these four candidates ever led their party to victory. Diefenbaker and Clark, with little support for their leadership bids from the party establishment, won four federal elections between them. Mulroney, while supported by a significant minority of ex-officio delegates, was chosen by majority support from rank-and-file delegates and won two majority elections. On the Liberal side, Turner, Pearson and St. Laurent were the choices of party insiders

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[60] Ian Stewart "The Brass Versus the Grass: Party Insiders and Outsiders at Canadian Leadership Conventions," in Perlin, ed., Party Democracy in Canada: The Politics of National Party Conventions, 1988, 145-159. Stewart's analysis divides party supporters into rank-and-file delegates and party elites or insiders. Ex-officio delegates, those who obtain delegate status because of a position they hold - rather than having been selected by party members, appear to be who Stewart refers to interchangeably as party elites and insiders.

while Trudeau and King were largely supported by rank-and-file delegates. Trudeau and King have seven majority government victories between them while the other three have two (both by St. Laurent). These findings cast severe doubt on the thesis that elites are better qualified to identify leadership candidates able to build coalitions bridging Canada's cleavages.

While Stewart convincingly makes the case that conventions do not always choose leaders favoured by the party elites, and that elite favoured candidates are not always the most electorally successful, George Perlin warns of the difficulty a new leader may face who does not enjoy substantial caucus support. He notes, "[i]t is clear that the Conservative caucus did not want Robert Stanfield in 1967 or Joe Clark in 1976 and the result was a serious impairment of the leader's effectiveness..."[61] While there are examples of candidates with little caucus support winning delegate conventions, there does not appear to be a single direct election in which the favoured candidate of the legislative caucus has been defeated. Winning candidates Boyd, Edwards, Gibson, Harris, Johnson, Klein, McLeod, Mitchell, Savage, and Weisgerber are all reported to have had

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[61] George Perlin, "Leadership Selection in the Progressive Conservative and Liberal Parties: Assessing the Need for Reform," 205.

as much or more caucus support than any of their rivals.[62]
The necessity of mobilizing large numbers of voters across
the province likely makes substantial caucus support a
requisite to competitiveness.

Conclusion

In an interesting essay on leadership selection, Perlin
argues that there are two competing views of democracy at
play in different versions of leadership selection: the elite

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[62]   See, for example, <u>Montreal Gazette</u> "Caucus Support
is Leaning Heavily Towards Johnson," July 16, 1985, A4,
reporting that Johnson was endorsed by 24 caucus members
while his nearest rival, Landry, had support of three caucus
members; <u>Toronto Star</u> "Its the Mike Versus Dianne Show,"
April 28, 1990, reporting that Harris led five four in
caucus endorsements; <u>Ha'ifax Chronicle Herald</u> "Savage
Announces Leadership Bid, April 11, 1992, A3, reporting that
Savage was endorsed by six MLAs at his campaign kick-off;
<u>Calgary Herald</u> "Anti Klein Forces Swell," December 1, 1992,
A1, reporting that Klein was endorsed by more than half of
the Tory caucus; <u>Alberta Report</u> "The Bland Leading the
Bland," September 12, 1994, 10, reporting that Mitchell and
Germain each had 10 caucus endorsements compared with one
each for Chadi and Dickson and none for Sidlinger; <u>Vancouver
Sun</u> "Weisgerber Hopes to Lead Reform," June 25, 1994, A5,
reporting that Weisgerber enjoyed the support of all four
members of the Reform caucus; <u>Regina Leader Post</u> "Boyd Has
Some High Profile Support" November 19, 1994, A4, reporting
that "Bill Boyd can count on most of his caucus mates'
support in today's Conservative Leadership vote;" <u>Vancouver
Sun</u> "Campbell Will Go For Liberal Job," April 30, 1993, A3,
reporting that Campbell has "support from as many as a dozen
Liberal MLAs;" and, <u>The Globe and Mail</u> (Toronto), "Two More
MPPs Join Liberal Leadership Race," November 15, 1991, A8,
reporting that McLeod began the race with the support of 12
MPPs.

theory of democracy and the participatory theory.[63]
According to Perlin the elite theory supports leadership
conventions with party activists comprising the majority of
delegates because, "[t]hese delegates will make the wisest
choices because they are better informed, recognize the need
for accommodation and compromise and better understand the
requirements for building an electoral majority."[64]

Perlin suggests that advocates of the participatory
theory argue that,

> Since parties are at the centre of the democratic
> process, they have a critical role in facilitating
> the development of a citizenry that is informed,
> responsible and committed to the principles of
> democracy. Leaders, therefore, should be chosen
> by a method that provides for the widest possible
> participation and that is thoroughly consistent
> with democratic norms.[65]

He further observes that "Canadian conventions have clearly
developed in the direction of the participatory model. While
early conventions preserved a major role for the party
élites, recurring amendments to apportionment rules have
extended the representation accorded the parties' mass
membership."[66]

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[63] George Perlin, "Leadership Selection in the
Progressive Conservative and Liberal Parties: Assessing the
Need for Reform," in Thorburn, Party Politics in Canada, 202.

[64] Ibid., 202-03.

[65] Ibid., 203.

[66] Ibid., 203.

While Perlin's model is somewhat narrower than the collective/collected one there is an important similarity. Like the collective model of decision-making Perlin's elite theory concentrates on the importance of "accommodation and compromise." The participatory theory, like the collected model, is far more concerned with increasing the opportunity for citizens to participate in the process.

That the collected-collective model captures the essence of the current debate between supporters of traditional leadership conventions and advocates of direct election is evident in the list of reasons Perlin delineates why the national parties should not adopt direct election. While some of these concern practical considerations such as campaign costs and the possible infiltration of the process by outside forces, the majority of his concerns fall squarely within the collective decision-making model. Perlin argues that adoption of direct election would undermine the principle of constituency representation, jeopardize parties' ability to promote "accommodation and compromise among diverse and conflicting interests," and vitiate the ability to achieve proportional representation for regional interests.[67] All of these valid concerns are rooted in a collective view of party leadership selection.

As illustrated in this chapter, parties are largely able

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[67] Ibid., 216-17.

to address these concerns by adopting direct election procedures that maintain the principles of equal constituency representation and thus proportional representation for regional interests. Given the increasing popularity of the collected method generally, the use of direct leadership selection at the provincial level and its recent adoption by the federal parties, it is likely only a matter of time before direct election is the method of course. The federal PCs and Liberals have attempted to unite characteristics of both the collected and collective methods into a single process. The Liberal method, which preserves the institution of the leadership convention, may prove in the long term to be most successful. Successful federal party leaders must be able to unite quite disparate groups of Canadians -- and the support of party elites has traditionally been essential to this process. A hybrid method of leadership selection, uniting the collected and collective methods, may best respond to the need for deliberation among party elites and meaningful participation by rank-and-file party members.

Chapter 6

Candidate Nomination

Candidate nomination is a primary aspect of party democracy. The candidate nomination process has the potential to be easily accessible to party members as it occurs at the riding level. This is especially significant since for most party members it is the only opportunity they will have to participate in an important aspect of party decision-making. This chapter examines four questions relating to candidate nomination that are relevant to the central questions of effective voter participation and collective party decision-making: (1) is the process controlled locally or centrally? (2) how many voters participate? (3) what factors influence participation rates? and (4) what is the nature of their participation?

Local Control Over Candidate Nomination

Most observers describe candidate nomination in Canadian political parties as being normally within the purview of local constituency associations. In 1906, Siegfried wrote: "Five or six weeks before the voting-day the candidates are nominated by a local convention held in each constituency."[1]

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[1]   Siegfried, The Race Question in Canada, 119.

In describing party nominations in the first half of this century, Dawson observed that local associations are largely left on their own to select their candidate: "There is thus little tendency for the provincial or federal headquarters to suggest to a convention the names of possible candidates, for the convention would be quick to resent any such attempt to influence its power of selection."[2] Studies of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party, the Alberta Social Credit and the federal Progressives all indicate that candidate nomination was largely left to the discretion of the local association.[3]

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[2] R. MacGregor Dawson, The Government of Canada (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), 531. Dawson describes an interesting difference between the practices of the Liberal and Conservative parties in the first half of this century. While riding associations in both parties maintained control over local candidate selection they often used different methods. Liberal associations routinely used the nomination convention for selection of their candidate, while Conservative candidates were routinely selected by the riding association executive.

[3] See Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought, 42-43; Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, 76-70; and Smith, Prairie Liberalism, 36-41. The following is an excerpt from a guide to candidate selection for the Progressive Party in the 1921 election in the Saskatchewan riding of Last Mountain:
Last Mountain Federal Constituency
Instructions re Primaries
Any supporter of the New National Policy in the Municipality may hand in the name of a man whom he wishes to have placed in nomination to the chairman or secretary of a polling division, or to the municipal committee man. All these names shall then be sent by the polling-division chairman or secretary to the municipal committee man, who shall prepare a ballot or a list containing all the names so suggested. The committee man shall then call a public meeting of supporters of the New National Policy which shall be open from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. or until any other suitable time of day, for the purpose of giving an opportunity to all

Similar findings at the national level were reported by Scarrow in 1964[4], Perlin in 1974[5], Williams in 1981[6] and Erickson and Carty in 1988.[7]

Carty and Erickson's data and the data collected for this study indicate that candidate nomination remains

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supporters to vote on the proposed names... The man having the largest number of the total votes in all the polling divisions in the municipality would be declared the municipal candidate. His name should be sent to the constituency secretary." Appendix I in Harold A. Innis, ed., The Diary of Alexander James MacPhail (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1940), 59.

[4] "In Canada, as in most other parliamentary democracies, the nomination of parliamentary candidates is the most important single function entrusted to the local (i.e. constituency) party association." Harold A. Scarrow, "Nomination and Local Party Organization in Canada: A Case Study," Western Political Quarterly 17 (1964), 55 and 62.

[5] George Perlin, "The Progressive Conservative Party in the Election of 1974," in Howard R. Penniman, ed., Canada at the Polls: The General Election of 1974 (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975), 114.

[6] "In the four parties under consideration the choice is normally made at a special meeting of the constituency party association, often called a nominating convention which is usually devoted exclusively to selecting a candidate," and "[m]ost evidence points to local autonomy as the norm in modern selection procedures." Robert J. Williams, "Candidate Selection," in Howard R. Penniman, ed., Canada at the Polls: 1979 and 1980 (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), 91 and 96.

[7] "Conventional wisdom has it that candidate selection is a highly localized phenomenon, primarily an activity of local partisans who choose their own nominees and who make the rules and practices with respect to that choice with virtually no legal encumbrances and few requirements imposed by their national parties." Lynda Erickson and R. Kenneth Carty, "Parties and Candidate Selection in the 1988 Canadian General Election," Canadian Journal of Political Science 24 (1991), 332.

generally within the authority of the local association, but their authority is by no means complete. This limitation of local autonomy is evidenced by the number of associations reporting that they had potential candidates either encouraged or discouraged from running by individuals from outside the riding. Overall, 91 of 389 (23 per cent) respondents reported outside involvement in their 1993 nomination contest. There is a significant difference in this number depending on whether an incumbent MP is seeking renomination. When an incumbent MP is seeking renomination the percentage of associations reporting outside involvement drops to 11 compared to 27 in the absence of an incumbent MP. Liberal associations reported the most frequent interference from outside the riding, with 34 per cent of their association presidents reporting such occurrences, compared with 24 per cent of PCs and 12 per cent of Reform.[8]

In his study of the federal Liberal Party from 1930-1958, Whitaker observes that candidate nomination meetings were often orchestrated events with regional ministers having significant influence over who the local candidates would be.[9] In his study of Newfoundland politics, Noel observes that from 1949 to 1968 Premier Joey Smallwood had absolute

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[8] Only the difference between the Reform and Liberals is significant at the .05 level.

[9] Whitaker, The Government Party, 413; see also p. 183.

authority over federal Liberal Party nominations in that province.[10] In Alberta under Social Credit, Premier William Aberhart selected candidates from lists of three or four names submitted by each constituency association.[11] While there may no longer exist regional and provincial party chiefs powerful enough to unilaterally select or ensure the selection of local candidates in the ridings within their dominion, there are some significant general qualifications that must be made to the rule that local organizations have complete authority in the selection of candidates.

Since 1970 the Canada Elections Act has effectively given party leaders a veto over the selection of candidates by constituency associations through changes in the law to allow for the placement of party affiliation beside the candidate's name on the election ballot.[12] In order to effect this provision, party leaders are required to endorse their party's candidate in each constituency,[13] and they

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[10] S.J.R. Noel, Politics in Newfoundland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 282.

[11] Williams, "Candidate Selection," 92.

[12] See John C. Courtney, "Recognition of Canadian Political Parties in Parliament and Law," Canadian Journal of Political Science 11 (1978), 33-60.

[13] The relevant provisions are currently found in: Canada Elections Act, section 81.(1)(h) and 82.(1): "Subject to subsection 82.(1), where the candidate has the endorsement of a registered party and wishes to have the name of the party shown in the election documents relating to him, an instrument in writing, signed by the leader of the party or

have refused to do so on various occasions. The first time that this provision was used to deny a nominated candidate party endorsement appears to be in the case of Leonard Jones of Moncton, New Brunswick. Jones was Mayor of Moncton and a vociferous critic of French language rights. Robert Stanfield refused to accept Jones' nomination in the 1974 election and demanded that the riding association nominate someone else. According to Perlin: "There was no explicit authority in the party constitution for Stanfield's action and it had no precedent, but the Moncton constituency executive complied with his decision and submitted the incumbent member of Parliament, whom Jones had defeated at the nominating convention, as its candidate."[14] Stanfield's action was criticized by many as an unjustified infringement on the right of the local party to select its nominee. Jones ultimately ran as an independent candidate and won the seat.

Brian Mulroney used this authority to refuse the renomination of Sinclair Stevens by his riding association prior to the 1988 election. Stevens, a former cabinet member, had been found by a judicial inquiry to have breached

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by a representative designated by the leader pursuant to section 27 and stating that the candidate is endorsed by the party, shall be filed with the returning officer at the time the nomination paper is filed;" and "A registered party may, with respect to any election, give its endorsement to only one candidate in each electoral district."

[14] Perlin, "The Progressive Conservative Party in the Election of 1974," 115.

conflict of interest guidelines on 14 occasions.[15]

In the 1993 campaign, Prime Minister Kim Campbell refused to certify the nominations of three incumbent PC MPs who had been renominated by their constituency associations in Quebec.[16] All three of these MPs had been charged with criminal offenses related to their service as MPs. The three MPs were Gilles Bernier, Carole Jacques, and Gabriel Fontaine. Campbell also announced that she would not allow incumbent MP Maurice Tremblay, who was also facing criminal charges, to run under the PC banner though he had not yet been renominated by his local association.

The Reform Party has effectively removed the veto power over nominations from its leader and vested it in the party's Executive Council,[17] which in 1993 refused the candidacy of

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[15] See Mr. Justice W.D. Parker, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Facts of Allegations of Conflict of Interest Concerning the Honourable Sinclair M. Stevens," (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1987).

[16] See, "Campbell Won't Sign Nomination Papers," Halifax Chronicle Herald, July 29, 1993, A7.

[17] Reform Party of Canada Constitution, Section 4. Candidate Recruitment, Nomination and Development, subsections (c) and (e):
> Each duly recognized Constituency Association shall have the right to nominate the official candidate of the Party at a general meeting of the members of the Constituency Association subject always to the right of the Executive Council, in its absolute discretion where it feels the overall best interest of the party is involved, to intervene with respect to any nomination and to nullify the nomination of any candidate; and,
> The Leader shall not withhold, under the provisions

former PC MP and leadership candidate John Gamble, who had been nominated by the party in the riding of Don Valley West. Their grounds for doing so were that he was too right-wing for the party.[18]

The greatest interference with local associations' autonomy in selecting candidates in the 1993 campaign occurred in the Liberal Party. In February 1992, in national convention, the party amended its constitution giving the National Campaign Committee, whose members are appointed by the party leader, complete authority over the rules and processes of candidate nomination.[19] Liberal MP Brian Tobin, who was assigned by Chrétien to work full-time on election preparedness, said the new rules amounted to "a massive shift of power from riding associations and provincial organizations to the national leader and the national campaign committee."[20] Party leadership, including Chrétien, based their arguments in favor of the amendment on

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of the Canada Elections Act, the endorsement of a nominee as candidate nominated by a recognized Constituency Association except in compliance with Article 4(d).

[18] See, "Reform Annuls Nomination," Globe and Mail (Toronto), April 3, 1993, A10.

[19] The Liberal Party of Canada Constitution, as amended by the 1994 Biennial Convention, "National Campaign Committee" section 14.(6), p. 50.

[20] "Liberals Clean up Nomination Process: Recruitment of instant members and ethnic minority groups to end," Globe and Mail (Toronto), February 21, 1992, A1, 6.

two reasons: (1) to prevent single interest groups, particularly pro-life groups, from capturing control of the nominating process and (2) to ensure that the party nominated a sufficient number of women candidates.[21] Subsequently, when Chrétien was criticized for his use of this provision, he justified his actions saying: "[The powers to hand-pick candidates] were given to me by elected delegates from across the land. I've used them to make sure we have an adequate number of women in the party, and I've used them to get a few good candidates like Marcel Massé."[22]

This provision was used by Chrétien to appoint 14 candidates. When the appointments are scrutinized there appears to be three types of instances when Chrétien exercised this authority: (1) the appointment of high profile candidates that he wanted for his cabinet (for example, Marcel Massé in Hull-Aylmer and Art Eggleton in York-Centre), (2) to increase the number of women candidates (11 of the 14 candidates appointed were women) and (3) to prevent divisive constituency battles.

The third category includes two types of potentially divisive nomination contests. The first being when single issue groups are attempting to take control of a constituency

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[21] See "Chrét' `  `hwarts Hijack by Pro-Lifers" _Montreal Gazette_. February 1992, B11.

[22] "Chrétien Parachutes in Hull-Aylmer Candidate" _Calgary Herald_, July 29, 1993, A7.

association by selling thousands of memberships and nominating one of their leaders.[23] An example of this is Chrétien's appointment of Jean Augustine in the Toronto riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore. While Augustine, then Chair of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority, meets the two other criteria for candidate appointment - being high profile and a women - the choice of riding for her nomination was likely related to Dan McCash's campaign for the nomination in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. McCash was at the time National Coordinator of Liberals for Life.[24]

A second example of an attempt to prevent a divisive nomination battle is the appointment of MP David Berger to renomination in the Montréal riding of Westmount-St. Henri. Berger was being challenged for the nomination by former MP, national party president and leadership candidate Donald Johnston. This contest promised to divide not only the constituency association but also the party's parliamentary caucus.

The sporadic use of the leader's candidate appointment powers did not, however, discourage aspiring candidates in

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[23] Concerns regarding single interest groups taking over nomination processes apparently are not new. Dawson refers to the "attempted packing of the convention," and "undue influences exerted by special groups" as areas of concern in the candidate nomination process during the first half of this century. Dawson, Government of Canada, 532.

[24] "Chrétien Names Five Women Candidates" Montreal Gazette, March 20, 1993, A11.

other ridings from signing up thousands of members and from engaging in divisive contests. In the Ontario riding of Brampton-Gore-Malton, for example, 10,000 new Liberal members were recruited by five different candidates from the Sikh community.[25]

There was substantial opposition within the party to many of Chrétien's appointments. Four Toronto MPs, Joseph Volpe, Dennis Mills, John Nunziata and Charles Caccia, all publicly criticized Chrétien's appointment of candidates.[26] John Munro, former Liberal MP and cabinet member during the Trudeau governments, unsuccessfully filed suit to enjoin Chrétien from appointing candidates. Munro maintained that the appointment of candidates amounted to a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.[27] Peter Li Preti, who had begun organizing a campaign for the party's nomination in York Centre prior to the appointment of Eggleton, joined Munro in the suit and was one of several spurned candidates for Liberal nominations who ultimately contested the 1993 election as independent candidates.[28]

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[25] "MPs Resent Chrétien's Nominees" Globe and Mail (Toronto), November 14, 1992, A5.

[26] "MPs Resent Chrétien's Nominees", Globe and Mail (Toronto), November 14, 1992, A5.

[27] "Rebels Challenge Chrétien" Winnipeg Free Press July 28, 1993, B7.

[28] Ibid.

Participation in Candidate Nomination

Participation in candidate nomination is measured in two ways: (1) by the number of voters who participate in the selection of the candidate and (2) by the number and types of party members who offer themselves as candidates for nomination.

Participation Rates

Relatively few voters participate in candidate nomination meetings. The average attendance at 1993 candidate nomination meetings was 413. This number is greatly increased by a few ridings that had very large meetings (three per cent over 2,500). The mean attendance was only 201. One-third of associations had 100 or fewer members participate, 55 per cent had fewer than 251 and 79 per cent had fewer than 501. Most ridings had four major parties contest the 1993 election; thus, if the nomination attendance numbers are generalized to include the NDP and the BQ, in most constituencies considerably less than 2,000 voters participated in all of the local candidate nomination meetings combined.[29] On average, this represents less than

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[29] The number of party members participating in nomination meetings does not appear to have increased over time. Fifty years ago, Dawson observed that: "A normal attendance is four or five hundred..." This figure actually represents a greater level of participation for two reasons: (1) there were fewer voters in each riding fifty years ago, resulting in a higher percentage of participation and (2) attendees at early nomination meetings were often delegates chosen from subdivisions within the riding, meaning that many

five per cent of general election voters.

Liberal respondents reported having larger nomination meetings than did either the PCs or Reform. Liberal meetings had a mean attendance of 478 and a median of 275. PC meetings drew a mean of 388 members with a median of 200. Reform associations attracted a mean of 359 members to their nomination contests, with a median of 150.[30]

Not only do nomination meetings attract a very small percentage of voters, they also appear to attract only about half of all party members. Using 1993 membership numbers (the vast majority of party nominations occurred in 1993), Liberal respondents had a mean membership of 821, Reform 770, and PCs 758; thus, on average, Liberal associations drew 58 per cent of their members to their nomination contests, PC associations 51 per cent and Reform associations 47 per cent. These numbers represent a significant increase from Carty and Erickson's findings concerning the percentage of members participating in nomination contests prior to the 1988 election: "On average, only about a third of a riding's

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more party members participated in the selection of these nomination meeting delegates. Dawson, The Government of Canada, 528.

[30] The differences between the parties may not be generalizable as an analysis of the variance of the means does not show them to be significant at the .05 level.

membership attends."[31]

One possible deterrent to participation may be the requirement that voters pay a fee, usually ranging from 10 to 20 dollars. However, association presidents overwhelmingly responded that the fee charged to those participating in the nomination contest did not discourage interested individuals from participating. Only two per cent of respondents believed the fee to be a deterrent.

As illustrated in Tables 6.1 through 6.3, the number of members attending the nomination meeting is significantly affected by whether the nomination is contested. Uncontested nomination meetings had a mean membership turnout of 183 and a median of 100. 52 per cent of these associations had 100 or fewer members attend, 77 per cent 250 or less and 95 per cent 500 or less. The largest uncontested meeting had a turnout of 1,200 members. Contested nomination meetings have significantly higher membership turn-out. The mean attendance at a contested nomination meeting was 574 and the median 300. 33 of these contests had more than 1,000 members attending, and a third of them had more than 500 members present. Contested Liberal and PC meetings were significantly larger than Reform meetings.

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[31]   R. K. Carty and Lynda Erickson, "Candidate Nomination in Canada's National Political Parties" in Bakvis, Canadian Political Parties: Leaders, Candidates and Organization, 114.

