Polling for Votes: CCF and Liberal Political Marketing, 1940-1945

Daniel J. Robinson

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/economicsperg_ppe

Part of the Economics Commons

Citation of this paper:
Paper No. 86

"Polling for Votes: CCF and Liberal Political Marketing, 1940-1945"

Daniel J. Robinson
The Political Economy Research Group was established in the faculty of Social Science at the University of Western Ontario in 1988. Its purpose is to foster scholarship, teaching and interdisciplinary research in political economy, with a focus on:

1. the application of economic models and methods to the study of political processes and institutions,
2. the economic impact of political processes and institutions,
3. the influence of economic factors on the formation of public policy and on institutional change,
4. the politics of economic policy making,
5. the political, social, and economic effects of public policy.

Co-directors:
Ronald Wintrobe (Economics)
Robert Young (Political Science)

Board of Directors:
Peter Howitt (Economics)
B.B. Kymlicka (Political Science)
John N. McDougall (Political Science)
Peter Neary (History)
John Whalley (Economics)

Staff:
Jayne Dewar

For further information:
Political Economy Research Group,
Department of Economics,
Social Science Centre,
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5C2
phone: (519) 661-3877
fax: (519) 661-3292
'Polling for Votes:
CCF and Liberal Political Marketing, 1940-1945'

by

Daniel J. Robinson
SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow
Department of History
University of Toronto
100 St. George St.
Toronto, ON
M5S 3G3
d.robinson@utoronto.ca

Presented to the Political Economy Research Group, University of Western Ontario
9 February 1998

Please do not quote, cite, or reproduce without author's permission
'POLLING FOR VOTES:
CCF AND LIBERAL POLITICAL MARKETING, 1940-1945'

In this day and age until we've learned how the technique of selling soap works, we'll go on making a mighty poor fist of selling socialism to the lower middle and working classes, the younger voters, and the women.

Philip Spencer, 1941

It will be possible for us again to survey nationally to determine which approach should be used in selling to the public the [Liberal] Party's stand on any particular issue... In this way we will know not only what the public feel strongest about but also the best way in which to sell to them the Liberal party's stand on that issue.

F.W. Gross, 1944

'The twentieth century and Canadian politics come to terms this year,' Richard Gwyn wrote in the Financial Post in April 1962, for the country was witnessing its 'first scientific election.' Two 'completely new weapons' were re-configuring the electoral landscape- 'privately hired, public opinion surveys,' and their adjunct, 'sophisticated, probing, statistical analysis.' When combined with state-of-the-art advertising and communication techniques, the election was a turning point in Canadian politics, a pivotal juncture in which 'the skills of sociologists, statisticians, advertising experts, pollsters, and mass-communications experts' would match or surpass the 'age-old talents of politicians.' Gwyn's pronouncement, buttressed by a detailed sketch of Liberal and Tory polling activities in 1962, set the tone for later accounts fixing the
arrival of electoral polling in the early 1960s. Joseph Wearing, while briefly remarking that Liberals and Conservatives 'attempted some polling in the 1950s,' credits the Liberal Party's hiring of Democratic Party pollster Louis Harris in the early 1960s as the effective launch date of Canadian electoral polling.\(^4\) Pollster and political scientist David C. Walker and Khayyam Zev Paltiel similarly situate partisan polling's substantive origins with Harris's arrival.\(^5\) These accounts, among others, have given rise to an enduring myth of Canadian politics.\(^6\)

Party polling began in the 1940s, not the 1960s. Indeed, many features of 1960s party polling were strikingly in evidence a generation earlier. Both times the Liberal Party was in the forefront, on each occasion helped by the survey expertise of Americans - in 1944 this being the Princeton psychologist Hadley Cantril. Both eras saw a close working relationship between Liberal officials and advertising professionals. Walter Gordon, the policy specialist and party technocrat who eagerly embraced polling in 1961,\(^7\) had his counterpart in the equally talented and polling-savvy Liberal MP Brooke Claxton in the 1940s. Keith Davey, the radio station sales manager-turned-party-organizer who brought Harris to Ottawa,\(^8\) was a latter-day, if less self-effacing, version of Bob Kidd, the Cockfield, Brown ad executive and Liberal polling point man during the war. Wartime Liberal party polling did not match the scale and sophistication of the 1960s surveys, but the earlier polling programme constituted the Canadian genesis of 'political marketing,'\(^9\) the adaptation of market research methods to party policy formation and electoral politics. In this respect, the 'twentieth century' arrived two decades before Gwyn's declaration.

While the Liberals adopted polling prior to the 1945 election, the CCF did not.\(^10\) Though Canada's first 'political consumer survey' appeared in the Canadian Forum, challenging the CCF to apply market research techniques to politics, the party was unable to answer the call. A fusion
of educative socialist movement and political party, the CCF faced structural and ideological barriers to the adoption of the marketing ethos. It counted many active grassroots members and possessed a democratic structure, both of which were inimical to polling's centripetal effect on policy making and electioneering. Wedded to a belief in individual rationality, the CCF worldview rejected advertiser and marketer assumptions about human nature defined as emotional, irrational, and malleable. As well, the CCF lacked contacts with advertising or market research firms versed in opinion sampling.

*

Readers of Canadian Forum’s October and December 1940 issues might have wondered if the socialist monthly had been commandeered by Madison Avenue emissaries. The titles alone of the pseudonymous11 Philip Spencer's articles ('Does it Sell the Stuff?' and 'Pardon Me, Madam, how often do you take a bath?') were a far cry from staple erudite offerings from leftist literati like Frank Scott, Barker Fairley, or Frank Underhill. Spencer's argument went further beyond the pale of most progressive intellectuals: socialists, and especially the CCF, should embrace wholeheartedly market surveys and advertising to fashion party policy and fight elections. Commercial advertising based on research methods and psychological insight, Spencer championed with characteristic hyperbole, was 'one thousand percent more effective than the appeals [presently] turned out by political advertisers.'12 He later introduced Forum readers to the market research surveys pioneered by George Gallup. In a passage extraordinary for its melding of commercial and political marketing, Spencer mapped out a research programme for a hypothetical launch of a cigarette brand. Sample surveys and other research tools would determine: the total number of smokers and their socio-economic distribution; what smokers liked
about their current brands; what previous brands they had smoked and why they switched; which cigarettes were preferred for 'mildness,' 'flavour,' or 'economy.' Ad copy testing would be done, and by cross-tabulating these results with other demographic and response variables the advertiser could 'evaluate the effectiveness of one selling story against another...the degree of penetration of a selling appeal...[and] whether advertising for a product [was] reaching the market intended.'

After outlining the four paragraph research plan, Spencer directed the reader to revisit it with a political cast of mind:

For the word "market" substitute the word "population" or "voters." For "cigarette" and "smoke" substitute either "appeal and "believe in," or "function" and "perform." Change "mildness" and "flavor" to any political or social descriptive noun you wish. Leave "advertising" as it is. Re-read the description of this typical survey and it will become evident how it could be applied to a thousand socialist problems.

The CCF would never achieve political strength, Spencer contended, so long as it relied on 'old-fashioned methods of "intellectual persuasion,"' rooted more in eighteenth-century 'rationalism' than twentieth-century mass democracy. The party should shed the "education-method" of our grandfathers' and adopt policies and campaign strategies with a mind to voters' emotional and impressionable natures. 'Until we know what people do and think and read, until we have developed a strategy that is really relevant to the readers of Popeye and the listeners [of] Charlie McCarthy, we can't hope to make socialism the loud, imperative and compelling shout that it should be.'

What should one make of Spencer's brash unorthodoxy? The CCF in 1940, in the minds of most supporters, constituted an educative socialist movement as well as a political party. To 'sell' socialism like chewing gum or cigarettes was at best trivializing a virtuous political crusade, at worst denigrating it. Forum editors, drawn from the ranks of the CCF 'brain trust,' the League
for Social Reconstruction,\(^{15}\) evidently thought otherwise; in each of the next four issues, articles from Spencer appeared, poring over the findings of a 'political consumer survey' he had conducted among Torontonians. The size of the sample was not disclosed and 'amateur investigators' served as field workers, who filled interview schedules stratified by age, sex, and class quotas. The survey solicited newspaper and magazine reading habits. For lower income earners - the 'C' and 'D' groups making less than $50 weekly and totalling 75 percent of the sample - the comics and sports pages together outstripped the news pages as the most popular newspaper sections.

