



CPA: The Canadian Scene

Thirty-third Regional Conference, Ottawa, August 8-13, 1993

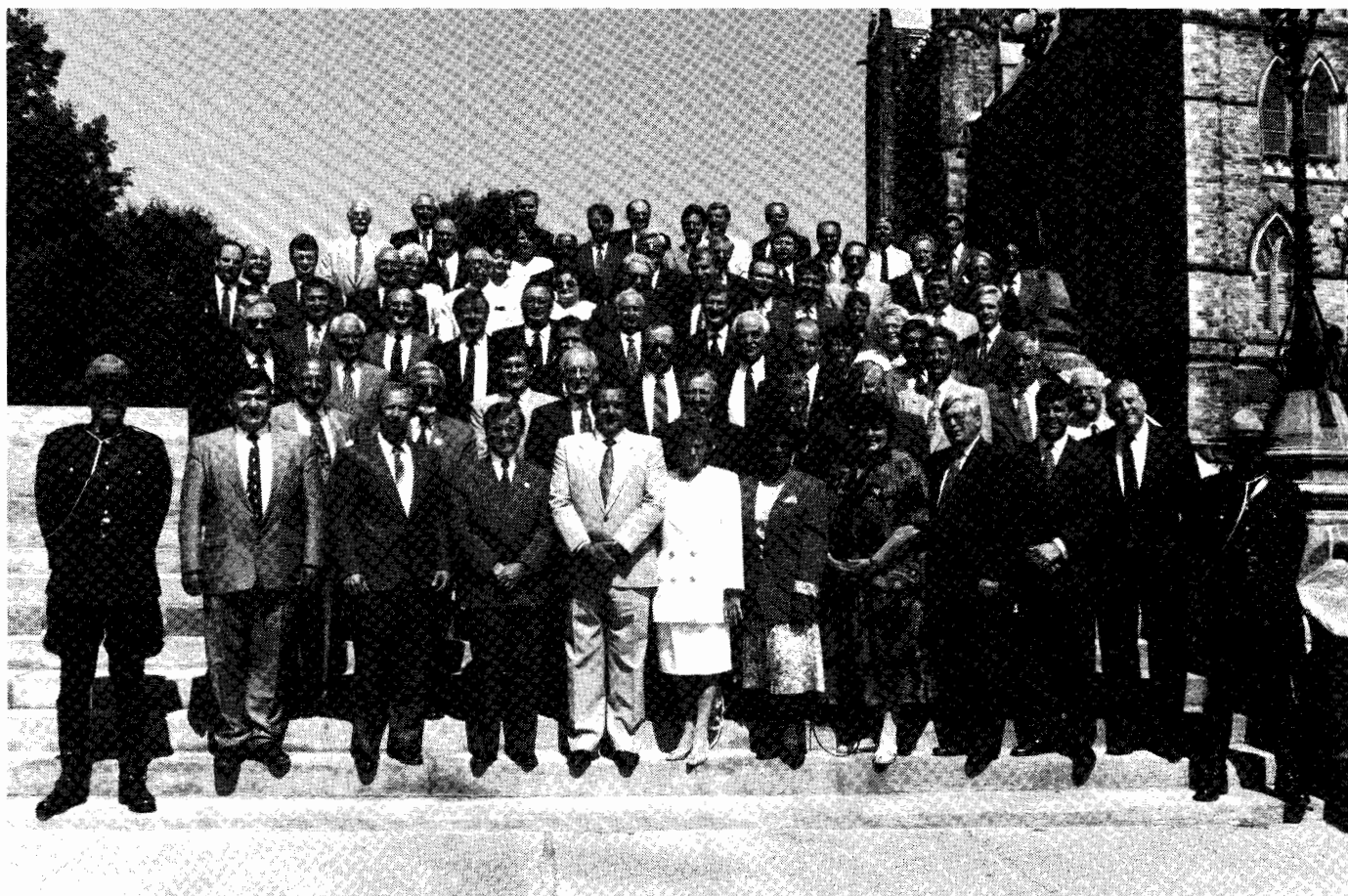
For the first time since 1970 the Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Ottawa. The Chairman of the conference, Senator C. William Doody welcomed delegates representing

every jurisdiction in Canada as well as representatives from the United Kingdom, Bermuda, Barbados and the Cayman Islands.

The conference, held in the Senate chamber, was opened by Senator Gerald Ottenheimer, Deputy

Speaker of the Senate. Steve Paproski brought greetings from the House of Commons and Don Mazankowski welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Government.

The theme of the conference was Representative and Responsible



Delegates to the 33rd Canadian Regional Conference, CPA (Andy Shott)

Government Reconsidered. The first session dealt with changing the nature of representation. Lead speakers were **Doreen Hamilton**, MLA, Saskatchewan and **Georgie Day**, MLA, New Brunswick. Much of the discussion focussed on the question of affirmative action and to what extent parties should amend their rules to encourage broader involvement from under-represented groups.

The next session featured presentations by **Stan Schumacher**, MLA, Alberta and **Paul MacEwan**, Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly. They described the process for choosing new leader in their respective parties. (See article on pp. 5-11 of this issue). In the case of Nova Scotia, a tele-convention was tried for the first time in North America. In Alberta, universal suffrage by members of the PC party was used to choose **Ralph Klein** who subsequently won the general election.

The third session dealt with the issue of lobbying. It consisted of presentations by **Don Boudria**, MP, a member of the House of Commons Committee that examined this question recently and **David Warner**, MPP, Speaker of the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

The fourth session on parliamentary scrutiny of expenditures provided a comparative perspective thanks to presentations by two United Kingdom parliamentarians, **Alan Beith**, MP and **Sir Malcolm Thornton** as well as by **Sybil McLaughlin**, Speaker of the Cayman Island Legislature and **Christiane Pelchat**, MNA, of the Quebec National Assembly.



The fifth session was on the lessons of the constitutional referendum held October 26, 1992. The panelists were Senator **Gerald Beaudoin**, former Chairman of the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada and **Keith Spicer**,

former Chairman of the Citizen's Forum on Canada's Future. Many of the questions raised during the debate over the Charlottetown Accord were revived. Senator Beaudoin observed that future amendments would probably have to be dealt with individually instead of as part of a large package. Mr. Spicer suggested we have to start thinking of Canada as more than a jurisdictional jigsaw puzzle.

The final session focussed on free votes, responsible government and legislative reform. The lead speakers were **Dennis Streifel**, MLA, British Columbia and **Paul Dicks**, MHA, Speaker of the Newfoundland House of Assembly.

In addition to the business session the conference provided an opportunity for informal exchanges among members of the various jurisdictions. The highlight of the social program was the trip to Kingston, Ontario including a tour of Fort Henry, lunch at Royal Military College, hosted by **Peter Miliken**, MP for Kingston and the Islands and a visit to Kingston's imposing City Hall built in anticipation of that city being designated the capital of Canada in the 1840s.