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***Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada:  
Questions of Confidence***

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*This is Volume 35 in the series of studies commissioned as part of the research program of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada.*

*This volume reflects the views of its author and does not imply endorsement by the Chairman or Commissioners.*



RICHARD JOHNSTON

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# Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada



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# Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada: Questions of Confidence

RICHARD JOHNSTON

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# CONTENTS

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FOREWORD	<i>ix</i>
INTRODUCTION	<i>xi</i>
PREFACE	<i>xv</i>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	<i>xvii</i>

## CHAPTER 1

<b>Introduction: A Question of Confidence</b>	<i>1</i>
Death and Rebirth?	<i>2</i>
The Sociology of Political Support	<i>7</i>
The Economics of Political Support	<i>10</i>
The Politics of Political Support	<i>11</i>
Implications for Analysis and Plan of the Book	<i>14</i>

## CHAPTER 2

<b>The Pattern of Political Confidence</b>	<i>17</i>
A Decline in Confidence?	<i>18</i>
Social and Geographic Bases of Confidence	<i>25</i>
Regional Representation and Political Authority	<i>33</i>
The Integrity of the Union	<i>41</i>
Political Confidence in Institutional Context	<i>55</i>
Economic Policy and Government Popularity	<i>59</i>
Some Reflections	<i>65</i>
Recapitulation	<i>65</i>

## CHAPTER 3

<b>The Social Structure of Opinion on Policy</b>	<i>69</i>
Policy Conflict in a Federation	<i>70</i>
Measurement Considerations	<i>72</i>

Federal Powers	74
Concurrent Powers	81
Contested Powers	87
Provincial Powers	97
General Issues	103
Regional Conflict, the Division of Powers, and the Federal Agenda	107
The Circulation of Groups and Provinces between Policy Coalitions	114
Recapitulation	116

#### CHAPTER 4

##### **Macroeconomic Attitudes and Perceptions:**

<b>A Political Business Cycle?</b>	119
A Political Business Cycle?	120
Inflation versus Unemployment	124
Memories of Economic Events	129
Economic Perceptions and Expectations	130
Attitudes to Policy Instruments	138
Recapitulation	144

#### CHAPTER 5

##### **Microeconomic Attitudes and Perceptions:**

<b>Personal Insecurity and Mercantilist Policies</b>	145
Introduction	145
Income and Employment Risk	147
Risk Preference and the Quality of Work	149
Technological Change	157
Unions and Labour Markets	161
Commercial Policy	167
Controls on Factors of Production	170
Public Ownership	181
Some Reflections	183
Recapitulation	186

#### CHAPTER 6

##### **Political Confidence and the Mandate to Rule**

Introduction	189
General Questions on Conflict and the Division of Powers	191
Attitudes on Jurisdiction over Specific Policy Areas	200
The Importance of the Federal Agenda	204
A Plague on Both Your Houses?	205
Some Implications	214
Recapitulation	215

CHAPTER 7

**Conclusions: Contradictory Majorities**

**and the Politics of Confidence 217**

Ideological Constraint in Mass Publics 217

The Political Analogy 220

Public Opinion and the Politics of Support 225

NOTES 228

BIBLIOGRAPHY 238



When the members of the Rowell-Sirois Commission began their collective task in 1937, very little was known about the evolution of the Canadian economy. What was known, moreover, had not been extensively analyzed by the slender cadre of social scientists of the day.

When we set out upon our task nearly 50 years later, we enjoyed a substantial advantage over our predecessors; we had a wealth of information. We inherited the work of scholars at universities across Canada and we had the benefit of the work of experts from private research institutes and publicly sponsored organizations such as the Ontario Economic Council and the Economic Council of Canada. Although there were still important gaps, our problem was not a shortage of information; it was to interrelate and integrate — to synthesize — the results of much of the information we already had.

The mandate of this Commission is unusually broad. It encompasses many of the fundamental policy issues expected to confront the people of Canada and their governments for the next several decades. The nature of the mandate also identified, in advance, the subject matter for much of the research and suggested the scope of enquiry and the need for vigorous efforts to interrelate and integrate the research disciplines. The resulting research program, therefore, is particularly noteworthy in three respects: along with original research studies, it includes survey papers which synthesize work already done in specialized fields; it avoids duplication of work which, in the judgment of the Canadian research community, has already been well done; and, considered as a whole, it is the most thorough examination of the Canadian economic, political and legal systems ever undertaken by an independent agency.

The Commission's research program was carried out under the joint

direction of three prominent and highly respected Canadian scholars: Dr. Ivan Bernier (*Law and Constitutional Issues*), Dr. Alan Cairns (*Politics and Institutions of Government*) and Dr. David C. Smith (*Economics*).

Dr. Ivan Bernier is Dean of the Faculty of Law at Laval University. Dr. Alan Cairns is former Head of the Department of Political Science at the University of British Columbia and, prior to joining the Commission, was William Lyon Mackenzie King Visiting Professor of Canadian Studies at Harvard University. Dr. David C. Smith, former Head of the Department of Economics at Queen's University in Kingston, is now Principal of that University. When Dr. Smith assumed his new responsibilities at Queen's in September 1984, he was succeeded by Dr. Kenneth Norrie of the University of Alberta and John Sargent of the federal Department of Finance, who together acted as Co-directors of Research for the concluding phase of the Economics research program.

I am confident that the efforts of the Research Directors, research coordinators and authors whose work appears in this and other volumes, have provided the community of Canadian scholars and policy makers with a series of publications that will continue to be of value for many years to come. And I hope that the value of the research program to Canadian scholarship will be enhanced by the fact that Commission research is being made available to interested readers in both English and French.

I extend my personal thanks, and that of my fellow Commissioners, to the Research Directors and those immediately associated with them in the Commission's research program. I also want to thank the members of the many research advisory groups whose counsel contributed so substantially to this undertaking.

DONALD S. MACDONALD





At its most general level, the Royal Commission's research program has examined how the Canadian political economy can better adapt to change. As a basis of enquiry, this question reflects our belief that the future will always take us partly by surprise. Our political, legal and economic institutions should therefore be flexible enough to accommodate surprises and yet solid enough to ensure that they help us meet our future goals. This theme of an adaptive political economy led us to explore the interdependencies between political, legal and economic systems and drew our research efforts in an interdisciplinary direction.

The sheer magnitude of the research output (more than 280 separate studies in 70+ volumes) as well as its disciplinary and ideological diversity have, however, made complete integration impossible and, we have concluded, undesirable. The research output as a whole brings varying perspectives and methodologies to the study of common problems and we therefore urge readers to look beyond their particular field of interest and to explore topics across disciplines.

The three research areas, — *Law and Constitutional Issues*, under Ivan Bernier; *Politics and Institutions of Government*, under Alan Cairns; and *Economics*, under David C. Smith (co-directed with Kenneth Norrie and John Sargent for the concluding phase of the research program) — were further divided into 19 sections headed by research coordinators.

The area *Law and Constitutional Issues* has been organized into five major sections headed by the research coordinators identified below.

- Law, Society and the Economy — *Ivan Bernier and Andrée Lajoie*
- The International Legal Environment — *John J. Quinn*
- The Canadian Economic Union — *Mark Krasnick*

- Harmonization of Laws in Canada — *Ronald C.C. Cumming*
- Institutional and Constitutional Arrangements — *Clare F. Beckton and A. Wayne MacKay*

Since law in its numerous manifestations is the most fundamental means of implementing state policy, it was necessary to investigate how and when law could be mobilized most effectively to address the problems raised by the Commission's mandate. Adopting a broad perspective, researchers examined Canada's legal system from the standpoint of how law evolves as a result of social, economic and political changes and how, in turn, law brings about changes in our social, economic and political conduct.

Within *Politics and Institutions of Government*, research has been organized into seven major sections.

- Canada and the International Political Economy — *Denis Stairs and Gilbert Winham*
- State and Society in the Modern Era — *Keith Banting*
- Constitutionalism, Citizenship and Society — *Alan Cairns and Cynthia Williams*
- The Politics of Canadian Federalism — *Richard Simeon*
- Representative Institutions — *Peter Aucoin*
- The Politics of Economic Policy — *G. Bruce Doern*
- Industrial Policy — *André Blais*

This area examines a number of developments which have led Canadians to question their ability to govern themselves wisely and effectively. Many of these developments are not unique to Canada and a number of comparative studies canvass and assess how others have coped with similar problems. Within the context of the Canadian heritage of parliamentary government, federalism, a mixed economy, and a bilingual and multicultural society, the research also explores ways of rearranging the relationships of power and influence among institutions to restore and enhance the fundamental democratic principles of representativeness, responsiveness and accountability.

*Economics* research was organized into seven major sections.

- Macroeconomics — *John Sargent*
- Federalism and the Economic Union — *Kenneth Norrie*
- Industrial Structure — *Donald G. McFetridge*
- International Trade — *John Whalley*
- Income Distribution and Economic Security — *François Vaillancourt*
- Labour Markets and Labour Relations — *Craig Riddell*
- Economic Ideas and Social Issues — *David Laidler*

Economics research examines the allocation of Canada's human and other resources, the ways in which institutions and policies affect this

allocation, and the distribution of the gains from their use. It also considers the nature of economic development, the forces that shape our regional and industrial structure, and our economic interdependence with other countries. The thrust of the research in economics is to increase our comprehension of what determines our economic potential and how instruments of economic policy may move us closer to our future goals.

One section from each of the three research areas — The Canadian Economic Union, The Politics of Canadian Federalism, and Federalism and the Economic Union — have been blended into one unified research effort. Consequently, the volumes on Federalism and the Economic Union as well as the volume on The North are the results of an interdisciplinary research effort.

We owe a special debt to the research coordinators. Not only did they organize, assemble and analyze the many research studies and combine their major findings in overviews, but they also made substantial contributions to the Final Report. We wish to thank them for their performance, often under heavy pressure.