Women read fewer papers but more magazines than men, half of which were female-specific. Blending condescension with marketing savvy, Spencer propounded that women were 'living in their own world of cosy chats about baby's diet and how I stopped middle-aged spread.' The only effective way to 'bring new ideas to this majority of women' was via the women's magazines themselves.\(^{16}\) Similarly, radio listening revealed tabloid tastes and diversionary impulses. Drama and variety shows, especially American ones, were more popular than news and public affairs broadcasts, notably among hoped-for CCF voters. As Spencer quipped sarcastically, 'it's pretty nasty, isn't it?, that the lower classes whom socialists want to reach, the youngsters, and leftists themselves, vote more heavily for escapism.\(^{17}\)

Having established the parameters of people's newspaper, magazine, and radio interaction, the survey scrutinized opinion on conventional left-wing issues. Did Torontonians think they paid an 'unfair price' for everyday staples? Why was this? Did monopolies keep prices unnecessarily high for consumers? If so, for what products? A strong correlation between those blaming monopolies for inflating prices and those believing they overpaid for staples meant, Spencer concluded, that 'it should be the job of a progressive movement to see to it that every individual
who blames monopolies has it knocked into his head that this condition also affects the everyday things he buys.\textsuperscript{18} Other issues queried included the treatment of soldiers, cooperatives, local relief, the quality of public schools, and the merits of municipally-managed milk distribution. The popularity of the last item meant the CCF 'would be backing a hopeful horse if it plugged this.'\textsuperscript{19}

Alongside variables like age, sex, and class, Spencer devised another denoting 'left' and 'right' political affinity. Respondents were asked to choose a preferred ideal government type, ranging from one which 'kept stricter control of labor unions and radical groups' to one which 'believed in parliamentary socialism.' Those expressing no political ideal were lumped in with the rightist camp, which overall comprised 63 percent of the sample, compared to 37 percent on the left. Among 'D' voters, though, left supporters totalled 48 percent, and for 30-to-40-year-olds they reached 53 percent. Slightly more men than women were left leaning. A target market for the CCF was coming into focus. Working-class males under forty, generally, were more predisposed to socialist tenets and thus more likely to endorse CCF ideas and policies. Party appeals, Spencer emphasized, should be designed with such groups in mind, using messages and communicative strategies which registered on a personal level, not an abstract, ideological one.\textsuperscript{20} They should shed the 'usual dry-as-dust socialist speech-making pap' and adopt the promotional will to 'act realistically and thoroughly on the basis of modern psychology and science.'\textsuperscript{21}

Spencer's clarion call, juxtaposing advertiser bravado with socialist platitudes, provided a peculiar spectacle, to say the least. Appearing in the country's preeminent leftist magazine, it was the first known politically-inspired opinion poll in Canada, albeit one done by 'amateur' canvassers and with only partial methodological disclosure. Spencer's series was also the first published apologia for the application of market research techniques to politics. Political marketing in
Canada had been conceived and trumpeted, but by an apostle seeking to curtail the very domain which spawned its progenitor, free-enterprise capitalism. And how did Forum readers react to learning the road to the New Jerusalem was lined with billboards plugging succulent grapes and golden honey? If printed reader responses were any indication, they didn't; no letters about the articles appeared, nor did any subsequent writings by Spencer. For the remaining war years, the Forum steered largely clear of advertising, market research, and polling, focussing instead on customary topics like state planning, civil liberties, and monopoly capitalism.\textsuperscript{22}

Did Spencer's message resonate with the CCF? Judging from the paucity of polling material in party records it would seem unlikely. In January 1941, an Ontario CCF committee inquired into means of improving party publicity, which included 'polls of public opinion,' but seemingly nothing came of this.\textsuperscript{23} For the federal CCF, the concern with opinion polling also proved marginal. Party files contain only a few Gallup Poll column clippings and related promotional material.\textsuperscript{24} Just once did party officials draft a strategy paper based on polling figures. A 27 March 1943 Gallup Poll showed support for the provincial CCF in Ontario at 26 percent, compared to 35 and 36 percent respectively for the Liberals and Tories. The memo estimated, based on the poll and internal intelligence, that in some 40 ridings CCF support averaged 40 percent, in 20 ridings it hovered around 26 percent, and in 30 constituencies it registered only about eight percent. The Liberals presented the main challenge, as Tory support was thought too thinly spread over rural and urban areas to capture many seats - an obviously flawed analysis as five months later the Tories won a plurality of seats with 36 percent of the vote. The memo also touched on a theme raised earlier by Spencer and couched in similar paternalistic reasoning. Gallup polls consistently counted far more men than women among CCF supporters,
which was 'a clear indication that we must make better efforts to interest the women in our program. They may think they are not interested in politics, but they are certainly interested in what will happen to their families after the war.' Though the CCF party press and its advertising occasionally formulated specific appeals for women voters, the party never followed through with opinion surveys or other marketing techniques to determine the effectiveness of these entreaties, both for women or other underrepresented groups beneath the CCF canopy.

On polling and the CCF, perhaps a more pertinent question is: *could* CCF leaders have adopted and acted upon the marketing ethos if they so wanted? A number of factors thwarted such a possibility. The CCF's hybrid character, the mingling of social movement and political party, functioned as a barrier to political action driven by opinion polling and advertising. A key axiom for Spencer was the generally irrational, malleable nature of most people, both as consumers and citizens. Advertisers knew this, hence their oftentimes preference for emotion-centred ad copy over appeals to reason or intellect. But this premise was anathema to the CCF world view, especially among those most enamoured with socialist proselytizing. People might read Popeye and listen to Charlie McCarthy for pleasure, but their fundamental human nature remained rational and educable. Strongly opposed to 19th-century economic liberalism, the CCF adhered to one important liberal precept from that era: a belief in the perfectibility of people through reason and knowledge. The CCF viewed the common people as uncommonly endowed with good judgement and homespun wisdom. They could be trusted to act prudently on public matters, reconciling their own interests with those of the general good, provided they received accurate facts and straightforward arguments. This deep-seated faith in public rationality served as the party's guiding principle for ideological dissemination and political promotion. 'The CCF
believed,' Walter Young wrote, 'that it could win by rational conversion and organization.' The basis of organization was the sending of the converted into the streets to proselytize on the doorstep, to set up clubs, to chair discussion groups, to publish pamphlets, to educate.\textsuperscript{28} From this standpoint, techniques for selling soap were inimical to the building of a Cooperative Commonwealth.

The CCF’s party structure posed another impediment to the adoption of market research methods. In his seminal typology of political parties, Maurice Duverger's model encompassed two broad categories. 'Cadre' parties were characterized by an emphasis on electoral operations, relatively few dues-paying members, and the dominant role of government leaders, financiers, bureaucrats, and professional experts in shaping party protocol and policies. 'Mass' parties functioned during and between elections, were more democratically organized, and counted many active members, most of whom shared an ideological affinity with party doctrines. Frequently, member groups were organized in non-electoral units, i.e. workplaces or neighbourhood associations. The Liberals and Tories, according to Engelmann and Schwartz, conformed to the cadre model, while the CCF adhered to the mass party type.\textsuperscript{29} For example, the CCF founded its first constituency association only in 1938, an organizational model which only gradually replaced the bevy of clubs and study groups (sometimes two or more per riding) comprising the party.

