

**A Way of Thinking: Ideas and Practices of
Political Leadership in Canada 1900-50¹**

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Abstract

At some point in the twentieth century, a whole way of thinking about Canadian politics and governance was washed away and replaced by another way of thinking. It is widely accepted today that in the Canadian political system executive power is practically limitless between elections, that prime ministers and premiers with a majority government have a free hand during their "mandate." The accountability of executive to legislature and of leader to caucus is generally accepted to have ceased to be relevant to Canadian political life. For Canadians interested in legislative responsibility and in parliament as a place for political issues to be brokered and political leadership to be tested, the early years of the twentieth century offer a number of examples worthy of attention. In the early 1900s, several episodes occurred that speak directly to our frustrations with unaccountable governments today. They offer a sharp contrast to our early twenty-first-century ideas about the responsibility of leaders to caucuses and governments to legislatures

Résumé

À un certain moment au cours du 20^e siècle, une façon de voir la politique et le gouvernement au Canada a disparu pour être remplacée par une toute nouvelle façon de penser. Il est généralement admis aujourd'hui que, dans le système politique canadien, le pouvoir exécutif est pour ainsi dire incontesté entre les élections et que les premiers ministres à la tête d'un gouvernement majoritaire ont les mains libres pendant leur « mandat ». La responsabilité de l'exécutif envers la législature et du chef envers son caucus n'est plus guère évoquée dans la vie politique canadienne. Pour les Canadiens qui s'intéressent à la responsabilité législative et au parlement en tant que lieu de tractation politique et de mise à l'épreuve du leadership des chefs, les premières années du 20^e siècle offrent un nombre d'exemples éloquentes. Dans les années 1900, plusieurs événements se sont produits qui trouvent un écho dans nos frustrations actuelles devant ces gouvernements qui refusent de rendre des comptes. Ils présentent un contraste marqué avec les idées que l'on se faisait au début du siècle de la responsabilité des chefs envers leurs caucus et des gouvernements envers les législatures.

In 1995 the political scientist Alan Cairns wrote an essay entitled "The Constitutional World We Have Lost." Cairns cited an observation of another political scientist, J.R. Mallory, who referred to "the once evocative phrase 'responsible government.'" According to Mallory,

responsible government "was the pivot around which English-Canadian historians developed the theme of evolving Canadian autonomy and the building of a Canadian nation." Mallory also provided a definition: "Responsible government means majority government, but majority government of a particular sort -- majority rule, not by the electorate, but by a majority of the electorate's representatives." According to Cairns, the world evoked by "responsible government" was the constitutional world that is now lost.²

All historical worlds become lost in the end, and historians would have little to do if they did not. Certainly, Cairns was not indulging in regretful nostalgia. He welcomed the transformation in Canadian political culture and declared "constitutional imagination" a greater need than "the historian's expertise." But Cairns was right to draw attention to the fact that at some point in the twentieth century, a whole way of thinking about Canadian politics and governance was washed away and replaced by another way of thinking. The lost world drew on a distinctly Canadian heritage of parliamentary government, in which the achievement of "responsible government" was both a key moment in Canadian political evolution and a long-lived model for appropriate political behaviour.

It is widely accepted today that in the Canadian political system executive power is practically limitless between elections, that prime ministers and premiers with a majority government have a free hand during their "mandate." On a day-to-day basis, we agree, party leaders are accountable to no one. Backbench representatives are understood to be mostly powerless and mostly worthless, and any inability of a leader to control his followers is a sign of scandalous weakness. We more or less concede that to bring down one of these incumbent leaders, no matter how inept or unpopular, the only option available is for a rival virtually to destroy the party along with the party leader, in a process that takes years, cost millions, and mostly involves the massive competitive buying of party memberships. The accountability of executive to legislature and of leader to caucus is generally accepted to have ceased to be relevant to Canadian political life.