Unfortunately, space does not permit us to thank all members of the Commission staff individually. However, we are particularly grateful to the Chairman, The Hon. Donald S. Macdonald; the Commission's Executive Director, J. Gerald Godsoe; and the Director of Policy, Alan Nymark, all of whom were closely involved with the Research Program and played key roles in the contribution of Research to the Final Report. We wish to express our appreciation to the Commission's Administrative Advisor, Harry Stewart, for his guidance and advice, and to the Director of Publishing, Ed Matheson, who managed the research publication process. A special thanks to Jamie Benidickson, Policy Coordinator and Special Assistant to the Chairman, who played a valuable liaison role between Research and the Chairman and Commissioners. We are also grateful to our office administrator, Donna Stebbing, and to our secretarial staff, Monique Carpentier, Barbara Cowtan, Tina DeLuca, Françoise Guilbault and Marilyn Sheldon.

Finally, a well deserved thank you to our closest assistants: Jacques J.M. Shore, *Law and Constitutional Issues*; Cynthia Williams and her successor Karen Jackson, *Politics and Institutions of Government*; and I. Lilla Connidis, *Economics*. We appreciate not only their individual contribution to each research area, but also their cooperative contribution to the research program and the Commission.

IVAN BERNIER  
ALAN CAIRNS  
DAVID C. SMITH



This monograph by Richard Johnston was fashioned in response to a desire of the Commission to analyze the underlying nature of support for the federal government and the Canadian national community, and to explore public opinion on numerous policy issues, primarily, but not exclusively, in the realm of economic policy. The result is a unique combination of data and scholarly interpretation which significantly advances our understanding of the citizen base of political authority and public policy in Canada. The analysis is nuanced and subtle, as befits the complexity of the subject matter. The interpretation of this rigorous scholarly work on *Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada* will be extensively cited and much debated in the social science community. I congratulate the author for a distinguished performance in the face of an almost impossible deadline.

ALAN CAIRNS



My greatest debts are to André Blais, Kenneth Norrie, John Sargent, Richard Simeon, and Alan Cairns. The first four made the initial requests for public opinion information in their respective research areas. Alan Cairns encouraged me to work those requests into a monograph, rather than simply to file four research reports. Beyond making the initial requests, these five have also been invaluable commentators on the manuscript itself. I have also benefited from the comments and advice of four Commission-appointed readers: Henry Brady of Harvard University, David Elkins of the University of British Columbia, Roderick Kiewiet of the California Institute of Technology, and Maurice Pinard of McGill University. Advice and/or requests for data also came from the following Commission authors and researchers: Peter Aucoin, Keith Banting, Bruce Doern, Karen Jackson, Mark Krasnick, Craig Riddell, Dennis Stairs, François Vaillancourt, and Cindy Williams. Their preoccupations are reflected at various places in this book.

This project could not have penetrated as deeply as it did into opinion on policy without access to a particularly valuable archive: the Decima Quarterly Report. The Quarterly Report merged file combines a depth of coverage of certain policy areas, a high frequency of repetition of items in certain other areas, and on-line access to the data. For proprietary reasons, analysis of Decima data goes no further than the fourth quarter of 1983. In that analysis, Ian McKinnon was especially helpful.

Another data set which I mined to some depth was the Senate Reform study, for which the field work was done by le Centre pour Recherche sur l'Opinion publique (CROP). These data were drawn to my attention, as was the on-line service offered by Decima, by Benoit Gauthier, then of the Canadian Unity Information Office. Aside from the Decima file, all

the data sets were made available to me through the UBC Data Library. This analysis simply would not have been possible without the support of the Library staff, especially of Laine Ruus.

Two research assistants helped me in preparing this work: Max Cameron and Janet Hiebert. I could not have wished for better help in what was as much an exercise in logistics as analysis. Also critical to the production of the work was Nancy Mina, who prepared the tables and more besides.

None of these people or institutions is responsible for the opinions expressed here or for any defects in analysis or interpretation.

RICHARD JOHNSTON



### **Introduction:** *A Question of Confidence*

As the 1980s began, Canadians' confidence in the federal government seemed on the ebb. Even Ottawa's strongest supporters agreed that fundamental changes were needed to restore its political authority. Beyond the federal government's predicament, the integrity of the very federation seemed to hang in the balance. At mid-decade, however, the federal government's political situation seems less dire. Although that government cannot claim overwhelming popularity, few now seem to question its authority, and the country no longer seems ineluctably fated to break up.

What produced this apparent reversal? Ottawa cannot be said to have repealed its more contentious policies. The structure of the federal government is unchanged. The reality of French-English relations seems much as before. Moreover, the entrenchment of language rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms flies in the face of expert opinion and of the clear position of the government of Quebec. The broader guarantees of the Charter have yet to reach deeply into Canadians' lives.

The speed and seeming ease of Ottawa's apparent recovery brings in question the depth of its earlier apparent fall. In truth, we know very little about the popular sources of political authority in Canada. We have little theory of mass legitimacy, and we have not brought together the pertinent data. This book aims to provide some of that theory and a veritable truckload of evidence.

The rest of this chapter will introduce the question of confidence. First will come a brief review of some schools of thought on Ottawa's predicament. This will be followed by an attempt to set Ottawa's apparent crisis of confidence in the intellectual context of such crises, real or imagined,

elsewhere in the industrial world. Finally will come a preview of the rest of the book.

## **Death and Rebirth?**

In its 1979 report, the Task Force on Canadian Unity summarized public confidence in the federal government in these terms:

Fifteen years ago, [the central government] stood high in the minds of a large number of Canadians, and was widely regarded with respect and a feeling of loyalty. Even those who felt little loyalty to it at least respected its efficiency and competence. Today, that is much less true; "Ottawa", as we found on our tour, is for many Canadians synonymous with all that is to be deplored about modern government — a remote, shambling bureaucracy that exacts tribute from its subjects and gives little in return. We recognize that this is an unfair stereotype, and that in another fifteen years the pendulum may have swung back to the other extreme; but the fact that this view has such a widespread appeal today is one of the significant elements that must be borne in mind in any attempt to improve our situation (Canada, Task Force on Canadian Unity, 1979, p. 16).

The Task Force view was reaffirmed, to no one's surprise, by provincial governments as they sought to gain jurisdiction at Ottawa's expense or to ward off threats to their own jurisdiction. But support for this view was not confined to those with a direct political stake in its propagation. The academic community seemed to agree that something was awry in the relations between the federal government and the citizenry. Somehow, Ottawa had lost the confidence of the broad mass of Canadians.

Views on the precise nature of the problem varied from observer to observer. Two broad lines of analysis seemed to emerge, however. One argument took as given that Canada had become an even more federal society than before. From this assumption followed the implication that if the political order or even what remained of the community were to be relegitimated, power in the federation would have to be further decentralized. The second argument presupposed the continued existence of a strong underlying sense of national community. Perversities in the structure of the federal government were deemed to distract Canadians from their fundamental sense of nationhood and from their natural allegiance to the only government they all had in common. This analysis pointed away from change in the division of power and toward change in the way Canadians were represented at the centre. The analysis of the problem tended to reflect the compass bearing of the analyst's gaze. Those looking at Quebec tended to argue for decentralization. Those concerned with regional alienation within English Canada, especially in the West, tended to argue for rejuvenated central institutions. Observers who sought to marry the different sources of grievance in a single



constitutional project tended to advocate an uneasy synthesis of decentralization and rejuvenation of the centre.

The problems posed by French Canada seemed fairly clear, even if scholars differed over the extent to which the grievances of that collectivity could be accommodated within some version of the Canadian union. French-English differences had become more politically salient even if the two societies had actually become more similar. The awkward coexistence that was possible when the French and English populations were each scattered in the countryside was no longer tenable when the two groups were forced to share an urban division of labour. The initial division of labour was along ethnic lines, an injustice which occasioned a collective sense of grievance in the subordinate group, the francophones. Attempts to redress the grievance only transformed its character. A struggle ensued over linguistic control of bureaucratic space, as francophones with white-collar technocratic skills sought employment which tapped their skills, but which did not require them to abandon their culture and language. Reverberations were felt throughout the federation as attempts by Quebec to create bureaucratic space in the province's public sector created fiscal and jurisdictional strain on Ottawa and the other provinces. The private sector felt the shock as well, as governments in Quebec attempted to extend the logic of public sector bureaucratic mobility to the province's business community. To the extent that only the Province of Quebec could achieve such collective goals and to the extent that the goals themselves were legitimate in the eyes of the academic community, outside as well as inside Quebec, that community saw Ottawa's confidence problem as stemming, at least in part, from the federal government's own refusal to accede to Quebec's legitimate demands.<sup>1</sup>

With less conviction and less clarity of purpose, academics often also accepted statements of grievance originating in English Canada. Most of the action here seemed to be in the West, especially in Alberta. Even if that province's position on energy questions excited as much opposition as support, Western farmers remained a traditionally aggrieved group. Decentralization was often put forward as a solution to the West's problems; this seemed especially true in energy disputes. More often, however, the grievance seemed to turn on unequal treatment in policy areas in which Ottawa was inevitably involved. With increasing frequency as the 1970s advanced, analyses which began with catalogues of specific grievances ended by pointing to the lack of Western representation at the centre. Sometimes that lack was laid at the door of the Liberal party, the seemingly permanent party of government. Sometimes, the Liberals were exonerated, at least in part, and were themselves cast as victims of the electoral system. The answer to Ottawa's confidence gap seemed to lie in electoral reform or in the Senate. That Western premiers

often rejected such solutions could be taken as evidence for, not against, their probable efficacy. Provincial politicians would naturally oppose a political reform which would reveal that they were wearing the emperor's clothes.<sup>2</sup>

Analysis of Ottawa's confidence gap quickened in the months which followed 15 November 1976. The Parti québécois' election victory plunged the anglophone academic community into near despair. Even if that election victory was actually a rejection of the Bourassa government and not in itself an endorsement of the Parti québécois' constitutional project, the Péquiste government would now be well positioned to manipulate the political situation to its advantage. If the dispute over bilingual air-traffic control was any guide, English Canadians could be expected to fall into a Péquiste trap. Opinion polls which preceded the 1980 referendum seemed to confirm these fears. The year which followed the Parti québécois' first election victory was the *annus mirabilis* of academic soul searching. York University and the University of Toronto each sponsored major conferences on the National Question. A group centred on Queen's University put the question most pointedly: Must Canada fail? (Simeon, 1977.) Although the answer was not necessarily that it must fail, to put the question in this way seemed to preclude the alternative possibility that Canada might actually succeed; mere survival seemed the best outcome that Canadians could expect. Even observers who were not so pessimistic about the outcome of a constitutional crisis occasionally despaired of the process:

The hurdles to be jumped before we reach the promised land are despairingly high and numerous, reflecting the powerful and self-seeking nature of the interests to be conciliated. It is little wonder that some look for escape routes by devices of referenda and constituent assemblies. Perhaps Belloc is closer to the truth.

