

EDITORIAL

With this issue the review published by the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is modifying its name to CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW. The first issue, published in June 1978, contained a message from the Secretary-General of CPA, Sir Robin Vanderfelt. He noted that Canada has 13 legislatures and thousands of people serving them. "The country is vast, it does not know itself; still less do its parliamentarians know each other... this ignorance has to be overcome for the sake of Canada and for the sake of the institution of parliament itself... this review will help". In June 1980 the REVIEW introduced a new format to rationalize the contents into more clearly defined areas.

The adoption of a new title now does not mean our objectives have changed; we still aim to inform Canadian parliamentarians about developments in CPA and in federal and provincial legislatures as well as to promote the study of and respect for parliamentary institutions in Canada. The CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW will be more than a newsletter about Association activities. However it will not become a journal devoted mainly to the analysis of public policy. There are already numerous such publications. Our aim will be to focus not so much on policy as on how parliamentarians deal with policy questions. What opportunities are open to them; what constraints do they face? In this issue, a relatively new question, parliamentary scrutiny of science policy is examined in two articles, one by a former Member of Parliament, the other by a university professor.

Other problems legislators face are not new. Indeed the more we examine parliamentary traditions in Canada and in various provinces the more we are struck by similarities between the past and the present insofar as the role of legislators is concerned. A prerequisite for knowing where we are going is to understand where we have been. For this reason the REVIEW will publish, from time to time, studies which shed light on some aspect of our parliamentary origins. The article on the career of a Quebec MP at the turn of the century provides some interesting comparisons about life on Parliament Hill then and now.

The REVIEW will give special attention to articles dealing with ways of accommodating parliamentary practice to changing circumstances. In its report section and through articles on procedure, privilege, statutory instruments, conflict of interest and other important but unpublicized issues the REVIEW will attempt to serve all members of the parliamentary community who grapple with the many-sided issue of parliamentary reform.

Representative institutions do not exist in a vacuum and the REVIEW will seek contributions from both inside and outside legislative assemblies. The ongoing challenge will be to strike a proper balance between federal and provincial material, between parliamentarians and knowledgeable outsiders, and between French and English contributions. The success of the REVIEW will depend to a large extent on cooperation from all those interested in parliamentary institutions. With your help it will succeed in attaining its objectives.

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