We don't even have the language with which to analyze its loss, because it's a question of being responsible to a legislature, and the whole language of legislative sovereignty and parliamentary accountability is the dead language of a lost world, as Cairns noted. Canadians entertain proposals for Senate reform, for electoral reform, for transfers of power to the provinces, and lots

of proposals for direct democracy to end-run the whole problem of representation. But on the accountability of executive to legislature, the most radical suggestion we ever hear is the pious plea that party leaders should "allow" their followers more free votes on matters that are not important.

For Canadians interested in legislative responsibility and in parliament as a place for political issues to be brokered and political leadership to be tested, the early years of the twentieth century offer a number of examples worthy of attention. In the early 1900s, several episodes occurred that speak directly to our frustrations with unaccountable governments today. They offer a sharp contrast to our early twenty-first-century ideas about the responsibility of leaders to caucuses and governments to legislatures. That they have never commanded the attention they deserve is more evidence of that shift in worldview Cairns alerts us to.

One stark example of a different relationship between leaders and legislatures from early in the twentieth century was the resignation of Interior Minister Clifford Sifton from the cabinet of Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier in 1905. In 1905, Laurier was at the height of his influence, and Sifton was among his most influential

ministers. Then Sifton disagreed with the language policy that Laurier proposed for the two new provinces being established that year. Laurier wanted to entrench minority language educational rights in Alberta and Saskatchewan; Sifton wanted to give the new provinces a free hand to remove those rights. Laurier used his prime ministerial authority to impose his views on the government's legislative proposals while Sifton was away from Ottawa. When Sifton learned what his leader had done, he resigned from cabinet. Sifton never returned to the cabinet table; his career in the executive level of politics was over.

At first glance, this looks like a very familiar kind of prime ministerial autocracy: the prime minister imposing a personal policy choice upon cabinet and caucus and country. But it is worth looking closely at what happened here. After Sifton resigned, Laurier in effect surrendered to the new backbencher. It was Sifton who redrafted new language clauses of the Alberta Act to his own satisfaction, and it was Laurier who abandoned his own preferred text and accepted Sifton's draft.

I have drawn most of the details of this event from D.J. Hall's very useful 1980s biography of Sifton. But Hall's book is also useful as an illustration of how hard it is to recapture the way of thinking of that

parliamentary world we have lost. Hall, having documented Sifton's success in defying and changing the policy of a prime minister at the height of his power, goes on to say that Sifton, in leaving cabinet, had been reduced to "the impotence of the backbenches."³

It seems clear that it was precisely the opposite. If Sifton had remained a cabinet minister, cabinet solidarity would have obliged him to acquiesce impotently in Laurier's language policy. By going to the backbenches, on the other hand, Sifton was able to organize resistance among the western and Ontario Liberal MPs who did not want to vote for French language rights in the new provinces. With Sifton's inspiration, they made it clear to the prime minister that much of the Liberal caucus would not support Laurier's bill, and they forced changes in it.

Sifton apparently wielded more influence on this piece of Interior Ministry policy as a backbencher than he could have done as Minister of the Interior. That is a perfectly normal occurrence in parliamentary systems, where cabinet ministers are bound by cabinet solidarity, but where party leaders must always be alert to caucus dissidence. It is not, however, a process most of our political historians can any longer recognize in Canadian politics. Like

Professor Hall, we cannot think "backbench" without thinking "impotent."

The early twentieth century offers many other examples of the Canadian parliamentary tradition in which Members of Parliament asserted this kind of control over party leaders. Robert Borden's leadership crisis of 1910, just one year before he became prime minister, is another example that speaks directly to our contemporary politics. In 1910, Borden had been opposition leader for ten years, and to many Conservatives he seemed outdated, dull, and a constant loser. The Conservatives foresaw endless defeats under his leadership. A Dump-Borden movement surged up in the Conservative caucus.

In 1910, such challenges did not fester unresolved for years at a time, awaiting the emergence of well-financed rivals to orchestrate a mass party convention and a leadership review vote. Borden agreed that he had to face his critics in caucus immediately. He offered the caucus his resignation and challenged his critics to put someone up against him. Then each side surveyed the party membership across the country. When they did, MPs found messages of support for Borden coming from their ridings and organizers back home. The challengers got the message and backed down. Borden remained leader.