"The Doctor smiled and took his fees,  
There is no cure for this disease."

The patient, however, may stagger on in a kind of half-life for a long time to come. Not only is there yet no cure. There is also no easy way to die (Cairns, 1979, p. 363).

The belief that Ottawa had lost the confidence of significant groups in Canadian society was ultimately validated by the federal government itself. The 1978 constitutional proposals, embodied in Bill C-60, assumed that representation at the centre was indeed a major problem. The principal remedy for this representation problem was to be a House of the Federation, with mixed federal and provincial appointment and proportional representation criteria.<sup>3</sup> A sense of national purpose was also to have been regenerated by a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The federal strategy conspicuously lacked any concession in the division of powers. But from time to time, even that concession was raised as a

possibility, most notably in early 1979. Throughout this period, the intensity of federal government advertising bore witness to the capital's nervousness about its support in the mass public.

The reappearance of the Charter of Rights in the 1980–81 constitutional crisis can again be read as an address to Ottawa's real or perceived confidence gap. As a document popular with the mass public, the Charter was thought to play a short-term role in binding support to what was otherwise an unpopular departure from constitutional usage by the government with the smallest apparent reserve of political capital.<sup>4</sup> The Charter's long-term role might be even more significant, according to this view. As a statement of principles which help define the Canadian nationality and as a basis for litigation, the Charter might divert constitutional debate from the division of powers, on which Ottawa's political position was weak, toward the assertion of commonly held rights, an assertion which would usually have some recalcitrant provincial government as its target. In bringing about this reorientation the Charter would legitimate, after the fact, the federal government's unilateral constitutional initiative. But it would also relegitimize the national community, if that were necessary, and the federal government itself (Cairns, 1983).

Informed opinion seemed mixed or even negative on the compromise which eventually emerged from the constitutional crisis. The Constitution Act, 1982 contained no change to representative institutions and so left open Ottawa's confidence gap in English Canada. Things were even worse for French-English relations. The entrenchment of language rights, particularly in the schools, seemed to fly in the face of the principal thrust of academic analysis of the problem and of the clear position of the Province of Quebec. The abiding francophobia of much of English Canada would be continually provoked, while Quebec would be blocked in its attempts to give French priority in its own schools. Quebec as a province lost any veto which it might historically have claimed, and which was implicit in virtually every amending formula seriously discussed before 1981. Moreover it was excluded from the deal itself, an apparent betrayal by that province's erstwhile allies.<sup>5</sup>

Popular reaction immediately after the event seemed to reaffirm the academics' pessimism. In Alberta, the Olds-Didsbury by-election in early 1982 hinted at an adverse Western reaction. This by-election result may actually have been more of an internal Alberta reaction against Premier Lougheed's part in the Alberta-Ottawa energy agreement of September 1981. Whatever its exact meaning, the by-election hardly seemed to promise a more forgiving national orientation in the province. The crushing defeat of the Blakeney government in Saskatchewan seemed only a further reaffirmation of Western discontent. The personal defeat of Roy Romanow, a principal author of the November 1981 accord, by a 23-year-old gas-station attendant seemed the perfect metaphor for the larger problem.

But soon thereafter, the political winds seemed to shift. Frontal attacks on Ottawa's right to govern slackened. Issues came to be couched in terms other than those of regional or jurisdictional gain and loss. Whatever French Canada's sense of grievance over the constitutional accord, that grievance seemed undirected, detached from any obvious political goal. The federal government seemed to win some confrontations with the provinces, notably over medicare. And in 1984, the party system showed its resilience: the Liberals gave hints of genuine interest in the West, and the Conservatives finally made the long-awaited breakthrough in Quebec.

The speed of Ottawa's apparent rejuvenation raises questions about how much of a change actually occurred. Several hypotheses are consistent with the train of events. Popular disaffection with a government, at least as typically measured in opinion polls, may be rather shallow; but the same could be true for a government's apparent popular support. Popular support or disaffection, however deep or shallow, might actually be simply irrelevant; politicians might claim popular backing for their actions, but might do so quite without evidence. This would be consistent with little or no change in popular support and with any level of support, high or low. Alternatively, popular feelings of confidence or support might be deep but complex: supportive in some ways, unsupportive in others. Each of these hypotheses will prove to be part of the truth. But a major argument of this book is that the most powerful image of popular confidence is the last one. The complexity of citizens' responses to government makes possible the appearance of volatility in opinion. Politicians themselves know this. One form which political struggle takes is an attempt to gain control of the agenda. For much of the 1970s, one could argue, provincial governments were in control. Sometimes the federal government played by the provinces' rules; sometimes it tried to shift the agenda, as when Mr. Trudeau tried to counter provincial claims on the division of powers with his own emphasis on the Charter of Rights. But politicians are not the only ones to set the agenda. Brute reality can intrude, as happened with the recession of 1983. That recession may, perversely, have been the best thing to happen to Ottawa since World War II. All along, the macroeconomic agenda that was forced on both levels of government by the recession may have been foremost in the minds of ordinary Canadians; Ottawa never seemed to grasp that possibility and the positional advantage that went with it. There would be a further irony in the importance to Canadians of macroeconomic questions, however. Stagflation may be a major source of whatever malaise Canadians experience; the federal government may thus be both a winner and a loser as a result of economic decline.

Before we develop these themes, however, more basic tasks must be undertaken. No one, to the best of my knowledge, has established whether Ottawa was really as unpopular as the rhetoric of the 1970s

would suggest. Similarly, no one has established that Ottawa's standing in the 1970s, whatever its level, was actually lower than in earlier periods. For that matter, we lack a satisfactory definition of what confidence in, support for, disaffection or dissatisfaction with a government might mean. As a background for the empirical chapters which form the heart of this study, the next sections will try to provide some clarification of the meaning and measurement of political confidence. The exercise in clarification will take us beyond the ethnic and regional preoccupations which have dominated the Canadian literature. As it happens, the study of political trust, support or confidence has constituted an international growth industry. Sometimes subcommunity relations play an important role in the analysis. More often the macroeconomic themes of unemployment, inflation and growth dominate the discussion. In expanding the field of causes for Ottawa's predicament, as promised in the preceding paragraph, I hope to place Canada squarely in an international context.

## The Sociology of Political Support

In the empirical study of political confidence or support, the classic reference is to Easton (1965). Easton portrayed the political system as engaged in dynamic exchanges with the rest of society. A reserve of "diffuse support", as Easton called it, was necessary to enable the state to exercise power. Most frequently referred to in the empirical literature was Easton's distinction among potential objects of support. At the most general level, support may be given to or withheld from the political *community*. Support might also be directed toward the *regime*, the political structures and values for a given community. Most specifically, support might be expressed for the incumbent *authorities*. In democratic societies, the struggle for support by authorities is nothing more than ordinary politics; withdrawal of support for one set of potential authorities only creates opportunities for another set. But support, however low or high, can generalize across objects. Even a poorly regarded individual can borrow support from his office if it is an esteemed part of a generally accepted regime. Good performance by a succession of incumbents can, over time, validate an initially unpopular political structure. Conversely, poor performance by a succession of authorities can undermine support for a formerly popular regime. Generalization can proceed along similar lines to and from the political community.

The critical core of Easton's argument is that support is both necessary and contingent. The state must deliver benefits, material or symbolic, to the major groups in society if it is to continue to enjoy their support.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the state's very ability to deliver benefits depends on the existence of a reserve of support. Political confidence, on this premise, is rather like the money supply: subject to expansion and

contraction by fairly small perturbations in policy instruments, yet not absolutely under the control of any single instrument.

The key constraint in this support-building exercise is the structure of social relations. The more distinct social groups are from one another, the more difficult it is for the state to satisfy each simultaneously. Easton calls these distinctions "cleavages". The idea is pretty straightforward at bottom and corresponds to earlier work in the pluralist tradition, notably by Dahl (1956). Dahl was deeply preoccupied with the distribution of opinion along each dimension of policy evaluation. The more widely dispersed citizens are along a dimension, the greater must be the distance between an average citizen's preferred policy and any actual position adopted by the state. The greater these policy distances, the greater the alienation felt by individuals; alienation here is an antonym for confidence, or support.

Two elaborations on Easton's and Dahl's early preoccupation with cleavages and policy conflict may be critical to the Canadian case. One is by Dahl himself.<sup>7</sup> A preoccupation of pluralist theory, nowhere better exemplified than in Dahl's own work, is with the extent to which inequalities cumulate. Pluralists usually grant, for any given policy, the existence of inequalities in influence. More decisive for them than any single unequal distribution is the extent to which inequality in each arena predicts inequalities in each other arena. To the extent that inequalities cumulate, with the same individuals or groups deprived of power in arena after arena, the system is distributively unjust. This may not matter much if the groups differ only weakly in their policy preferences. But cumulative inequality of power joined with sharp divergences in preferences about the things over which power is exercised can be explosive.

The second elaboration has affinities with the first. Rogowski (1974) puts Easton's idea of political support squarely in a rational choice framework. Of particular relevance for the Canadian case is Rogowski's logical argument that members of societies in which roles are relatively fixed are unlikely to find simple majority-rule institutions legitimate. Rogowski takes Lijphart's (1968; 1977) analysis of "segmented pluralist" societies as evidence for his argument. In such societies, social transactions rarely cross subgroup boundaries; the subgroups are typically religious or ethnic, although occupational groupings also figure in Lijphart's analysis. Where groups are mutually segregated in this way, decisions are made by élite representatives of each group according to a rule of proportionality or by mutual veto; in no case is a simple majority formula employed. Some observers contend that Canada has imposed precisely such a majority formula on a society which would be better served by some more "consociational" alternative.