Party fundraising, largely unsuccessful until the late 1940s, was premised on soliciting donations from grassroots members.\textsuperscript{30} This diffuse, decentralized party structure was often beset by sectarian rivalry and a 'lack of coordinated effort at elections,' especially before the mid-1940s.\textsuperscript{31}

The CCF’s degree of internal democracy also distinguished it from the established parties. While, for example, the federal Liberals had last held a party convention in 1919, the CCF
convened eight national conventions between 1932 and 1944. Party members elected local, provincial, and national officials and leaders, as well as most delegates to provincial and national conventions. Delegates presented resolutions to the convention floor and voted on party policies. The epitome of this democratic style was in Saskatchewan, where widespread grassroots activism infused CCF riding and provincial affairs, especially in rural areas. This does not refute entirely Young's argument that an 'oligarchic' clique of CCF officials and leaders exercised considerable influence in policy formation and party decision-making. Officials like David Lewis, the National Secretary from 1937 to 1950, no doubt set the tone and tempo for a good deal of the party's affairs. But Young's critique of the CCF's democratic structure is set against an **ideal** type of grassroots party democracy and not the actual state of Canadian political parties. Had his analysis incorporated the Grit and Tory parties' meagre measures of internal democracy, it is likely his assessment of CCF democratic practices, properly contextualized, would have been more conciliatory. One begins to see why a mass party like the early CCF - defined by grassroots activism, a relatively diffuse power base, and a shared animating ideology - was an unlikely candidate for opinion polling before 1945. According to the CCF credo, policy making and political intelligence gathering were as much the preserve and responsibility of the rank-and-file as of 'elite' decision makers. To go further and have 'outsiders' like opinion pollsters perform these functions would no doubt have alienated grassroots supporters, the organizational bedrock of a movement-cum-party. David Walker, underscoring polling's centripetal impact on electioneering and party decision-making, observes: 'Their [pollsters] success is based on limiting access to information and maintaining a mystique regarding the collection and analysis of data. Their world is dominated by hierarchical organizations in which it is taken for granted that they negotiate and
confide with only a few at the top. The democratization of this world is still a long way off.\textsuperscript{35}

Another factor mitigating against the CCF's use of polls was the party's relative lack of contact with established advertisers and market researchers. As will be seen below with the Liberal Party, direct and enduring ties with market researchers, both commercial and academic, were vital for launching and sustaining a polling program. The standard histories of the CCF provide little in the way of the party's use of advertising or its relations with ad firms prior to 1945.\textsuperscript{36} What fragments are available suggest CCF advertising was often primitive and lacklustre. A 1944 committee chaired by Ontario provincial secretary Morden Lazarus concluded that CCF ads and literature were 'dull, badly laid-out, repetitious, and lacking in personal appeal.' The committee recommended they become more 'colourful, catchy, and entertaining,' and that they 'DON'T PREACH.'\textsuperscript{37} During the war, CCF advertising was often 'depression-oriented,' a sort of political scare copy admonishing voters to back the CCF to prevent a return to economic calamity.\textsuperscript{38} Some ads were also trite and crude, like those in 1944 attacking big business by depicting a grasping, malevolent octopus choking a soldier, housewife, and farmer. Another ad, Caplan describes, showed 'two fat cat capitalists, bedecked in top hats and tails, slinging mud at an advancing army of socialist realism-created workers, farmers, and soldiers.'\textsuperscript{39} Of course, had CCF officials sought out an advertising or market research firm for a political poll they likely would have been rebuffed. As any perusal of the advertising and marketing trade press will attest,\textsuperscript{40} ad men and marketers were unrestrained boosters of free enterprise and mass consumption. Socialism, when mentioned, was usually excoriated. As the customers of advertising and market research firms were mostly other companies, word of a CCF association could well harm client relations and future business prospects.
Had CCF popularity remained mired at pre-war levels, the absence of voter research and opinion polling probably would have mattered little. Garnering just under nine percent of votes in the 1935 and 1940 elections,\textsuperscript{41} party support remained confined to parts of western Canada, Cape Breton, and a sprinkling of northern and urban ridings in Ontario. But this would change suddenly after 1942. In an oft-cited series of events, CCF fortunes catapulted skyward, ushering in a short-lived 'Golden Age' of Canadian socialism.\textsuperscript{42} Joe Noseworthy's thrashing of Arthur Meighen in York South in February 1942, the Ontario CCF's capture of 34 seats in August 1943, Tommy Douglas's resounding triumph in Saskatchewan a year later were the electoral milestones of a rising socialist tide that promised - or threatened, depending on one's standpoint - to engulf federal politics. The party registered 20 percent or more in Gallup polling from late 1942 until April 1945, even once in September 1943 outpacing the Liberals and Tories.\textsuperscript{43} CCF membership jumped from under 30,000 in 1942 to nearly 100,000 two years later.\textsuperscript{44} Issues long championed by the CCF - state planning, public ownership, social security, unionization - had migrated from the political periphery to the hub of public debate. But just as precipitously as the CCF's star rose, so would it crash. The much anticipated Ontario and federal elections of June 1945 saw the provincial party reduced to eight seats and its federal counterpart shut out of all Ontario ridings. Nationally, the CCF took 28 seats, 18 in Saskatchewan, and its 15.6 percent share of the popular vote, while a marked improvement from 1940, was well below expectations. Various explanations abound. The end of the European war one month earlier had sapped some of the general resolve for state planning. Concerns for social security remained, but these were also being met by the protean King Liberals, whose moderate welfarist platform promised a 'New Social Order,' made possible, in part, by co-opting CCF ideas and policies.\textsuperscript{45}
CCF officials and historians commonly point to another reason for the party's 1945 defeat - the anti-CCF smear campaigns by Gladstone Murray and B.A. Trestrail. Murray, a former CBC general manager, founded 'Responsible Enterprise Limited' in April 1943 as a clearing house to publicize free enterprise and assail socialism and the CCF. Capitalizing on his broadcasting and public relations work with the CBC and BBC (during the 1926 General Strike he worked as a government propagandist), Murray enlisted business backers in a venture employing 'imaginative planning' and 'psychological initiative' to stem the spread of socialism. By September, he counted among his supporters Arthur Meighen, former finance minister C.A. Dunning, and the presidents of Imperial Oil, Noranda Mines, Massey-Harris Company, National Breweries, International Nickel, and Continental Life Insurance Co. Murray's operation, Caplan argues, secured the financial backing of 52 company presidents and 17 vice-presidents. Murray's publicity work centred on writing propaganda tracts, reprinting his and others' speeches, and publishing Outlook, an anti-CCF newsletter. He also supplied anti-socialist material to radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, and politicians. Stephen Leacock was even enlisted to write material.

Trestrail lacked Murray's blue-chip backing, but he more than compensated with a keen writer's ear for homespun idiom and kitchen-table logic, combined with a Goebbels-like ability to render the Big Lie believable. No finer complement could be had than when in 1944 a CCF report on publicity recommended party literature mirror the colloquial, breezy style of one of Trestrail's anti-CCF booklets. An American by birth, he settled in Canada in the 1910s while in his twenties. He claimed to have earned a sizeable fortune in the 1920s, only to lose it during the Depression. A self-described 'Industrial Relations Counsel' during the war, in 1944 he founded 'Public Informational Association,' which solicited business donations to finance anti-
socialism/CCF publicity. His 1945 booklet, Social Suicide, (a condensed version of the 1944 book, Stand Up and Be Counted) was, Trestrail claimed, mailed to every postal address in the country prior to the federal election, a total of three million copies at a cost of more than $300,000, according to one CCF estimate.51

Taken together, the tracts are superb examples, indeed seminal classics, of political attack literature, marrying commercial salesmanship with a polished knack for exploiting emotional and negative motifs. Half of Social Suicide's title page was taken up with the message, "$5000 Cash Awards: See Back Cover," which referred to a contest awarding $500 prizes to the best titles submitted for a cartoon of a CCF 'acrobat' juggling and balancing a number of balls inscribed with CCF policies. Some 27,000 people reportedly wrote in.52 The pamphlet also carried testimonials from satisfied 'customers' of Stand Up and Be Counted. Mrs. W.G. Robert, self-described as 'just one of the ordinary working class,' had bought several copies for friends and expressed the hope that 'thousands more will see and buy your booklet.' Trestrail's ostensible mode of persuasion was by honest appeal from one ordinary citizen to another. 'I will express myself in the language of the so-called "common people," of whom I am one, and with whom I have spent most of my life.' Such people generally exercised good common sense, 'if you will just give them the facts.'53 The 'facts' presented, however, were often gross distortions and outright fabrications. A CCF government would regiment and bureaucratize civil society while nationalizing most businesses. Individual freedom would be crushed under the heel of totalitarianism. Ludicrous parallels between the 'National Socialism' of Nazi Germany and the CCF were drawn. An anti-semitic, xenophobic raw nerve was exposed with references to Lewis as the son of a 'Russian Jew,' and that this 'Jewish immigrant boy' might soon 'write the ticket for the social and economic program
of this nation.Added to this was strident anti-intellectualism; CCF officials were 'Professional Social Students,' and the cartoon drawings by the Globe's Jack Boothe, in addition to accentuating Lewis's semitic features, depicted an egg-headed Frank Scott in convocation cap and gown. CCF leaders were not Of The People like Trestrail and his initiated readers; they were alien malingerers, untouched by the meaning of ordinary work and everyday concerns.