We can see in operation here two principles largely unknown in Canadian parliamentary processes today. One is the clear authority of the caucus to review and replace a party leader. The other is the accountability of MPs to their constituencies back home. Not being entirely beholden to whoever held the party leadership, the MPs of the early twentieth century had latitude to consult their supporters' views in the process of making up their own minds. In this case, such consultation dissuaded most of them from a course of action that had seemed attractive from within the caucus room itself.⁴

Borden became prime minister a year after this test, but he continued to face a feisty, assertive caucus. In 1912 Quebec members of his caucus dissented from his naval policy. In 1918 and 1919, the Nickle resolutions on honours and titles (recently made famous by Conrad Black) were pushed through the House of Commons by the Conservative caucus (with opposition support) against the inclination of Prime Minister Borden and his cabinet. And in 1914, there was a backbench challenge to a key piece of Borden's economic legislation, a \$300 million subsidy to the Canadian Northern Railway. The challenge did not go far, and almost the whole Conservative caucus supported Borden's policy. Still, the challenge is of interest, not

just because it came from a future prime minister, R. B. Bennett, who was then a backbencher, but also because of the language that Bennett and his allies used.

In the Commons debate on the railroad subsidy bill, Bennett justified his opposition to it by saying, "In this new democracy... there must be room in the party to which I belong for independent spirit and independent thought. I must be permitted to exercise the intelligence that Providence gave me." One of his caucus allies argued in the same vein:

I am not willing to admit that it is necessary to the solidarity of party government that the crack of the party whip should be so loud and its sting so sharp that individual responsibility should be absolutely abrogated.⁵

We should not take these speeches too seriously; they have a large rhetorical content, and they came from caucus dissidents who were about to lose overwhelmingly. Still, given the history of caucus rebellions against Laurier and Borden, there was indeed precedent for the assertion of backbench authority of the kind Bennett hoped to re-launch here. When Bennett invoked the MP's right of independent thought and speech, even against the policy of his party leadership, he was linking his dissidence to a

parliamentary tradition his hearers knew and respected. He explicitly linked the caucus' s freedom to overrule its leader to "democracy."

I want to cite two more cases from the politics of this era. One is the selection of Arthur Meighen as Robert Borden' s successor as leader of the Conservative party and prime minister in 1920. When Prime Minister Borden retired, he canvassed both his cabinet and the caucus about the succession. The cabinet and the party establishment strongly supported Thomas White as the next leader and the new prime minister. The caucus, however, insisted on Meighen, and the caucus got its way.⁶

The other case comes from provincial politics. It concerns the departure from office of Premier Parent of Quebec in 1905. Simon-Napoléon Parent, a Liberal, had been premier of Quebec since 1900, and in the provincial election of late 1904 his party had won 68 of the 74 seats. This was a situation of one-party dominance similar to what we have seen in recent years with Premiers Frank McKenna and Bernard Lord in New Brunswick and Premier Glen Campbell in British Columbia, situations in which those premiers have enjoyed virtually unlimited authority during their four-year mandates.

But historian Bernard Vigod describes the 1904 Quebec provincial election as "the bitterest and most closely fought one-party election in parliamentary history." Many of the Liberal candidates, in fact, were progressives openly opposed to the conservative and uncharismatic Parent. There were fierce battles for Liberal nominations, and in several constituencies, "independent Liberal" candidates ran against the party standard-bearers. Just a few months after the election, the new caucus, by majority vote, removed Parent from office and replaced him with cabinet minister Lomer Gouin. Parent went off to a patronage job in Ottawa, and Gouin remained premier of Quebec for the next fifteen years.⁷

In 1905, in other words, the legislative caucus had, and was understood to have, the authority to hire and fire leaders. An overwhelming election victory was seen as empowering the party caucus, not the party leader. Ideological faction-fighting within the party caucus was understood to be a sometimes-inescapable aspect of parliamentary democracy.