Empirical work on support or confidence commonly adheres to this Eastonian vein. Measures of support vary, although not in a highly systematic way: often analysts have had to make do with measures

originally devised according to some other theoretical scheme or to no scheme at all. The yeoman measure seems to be one styled as "political trust", or as its opposite, "political cynicism".<sup>8</sup> Also in use are measures which explicitly ask respondents how much confidence they feel in a particular object; much will be made of such measures in this book. Another measure asks about respondents' warmth of feeling about a political object. The respondent is given a picture of a thermometer (fahrenheit) and a brief account of the relationship between gradations on the thermometer and warmth of feeling; the higher the score, the warmer the respondent's feeling toward the object. Warmth has been interpreted as a surrogate for closeness, another possible analogue of confidence or support. "Feeling thermometers" figure prominently in the next chapter. Indirect indicators of confidence also appear. For example, it is not unreasonable to take respondents' willingness to make verbal commitments to political parties as an indicator of support for the party system as an institution; even if expression of commitment need not indicate support, withdrawal of commitment might reasonably indicate withdrawal of support. The level of political participation in voting and in other activities might also indicate the degree of commitment to the system.

With tools such as these, empiricists have told an elaborate story about trust in the U.S. government and sketchier stories about the legitimacy of other systems. The terms for the American debate were set by Miller (1974), who documented a long-term decline in political trust, according to the standard measure in the biennial National Election Study (NES) surveys. Miller interpreted the decline in Eastonian terms: a polarization of mass policy preferences, especially on race and on the Vietnam War, such that the centrist policies adopted by the parties left large proportions of the American electorate alienated from even their preferred party alternative. More recent work (Abramson, 1983) affirms Miller's view. The decline in political trust finds a parallel in the increased proportion of independent responses to party identification questions and in a post-1960 decline in turnout.<sup>9</sup>

The plague that struck the United States seemed to spread to Britain. In the latter country, systematic study of several decades of survey data is not possible, but the surface symptoms of British political life suggest in some ways the existence of an even deeper problem than exists in the United States. As in the United States, support for the party system seems to have declined, as has turnout in general elections (Sarlvik and Crewe, 1983). British governments have had more trouble maintaining order than have American ones, particularly in the face of miners' strikes. The state seems trapped between intermittent organized resistance to the political order and unorganized resentment against whatever deals the state makes to restore labour peace (King, 1975; Rose, 1975; but see Birch, 1984).<sup>10</sup>

Evidence is sketchier still for other countries in the European Com-



munity. One influential study (Inglehart, 1977) argued that European democracies had witnessed a rise of "postmaterialist values" as a generation which had never known material want came of political age. Conflict between the new and the old value systems engendered a decline of confidence in institutions. Inglehart could not really present times-series evidence, however. Similarly influential and similarly bereft of hard time-series evidence was a study on the "ungovernability" of the European democracies, as well as of the United States and Japan (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki, 1975). In this study, governments were seen as liable to crack under "demand overload", another characteristically Eastonian term. Habits of self-restraint which aristocratic custom or the discipline of the market had kept intact in the early years of Western liberal democracy had weakened with the continued spread of democratic and participative norms, and with the undermining of market discipline by the welfare state and by the commitment to full employment.<sup>11</sup> Such little evidence as actually can be brought to bear on the matter, from Eurobarometre questions on satisfaction "with the way democracy works" in the respondent's own country, indicates no consistent Community-wide trend. The specific country samples show considerable fluctuation in response to short-term political events.<sup>12</sup>

Observations about declining confidence in governments have been extended to other institutions. As usual, the most telling evidence is American. Data from several American sources converge to suggest a pervasive decay in the assessment of institutions, especially in assessment of government, business and labour. Most institutions display the same downward trend. At any cross-section, confidence ratings exhibit a powerful underlying factor common to most institutions. Some institutions, however, are more closely related than others (Lipset and Schneider, 1983).

## **The Economics of Political Support**

The arguments reviewed to this point all share in Easton's emphasis on the impact of sharply divergent demands on support for the political system. Another literature employs a different emphasis: it focusses on the state's failure to perform in the macroeconomic domain. "Stagflation", the theoretically unexpected coexistence of high unemployment and high inflation, has probably received most of the attention in this literature. But also prominent has been a concern with slow real-income growth and with government deficits. Macroeconomic theories of political decline seem to vary in the extent to which they seek micro-economic, or social group-level, explanations for the macroeconomic phenomena. The more an account gets into the microfoundations, the more it shades into an Eastonian account in terms of competing incompatible demands on the state. The two kinds of explanation are espe-



cially likely to converge where the task is to account for double-digit inflation.

The most technically sophisticated work in the area is on a "political business cycle". Here the concern is rarely with political confidence as such, but rather with macroeconomic fluctuations induced deliberately by the politicians to abet their own re-election. But some authors in the field allude to implications of their work for the understanding of shifts in political confidence, and authors more squarely in the confidence literature sometimes invoke others' work on the political business cycle.

The first move down the aggregation ladder comes as analysts incorporate into their explanations the struggle over relative shares of the national income. On the left, O'Connor (1973) sees the struggle between labour and capital producing a fiscal crisis for the state; here the struggle is more explicitly focussed on the state than was Marx' account of the falling rate of profit. On the right, Brittan (1975) sees essentially the same struggle producing essentially the same economic consequences, although his emphasis is as much on inflation as on the deficit. For Brittan, inflation is both a politically induced salve for the social unrest that comes with slow growth and itself a cause of that slow growth.

Further down the microeconomic ladder is Olson (1982). Olson sees nations as fated to decay with age. With time, "distributional coalitions" form to appropriate, through the political system, larger shares for themselves than they would gain from the unconstrained operation of the market. This leads to rigidities, slow growth and stagflation. Each of these economic misfortunes leads to political malaise. Labour unions figure prominently in Olson's account; to the extent that they do so, Olson's story is not so different from either O'Connor's or Brittan's. But Olson sees distributional coalitions everywhere, especially within the capitalist class, and so takes his analysis beyond the struggle for the relative shares of labour and capital. In that sense, then, his account is more microeconomic in orientation than is either O'Connor's (1973) or Brittan's (1975).<sup>13</sup>

## **The Politics of Political Support**

Not everyone sees the apparent decline of political trust and confidence in such Spenglerian terms. Four overlapping critiques can be identified. First, some argue that what is measured as trust in basic political institutions or in the community is little more than feelings about the "ins" held by the "outs", feelings which are likely to shift with the vagaries of elections. Secondly, some question whether low trust or support, as measured, is a bad thing in itself; some degree of alienation may actually be inevitable, and even healthy, in liberal democracy. Thirdly, one may ask how much popular support, as a mass psychological state, really matters; other, more material factors may be the really

important ones. Finally, one can look on mass support as a truly important political resource, but one which is far more complex than analysts in the Eastonian vein have been willing to admit: confidence may be multidimensional, oriented to different parts of the state or pitched separately at different levels of generality; these dimensions of confidence may be played off against one another by creative politicians.

The first line of criticism starts with a problem in virtually any conventional measure of political confidence: the measure's ambiguity as to its object. When a respondent encounters a stimulus referring to "government", does he or she respond in terms of the regime or in terms of the incumbent authorities? Citrin (1974) argued that much of the action relating to the trust or cynicism items in the American National Election Study was merely partisan. This also proves to be true of Canadian data, as revealed below. In general, the observer should be alert for the possibility of partisan influence in any purportedly regime-oriented data. But the presence of partisan influence need not preclude the operation of more deeply fundamental forces.

Secondly, confidence as measured by any single item or by an index constructed from similar items may be a positively misleading indicator of the disposition that we really want to capture. The most succinct statement of the problem is by Sniderman:

Political systems are like parents in one respect: none is perfect. All forms of government fall short of their ideals. But public contention about this gap between principle and practice has much to do with the viability of the democratic process itself. The viability of democratic politics depends on the ability of those out of power to challenge those in power, to bring their case before the public, to criticize policies and performance, to call for change, to compete for office. A democratic system provides both means and incentives to mount public challenges. Competitive elections encourage "outs" to persuade voters that the "ins" have performed miserably and should therefore be put out of office. . . . Both the formal and informal institutions of democratic politics legitimize, and to a degree encourage, attempts to publicize the imperfections of those who hold office and, on occasion, even of the political system itself.

What should citizens make of this? If we tread the path of precedent, we should conclude that the more qualities he notices, the more allegiant he is. But surely this is an odd way to conceive of the notion of allegiance in a democratic system. What seems in order is not blind loyalty but balanced judgement: an awareness that the democratic political order, whatever its virtues, will have shortcomings (Sniderman, 1981, pp. 15-16).

Positive feelings about the political order may be good in themselves, but only in moderation. Unambiguous expressions of confidence may be so only on the surface. Again, we should be cautioned against overly simple interpretations of the positivity or negativity of confidence as measured. Sniderman's warning indicates that we must attend especially carefully to views which accompany expressed support or alienation.

A third line of attack is most pointed in Barry (1970; 1979). Barry questions what he calls "sociological" theories of political support. He is sceptical of theories which emphasize consensus on values, especially where the consensus is believed to be maintained by early childhood socialization. He is more sensitive to divergence than to convergence in values, even in societies which hardly seem in crisis. The strongest version of his attack, however, calls into question any theory which requires consent to explain the stability of societies; the world presents examples of successful and productive societies which almost certainly do not rest on the consent of the mass of the governed. A view rather similar to Barry's appears in the critique of the "dominant ideology" thesis, written from within the Marxist tradition, by Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner (1980). For Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner, the capitalist social order is maintained, not by false consciousness, but simply, as Marx put it, by the dull compulsion of economic relations.

Finally, consider the possibility that confidence or support is itself multidimensional. An individual can support some things and not others. Support levels may diverge among institutions. Some institutions, such as the monarch in successful constitutional monarchies, evoke consensual support. Judges are often highly esteemed, at least to the extent that they appear truly to dispense justice. Conversely, institutions which express or provide an arena for conflict, for example parties and legislatures, often evoke considerable popular distaste (Citrin and Elkins, 1975). Similarly, an individual may make evaluations which diverge between the general and the particular. The decline in general support for government, so characteristic of recent American samples, does not extend to all that many specific government programs or activities. An important feature of recent American politics has been a struggle over the definition of the situation, for control of the agenda. Sometimes, the low esteem in which governments are held can be harnessed to anti-government ends, as in the California tax revolt; sometimes such efforts fail (Sears and Citrin, 1982).