Table 6.1. Participation in PC association nomination meetings. N=107.

type of contest	mean attendance	median attendance	Cases
contested nominations	632	500	46
uncontested nominations	204	100	61
all nominations	388	200	107

(the difference in means is significant at .01 level)

Table 6.2. Participation in Liberal association nomination meetings. N=141.

type of contest	mean attendance	median attendance	Cases
contested nominations	733	385	74
uncontested nominations	196	125	67
all nominations	478	275	141

(the difference in means is significant at .01 level)

Table 6.3. Participation in Reform association nomination meetings. N=122.

type of contest	mean attendance	median attendance	Cases
contested nominations	426	200	97
uncontested nominations	81	50	21
all nominations	359	150	122

(the difference in means is significant at .01 level)

Incumbent MPs seeking renomination are usually not challenged. More than 87 per cent of incumbents seeking renomination in 1993 faced no challengers.[32] Nomination

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[32] Erickson and Carty found that a remarkably similar 88 per cent of incumbents seeking renomination in 1988 were acclaimed. Erickson and Carty, "Parties and Candidate Selection." 342.

meetings with incumbent MPs as candidates are among the smallest. The mean attendance at a nomination meeting with an incumbent seeking renomination was 290 and the median was 200. 91 per cent of these meetings had 500 or fewer members participating. However, in the rare instances when an incumbent is challenged, the number participating in the nomination meeting increases substantially. These contests are among the largest meetings. The mean attendance at these nomination meetings was 637 and the median was 400. The largest of these meetings drew 3,500 party members.

All associations require that one belong to the party in order to participate in candidate selection. A cut-off date is set by which one must be a member in order to participate.[33] In a majority of associations members had to belong to the party for at least a month before the nomination meeting in order to be able to participate.

Table 6.4. Length of membership requirement for voting at candidate nomination meeting for all respondents. N=387.

membership requirement	number of cases	percentage
one week or less	37	9.5
one - two weeks	40	10.3
two weeks - one month	104	26.8
a month or more	206	53.1

[33] 9.5 per cent of respondents reported a cut-off date of seven days or less, this is consistent with Erickson and Carty's finding that 10 per cent of associations had no cut-off date. Erickson and Carty, "Parties and Candidate Selection," 341.

The PCs generally have the shortest membership requirement. Only 23 per cent of PCs require membership a month or more prior to the nomination meeting, as opposed to 49 per cent of Liberals and 83 per cent of Reform associations. Very few associations in the Liberal and Reform parties permit those who have been members for a week or less to vote. The PCs are significantly more lenient in this regard: 17 per cent of PC associations allow these new members to vote compared to six per cent for the Liberals and Reform.

Candidate participation

42 per cent of all nominations are uncontested. 22 per cent had two candidates, 16 per cent three, and 20 per cent more than three. The Liberals and PCs had a significantly lower percentage of contested nominations than did Reform. 80 per cent of Reform nominations were contested compared with 41 per cent of PC nominations and 52 per cent of Liberal contests.[34] The difference between the three parties partially results from their different number of incumbent candidates. The number of uncontested nominations in associations without an incumbent seeking renomination drops from 48 per cent to 35 per cent of Liberal associations and from 59 per cent to 38 per cent of PC associations. As illustrated by Table 6.5, the presence of an incumbent MP in

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[34] The difference between the Liberals and the PCs is not significant at the .05 level.

th.e nomination race has a significant relationship to the number of candidates in the contest.

Table 6.5. Number of candidates seeking party nominations in contests with and without incumbent MP candidates. Actual cases and column percentages provided. N=392.

number of candidates	incumbent MP in race	no incumbent MP in race	row totals
one	75 (87.2%)	90 (29.4%)	165 (42.1%)
two	4 (4.7%)	81 (26.5%)	85 (21.7%)
three	2 (2.3%)	61 (19.9%)	63 (16.1%)
four	4 (4.7%)	35 (11.4%)	39 (9.9%)
five or more	1 (1.2%)	39 (12.7%)	40 (10.3%)
totals	86 (21.9%)	306 (78.1%)	392 (100%)

chi square = 92.90   significance = .00   cramers V = .49

The cost of seeking a nomination does not appear to have been a significant factor in the decision to become a candidate. Approximately 90 per cent of association presidents in all three parties answered no to the following question: "Do you believe the cost of mounting a campaign for the nomination prevented any potential candidates from seeking your association's nomination for the 1993 election"" The responses to this question are virtually identical from associations with and without contested nominations.

Overall a small majority of respondents reported that the average amount spent by candidates for their

association's nomination was $500 or less. As indicated in Table 6.6, few associations reported expenditures in excess of $2.500.

Table 6.6.   Spending by candidates for party nominations. N = 372.

average amount spent per candidate	number of associations	percentage of all associations
0 - 500 $	202	54.3
501 - 1,000 $	65	17.5
1,001 - 2,500 $	56	15.1
over 2,500 $	49	13.2

Not surprisingly, spending increases in contested nominations. As illustrated in Table 6.7, which is limited to those associations with a contested nomination, the number of associations spending less than $500 decreases by about a fourth, with the other categories increasing fairly evenly. Even in contested nominations, however, less than a fifth of associations report that candidates spent in excess of $2,500.

Table 6.7.   Spending by candidates in contested party nomination contests. N = 219.

average amount spent per candidate	number of associations	percentage of contested associations
0 - 500 $	88	40.2
501 - 1,000 $	47	21.5
1,001 - 2,500 $	43	19.6
over 2,500 $	41	18.7

It does appear significantly more expensive to seek a

contested nomination in the Liberal and PC parti s than in Reform. There is a significant difference among parties in the percentage of contested nominations in which candidates spent in excess of $2,500. Only eight Reform associations report such spending -- representing eight percent of contested Reform nominations. In 24 per cent of contested PC nominations and 31 percent of contested Liberal contests candidates spent in excess of $2,500.[35]

A large majority of associations had no women candidates for their nomination. 66 per cent of Liberal associations, 67 per cent of PCs and 68 per cent of Reform reported having no women candidates for their nomination. In the 110 associations with a woman in the contest, women candidates usually faced male opponents. As illustrated in Table 6.8, only seven of 145 Liberal associations reported having more than one female candidate, one of 112 PCs and eight of 122 Reform.

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[35] The difference between the Liberals and PCs is not significant at the .05 level.

Table 6.8. Number of female candidates per riding for 1993 nominations by party. Actual cases and row percentages provided. N=379.

	0	1	2	3	more than 3	totals
Liberal	95 (66%)	43 (30%)	6 (4%)	0	1 (1%)	145
PC	75 (67%)	36 (32%)	0	1 (1%)	0	112
Reform	83 (68%)	31 (25%)	8 (7%)	0	0	122
totals	253 (67%)	110 (29%)	14 (4%)	1	1	379

It has often been hypothesized that there is a relationship between the "winability" of the riding and the likelihood of the local association nominating a women candidate.[36] However, what is not often addressed is whether women contest nominations in "winnable" ridings at the same rate as men and at the same rate that they seek their party's nomination in less desirable constituencies.[37]

There does seem to have been a difference in the likelihood of women seeking the nomination in Liberal associations that won the 1993 election and in those that lost the election. 71 per cent of Liberal associations whose

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[36] See, for example, Janine Brodie, "Women and the Electoral Process in Canada," in Kathy Megyery, ed., Women in Canadian Politics, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 6 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991).

[37] There is great difficulty in defining "winability." This discussion takes the blunt approach of defining a winnable riding as one the party actually won in the 1993 election.

candidate won had no women seeking the nomination compared with 56 per cent of associations whose candidate was defeated in 1993.[38] In the Reform Party, however, women appear more likely to run in ridings in which the party was ultimately successful. In 47 per cent of the ridings won by the party, at least one women contested for the nomination. In only 26 per cent of the ridings in which the Reform candidate was defeated did a female contest the party's nomination.[39] The PCs were not successful in a sufficient number of ridings to allow for such a comparison.

The difference between the Liberals and Reform in this regard is at least partially explained by the Liberals significantly larger number of incumbent candidates. All Liberal incumbents seeking re-election were both renominated and re-elected in 1993. Thus, in order for Liberal women to seek nominations in almost half of the winnable Liberal seats they would have had to challenge an incumbent MP for the nomination. This makes an expensive contest likely with little chance for success.

In all, 24 per cent of nominated candidates of the five major parties in 1993 were women (278 of 1166). The breakdown by party is as follows: NDP 113 (38 per cent), PCs 67 (23 per cent), Liberals 64 (22 per cent), Reform 23 (11

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[38] This difference is significant at the .15 level.

[39] This difference is significant at the .10 level.

per cent) and BQ 10 (13 per cent). Thus in 69 per cent of the PC ridings in which women sought nominations a women was nominated; the same is true for 64 per cent of Liberal and 35 per cent of Reform associations.[40] At least for the Liberals and PCs, then, it appears that the key to increasing the number of nominated women candidates is to increase the number of ridings in which women compete for the nomination. Once women enter a nomination contest they seem to fare quite well. This finding is consistent with that of Carty and Erickson who concluded, that:

> While local selection may be a factor in limiting
> the nomination of women, the data do not support
> the view that this is because the grassroots
> membership discriminates against women. The problem,
> it seems, is that women do not contest candidacies
> to the same extent as men: in the survey, women
> sought nominations in only 37 percent of the local
> associations in which incumbents were not running,
> whereas, men did so in 84 percent of those
> associations.[41]

Only 48 of 379 associations (13 per cent) had members of visible minorities seek their nomination. When analysis is limited to associations without an incumbent MP seeking renomination, the percentage increases only slightly, to 15 per cent. There is no significant difference among the parties in this regard.

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[40] The difference between the Liberals and PCs is not significant.

[41] Carty and Erickson, "Candidate Nomination," 146-47.

Effectiveness of Participation

Policy differences do not appear to have played a significant role in party nomination campaigns. Respondents were asked: "Were there any substantive policy differences among candidates for your party association's 1993 nomination that were significant in the nomination campaign and election?" Limiting analysis to associations with contested nominations, 173 of 228 (77 per cent) answered no. There is no significant difference among the parties in this regard.

The data is inconclusive concerning the effect of an issue conflict on participation at nomination meetings. As illustrated in Table 6.9, attendance at contested nominations with substantive policy differences among the candidates is 20 per cent higher than at those without substantive policy differences. However, the level of significance indicates that this difference may result from sampling error. The difference holds when analysis is restricted to only Liberal and Reform associations. Liberal associations with a policy difference among nomination candidates had an average of 864 members compared with 693 for contested contests without a significant policy difference. For Reform associations, attendance increased from 397 to 552. PC associations are the exception here. Their attendance figures actually drop from a mean of 660 to 493 when a policy issue divides candidates. This difference among parties may represent a

difference in participation motivation between government and opposition parties.

Table 6.9. Mean attendance at contested association nomination meetings controlling for the presence of a significant policy difference among candidates. N=225.

	Liberals	Reform	PCs	overall
contests with policy differences	865	552	493	670
contests without policy differences	694	397	660	545

(The differences in means are only significant at the .30 level).

Respondents were also asked if a public debate was held among the nomination candidates. Overall 130 of 226 (58 per cent) associations with contested nominations reported holding such an event. This number is greatly inflated by the frequent occurrence of debates in the Reform Party. 79 per cent of such Reform associations held a debate compared with 40 per cent for both the Liberals and PCs.

The holding of a public debate also seems to significantly increase voter interest in nomination contests. As illustrated in Table 6.10, attendance at contested meetings was significantly higher in all three parties for associations holding a public debate among candidates.

Table 6.10. Mean attendance at contested nomination meetings for associations with and without a public debate among nomination candidates. N=226.

	Liberals	Reform	PCs	Overall
public debate	1,042	499	801	669
no public debate	534	127	513	443

(The difference in means is significant at the .05 level).[*]

To determine which of the factors discussed above have the greatest impact on participation, a multiple regression analysis of all of the factors was undertaken. Table 6.11 lists the factors considered that are shown to have a significant impact. Overall, these factors account for 55 per cent of the variance. Other factors, including the existence of a policy difference among the candidates, the number of women candidates, membership cut-off dates, and the placing of the party's candidate in both the 1988 and 1993 elections, were found to have no significant effect on turnout at nomination meetings when other factors were held constant.

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[42] The significance level for each individual party is: Liberals .03, Reform .02 and PCs .13.

Table 6.11.   Multiple regression analysis of factors influencing participation in nomination meetings.   Beta scores and significance levels reported.

	Beta	S.E. B	Beta weight	significance
93 membership total	.367	.031	.550	.000
92 membership total	.108	.031	.156	.001
nomination debate	196.5	66.9	.146	.004
number of candidates	54.3	19.9	.136	.007
incumbent in race	136.8	73.6	.081	.064

adjusted R Square = .55   F =32.08   significance=.000.[43]

This analysis tells us that the factor most closely related to membership turnout in 1993 nomination meetings was the size of the association's 1993 membership.[44] This finding is not surprising. The 1993 membership numbers are expected to be related to participation since candidates promote the purchase of party membership during nomination contests in an effort to boost turnout among their supporters. Turnout at nomination meetings is a function of total party membership, as one must be a member in order to participate. The size of the association's 1992 membership also influences turnout,

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[43] Dummy variables for region and party affiliation are also shown to have a modestly significant effect on participation in nomination meetings. Region increases the adjusted R square by .03 and party affiliation by .06. These variables are not included in the table as an association has no control over their region or party affiliation. 'Incumbent in race' and 'debate among candidates' are dummy variables; with 1 equalling no incumbent and 0 an incumbent; 1 equalling a debate and 0 no debate.

[44] The Beta column reports the unstandardized regression coefficients. Beta weights indicate the relative influence of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable -- participation in candidate nomination meetings.

though not as significantly as 1993 membership. This is likely explained by the fact that long term party members are more committed to the party than those signed-up during a nomination campaign, and thus are more likely to attend the nomination meeting. Therefore, the turn-out rate at nomination meetings is likely higher for long term members than it is for new members.

The finding that participation in candidate nominations is significantly increased when a public debate is held among the candidates may be evidence that voters are interested in meaningful candidate nomination contests.

The number of nomination candidates significantly affects turnout numbers as each candidate encourages her supporters to join the party and attend the nomination meeting. Consistent with the bi-variate findings reported above, the candidacy of an incumbent MP decreases turnout - even when the other variables are held constant.

Collected-Collective Tensions

That relatively few voters participate in candidate nomination meetings is not surprising considering the process most associations engage in to nominate their candidates. The nomination process offers neither the widespread participatory opportunity of US-style primaries nor the deliberative possibilities of British-style candidate

nominations dominated by local party elites.

Extrapolating from the survey data, it is likely th-t less than half a million voters participated in the nomination of candidates in the 1993 federal election.[45] As mentioned above, this represents less than five per cent of those who voted in the general election. While there are certainly many reasons why more Canadians do not vote in nomination battles, ranging from a lack of interest in wha: are seen to be intra-party affairs to the prevalence of uncontested nominations, the principal ones are likely the cost and lack of easy accessibility of participation.

In order to participate an elector must first join a political party. This may be enough to dissuade many who do not wish to be allied openly and publicly with a political party. And while the membership fee is not particularly substantial, presumably some are dissuaded from joining because of it. As well, for many there may be additional costs such as the necessity to provide child care or take unpaid leave from employment to attend nomination meetings. In order to participate one must be able to spend an evening listening to candidate speeches and voting -- sometimes over several ballots. It is not uncommon for contested nomination

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[45] With an average of four major parties contesting the country's 295 ridings and the average attendance per party being 413, this figure is arrived at through the following calculation: 4 x 295 = 1,180 x 413 = 487,340.

meetings to run past midnight. Some potential participants may be disenfranchised by not being able to spend a full evening away from home or because of job responsibilities. Those without ready means of transportation, particularly in rural areas with no public transport, may find it difficult to participate in a nomination contest since in almost all ridings voters must travel to one location in order to participate.[46] Canadian ridings are generally large and even in relatively highly populated regions like Southern Ontario participation can involve travelling up to 50 miles. Older voters and those without their own vehicles face a substantial obstacle to participation.

Requirements that voters join parties well prior to the nomination contest also likely diminish participation. In most cases, associations adopting early membership deadlines hold their nomination contests prior to the official beginning of the election campaign, with the result that many potential participants may not even be aware that a nomination contest is underway until after the membership deadline passes.

The traditional parties, out of a concern that they not adversely affect subsequent collective practices, do little

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[46] In a very few large rural ridings, rolling nominations are held in which voters from different parts of the riding gather on different evenings at regional locations to hear the candidate's speeches and cast their ballots.

to increase the importance of policy in nomination contests. Early membership cut-off dates assist in this effort, as policy differences among candidates are not likely to be widely evident to potential voters a month prior to the nomination meeting. Most parties do not hold public debates among their nomination candidates, and when they do they are likely not held more than a month before the balloting. Thus, while the holding of a debate increases turnout, most associations do not hold them and when they do the effect is limited to those voters who have already joined the party. They do not permit potential members, who may be energized by the debate, to participate in the contest. It is thus not surprising that the majority of respondents report that candidates' policy positions play little or no role in nomination contests.

Nomination meetings are often held well prior to the calling of an election.[47] One result of this is that the nominations often take place before it becomes clear what the major policy issues of the election will be. This serves to discourage voters and candidates from concentrating on issues of public policy, and limits successful candidates' ability to claim they represent the policy views of their

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[47] Erickson and Carty found that "fully 80 per cent of the party nominations had been completed by the time the election was called," Erickson and Carty, "Candidate Nomination," 112.

constituents if those views differ from the party line.

The large number of uncontested nominations also weaken the collected nature of candidate nominations. Incumbent MPs represent a large portion of uncontested candidates. Incumbent candidates are often able to arrange for early nomination contests, thus making it less likely that a challenger will emerge who has had sufficient time to mount a competitive campaign. Their ability to manipulate the timing of the leadership contest, together with early membership cut-off dates, likely discourages challengers.

The greatest infringement on voters' ability to choose their local candidates occurs when the national parties intervene to either appoint a candidate or to veto the local party's choice. The interference of the national party and leader in an association's choice of candidate is normally justified on the following grounds consistent with the collective perspective of decision-making: (1) to prevent the selection of candidates beholden to special interests, (2) to ensure a "sufficient" number of women candidates are nominated in winnable ridings, (3) to ensure the availability of specific talented individuals for cabinet selection and (4) to prevent "undesirable" candidates from carrying the party's endorsement. All of these considerations reflect an implicit collective model of decision-making.

The desire to increase the number of women in caucus,

and thus the number available for cabinet selection, reflects the collective tenet that all significant societal groups be represented in the public decision-making process. As discussed in Chapter One, in recent years it has become unacceptable for women to be excluded from public decision-making. The question to be considered, however, is whether the methods used to ensure female representation in caucus and cabinet - in particular, the selection of candidates by party leader - infringe unnecessarily on the customary prerogative of local voters to select their own candidates.

From the data reviewed above, it appears that less intrusive methods of accompiishing the objective of increasing female representation are available to parties than the arbitrary appointment of candidates. There is substantial evidence that voters in candidatc nomination contests do not look unfavorably upon female candidates. Data from both the 1988 and 1993 elections indicate that women seeking party nominations fare at least as well as do their male counterparts. This assessment appears true even in winnable ridings.[48]   Studies by Donley Studlar and

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[48]   Studlar and Matland successfully debunk the myth that parties are less likely to nominate women in ridings they believe to be 'winnable.' They found that: "Once the effects of incumbency are partialled out, women were just as likely to run in ridings the party had won in the previous election as in those the party had lost." Donley T. Studlar and Richard E. Matland, "The Growth of Women's Representation in the Canadian House of Commons and the Election of 1984: A Reappraisal," Canadian Journal of Political Science 27

Richard Matland and by Erickson find that when women seek nominations they compete well against male opponents.[49]   A substantial contributing factor to the shortfall of women MPs is the lack of female candidates in nomination contests.

Party efforts to attract women as nomination candidates have had limited success.   In a study of nominations in the 1988 election, Erickson found that, "[a]t the local level, search committees can be used both to encourage competitive selection and to encourage women to run."[50]   She goes on to say that such efforts "can be especially effective for women."[51]   Erickson found that when a local association had a search committee to assist in finding nomination candidates, there was a 60 per cent increase in the likelihood of there being a women candidate for the nomination.   Only 54 per cent of Liberal associations had a

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(1994). 53-79, 71.

[49] "The upshot of these findings is that there is little evidence of a reluctance within parties to nominate women for winnable seats.   This finding is consistent with Erickson's finding that in ridings where both men and women competed for a party's nomination, a woman was chosen 54 per cent of the time as the party standard bearer."   Studlar and Matland, "The Growth of Women's Representation in the Canadian House of Commons, 71; and Lynda Erickson, "Women and Candidacies for the House of Commons," in Kathy Megyery, ed., Women in Canadian Politics: Toward Equity in Representation, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 6 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 112.

[50] Ibid., 112.

[51] Ibid.

search committee for the 1988 election compared with 70 per cent of New Democrats (the parties had a similar number of open nominations).[52] One way for parties to increase female representation in their parliamentary caucus is to encourage more associations to strike candidate search committees with an eye towards encouraging potential female candidates.

Erickson also found that "nationally directed workshops that target women and specifically address the question of candidacy do seem to encourage women to come forward."[53] She also suggests that the cost of candidate nomination contests discourages more women than men from running. The Lortie Commission reported that "[d]uring our hearings at the symposium on women in federal politics and in surveys, women identified cost as the most formidable obstacle to nomination," and "[w]omen appear to lack the professional or social contacts needed to build financially competitive campaign organizations."[54] In a study of women who were nominated by their parties in 1988, Brodie found that these women believe the cost of nomination contests was the single

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[52] Ibid., 113.

[53] Ibid., 116.

[54] Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 107.

largest barrier to women seeking party nominations.[55] The Lortie Commission recommended that parties establish a nomination spending limit, and that financial incentives be available to assist in costs for child care.[56] These concerns, at least as they regard spending in the nomination campaign, are not supported by the 1993 data. Most candidates in competitive nomination contests spent less than $2,500. This amount is not likely to discourage many viable candidates from seeking a nomination. Almost 90 per cent of respondents reported that they did not believe any candidates were discouraged from running because of the cost of a nomination campaign.

The desire to ensure the availability of specific talented individuals in caucus and cabinet also arises from the co ective conception of public decision-making. The most obvious example of this phenomenon in the 1993 election was Chrétien's appointment of Marcel Massé. Considering the

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[55] Brodie, "Women and the Electoral Process in Canada." Women are not the only group who feel that the cost of nomination contests restricts their ability to seek nominations. A repre ntative of the Canadian Association of the Deaf, gave the following testimony to the Lortie Commission: "For the average able-bodied person, [the cost of seeking a nomination for one of the larger political parties and running for political office] is a very expensive gamble to undertake. For a deaf or otherly-disabled person it is quite frankly prohibitive." See Report. Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 96.

[56] Report. Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 117-120.

presence and strength of the BQ in the 1993 federal election and the likelihood of the PQ forming the next provincial government in Quebec, one could be fairly certain that the sovereignty issue would be of central importance during the tenure of the government elected in 1993. Chrétien and other members of his front bench from Quebec, such as André Ouellet, were compromised on this issue because of their involvement in the 1982 patriation of the constitution as well as their opposition to the Meech Lake Accord. The Liberals lacked a strong francophone federalist presence. It was hoped that Massé would fill this void. The other parties were not faced with this problem for various reasons. The PCs had substantial Quebec representation in their caucus that spanned the political spectrum from soft nationalists to committed federalists. The Reform Party was not running any candidates in Quebec; and the NDP, while running a full slate of Quebec candidates, had little hope of electing any.