There are other examples I might cite: the fight within the federal Liberal party over reciprocity in 1911, the Liberal party's split over conscription in 1917, the campaigns of Henri Bourassa and Armand Lavergne against

Laurier's policies within the Liberal caucus in the early years of the century. Some of these cases, involving the "national question" of French Canadian survival, make bad test cases, for they generated the kinds of fundamental tensions that might split parties in any circumstances and go far beyond the kinds of factional conflicts and leadership accountability issues that I am suggesting were relatively "normal" Canadian parliamentary processes up to about 1920.

The point is clear enough. Members of Parliament, commentators, and the political public in the era 1900-1920 frequently identified the legitimacy of governments with the accountability of governments to the elected legislators. In practice, that meant Members of Parliament claimed the right to contradict, and even to replace, their own leaders. In exercising that right, the backbenchers frequently spoke the language of responsible government. Often, they invoked Baldwin and LaFontaine and specifically linked the accountability of leaders to caucuses with the triumph of responsible government in Canada, but they could also invoke the concept of "democracy" in the way Bennett did.

This tradition then came to an end, suddenly and decisively enough to justify Alan Cairns' reference to a

lost world. The decisive date in the transformation is easy to spot. It came when Leader of the Opposition and Liberal Party leader Sir Wilfrid Laurier died in the spring of 1919. The Liberal Party turned a scheduled policy conference into a leadership convention, the first extra-parliamentary mass-membership leadership selection process in Canadian political history. To confer leadership selection upon a mass party convention meant an explicit break with the view that the hiring and firing of party leaders was a defining principle of governmental responsibility and must be the prerogative of elected representatives. As we have seen, when Meighen succeeded Borden in 1920, a year after the Liberal Party convention, the Conservative Party stuck with the established parliamentary process. Thereafter, all parties, federal and provincial, shifted to the mass party extra-parliamentary leadership selection process that has been the Canadian standard ever since. (It remains a uniquely Canadian innovation, largely unknown in the rest of the parliamentary world.)

The consequences of this change can be seen to have taken effect almost immediately. It is true that for about three decades after 1919, MPs and party establishments continued to wield great influence upon leadership

conventions. No one became a party leader by running against the caucus and the party establishment until John Diefenbaker did it in 1956. (John Diefenbaker, particularly when in opposition, made much of his reverence for Parliament. But he could not have become Conservative leader if the choice had been up to the caucus. Even when he skillfully marshalled his supporters in caucus against the cabinet revolt of 1962-3, he acknowledged the caucus's right only to support him, not to remove him.)

It was to get rid of Diefenbaker that Dalton Camp and the Conservative party established the other aspect of the leadership-convention process in the early 1960s: namely, that if the mass party membership hired the leader, the mass party membership could also remove and replace the leader. But the impact of extra-parliamentary leadership selection upon Canadian politics can be seen long before Diefenbaker's rise and fall.

The first person to identify the implications of transferring control of the leadership from caucus to convention was, not surprisingly, the first winner of a mass party leadership convention, William Lyon Mackenzie King. Wilfrid Laurier and Robert Borden had lived with restive caucuses that frequently debated whether or not to support the leader's chosen policy. King never really had

to concern himself with a dissident caucus. Throughout his long tenure, he had extraordinary freedom to make and change policy, with an eye on the electorate certainly, but without the concern that earlier leaders had had to show for the sensitivities of the parliamentary caucus. King understood he was not answerable to the parliamentary caucus.

