



CPA: The Canadian Scene

Tenth Regional Seminar

The 10th Canadian Regional Seminar of the CPA will be held in Ottawa from November 25-29, 1985. The topics, as approved by the Canadian Regional Council at its meeting of June 8, 1985, are as follows: Redistribution and the Optimum Size of Legislatures; Choosing the Party Leaders: Is There a Better Way?; Parliament and the Polls; Courts and Legislatures in the Age of the Charter; and Technology and Information.

Twenty-fifth Conference

The twenty-fifth Conference of the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Quebec from July 21 to 27, 1985.

The conference was opened by the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, **Gilles Lamontagne**. The President of the Quebec National Assembly, **Richard Guay**, also extended a welcome to delegates from every legislative jurisdiction in Canada as well as invited observers including Sir **Michael Shaw** and **Alfred Morris** from Great Britain, **Jack Genia** from Papua New Guinea, Speaker **W. St. Clair Daniel** from St. Lucia, **Robert Moinet** of the International Association of French Speaking Parliamentarians, **John Bragg**, Chairman of the National Conference of State Legislatures and **Earl Mackay**, Executive Director of the NCSL.

The special guest of honour was **Roland Michener**, former Governor General of Canada and delegate to the very first conference of Canadian parliamentarians held in Halifax in 1958.

Mr. Guay declared, "conferences held for parliamentarians are very often unjustly viewed as pleasure trips. Yet parliamentary relations are part of what I could call a member's continuing education. In an increasingly complex world it is of the utmost importance that parliamentarians have access to those sources of information which will enable them to better fulfill their task... This year, therefore, we have attempted to improve

the format of the conference with plenary sessions and panel sessions. I am counting on the active participation of everyone to make these meetings a success."

After the opening ceremonies, a representative from each branch reported on activities over the past year. Sir **Robin Vanderfelt**, Secretary General of CPA, was then asked to address the conference. He briefed members on the international activities of the CPA including the forthcoming conference in Saskatchewan.

The first plenary session gave participants an opportunity to hear **James McGrath**, Chairman of the Special Committee on Reform of the House of Commons which tabled its report on June 18 and **Michael Adams**, President of *Enviro-nics Research Group* of Toronto, a firm which has conducted a survey research of how Canadians view their parliamentary institutions.

Mr. Adams outlined the relatively low esteem in which Parliament is held. Mr. McGrath summarized recommendations relating to the reform of committees, scrutiny of executive appointments, private members business, and other changes designed to improve the role of private members. He concluded with some comments on the role of the Canadian Region and the valuable role it can play in the reform process.

"Many issues that effect all Canadians are trans-jurisdictional and are the focus of debate at both the provincial and national level. At present there are numerous federal-provincial conferences, not only involving the first ministers, but also involving other members of the executive branch of the federal and provincial legislatures. Meetings on issues from aboriginal rights to energy policy have become institutionalized over the past number of years. It seems to me that a logical extension of the reform process would be to institutionalize the regional meetings of the CPA as the forum for private members. The collective views of private members from the federal and provincial levels could make a significant contribution to the discussions presently underway on important issues. In order to establish the regional meetings of CPA as the forum in which private members can speak out on issues of cross-

jurisdictional concern, it is my belief that we will have to broaden our present membership and significantly raise the profile of the organization". With the support of an organization like CPA the private member of Canada's legislatures will be able to champion the ongoing cause of reform of our governing institutions."

On July 23 delegates divided into workshops. The panel on the role of the private member consisted of **Lise Bourgault**, federal Member of Parliament and **Robert Jackson**, Professor at Carleton University. Discussions centred on the parliamentarian's role as legislator and controller of the Executive. The member's role as an intermediary was also stressed. This role may sometimes conflict with his political background and with what is known as "party discipline". The delegates also considered the relationship between the member and the representatives of the media, who are frequently looking for a spectacular news story, whereas the member's duties are generally quite unspectacular. Finally, the delegates turned to the limitations on parliamentarians' freedom of speech, when a nuanced interpretation of a specific situation can immediately be interpreted as a dissenting opinion.

The panelists on "The Committee System" were **Richard French**, Member of the National Assembly, and Professor **Graham White**, of the University of Toronto. They discussed the number and specific nature of the functions fulfilled by parliamentary committees. The discussion also dealt with the organization of committees, especially their make-up and the orientation of their work. In this respect, the participants considered the role of the committee chairman, the participation of ministers and party discipline in the context of a parliamentary committee. The delegates finally dealt with the issue of the independence of parliamentary committees, which has a significant impact on their effectiveness.