The desire to have strong francophone federalist representation in the government is a fundamental collective concern, thus the Liberal predicament in the case of Massé is difficult to evaluate.[37] Any federal government faced with

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[37]   In the event, Mr. Massé was something of a disappointment for the government. Having been compromised early on by charges of ethical impropriety, Massé never achieved the central position hoped for. The subsequent endorsement of Mme. Robillard's nomination in the Westmount-St. Henri riding by Chrétien was virtually a replay of the Massé selection.

a debate on Quebec sovereignty would be compromised by the absence of strong francophone representation from Quebec. Chrétien's intrusion into the right of constituents to select their own candidate is unquestionably severe, but in this instance it was balanced by a desire to ensure that all major interests, particularly on issues of language and region, would be represented at the highest level of governmental decision-making. One way for a government party to avoid such a predicament is to use its power of appointment of Senators (if Senate seats are vacant) to ensure the necessary representation of various groups in cabinet. This tactic was used by the Clark government to ensure Quebec representation and by the Trudeau Liberals to provide Western cabinet representation.

The appointment of other high profile candidates, such as former Toronto mayor Art Eggleton, are more difficult to justify. In the two types of cases examined above, the candidate appointments were made to ensure representation of important and substantial groups within the collective decision-making process. But, the Liberal Party had no shortage of high profile, well qualified male candidates from Ontario. Moreover, someone of Eggleton's stature, with a personal network developed during several terms as Toronto's mayor, would have had little difficulty in waging a competitive nomination campaign. The appointment of such

candidates, and the resulting denial of choice to party members, is not easily justifiable on any relevant grounds.

The desire to prevent single interest groups from taking over nomination contests and nominating a supporter of their particular cause arises from the particular form of collective decision-making practiced in Canadian federal politics. In Chapter One it was argued that the practice of Canadian brokerage politics, is almost exclusively concerned with the accommodation of regional and racial differences, excluding many issues from the political arena.[58] Issues such as abortion and capital punishment, that often preoccupy single interest groups, are avoided by the traditional brokerage parties. Party leaders are thus wary of the presence in their caucus of individuals who are singularly committed to a particular stance on one of these potentially divisive issues and who will likely attempt to raise the political salience of the issue. Leaders concerned with maintaining winning coalitions within the traditional brokerage model fear that such issues, if pushed too hard, will force members to take sides and destroy their fragile caucus unity.

The Canadian parliamentary system operates in a manner in which the real collective body for the governing party is

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[58] See, for example, Brodie and Jenson, "Another Explanation - Class Differences Have Been Observed," 282.

the cabinet. While caucus members do engage in deliberation and debate on matters of public policy, the final decision on most issues rests with cabinet. This is not to imply that a united and determined caucus cannot dissuade cabinet from taking particular actions. The 1994 example of the Liberal government's abandoning of its "gay rights" legislation appears to have been an example of a determined caucus forcing cabinet to abandon, or at least delay, its legislative plans. However, in most cases cabinet, while considering caucus views, will make the final decisions. In order for the consociational practices described earlier to function, cabinet must be confident that the agreements they reach will be acceptable to caucus and thus to parliament. Leaders rightfully fear that the presence of MPs not sharing these over-riding concerns jeopardize the collective process.

What must be considered, however, is why these interest groups are occasionally able to win a party nomination contest, but never elect any candidates outside the party system in a general election. While party leaders argue that lenient nomination voting rules enable interest groups to infiltrate a constituency association, this logic is clearly faulty. Less restrictive rules that encourage voter participation apply to general elections, yet single interest groups routinely fail to have a significant impact in these contests. The reason for this is that liberal voting

eligibility and belief by voters that participation is meaningful, encourage a high turn-out in general elections, thus diminishing the impact of interest groups.

Candidate nominations are susceptible to take-over by interest groups because they artificially restrict the number of voters eligible to participate. Because participation in a nomination meeting is relatively difficult and expensive, and because they very rarely centre around policy questions, few voters participate; thus, an interest group often needs to mobilize only a few hundred or perhaps a thousand supporters to successfully control a nomination contest.

This is an instance where an increase in collected decision-making opportunities - opening up participation to substantially more voters - would increase the subsequent success of the collective processes.

Parties use of the ballot endorsement requirement to effectively veto the selection of "undesirable" local candidates appears justifiable. In most of these cases it is likely that if the candidates originally nominated were successful, the party would not permit them to join their parliamentary caucus. Certainly this was the case with Campbell's use of this provision in 1993. The candidates whose nominations were rejected had already been suspended from caucus and would almost certainly not have been accepted back if re-elected. Were the party to lend its name to these

candidates, it would be deceiving voters who believed they were electing a member of the PC caucus.

Conclusion

General election voters are presented with a candidate for each major party, and if they prefer the leader or policies of a particular party, their only rational option is to vote for that party's local candidates regardless of their qualifications or personal policy positions. It cannot be said with any degree of general accuracy that voters deliberately select particular individuals to represent their interests in parliament. The result is that, in most instances, MPs can not legitimately claim that they were elected to reflect the views of their constituents. When conflicts arise between party leaders and individual caucus members over a policy issue, this reality places party leaders in a strong position. MPs are hard-pressed to argue that they were elected because voters agreed with their political perspectives or trusted them to exercise good judgment on their behalf. The effect strongly favours the practice of elite dominated collective decision-making.

The only genuine opportunities for determining the relationship between the representative and the represented exists at the time of candidate nomination. Yet those opportunities are deficient in several respects: (1) not all

adult voters are eligible to participate, (2) the costs of participation are relatively high, (3) participation in the process is only partially effective, (4) the process is not free from extraneous influence and (5) participants are not provided with sufficient information to make choices based on their preferences and interests. For the most part, these shortcomings in collected opportunities are not justified by concerns for effective, collective decision-making.

While Canadians continue to voice support for stronger representation of their particular concerns by their MPs, there is little in the candidate nomination process to help effectuate these views. Few Canadians participate in nomination processes and those who do are discouraged from basing their decisions on candidates' policy positions. When voters do mobilize to support a candidate based upon her policy positions their participation is often viewed as illegitimate.

As long as candidate nominations are seen as the preserve of party activists, and attract few candidates and relatively few voters, it is unlikely that the relationship between voters and their MPs will change substantially.

The traditional national parties, committed to a particular form of collective decision-making, however, may actually have some incentive to encourage changes to this process. With voter confidence in parties and in parliament

consistently low there is concern about the continued legitimacy of decisions made through these institutions. If nomination processes are opened up and some policy debate becomes routine, MPs may have more legitimacy and voters more tolerance in those instances when the national interest truly does demand national accommodation and MPs feel obliged to vote against their constituents' parochial interests. If the Reform Party is successful in establishing the practice of its MPs voting their constituents' views and, not necessarily, following party policy, then we might expect to see some hotly contested Reform nominations, particularly in areas of Reform strength, revolving around particular policy questions.

Some commitment to policies expressed by nomination candidates, coupled with the knowledge that a renomination battle may also include policy debate, should encourage MPs to more vigorously represent their constituents' interests in caucus discussions. When party decisions go against them, MPs will then have more incentive to explain to their constituents that vigorous caucus debate took place, what arguments carried the day and why. And when MPs decide to either break from party discipline or to vote against the wishes of their constituents, this process might help to legitimize their decision.

Chapter 7

Participation in Party Policy Formation:

Uses of New Technologies

Previous attempts to increase the effectiveness of citizen participation in political parties have centered around efforts to make the parliamentary party more accountable to and reflective of the policy perspectives of the rank-and-file membership. The method of achieving this increased accountability has traditionally taken the form of seeking a formal role for the party membership in the adoption of party policy. As discussed in Chapter Two, this was the primary focus of earlier participatory efforts in both the UFA and to a lesser degree in the Saskatchewan CCF and the federal Liberal Party. The experiences of these parties are not atypical. What begins as a promising venture, usually during terms spent in opposition, almost always begets frustration among the membership when a party gains power.

This result may be viewed as the product of human nature - those who have won power seem naturally inclined to consider themselves the rightful bearers of it and are unwilling to cede it to others - a phenomenon Michels described as the "iron law of oligarchy."[1] Michels observed

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[1] Robert Michels, Political Parties (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949).

that political parties, like other human organizations, will naturally evolve to a state where power is dominated by the few.

The practice of responsible government within the Canadian parliament is another contributory reason. When a party achieves power, both the exercise of it and responsibility for it rest with cabinet. According to C.E.S. Franks, "[t]he parliamentary system means government in and with, but not by parliament....Collectively, the prime minister and cabinet are responsible for the overall management and direction of government."[2] The government's continued existence is dependent upon the ongoing support of its parliamentary caucus, making it difficult for the extra-parliamentary party to play an independent policy-making role.[3]

There is, however, another related phenomenon also at play in the Canadian context; namely, the generalized belief in the necessity of collective decision-making. As discussed in Chapter One, this belief coupled with the British parliamentary tradition of cabinet centered

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[2] C.E.S. Franks, The Parliament of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 10.

[3] Ibid., 11-12: "Government and parliament live and die together. They are bound to each other. A cabinet must have the support of a majority in parliament. If it loses this support on a question of confidence it must resign or ask for an election."

government, has resulted in decision-making power being concentrated in cabinet or exercised through the mechanisms of executive federalism.

One of the results of this cabinet-centered decision-making process is strong party discipline within the House of Commons. This is required by both the principles of responsible government and by the adoption of consociational practices. If elites are to engage in a brokering process, during which they are perceived to represent the interests of significant societal groups, they require reasonable assurance that any agreements reached will be accepted by both the mass of those they represent and by their fellow parliamentarians.[4] The process of negotiating and brokering interests among divergent groups can be very difficult and straining on the participants (as well as challenging to their legitimacy as representative of their interest/region/group), and they are often not willing to partake in it as an exercise without guarantees that outcomes will be effective.

It is thus not surprising that parties which have been most successful at developing an effective role for their extra-parliamentary membership in policy-making have been opposition parties with little chance of forming a government. The NDP is a good example of this. Policy

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[4] See Noel, "Consociational Democracy," 15.

decisions in the party are made at party conventions consisting of delegates representing the grassroots membership. Caucus members and the party leader are expected ordinarily to follow the decisions made by the membership.[5]

The Reform Party has a somewhat different philosophy in this regard. It is more explicit than its counterparts in establishing communication between the parliamentary and non-parliamentary wings. The party constitution establishes an 'Executive Council - Party Caucus Liaison Committee.' This

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[5] Article V. Conventions, section 2 "The Convention shall be the supreme governing body of the Party and shall have final authority in all matters of federal policy, program and constitution."

Two examples of provincial opposition parties that ceded much authority on policy-making to their non-parliamentary party, and subsequently endured great stress in the relationship between the parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties over policy-making when unexpectedly coming to power are the PQ and the Ontario NDP. The PQ determined its policy positions by decisions of the party membership until achieving power in 1976. Premier Levesque and the party membership struggled over control of the party's policy agenda after assuming power, since Levesque was unwilling to let the membership dictate policy positions. See Graham Fraser, P.Q.: René Levesque and the Parti Québécois in Power (Toronto: MacMillan, 1984).

The Ontario NDP provide another example of a party that for many years determined its policy principally through votes of delegates at conventions until assuming power. During its five years in power Premier Rae made clear that the final responsibility for determining government policy resided with the legislative caucus and specifically with cabinet. Subsequently, much friction resulted between the parliamentary party and the activist membership over such issues as funding of universities, Sunday shopping, casino gambling and public auto insurance. See, for example, "Heats on Bob Rae," Toronto Star June 19, 1992, A19; and "Ontario's 'Mice' Ready to Roar at Premier," Vancouver Sun, June 18, 1992, A4.

committee is composed of three members of the parliamentary caucus, three members of the party executive and the party leader, and exists to "ensure a close and harmonious working relationship between the Reform Party grassroots membership and the caucus of Reformers elected to the House of Commons."[6] The specific responsibilities of the Committee include maintaining "a continuous open line of communication between the caucuses and the party membership," to "serve as a channel through which: the caucus can seek the counsel and guidance of the Party's Executive Council on matters of policy and procedure," and to keep the party membership informed of issues coming before parliament.[7]

The Reform constitution does, however, make clear that the MPs' first responsibility is to their constituents: "We believe in accountability of elected representatives to the people who elect them, and that the duty of elected members to their constituents should supersede their obligations to their political parties."[8]

In practice, Reform MPs have dissented from party policy on several occasions. The Reform policy appears to be that the parliamentary party's positions should be consistent with

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[6] Reform Party of Canada Constitution, Section 5A.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Reform Party of Canada Constitution, Schedule A, Statement of Principles, number 15.

resolutions passed by the party in convention, but that individual MPs may dissent if their constituents have dissenting views,[9] as in the following two instances.

(1) Despite an 87 per cent vote at a national party Assembly in favour of defining marriage as "the legal union of a woman and man," MPs Stephen Harper and Ian McClelland announced their intention to likely vote differently should the matter arise in the House of Commons. Harper is reported as saying "[t]he Party's MPs should consult their constituents through a referendum and do as they are told by the people who voted for them;"[10] and according to a newspaper account, "Harper and McClelland said they are sending questionnaires to their constituents asking how they feel about gay rights protections. McClelland said he has hired a polling firm to conduct a phone survey."[11] Reform

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[9] The UFA, also initially committed to strong grassroots representation also encountered tension for a member's loyalty between the provincial convention and the riding constituents. However, in the UFA the convention usually won out. The UFA's 'Principles of Political Action' for the 1920 election stated: "Resolved, that the principles and policies as declared from time to time by U.F.A. convention, broadly interpreted, shall be the general guiding influence of the U.F.A. legislative group..." According to Morton "the UFA federal members knew beyond doubt that they were delegates of constituents, under the supreme authority of the UFA in convention." Morton, The Progressive Party, 223-24.

[10] "Second MP Breaks Ranks over Gays," Calgary Herald, October 16, 1994, A10.

[11] "Reform Party May Split on Gay Rights," Halifax Chronicle Herald, December 7, 1994, A12.

Leader Preston Manning said that while he disagrees with the MPs personal position in support of legal protection of gay rights, the party "left the door open for caucus dissenters to ignore party policy if they can prove constituents want them to vote that way."[12]

(2)   In accordance with the results of a poll he commissioned of his constituents, BC MP Ted White decided to dissent from party policy and support gun-control legislation. A poll by MarkTrend Research found that White's constituents favoured Bill C-68s proposed gun registry by a margin of more than 2-1."[13]   White spent $2,700 from his office budget to have the poll conducted, and to pay for a booklet, mailed to constituents before the poll, that gave equal space to pro and anti gun-control groups to argue their positions.   MPs Harper and McClelland also expressed support for the gun-control legislation saying that their constituents also favoured it.[14]

[12]   Ibid.

[13]   "Reform MP Breaks Ranks to Support Gun Control," Vancouver Sun, May 31, 1995, A5.

[14]   Ibid. Dissent among the party's caucus is not always tolerated.   BC MP Keith Martin was demoted in a caucus shuffle, when he refused to support Manning's call for Canada's troops to be pulled out of Bosnia. "There's no question in my mind that I was punished in my case.   Its a disappointment because I think we should tolerate alternative views."   "Manning Accused of Punishing Dissident," Vancouver Sun, July 11, 1995, A4.   There is, however, no evidence that Martin's dissent was based upon the views of his constituents.

The PC party's 1991 policy conference in Ottawa was the culmination of a two year process that began with policy discussions at the riding level. Policy resolutions worked their way up from the riding level through regional and provincial meetings before being put on the agenda for the national meeting. 320 resolutions reached the national meeting out of more than 800 initially submitted by riding associations.[15] Hugh Winsor summed up the status of these resolutions when he wrote: "The resolutions passed by the policy conference are not binding on the government, but they do convey a sense of the feeling in the broader Conservative Party."[16] The government did not see itself as being bound by the party's policy decisions and Mulroney "said only 'hat he will 'study' these and other resolutions."[17] The government immediately distanced itself from several resolutions adopted by the convention. For example, after party members voted to privatize the CBC, Communications Minister Perrin Beatty immediately told the press that he opposed the resolution and that the government had no plans

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[15] "Conventional Behaviour," Montreal Gazette, August 3, 1991, B5.

[16] "PCs Reject Aid Cut," Globe and Mail (Toronto), August 10, 1991, A5.

[17] "What Did the Tories Actually Decide," Halifax Chronicle Herald, August 14, 1991, B2.

to act in this area.[18]

In the party's restructuring process, following the 1993 election, special emphasis was placed on the role of the party membership in policy development. The party found that while "[t]here appears to be a consensus within the Party that the process which led to the 1991 conference and the conference itself were a reasonable success," "[t]here are few mechanisms within the Party to provide for follow-up to ensure accountability with respect to resolutions passed by the conference."[19] "The overall status of resolutions passed by a policy conference remains unclear. What freedom do the

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[18]   CBC Sale Advocated by Tories," Globe and Mail (Toronto), August 10, 91, A1. Wearing recounts a similar occurrence after the 1966 Liberal national convention when within days "Pearson had repudiated two of the more impractical resolutions..." These resolutions concerned North American free trade and requiring some civil servants to be bilingual. According to Wearing: "In spite of what the party's constitution now said, he declared that the convention's resolutions did not 'establish policy' but would be taken 'very seriously as a guide to policy'." Wearing, The L-Shaped Party, 75. Despite initial attempts to create a more effective role for party activists, things did not change substantially in this regard under Trudeau. Wearing writes that: "Many in the party had become disillusioned with the whole policy process after Trudeau's rejection of two of the most important resolutions emanating from the 1970 convention (the guaranteed annual income and the emergency powers review board) and the cabinet's rejec ion of the whole Liberal Charter." Ibid, 206. This pattern continued under the leadership of John Turner who referred to policy resolutions from the party's 1986 convention as "highly persuasive" though not binding. See Wearing, Strained Relations, 196-97.

[19]   "Background Paper on Party Restructuring," Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, September, 1994, 2.

Leader and caucus have to adjust policy based on changing circumstances and emerging events?"[20]

The party's restructuring task-force suggested the creation of a permanent policy foundation within the party to act as "a mechanism for Party member and riding level involvement in, and input to, the policy process."[21] The policy foundation "could be designed to forge some new and important linkages between rank and file Party members and the policy process," and it could "report regularly to the Party membership on the progress made in implementing the resolutions from the previous national policy conference."[22] This was adopted in the PC Party's new constitution, which commits the party to "a continuous policy process and a permanent policy resource which respects and encourages the participation of Members."[23] Party conventions will "review, discuss, and formulate policy for the Party, taking into consideration the continuing policy process of the Party."[24] A National Council is created and given responsibility to "facilitate the full and continuing involvement of all

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., 3.

[22] "Supplementary Notes on Party Restructuring," Progressive Conservative Party of Canada," October, 1994, 12.

[23] The New Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, April 1995, section 8.1.3.

[24] Ibid., section 8.20.7.

Members ... in the formulation, discussion and dissemination of policy proposals and resolutions;"[25] to "oversee, facilitate and promote the communication of policy proposals and resolutions from the constituency level to the provincial/territorial level, to the regional level and to the national level of the Party;"[26] and to "facilitate and promote on a regular and timely basis responses from the leadership to Members, constituency associations ... on policy proposals and resolutions put forward by them."[27] The new constitution creates a "permanent policy resource" whose mission is:

> To facilitate and support policy discussion within the Party and serve as a policy resource to the Party.
>
> To provide effective and timely liaison and communication among Members, constituency associations ... the Parliamentary Caucus and the Leader on policy issues; and
>
> To implement a regular reporting system to Members,.... on specific policy issues be considered by the Party and on the implementation of policy by the Leader.[28]

While striving to ensure stronger communication between the grassroots and the parliamentary caucus, in the end, there

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[25] Ibid., section 9.3.1.

[26] Ibid., section 9.3.2.

[27] Ibid., section 9.3.3.

[28] Ibid., sections 9.5.1; 9.5.2; and 9.5.6.

appears to be no formal change in the relationship between the PC party's grassroots and the parliamentary caucus on the issue of policy positions taken in the House of Commons. The parliamentary caucus remains free to vote as they wish, regardless of the expressed views of the non-parliamentary party.

In the Liberal Party, a Standing Committee on Policy Development is composed of members of the parliamentary caucus, national party executive members, provincial association representatives, and representatives of party constituency groups (e.g. youth, women, aboriginals). This committee has "responsibility for national policy development between national conventions."[29] The party constitution calls upon the committee to establish joint committees with representatives from both the parliamentary and non-parliamentary party to develop policy. Furthermore, "[t]he committee shall strive to ensure that the policy document is respected by the parliamentary wing and shall report thereon to the national convention."[30] A separate group, called the National Platform Committee, has a similar membership to the Standing Committee on Policy Development. It is "responsible for advising the Leader with respect to the development of

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[29] The Liberal Party of Canada Constitution, section 7.(3).

[30] Ibid., sections 7.(3) and (4).

the platform to be put forward by the Liberal Party."

The Liberals are similar to the PCs in that the parliamentary caucus is in no way bound by policy decisions made by the non-parliamentary party. Both parties have also not tolerated significant dissent by caucus members from the policy positions taken by the parliamentary party's leadership. The most recent example of this is the Liberal Party's expulsion of maverick MP John Nunziata from the party's caucus for voting against a budget bill. Nunziata's defense that he was acting in accordance with his constituents' wishes was summarily dismissed by Chrétien.

As discussed in Chapter One, and observed by both the Reform and PC parties, however, it has become increasingly clear that Canadians are dissatisfied with the connection between the parliamentary parties' policy agendas and the concerns of the public. It is not clear, however, that this dissatisfaction can be addressed by making the parliamentary party directly responsible to the wishes of party activists. There is no evidence that party activists, and particularly those who participate in national party policy conventions, hold policy positions reflective of those held by the general population. PC Communications Minister Beatty specifically rejected the idea that there was any connection when he responded to his party's vote to privatize the CBC by saying, "I think the majority of Canadians believe the CBC performs

an important function today."[31]   Prime Minister Mackenzie

King also rejected policy control by the non-parliamentary

body, arguing at the party's 1948 convention that parliament

was responsible to all citizens and not merely the members of

one political party:

> The substitution, by force or otherwise, of
> the dictates of a single political party
> for the authority of a freely elected
> Parliament is something which, in far too
> many countries, has already taken place.
> It is along that path that many nations
> have lost their freedom. That is what
> happened in fascist countries. A single
> party dictatorship is, likewise, the very
> essence of Communist strategy."[32]

Citizens desiring more responsive legislators are unlikely to

be satisfied by parties taking their policy direction from a

small group of activists.   The question that remains,

however, is whether there are other available methods to

improve communications between the parliamentary parties,

their party activists and their constituents.

To a certain extent, this discussion requires

consideration of the appropriate role of the individual MP in

the governmental decision-making process. This raises the

questions of how responsive MPs should be to their

constituents, and whether they should be free to vote in

accordance with their individual concerns, free of party

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[31]   "No Money for Montreal, Tory Delegates Say," Montreal
Gazette, August 9, 1991, B1.

[32]   Quoted in Wearing, The L-Shaped Party, 74-75.

discipline. The independence versus mandate debate has been with us for centuries, without resolution. As Pitkin observes:

> In a way, what is most striking about the mandate-independence controversy is how long it has been going on, without being brought any nearer to a satisfactory solution.[33]

It is not the purpose of this chapter to reopen this debate. Rather, the discussion that follows focusses on methods of citizen participation in the policy development process within parties, rather than the role of the representative within parliament. Perhaps Canadians' demands for a stronger nexus between their views and those of the parliamentary parties can be satisfied with something far short of abandoning the traditional methods of collective decision-making in caucus and cabinet. It is possible to envision the inclusion of party activists in decision-making processes that complement rather than replace these collective methods. MPs with stronger ongoing communication with their constituents and local party members will be better able to reflect these views in caucus and cabinet debates, and accordingly decisions reached through the collective processes will be seen as having greater legitimacy.