Trestrail's propaganda pieces were not just the product of one man's intuitive reading of the voter psyche. He claimed to have benefited from insights gleaned from opinion polls. At one point in Social Suicide, he refers to 'the figures of six recent surveys' which revealed that only half of Canadians could offer a definition for 'State Socialism.' The polls' sources and sponsors were not revealed. In a May 1945 fund-raising letter, Trestrail outlined plans for a national anti-CCF campaign, which would be 'based on the findings of surveys covering more than 2000 Canadians in all walks of life.' He noted that a 1944 'experimental campaign' in Toronto had been conducted to 'ascertain to what extent public interest could be aroused over the issue of State Socialism and the degree to which such thinking could be influenced.' The survey indicated that 25 to 40 percent of people could 'be diverted from the possibility of voting for any candidate committed to State Socialism -if they are provided with proper information in the proper manner.' Here again, the source and content of the purported polls are unknown; they could well have been slap-dash, unscientific undertakings.

Trestrail's use of opinion polls likely paled in comparison to another business-sponsored venture carried out by the market research firm, Elliott-Haynes Limited. The company began operations in 1937 as a credit reporting service, but by the early 1940s had moved into survey research work, primarily with radio listening audiences. In September 1944 it launched a semi-
annual survey, 'The Study of Public Attitudes Toward Business and Industry,' which would continue into the early 1950s. The survey was partially modelled on polling done by the Psychological Corporation for the Du Pont Corporation during the late 1930s and early 1940s. These surveys registered American attitudes toward the company, probed their etiology, and evaluated the effectiveness of Du Pont promotional activities in shaping public opinion. Americans holding a 'generally favourable' view of the chemical conglomerate increased from 56 percent in 1936 to 69 percent in 1940. The 6000-person Elliott-Haynes national survey - one of the largest samples ever to that time - solicited general opinions about business and industry, as well as specific views on individual companies. To offset costs, sponsorship of the 'omnibus poll' was spread among a number of companies, each of whom received data specific to their firms, along with findings of a general nature. These surveys represent the first systematic use of polling for public relations purposes in Canada. Their impetus and operating rationale were closely tied to the socialist surge. As an early 1945 survey report made clear, the study's principal objectives were 'to provide overall measurements of the magnitude of threats against business in general,' to track these views over time, and to delineate 'the cultural areas of population sub-groups within which the major changes are occurring.' It was vitally important that big business acquaint itself with mass opinion on this score, for 'some of the forces swaying public attitudes are not in line with the continued good health of Canadian private enterprise.'

The September 1944 survey found support for government ownership on the rise. Thirty-seven percent of Canadians favoured 'government owner-management' for all of the following industries: hydro-electricity, railways, airlines, banks, insurance, telegraphs and telephones, radio, logging, mining, and steamships. Individually, hydro-electricity had the most public support for
state control, logging the least. The survey also probed Canadians views on the following companies: Bell Telephone Co. of Canada, Canadian General Electric, Canadian Industries, Canadian Westinghouse, Chrysler Corporation, Dominion Rubber, Ford Motor Company of Canada, General Motors of Canada, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. of Canada, Imperial Oil, Imperial Tobacco Co. of Canada, Northern Electric, and RCA-Victor. One explanation for the relatively high levels of support for state enterprise, the report advanced, were the 'consistent efforts of the C.C.F. and [other] socialistic-minded' politicians.\textsuperscript{62} The general appeal of the survey was twofold: it provided Canadian corporations with an overall view of the mass opinion landscape, particularly concerning issues of state regulation and nationalization. It also penetrated attitudes on specific companies and their competitors - not just views on products or services. A wealth of geographic and demographic breakdowns, made more reliable by the exceptionally large base sample, facilitated fine-tuned analyses and planning - 'the use of the "rifle" technique of promotion and education rather than the "shotgun" technique.'\textsuperscript{63}

How much if any of these poll findings made their way to Murray or Trestrail is unknown. Some of the aforementioned companies - Imperial Oil, Imperial Tobacco, Bell Telephone - counted among Murray's business sponsors, and conceivably survey results could have been passed on.\textsuperscript{64} In any event, the above events highlight the disparity of polling preparedness between the political left and the business right leading up to the 1945 election. Caplan makes the point that the CCF was organizationally ill-equipped for 'counter-propaganda' activities, and that it had greatly overestimated the 'revered Common Man's' capacity to discern Trestrail's and Murray's 'self-evident' lies.\textsuperscript{65} Lewis, acknowledging Trestrail's work as a 'masterpiece of propaganda,' attributed to the CCF's response a 'lack of political sophistication,' one compounded
by a 'failure to appreciate the strength of the acquisitive psychology implanted in Canadians by the materialistic environment of North America, and, more importantly, the electoral strength of cleavages other than those of class.\textsuperscript{66} One can see how even a remedial polling program would have better informed CCF officials on these counts, both to the extent of the Trestrail-Murray influence on voters and of the demographics and political outlook of non-class cleavages. But, as recounted above, the CCF faced structural-ideological barriers to adopting the marketing dictum, even though the party's intelligentsia were among the first to publish a 'political-consumer' survey.

That Trestrail and other business interests were early movers in adapting consumer research techniques to the political arena was foreseeable: market research surveys had been part of the commercial landscape since the late 1920s. That their efforts were in turn used against the CCF reads as much like Greek tragedy as it does an early achievement of commercial politics.

* 

For the federal Liberals, the wartime years saw mercurial swings of fortune. The first Gallup Poll on party standings in January 1942 pegged Liberal support at 55 percent, three points higher than its share of the 1940 vote. But soon after, Grit support began to tumble. In the Fall of 1942, its Gallup numbers were under 40 percent, and by the following September support had bottomed out at 28 percent. In Ontario in 1943 and Saskatchewan the year after, Liberal governments were pummeled by voters. Similarly, the Union Nationale replaced the Godbout Liberals in Quebec in 1944. Badly haemorrhaging support to the CCF in English Canada, Mackenzie King's party confronted the unenviable prospect that had befallen Britain's Liberals: political marginalization in the wake of left-right polarization. After Liberal by-election losses in August 1943, King wrote in his diary of the CCF and Communist gains: 'In my heart, I am not
sorry to see the mass of the people coming a little more into their own but I do regret that it is not a Liberal party that is winning that position for them.\textsuperscript{67} How King succeeded in 'winning that position for them,' eventually securing a slim majority government in 1945, has been well documented and need not be recounted here in detail.\textsuperscript{68} Party notables, like Norman Lambert and Brooke Claxton, reactivated the dormant National Liberal Federation (NLF) in September 1943. The NLF Advisory Council subsequently endorsed a range of progressive policies touching on full-employment, social security, old-age pensions, and family allowances. The government's January throne speech reconfirmed the party's commitment to reconstruction and social welfare.\textsuperscript{69} The Liberals' cautious welfarist programme contained just enough to woo back CCF defectors but not enough to trigger a serious exodus of right-wing and business supporters to the Tories.\textsuperscript{70}

The role of party organization, finance and advertising in contributing to the Liberal victory has been explored by Whitaker and Granatstein.\textsuperscript{71} But neither author addresses in detail the party's use of polling. The Liberal Party embarked upon three polling projects, all organized by the advertising agency, Cockfield, Brown. Two surveys of Claxton's riding were undertaken. A national poll gauged the popular appeal of campaign slogans. And an extraordinary series of surveys in 43 Ontario ridings in 1944 measured Liberal strengths and weaknesses in the province shaping up as the key electoral battleground.