Political confidence, in its internal structure and in relation to other political orientations, may thus present the circumstances for the paradox of voting (Arrow, 1951). Under this paradox, majorities may be found on each side of an issue, depending on how, precisely, the choice is structured. Structuring the choice is the central task of a constitution, of course (Riker, 1980); this reminds us of the constitutional conflict with which this chapter began. But structuring the choice, or controlling the agenda, may also be the core of day-to-day politics (Riker, 1984), as the Canadian constitutional dispute also suggested. The potential for the paradox requires us to consider what political confidence, as measured, actually implies for the Canadian federal government's — or any government's — mandate to rule. The implications will almost certainly not be straightforward. Popular support, or the various specific kinds of popular support, may be part of a system of manipulatory politics.

## Implications for Analysis and Plan of the Book

Five analytic tasks emerge from all of this. The first task is to assess the federal government's political standing and to begin to plumb its sources. Some of these are sociological, some are economic, and some are frankly partisan. The second task is to pursue the sociological line of analysis into the social structure of opinion on policy. The third task is to explore attitudes to macroeconomic policy, to see if Canadians are the authors of their own misfortunes. Fourth comes an exploration of micro-economic attitudes; again, we ask if Canadians have mainly themselves to blame. The fifth task, suggested by the four critiques in the immediately preceding section, is to assess what confidence, as measured, implies for the mandate to rule.

Chapter 2 indicates that by some measures, Ottawa's political standing has declined, but that by other measures, little has changed. Provinces and social groups differ in support for the federal government, but not always in the ways we might expect. Feeling about Ottawa does not extend to feeling about Canada in any simple way; the provinces and groups which are most supportive of Ottawa are often *least* supportive of Confederation and vice versa. Even so, the union seems to have a strong popular basis. The consociational theme in analyses of Ottawa's legitimacy problem finds little resonance in the mass public. Canadians are little interested in institutional reform. In the summer of 1983, at least, change in the party in power held more promise. Then Chapter 2 turns to less peculiarly Canadian themes. Feelings about Ottawa are part of a syndrome of greater or lesser confidence in all institutions, governmental or other. If Ottawa's standing has declined, it has done so mainly for a reason shared with governments elsewhere: stagflation. Unemployment seems to be the bigger part of the story, but the role of inflation is far from negligible.

Chapter 3 looks behind the social and geographical structure of political confidence for analogues in the structure of policy preferences in the mass public. It considers the possibility that part of Canada's problem is an inappropriate division of power between the federal government and the provinces. As a corollary, it examines the federal government's agenda for regional and social-group conflict. Attention is also given to the movement of groups between policy coalitions, to shed some light on the problems, raised by Dahl, Rogowski, and Lijphart, of cumulatively unequal influence and of social segmentation. The main story is of weak social and geographic differences. This is especially true for the economic questions at the heart of the federal government's brief. Conflict is sharpest and lines of cleavage most cumulatively reinforcing in the ethnocultural domain. This domain is also one of jurisdictional contestation between the federal government and the provinces.

Chapter 4 moves on to the economic emphases in the study of political legitimacy. This chapter stays with macroeconomic targets and indica-

tors; microeconomic aspects of the problem appear in Chapter 5. The logic of the political business cycle demands attention to four areas. First, are voters systematically more averse to unemployment than to inflation? In Canada, the answer is clearly no. Canadians are more averse to whichever indicator is performing more poorly. Secondly, have voters short memories? The Canadian evidence is inconclusive and weak. Thirdly, are voters myopic? Canadians certainly seem able to assess the macroeconomy independently of their personal circumstances, but they have trouble making even elementary forecasts pertaining to the coming six months. Fourthly, have Canadians feelings about macroeconomic policy instruments, feelings that might block the realization of their own macroeconomic goals? On balance, Canadians seem to have only weak preferences in this area. The evidence is itself weak, however. In sum, Canadians do not seem rigidly committed to macroeconomic policy goals which are contradictory of one another, or which are destructive of the economy.

Chapter 5 addresses what might be called microeconomic questions. It begins with individuals' risk preferences. Canadians attach less weight to increased income than to greater job security. Behind this risk aversion lies the intrinsic attraction of work and of respondent's own jobs. The chapter then moves out from the individual to forces which might enhance or threaten his or her immediate work and income situation. Technological change is seen as a threat to the workplace. Its promise of lower price and superior quality of goods is received tepidly. The union movement is not seen as a highly promising bulwark against such threats to the workplace. More promising are government restrictions on the flow of trade or on the mobility of some factors of production. Tariffs and trade restrictions seem fairly popular. An open immigration policy would not be popular. Investment controls get mixed reviews. Canadians approve of investment controls in the abstract, but if jobs are threatened, the support for controls withers. Finally comes direct government ownership as a means of shaping a market economy to publicly desired ends and as an employer of last resort. Feelings on public ownership are not strong. The politically dominant position seems to be the status quo.

Chapter 6 takes all of the foregoing, but especially the evidence of Chapter 2, and asks what it implies for the political authority of government in general and of Ottawa in particular. The divergence between abstract alienation from all government, especially from the federal government, and support for almost every specific government program, in Ottawa or elsewhere, is striking. There appears to be no obvious desire for change in the division of powers. At the same time, however, the data reveal great potential for manipulation of the agenda. In this chapter, as in many of the others, the precise nature of the survey response depends on how the question is put.

The dependence of response on stimulus becomes the central preoc-

cupation of the concluding chapter. The review of the evidence will emphasize apparent divergences in response. These divergences will first be considered against evidence that others have marshalled on the structure of policy opinion. Are these divergences best interpreted as "non-attitudes", as evidence that Canadians really have no attitudes at all? Or are the divergences more apparent than real, artifacts of error in the measures? Or are the divergences real and substantial? Does response shift in a consistent and coherent way with the stimulus? We cannot estimate the relative power of these competing views. But to the extent that the last image prevails, Canadian policy-attitude data reveal the paradox of voting. The appearance of the paradox in the survey context points us back to real politics. The divergent effects of survey stimuli mirror the struggle by real politicians, as opposed to survey researchers, to control, or at least shape, the policy agenda. The book concludes that political support is an important resource, but an equivocal one; its importance comes at least as much from the adroitness of the politicians as from the structure and apparent depth of political support itself.



# The Pattern of Political Confidence

Are Canadians really as alienated from their national government as the Robarts-Pépin task force seemed to imply? At any particular time, how does support for Ottawa vary across groups and regions? How much do the regional differences stem from defects in representation at the centre? What does feeling about Ottawa imply for the moral claims of the Dominion itself? Do feelings about governments extend to other Canadian institutions? If support for the federal government has changed over time, why has it done so? In particular, what role has the economy played in such change?

This chapter tries to answer each of these questions in turn. The first task is to establish whether support for Ottawa has declined, and if it has, in what ways. Then follows an exploration of cleavages in mass support, between ethnic and religious groups, between educational and occupational groups, and between provinces. After we establish the social basis of support, we go on to assess its implications for representation at the centre. Here we test whether scholars' preoccupation with representation, especially with a reformed second chamber, is mirrored in the mass public. After considering representation, we turn to the integrity of the federation itself. The task here is to assess the general level of support for the country and, again, to plumb the social structure of such support. This section also examines the extent to which federal-provincial conflict leads to divergent assessments of federal and provincial governments. Do Canadians respond to their governments in the same "either/or" terms that seem to dominate conflict between the orders of government?

The first part of the chapter, then, looks to the distinctively Canadian sources of conflict, to cleavages between groups and regions. The second part takes up the more international themes. Here confidence in the



federal government will be set in the context of confidence in other institutions. Confidence measures will then be related to three key macroeconomic indicators: unemployment, inflation and real income.

This chapter will reaffirm some parts of the conventional wisdom, but will call other parts into question. By some measures, support for Ottawa appears to have declined. By other measures, Ottawa's position still looks quite strong. Regional differences in support for the federal government exist, as we should expect, but the direction of such differences does not correspond to the rhetoric of élite conflict. Underrepresentation of certain regions does not seem to weigh heavily on individuals who actually live in such regions. And the pattern of support for Ottawa corresponds hardly at all to the pattern of support for Canada as a country. The regions which have the sharpest sense of themselves as distinct communities commonly express the greatest support for the national government. The regions most alienated from the national government are the least alienated from the nation itself. Any decay in Ottawa's position probably has not been unique to that institution. Rather, feelings, positive or negative, about all institutions run together. Finally, such movement as we find in support of Ottawa is heavily under the control of a factor usually neglected in accounts of Canada's political crisis: the macroeconomy. Unemployment alone accounts for the greater part of such change as we can find.

## A Decline in Confidence?

Documentation of a decline in Ottawa's popular standing is hard to find. One careful review does find a 1965–74 shift of orientation from Ottawa to the provincial governments (Elkins and Simeon, 1980). But the shift, as measured, is in attributions of governmental importance and not in terms of respondents' confidence in one or the other order. Over much the same period, in apparent contradiction to the provincialist trend, Canadians also became more nationalistic (LeDuc and Murray, 1983). Can we find any evidence that directly addresses the popular standing of the federal government?

Four groups of survey data speak to this question. Items from the Gallup Poll span the longest period, but provide distressingly weak evidence in themselves. The Canadian National Election Studies (NES), under various university-based teams, give readings from 1965 to 1980. The Quality of Life (QOL) surveys, from York University, give 1977 and 1979 samplings.<sup>1</sup> The fourth data set is the *Decima Quarterly Report*. Although much will be made of Decima data in this and later chapters, the Decima quarterly series began only in 1980.