Donald Cameron, Member of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly, and **Jeffrey Simpson**, columnist with the *Globe and Mail*, led off the discussion of "Question Period". The session

began by considering the nature of question period, that is, the tool available to the Opposition to exercise a degree of control of the actions of the government and to question ministers on a given subject, while recognizing that it is also a means of obtaining information from the government on a matter of public interest lying within its jurisdiction. The discussion then turned to the performance aspect of question period, emphasizing that it provided the member an opportunity to attract the attention of journalists and the public, and with much less effort than through the other aspects of his work as a parliamentarian.

The panel on the "Confidence Convention" consisted of **Robert Rae**, Leader of the New Democratic party in the Ontario Legislature, and **Philip Laundy**, Clerk Assistant of the House of Commons. The participants discussed the responsibility of the government before Parliament, and changes to the confidence convention in light of the McGrath committee report and the Liberal-NDP agreement which brought down the government in Ontario.

Following the workshops the delegates returned to the plenary session to hear reports from the Chairmen of each workshop.

On July 24 the delegates travelled to Pointe-au-Pic where they reconvened to consider subjects on the conference's second theme, relations between Canadian parliamentarians and American legislators. The four panels were as follows: Economic Development, Senator **David Nething**, North Dakota, and **Kenneth Kowalski**, Alberta; The Environment, Representative **Jim Consta**, California and **Abe Kovnats**, Manitoba; Health

Policy, **Evelyn Bacon**, Saskatchewan and Representative **John Bragg**, Tennessee; The Arts, Senator **Tarky J. Lombardi**, New York and **Bruce Strachan**, British Columbia.

At noon the Director of the Institute for U.S.-Canada Business Relations at Pace University in New York, **Steven Blank**, addressed the delegates on the subject of Canadian-American relations. In a thought provoking address he cautioned politicians not to become bogged down in short term analysis of costs and benefits of particular trade sectors. In the afternoon the Chairmen of the workshops, **Claude Dauphin**, **Jean Lafrenière** and **Jean-Paul Champagne** of Quebec and **Jean Poirier** of Ontario gave reports on the discussions that took place in their sessions.

The session on Economic Development essentially focused on four subjects: foreign trade, tourism, privatization and deregulation, and natural resources. In regard to foreign trade, the delegates considered the role of the provinces and the States in realm of foreign trade. The discussions touched on imports, access to export markets, the participation of parliamentarians and legislators in foreign trade missions, as well as on the appropriateness of freer trade between Canada and the U.S., and the pros and cons of protectionist measures. The delegates discussed the importance of tourism as an industry, the approaches that should be adopted to ensure its development, and the overall situation of tourism in Canada and the U.S. The participants attempted to draw a parallel between the situation which prevails in Canada with respect to privatization and deregulation in certain sectors of the economy, and the situation as it exists

in the United States. Finally, the delegates considered the means which might be used to develop natural resources.

The first topic to be discussed in the panel session on environmental issues was acid rain, particularly the regional aspects of this phenomenon. The session also dealt with toxic wastes and, especially, how to dispose of them. Turning to pollution, the delegates focused on water quality and water diversion such as, for example, from James Bay to the United States. The session ended with participants concluding that regulations tend to be more strict with respect to environmental issues, whereas in the economy as a whole, the trend is to deregulation.

The discussions in the session on health policy dealt at length with the quality and the cost of health care. Access to new medical technology was also emphasized, and the increasing age of existing equipment was noted. Finally, the delegates considered what effects an aging population would have on health care and retirement plans, and discussed the cost of long-term care for the elderly and the handicapped.

The participants in the final panel session discussed art from the perspective of a profitable industry. The problem of financing artistic and cultural activities was considered, and the Canadian and American experiences were compared. The participants raised questions as to why government should finance these activities, the role of different levels of government, and the impact of federal interventions on the States and the provinces. Still on the subject of financing, the discussion dealt with the respective role which government and the private sector should play.



New Speakers in Ontario and Yukon

Two new presiding officers have been elected following changes of government in Ontario and Yukon.

The new Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly is **Sam Johnston**, member of the Assembly for Campbell. Mr. Johnston, 49, was educated at Carcross, Yukon. He was for many years Chief of the Teslin Indian Band and Chairman of the Teslin Local Improvement District. He was first elected to the Assembly in 1985.

The choice of Mr. Johnston as Speaker left the New Democratic Party in a minority situation since the combined Progressive Conservative and Liberal opposition hold eight of the sixteen seats in the Assembly.



Sam Johnston

In Ontario the new Speaker is **Hugh Edighoffer**, a Liberal who has represented Perth in the Assembly since 1967. Mr. Edighoffer has experience presiding over a legislature in which no single party enjoys a majority of seats. He was Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House in the 31st Parliament from 1977 to 1981.