In order to consider ways in which these communications can be strengthened, it is helpful to probe more deeply into

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[33] Pitkin, "The Concept of Representation," in Pitkin, **Representation**, 18.

the current levels of participation by grassroots activists in the parties' policy-making efforts and to gauge the views of party activists as to the sufficiency of these measures.

Views of Party Activists

The data collected in this area illustrate a significant difference among the three parties in both the opportunities afforded activists and their belief as to the effectiveness of their participation. Generally, Reform Party members are given more opportunity to participate in policy study and development, and believe that they play a more significant role in the development of their party's policy positions than do activists in the two old-line parties.

This difference between the parties is likely attributable to three factors: (1) the tradition of Western Canadian populism from which the Reform Party received much of its initial support, (2) voter frustration with the traditional parties being driven from the top-down, with little opportunity for effective grassroots participation and (3) the fact that Reform was an almost exclusively non-parliamentary party prior to the 1993 election which allowed it to cede authority to its membership without risking a turf battle between the membership and the parliamentary caucus. Whether Reform will be able to maintain this high level of activist support and satisfaction if it entrenches itself in

parliament and becomes a serious contender for power remains to be seen.

Considering that only a small percentage of Canadians belong to political parties, those who do are likely among the most politically active members of society. The data indicate that this group of activists are given little opportunity to participate in policy development within parties.

Association presidents were asked how many times a year, between elections, their association sponsors an event where a substantial amount of time is devoted to policy study and discussion. As illustrated in Table 7.1, 47 per cent of PC, 35 per cent of Liberal and 12 per cent of Reform presidents responded that they had no such events in a typical year. 69 per cent of Reform associations held policy meetings more than once a year compared with 40 per cent of Liberals and 27 per cent of PCs.[34]

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[34] These differences between Reform and PC and between Reform and Liberal respondents are significant at the .05 level.

Table 7.1. Frequency of meetings devoted primarily to policy study and development at the constituency level by party affiliation. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N=388.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	Totals
0 per year	52 35%	54 47%	15 12%	121 31%
1 per year	37 25%	30 26%	24 19%	91 24%
2-5 per year	45 30%	20 18%	56 44%	121 31%
more than 5 per year	14 10%	10 9%	31 25%	55 14%
totals	148	114	126	388

chi square = 55.20   significance = .000   cramers V = .27

At first glance, one might read these results to mean that grassroots party members in the traditional parties are not particularly interested in policy questions. However, a majority of respondents from all three parties expressed belief that their members would like more opportunity to involve themselves in policy issues and would like to have more influence in positions taken by their party. Asked if members of their local association would like to spend more time considering matters of public policy; 84 per cent of Liberals, 88 per cent of PCs, and 69 percent of Reformers expressed agreement. Asked if their membership would like to have more influence over the policy positions taken by their national party; 89 per cent of Liberals, 95 per cent of PCs, and 60 per cent of Reformers expressed agreement. The lower numbers for Reform respondents do not likely indicate less

desire to participate in policy study and development but rather a greater degree of satisfaction with the participatory opportunities currently available.

Respondents were also asked which activities engaged in at the constituency level they considered most important. As shown in Table 7.2, fundraising ranks as the most important activity for 30 per cent of respondents, followed by "support work for MP or nominated local candidate." Only 12 per cent of respondents considered policy study and development the most important activity engaged in by their local association.

Table 7.2 Number of associations by party affiliation naming listed activity as most important activity engaged in by their constituency association. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N=366.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	Totals
support work for MP or nominated candidate	30 22%	8 8%	8 6%	46 13%
social events	12 9%	11 11%	10 8%	33 9%
fundraising	44 32%	37 36%	29 23%	110 30%
policy study & development	17 12%	13 13%	15 12%	45 12%
campaign planning	10 7%	13 13%	8 6%	31 9%
publish newsletter	4 3%	4 4%	5 4%	13 4%
membership drive[35]	8 6%	. ,	31 25%	46 13%
other	13 9%	10 10%	19 15%	42 12%
totals	138	103	125	366

A significant reason why local party associations spend such little time and effort on consideration of public policy issues appears to be that they do not see these efforts as being effective in influencing policy decisions made by their parties. Respondents were asked whether there existed "regular and established means by which your local association can report to the national party its views on

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[35] This answer was volunteered, the others were offered as possible answers.

matters of public policy?" Respondents were then asked to describe what methods of communication existed. A majority of PC associations reported that there is no regular and established method in place that permits local associations to report their views on policy matters to their national party. Only 43 per cent of PC respondents said such opportunities existed. More than a quarter of Liberal party respondents, 29 per cent, also stated that there was no such method for them to communicate their views on policy issues with their national party.[36] Respondents from the Reform Party differed sharply in this regard as a full 95 per cent reported the existence of regular and established methods of communication.

While the national leadership of the Liberal and PC parties would likely argue that party members and constituency organizations are always welcome to send letters or telephone with their opinions, the results likely are influenced by attitudes of respondents as to the effectiveness of such efforts. Many Reform respondents listed letters to their MP or to the national party executive as a method of communication. While not all associations have an MP from their party, they all have the opportunity to write to their national leadership. Again the disparity in

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[36] This difference between t'e Liberals and PCs is not significant at the .05 level.

answers likely reflects attitudes as to the receptiveness of officials to these communications and to their effectiveness.

All three parties hold conventions at which, to varying degrees, policy matters are discussed and voted upon by the membership. While a large majority of associations from all three parties report having sent delegates to a national convention of their party where public policy issues were both debated and voted on, many did not consider these effective methods of communicating their views on policy issues. Only in the Reform Party did those attending these conventions overwhelmingly find them to be worthwhile. While `8 per cent of Reform respondents agreed that their association's delegates found these meetings worthwhile and believed that their opinions were carefully considered, only 74 per cent of Liberals and 42 per cent of PCs agreed.

Not surprisingly, these inter-party differences are reflected in answers to a series of Likert scale questions concerning efficacy of participation. Asked whether their association played a significant role in the development of their national party's platform for the 1993 election; 38 per cent of Liberals answered strongly or somewhat agree, compared with 76 per cent of Reformers, and 12 per cent of PCs. A full 66 per cent of PCs answered "disagree strongly" to this question, compared with 31 per cent of Liberals, and 5 per cent of Reformers. Asked whether they believed their

national party carefully considered the views of local associations like theirs in the drafting of its 1993 election platform; 53 per cent of Liberals expressed agreement, compared with 92 per cent of Reformers, and 5 per cent of PCs.

An examination of the relationship between respondents' views concerning the effectiveness of their participation and the frequency of their local association sponsoring policy related meetings supports the hypothesis that associations will expend more effort on policy discussion if they believe their participation to be meaningful and have the potential to influence the policy decisions ultimately made by their national party.

Table 7.3 illustrates a significant positive relationship between an associations' view as to whether or not their national party considers the views of local associations and the number of local policy meetings held. The stronger the belief that national parties care about the policy views of local activists the more often the local activists meet to discuss policy issues. Of associations that strongly agree that their national party does consider local views, 24 per cent meet to discuss policy six or more times a year while 11 per cent never hold such meetings. For associations that strongly believe their national party doesn't consider local views only eight per cent meet six or

more times a year and 49 per cent never meet to discuss policy. This relationship remains significant when party affiliation is controlled for.

Table 7.3. The number of meetings a year sponsored by local party associations for policy study and development by respondents' response to "Our national party carefully considered the views of local associations like ours in the drafting of its 1993 election platform." Actual cases and column percentages reported. N = 387.

	agree strongly	agree somewhat	undecided	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly
6 or more	24 23.5%	14 14.7%	3 8.6%	5 8.9%	8 8.1%
4-5	12 11.7%	9 9.5%	6 17.1%	2 3.6%	3 3.0%
2-3	33 32.4%	24 25.3%	4 11.4%	12 21.4%	16 16.2%
1	22 21.6%	22 23.2%	9 25.7%	14 25.0%	24 24.2%
0	11 10.8%	26 27.4%	13 37.1%	23 41.1%	48 48.5%
total	102 100%	95 100%	35 100%	56 100%	99 100%

Chi square = 54.88   significance = .000   gamma = .36

Activists in the PC Party are particularly disgruntled with their opportunity to participate in policy development. Certainly, to some degree this is reflective of the party's poor performance in the 1993 election and the wide-spread belief that this resulted from the party hierarchy losing touch with grassroots supporters. These attitudes were reflected in the documents produced during the party's 1993 restructuring process, some of which were discussed earlier.

These attitudes are likely also reflective of the recurring difficulty of government parties to satisfy the policy demands of their grassroots supporters, and the difficulties governing parties find in establishing a policy role for their non-parliamentary party.

Reform Party activists are by far the most active in policy discussion and the most satisfied with the effectiveness of their participation. The problem, however, arises in attempting to apply the Reform approach to governing parties. There are, however, certain things that the traditional parties can do to include their grassroots supporters in policy development in a more meaningful fashion, without abdicating their governing responsibilities. Some of these mechanisms are considered in greater detail below.

Teledemocracy Experiments

During the last few years several efforts have been made to use technological advances as methods of improving communication between citizens and their political leaders. The expansion of cable television has made available inexpensive and sometimes free access for local MPs and political leaders who wish to communicate with voters through that medium. Communication, moreover, may be two-way (at least to some degree) when cable television is used in

conjunction with telephone technology.[37]   Increasingly,
political leaders are also providing access to voters via the
internet.

Efforts to communicate with constituents and to
determine their views are of course not new. MPs have for
many years included questionnaires as part of their
"householder" mailings with an invitation for voters to
complete and return the survey to their MP.   MPs and their
staff have likely always welcomed the receipt of letters and
phone calls from constituents expressing their views about
current policy issues.   As well, MPs spend considerable time
at home in their ridings attending community events where,
solicited or not, they often hear the views of constituents.

The new efforts, however, differ in several important
ways: (1) they permit many more constituents to express their
views, (2) they permit many more voters to hear the views of
their political leaders and (3) they aim to reach a
numerically expressed result by tabulating the telephoned-in
responses of viewers ('teledemocracy'), which are then
claimed to possess legitimacy as 'public opinion' because of
the number of citizens participating.   There is no attempt to
bridge gaps between divergent viewpoints or to build
consensus around a policy alternative; rather, the principal

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[37]   Some experiments with this technology are examined
in detail below.

intent is usually to quantify the opinions of viewers on a particular issue of public policy.

Before reviewing several of these experiments, it is useful to consider briefly the arguments of both advocates and critics of teledemocracy.

The principal argument advanced by advocates of teledemocracy is that it helps overcome the obstacles of size and population dispersion that otherwise make direct democracy impossible in the modern state. Iain McLean argues, for example, that all democratic theorists except for Burke, Madison and Schumpeter would agree that in principle direct democracy is better than representative democracy, and that the latter has been needed only because of "unwieldy and inconsistent" nature of direct democracy in large societies.[38] Similarly, Becker and Scarce, and Arterton point to the ability of technology to permit a greater number of citizens to participate directly in political decision-making as potentially one of its greatest attributes:

> The principle observed impact of the use
> of technology for democratic politics is
> to reduce the costs and burdens of participation
> for citizens. These costs may be financial
> or they may be associated with time, travel
> and information necessary to participate

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[38] Iain McLean, _Democracy and the New Technology_ (Cambridge, Eng.: Polity Press, 1989), 108-10.

politically.[39]

Such costs they argue, are burdens on democratic citizenship, and:

> if technology offers anything,
> it is an opportunity to reduce these burdens
> for citizens. By making participation easier
> for all, communication technologies may be
> able to reduce the inequalities that now
> severely grip different avenues for citizen
> involvement in policy-making.[40]

A final argument in support of use of technology (such as the internet) for political purposes is that it can enhance the ability of citizens to communicate with one another and with their political leaders on issues of public policy. Discussion, debate, learning, and the sharing of information among citizens, potentially from different backgrounds, regions and socio-economic status will make for a more invigorated democracy. In the Canadian context, such opportunities may provide a vehicle for the bridging of cleavages, expanding opportunities for participation in collective activities.

Critics of teledemocracy argue that its proponents are most often interested in determining public opinion, or in

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[39] F. Christopher Arterton, Teledemocracy: Can Technology Protect Democracy? (Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage, 1987), 189. Also see, T.L. Becker and R. Scarce, "Teledemocracy Emergent: The State of the Art and Science," presented to meetings of the American Political Science Association, Washington D.C., 1984).

[40] Ibid., 50-51.

legitimizing their own positions by making it appear that these opinions are representative of public opinion. The principal dilemma is that while technology may allow many citizens to participate in a minimal way - such as by collecting their opinions on a particular issue - it does not permit a large number of citizens to participate in a dialogue that may lead to real consensus-building. At best, participants are reduced to observers of discussions held by others, even if they are permitted to pass judgment on the debate observed. Jean Elstain criticizes teledemocracy on the grounds that it does not provide for deliberation, discourse with other citizens, or a sense of community -- all of which, she argues, are vital in a successful participatory democracy.[41]

Others argue that the increased use of technology is a threat to representative institutions that provide an intermediate level of decision-making and that it puts at risk minority interests that may be ignored through the rough practice of majority rule teledemocracy.[42]

The use of teledemocracy often includes some decision-making power being ceded directly to the participants -- otherwise few will participate. However, even with

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[41] Jean B. Elstain, "Democracy and the Qube Tube," in The Nation (August 7-14, 1982), 108.

[42] Kenneth C. Laudon, Communications Technology and Democratic Participation (New York: Praeger, 1977).

teledemocracy, many citizens will not participate, and their interests are not protected by anyone. While representatives may protect the interests of those who do not actively participate in public life, there is no one to look out for these interests in teledemocracy. As McLean argues, even though teledemocracy may be technologically possible: "Nonetheless my hunch is that direct on-line democracy will not become part of daily life for most people. Taking decisions is long and hard work, and most people prefer to do other things most of the time."[43]

Others argue that teledemocracy raises problems of aggregating interests as citizens expressed preferences may not be consistent.[44] For instance the public may prefer that their taxes be reduced by 20 per cent while simultaneously favouring that all citizens be provided with adequate shelter. These two public policies may be contradictory, and teledemocracy is incapable of solving this dilemma. McLean also discusses the likelihood of teledemocracy resulting in problems of cycle voting and the difficulty in identifying a

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[43] McLean, Democracy and Technology, 159.

[44] Arterton, Teledemocracy. This problem was observed after the PC's 1991 policy convention in "Delegates Face Right, Left and Centre When Forming Resolutions," Calgary Herald, August 10, 1991, A5. "Toryland is fertile ground for schizophrenics. If the federal government tried to implement the scores of resolutions passed by its national party this week, it wouldn't know where to turn. The policy decisions from the 2,500 delegates reveal that the party is all over the ideological map."

condorcet preference.[45]

The Reform Party has used a method which combines television with telephone polls to determine voters' views on several issues, including the federal budget, federalism and doctor assisted suicide. For example, on the latter issue, in April 1994, Manning and four other Calgary area Reform MPs organized a telephone vote of their constituents in conjunction with a television program that was broadcast via a Calgary cable channel. In front of a studio audience of approximately 200, a panel of experts representing both sides of the issue discussed its merits. Manning appeared only briefly on the program to present his position. An estimated audience of 20,000 viewed the program, and 1,533 phoned in their votes.

While the television show allowed interested voters to learn more about the issue, this was clearly a secondary objective. The primary objective, as stated by Manning, was for the MPs to learn the views of their constituents. All five sponsoring MPs had previously expressed their opposition to doctor assisted suicide, while declaring their willingness to consider the wishes of their constituents before making a

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[45] McLean, Democracy and the New Technology, 55-56. This refers to instances where no preference is a clear majority favourite. For example, when voters have three options available - A, B and C - A may be preferred over B, B preferred over C, and C over A. In this instance there is no condorcet choice.

final decision. MP Diane Ablonczy stated that this issue was particularly suitable to an MP voting the wishes of her constituents as: "This is an issue that wasn't discussed during the last election but which people care very deeply about."[46] While Manning pledged to support the view of a majority of his constituents, "Doug Kemp, an aide to MP Jim Silye, said only an unquestionable, clear majority would prompt Mr. Silye to vote against his conscience."[47]

There were several mechanisms used to determine voters' views. Viewers were invited to phone a central number in order to vote, but since PINs were not provided there was no mechanism to restrict each voter to one phone call. 60 per cent of callers supported doctor assisted suicide.[48] As a control measure aimed at preventing one side of the issue from dominating the phone-in poll, 1,195 viewers were randomly selected and called after the program. These viewers voted 72 per cent in favor of doctor assisted suicide and 19 per cent opposed. Finally, a randomly selected sample of 602 constituents was polled on the issue with 82 per cent voting in favour and 16 per cent opposed. Manning concluded from this exercise that "[t]he initial interpretation

[46] "Reform Taking Suicide Issue to Air in Major Experiment," Globe and Mail (Toronto), April 16, 1994, A7.

[47] Ibid.

[48] "I'll Support Suicide: Manning" Toronto Star, April 23, 1994, A12.

indicates a strong constituent support for physician-assisted suicide under specific conditions," and reported that "[i]f a government bill was presented to Parliament tomorrow permitting physician-assisted suicide under those conditions, the participating MPs would vote for it in accordance with t'.e expression of those constituents."[49]

The Reform Party used this same technology nationally in its "Canada Speaks" project aimed at determining voters' views on Canadian federalism. Manning announced in September of 1994 that the party would be opening up phone lines from September 26 to October 3 for voters to phone-in and express their views on three questions relating to Canadian federalism.[50] On October 3, the party sponsored a television program broadcast throughout most of Canada on cable television, providing a discussion of the relevant issues by a panel of experts, members of the studio audience, and taped comments from prominent Canadians. The program was broadcast in both english and french. The phone lines, available with both english and french instructions, were open through to the end of the television broadcast. The panel included ardent federalists, economists and a well-known Quebec separatist, Josée Legault. Manning travelled extensively

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[49] Ibid.

[50] "Reform Party Dials Up 1-900 Referendum," Winnipeg Free Press, September 21, 1994, A10.

during the period leading up to the television broadcast seeking publicity for the project and encouraging Canadians to participate in it.[51] Voters wishing to telephone in their views were charged a fee of $1 per minute, with the average call lasting two minutes. Again no PINs were distributed and voters could phone-in as often as they wished. Voters were asked the following three questions:

A. Has Canada reached a point in its history when the issue of national unity must be resolved once and for all? 1. Yes; or 2. No.

B. Which Course of action do you think is best for Canada? 1. Complete separation of Quebec from Canada; 2. Special association between Canada and an independent Quebec; 3. Changing the federal system for the entire country; or 4. Continuing the present system.

C. Who should set the framework for Canada's future? 1. The Canadian people through a bottom-up process; or 2. Governments and political leaders.

Approximately 10,000 answers to the individual questions were received. It is impossible to know how many Canadians actually participated as some may have voted more than

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[51] See, "Manning Peddles Reform, TV Show," Halifax Chronicle Herald, September 26, 1994, A1.

once.[52] In the event, 92 per cent of callers agreed that the national unity question should be resolved "once and for all;" 57 per cent believed that the federal system needed to be changed; and 92 per cent felt the issue should be resolved by a "bottom-up process."[53] It does not appear that the party sponsored any follow-up scientific opinion polls.

A similar process was used in February 1995 to determine Canadians views on issues concerning the federal budget. The Reform Party sponsored a 90 minute program entitled "You Be the Finance Minister" that was broadcast across Canada by more than 80 cable television companies. The program was hosted by Manning and included a panel discussing various perspectives on public finance. The panelists included Michael Walker of the Fraser Institute; Duncan Cameron, President of the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives; Diane Francis, editor of the Financial Post; and John Richards, an economist at Simon Fraser University and member of the NDP.[54]

Three possible budget scenarios were discussed and

[52] "Pushbutton Populism: The Reform Party and the Real World of Teledemocracy," Darin David Barney, presented at the meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association, Montréal, Quebec, June 6, 1995.

[53] "End Unity Debate, Reform TV Show Told," Globe and Mail (Toronto), October 4, 1994, A3.

[54] "Callers Back Massive Cuts in Spending," Calgary Herald, February 20, 1995, A1.

evaluated: (1) "hold the line on taxes while reducing spending substantially," (2) "slight increase in taxes with modest spending reductions" and (3) "more spending on social programs and job-creation projects and reduced subsidies to business."[55] Approximately 10,000 viewers telephoned a 1-900 number to register which of the three budget scenarios they preferred. 93 per cent of callers supported the first option, which is the position advocated by the Reform Party leadership.[56] Again, it does not appear that any follow-up scientific polling was conducted.

The Reform Party is not alone in Canada in experimenting with teledemocracy. BC Premier Mike Harcourt used an "electronic town hall" meeting in conjunction with phone calls from viewers to help generate public discussion on provincial budget issues in February 1995.[57] The hour-long show, broadcast on the BCTV cable network, included a panel discussion of various fiscal options available to the government. Members of the studio audience were able to ask questions of the panelists and home viewers were invited to phone in their questions. Unlike the Reform Party's efforts,

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[55] "Hold Tax Line, Reform Listeners Urge," Globe and Mail (Toronto), February 20, 1995, A3.

[56] "Callers Back Massive Cuts in Spending," Calgary Herald, February 20, 1995, A1.

[57] "Harcourt a Telephone Call Away," The Vancouver Sun, February 3, 1995, A3.

there was no telephone poll of viewers included with this endeavor.

Perhaps the largest effort at using teledemocracy to determine the views of constituents on a particular issue was Reform MP Ted White's project concerning reform of the Young Offenders Act. The objectives of this project were: (1) to inform voters of the issues relevant to reform of the Young Offenders Act and (2) to gauge opinion of constituents on possible reforms. The first objective was achieved through advertisements in the community newspaper, the North Shore News and through the mailing of a "householder" pamphlet to all residents. Both the advertisements and the pamphlet included what appear to be a balanced discussion of the opposing positions concerning reform of the legislation. For example, an advertis ent in the 18 May 1994 North Shore News includes the following:

> You could be excused for thinking (based on media reports) that absolutely everyone wants to toughen up the Young Offenders Act, but that is not the case. Groups such as the John Howard Society, intellectuals who have studied the statistics for youth crime, and individuals including Allan Rock, federal Minister of Justice, feel that "the Act substantially has been a success and that in principle it is the right approach." (Hansard March 17, 1994). A "Householder" presenting both sides of the argument will soon be delivered to North Vancouver homes. I encourage you to read it through carefully before you vote.[58]

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[58] North Shore News (Vancouver), May 18, 94. See also May/June 1994 Householder from MP Ted White, "Referendum '94: Teledemocracy, the Future Now."

White also provided his constituents with a telephone help-line which they could call for information on both the substance of the issue and the method of voting.

The second objective was met by implementation of an elaborate telephone poll. All registered voters in the riding were eligible to vote and were mailed a PIN between 1 June and 9 June 1994.[59] Voters could then telephone a 1-900 number between June 15 and June 20 to cast their vote. Voters needed to punch in their PIN in order to have their vote count, and the system limited each constituent to one vote. Callers to the 1-900 number were billed $1.95 per call. White anticipated a participation rate of 60 per cent.[60]

Callers were asked three questions to which they could punch in numbers on their telephone key pad indicating a yes or no answer. The questions, and the number of respondents giving each answer, were:

1. Should the age be reduced to ten for charges to be laid under the Young Offenders Act?

Yes - 3,067   No - 1,539

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[59] Ted White Press Release, May 27, 1994.