Two Gallup questions tap the "confidence" domain over parts of three or four decades. Evidence about the first question, in which respondents are asked to identify which of "big business", "big labour", and "big



**TABLE 2-1 Biggest Threat: Business, Labour, Government?**

Date	CIPO No.	Biggest Threat			(N)
		"Big Business"	"Big Labour"	"Big Government"	
Oct. 1968	332	22.9%	45.7	31.4	(512)
Aug. 1975	374	23.3%	42.6	34.1	(850)
Nov. 1976	394	19.4%	45.5	35.1	(984)
Sept. 1977	404	21.1%	43.5	35.4	(1,078)
Jan. 1979	420	20.0%	38.2	41.8	(914)
Jan. 1981	445	26.0%	35.4	38.6	(889)
Oct. 1981	454.1	18.6%	31.7	49.7	(920)
Feb. 1982	458	17.3%	34.5	48.2	(934)
July 1982	463.1	14.7%	33.7	51.6	(924)
Nov. 1982	467	15.3%	34.7	50.0	(946)

*Source:* Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (CIPO).

*Items:* CIPO No. 332: In your opinion which of the following do you think will be the biggest threat for the country in the future — big business, big labour, or big government?

All others: Speaking of the future, which do you think will be the biggest threat to Canada in years to come — big business, big labour, or big government?

government" is the "biggest threat", appears in Table 2-1. However badly formulated this question might be, it has the virtue of repetition. Government clearly grows, while both labour and business recede, as the greatest perceived threat. This trend appears fairly linear to early 1981, with a cumulative growth of the "big government" share of about ten percentage points. Then, from the beginning to the end of 1981, the government share seems to grow by about another ten points. It is conceivable that respondents still do not see "big government" as much of a threat in itself, just as more of a threat than either of the other options. Conversely, all three sectors may pose a considerable perceived threat; business and labour may fare well only in comparison to government. Whatever the general standing of the three institutions, government fares the least well in the popular mind. Unfortunately, we cannot say which, if any, particular order of government carries most of the blame.

The other Gallup item, on approval of the prime minister's handling of his job, appears in Table 2-2. Although this item is fairly straightforward, problems of interpretation remain. The object of assessment is unequivocally a federal actor. The assessment is absolute, rather than relative to the performance of some other actor or institution. But the object, the prime minister, may be too specific. Although we do want to know how much of what appear to be general assessments of federal institutions are really only disguised evaluations of the actor or actors who run them, it would be best if we also had a general assessment of federal institutions which also spanned this 20-year period. Such a

**TABLE 2-2 Approval of Prime Minister's Handling of His Job**

Date		CIPO	Approve	Disapprove	(Valid N)	Incumbent
			%	%		
July	1956	250	79.5	20.5	(1,500)	St. Laurent
Sept.	1957	260	91.0	9.0	(697)	Diefenbaker
Dec.	1957	263	85.2	14.8	(1,495)	Diefenbaker
Mar.	1959	274	63.5	36.5	(576)	Diefenbaker
Jan.	1960	280	70.2	29.8	(493)	Diefenbaker
July	1960	283	54.2	45.8	(612)	Diefenbaker
Nov.	1960	285	55.7	44.3	(524)	Diefenbaker
March	1961	287	56.9	43.1	(497)	Diefenbaker
July	1961	290	57.8	42.2	(606)	Diefenbaker
Sept.	1962	298	48.1	51.9	(540)	Diefenbaker
March	1963	301	48.8	55.2	(1,477)	Diefenbaker
June	1963	303	56.5	43.5	(446)	Pearson
Jan.	1966	317	66.5	33.5	(658)	Pearson
Jan.	1970	335	47.8	52.2	(521)	Trudeau
March	1974	364	58.7	41.3	(855)	Trudeau
Sept.	1975	380	54.1	45.9	(801)	Trudeau
April	1976	387	39.0	61.0	(1,067)	Trudeau
Dec.	1976	395	35.9	64.1	(934)	Trudeau
Nov.	1977	406	49.6	50.4	(879)	Trudeau
Sept.	1982	464	28.2	75.8	(922)	Trudeau
Dec.	1982	468.1	32.1	61.9	(943)	Trudeau

Source: CIPO.

Item: Do you approve or disapprove of the way ( . . . ) is handling his job as Prime Minister?

measure does not exist, however. If we do want to tap sentiment over parts of four decades, we must go with what we can find. Response to the prime minister may, in any case, reflect the spirit of the age somewhat independently of the characteristics of the individual incumbent.

According to Table 2-2, evaluation of prime ministers has become more negative. The July 1956 reading for Mr. St. Laurent suggests that his standing cannot have suffered too much from media criticism over the Pipeline debate. The high 1956 rating did not, however, insulate Mr. St. Laurent from an electoral reverse in the following year. Mr. Diefenbaker's early ratings rival the rating for Mr. St. Laurent. But even as Mr. Diefenbaker's government was collapsing in late 1962 and early 1963, almost as many respondents approved of his performance as disapproved of it. Mr. Pearson's two readings were positive, although neither reached the heights which seemed to be the norm before mid-1960. Mr. Trudeau's ratings, notwithstanding his electoral success, were almost always negative.

What is one to make of this picture of decline? Do the ratings mirror only the idiosyncratic chemistry of the relationship between each prime minister and the electorate? Or is the story not so idiosyncratic, but rather one of steady deterioration in the tone of public discourse? The

**TABLE 2-3 Approval of Prime Minister: Time Series Analysis**

Independent Variable	Equation			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Number of months since July 1956	-0.137 (-5.58)	—	-0.245 (-3.68)	—
Diefenbaker	—	-16.76 (-1.21)	-5.12 (-0.47)	-29.71 (2.62)
Pearson	—	-18.0 (-1.13)	-3.20 (0.24)	-35.54 (-2.64)
Trudeau	—	-36.33 (-2.59)	18.23 (1.00)	-33.22 (-3.04)
Number of months since first formed government	—	—	—	-0.24 (-3.51)
Intercept	71.87 (19.78)	79.5 (6.02)	79.5 (7.94)	101.16 (8.47)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.621	0.445	0.700	0.690
D-W	1.15	1.02	1.74	1.81

Source: CIPO.

Item: See Table 2-2.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

successive prime ministers may have contributed to this deterioration, but may also have been victims of a more general loss of confidence in government. A secondary phenomenon may also be at work. The longer a prime minister leads a government, the less popular he may become, even if his party continues to win elections. Mr. St. Laurent's high standing in his eighth year seems to belie this observation, but such a story may hold for his successors. The readings we get for each may, in part, be accidents of how early or late in the life of a government Gallup happened to pose the questions.

Table 2-3 tries to sort these explanations out with elementary analyses of the Gallup time series. Each equation tells a different part of the story. Equation (1) regresses approval on the number of months which have elapsed since the first reading in July 1956. The effect is clearly negative: on average, the percentage approving the prime minister's handling of his job has dropped by 0.137 points each month, for a 25-year cumulative decline of more than 40 percentage points. Equation (2) is a dummy variable regression which gives, in effect, the average rating difference between Mr. St. Laurent and each of three of his successors. As we already know, each prime minister rates less well than his predecessor. The decay for Mr. Trudeau seems especially striking, however. Note, nevertheless, that the Durbin-Watson statistic (D-W) for this equation is low, an indication that the error terms in equation (2) are serially correlated. What appear to be effects from individual prime ministers may actually be from some secular trend. Equation (3) pits the secular decay

thesis against the effects of particular incumbents. The evidence in that equation should be treated carefully, as the prime minister dummy variables are closely related to the time variable for obvious reasons.<sup>2</sup> Even so, equation (3) leans strongly toward an emphasis on the times rather than the man. The coefficient on time is larger here than in the bivariate regression in equation (1). Meanwhile, none of the prime minister effects is significant. Equation (4) tests the possibility that the prime ministers count down, not from the beginning of time, or at least from 1956, but from the month in which they first formed a government. Once the honeymoon is over, a prime minister almost inescapably begins to alienate parts of the electorate. The cumulation of alienated groups could undermine his popularity. Mr. Trudeau's generally low scores might thus be a result of his very longevity. Equation (4) is consistent with this possibility. Note that although each prime minister dummy-variable coefficient is significantly different from zero, each such coefficient is essentially indistinguishable from the others. Mr. Trudeau's coefficient is the middle one of the three, not the lowest as in equation (2). We cannot really pit the within-government explanation against the long-term decay account implicit in equations (1) and (3). Such an estimation would founder on the dense overlapping of the variables. Note, however, that equation (3) explains variation better than does equation (4). This may be a hint that the long-term decay model is the dominant one.<sup>3</sup> Most important in all of this, however, is the weakness of any explanation in terms of prime ministerial idiosyncracies.<sup>4</sup>

Evidence from the National Election Studies and from the York Quality of Life surveys appears in Table 2-4. Three kinds of questions in these surveys bear on our thesis. First, we can track response to the party system from 1965 to 1980, as indicated by Panel A of Table 2-4. Secondly, in Panel B appears evidence from the 1974, 1979, and 1980 election surveys about feelings toward the Liberal and Conservative leaders and toward the federal government. Thirdly, we can examine items which tap a "sense of political efficacy".

On average, Canadians have become no more and no less intense in their commitments to political parties. Canadian samples reveal none of the flight from parties that American samples do. American respondents have moved increasingly into weaker expressions of partisanship and increasingly into the non-partisan camp, although there is considerable dispute over the extent to which this apparent shift cloaks an enduring, unexpressed partisanship.<sup>5</sup> Among those who espouse a party identification in Canada, there is no perceptible shift toward weaker expressions of the commitment. And the proportion claiming a party preference does not shrink.

The evidence from "feeling thermometers", in Panel B, tells a similar story for the Government of Canada. Feelings for the government dip in 1979, but this move may reflect nothing more than the fact that the

**TABLE 2-4 Indicators from University-Based Surveys, 1965–1980**

	Year					
	NES 1965	NES 1968	NES 1974	QOL 1977	NES 1979	NES 1980
<b>(A) Party Identification</b>						
Very strong	23.0%	24.2%	27.2%	—	25.5%	30.5%
Fairly strong	41.3	43.2	28.9	—	40.5	40.8
Not very strong	14.8	14.5	13.6	—	13.1	11.3
DK; NA; Inapplicable	20.8 (8,199) <sup>a</sup>	18.1 (2,767)	20.1 (2,562)	—	20.9 (2,761)	17.3 (1,748)
<b>(B) Feeling-Thermometer Mean Scores</b>						
Government of Canada	—	—	62.7 (2,483)	—	57.1 (2,603)	62.1 (1,676)
Pierre Trudeau	—	—	61.9 (2,457)	—	57.1 (2,689)	54.9 (1,719)
PC Leader	—	—	47.4 (2,429)	—	50.9 (2,611)	44.6 (1,694)
<b>(C) Political Efficacy (percent agree)</b>						
(1) "Gov't doesn't care."	48.2 (7,741) <sup>a</sup>	—	58.5 (1,201)	61.5 (3,164)	54.4 (1,308)	—
(2) "MPs lose touch."	60.0 (7,580) <sup>a</sup>	—	65.4 (1,201)	74.9 (3,106)	65.4 (1,287)	—
(3) "Politics are too complicated."	71.1 (7,924) <sup>a</sup>	—	67.0 (1,239)	69.3 (3,198)	67.8 (1,331)	—
(4) "People like me no say."	51.1 (7,878) <sup>a</sup>	—	55.5 (1,226)	55.6 (3,173)	57.7 (1,322)	—

*Sources:* National Election Studies (NES); (York) Quality of Life (QOL) surveys.