More important, perhaps, the caucus itself understood the same thing. As an observer of the process, John Lederle, described it in 1947, Mackenzie King:

placed great stock in the fact that he was selected by a democratic convention and not by the parliamentary caucus. On those rare occasions when the parliamentary caucus [had] begun to growl... he... more than once silenced the parliamentary leaders by emphasizing that he [was] the representative and leader of the party as a whole, not merely of the parliamentary group. What the parliamentary group did not create, it may not destroy.⁸

King had the best of both worlds. To the public, he liked to say, "Parliament will decide." But in parliament, it was clear that, as long as he commanded a majority government, King alone would decide, since parliamentarians

no longer had any standing to challenge a leader who was not accountable to them. In theory, King accepted his accountability to the party at large, but the Liberal Party held no further conventions between 1919 and his retirement in 1948. Accountability to party, unlike the older accountability to caucus, was a purely theoretical restraint.

Despite his 1914 protestations of backbencher freedom, R.B. Bennett, the first Conservative party leader chosen by the party at large, also came to approve of the freedom from accountability the new system provided. His abrupt reversal of Conservative Party policy in the "Bennett New Deal" of 1935 was undertaken largely without consultation with his caucus. He, as much as King, now made policy without much concern for the once-mighty backbench, and critics and rivals had to depart and form new parties rather than orchestrate opposition within the caucus. "Democracy" had become firmly associated with the impotence of the caucus. (Indeed, as early as 1920, Liberal backbencher Samuel Jacobs had mocked Arthur Meighen in the House for not being "elected in an open convention, as we consider to be the custom in a democratic country."⁹)

I suggest that 1919 was the key moment in the death of that old, parliamentary "world we have lost." It remains a

maxim of Canadian parliamentary theory that the government is responsible to parliament. From the establishment of responsible government in 1847-8 until 1919-20, however, the leader of the government was genuinely responsible to the majority caucus, both for the policies he wished to initiate and for his own continuance in office. Robert Baldwin and Louis-Hypolite LaFontaine, the first two government leaders under responsible government in the Province of Canada, had each proven the rule by leaving office, not when they lost an election, but when they lost the confidence of their caucuses. In the decades that followed, party leaders in Ottawa and the provinces - Alexander Mackenzie, Mackenzie Bowell, Robert Borden, Simon-Napoleon Parent, to name a few - had to work with, and sometimes surrender to, caucuses confident in their authority to hold their leaders accountable - they would have said "responsible" - to them.

That tradition stopped dead with Mackenzie King, and it has never come back. When this was written in the fall of 2002, it was generally accepted that at least a hundred of the 170 members of the governing Liberal caucus in Ottawa did not support the current leader and prime minister, Jean Chrétien. This was seen as humiliating to the prime minister, but only the prospect of defeat in a mass party

leadership race could force him to yield office. Pending the formal mass party vote, his right to remain in office for months or years and to retire at a time exclusively of his own choosing went unchallenged. It remained universally accepted in Canada that only a mass party leadership review could remove a party leader from office. Prime Minister Chrétien took the same position in the face of caucus dissidence as Mackenzie King and John Diefenbaker and Stockwell Day. Since 1919-20, all leaders in all parties have denied that the caucus holds any power over their tenure in office, forcing their rivals either to form new parties or to appeal to the party at large, usually from outside Parliament. A party leader's freedom to remain in office until a date of his own choosing - unless the mass membership of the party has been slowly and cumbersomely mustered against him or her - is fundamental to the modern concept of Canadian "parliamentary" democracy.

1919 marked a very important transition in our politics. It was the end of the seventy-five-year tradition of responsible-government ideology as a practical reality in political leadership. Mackenzie King's version of responsibility, in which leaders are immune to caucus control, has displaced the older version, in which leaders

were constantly responsible to the people's elected representatives. Since then, our political culture has been unable even to entertain the question as to whether something may have been lost.

Is it too simple to link the whole change, the extinction of a way of thinking about legislatures and accountability in Canadian politics, to a simple technical change in Liberal Party internal politics in 1919? I have not done primary research into how politicians and political thinkers in 1919 interpreted the new leadership-process the Liberal Party inaugurated; indeed, it might be a useful research project for anyone who finds these issues interesting. So far as I can judge from the secondary literature, the thing seems to have been largely a non-issue. It is at least possible, odd though it seems, that by 1919 nobody cared enough about the accountability of leaders to parliamentarians to comment on the end of that tradition.