[60] Ted White, "Letter to the Editor," May 23, 1994; abbreviated version published in Vancouver Sun, May 26, 1994, A14.

2. Should there be automatic transfer to adult court for serious crimes such as murder?

Yes - 4,474   No - 125

3. Should there be a special category in the Young Offenders Act for repeat and dangerous offenders?

Yes - 4,539   No - 53

High school students who resided in the riding but were not of voting age were also able to participate in the telephone poll and their answers were segregated from those of registered voters. In the event, less than 50 students participated in the poll. White was very disappointed with the low participation rate which he attributed to three principal factors: (1) the three day media campaign clashed with the Stanley Cup playoffs and the Vancouver hockey riot, (2) the PIN numbers were sent out too long before the vote and (3) people knew that the Justice Minister's proposals would be pushed through parliament with little or no input and felt that their votes would not count.[61]

A final technology increasingly used by elected officials to communicate with their constituents is the home computer. A growing number of office holders have established sites on the internet that allow them to provide information to interested constituents and for constituents

[61] Ted White "Advertorial," North Shore News (Vancouver), "The Post Mortem," June 29, 1994.

to communicate their views. For example, Alberta Premier Ralph Klein posted his government's January 1995 Throne Speech on the internet and received more than 3,200 responses. When the province's budget was also made available, Treasury spokesperson Gord Rosko said: "It's just another way to get information out to the public."[62] Premiers Rae, Harris and Mckenna have also been available on the internet, and federal Finance Minister Paul Martin posted his first budget on the internet. All five of the federal parties have web cites offering various information. The Reform candidate in the federal by-election in the Ontario riding of Ottawa-Vanier set up a freenet address that allowed him to communicate directly with interested constituents. Said candidate Kevin Gaudet: "The move into the Internet, officially launched this week, is an attempt to bypass the media and talk directly to voters."[63]

Collected - Collective Tensions

It is useful, for purposes of this discussion, to evaluate the use of teledemocracy for communication between elected officials and their constituents in two ways: (1) the ability of technology to facilitate the gathering of public opinion

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[62] "Premier Attracts Internet Attention," Calgary Herald, January 28, 1995, A2.

[63] "Reform Party Drives on to Internet," Calgary Herald, January 28, 1995, A1.

on matters of public policy and (2) the ability of technology to facilitate the practice of collective decision-making.

The objective of technological efforts used by Canadian political parties have primarily been of the collected type. The focus of these high-tech experiments has been on the collecting of individual opinions in an attempt to determine public opinion. While panel discussions or mailings concerning the topic at issue were incorporated into some of these projects, their purpose was primarily to inform participants of the divergent opinions and interests relevant to the issue. Little effort was made to bring these divergent opinions closer together. Instead, individuals were given a fairly balanced exposition of the principal arguments concerning the issue and were then asked to pass judgment.

The very nature of these events precludes collective decision-making. The technology used restricts participants to either approving or disapproving of a particular policy prescription, or choosing one option from among several. No opportunity exists for participants to try to find common ground between the divergent positions presented.

The objective of these experiments, then, is to enhance collected decision-making, but the success of the technology used in achieving even this objective is questionable. The participatory group is limited to those who follow public

affairs and who are thus aware of the existence of the experiment. While notice of forthcoming experiments may be given once or twice in a local newspaper, and perhaps on a local radio and television broadcast, cost usually prevents significant mainstream advertising. As a result, many of these projects pass by with many citizens not even knowing of their existence. The use of cable television broadcasts is also problematical. Many citizens rarely watch cable channels, and the range of television programming available makes it likely that only a small percentage will be attracted by a political discussion on the cable channel.

In most of the undertakings examined, the method of active participation for voters was restricted to the telephone. While the vast majority of Canadians have telephones, the technology utilized requires a touch-tone telephone -- which a significant minority, estimated at between five and ten per cent, do not possess. These citizens are effectively prevented from participating and having their opinions count. Rotary-dial telephones are most common among the poor, who cannot afford the extra monthly charge of a touch-tone line, and among the elderly, who do not see any need to adopt the new technology.

Those projects in which participants are invited to record their opinions via the internet or some other computer service present even more significant questions of access.

Many voters do not have home computers, and many who do are not connected to modems that would allow participation in these projects. Fortunately, however, sponsors of these projects apparently do not usually represent that the comments they receive are representative of wider community opinion.

In those projects that couple a cable television show with a telephone "poll" citizens without cable television are effectively eliminated from participation. While a majority of Canadians have cable television, a substantial minority do not. Again, the poor are over-represented among those without cable television. While it is possible to participate without the ability to view the television broadcast, it is both difficult and unlikely. Voters would have to be prompted by detailed reports of the event, on either basic television or radio or in the print media, that included the exact questions being asked, the telephone number to call, and the specific time when calls would be acceptable. These voters would also have more difficulty in determining what their interests are in the issue being addressed as they would not have the benefit of the television show's debate.

Participation in these events is not limited to adults or citizens. In most, anyone who is aware of the project and has a touch-tone phone is eligible to participate.

Respondents are also not restricted to casting only one vote. In most of these experiments, one can vote as often as one is able to dial in the assigned phone number during the allotted time period. Meanwhile, those unable to vote, or to get their vote recorded, during this small period were disenfranchised.

The universe of potential participants in most of these experiments with technology is thus not identical to the pool of eligible voters in a general election. Instead, the eligible group is both wider and narrower than that of eligible voters. Non-citizens and youth are able to participate in most of the teledemocracy experiments, while, those without cable television and touch-tone phones, and those not available during an evening time-frame of a couple of hours are disenfranchised.

The project run by Ted White in Vancouver North addressed many of these concerns. Firstly, White ensured that all citizens would be made aware of the project's existence by taking several steps: (1) advertising the project in the local newspaper, (2) receiving substantial free coverage in the local media, (3) using his MP "householder" mailing to announce the project and, most importantly, (4) mailing a voter information sheet personally addressed to each registered voter in the riding. White even made efforts to update the voter registration list from the

previous federal election so as not to exclude new residents or those who had recently moved from the pool of eligible participants.

Secondly, White mailed a PIN to each eligible voter. The PIN had to be entered into the telephone key pad before one was able to cast a vote. This ensured that only eligible voters participated, and that each voter could only vote once.

Thirdly, White's experiment allowed one week for citizens to cast their vote. This meant that those who were unable to vote on one particular day were not necessarily disenfranchised.

His experiment still required that participants use a touch-tone telephone to participate. However, considering the advance notice given to all voters and the length of time during which voting was possible, most interested voters without touch-tone phones would likely be able to make arrangements to use someone else's phone.

Participation in these teledemocracy projects has been very limited. White's project which was the most "user friendly" and most accessible of any of the teledemocracy projects reviewed, probably had the highest percentage participation rate -- yet it still was less than ten per cent. Because of the low percentage of registered voters who participated in these teledemocracy projects, the question of

the representativeness of the participant body becomes important.

In those projects in which the potential electorate differs from the pool of registered voters, by definition the participant group can not be representative of all registered voters. Furthermore, the cost of voting likely results in a further under-representing of the poor and those not particularly engaged in public affairs. The 1-900 telephone technology employed by the users of teledemocracy is expensive. In all instances this expense has been off-loaded to participants. Most of the teledemocracy projects resulted in participants being charged two to three dollars for voting. The poor are likely to be reluctant to spend even two or three dollars on participating in a teledemocracy project, while those not particularly engaged in politics might not regard participation as worth the expense. Moreover, these projects have all been advisory in nature, with no direct impact on public policy. The charging of a voting fee might dissuade well-informed citizens who are aware that there will be no direct connection between a project's vote total and any actual policy outcome.

While the author is aware of no quantitative study comparing the representativeness of teledemocracy project participants with the entire pool of eligible voters, the issues raised above make it quite likely that the

participatory group is not representative of the larger
electorate. This is especially important because users of
the teledemocracy technology often justify their experiments
in collected terms -- as being representative of public
opinion. Users will often point to the number of
participants, often in the thousands within a single riding
or city, as evidence of the reliability of their results.
For example, White said of his project,

> Voter participation was lower than we
> predicted it would be when we announced
> the referendum about seven weeks ago...
> Even so the total was many times greater
> than any opinion poll conducted in the area.
> People with polling experience will tell you
> that voting patterns are established within
> a few hundred calls so referendum '94
> represents a very significant result.[64]

Of course, there is no statistical validity to these claims.
All participants in teledemocracy projects are self-chosen.
Those most interested in the issue being debated, partisans
of the party sponsoring the project, and those generally more
politically active are likely over-represented among
participants. The poor, those without cable television and
touch-tone phones, and those not generally engaged in
political debate, are likely under-represented. No matter
how many citizens participate in teledemocracy projects, as
long as participation remains substantially less than 100 per

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[64] "Referendum '94 Results Released," Press Release from
MP Ted White, June 21, 1994.

cent the raw number of participants provides no evidence that the participatory group is representative of voters at large.

Teledemocracy experiments, therefore, are likely better at measuring intensity than overall public opinion. Those generally politically active and those concerned with the specific issue being addressed are much more likely to participate than citizens at large. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Since these projects have all been a.visory and not determinative of public policy, knowledge of intensity of feelings can aid politicians in their decision-making. Information concerning overall public opinion is still, however, best determined by professional pollsters.

Technology has not yet been successfully utilized to aid in wide-spread collective decision-making. The problem of size, particularly, is not easily overcome by technology. While technology is able to overcome the problem of distance - a small group of dispersed decision-makers can be brought together through such means as tele-conferencing to participate in deliberation that is very similar to face-to-face decision-making - it does not provide a means through which large numbers of voters can participate in a decision-making process that is deliberative and lends itself to the seeking of consensus. As Arterton concluded from a study of 13 US experiments with teledemocracy: "As a medium of dialogue, each of these vehicles may be conveniently used by

modest numbers of communicators, the emerging technologies do not promise that everyone can have his or her individual say in a national dialogue."[65]

On a small scale, however, technology can improve the collective decision-making capacity of representatives. Some of the projects studied by Arterton succeeded in this fashion,

> The more innovative experiments involve the political uses of semi-private media. The Legislature of Alaska for example, holds committee hearings over a voice-only tele-conferencing network and citizens who wish to testify must go to one of 71 sites located throughout the vast state where those state-owned facilities are located. Computer conferences have been arranged allowing a Congressman to discuss arms control policy with a limited group of citizens. Another Congressman held video conferences with constituents back home in California.[66]

While it does not seem to offer the prospect of transforming mass participation from collected to collective decision-making, technology may well enable representatives to do a better job of collective deliberation. The cable television broadcasts and information provided through computer network services do provide a useful source of information on public issues to interested citizens. And, these teledemocracy experiments broaden the range of participants beyond party activists. By attempting to gather the views of all

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[65] Arterton, Teledemocracy, 188-189.

[66] Ibid., 187-88.

constituents, they are not susceptible to the charge that participation in these experiments is available to only a small group.

Conclusion

The data collected strongly indicate that party members are dissatisfied with existing participatory opportunities and would like to have more influence in the decision-making process. Two steps that the parties can take immediately, without threatening the collective process, are to encourage policy discussion at the grassroots level and the communication of grassroots opinions to the national level. Association presidents overwhelmingly indicate that their members would like to spend more time discussing policy issues. Moreover, whether members believe their national party encourages such activity appears to be strong indicator of the amount of time they spend discussing policy. Parties can also easily establish consistent methods for the local associations to pass on their views on policy matters. These activities would serve to benefit the party as they may result in new and good ideas being generated and will also go some way towards satisfying the desires of party activists. If the PCs are successful in establishing a permanent policy foundation it may help address this problem in their party.

The real challenge for the parties, however, is to use

this information passed on by the grassroots in a meaningful way that leaves activists with a legitimate sense that their opinions are listened to. At the end of the day, in most political parties, particularly in those with reasonable aspirations of achieving power, policy decisions will ultimately be made by the parliamentary party. This is consistent with both Canadian parliamentary practice and with theories of representative democracy -- that those elected should be responsible for making governing choices. MPs, unlike grassroots members of a political party, are responsible for their decisions to both parliament and their electorates. Furthermore, parliamentary caucuses are able to participate in real collective processes of group deliberation and consensus building. For all of the reasons reviewed in Chapter One, this remains essential in the Canadian context. Long-term political success of Canadian parties is dependent upon their successful brokering of the country's different interests. Many Canadians would not agree with McLean's assertion that in theory direct democracy is always preferable to representative democracy.

The practice of collective decision-making by representatives, however, does not preclude an effective role for grassroots activists. If MPs are to represent their constituents they must communicate with them to learn what their views are. Improved two-way communication and more

transparent collective processes are two essential reforms.

Chapter Eight

Campaigns and Elections: Participatory Opportunities and
Accessibility

This chapter examines three general ways in which citizens can participate in election campaigns in a manner that allows them to exercise influence over public policy: (1) by voting for parties that espouse policy positions similar to their own, (2) by assisting their preferred party in its vote getting efforts and (3) by participating in activities that have influence on the policy decisions taken by parties and candidates. The following paragraphs provide a brief introduction to the analysis pertaining to these three areas.

Citizens' ability to influence policy decisions by voting for their preferred party is largely dependent upon the parties staking out clear positions on policy issues. As discussed in Chapter One, much criticism of the Canadian electoral process concerns the unwillingness of brokerage parties to take clear and consistent policy positions during election campaigns. This chapter examines the ability of interest groups and new and smaller political parties to access the electoral process. This analysis focusses on the ability of these groups to compete with the established parties, to introduce issues into the political debate and to pressure candidates and parties to take positions on

important issues.

Analysis of the party memberships' involvement in election campaigns examines the number participating, motivations for participation, activities performed by volunteers and the relationship between volunteer activity and electoral success. In order for volunteer campaign activity to be effective in helping to elect a preferred candidate or party, there must be some connection between electoral success and these activities. Thus, an examination is made of the relationship between these two variables.

Volunteer election activity may also potentially be aimed at influencing the policy positions staked out by parties and candidates. While Chapter 7 concluded that party activists are not routinely provided an effective role in the parliamentary parties' policy-making processes between elections, the analysis in this chapter focusses on the frequency and effectiveness of policy-oriented activity at the local level during election campaigns.

Participation in Election Campaigns

Scant information exists concerning voters' participation in election campaigns. The work done by Carty on the 1988 campaign, provides the first information concerning how many people participate in campaigns, what their motivations are

and what tasks they fulfill.[1]

The mean number of volunteers for local party associations in the 1993 election was 161 and the median 100. There was some variance among parties: the Liberal mean was 189, Reform's 159 and the PC's 128.[2] These numbers indicate that only a small minority of party members volunteer in election campaigns. The PCs have the lowest participation rate at 17 per cent, the Reform Party is next at 21 per cent and the Liberals have the highest participation rate at 23 per cent. In all three parties, less than half of those who attend candidate nomination meetings volunteer during the election campaign.[3]

A majority of constituency associations reported difficulty in finding sufficient volunteers for their 1993 campaign. As illustrated in Table 8.1, 59 per cent of respondents reported that their association did not have a sufficient number of volunteers to run an 'effective' local

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[1] Carty, Canadian Political Parties, 167-78.

[2] Only the variance between the PC's and Liberal's mean is significant at the .05 level.

[3] One reason for this is certainly what might be called the 'friends and family factor.' Many party members are people who joined the party to support a friend or family member in a nomination campaign. When their candidate is unsuccessful they are unlikely to remain active party members. This hypothesis is supported by the findings that support for the local candidate is a major factor motivating campaign volunteers, and that the percentage of members volunteering is lower in associations with contested nominations.

campaign.[4] The shortage was most common for PC and Reform associations with two-thirds of each reporting a shortage, as opposed to less than half of Liberal associations. This finding is somewhat surprising considering the suggestions of some commentators that the nationalization of campaigns and the increased use of technology make the need for substantial numbers of campaign volunteers obsolete.[5] The severity of the claimed volunteer shortage was greatest in the Reform Party: 44 per cent of Reform associations reported that they required at least 50 more volunteers than they had, compared to 30 per cent of PCs and 17 per cent of Liberal associations.[6]

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[4] "An effective local campaign was not defined"; rather, each association was asked how many volunteers they had for the 1993 campaign and how many they require to run an effective campaign.

[5] S.J.R. Noel, "Dividing the Spoils: The Old and New Rules of Patronage in Canadian Politics," Journal of Canadian Studies 22 (1987), 72; and Wearing, Strained Relations.

[6] Only the difference between the Liberals and Reform is significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 8.1. Degree of 1993 campaign volunteer shortage by party affiliation. Actual cases and column percentages reported.
N = 374.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	Totals
0	79 56%	39 35%	37 31%	155 41%
1-10	6 4%	3 3%	5 4%	14 4%
11-25	14 10%	16 14%	9 8%	39 10%
26-50	18 13%	21 19%	16 13%	55 15%
51-100	7 5%	15 13%	22 18%	44 12%
101-200	8 6%	17 15%	13 11%	38 10%
more than 200	9 6%	2 2%	18 15%	28 8%
totals	141	113	120	374

chi square = 45.87   significance =.00   cramer's V =.25

Even though Reform associations had a higher number of volunteers on average than the PCs, they reported a greater shortage. This may reflect a difference in attitudes regarding the role and importance of grassroots activity in each party. More than 82 per cent of Reform Party respondents reported that canvassing was a very important method of communication in their 1993 campaign compared with 70 per cent of PCs.

The reasons offered by association presidents for the volunteer shortage vary significantly by party. An open-ended question asking respondents why they found it difficult

to find sufficient volunteers was asked of those who reported a shortage. As shown in Table 8.2, by far the most common response from Reform associations was that they were a new and inexperienced party. This is substantiated by the finding that Reform associations from Western Canada, many of whom contested the 1988 election, reported much greater success in recruiting volunteers than did their eastern counterparts. Of course, Reform also enjoyed more popularity in Western Canada and this likely also assisted its efforts to attract campaign volunteers. Liberal associations generally reported that their difficulty in finding volunteers resulted from people being too busy or disillusioned with politics. More than two-thirds of PC associations with a volunteer shortage attributed this to voter anger with their national party or former leader.

Table 8.2. Reasons given for volunteer shortage for associations reporting a shortage by party affiliation. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N = 205.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	Totals
members too busy	8 15%	5 7%	8 10%	21 10%
disillusioned with politics	11 20%	11 16%	0	22 11%
generally apathetic	9 16%	0	9 11%	18 9%
new party	2 4%	0	55 68%	57 28%
angry with national party	5 9%	36 52%	0	41 20%
angry with Mulroney	0	13 19%	0	13 7%
other	19 36%	4 6%	9 11%	32 16%
totals	54	69	81	205

chi square = 202.67 significance = .00 cramer's V = .71

The fact that anger with the national parties and disillusionment towards politics are substantial factors in the inability to recruit a sufficient number of volunteers is interesting. Not enough data exists to be certain, but considering the findings discussed earlier, and the fact that these feelings were strongest in the PC Party, it is possible that these sentiments are related to the sense that grassroots party members have little influence over the policy decisions made by parties.

Support for the local candidate is the primary motivation for participation reported by approximately 40 per cent of Liberal and PC respondents. Support for the party,

and/or its policies, is listed as the primary motivating factor by another 40 per cent of respondents. As illustrated in Table 8.3, a substantial number of Liberal and Reform respondents, however, list dislike of the PC government as their primary rationale -- this motivation may result from policy disagreements.

Table 8.3. Motivations for volunteering by party affiliation. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N=373.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	totals
Dislike of PC government	19 14%	0	53 42%	72 19%
belief in our policies/party	39 28%	54 50%	54 43%	147 40%
support of local candidate	55 39%	41 38%	10 8%	106 28%
hope for personal reward	8 6%	4 4%	0	12 3%
support our party leader	3 2%	2 2%	2 2%	7 2%
dislike of Liberals	0	1 1%	0	1 0%
other	16 11%	6 6%	6 5%	28 8%
totals	100%	100%	100%	373

chi square = 107.67   significance = .00   cramer's V = .38

Respondents were asked what the most important task performed by volunteers in their campaign organization was. As illustrated in Table 8.4, canvassing, election day work and fundraising are the three most important activities performed by election volunteers in all three parties. Less than one per cent of associations consider policy development to be

the most important task performed by campaign volunteers. This is not surprising considering the findings of several authors who have studied particular ridings and discovered that there is little importance to or attention placed on local issues during election campaigns.[7]   This finding supports the hypothesis that one factor contributing to the shortage of volunteers may be frustration felt by party members caused by a belief that they do not play a meaningful role in party policy-making.

Table 8.4. Most important task performed by volunteers. Actual cases and column percentages reported.   N=384.

	Liberals	PCs	Reform	totals
canvassing	62 43%	43 38%	71 55%	176 46%
election day work	34 24%	25 22%	16 12%	75 20%
putting up signs	7 5%	7 6%	7 5%	21 6%
fundraising	15 11%	13 12%	13 10%	41 11%
policy development	1 1%	0	2 2%	3 1%
office work	8 6%	11 10%	6 5%	25 7%
other	16 11%	13 12%	14 11%	43 11%
totals	143	112	129	3f

chi s uare = 14.05   significance = .30

[7] David Bell and Frederick Fletcher, eds., Reaching the Voter: Constituency   Campaigning   in   Canadian   Federal Elections, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 20 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991).

The data reviewed above strongly indicate that party members are given little opportunity to participate in elections and campaigns in a manner that has significant impact on the policy positions taken by the parties. In all three parties a small minority of members participate in election activities and those who do volunteer spend their time canvassing voters, assisting at polling places, fundraising and putting up election signs. While all of these may be important functions in maximizing a party's vote total, they likely do little to remedy the feelings of ineffectiveness expressed by many local associations and their members in influencing policy matters.

Effectiveness of Local Volunteer Efforts

While party members are not likely to have any significant impact on a party's policy positions, they may exercise influence by increasing the likelihood of their preferred party being elected. Substantial and convincing research exists establishing the connection between local campaign activity and the vote in national elections. Most of this research relates to the United States and Britain.[8] The

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[8] See, for example, John Frendreis, et al, "The Electoral Relevance of Local Party Organizations," American Political Science w 84, (1990), 225-35; Robert Huckfeldt and John Sp ue, "Political Parties and Electoral Mobilization: Political Structure, Social Structure and Party Canvas," American Political Science Review 86, (1992) 70-86; Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley, Labour's Grass Roots: The

Canadian literature on this subject restricts itself to examinations of the importance of local candidates or of party canvassing.[9] There has been little attempt in Canada to gather comprehensive data concerning local campaign activity and to examine its relationship to electoral results.

In large part this may be due to the preoccupation of Canadian scholars with the national party leaders and their campaigns. As mentioned above, many students of Canadian politics have observed a growing nationalization of Canadian elections. The thesis of this literature is that with increasing nationalization of the media and opinion polling, voters' attention is focused on the leaders' tours and debates, and the perceptions of the campaign as relayed by the national media. This view of elections leaves little room for significant involvement by local party activists.

Recent case studies of local election campaigns during the 1988 federal election, conducted for the Lortie Commission, suggest that this view of Canadian elections may

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Politics of Party Membership (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); and Paul Whiteley, et al, True Blues: The Politics of Conservative Party Membership (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

[9] See, for example, Jerome Black, "Revisiting the Effects of Canvassing on Voting Behaviour," Canadian Journal of Political Science 17 (1984), 351-74; and William Irvine, "Does the Candidate Make a Difference? The Macro-Politics and the Micro-Politics of Getting Elected," Canadian Journal of Political Science 15 (1982), 755-82.

be incomplete. Several authors, in a collection of case studies of ten ridings, conclude that local campaign efforts had a significant impact on riding election results.[10] Studying the riding of Vancouver Centre, Anthony Sayers concludes that the weakness of the local Liberal campaign and party organization were reflected in the election outcome.[11] David Bell and Catherine Bolan, studying the Ontario riding of Markham conclude: "The key to the outcome of the campaign and Atwell's impressive victory probably had less to do with the media coverage than with his superb organization (built up effectively in his quest for the nomination)."[12] Commenting on the more rural Ontario riding of Perth-Wellington-Waterloo, Bell and Bolan note that many voters are offended if party workers do not personally canvass them asking for their support.[13] These findings, while impressionistic, support the hypothesis that local association vitality can make the difference between victory and defeat at the riding level.