Cockfield, Brown was Canada's first advertising agency to conduct systematic market research, having established in 1929 a Commercial Research and Economic Investigation Department soon after its founding. Assisted by university-based consultants, the company conducted or coordinated consumer research in numerous locales across the country. A key figure in the development of the firm's market research capacity was H.E. Kidd. Born in
Stockholm in 1902 to British parents and educated in Sweden, Kidd moved to Vancouver in 1921. After a year's work in a sawmill, Kidd landed a reporting job with the Vancouver Daily World. In 1926 he joined the Eastman Advertising Company as a research and account executive, and four years later he signed on as a field representative in Cockfield, Brown's research department, working out of the Vancouver office. Subsequently, Kidd travelled widely, conducting marketing investigations for B.C. industries like cedar shingles, apples, and the Pacific fishery. In 1937, he moved to the firm's Montreal head office to become an account executive, and shortly after he was handling the files of important clients like the Dominion Textile Company, the Aluminum Company of Canada, and the Canadian Bankers' Association.72

Kidd professed longstanding ties to the Liberal Party, claiming to have 'worked with and in the Liberal organization since 1925.73 However, his direct links to the party hierarchy (which culminated in his 1949 appointment as NLF secretary) began in 1940 when Claxton, seeking to unseat the longtime Tory incumbent in the Montreal riding of St. Lawrence-St. George, engaged the services of Cockfield, Brown. He was assigned Kidd, who effectively organized campaign publicity, emphasizing the use of radio advertising.74 Kidd's ties to Claxton remained close after the election, when he served as volunteer publicist for the newly-minted MP, forwarding copies of Claxton's speeches and articles to dozens of magazines and newspapers, along with press releases on his public activities.75 No other backbencher benefited from such a coordinated public relations campaign. The bright, hard-working, and politically-astute Claxton, though an awkward glad-handler, would no doubt have eventually achieved political prominence with or without Kidd's input. But the speed with which this novice MP ascended the governing ladder, becoming King's parliamentary assistant in 1943 and a year later minister of national health and welfare,
suggests that Kidd's efforts to distinguish Claxton from a very crowded field of Liberal backbenchers were not inconsequential.

Judging from the confidence Claxton placed in Kidd, the up-and-coming MP was well attuned to the political uses of the professional ad man. When asked by King to help organize the NLF Advisory Committee meeting of September 1943, Claxton turned to Kidd and other Cockfield, Brown executives for advice on policy options, the state of Liberal organization, and business reactions to Liberal defeats in the Ontario election and recent federal by-elections. Kidd rallied support within the agency for partisan involvement, overcoming one colleague's disdain for the unreliable paymaster 'hypocrites of Ottawa,' and by early 1944 Cockfield, Brown had cemented a deal making it the Liberal Party's sole provider of national, English-language advertising. Having skilfully outmanoeuvred MacLaren Advertising, its principal Liberal-affiliated rival, Cockfield, Brown transferred Kidd to Ottawa to liaise directly with the NLF and to begin work on restoring the Liberals' sagging fortunes.

Soon after Claxton's invitation to Cockfield, Brown, in September 1943, Kidd suggested that a 'careful survey of [his] constituency should be made fairly soon.' In early 1944 Claxton took up the offer. The first of its kind in Canada, the quota sample constituency poll, completed sometime in late February or March, was conducted by the Cockfield, Brown research department at cost -15 cents for each of the approximate 200 interviews. The survey report does not survive, but that of an April follow-up poll of St. Lawrence-St. George voters is available. The 190 person, in-home survey contained breakdowns by sex, age, language, income and marital status. The poll asked if it mattered much or little which party ran the country's affairs, and whether voter party loyalties were strengthening or diminishing. Half the sample was undecided,
but of the remainder 61 percent opted for the Liberals, while the Tories placed a distant second at 20 percent. The news was not all reassuring for Claxton: only 22 percent of voters could name their MP. The report also grouped the riding's polls by A-B-C-D census class designations, information which could later be used to devise door-to-door campaign strategies. Another information service was also provided to enhance Claxton's electoral prospects. Interviewers were disingenuously instructed to identify themselves as researchers 'making a series of studies on political problems in Canada,' telling respondents that 'we do not want your name - just your opinion.' Nonetheless, a list of addresses of people voting Liberal was included in the report. Kidd's matter-of-fact way of conveying this to Claxton ('you will also find attached the addresses of respondents saying they would vote Liberal') suggests that this breach of respondent anonymity was a perfectly acceptable means of securing voter intelligence.\(^{80}\)

Cockfield, Brown and the NLF formalized their contractual arrangement on 15 March 1944, and three days later Claxton and Kidd discussed the prospect of opinion surveys. Their deliberations would eventually result in two separate endeavours - a national survey to 'pre-test' campaign slogans, and the riding polls in Southern Ontario. However, the polling project was originally conceived, incredibly, as a series of surveys in most of Canada's 245 federal ridings. Claxton, insisting the survey be scientifically rigorous, suggested Kidd contact American Gallup officials or Princeton survey researcher Hadley Cantril, both of whom had provided polling services for Ottawa's Wartime Information Board.\(^{81}\) Kidd sought to have Harold Poole, Cockfield, Brown's Director of Research, visit Princeton right away, but a busy schedule prevented his immediate departure.\(^{82}\) Instead, F.W. Gross, an account executive with a marketer's flair for 'political merchandising,\(^{83}\) contacted Cantril by phone. The Princeton professor proved
highly accommodating, even agreeing to visit Montreal to offer survey advice, but he was strongly adamant that his involvement remain strictly confidential. Cockfield, Brown officials thought the survey should be restricted to voting-related questions, but Cantril advocated a more expansive approach, as Gross later reported to Kidd:

Cantril...is very strongly of the opinion that it is in the field of campaign issues and policy where we may be of greatest help to the Liberal party. His view was that, supposing we do determine how a particular constituency will vote, of what use is that information without some knowledge of why it will vote that way. He answered my objection regarding the complications by saying that campaign issues and policy matters should be surveyed only on a National basis...He recommends, therefore, that we conduct a number of sample surveys to determine what in the public view, are the main issues in the national sense involved in the coming election.

Gross also solicited advice on handling the Liberals' perceived Achilles Heel: the unpopularity of King, who, Gross callously claimed, was viewed by voters as a 'dictatorial automaton without humanness and colour.' Cantril offered some reassurance; his polling for President Roosevelt had shown that many voters resented his 'cocksureness.' Roosevelt subsequently gave a humility-laden speech, emphasizing that he had made past mistakes and would undoubtedly make future ones. The result, according to Cantril, was that public sentiment 'changed almost over night.' Gross thought, quite rightly, that King would be far less amendable to similar attempts at an image make over. Cantril also dissuaded Gross from polling in most ridings. The cost and logistical problems would be enormous, and ample political data could be attained from a selected sample of ridings. By late March, Cantril's suggestion that 'campaign issues and policy matters' be surveyed nationally was given closer consideration.

On 30 March, Claxton wrote Cantril, soliciting survey research and psychological insight on a proposed political message: 'If the government can organize the country for war, it can do it for peace. The members of the government have proved their skill.' Cantril, responding shortly
after, warned of the 'very real danger' of this political appeal. If the Canadian political situation were analogous to the American one, such an appeal 'would spell suicide for the Administration as an argument,' for voters saw wartime and peacetime governing as fundamentally different phenomena. Americans strongly supported Roosevelt's wartime administration, but if peace came soon the President would almost certainly lose the next election. (Churchill's later defeat lends some credibility to this analysis.) Cantril, however, did agree with Claxton's idea of 'moving ahead with the liberal [sic] party,' underlining that the key problem was 'how to present your theme, how to say it,' and to do so 'in a better way than the other chaps.'