*Items:* (A) Party Identification: How strongly (party mentioned) do you feel — very strongly, fairly strongly, or not very strongly?

(B) Feeling Thermometer: varies according to placement in questionnaire; see H.D. Clarke et al., *Political Choice in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979).

(C) (1) I don't think that the government cares much what people like me think.

(2) Generally, those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with the people.

(3) Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

(4) People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

a. Integer weighted.

DK = don't know.

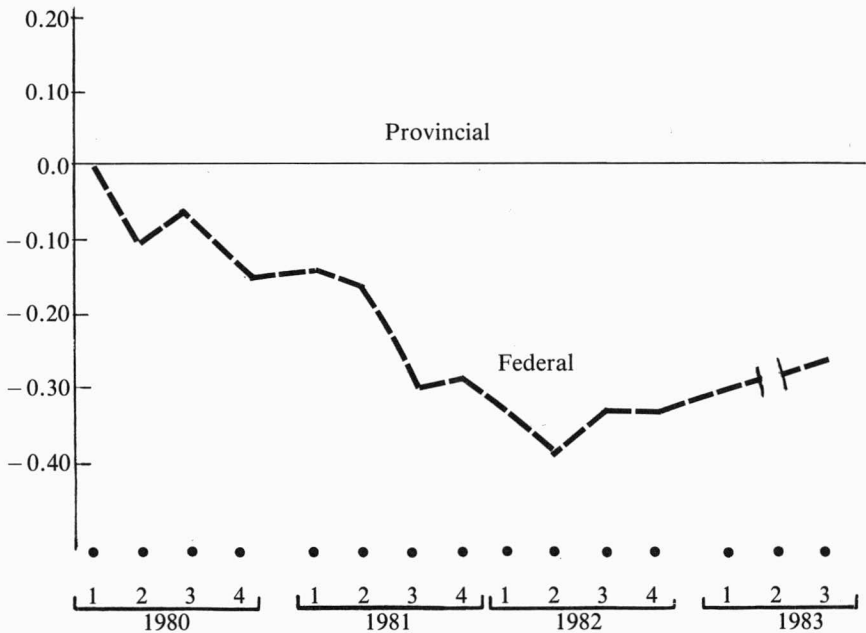
NA = not ascertainable.

government of the day had received the votes of less than 40 percent of the electorate.<sup>6</sup> Feelings for the Conservative leader show no trend, but are never more than lukewarm. As in the Gallup series, Mr. Trudeau's standing drops over the six-year period. Even so, his margin over the Conservative leader is only a little smaller at the end of the period than at the beginning.

The "political efficacy" items appear in Panel C of Table 2-4. One item emphasizes the respondent's subjective sense of political competence; the other three items tap respondents' sense of the responsiveness of the system. Only one of the governmental references is specifically to the federal government. This item refers to "Parliament", a term popularly reserved for the House of Commons. Whatever their exact reference, the efficacy items exhibit little interpretable change over the 1965-80 period. The one item which refers to respondents' own competence shows no trend. The other three items may indicate a diminished sense of efficacy. The 1977 Quality of Life sample stands out as less efficacious than any of the National Election Study samples. The NES samples do, however, hint at a small long-term decline in reported sense of efficacy. At no point does the public seem overwhelmed by the responsiveness of government, but not much can be made of this. Most striking, in any case, is how small any change has been.

The final body of evidence comes from the Decima Quarterly Report. The quarterly national-sample mean score for a question on confidence in the federal government appears in Figure 2-1, for 14 of the 16 1980-83 quarters. In the figure, points below the horizontal axis indicate that opinion is, on balance, negative. At its high point, in the first quarter of 1980, opinion is evenly balanced. The federal government's standing drops until the second quarter of 1982 and then recovers some of its lost ground. The drop in government esteem coincides roughly with two different events: the constitutional crisis of 1980-81 and the economic difficulties, first inflation and then recession, of 1981-82. What do the Decima data, with their short span, tell us about the longer-term question? First, one cannot but be struck by the seemingly weak standing of the federal government for much of the 1980-83 period. Of the three response choices, the negative one forces the respondent to say that he or she has "no confidence" in the federal government. A more diffidently negative response is not allowed. Even so, in some quarters, about half the national sample claims to have no confidence in its national government. It is not clear how much to make of this, however. As it happens, this particular trio of response choices tends to produce a more, not less, negative picture than would a four-category set (Lipset and Schneider, 1983). Secondly, the quarterly repetition of the Decima items alerts us to variation that is not picked up by the intermittent and widely-spaced Gallup and university-based studies. The Decima data indicate that political confidence, whatever its long-term movement, is also vulnerable to short-term forces, be they political or economic.

**FIGURE 2-1 Mean Confidence in the Federal Government**



Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: "Now I'm going to name some institutions in this country and I'd like you to consider the people who run these institutions. How about the people who run . . . (ROTATE ITEMS). Would you say you have a great deal of confidence in them, only some confidence in them, or hardly any confidence in them?" (Great deal = +1; some = 0; hardly any = -1.)

The evidence leaves no single, clear impression. The Gallup items suggest that the federal government's, or perhaps all governments', political standing has declined. The other data sets say nothing of the sort. Whatever Canadians may feel in their hearts about their government or their leaders, they still exhibit commitments to parties, they reveal little change in the warmth they feel toward governments and party leaders, and they do not claim to feel more remote from the political order. And if the Decima data are any guide, the long-term shift or lack of shift masks considerable short-term variation in political confidence.

### **Social and Geographic Bases of Confidence**

As Chapter 1 suggests, language and geography dominate accounts of Ottawa's political predicament. If Ottawa is the government of English

Canada, while Quebec provides the only government that French Canadians can realistically hope to control, then we should expect a linguistic discontinuity in support for Ottawa. But the linguistic difference may appear only in interaction with the province of residence. Residence in Quebec may be the critical mobilizing factor for French Canadians; those outside Quebec may actually need Ottawa to defend their interests as provincial minorities. If support for Ottawa among French Canadians varies with the extent to which the francophone sub-group's well-being depends on the federal government (Pinard, 1980; Stinchcombe, 1975), so might it vary within English Canada. Western Canadians, for example, might see Ottawa as not very relevant to, or even as inimical to, their interests. For a given group, dependence on an order of government may itself be a complicated factor. Here francophone Québécois come to mind again. However much Quebec may be the only government that francophones can dominate, the government of Quebec may not be able to deliver all of what residents of that province need. Quebec may be especially dependent on the transcontinental economic system which exists, to the extent that it still does exist, only because Ottawa wills it. To the degree that this is so, Quebec dwellers may actually be relatively supportive of the federal government.

Accordingly, this section looks at the geographic and social bases of confidence in the federal government. As it happens, the social factors we consider extend beyond language. We shall also look at occupation and education. It will not always prove possible, unfortunately, to look at social and geographic factors simultaneously. In some of what follows, only geographic differences will appear.

Table 2-5 picks up the thread from the immediately preceding section, providing Decima data on confidence in the federal government. The table gives the national mean for each quarter and each province's deviation from the national mean.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to expectation, Quebec is consistently far above the national mean. The Atlantic provinces are, on average, a little above the mean. No Atlantic province is above the national average in every quarter, however. The Western provinces are consistently below the national mean. This is most true for Alberta and British Columbia. Thus, conflict among political élites is mirrored only incompletely in the mass public. The clearest reflection is in the West. In contrast, the federal government fares relatively well in Newfoundland, notwithstanding the bitter dispute over the offshore. The battle for the hearts and minds of Québécois seems to be going especially well for Ottawa. In the early 1980s, at least, Québécois may have felt more dependent than residents of most other provinces on Ottawa as an agent of their economic interests. Chapter 5, below, reveals some popular sense of this dependence in Québécois' relatively strong support for the National Energy Policy; similarly, Chapter 6 reveals Quebec as the bastion of support for Ottawa's control of the offshore.



TABLE 2-5 Confidence in the Federal Government

Quarter	Mean for Canada	Differences from National Mean								
		B.C.	Alta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N.B.	N.S.	Nfld.
1.80	0.00	-0.17	-0.19	-0.10	-0.19	-0.07	0.26	-0.03	0.06	0.15
2.80	-0.08	-0.12	-0.17	-0.07	-0.02	-0.03	0.11	-0.01	0.03	0.11
3.80	-0.05	-0.17	-0.22	-0.12	-0.03	-0.06	0.22	-0.06	-0.04	0.12
4.80	-0.14	-0.13	-0.29	-0.21	-0.09	-0.01	0.15	0.03	0.15	0.14
1.81	-0.13	-0.16	-0.19	-0.14	-0.15	0.02	0.14	-0.08	0.03	-0.07
2.81	-0.15	-0.14	-0.25	-0.17	-0.08	-0.10	0.28	-0.02	0.10	-0.03
3.81	-0.27	-0.17	-0.11	-0.06	-0.10	-0.13	0.26	0.03	0.09	0.06
4.81	-0.25	-0.16	-0.29	-0.14	-0.08	-0.09	0.20	0.06	0.01	-0.05
1.82	-0.33	-0.17	-0.20	-0.10	-0.16	-0.09	0.23	0.13	-0.03	0.28
2.82	-0.37	-0.12	-0.19	-0.11	-0.09	-0.08	0.26	0.02	0.03	0.01
3.82	-0.32	-0.21	-0.23	-0.11	-0.09	-0.12	0.33	-0.04	-0.07	0.17
4.82	-0.32	-0.15	-0.23	-0.10	-0.08	-0.07	0.25	-0.05	-0.04	0.01
1.83	-0.30	-0.25	-0.25	-0.13	-0.09	-0.08	0.29	-0.06	0.12	0.13
3.83	-0.21	-0.23	-0.19	-0.13	-0.13	-0.04	0.25	0.07	-0.06	0.01
14-quarter average	-0.21	-0.17	-0.21	-0.12	-0.10	-0.06	0.24	0.00	0.02	0.09
(N)	(1,500)	(161)	(120)	(60)	(68)	(540)	(408)	(44)	(54)	(37)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Prince Edward Island is omitted for lack of cases. Entries are mean confidence ratings.