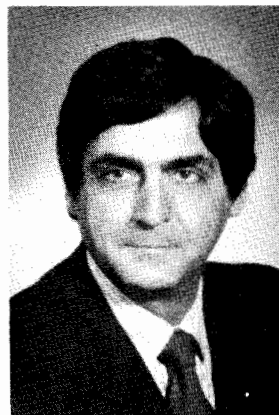


Hugh Edighoffer (Ashley & Crippen)

New Senator from New Brunswick

Jean-Maurice Simard who had been a member of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly and member of the cabinet since 1970, was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Mulroney.

Mr. Simard is well known in New Brunswick for his support of French language legislation and attempts to bring the Acadian population into the mainstream of provincial politics. He was Minister of Finance from 1970-1974, President of the Treasury Board from 1976-1982 and Minister in Charge of Government Reform and Economic Programs until his appointment to the Senate.

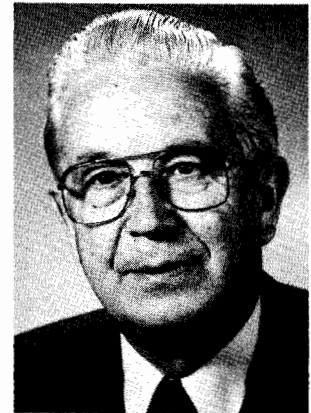


Maurice Simard (Stanya Studio)

New Lieutenant-Governor for P.E.I.

The new Lieutenant-Governor is **Robert Lloyd MacPhail** a longtime member of the legislature and Minister of Finance and Tourism in the government of **James Lee**.

Born in 1920, Mr. MacPhail operated a farm supply business in New Haven for some 30 years. He was first elected in 1961 and re-elected seven times. Mr. MacPhail replaces Dr. **Joseph Aubin Doiron** whose term has expired.



Lloyd MacPhail

New Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod

The former Sergeant-at-Arms of the Quebec National Assembly, **René Jalbert**, was appointed Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod for the Senate on July 15, 1985.

Equivalent in some ways to the position of Sergeant-at-Arms in the House, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod is one of the senior Senate officials with both administrative and ceremonial responsibilities.

A career military man until he joined the National Assembly, Mr. Jalbert was decorated by the Assembly for his actions last May in subduing a gunman who invaded the Assembly and shot several people.



Robert Bourassa

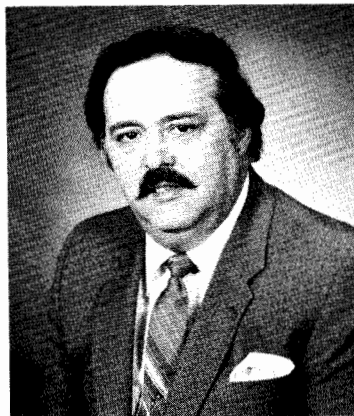
defeated in the 1976 election. After leaving political life for several years Mr. Bourassa was re-elected leader of the Liberal Party in October 1983. He passed up several opportunities to enter the National Assembly before deciding to contest the riding of Bertrand where he defeated Francine



Claude Trudel

Bye-elections in Quebec

The Quebec Liberal Party raised its record of consecutive bye-election victories to 26 when it took four seats from the governing Parti Québécois on June 3. The results increased the number of Liberals in the National



Jean-Guy Gervais

Lalonde, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women by about 2000 votes.

In L'Assomption Liberal **Jean-Guy Gervais** defeated **André Asselin**, while **Dennis Taillon** of the PQ finishing third.

In the eastern Montreal riding of Bourget **Claude Trudel** won the seat with more than 10,000 votes compared to 3200 for **Réal Lafontaine** of the PQ.



Paul Philibert (Studio O. Allard Inc.)

Assembly to 53 compared to 62 for the Parti Québécois. With seven independents and excluding the Speaker who cannot vote except in a tie, the government's working majority was reduced to a single seat.

Among those who won seats in the bye-elections was **Robert Bourassa**, former Premier of Quebec who was

Finally in Three Rivers **Paul Philibert** won the riding defeating PQ and Union national candidates by a wide margin.

New Legislative Librarian in British Columbia

The new Legislative Librarian in British Columbia is **Joan Barton**. A graduate of the universities of Victoria and British Columbia. She holds a Master of Library Science degree and had been head of Reference Services in the Legislative Library since 1974.



Joan Barton

Resignations and Retirements

Jacques Leonard, member of the Quebec National Assembly for Labelle resigned his seat in the Assembly on May 23. First elected in 1976 Mr. Leonard had served as Minister of Municipal Affairs and later Transport Minister before resigning from the Cabinet in November 1984.

The resignation of **Albert Canadien**, Clerk Assistant, Procedural, of the NWT Legislative Assembly was announced at the recent session of the assembly in Rankin Inlet. Mr. Canadien, 42, has held this position since July 1983. Before joining the Assembly he was settlement secretary in his home community of Fort Providence for eight years.