Soon after, Cockfield, Brown organized a national survey on political slogans to determine the most effective way 'to say it.' As Kidd later relayed to Cantril, the poll's purpose 'was to establish whether it is practical to pre-determine the value of a slogan by finding out which one people will go for.' The 1068-person survey cost the NLF $450, and, in characteristic fashion, responses were broken down by sex, age, urban-rural, income, occupation, and party affiliation designates. Respondents were asked to select from a list of six slogans the one which 'best tells the story of what the country could expect from the political party you favour?' These were: 1) Work-Progress-Unity, 2) Bring Victory Home, 3)Let's March Forward Together, 4)Keep Moving Forward, 5)Let's Stay Prosperous, and 6)The (X) Party Gets Things Done. The overall first choice, picked by 27 percent of respondents, was 'Work-Progress-Unity.' But among Liberals, the slogan scored only 23 percent, compared to 39 percent for CCF supporters. Such a slogan might lure CCF supporters to the Liberals, but it also carried the risk of reinforcing a political message associated with socialist principles. A seemingly better choice for the Grits was 'Bring Victory Home,' which scored first among Liberal supporters (29%) and
also among undecided voters (38%), while faring poorly with CCFers (14%). But this slogan's utility obviously hinged on the prospects and timing of Allied victory. Before D-Day, public support for such sentiment was naturally quite high, but once Allied victory became a foregone conclusion, say by early 1945, its appeal would be significantly lessened as people's sights became more fixed on postwar concerns.

The least preferred option was 'The (X) Party Gets Things Done,' which scored only 7 percent overall, but 13 percent among Liberals.87 And yet, surprisingly, this slogan was chosen by Cockfield, Brown to anchor a proposed ad campaign for the summer of 1944. A short run of 'The Liberal Party Gets Things Done' actually appeared in the Saskatchewan election, which saw the governing Liberals reduced to a five-seat rump.88 Cockfield, Brown executives' rationale for this choice, advanced on 23 May, was that this 'background' advertising campaign would reinforce in voters' minds that the Liberal Party 'does accomplish what it sets out to do.' Later when Liberal election promises were made they would be 'more readily believed if the people [were] convinced before hand' that the party had 'the ability to accomplish anything they promise.' The slogan's low survey ranking, however, presented a problem for the ad planners, and a consensus arose that 'not a great deal of usefulness would be served in presenting the results of this survey.'89 The proposed $150,000 ad campaign, approved by Jimmy Gardiner, the minister in charge of electoral organization, and the Publicity Committee of the Cabinet, however, never got off the ground. In a problem that would plague NLF-Cockfield, Brown relations, the necessary 'financial arrangements' for the national campaign 'were not completed.'90

Concurrent with the work of the slogan survey, Claxton and Cockfield, Brown officials discussed plans for a series of constituency polls.91 Claxton's initial idea of surveying each of the
Liberals' 176 seats was soon jettisoned on the altar of cost and logistical capability. Cantril had earlier suggested to Gross that ridings be grouped into categories of 'fairly certain,' 'doubtful' and 'extremely doubtful,' with polling mainly targeting the latter two. One week later, on 31 March, plans were set in motion for a survey of some 50 ridings in Toronto and Southwestern Ontario. The rationale for this geographic choice was not explicitly stated, but it likely derived from two key considerations. Politically, the Liberals in early 1944 were reasonably strong in French Quebec and the Maritimes. In the West, however, party prospects were generally bleak (the Grits would take only 19 of 71 seats in 1945). Consequently, Ontario, with its 82 seats, loomed large as a make-or-break Liberal battleground. The party commanded strong support in the province's northern and eastern ridings, owing in part to higher Catholic and French Canadian representation, but its support in Toronto and Southwestern Ontario was far less secure. Of the eventual 43 seats surveyed, 26 were Liberal, but roughly three-quarters of these had voted Tory until 1935. Retaining as many of these 'swing' seats as possible was vital to the party's chances for re-election. A second, and more pragmatic consideration, was these ridings' proximity to Toronto, where Cockfield, Brown had a branch office and from which the survey could be managed. The city was also home to Canadian Facts, a leading market research organization which provided trained interviewers for the project.

After receiving Jimmy Gardiner's approval and a $5000 advance from the NLF, Cockfield, Brown began work on the project on 11 April. Under Poole's direction, questionnaire pre-testing commenced in Toronto with the help of Canadian Facts' interviewers handpicked by John Graydon, the company president. After trying surveys of various lengths, they adopted a questionnaire similar to that used for the Claxton constituency poll. The survey probed: whether
it mattered which party ran the country, and if so if it most mattered between Liberals and Tories or between the CCF and the 'older parties'; the state of voter party loyalty; if people could identify their MP; how and in which riding they had voted in 1940 and in the Ontario election; and how they would vote today. Thus, the survey was mainly limited to voting and party matters, and did not attempt to identify the salient issues among riding constituents. As such, it fell somewhat short of Cantril's dictum that political polling should integrate voting and issues questions. By late April, polls in three Toronto ridings - York East, Danforth, and Eglinton - had been done.

By early May, work on the remaining 10 Toronto-area polls was winding down, and Poole began arranging for out-of-town surveying. It soon became evident, however, that rural polling was far more expensive than its urban counterpart. An average of 100 respondents were queried in each riding by two groups of interviewers travelling by car. Though Gardiner was adamant that the survey not exceed its $5000 allotment, Poole informed Kidd on 22 May that the Canadian Facts bill for the 27 completed or in progress polls was $3,730, and the estimate for all readings would be $6,013. Moreover, this figure did not include Cockfield, Brown's 'out-of-pocket,' or overhead, expenses, which would be an additional 100 percent. The total bill to the NLF would be in the area of $12,000 and thus it was necessary, Poole informed Kidd, to contact NLF officials and 'get some more money in the bank.' (The 100 percent markup was subsequently lowered when it was determined that Canadian Facts would do most of the survey tabulation.) It is not known how much, if any, additional money was secured, but the surveys continued apace and by mid-June 43 ridings had been canvassed, spanning from Toronto to Windsor and from the Niagara Peninsula to Lake Huron.

And what did the results reveal? As a Claxton memo to King summarizing the findings
made clear, Liberal prospects in Southern Ontario were gloomy. The Grits held 26 of the 43 polled ridings, but only 12 seats were likely to return Liberal members. The CCF stood to gain 17 seats, the Tories to lose three. Of Ontario's 82 seats, Claxton estimated the Liberals would capture 20, the CCF 26, the Tories 35, and the Communists 1.\textsuperscript{100} In some Liberal ridings, Grit seepage to the CCF was astounding. In Hamilton East, the CCF stood at 50 percent, the Liberals 26 percent. In Hamilton West and Trinity, the respective numbers were 47 and 24 percent, and 44 and 23 percent.\textsuperscript{101} Such bad tidings, Claxton suggested, should not be widely circulated, lest some MPs' nascent 'defeatism' become more ingrained. Rather, the results should be limited to cabinet ministers and key party officials.\textsuperscript{102} Claxton's unsettling news was the likely catalyst for King's same-day tirade to cabinet colleagues lamenting the shoddy state of party organization.\textsuperscript{103}

Soon after, plans were made to extend the polling programme to Ontario's remaining ridings, with the exception of the less accessible northern ones. A $6,000 budget for 30 additional riding surveys was drawn up and presented to Liberal Party Chairman Gordon Fogo on 18 July. But Fogo viewed the proposed survey as an unwarranted - and arguably unaffordable - expense and turned it down. He did, however, authorize an additional $375 to complete a statistical breakdown of survey results from 19 southwestern Ontario ridings, currently being done by Canadian Facts.\textsuperscript{104} The impetus for this statistical analysis had come from Graydon himself.

Writing Poole in early June, Graydon provided a textbook enunciation of the consumer researcher's marketing vision, only this time pertaining to a 'political' marketplace:

I think we are agreed that the results of the interviewing in the Ontario ridings can only be of the greatest value if they are analyzed to bring out differences in the thinking of different groups so that promotion plans can be aimed at specific groups. For example, you and your client should know how much difference, if any, there is in the political thinking of men and women, between members of labour unions and non-members, between various age groups, between income classes and between city sizes or urban and
rural residents.