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[10] Bell and Fletcher, Reaching the Voter.

[11] Anthony M. Sayers, "Local Issue Space in National Elections: Kootenay West-Revelstoke and Vancouver Centre," in Bell and Fletcher, Reaching the Voter, 41.

[12] David Bell and Catherine Bolan, "The Mass Media and Federal Election Campaigning at the Local Level: A Case Study of Two Ontario Constituencies," in Bell and Fletcher, Reaching the Voter, 93.

[13] Ibid.

The following analysis builds on these case studies by using survey data to examine the relationship between local party "vitality" and electoral success.

Respondents were asked a series of questions relating to activity of their local party association prior to the 1993 vote. An independent variable is created using an additive index composed of five indicators of association vitality. Values representing 1992 party membership level, 1993 membership level, the number of 1993 campaign volunteers, the number of needed minus actual 1993 campaign volunteers, and the number attending the candidate nomination meeting are weighted equally and added together to produce an index of vitality for each constituency association.[14]   Each component of the index was tested individually and, as measured by cross-tabulation analysis, indicated a moderate to significant positive relationship to 1993 candidate

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[14]   Data for each of the five variables comprising the "association vitality" index was collected in interval form. However, as many associations responded with a range or an estimate, the data was transformed into ordinal form for purposes of index construction. The range of scores for each variable is one through seven, with seven representing the highest level of participation and one the lowest. Thus, scores on the index range from 5 through 35. Associations with index scores between 23 and 35 are categorized as high vitality associations, those scoring between 17 and 22 are medium vitality associations, and those scoring between 5 and 16 low vitality associations. These classifications were designed so that one-third of associations would fall into each category. Each component variable of the index has a strong positive relationship with the "association vitality" variable.

finish.

No effort is made to distinguish between the types of election activities volunteers engage in. Presumably, associations employ their volunteers in the manner they deem most likely to maximize their electoral support. The efficiency of particular activities likely differs between types of ridings, such as rural and urban.

Some may question the logical connection between attendance at candidate nomination meetings and electoral success. However, given that support for the local candidate serves as a leading motivator in decisions to volunteer, the ability of a candidate to draw supporters to a nomination meeting may be strongly indicative of their ability to attract volunteers. As well, it indicates interest and participation levels in the local party in the run-up to the election campaign.

The dependent variable is candidate finish in the 1993 election.

It is not possible to run a multiple regression analysis, controlling for other variables, as respondents were given complete anonymity and thus individual responses cannot be matched with a particular constituency.

The simplest method of analysis is to examine scores on the vitality index for each category of electoral result in the 1993 election. As illustrated by Table 8.5, associations

with candidates who won the 1993 election had both the highest mean and median scores followed by associations whose candidate finished second, followed by third place finishers and finally those whose nominee finished fourth or lower. This pattern holds within each party. Winning Liberal associations received a mean score of 23.3 and a median of 23.0, while losing Liberal associations had a mean of 17.5 and a median of 17.0. Winning Reform associations scored a mean of 26.5 and a median of 27.0, while losing Reform associations had a mean of 17.0 and a median score of 16.5. PC associations finishing first or second had a mean score of 21.4 and a median of 21.5; PC associations finishing lower than second had a mean score of 16.1 and a median score of 15.0.

Table 8.5. Scores on vitality index by 1993 candidate finish.

	MEAN	MEDIAN
FIRST	24.5	24.0
SECOND	18.8	18.0
THIRD	16.3	16.0
FOURTH	12.9	12.5

The findings in Table 8.5 suggest that there may be a relationship between candidate finish and association vitality. The existence and strength of this relationship can be tested more rigorously thorough a cross-tabulation analysis. This procedure reveals that candidate finish has a significant and strong positive relationship to association

vitality. Scores on the vitality index were grouped into three categories, high vitality, medium vitality and low vitality. As illustrated in Table 8.6, the higher an association ranks on the vitality scale the more likely it was to win the 1993 election. For example, 67 per cent of associations that receive high vitality scores won the election compared with 25 per cent of associations with medium vitality and six per cent of associations with low vitality.

Table 8.6. Constituency vitality index by 1993 candidate finish. Actual numbers and column percentages are reported. N=295.

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
THIRD OR LOWER	55 (56%)	26 (27%)	9 (9%)	90 (31%)
SECOND	38 (38%)	48 (49%)	23 (24%)	109 (37%)
FIRST	6 (6%)	24 (25%)	66 (67%)	96 (33%)
TOTALS	99 (100%)	98 (100%)	98 (100%)	295 (100%)

chi square = 103.95   significance .01   gamma = .70

The strength of the relationship is even greater when the dependent variable is collapsed to two values differentiating only between winning and losing the 1993 election.

A strong relationship between these two variables also exists within each party.[15] As illustrated by Table 8.7, 86

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[15] For testing across party lines, candidate placement for the PCs is categorized in two values: finishing either first or second, or finishing lower. This is made necessary because of the paucity of winning PC candidates.

per cent of Liberal associations with high vitality scores won in their riding compared with 54 per cent of medium vitality associations and 21 per cent of those with low vitality. Table 8.8 shows that 79 per cent of Reform associations with high vitality won the 1993 election compared with 15 per cent of medium vitality associations and three per cent of low vitality associations. Table 8.9 shows that 57 per cent of PC associations with high vitality finished first or second compared with 52 per cent of medium vitality associations and 13 per cent of low vitality associations.

Table 8.7. Association vitality by 1993 candidate finish for Liberal associations. Actual cases and column percentages are reported. N=102.

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
LOST '93	19 (79%)	16 (46%)	6 (14%)	41 (40%)
WON '93	5 (21%)	19 (54%)	37 (86%)	61 (60%)
TOTALS	24 (100%)	35 (100%)	43 (100%)	102 (100%)

chi square = 27.92   significance .01   gamma = .76

Table 8.8. Association vitality by 1993 candidate finish for Reform associations. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N=105.

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
LOST '93	36 (97%)	29 (85%)	7 (21%)	72 (69%)
WON '93	1 (3%)	5 (15%)	27 (79%)	33 (31%)
TOTALS	37 (100%)	34 (100%)	34 (100%)	105 (100%)

chi square = 54.90   significance .01   gamma = .93

Table 8.9 Association vitality by 1993 candidate finish for PC associations. Actual cases and column percentages reported.   N=88.

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
THIRD OR LOWER	33 (87%)	14 (48%)	9 (43%)	56 (64%)
FIRST OR SECOND	5 (13%)	15 (52%)	12 (57%)	32 (36%)
TOTALS	38 (100%)	29 (100%)	21 (100%)	88 (100%)

chi square = 15.72 significance .01 gamma = .62

While the above tables suggest a strong positive relationship between association vitality and candidate finish it is possible that these findings are strongly affected by regional variations.   Given the regional disparity in candidate finish within parties in Canadian elections, it is possible that what is being reflected is association vitality within regions of electoral strength for each party and not any differences among constituency associations within a region.   To test this, Tables 8.10 and 8.11 examine the relationship between association vitality and candidate finish ror constituency associations of the Liberal and Reform parties within the four western provinces.   Both the Liberals and Reform won and lost a number of ridings within this region and Tables 8.10 and 8.11 show the existence of a strong relationship between association vitality and candidate finish within the West.   Reform associations with high vitality finished first in 27 of 31 constituencies,

while medium vitality associations won in three of 11 races, and low vitality associations were successful in one of nine ridings. Only five Western Liberal associations received high vitality scores, thus it is logical to combine high and medium scores together foi discussion purposes. Liberal associations with high or medium vitality won six of 19 elections, compared with zero of 14 with low vitality. These findings are meaningful as it is unlikely that a riding association's ability to attract participation within the region varied significantly because of different degrees of popular support or constituents' differing views of the parties' chances for electoral success.

Table **8.10.** Association vitality by 1993 candidate finish for Reform associations in Western Canada. Actual cases and column percentages reported. N=51.[16]

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
LOST '93 ELECTION	8 (89%)	8 (73%)	4 (13%)	20 (39%)
WON '93 ELECTION	1 (11%)	3 (27%)	27 (87%)	31 (61%)
TOTALS	9 (100%)	11 (100%)	31 (100%)	51 (100%)

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[16] Chi square and gamma statistics are not calculated for tables 8.10 and 8.11 as several cells have expected frequencies of less than five.

Table 8.11.　Association vitality by 1993 candidate finish for Liberal associations in Western Canada.　Actual cases and row percentages reported.　N=33.

	LOW VITALITY	MEDIUM VITALITY	HIGH VITALITY	TOTALS
LOST '93 ELECTION	14 (100%)	10 (71%)	3 (60%)	27 (82%)
WON '93 ELECTION	0 (0%)	4 (29%)	2 (40%)	6 (18%)
TOTALS	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	5 (100%)	33 (100%)

It is possible that there is no causative effect between association vitality and electoral success.　Some may argue that both are caused by existing popular support for a party within each riding.　(This is virtually impossible to test empirically as it requires da‘a showing popular support for parties within each riding prior to the election).　This explanation, however, would not likely account for the significant relationship found between association vitality and electoral success within the Western provinces.　For example, there is no evidence that support for the Reform Party was substantially higher prior to the calling of the 1993 campaign in those Alberta constituencies it won than in those it lost.

A second factor minimizing the likelihood of the relationship being spurious is that party popularity was very volatile before and during the 1993 campaign.　The use of variables representing participation in local parties over a

two year period should minimize this effect. The shar of the popular support received for all three parties shifted dramatically in the period leading up to, and during the course of, the campaign. The Reform Party began the campaign with support in the single digits while the PCs were enjoying a slight lead over the Liberals. If existing popular support causes vitality in constituency associations then its effect should be minimized by using variables that cover a long enough time span to minimize the effect of late surges or falls in popularity. For example, if current popularity levels determine association vitality, turnout at contested PC candidate nominations should be quite high, as the party was leading in the polls for much of the nomination period. This, however, is not the case. While existing popular support likely has some impact on association vitality, it does not seem to be completely explanatory.

The suggestion of a relationship between local association vitality and electoral success is important. While the analysis presented does not establish a causal link, it does suggest the existence of a strong relationship. This finding suggests that local party members can influence the chances of their local candidate being elected and thus further the chances of their preferred party forming the government.

More research and analysis needs to be conducted in this

area.   Multivariate analysis can help determine more precisely the nature of the relationships being studied. As well, collection of similar data from subsequent elections will help to ensure that the relationship found is not limited to the 1993 experience.

Independent Participation in Elections

Considering that party activists are given little opportunity to participate at election time on policy development, consideration must be given to the activities of independent interest groups. Specifically, it is necessary to consider whether citizens are encouraged to participate in these groups, and whether these groups are able through their activities to encourage the parties to discuss matters of public policy?

Several times during the past two decades, parliament has enacted legislation aimed at prohibiting meaningful interest group participation in federal elections. While proponents have claimed that the legislation is necessary to preserve the level electoral playing field for candidates and parties, the legislation has at least two other significant consequences: (1) allowing candidates and parties a near monopoly over effective communication with voters and (2) permitting parties to avoid discussing certain issues during election campaigns -- particularly those that divide their

traditional electoral coalitions.

The collective model of decision-making is enhanced if voters choose at election time from among a group of parties not taking definitive positions on all the important issues of the day. This leaves party elites with the opportunity to subsequently decide their policy positions in a collective manner. This phenomenon partially explains the "absent mandate" theory of Canadian federal elections.

The continuing validity of the absent mandate theory has been brought into question as parties, particularly at the provincial level, have offered voters detailed blue-prints of their governing plans during election campaigns. One recent example from the provinces is the Ontario PC Party's Common Sense Revolution campaign, in which the party outlined its governing plans in some detail. At the federal level, the Liberal Party made great use of its campaign "red book," during the 1993 campaign. Though not nearly as comprehensive nor specific as the Ontario PC's plan, the Liberals scored political points by arguing that unlike the federal PCs they had a plan that was available for all voters to review and judge. The Reform Party also apparently scored political points with its detailed policy positions on issues such as the federal deficit.[17] These examples suggest that voters

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[17] The existence of a detailed campaign platform is not itself sufficient to win voter support. The NDP entered the 1993 campaign with perhaps the most detailed policy positions

are looking for specific policy positions that they can cast judgment on at election time. Consistent with the collected model, voters appear to desire to cast their votes for something more than a team to make all important policy decisions for them.

A prohibition on interest group activity can have the effect of isolating parties from independent competition and permitting them to debate only those issues they think favorable to their cause. Before further discussing the impact of such a prohibition it is important to review the somewhat tortured history of legislative initiatives in this area.

The 1974 Election Expenses Act included a provision prohibiting anyone other than a candidate or political party from incurring "election expenses."[18] Election expenses were defined as amounts paid "for the purpose of promoting or opposing, directly and during an election, a particular registered party, or the election of a particular candidate."[19] As a defense to prosecution for violation of this provision, the statute provided a "good faith" exemption

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of any of the major contenders. While there is evidence that the adoption of such a plan is viewed favourably by the electorate; in the event, the presence of a plan does not guarantee electoral success.

[18] Election Expenses Act, 1974, section 70.1.

[19] Ibid., section 2.(2).

for expenditures made "for the purpose of gaining support for views held by him on an issue of public policy, or for the purpose of advancing the aims of any organization or association."[20] Problems with determining when spending constituted "promoting or opposing, directly" and when the "good faith" exemption was applicable made consistent enforcement of this prohibition impossible.[21] In response to this dilemma, parliament amended the Act in 1983, removing the exemption.[22] This amendment effectively prohibited anyone other than a party or candidate from incurring election expenses. This legislation was subsequently challenged in Court by the National Citizens' Coalition. Finding that the legislation unjustifiably infringed upon the Charter's guarantee of freedom of expression, the Alberta Queen's Bench Court invalidated the prohibition.[23] This

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[20] Ibid., section 70.1(4).

[21] Court decisions made clear that the policy position being advocated by the expenditor need not be explicitly evidenced by the expenditure. For example, the courts allowed use of the good faith defence for an accused whose expenditure consisted of flying a banner with the following message: "O.H.C. Employees 767 C.U.P.E. vote but not Liberal." The appellate court held: "The accused in this case was clearly expressing the views of his association on an issue of public policy." Regina v. Roach, 25 ` R.(2d) 1977, 768.

[22] An Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act, S.C. 1983, chapter 164, section 14.

[23] National Citizens' Coalition v. Attorney General for Canada, 5 W.W.R. 436, 1984.

decision was not appealed. While the Court's decision in this case is only binding in Alberta. Elections Canada officials announced prior to the 1984 federal election that for the sake of symmetry no independent expenditors would be prosecuted anywhere in Canada.

In the 1988 general election. independent groups took full advantage of this opening in the election law. It is estimated that independent groups and individuals spent in excess of $4.7 million on campaign advertising.[24] While much of this spending concerned the then proposed U.S. - Canada Free Trade Accord (FTA). significant funds were also expended by those principally concerned with other issues such as abortion.[25] This increased spending by independent groups led George Allen. then Elections Canada Commissioner, to describe what he called the deluge of third party

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[24] Janet Hiebert. "Interest Groups and Canadian Federal Elections," in F. Leslie Seidle. ed., Interest Groups and Elections in Canada, Research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 3 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991), 23.

[25] Pro-life groups anticipated spending nearly $400,000 and pro-choice groups also made expenditures. For an analysis of 1988 independent activity relating to the abortion issue, see Barry Kay, et al "Single Issue Groups and the Canadian Electorate: The Case of Abortion in 1988," in Journal of Canadian Studies 26 (1991). Groups concerned with other issues are thought to have spent in excess of $100,000 on newspaper advertising; Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume one, 339.

advertising as "patently unfair" to candidates and parties.[26]

With a mandate to consider this 1988 experience of increased independent spending along with other issues of electoral reform, the Lortie Commission was established. The Commission, agreeing that unfettered spending by independent interests creates an unfair electoral playing field, proposed that all entities, other than official parties and candidates, be limited to spending no more than $1,000 during the election period on election expenses. The Commission proposed that the definition of election expenses be expanded to include both candidate and party advocacy, and issue advocacy.[27] The permitted thousand dollars could not be combined with another's spending - thus no group or association would be permitted to spend more than $1,000 regardless of the size of its membership.[28] The Commission further recommended that the advertising blackout period,

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[26] "All's Not Well That Ends Well," Marketing, November 28, 1988, 17.

[27] The Commission recommends that election expenses be defined to include expenditures made, "(1) to promote or oppose, directly or indirectly, the election of a candidate; (2) to promote or oppose a registered party or the program or policies of a candidate or registered party; or (3) to approve or disapprove a course of action advocated or opposed by a candidate, registered party or leader of a registered party." Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 341.

[28] Ibid., 356.

which prohibits parties and candidates from advertising before the final 29 days and during the final 24 hours of the campaign, be expanded to prohibit independent advertising during the final 24 hours.[29]

In response to the Royal Commission's report, an all party House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform was established on February 14, 1992. The parliamentary committee proposed draft legislation that was largely adopted by the government and included in Bill C-114, An Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act, passed by parliament on May 6, 1993. Bill C-114 includes provisions to limit to $1,000 the amount independent groups or individuals may spend on advertising expenses "for the purpose of promoting or opposing, directly and during an election, a particular registered party or the election of a particular candidate."[30] Though the parliamentary committee, in its Fifth Report, recommended a complicated scheme for the setting of limits on issue advocacy, Bill C-114 provides for

[29] Ibid.

[30] C-114, section 259.1(1). The proposed legislation would limit independent "advertising expenses" to $1,000. Section 259 defines advertising expenses as "amounts paid and liabilities incurred for the production, publication, broadcast and distribution of any advertising for the purpose of promoting or opposing, directly and during an election, a particular registered party or the election of a particular candidate."

no limit on issue advocacy by independent groups.[31]

Similar to the Lortie proposal, Bill C-114 prohibits one individual's independent spending from being combined with another person's "if the aggregate amount of the advertising expenses incurred exceeds one thousand dollars."[32] Bill C-114 also expands the advertising blackout to include independent expenditors.[33]

The National Citizens' Coalition, plaintiffs in the case overturning the 1983 legislation, brought a Charter challenge to this legislation. The Alberta Court of Queen's Bench ruled on June 25, 1993, that the restrictions on independent spending violate the Charter protections of expression, association, and an informed vote.[34] This decision has been upheld by an appellate court and the federal government has announced its intention to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. The result of this court decision was that independent spending was again unregulated during the 1993 campaign. Data collected from the 1988 campaign, which included substantial independent spending, will be used to evaluate the issues involved with this debate within the

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[31] House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform, fifth report, 1993, section 259.8.

[32] Bill C-114, section 259.2(2).

[33] Ibid., section 213(1)(a).

[34] Somerville v. Canada Oral Judgment (Alta. Q.B. June 25, 1993) J. MacLeod.

collected-collective framework.

The primary political values critics view as being endangered by unregulated independent spending is that of financial equity among candidates for elective office and preserving the primacy of parties. A fair electoral playing field is consistent with the collected view of decision-making, thus it is necessary to evaluate these concerns in order to weigh them with the other collected concerns identified previously.

Current federal election law places strict campaign spending limits on candidates and parties. The Canada Elections Act provides a formula indexed to the Consumer Price Index for the determination of limits.[35] Candidate spending, based on the number of voters on the preliminary voters list in each constituency, was limited in 1993 to approximately $60,000 per candidate. The major parties' spending limits for the 1993 campaign, based on the number of voters in constituencies where the party nominated a candidate, were $10,531,510 for the PCs and the Liberals, $10,499,279 for the New Democrats, $7,519,795 for Reform and $2,718,745 for the BQ. These limits exist to help ensure that no financially well off candidate or party spends enormous amounts of money -- vastly out-spending their opponents. The underlying assumption is that significantly

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[35] Canada Elections Act, sections 208, 210 and 211.

increased spending accrues electoral advantage to the high-spending candidate or party.

Critics contend that when independent groups spend significantly, the balance of the playing field is disturbed as one candidate or party benefits from the spending of the independent group while the other must campaign within the confires of the spending ceiling. During the 1988 campaign, independent spending on the free trade issue provided an example of this phenomenon. While much of the spending was issue-centred and did not directly support or oppose specific candidates or parties, it was widely recognized that pro-free trade advertising favoured the PCs while advertising in opposition to the trade deal favoured the Liberals and New Democrats. The Lortie Commission found that independent expenditures promoting free trade totalled in excess of four times the amount spent by groups opposing the trade deal.[36] As Janet Hiebert notes, "(t)he benefits of interest-group advertisements, in terms of which issues were favourably promoted, disproportionately accrued to one party" -- the PCs.[37] It is, however, unclear what impact this spending had on the electoral fortunes of the three parties. While research does indicate that the PCs increased their opinion

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[36] Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume one, 337.

[37] Hiebert "Interest Groups and Canadian Federal Elections," 23.

poll standings during the period in which most of the pro-free trade spending took place, it is not clear how much of the improvement is attributable to the independent spending.[38]

When the spending numbers are looked at from another perspective, it is possible to argue that the independent spending created a mcre level playing field. If one believes that the determinative issue for voters in the 1988 election was the FTA, then independent spending helped ensure the voters had a full and balanced exposition of the issue. While the Liberals and NDP were both spending advertising dollars opposing the deal, the PCs were left on their own to defend it. The combined advertising budgets of the Liberals, NDP and anti-free trade groups totalled approximately $7.87 million, while the PCs and pro-free trade groups spent approximately $8.35 million.[39] Without the independent

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[38] See, for example, Richard Johnston, et al Letting the People Decide: The Dynamics of a Canadian Election (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 163: "Third party advertising coefficients defy substantive interpretation: some are large and significant but the pattern is offsetting and the total coefficient effectively zero."

[39] These aggregate numbers are comprised of the following expenditures (Hiebert "Interest Groups and Canadian Federal Elections," 22):

PC party advertising	$4,716,737
Pro-free trade independent spending	$3,638,904
Pro-free trade total:	$8,355,641
Liberal party advertising	$3,860,286
New Democratic party advertising	$3,128,186
Anti-free trade independent spending	$ 878,348

spending, advertising dollars would have been spent disproportionately by those in opposition to the trade deal: $7.0 million by the anti-free trade parties and $4.7 million by the pro-free trade party.

Free media coverage of parties and candidates must also be considered when examining the level at which independent expenditures seriously tilt the playing field in favour of one candidate or party. Not taken into account in calculations meant to show that independent groups have become significant players is the value of free newspaper, radio and television coverage given parties and candidates. Two questions must be asked concerning free media coverage: (1) did independent spending affect the balance of reporting on the FTA? and (2) did the independent groups challenge the primacy of parties and candidates in news reports concerning the FTA?