There is some evidence to that effect in the writings of Eugene Forsey. Forsey is generally considered a parliamentary traditionalist, indeed the keeper of parliamentary traditions in Canada, always ready to unearth an obscure parliamentary precedent from the Rules of Order or from English political history. And Forsey despised and

loathed Mackenzie King precisely for King's abuse of Parliament. In his article, "Mr. King and Parliamentary Government," first published in 1951, Forsey went hammer and tongs after King for a whole series of failings in constitutional theory and practice. The article posed one great question about King: "Was his basic constitutional creed really parliamentary democracy or plebiscitary democracy with a thin parliamentary veneer?"

Answering his question, Forsey observed that King consistently acted as if the prime minister was above Parliament, as if he were not confined by cabinet or caucus or by House resolution, and as if he had unlimited authority to dissolve a House of Commons that failed to support him, even to the point of holding several successive general elections until the voters elected the kind of government the prime minister approved of. Parliament, in Forsey's paraphrase of King's views, "was a mere creature of the cabinet."

The Houses may still meet; laws may still, in name, be enacted by the Crown, the Senate, and the Commons; the ancient pageantry, the time-honoured forms, may still be preserved. But the breath will have departed. Nothing will be left

but a lifeless image, a puppet dancing at the end of strings held by the prime minister.¹⁰

What is striking, however, is that Forsey blamed the new situation of parliament-as-puppet mostly on the sheer evil malignity of Mackenzie King's character. He made no attempt that I can find in his published writings to link King's vast - and in Forsey's view, illegitimate - authority over cabinet, caucus, and legislature to the fact that his selection as leader had been an extra-parliamentary process.

King did, in fact, have a new relationship with his parliamentary caucus, and that status had given him new and unprecedented grounds for claiming that he did not bear the accountability that his predecessors had accepted. If the parliamentary majority could not hold him to account, then he was not responsible to Parliament in the way all his predecessors had been. Forsey makes no mention of the fact. As early as 1951, the greatest thinker and commentator on parliament and parliamentary processes of his time had lost the ability to speak the dead language from the lost world of responsible government as completely almost as anyone else in Canada.

In his essay, Professor Cairns dates the time when the whole Westminster-derived language for discussing,

analyzing, and defending parliamentary democracy through the concept of responsible government lost its currency in Canada, to "around the time of Diefenbaker." But an intellectual change preceded the political one. In English Canada at least, mainstream historical interpretations had already shifted decisively away from the old tradition of worshipful attention to the grand traditional themes of constitutional reform, increased liberty, and national independence for Canada.

The most effective historical critic of that older tradition was Donald Creighton. Creighton called the Canadian political history written up to his day "merely lives of Robert Responsible-Government and Francis Responsible-Government and Wilfrid Responsible-Government," and dismissed it all as merely Grit propaganda. Creighton argued it was economics and geography and power that drove Canadian history. The significant political leaders were the ones who understood those forces, not those who engaged in what Creighton called "a highly unreal voyage of discovery for first principles," certainly not those who had campaigned for parliamentary reform.¹¹

Dismissive commentary on the nineteenth-century Canadian political tradition has remained practically universal among Canadian historians since Creighton's day.

Ask for a statement about confederation from any Canadian historian of the last fifty years, and the first thing they say is, "The Fathers of Confederation were not democrats." I've been making a collection of uses of this phrase, at least in English. Creighton said it, and Arthur Lower said it, and J.M.S. Careless said it. In more recent times, Philip Buckner, from the constitutional history mainstream, has said it. So have Allen Greer and Ian Mackay from the social-history and Marxist perspective. So has even Jack Granatstein, the most articulate advocate of restoring politics to Canadian history.