Graydon originally proposed that the statistical analysis cover the roughly 4,400 cases comprising most of the surveyed ridings.\textsuperscript{105} In the end, however, for reasons which are not entirely clear, the analysis was limited to a 2,200 person sample drawn from the 19 southwestern ridings.\textsuperscript{106}

By August, polling work for the Liberals was largely complete, and no subsequent surveys were commissioned.\textsuperscript{107} Two likely reasons account for this cessation. Many in the Liberal camp in the spring and summer of 1944, including King as late as 13 July,\textsuperscript{108} believed a fall election was likely. But by late summer it was apparent the federal writ would not drop soon. Concerns in September about the readiness of the Liberal organization in Quebec were followed by the events of the second conscription crisis, and King resolved to postpone voting until fighting in the European theatre had neared completion, likely the following spring.\textsuperscript{109} The organizational imperative tied to an impending election was removed, thus lessening the immediate need for voter surveys. Secondly, and more importantly, Liberal party organizers at this time were increasingly hard pressed to raise the necessary funds for research and promotional activities.\textsuperscript{110} Liberal payments to Cockfield, Brown were held up, and relations became tense enough that Kidd felt compelled to write Claxton that ‘the money deadlock must be broken.’\textsuperscript{111} The exact amount of money passing from Liberal to Cockfield, Brown hands during this period is not known.

Whitaker points to an NLF report stating that $14,537 was paid to the firm from March 1944 to January 1945. However, agency invoices for about $23,000 were also sent to the NLF over the same period.\textsuperscript{112} Presumably, the actual figure fell somewhere in the middle. It would seem, therefore, that polling costs formed a considerable part of overall Cockfield, Brown billings. Records show that the NLF gave the agency $5,375 for the Ontario surveys and accompanying
analysis, plus $450 for the national slogan poll. But additional revenue would also have been
needed to cover the $6013 cost of Canadian Facts interviewing and whatever overhead charges
Cockfield, Brown would have tacked on top.

Similarly, it is not possible to determine precisely the extent to which poll findings
influenced campaign strategies and advertising in the June 1945 election.113 Of the 43 surveyed
ridings in Ontario, only 13 voted Liberal in 1945, which suggests a limited instrumental value for
the surveys at the constituency level. A Fall 1944 Cockfield, Brown memo drew on data from the
Ontario survey to report that many voters had moved ridings since 1940 and that most could not
name their MPs. Undecided voters predominated among 'young people, women, and middle-
agers with depression memories,'114 and these groups should be especially appealed to by Liberals.
Kidd, in a post-election report, again referred to the Ontario and slogan surveys, emphasizing that
the 'results of these polls of public opinion were carefully studied.'115 The forward-looking,
demographic-specific nature of Liberal election advertising also suggests a measure of marketing
insight. As Whitaker describes, Liberal advertising 'appeals went out to specific sectors of the
population, to farmers, to union workers, to returned soldiers, to small businessmen, and to
housewives -with a dual emphasis in each case on the actual achievements of the government with
regard to the special interests of the recipient...''116 This certainly points to a more efficient and
effective advertising approach than that suggested by such generic CCF appeals as 'They
[financiers] Can't Hold Back the CCF March.' Evidently, as Cantril had earlier counselled, the
Liberals had indeed learned to 'present [their] themes' in a 'better way than the other chaps.'

*

Irony imbibes this study. A socialist magazine trumpeted Canada's first voter survey and
political marketing programme, but polling would make negligible inroads with the CCF. Indeed, the party would bear the brunt of business attacks shaped in part by polling itself. That the Liberal Party far outran the CCF with respect to political surveying is not surprising. The cadre party Liberals were little beholden to the rank-and-file, with party decision-making effectively centralized in a coterie of key organizers and cabinet ministers. Its lengthy tenure in office had fostered close ties with advertising agencies like Cockfield, Brown, which possessed a strong market research capacity and were well placed to draw on firms like Canadian Facts for more specialized research services. Survey advice from Hadley Cantril similarly served the party well. But the most important factor was the presence of two talented men: Bob Kidd, the research-wise advertiser; and Brooke Claxton, the 'organizational genius' of the Liberal Party. These two pols, more than anyone else, helped usher in 'twentieth-century' political marketing.
Endnotes

1. Philip Spencer, 'We Went to the People,' Canadian Forum, 21 (April 1941), 23

2. F.W. Gross (Cockfield, Brown advertiser) in National Archives of Canada (NAC) H.E. Kidd Papers, MG 32 G9, vol. 21, file 1, Gross to Kidd, 24 March 1944


5. The polling industry's generally short-sighted view of its own history is seen with Walker's statement that the 'public-opinion business emerged simultaneously over the past three decades [since the late 1950s] within academic circles as well as in the commercial world.' David C. Walker, 'Pollsters, Consultants, and Party Politics in Canada,' in Alain G. Gagnon and A. Brian Tanguay, eds., Canadian Parties in Transition (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1989), 387; Khayyam Zev Paltiel, 'Political Marketing, Party Finance and the Decline of Canadian Parties,' in ibid., 341. Paltiel does, however, note in passing that such polling 'activities [were] traceable to the 1940s.'

6. Robert Fulford glibly asserts that 'ever since [his] visitation, Louis Harris has occupied among Canadian pollsters a position equivalent to that of a major saint in the Roman Catholic Church.' See 'Election Frauds,' Saturday Night (Nov. 1992), 72. For other accounts locating the rise of electoral polling in the early 1960s, see Jeffrey Simpson, 'Pollstruck,' Policy Options (March 1987), 3-7; Fulford, 'This Brain for Hire,' Saturday Night, (Dec. 1985), 33-4; Claire Hoy, Margin of Error: Pollsters and the Manipulation of Canadian Politics (Toronto: Key Porter, 1989), 21-2


13. Spencer, 'Pardon Me, Madam, how often do you take a bath?', Canadian Forum 20 (Dec. 1940), 274-6


16. Spencer, 'We Went to the People,' Canadian Forum 20 (Jan. 1941), 317

17. Spencer, 'We Went to the People,' Canadian Forum, 21 (April 1941), 22. Original emphasis.

19. 'We Went to the People -II,' Canadian Forum 20 (Feb. 1941), 348

20. 'We Went to the People - III,' 20 (March 1941), 379-82

21. 'We Went to the People,' Canadian Forum, 21 (April 1941), 20, 21, 24

22. Two articles on advertising appeared in 1942, which attacked the 'unpardonable waste' of corporate advertising during wartime. C.D. Watt, 'The War and Advertising,' Canadian Forum (May 1942), 47-8; 'Advertising and the War,' Canadian Forum (Oct. 1942), 218-9

23. Queen's University Archives, Ontario CCF/NDP Papers, Executive Minutes, 17 Jan. 1941, cited in Morley, Secular Socialists, 46


25. CCF, vol. 157, 'Confidential Memorandum: "What the Poll Means to the CCF,"' circa April 1943


28. Young, Anatomy of a Party, 179, 178, 45, 50; Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 44


31. Zakuta, A Protest Movement Becalmed, 46; Morley, Secular Socialists, 101-3

32. David Lewis and Frank Scott, Make This Your Canada (Toronto: Central Canada Publishing, 1943), 133-44; Engelmann, 'The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada,'

33. Lipset, Agrarian Socialism, 244-66
34. Young, *Anatomy of a Party*, 164-75

35. Walker, 'Pollsters, Consultants, and Party Politics in Canada,' 385. Similarly, Walker suggests that one reason for the federal NDP's belated start in opinion polling was its ties to organized labour: 'the trade unions have long been suspicious of polls and, within their organizations, have relied on the mythology of union democracy to legitimize their leadership. In this context, many unions have found it difficult to endorse the concept that a market research company, which normally deals with corporate clients, can, through the magic of polling, understand the working world better than the membership.' 389

36. For two brief advertising references, see McHenry, *The Third Force in Canada*, 58; Caplan, *Dilemma of Canadian Socialism*, 113, 164-5. Caplan notes that CCF advertising in 1944 was done by a 'friendly professional advertising concern, the William Orr Advertising Company.' 113 The party had hoped to raise $500,000 for the 1945 election but only managed to secure $84,000.