The first question is answered by Richard Johnston, et al, in their comprehensive study of the 1988 election. The authors coded all CBC television news stories relating to the FTA according to the amount of time the agreement was cast in a positive or negative light. After calculating a net balance, their conclusion was that: "Taking the campaign as a whole the CBC's coverage of the FTA is striking for its balance at least in its representation of events and

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Anti-free trade total: $7,866,820

arguments."[40]

The second question is more difficult to answer as it essentially questions the motivation behind as well as the substance of news coverage. In an attempt to get some sense of the amount of FTA news coverage generated by interest group activity as compared to party and candidate activities all news stories appearing in the front sections of the Globe and Mail and the Montreal Gazette during the final two weeks of the campaign were analyzed. All reported arguments for or against the FTA were coded according to whether they were attributed to a party or candidate, or to any other person or organization. The results show that, at least for these two newspapers during this time period, the FTA related coverage was dominated by the parties and their candidates. As Table 8.12 illustrates, parties and candidates were the source of slightly more than three out of every four FTA related arguments reported in the Globe and Mail, and slightly less than two out of every three in the Montreal Gazette. During this same 15 day period, these two newspapers also had very modest coverage devoted specifically to the activities of interests groups -- 12 front section articles in the Globe and Mail and seven in the Montreal Gazette.

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[40]   Johnston, Letting the People Decide, 118.

Table 8.12 Reported arguments for or against the FTA, for the period November 7 - November 21, coded by source attributed to. Actual number of arguments reported. N=209.

	Candidates or Parties	Other Individuals or Organizations	Totals
Globe and Mail	92	30	122
Montreal Gazette	54	33	87
Totals	146	63	209

These findings suggest that even the several million dollars spent on newspaper advertisements by those concerned with the FTA did not prevent either balanced news reporting, or, political parties from dominating newspaper coverage of the issue -- even at the height of the independent spending.

While it is unclear whether the 1988 free trade-related independent expenditures were sufficient to tilt the playing field substantially in favour of one party over another, the possibility of such an occurrence exists. It is, however, not sufficient to conclude that because independent expenditures might have some influence on an election's result they are all problematic. It must be remembered that the wealthy groups found on both sides of the free trade debate are atypical of independent groups. Most independent groups are small and exist on limited budgets. Independent groups active in recent elections include those concerned with peace issues, women's groups wanting to increase female voter turnout, groups c :erned with issues important to Maritime fishermen, Japanese Canadians seeking financial

compensation for World War II internment, environmental groups, anti-pornography groups, an artists' coalition, rural postal workers, and a group concerned with government drug policy.[41]   None of these groups spent enough funds to threaten the equity of electoral competition.

We are left with a valid democratic concern that independent groups not be allowed to expend sufficient funds to substantially disrupt the relatively level playing field among candidates and parties.   This concern, however, is coupled with the knowledge that the amount of funds needed to accomplish this is very high -- and out of reach for the vast majority of active independent groups.

On the other side of the debate are the democratic values, consistent with collected decision-making,   of citizen participation and the full and robust debate of policy issues.   Participatory theorists agree that deliberation by citizens over public policy options is

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[41]   See, for example, "Election Will be Bandwagon for Special-Interest Groups," Montreal Gazette, June 11, 1988, B6; "Nova Scotia Lobby Groups Push Candidates on Defence Issues," Globe and Mail (Toronto), October 19, 1988, A14; "Groups Vie for Attention Amid Election Dim," Globe and Mail (Toronto), October 31, 1988, A10; "T.V. Ad Urging Women to Vote Called Unacceptable by CBC," Globe and Mail (Toronto), October 19, 1988, A11; and, review of the election activities of "The Friends of Portage Program for Drug Dependence," and "Canadian Peace Pledge Campaign," Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 339.

essential to a successful democracy.[42] Elections are a time when the national energy is focused on politics and policy issues. No other time provides a better opportunity for a full and vibrant national debate on the issues of the day. That all citizens should be encouraged to participate in this debate, with no group holding a monopoly on the public agenda, is both consistent with collected decision-making and is a widely accepted democratic axiom.

Providing a tax credit for modest contributions encourages individuals to participate financially through parties and candidates. Many, however, choose not to. Many Canadians are disillusioned with the current political process and feel that the political parties are not responsive to their interests. They see no other avenue of participation open to them than independent action. Some voters, apparently frustrated with the brokerage traditions of the traditional parties, are looking for alternative methods of having their issues placed on the public political agenda.

A Lortie Commission research project found, in a survey of interest groups who participated in the 1988 election,

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[42] See, for example, Carol Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory (Cambridge, Eng.: University Press, 1970); Benjamin Barber, Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); and Joshua Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," in Alan Hamlin and Philip Pettit, eds., The Good Polity (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

that "only eight percent were 'very satisfied' with the way the political system in general responded to their group's concerns."[43]   These groups represent Canadians who, while they are most dissatisfied with the political parties, still wish to participate in the democratic process. As the Lortie research study discovered: "Indeed, comments gleaned from the interviews indicate that this sort of spending constitutes one of the few methods whereby groups that feel they are shut out of the system can make their concerns known to politicians and the public."[44]   All of these groups apparently felt they had an important message to communicate to Canadians during an election campaign. Canadian democracy can only be the richer for the participation of these groups and the diversity of opinion they represent.

The related collected interest of a full and robust policy debate is also advanced by independent spending through the raising of issues that the candidates and parties choose not to discuss. A Maclean's article appearing one week before the 1988 election and aptly titled "Questions in the Background: The Parties Ignore Some Issues," includes the following in a list of neglected issues: the Conservative decision to spend $8 million on nuclear powered submarines,

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[43]   A. Brian Tanguay and Barry Kay "Political Activity of Local Interest Groups" in Seidle, Interest Groups and Elections in Canada, 87.

[44]   Ibid., 99.

immigration policy, the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord, a national sales tax, and the budget deficit.[45] Three of these neglected issues - the Meech Lake Accord, a national sales tax, and the budget deficit - dominated the government's agenda after the election. When parties are unwilling to debate some of the more important questions of the day, proponents of collected democracy would argue that there is a real need to ensure that other groups are not prevented from bringing public attention to these issues during the election period.

While the competing interests are usually viewed as irreconcilable this may not be the case. Clearly unfettered independent spending has the potential to affect financial equity among candidates and parties. A fair political system is favoured by both the collected and collective decision-making models. Lack of financial equity can allow one party to drown out the voices of its competitors. This does not allow for the type of debate required for collected decision-making. Voters must be presented with a balanced amount of information on the various positions from which they are asked to choose. At the same time, however, a complete prohibition on independent activity is not favoured because of its potential to stifle debate on important issues.

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[45] "Questions in the Background," Macleans, November 14, 1988, 21.

It is possible to preserve the interest of equity and protect the primacy of political parties without preventing interest groups from meaningful participation. A regulatory scheme can be structured that both permits robust political debate by all interested groups and respects the other identified democratic interests. Such a scheme might be developed along the following lines:

(1) restrict independent spending to registered voters;

(2) limit the amount each individual may spend or contribute cumulatively to independent groups to $1,000;

(3) impose no limit on the amount any independent group may raise or spend;

(4) require independent ε.penditors and their contributors to report their activities with Elections Canada.[46]

Party Advertising and Registration

Parties are strictly limited as to the amount of television advertising they can purchase during federal election campaigns. The <u>Canada Elections Act</u> sets out a specific formula that is used to determine how much time is allotted to each party. The formula is composed of three components:

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[46] For a more detailed discussion of this regulatory proposal; see, William Cross, "Regulating Independent Expenditures in Federal Elections," <u>Canadian Public Policy</u> 20 (1994), 253-264.

(1) the percentage of seats in the House of Commons controlled by the party as of the dissolution of parliament; (2) the percentage of the popular vote received by the party in the previous federal election and (3) The number of candidates nominated by the party in the previous federal election as a percentage of all nominated candidates. A weight of 40 per cent is given to items one and two, and 20 per cent to item three.[47]

These rules strongly favour the established parties. All of the considerations are based on prior electoral participation and success. A party that is running in its first election, regardless of its standing in the public opinion polls, is entitled to almost no advertising time.[48]

Continuing parties that have not yet experienced substantial electoral success are also disadvantaged. For

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[47] *Canada Elections Act*, section 310.(1) "the Broadcasting Arbitrator shall give equal weight to (a) the percentage of seats in the House of Commons held by each of the registered parties at the previous general election, and (b) the percentage of the popular vote at the previous general election of each registered party, and he shall give half the weight given to each of the factors referred to in each of paragraphs (a) and (b) to the number of candidates endorsed by each of the registered parties at the previous general election expressed as a percentage of all candidates endorsed by all registered parties at that election."

[48] *Canada Elections Act* section 311.(1) provides that new parties be guaranteed the lesser of six minutes or the lowest amount guaranteed to a party that did contest the previous election. In 1993, new parties, such as the BQ and The National Party were entitled to just five minutes each per broadcaster. Only 'registered' parties are entitled to any advertising time.

example, despite receiving 17 per cent of the popular vote in the 1993 election and winning the majority of seats in Western Canada, the Reform Party was limited to purchasing just 17 minutes of national television broadcast time.[49] While Reform was able to be relatively successful it is impossible to know how much better it may have done, particularly in Ontario where the party's message was not as well known and where a number of its candidates finished a strong second, had it been able to compete in television advertising with the established parties.[50]

Established parties, with little current popular support, such the NDP, benefit from these rules. Despite consistently trailing Reform in public opinion polls and ultimately receiving about a third as many votes, the NDP was eligible for more than three times as much national television advertising. The NDP's allocation was completely based upon its showing in the 1988 election.

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[49] The 1993 allocations were: PCs 116 minutes; Liberals 78; NDP 55; Reform 17; Libertarian Party and Christian Heritage Party 16; Communist Party of Canada, Confederation of Regions Party and Party for the Commonwealth 14; and all new parties 5 minutes. "Airtime Limits Irk Reform Party," Vancouver Sun, August 5, 1993, A4; and "Airtime Allotment Angers Reform," Montreal Gazette, August 5, 1993, B1. Free broadcast time is allocated on the same basis as is the paid allotment.

[50] Reform's Communications Director Ron Wood complained, "[w]e've been given equal footing with the Communist Party and we get less than one-third the time given to the NDP. We think its totally outrageous..."; "Airtime Limits Irk Reform Party," Vancouver Sun, August 5, 1993, A4.

It is difficult to identify any convincing rationale for these broadcast limitations. Why should any political party be banned from buying paid political advertising while other parties are entitled to purchase substantial amounts of time? If the interest is one of equity, then a fairer rule would be one that determines eligibility based upon the number of candidates a party is running in the present election. Any standard based on an indicator of prior electoral success is unfair to new parties and to those that fared poorly in the previous election.

The result of the current rules is to artificially limit the ability of certain parties to communicate with voters. While there are substantial opportunities for parties to use free media time during elections, such as newscasts and public information shows, television advertising remains an effective tool for communicating a party's message. The fact that the major parties spend millions of dollars each election year on television advertising testifies to the value they place on paid advertising.

New parties without substantial support in the public opinion polls, such as the National Party in 1993, find it very difficult to compete under these rules.[51]   These

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[51]   These rules were defended by some members of the established parties, such as PC MP Donald Blenkarn, who argued "I believe that our system of government works best with two parties.   There is no question that the existing system favours the people who have power as opposed to

parties do not receive nearly the amount of free media coverage afforded the established parties. For example, National Party leader Mel Hurtig was not invited to participate in the leaders' debates televised nationally in prime time.[52]

The effective prohibition on television advertising for new and as of yet unsuccessful parties, effectively shuts them out of the national election debate. Issues that these parties may wish to bring to the fore may be ignored. Thus, the established parties do not find it necessary to respond to these issues. The results include a less robust political debate, parties taking fewer concrete stands on issues and a favoured place for the established parties.

The rules pertaining to 'registered party' status also work against new and smaller parties.[53] In order for a party to be eligible for registered party status if must

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political parties that are not in power..." "Campaign Ad Rules Unfair," Globe and Mail (Toronto), August 6, 1993, A4.

[52] See, "Hurtig Can Be Left Out, Says Court," Calgary Herald, September 24, 1993, A9. Hurtig challenged the CBC's right to air a leader's debate from which he was excluded. Justice Ronald Berger ruled that there was no legal impediment to the CBC deciding who to include and exclude in any debate.

[53] Registered party status is important because it permits party identification on the ballot, provides a tax credit for contributions, guarantees accessibility to some low-cost broadcast election advertising and is a requisite for the party portion of post-election public financing.

nominate 50 candidates and pay a deposit of $1,000 per candidate.[54] The candidate deposit was increased from $200 prior to the 1993 election. Effectively, there is a $50,000 buy-in fee for new parties.

The increase in candidate deposits was justified by the government as an attempt to encourage greater compliance with candidate obligations to file post-election financial reports with Elections Canada. The government argued that the increased deposit, coupled with a provision that candidates who fulfill all of their election compliance requirements receive a $500 rebate, would increase the percentage of candidates who fully comply with the Act.[55] MP Jim Hawkes stated: "We are putting out a little bit of carrot: Put up $500. You forfeit it if you do not do the paper work; you get it back if you the paper work. It is just a deposit on paper work."[56]

Several members of the House of Commons objected to this

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[54] Canada Elections Act, sections 24.(3)(a) and (b), and section 81.(1)(j).

[55] The Lortie Commission used this rationale in proposing the increase. See Report, Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, volume 1, 89. This is somewhat surprising considering the Commission's statement that "[o]ur attitudinal survey showed that many Canadians want the electoral process to be made more accessible to the non-traditional parties so that voters have a broader choice in the selection of their elected representatives." Ibid., 228.

[56] House of Commons Debates, 1993 volume 13, 8 March, 16661.

increase arguing that new and smaller parties may find it difficult to raise the $50,000 required for registered party status. MP Louis Plamondon argued: "It is utterly unacceptable for the government to demand not $250 but $1,000 from someone who is running."[57] Plamondon referred to the Green Party as an example of a party that runs candidates to raise awareness of an important issue and may not be able to do so under the new law.[58] Plamondon also argued that: "Several political parties are using election campaigns in order to force candidates to take a stand on substantive issues."[59] MP Nick Leblanc concurred with Plamondon and argued that the new provision may prevent these types of candidates from running.[60]

Two further effects of this regulation are: (1) preventing small groups from forming parties (this is important because, as discussed above, efforts are ongoing to limit substantial campaign activity to parties) and (2) draining the resources of new parties, that could otherwise be spent communicating their message.

The success of the Reform Party and the BQ in the 1993 federal election illustrate that these regulations, while

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[57] Ibid., April 2, 1993, volume 14, 18027.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 18084.

[60] Ibid., 18038.

favouring the established parties, do not completely inoculate them from electoral competition.[61] Canada's first past the post, single member constituency electoral system favors regional parties. As Cairns has argued, successful regionally based parties are more likely to elect MPs than national parties with similar level of support.[62] This is a result of the regional party's concentration of votes in a relatively small number of ridings. An example of this phenomenon is available from the 1993 election. The popular vote totals of the Reform, PC and BQ parties were all within five percentage points of one another, yet the BQ and Reform each elected more than 50 of their candidates while the PCs elected only two.[63] Of course, this resulted from the PCs vote being scattered across 295 ridings, while the Reform and BQ vote was concentrated respectively in the West and in Quebec. As many students of Canadian politics have observed, the Canadian electoral system distorts the popular vote when

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[61] These rules do, however, prevent the establishment of provincial-federal parties of the BQ type in every other province except Ontario -- as no province other than Quebec and Ontario has fifty or more ridings for a potential party to nominate candidates in.

[62] Cairns, "The Electoral System and the Party System," 55.

[63] The Reform Party elected 52 members with 19 per cent of the popular vote, the PCs elected two members with 16 per cent of the vote and the BQ elected 54 members with 14 per cent of the popular vote.

converted into seats in the House of Commons.[64]

CONCLUSION

Relatively few Canadians actively participate through the political parties in election campaigns.[65] Those who do so are limited primarily to fundraising, canvassing and other organizational support work. Little opportunity is afforded for meaningful activity connected with matters of public policy.

Most constituency associations are very small between elections and are instilled with only a modest level of vitality in the lead-up to an election campaign. Most association memberships remained below 500 in 1993 and almost two-thirds of associations reported having fewer campaign volunteers than needed. This lack of voter activity in local party organizations co-exists with a pronounced feeling of alienation by many voters from the political process. It may be that if parties wish to increase the vitality of their

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[64] See, for example, Cairns, "The Electoral System and the Party System," and Ronald G. Landes, The Canadian Polity: A Comparative Introduction (fourth ed.; Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1995), 385.

[65] Compared to other western nations Canada ranks near the bottom in terms of percentage of the electorate who belong to a political party. Three per cent of Canadian voters belong to political parties compared with 22 per cent of Austrians, 13 per cent of Finns, four per cent of Germans and three per cent of UK voters. Carty, Canadian Political Parties, 28.

riding associations they need to make participation in local parties more meaningful in terms of national party decision-making.

While local activists may be able to assist in the election of their preferred candidate, the breadth of the electoral field is artificially restricted and access to the electoral process for new parties is unnecessarily difficult. New parties must effectively pay a $50,000 entry fee and then are denied opportunity to purchase television advertising time. For the past 20 years, parliament has been attempting to ban or severely limit interest group participation in election campaigns. These efforts have created much uncertainty and have had a chilling effect on interest group election activity.

This discussion has highlighted problems related to ensuring that all interests are heard in election debates and that access to political discourse is not limited to certain groups or political perspectives. The regulations discussed in this chapter potentially serve to limit political debate, and in doing so prevent election campaigns from taking on a more collected nature. While it is difficult under any circumstances for results of parliamentary elections to be considered definitive statements of voters' intentions on particular issues, Canada's election regulatory framework serves to limit the scope of voices heard in election

campaigns. These regulations substantially favour entrenched parties, and make it relatively more difficult for new interest-based parties and interest groups to compete and communicate with voters. Thus, the collective model of decision-making is artificially perpetuated.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

The authors of <u>Absent Mandate</u> conclude that voters, while "profoundly and almost universally dissatisfied with brokerage politics," have not given up on electoral politics; rather, "[t]hey are interested and they want to be involved. Yet they feel that they do not have access to the political process and that politicians and government are neither sufficiently responsive nor reliable."[1] This thesis has argued that the political parties both share in the responsibility for this voter discontent and have the capacity to provide voters with the desired opportunities for effective participation.

There are several aspects of Canadian politics which may be reformed to increase effective citizen participation and responsiveness by governmental elites. Changes to the first-past-the-post electoral system, greater use of direct democracy and parliamentary reforms would all potentially result in greater responsiveness to citizens' concerns. This study, however, has concentrated on possible areas of change in the activities of political parties. The decision to focus on parties was based on three important factors: (1)

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[1] Harold D. Clarke, et al, <u>Absent Mandate: Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring</u> (3rd ed., Vancouver: Gage, 1996), 180, 181-82.

the ready accessibility of parties to grassroots activists;
(2) the central place of political parties in Canadian public
decision-making; and (3) the potential of political parties
to integrate mass participation with the brokering and
aggregating of regional and linguistic concerns into national
policies.

This discussion is timely as there is substantial
evidence of very high levels of voter alienation and cynicism
towards Canadian political processes and institutions.
Outcomes from these processes are increasingly viewed as
illegitimate and not reflective of public desires.
Accordingly, there is currently much reflection on possible
reforms to address these sentiments. This thesis attempts to
add to this debate by providing a framework for consideration
of what are often considered incompatible objectives of
effective mass participation and consociational practices
aimed at consensus building. This thesis has argued that the
parties can increase opportunities for effective grassroots
participation without seriously diminishing their capacity to
broker disparate interests into national consensus.

While parties cannot be expected to completely resolve
the traditional regional and linguistic tensions, effective
participation in their central activities may begin to
alleviate the sharp tensions currently existing between
voters and their political leaders and institutions. Some

signs exist that a change in the parties mind-set and operations in this regard occurred prior to the 1993 election. Parties are, of course, dependent upon public approval for their continued existence and thus see it in their best interest to respond to these demands. Both the Liberals and Reform capitalized on this voter sentiment. Not only did Reform release detailed policy positions, one of its central campaign themes was a promise to be more responsive to the wishes of voters during the tenure of the next parliament.[2] While the Liberal 'Red Book' was not nearly as explicit nor comprehensive, it too was a signal that the party recognized that voters were looking for substantive discussions and wanted their ballots to count for more than the selection of leaders. Woolstencroft, in an essay on the PCs' 1993 election campaign, observes that one of the great failings of the party's effort was inadequate policy preparation and development.[3] The PCs underestimated voters' strong desire for parties to present clear and detailed policy options.

The PCs have learned from their dismal performance in the 1993 election and have embarked on a rebuilding process.

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[2] Faron Ellis and Keith Archer, "Reform: Electoral Breakthrough," in Alan Frizzell, et al, The Canadian General Election of 1993 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994), 60-78.

[3] Peter Woolstencroft, "Doing Politics Differently: The Conservative Party and the Campaign of 1993," in ibid., 9-26.

This process aims to provide a much more meaningful place in party decision-making for its grassroots members. All of the major federal parties, with the exception of the BQ, have amended their leadership selection processes to give a more meaningful role to their membership.

Only limited data exists on the activities of Canadian political parties at the grassroots level. Prior to the work completed for the Lortie Commission, there was no systematic information available on grassroots participation in nomination campa gns. Leadership campaigns have been studied much more extensively, yet almost all of these studies concentrate on the traditional leadership convention which is increasingly being replaced by direct election. No studies have been published concerning a party's use of teledemocracy to better determine the views of constituents on policy matters, similarly, almost no evidence exists concerning the attitudes of party members regarding the participatory opportunities offered them. Studies of election campaigns have increasingly focussed on the national leaders without consideration of grassroots activity. Finally, the roles of interest groups and small interest-based parties in encouraging the major parties to take positions on issues have not been fully examined. This thesis provides comprehensive data relating to grassroots participation in all of these areas.

This thesis began by reviewing evidence of public dissatisfaction with political processes and institutions. It was argued in Chapter One that this voter disenchantment largely results from discontent with the strength of the connection between policy preferences and government decision-making. The data reviewed subsequently, confirm that the traditional political parties do little to alleviate this tension. Voters are given few opportunities to participate in the traditional parties in a manner that might have a significant impact on public policy. The Liberals and PCs have traditionally selected their leaders, nominated their local candidates, developed their policy positions and campaigned for election in ways which provide voters with scarce opportunities for effective participation.

In concluding his study of the Liberal Party, Wearing wrote: "Looking at the history of the Liberal party in perspective, one can clearly see a cyclical pattern of decay and renewal; the decay coming after a number of years in power and the renewal prompted by electoral defeat either threatened or actual."[4] This observation may apply more generally to the position of all three federal parties studied in this thesis. The PCs, coming to the end of their nine year reign, offered their activists the fewest opportunities for effective participation in the lead up to

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[4] Wearing, The L-Shaped Party, 235.

the 1993 election. PC activists were also the least satisfied with the adequacy of the participatory opportunities available to them. On the other hand, the Reform Party, very much a fledgling party, offered its activists substantial opportunity for effective participation, and party members were the most satisfied with the opportunities afforded them. The Liberal Party, on the verge of power after nearly a decade in opposition, found the center ground it so often occupies.

This thesis has argued that a commitment by the Liberals and PCs to brokerage and cons ciational practices is also partially responsible for their failure to engage in more participatory activities. It has long been argued that Canadian public decision-making must aim to bridge differences between strong regional and linguistic cleavages. Many argue that the existen' and strength of these cleavages make it necessary for those engaged in public decision-making to seek accommodation and to build consensus. Consistent with the consociational model of public decision-making, it has been suggested that only elites, committed to reaching accommodation, are able to effect the necessary compromises. Parties have traditionally believed that it is their responsibility to negotiate national compromises among representative elites, and their intra-party practices illustrate such efforts to do so.