Creighton's argument was that Canadian history was not about political or constitutional ideas at all. And ever since, there has been consensus among our historians and political scientists that if we are interested in issues of democracy and good government, there is really no Canadian historical tradition to guide us, that we can and must start from scratch to create viable Canadian political traditions. Cairns largely takes that view in "The Constitutional World We Have Lost," but the argument comes most strongly, perhaps, from a book by another political scientist, Peter Russell's *Constitutional Odyssey*, whose significant subtitle "Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People?" expresses the widely-held assumption of Canadian

political experts that with regard to the most fundamental aspects of government, Canada has no political traditions to preserve or to build upon.¹²

The history Creighton mocked, that old textbook celebration of responsible government and Canadian progress, was mostly superficial, complacent, bad; I don't want to suggest we should all start reading George Wrong again. But the older tradition was a history that took Canadian political history seriously. It began from the conviction that the moment when the Crown's executive in Canada was made accountable to the elected representatives of the people was a genuinely transforming event in Canadian history. It did have that core belief summarized by J.R. Mallory's definition of responsible government, that democracy was secured through "majority rule not by the electorate, but by a majority of the electorate's representatives," and that sovereignty was rooted in legislatures rather than in the executive branch.

That's the intellectual world Canada has lost.

Something important and lasting occurred in our politics near the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century. There was a rapid, decisive, lasting, and almost-undiscussed transformation from a strong and vigorously applied tradition that political leaders should be held

constantly accountable by the elected representatives in their own party caucuses, to a new tradition in which there was virtually no leadership accountability at all.

This was not just a technical change but also a change of mind and a change of thinking about parliamentary government. So far, it has been almost completely unstudied, almost entirely unexplained, and almost entirely unnoted by political and intellectual historians who share the new worldview and can barely take cognizance of the old one. We have heard complaints from our political historians that political history, the 'national history' of Canada as it has been called, is undervalued and unappreciated. But there might be a larger audience for political history if political historians gave us a version of Canadian political history that addresses the enduring classical issues of government, parliament, and accountability. As long as we remain sure that, whatever our faults, we are surely superior in all respects to Canadians of earlier times, then we won't even have the language we need with which to describe and analyze our ongoing parliamentary paralysis.

¹ In the colloquium for which this essay was written, the "overview" papers (of which this is one) were announced as the work of established scholars in each field. I would like to make clear that I have never published any scholarship on the politics of the period 1900-1950. But I have views on the period and, when asked, I was delighted to share them.

² Alan Cairns, "The Constitutional World We Have Lost," pp. 43-67 in C.E.S. Franks et al, eds. *Canada's Century; Governance in a Maturing Society Essays in Honour of John Meisel* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1995). Also see J.R. Mallory, "The Continued Evolution of Canadian Constitutionalism," pp. 51-98 in Alan Cairns and Cynthia Williams, eds., *Constitutionalism, Citizenship, and Society*. (Studies for the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

³ D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton, Vol. 1: The Young Napoleon 1861-1910*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1981), particularly pp.177-191.

⁴ R. Craig Brown, *Sir Robert Laird Borden: A Biography*, Vol. 1. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1975), p. 167ff.

⁵ Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1914 Vol. 4, p. 3696ff, May 13-14, 1914.

⁶ Brown, *Borden: A Biography*, Vol. 2 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1980).

⁷ Bernard Vigod, *Quebec before Duplessis: The Political Career of Louis Alexandre Taschereau* (Montreal: McGill-Queens, 1980), p. 25ff.

⁸ John C. Courtney, *The Selection of National Party Leaders in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), p. 128, quoting John Lederle in *Dalhousie Review* #27 (April 1947) p. 86.

⁹ Bernard Figler, *Sam Jacobs, Member of Parliament* (Montreal: privately published, 1970).

¹⁰ Eugene Forsey, "Mr. King and Parliamentary Government," (1951) in *Freedom and Order* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, The Carleton Library #73, 1974), quotations from pages 98 and 109.

¹¹ I have set out these thoughts about Creighton's influence in more detail in Christopher Moore, "A River with Attitude: The Empire of the St. Lawrence, Donald Creighton, and the History of Canada," Introduction to the reissue of Donald Creighton, *The Empire of the Saint Lawrence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

¹² Peter Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).