38. Young, *Anatomy*, 200; Caplan, *Dilemma*, 164

39. Caplan, 113

40. For this see the advertising trade magazines, *Canadian Advertising and Marketing*.

41. Whitehorn, *Canadian Socialism*, 262

42. Caplan, *Dilemma*, 88


44. Young, *Anatomy*, 111; Paltiel, *Political Party Financing in Canada*, 51


47. 'Gladstone Murray as a Point of Reference,' *Canadian Forum* 23, (March 1944), 270-2

48. Caplan, *Dilemma*, 123

Young, Anatomy, 204; Lewis, Good Fight, 312

50. Young, Anatomy, 200

51. Lewis, The Good Fight, 318

52. TFRBL, Kenny collection, pam-0436, 'Social Suicide,' 1945; Young, Anatomy, 203

53. Social Suicide, 3; Stand Up and Be Counted, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1944), 15. Original emphasis.

54. Stand Up and Be Counted, 31. For David Lewis's reaction, see The Good Fight, 315-7

55. Social Suicide, 3

56. Caplan, Dilemma, 160


59. Ibid., Box 17, file 245-5-0-1, 'First Quarterly Survey of the Canadian Public's Attitude Towards Business and Industry,' Oct. 1944. The poll sampled 1,200 people in each of the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec, the Prairies, and B.C. The national results were weighted by population size, but the large regional samples afforded more accurate demographic breakdowns. The company also claimed that ten percent of questionnaires received from its 216 interviewers were re-checked by office staff as a quality control measure.


61. AO, Elliott Research, Box 17, file 245-5-0-4, 'Public Attitudes Towards Canadian Business and Industry,' Feb. 1945


63. Ibid., 'Public Attitudes Towards Canadian Business and Industry,' Feb. 1945
64. See Lewis, *The Good Fight*, 311; Caplan, *Dilemma*, 132

65. Caplan, *Dilemma*, 195

66. Lewis, *The Good Fight*, 316, 199

67. King Papers, MG 26 J 13, King Diary, 9 Aug. 1943, p. 623


70. On the cadre party nature of the federal Liberals, see Whitaker, *The Government Party*, 405-7


75. Whitaker, *Government Party*, 227. For one example, see Carolyn Cox, 'First Parliamentary Assistant,' *Saturday Night*, (5 June 1943), 2. The extent of Kidd's close association with Claxton is playfully alluded to in one stanza of a 1942 limerick written for Kidd by colleagues:

Of thinkers, past and present then,
If we must name our pick,
In unison we'll name the guy
Who makes Brooke Claxton tick

Kidd Papers, vol. 21, file 1, 'We Wouldn't Kidd Him,' 1942

76. In December, Cockfield, Brown was informally invited to begin work on pre-election advertising, but the deal was not actually signed until 15 March 1944. Provincial-run campaigns could use other advertisers, and the Canadian Advertising Agency was given charge of French

77. On the mutually-rewarding, though sometimes antagonistic, relationship between Cockfield, Brown's partisan work and federal government advertising, see Whitaker, Government Party, 225-36

78. Kidd, vol. 1, file 8, Kidd to Claxton, 30 Sept. 1943. From March 1944 to the start of the 1945 election campaign, Cockfield, Brown performed nearly $2600 of paid work in Claxton's riding. During the 1945 campaign, $2,750 of Claxton's $5109 in advertising spending was handled by Cockfield, Brown. Whitaker, Government Party, 228

79. Kidd, vol. 1, file 9, Poole to Claxton, 15 Feb. 1944


81. On WIB polling, see Robinson, 'Polling Consumers and Citizens,' 201-271

82. Kidd, vol. 4, file 4, Kidd to Anderson, 19 March 1944

83. For example, see Gross's input during a December 1943 company meeting: 'Voters are divided into three groups: the staunch Liberal supporters; the large middle group who get their ideas from their newspapers and radio and are undecided which way to vote; and the third group who are loyal to an opposition party. The first group obviously can be left out and not much can be done about the third. Therefore let us attack the middle group. Print ads, not selling Joe Blotz, but selling the idea -what it is going to do for them, as workers in a plant, for instance. Sell, "Maintain production -it will help you!" Another thing, do not give political speeches on the radio -sell dramatized shows merchandising the idea. Instead of having political speeches at rallies [sic], etc., produce motion pictures carrying out the same merchandising angle. In the past, politicians have not done a merchandising job, which is actually what should be done.' Kidd, vol. 4, file 3, 'Notes on Meeting re: National Liberal Organization,' 10 Dec. 1943

84. Kidd, vol. 21, file 1, Gross to Kidd, 24 March 1944

85. Ibid., Cantril to Claxton, 4 April 1944. Original emphasis

86. NLF, vol. 603, file 'Public Opinion Survey 1944,' Kidd to Cantril, 3 June 1944

87. Ibid., various tables; file 'Ontario Survey, 1944,' Poole to Kidd, 17 July 1944

88. Ibid., Kidd to Cantril, 3 June 1944. Of $25,613 spent by the Liberals in the Saskatchewan election, more than 250 percent than was spent in 1938, just $5505 was handled by Cockfield,

89. Kidd, vol. 21, file 1, Waldo to Kidd, 23 May 1944


91. This polling project is mentioned briefly in Granatstein, *Canada's War*, 385, and Bercuson, *True Patriot*, 123

92. Kidd, vol. 4, file 4, Kidd to Anderson, 19 March 1944; ibid., vol. 21, file 1, Gross to Kidd, 24 March 1944; NLF, vol. 603, file 'Gallup and Opinions, 1944,' Poole to Anderson, 31 March 1944


94. Constituency redistribution and riding name changes make an exact comparison of 1930 and 1940 seat differentials difficult. For these riding results, see Howard A. Scarrow, *Canada Votes: A Handbook of Federal and Provincial Election Data* (New Orleans: Hauser Press, 1962), 82-4, 111-13

95. NLF, vol. 603, file 'Gallup and Opinion Polls, 1944,' Kidd to Gross, 11 April 1944; Gross to Kidd, 12 April 1944. Kidd, vol. 4, file 4, Brown to Robertson, 14 April 1944; Kidd to Poole, 8 June 1944; vol. 11, file 9, Poole to Kidd, 14 April 1944

96. NLF, vol. 603, file 'Ont. Survey 1944,' Poole to Kidd, 1 May 1944

97. Ibid., Kidd to Gardiner, 2 May 1944; Poole to Kidd, 12 May 1944; Anderson to Kidd, 19 May 1944

98. Ibid., Poole to Kidd, 22 May 1944

99. Ibid., Anderson to Gross, 23 May 1944. A later Cockfield, Brown budget quote to a Liberal official involved a 25 percent mark up above survey costs. Ibid., Poole to Kidd, 17 July 1944; Kidd Papers, vol. 11, file 9, Kidd to Fogo, 18 July 1944

100. Kidd, vol. 21, file 6, Claxton to King, 28 June 1944

102. Kidd, vol. 21, file 6, Claxton to King, 28 June 1944

103. J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Forster, eds., The Mackenzie King Record: Volume 2 1944-1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 20-1

104. NLF vol. 603, file 'Ont Survey 1944,' Poole to Kidd, 17 July 1944; Kidd to Poole, 20 July 1944. Kidd, vol. 11, file 9, Kidd to Fogo, 18 July 1944

105. NLF, vol. 603, file 'Ont. Survey, 1944,' Graydon to Poole, 6 June 1944

106. These ridings, which came under the ministerialist direction of Secretary of State Norman McLarty, were: Brant, Brantford, Elgin, Essex East, Essex South, Essex West, Huron North, Huron Perth, Kent, Lambton Kent, Lambton West, London, Middlesex East, Middlesex West, Norfolk, Oxford, Perth, Waterloo North, Waterloo South.

107. In July, Kidd again attempted to have Cantril visit Ottawa. Cantril's busy teaching and White House consulting schedule prevented such a trip, but he did invite Kidd to visit him in Princeton. NLF, vol. 603, file 'Ont. Survey 1944,' Cantril to Kidd, 26 July 1944; Kidd to Cantril, 28 July 1944

108. Pickersgill and Forster, eds., The Mackenzie King Record: Volume 2 1944-1945, 21

109. Granatstein, Canada's War, 387-9

110. Whitaker, Government Party, 233

111. Kidd, vol. 1, file 9, Kidd to Claxton, 17 July 1944

112. Whitaker, Government Party, 233

113. NLF records (vol. 802-805) on the 1945 election do not discuss opinion polling.


116. Whitaker, Government Party, 159

117. Ibid., 226