Increasingly, however, the national political parties are aware of voters' desire for increased participation and, to varying degrees, are beginning to be responsive to these demands. The area in which the greatest movement in this regard has occurred is in party leadership selection -- many provincial parties and all of the federal parties, except for the BQ, have adopted various methods of a direct vote of their membership as their new selection method. This method of selection greatly increases the role of individual party members in the selection process.

The data collected indicate that in the past the participation of party activists was largely reduced to choosing among various local personalities to send to the leadership convention to make the selection choice for them. When delegate selection meetings did offer choices among delegate candidates publicly favouring leadership candidates, voters were forced to make their choices with little evidence of the policy preferences of the leadership candidates. There is no doubt that direct leadership selection increases opportunity for effective collected participation of party members.

Criticism of direct election processes often concerns a decrease in collective decision-making opportunities. Direct election critics argue that leadership conventions serve the interests of accommodation and consensus building in two

ways: (1) by providing an electorate representative of the national cleavages that need to be reconciled and (2) by bringing these representatives together in one place for the purpose of deliberating on the choice of party leader. The first of these two arguments is the stronger.

There is little evidence that leadership conventions are deliberative experiences at which delegates from across the country attempt to reach a compromise choice. Rather they are often divisive affairs, pitting one block of the party against another.

Conventions have been more successful at reflecting the cleavages perceived to be important. As these interests are regionally based, this is easily accomplished by awarding equal representation to each riding association. Parties have had more difficulty in providing equal representation to other interests that are not regionally based. For example, as the awareness of gender issues has increased, parties have been under pressure to ensure equal representation of women. The parties have failed at efforts to reach gender parity. As discussed in Chapter Five, direct election procedures used by several provincial parties have had greater success at achieving an electorate representative of their province. In switching to direct election, the federal parties have adopted rules to ensure the continuance of equitable voting strength from each region.

What is uncertain, however, is whether the absence of the federal party leadership convention may bring less attention to any shortcomings that candidates have in different regions of the country. Events at previous conventions have made it evident to all delegates when a particular candidate has been unacceptable to one region.

The federal Liberal Party, following the lead of their Ontario provincial colleagues, appear to have adopted a system that best unites the collected and collective perspectives. By choosing delegates based on proportional representation of party members' leadership preferences and committing delegates' first ballot votes, individual party members are provided opportunity for effective participation. By maintaining the leadership convention, ensuring equitable regional representation and freeing delegates on subsequent ballots, the collective benefits of the convention are also preserved.

The data gathered concerning candidate nominations indicate that they are not universally an area of significant grassroots participation. Less than two hundred party members participate in most nomination contests. A majority of PC and almost half of Liberal 1993 nominations were uncontested. The Reform Party differs significantly in this regard as 80 per cent of their nominations were contested. This difference is likely attributable to the absence of

incumbent Reform MPs seeking reelection in 1993.

Parties actively discourage voter participation in nomination contests. In order to be able to vote one must pay a membership fee of approximately $10, join the party prior to a cut-off date - often as early as 30 days prior to the nomination contest, travel as much as 50 miles or more to a single voting location and spend a full evening at the nomination meeting.

Policy positions play little role in nomination contests. Only in the Reform Party did a majority of associations sponsor a public debate between nomination candidates. There is evidence that voters may prefer that policy positions play a more substantial role in nomination contests. This is indicated by the significantly increased turnout at these events when a debate is held.

Control over nominations is not completely given to local party associations. All federal parties have centralized rules that local associations must follow. The greatest interference in 1993 was Chrétien's appointment of 14 Liberal candidates. Both the PC and Reform parties exercised their authority to overturn decisions of local party associations which they found unacceptable.

While these factors result in limited opportunity for collected participation in candidate nomination, they also impact upon the role of the MP once elected. Given that MPs

are either acclaimed for nomination or win contested races through superior organization, there is no mandate given to the winner on policy issues. The general election does not remedy this shortcoming as all studies of Canadian voting behaviour indicate that voters are primarily concerned with the national parties and their leaders and not with their local candidates.

The result of this is that MPs have little legitimacy to claim a mandate to vote contrary to their party leadership. This is particularly significant considering the evidence of increased support for reduced party discipline and more independent-minded MPs. Allowing MPs to vote without party discipline would potentially increase collected decision-making. However, there is little in the candidate nomination or election process that would ensure that MPs have views similar to their constituents on the important issues.

Paul Thomas has studied the role of party caucuses in representing regional concerns and interests in the national policy process. Thomas concludes that party caucus meetings are important forums for expression and cons..deration of regional concerns, and that the caucus meetings play an important role in accommodating these regional interests.[5] Thomas argues that the great failing of these forums lies in

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[5] Paul G. Thomas, "Parties and Regional Representation," in Bakvis, Political Parties, 179-252.

the fact that they are held behind closed doors. The public rarely learns what transpires in caucus decision-making, and only sees the end result -- which because of the success of the party caucuses at consensus building almost never completely reflects the desires of any one region. No matter how strongly MPs argue for their regional interest and then succeed in reaching compromise, the public never has access to this process. Changes in the party nomination process would put pressure on caucus members to make these activities more transparent and better appreciated by their constituents. Not only would this result in voter knowledge that their representative was arguing in their interest, but also may make citizens more amenable to resulting compromises.

Reform Party respondents are far more contented with their role in developing their party's policy agenda than are their Liberal and PC counterparts. A substantial number of Liberal and PC respondents report that participation at their parties' national policy conventions is not a worthwhile endeavour. One reason for this sharp contrast between the Reform Party and the older brokerage parties is the Reform's lack of a strong parliamentary party at the time of the survey. In the older parties, tensions between party activists and their parliamentary party over public policy have long been present. Given the nature of the Canadian

parliamentary system and the collective nature of parliamentary party decision-making, this is not surprising.

Not burdened by a desire to broker regional interests into national consensus, the Reform Party has been in the forefront of efforts exploring ways through which grassroots activists may participate directly in the policy development process. Reform MPs have used innovative polling and teledemocracy experiments in the attempt to determine with more precision the views of their constituents on key issues. These experiments fall short of the collected ideal in that they do not offer easy participation to most constituents. Nevertheless, by engaging in these practices, Reform MPs are acknowledging their interest in determining and then reflecting the views of their constituents within parliament. This is consistent with the collected perspective. Importantly, participation in these Reform experiments has not been restricted to party members but rather all interested constituents' views are considered. Reform MPs engaging in these activities have often pledged to vote in the House of Commons in accordance with their constituents' wishes. However, there is no reason why the traditional brokerage parties could not engage in similar activities. When matters of national importance are at stake, MPs could use this information to better represent their constituents in caucus while ultimately accepting a compromise position.

Such processes would likely have greater legitimacy and the resulting compromises may thus be more acceptable to voters.

The examination of grassroots participation in election campaigns reaches a similar conclusion. Not surprisingly campaign volunteers in all three parties spend little time working on policy issues. A substantial proportion of PC and Liberal respondents report that their national party was unconcerned with their views in developing their 1993 election platforms. Again, the Reform Party significantly differs in this regard, with less than five per cent of respondents concurring with this sentiment.

The success of the Reform Party at encouraging more effective membership participation is, however, not surprising considering that Reform has explicitly rejected the brokerage practice. With only one MP representing a riding east of Manitoba, the party's parliamentary caucus is not faced with the challenge of trying to broker agreements spanning regional and linguistic cleavages.

One of the findings of this thesis is a significant relationship between the vitality of a constituency association and the electoral showing of the association's candidate. This finding suggests the possibility of local activists having substantial impact on the chances of their preferred candidate being elected. Ideally, this would offer the possibility of a strong connection between voters' policy

views and those of their MPs, as voters would likely support candidates with views similar to their own. However, the ability to aid in the election of a particular candidate is of limited value as both the candidate nomination process and the electoral system are structured in a manner that diminishes the importance of policy preferences.

Several areas of electoral regulation affect the scope and quality of debate presented to voters during election campaigns. Attempts to limit effective participation in elections to established parties artificially restrict both the scope of issues and perspectives represented in the election debate and access to the electoral playing field.

As the traditional parties have not succeeded in offering effective participatory opportunities to voters, support for some alternative methods of strengthening the connection between voter preferences and public policy has increased. Direct democracy is attractive to those concerned with the strength of the connection between citizens' preferences and policy outcomes as it removes any intermediary levels of decision-making. The brief historical discussion in Chapter One, however, illustrates that direct democracy has been shown to be problematic when used in Canada. The referendum does not encourage the accommodation or consensus building necessary in a state with strong cleavages. The three experiences with national referendum in

Canada, spanning a period of almost one hundred years, have highlighted the continued existence of strong regional and linguistic/racial tensions that must be accommodated. Direct democracy does not offer any promise of being able to produce the necessary compromises.

There are several historical examples of citizens attempting to use parties as vehicles for more effective public participation. These experiences illustrate the tensions that arise in a system of parliamentary government between the parliamentary party and the mass membership when the extra-parliamentary party attempts to assert itself in the policy-making domain. Because these efforts have often had the establishment of a formal policy-making role for the party membership as their objective, they have been viewed as contrary to Canada's parliamentary traditions.

Given these historical examples, this thesis has examined whether there are more subtle, yet effective, methods through which the party membership may exercise influence over public policy. Given the low levels of effective participation traditionally available through the parties, undoubtedly more can be offered without jeopardizing their consensus-building role. In each area of party activity examined, participatory reforms may have the effect of actually increasing the likelihood of accommodations being viewed as legitimate by the voters.

David Elkins has suggested that parties cannot solve our national unity problems, and that if we expect them to be confederal and to represent both sides of our fundamental cleavages they are doomed to failure.[6] Surely Elkins is right, insofar as the parties cannot themselves create national unity through the practices of elite accommodation. However, if our parties become more participatory and responsive while maintaining an ability to accommodate interests, it is likely that outcomes will be seen as more legitimate. If effective public participation has significant influence on the actions of the elites, and makes the collective processes more transparent, then it is likely voters will have more confidence in those processes and their outcomes. The reason Canadians ask so much from their parties is because there are no alternative institutions more capable of succeeding at their difficult tasks.

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[6] David J. Elkins, "Parties as National Institutions: A Comparative Study," in Bakvis, Political Parties, 3-62.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

POLITICAL PARTIES RESEARCH PROJECT

A SURVEY OF PARTY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

This study is being conducted to better understand the activities engaged in by political party constituency associations. Your participation in this study is essential to its success and is greatly appreciated. All responses are completely anonymous. If you would like a copy of the survey results please drop a note to the address below and a copy will be mailed to you.

POLITICAL PARTIES RESEARCH PROJECT
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
LONDON ONTARIO
N6A 5C2

Section 1. <u>General association activity</u>

1.   How would you describe the level of activity of your local association? (circle one number)

> 1. SEVERAL MEETINGS OR EVENTS EACH MONTH
> 2. SOMETHING HAPPENING EACH MONTH
> 3. AT LEAST SEVERAL EVENTS A YEAR
> 4. MEETS VE?" INFREQUENTLY BETWEEN ELECTIONS

2.   Would you say there is a small "core group" in your riding that does most of the work between elections? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

> IF YES, How big is this group?   _____

How many of each of the following are included in the core group?

> 1. WOMEN _____

> 2. VISIBLE MINORITIES _____

3.   What was the size of your local association membership for each of the following years?

> 1. 1992 _____

> 2. 1993 _____

> 3. 1994 _____

4. Does your local association have any paid staff (separate from an MPs constituency office)? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

IF YES, HOW MANY AND WHAT DO THEY DO? _____

_____ .

5. Between elections how many times a year does your local association sponsor each of the following activities? (please answer with a number for each activity listed)

1. SUPPORT WORK FOR MP OR NOMINATED LOCAL CANDIDATE _____

2. SOCIAL EVENTS _____

3. FUND RAISING _____

4. POLICY STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT _____

5. CAMPAIGN PLANNING _____

6. PUBLISH A NEWSLETTER _____

7. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

_____.

Which of the above would you rank (in order) as the three most important activities your local association is engaged in?

1. _____   2. _____   3. _____

6. What is your local association's annual membership fee?

$_____

Section 2. Policy study and development

For each of the next 5 questions please select the answer that best describes the accuracy of the statement given.

1. Our local association played a significant role in the development of our national party's platform for the 1993 election. (circle one)

1. AGREE STRONGLY
2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
3. UNDECIDED
4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
5. DISAGREE STRONGLY

2.   Our national party encourages our local association to discuss matters of public policy. (circle one)

1. AGREE STRONGLY
2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
3. UNDECIDED
4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
5. DISAGREE STRONGLY

3.   Our national party carefully considered the views of local associations like ~~rs in the drafting of it's 1993 election platform. (circle one)

1. AGREE STRONGLY
2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
3. UNDECIDED
4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
5. DISAGREE STRONGLY

4.   If given the opportunity, members of our local association would like to spend more time considering matters of public policy. (circle one)

1. AGREE STRONGLY
2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
3. UNDECIDED
4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
5. DISAGREE STRONGLY

5.   If given the opportunity, members of our local association would like to have more influence over the policy positions taken by our national party. (circle one)

1. AGREE STRONGLY
2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
3. UNDECIDED
4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
5. DISAGREE STRCNGLY

6.   Are there regular and established means by which your local association can report to the national party its views on matters of public policy? (circle one)

1. YES
2. NO

IF YES, please explain_____

_____   _____.

7. Outside of election campaigns how many times a year does your local association hold meetings at which a significant amount of time is devoted to discussion of matters of public policy? (Circle one)

    1. 0
    2. 1-2
    3. 3-4
    4. 5 or more

8. Did your local association send delegates to a national convention of your party at which public policy issues were **both debated and voted on,** in

    1994 (circle one)   1. YES   2. NO

    1993 (circle one)   1. YES   2. NO

    1992 (circle one)   1. YES   2. NO

9. IF YES to any of the above, is it your impression that those members attending found the experience worthwhile and believed that their opinions were carefully considered by the national party? (circle one)

    1. YES
    2. NO

Section 3. Election campaign activity

1. How many volunteers do you require to run an effective local campaign in your constituency?

    _____

2. How many volunteers did you have in the 1993 federal campaign?

    _____

If the number of volunteers was fewer than needed, why do you think it was difficult to find sufficient volunteers?

_____

_____

3. Of those who did volunteer for your local association's 1993 campaign what do you think were their primary reasons for doing so?

_____

_____ ___ .

4. Please list in order of importance the three most important tasks performed by volunteers in your campaign organization.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

5. Did your local association conduct any public opinion polling in preparation for or during the 1993 campaign? (circle one)
  1. YES
  2. NO

6. Did your national party offer your local association any public opinion polling data during the 1993 campaign? (circle one)
  1. YES
  2. NO

7. How would you rate the following methods of communication in terms of their importance to your 1993 local campaign? (please check one box for each method of communication)

	very important	somewhat important	not too important	unimportant
television				
radio				
newspapers				
direct mail				
canvassing				
telephone				

8. Did your local campaign have any paid staff for the 1993 election? (circle one)

          1. YES
          2. NO

   IF YES, how many paid staff did you have and what did they do?

_____

_____ .

Section 4. Candidate nomination

1. How many ballots did it take for a winner to be declared in your local association's 1993 nomination contest?

          _____

2. Was an incumbent M.P. running for your association's nomination in 1993?

          1. YES
          2.

3. How many candidates contested your local association's nomination for the 1993 election?

   HOW MANY WERE: _____
          1. WOMEN _____

          2. VISIBLE MINORITIES _____

4. What would you estimate was the average amount spent by candidates for your association's nomination in 1993?

          1. $500 OR LESS
          2. $501 - $1,000
          3. $1,001 - $2,500
          4. $2,501 OR MORE

5. Do you believe the cost of mounting a campaign for the nomination prevented any potential candidates from seeking your association's nomination for the 1993 election? (circle one)

          1. YES
          2. NO

6.   To your knowledge, were any potential candidates encouraged or discouraged by party officials from outside your riding from running for your association's 1993 nomination? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

7.   How many individuals attended your local association's 1993 nomination meeting?

_____

8.   Do you believe that the cost of party membership kept anyone from attending, and voting in, your local association's 1993 nomination election? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

9.   How long do supporters need to be party members to vote in your local association's nomination meetings?

> 1. A WEEK OR LESS
> 2. ONE - TWO WEEKS
> 3. TWO WEEKS - ONE MONTH
> 4. A MONTH OR MORE

10.   Was a public debate held among those contesting your local association's nomination for the 1993 election? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

11.   Were there any substantive policy differences among candidates for your party association's 1993 nomination that were significant in the nomination campaign and election? (circle one)

> 1. YES
> 2. NO

Section 5. <u>Leadership Selection</u> (Answer questions 1-6 if your association has elected delegates to a leadership convention, otherwise proceed to question 7).

1. How long do supporters need to be party members to vote in your local association's delegate selection meetings? (circle one)

      1. A WEEK OR LESS
      2. ONE - TWO WEEKS
      3. TWO WEEKS - ONE MONTH
      4. A MONTH OR MORE

2. Do leadership convention delegate candidates in your riding tend to disclose who they will support at the convention prior to the delegate election? (circle one)

      1. YES
      2. NO

3. Which of the following best describes your view of this statement: "A leadership candidate's policy positions play a significant role in the outcome of our local association's election for leadership convention delegates." (circle one)

      1. AGREE STRONGLY
      2. AGREE SOMEWHAT
      3. UNDECIDED
      4. DISAGREE SOMEWHAT
      5. DISAGREE STRONGLY

4. Do you believe that members of your local association would prefer to have more information concerning leadership candidates' positions on the major issues before selecting delegates for the leadership convention? (circle one)

      1. YES
      2. NO

5. What do you believe is the most important factor determining which delegate candidates are chosen by your local association to attend a leadership convention? (circle one)

    1. LENGTH OF TIME AS A PARTY MEMBER
    2. DECLARED SUPPORT FOR A PARTICULAR LEADERSHIP CANDIDATE
    3. NUMBER OF NEW PARTY MEMBERS SIGNED UP TO SUPPORT DELEGATE CANDIDATE
    4. HOW ACTIVE THE DELEGATE CANDIDATE HAS BEEN IN PARTY AFFAIRS

6. How many party members attended your local association's delegate selection meeting for your party's last leadership convention?

_____

7. Several provincial parties have recently chosen leaders by a direct vote of party members rather than by holding a leadership convention. Do you think that your federal party should choose its next leader by the direct vote method? (circle one)

      1. YES
      2. NO

Section 6. General (These questions are asked to allow for group comparisons and not for identification purposes).

1. To which political party does your constituency association belong?
(circle one)
      1. BLOC QUEBECOIS
      2. LIBERAL
      3. NEW DEMOCRATIC
      4. PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE
      5. REFORM

2. Which province is your riding located in?

_____

3. In the 1993 federal election what place did your association's candidate finish in? (circle one)

      1. FIRST
      2. SECOND
      3. THIRD
      4. FOURTH OR LOWER

4. Did your association's candidate win the 1988 federal election?
(circle one)
      1. YES
      2. NO
      3. NO CANDIDATE IN 1988

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. YOUR

PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.

PLEASE RETURN IT TO:

POLITICAL PARTIES RESEARCH PROJECT
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
LONDON ONTARIO
N6A 5C2

Appendix B

First cover letter to respondents

28 January 1995

1‾

Dear 2‾:

Many political commentators agree that Canadians have developed a strong suspicion of their political elites and desire a more direct - hands on - approach to political decision making. Most of these commentators, however, focus on national politics, paying little attention to what goes on at the grass-roots level. Much more needs to be understood about the way politics is practiced at the riding level. To this end, I am conducting a study to establish the degree and scope of participation in party constituency associations and to gather opinions of association presidents on possible reforms aimed at increasing the importance of local associations in a variety of areas.

The national Liberal office has kindly provided me with your name and address. In order to obtain an accurate portrayal of the activities engaged in by constituency associations it is necessary that responses to the enclosed survey be received from as many association presidents as possible. The results of this research will be made available to the national Liberal Party to assist them in their future planning. You can be assured of the complete

knowing who filled out any particular survey. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. If you do not know the answer to a question perhaps there is someone in your association you can ask. If you are not able to answer a question just leave it blank but please complete the rest of the survey and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

I feel that this project is so important 3⁻ that I am funding it myself. I hope that you agree with me and will take just a few minutes to complete and return the survey. Should you have any questions please feel free to write or call me. Thank you for your help in this important research project.

Sincerely,

Bill Cross
PhD candidate

Français au Verso

Appendix C

Second cover letter to respondents

January 21, 1995

1⁻

Dear 2⁻:

Two weeks ago you received a survey concerning the activities of your local Liberal Party constituency association. Many surveys have been returned but because of the anonymity of respondents I have no way of knowing whether you have returned your survey. If you have returned your completed questionnaire please accept my gratitude for your assistance with this important research project.

If you have not yet returned your survey, please take a few minutes today to complete it and return it to me. In case you have misplaced the one originally sent you, I have enclosed another questionnaire for your convenience.

The completion of your survey is an integral part of an important research project. There are two principal objectives to this study: 1. to better understand the way politics is practiced at the riding level; and, 2. to learn the opinions of riding presidents towards reforms of the political process aimed at increasing mass participation. This study can only succeed with your cooperation. Unless you complete and return your survey the study results will be

incomplete as the activities and attitudes of your association will not be included in the findings.

I realize that you have many demands on your time 3⁻, but I do hope that you can find a few minutes today to complete the survey and return it to me. Please use the self addressed stamped envelope sent to you earlier to mail your completed questionnaire to: Political Parties Research Project, Department of Political Science, University of Western Ontario, London ON N6A 5C2.

Sincerely,

Bill Cross
PhD candidate

Francais au Verso

Appendix E

Liberal

Nova Scotia Liberal Association

P.O. Box 723
1660 Hollis St., Suite 911
Halifax, N.S. B3J 2T3

(902) 429-1993
Fax: 423-1624

April 5, 1995

Mr. Bill Cross
The University of Western Ontario
Department of Political Science
Social Science Centre
London, Ontario N6A 5C2

Dear Mr. Cross:

You have a timely and most interesting research study. I wish you every success.

I will attempt to answer your queries to the best of my knowledge. I have contacted the three Liberals who were directly involved with the direct vote by telephone. Two are out of the province. Therefore, if you need further answers or clarification you can contact us again.

1. The Executive Committee of the Nova Scotia Liberal Association made the decision to adopt the direct vote process for the Leadership '92. Attached is a list and description of the members who make up this committee.

2. The decision was made in April 1992 at a special meeting of the Executive Committee.

3. In the main, the majority of Committee members were in favour of the process and it was unanimously carried as a motion at the meeting.

4. The principal arguments for the direct election were:

    A. We are an open party and promote the openness and input from all Liberal members; therefore, it gave all members an opportunity to voice their vote.

    B. The convention took place in the central area of the province therefore it was:

        i)   less time consuming to travel to a convention, and

        ii) less costly to participate.

    C. Nova Scotia Liberals have always had a pioneering spirit when change is possible.

    D. Liberals who could not leave their home due to illness/disability could participate.

...2

Although there were few arguments against the direct election some concerns addressed were:

A. The traditional convention hall atmosphere lent itself to promoting candidates to acquire last minute support and in particular if there was a second or third ballot. This is more difficult when the greater number of members were scattered from one end of the province to the other.

B. Some areas did not have home access to the touch tone telephone.

5. Currently our constitution recommends a leadership review every two years. The process of how this will take place is to be determined by the Executive Committee. However, in the past seven months we have had a Constitutional Review Commission working on the revisions to the constitution by means of consultation with Liberal members – questionnaires, town hall meetings and written submissions. These changes which may include leadership selection and review will be completed by July 1995.

Enclosed are copies of an article and a specific study conducted on tele-democracy.

Yours truly,

Anna M. Redmond
Executive Director

/md
Enclosures