Item: See Figure 2-1.

Ontarians' response may be the most surprising of all. In recent years, Ontario seems to have figured as prominently as Quebec in Westerners' anti-Ottawa demonologies. Yet Ontario samples are always much closer to Western than to Quebec samples. Like Westerners, Ontarians, on balance, are always negative about Ottawa, even if sometimes only slightly so. In sum, regional differences do exist and are often quite striking, but they do not always occur as conflict among élites might lead us to expect. Even where the federal government is relatively popular, however, its absolute level of popularity is rarely particularly impressive.

Geography does not seem to explain much, if any, of the quarterly shifts in federal confidence levels. Although the provincial deviations fluctuate, most of this flux is probably the result of sampling error. Provinces seem to move up and down in concert, maintaining as they go the rough pecking order of confidence levels. A more rigorous test of this observation appears in Table 2-6. The table gives coefficients from bivariate time-series regressions: of provincial mean confidence scores on the national mean confidence score; and of the provincial mean scores on one another. British Columbia's, Alberta's, and Ontario's confidence levels move with one another and with the national level in an almost one-to-one fashion. The Quebec series is also clearly linked to the others, but with a less close fit than prevails among the predominantly anglophone provinces.

Nevertheless, the regional structure of feelings about the federal government is not utterly impervious to events, according to Table 2-7. Here, "government of Canada" thermometer ratings appear as dependent variables in three cross-sectional regressions. Non-geographic factors now make their appearance. The independent variables include: province of residence, with Ontario as the reference category; two language dummy variables, one for French-speakers and one for non-English/non-French ("Other") speakers; two occupational dummy variables, one for manual workers and one for farmers; and the number of years of schooling. The non-geographic variables represent a crude attempt to identify class or ethnic discontinuities in national sentiment. The education variable appears to test two contradictory hypotheses: one that education, in promoting exposure to the core values of the culture, increases the sense of commitment and closeness to government; and the other, that education promotes more critical or less effusive expressions of sentiment. As provinces differ greatly in their educational, linguistic and occupational composition, entering social variables into the same equation as geographic variables should produce purer estimates of geographic effects than would the simple comparison of provincial means. We must exercise caution here, however, as the differential geographic distribution of non-geographic traits is part of what drives regional disputes in Canadian politics.

The most striking thing about the equations in Table 2-7 is the instability of the signs, as a reflection of the alternation of parties in government. The ethnic pillars of the Liberal party move with the political winds. In 1974 and 1980, the most powerful non-geographic coefficient is on the "other language" dummy variable. French-speakers are also relatively pro-government in 1980, although only just. In 1974, francophones are not distinct at all. The sign for each linguistic coefficient switches in 1979, but neither is significant for that year. Still, the groups can be said to move relative to the rest of the sample in response to whichever party forms the government.

Of the other non-geographic coefficients, only that on years of schooling does much work. The education effect, unlike the other significant ones, is not responsive to party alternation. Rather, it is negative in each year.<sup>8</sup> Precisely what the negative effect means is not clear. It could indicate an effect from schooling itself. If so, one of the causes of the apparent decline in the esteem in which the federal government is held may be the growth in educational attainment which federal conditional grants helped to promote. On the other hand, the effect which appears to be from schooling may indicate something about the kind of people who are recruited to each level of educational attainment, regardless of what schooling itself does.

This brings us back to geography. In 1974 and 1980, the province coefficients resemble, with one exception, the province differences in Table 2-5. The Western provinces are consistently negative, and the Atlantic provinces are intermittently positive. In contrast to the earlier table, here the Quebec coefficient is never significant and is not always positive. Some of the difference may reflect the politics of the different periods, the 1970s as contrasted with the 1980s. Some of the difference must reflect the presence of a French-language dummy variable in the equation. In 1980, the "French" variable picks up some effect which, in its absence, would have been routed through the Quebec coefficient.<sup>9</sup> The language coefficient is not particularly impressive, however, and, of course, is not significant in 1974. Differences between the feeling thermometer and the confidence question as stimuli may explain some of the difference between the tables. The confidence question, with its rather stark wording, may force out group contrasts in a way that the feeling thermometer fails to do. That said, the 1974 and 1980 regional differences among the mainly anglophone provinces resemble very closely the differences in the Decima data.

In 1979, the picture is dramatically different. In that year, the coefficients for Alberta and British Columbia are positive. The stimulus represented by the Government of Canada thus must have an important partisan component. Note, however, that the Atlantic provinces are much less affected by this component than are Alberta and British

TABLE 2-6 Temporal Dependence in Provincial Sub-samples' Confidence in the Federal Government

Mean Federal Confidence Score in:	Mean Federal Confidence Score in:					
	Canada	B.C.	Alberta	Ontario	Quebec	Intercept
B.C.	(1) 1.07 (11.38)	—	—	—	—	-0.15 (-6.90)
	(2) —	—	0.91 (6.62)	—	—	0.00 (0.15)
	(3) —	—	—	0.86 (9.16)	—	-0.14 (-4.76)
	(4) —	—	—	—	0.92 (3.69)	-0.40 (-15.54)
Alberta	(1) 1.01 (8.51)	—	—	—	—	-0.21 (-7.60)
	(2) —	0.86 (6.62)	—	—	—	-0.10 (-1.91)
	(3) —	—	—	0.79 (6.41)	—	-0.20 (-5.40)
	(4) —	—	—	—	0.91 (3.83)	-0.45 (-18.14)
Ontario	(1) 1.17 (13.14)	—	—	—	—	-0.03 (-1.51)
	(2) —	1.01 (9.16)	—	—	—	0.11 (2.40)
	(3) —	—	0.98 (6.41)	—	—	0.14 (2.06)
	(4) —	—	—	—	0.97 (3.47)	-0.31 (-10.49)
						R <sup>2</sup>
						D-W
						0.92
						0.79
						0.87
						0.53
						0.86
						0.79
						0.77
						0.55
						0.93
						0.87
						0.77
						0.50
						1.90
						2.42
						1.13
						1.47
						2.92
						2.64
						2.06
						2.25
						1.81
						1.16
						1.88
						1.41

Quebec	(1)	0.75 (5.38)	—	—	—	0.19 (5.69)	0.71	2.65
	(2)	—	0.58 (3.64)	—	—	0.25 (4.01)	0.53	2.66
	(3)	—	—	0.61 (3.83)	—	0.29 (4.13)	0.55	3.23
	(4)	—	—	—	0.52 (3.47)	0.17 (3.79)	0.50	2.56

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

Item: See Figure 2-1.

**TABLE 2-7 Structure of Feelings About the Government of Canada**

Independent Variable	Year		
	1974	1979	1980
Years schooling	-0.30 (-2.08)	-0.44 (-3.39)	-0.84 (-5.35)
Manual	-0.13 (-0.12)	-0.82 (-0.88)	-2.32 (-1.99)
Farm	2.38 (1.18)	2.97 (1.97)	-2.35 (-1.20)
French	1.62 (0.88)	-2.35 (-1.28)	3.97 (1.67)
Other language	6.64 (3.46)	-0.44 (-0.22)	5.73 (2.03)
B.C.	-3.79 (-2.29)	4.16 (2.67)	-7.75 (-4.09)
Alberta	-6.19 (-3.25)	3.60 (2.01)	-11.65 (-5.01)
Saskatchewan	-5.23 (-2.12)	0.86 (0.38)	-10.97 (-3.82)
Manitoba	-7.36 (-3.22)	2.48 (1.18)	-4.68 (-1.87)
Quebec	-3.14 (-1.62)	-0.84 (-0.43)	2.07 (0.80)
New Brunswick	-0.60 (-0.27)	-0.43 (-0.20)	2.69 (0.96)
Nova Scotia	-1.37 (-0.69)	5.45 (3.00)	3.73 (1.69)
P.E.I.	2.70 (1.07)	3.74 (1.65)	4.68 (1.71)
Newfoundland	0.22 (0.09)	2.98 (1.31)	4.03 (1.39)
Intercept	67.23 (33.79)	61.40 (32.68)	72.88 (30.87)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.02	0.03	0.09
N	2,394	2,507	1,609

Source: National Election Studies, 1974, 1979, 1980.

Note: Dependent variable is feeling-thermometer score. Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

Columbia. The partisan component could not, of course, have produced regional fluctuation in the 1980-83 Decima data.

Region is clearly a factor in assessment of Ottawa, just as the rhetoric of political alienation in Canada leads us to expect; but it is not the only factor, and its effects are not always stable. The most impressively stable effect appears to derive from education. "Other language" speakers are

a distinct group, but one which responds to the partisan hue of the government. Shifts in the ethno-linguistic base of sentiment toward Ottawa from a counterpoint to movement in the geography of that same sentiment. When the Conservatives replaced the Liberals in government, opinions in Alberta and British Columbia changed from being the least warm to the warmest toward Ottawa. Over the life of a particular government, however, shifts in confidence tend not to be differentiated by region.

At first glance, the data just presented are reassuring. A regional cleavage exists, but it neither explains everything nor is itself written in stone. The one year in which a regional reversal appears, 1979, represents what used to be a rarity in recent Canadian history, a year in which the Conservative party formed the government. The Western provinces may have had the potential all along to be very supportive of Ottawa, but their potential was tapped very infrequently. Canadian elections were not so much a lottery as a "sure thing", with Westerners always on the short end. The 1984 election may promise a new order of things, but the very breadth of the Conservative victory leaves political support in the West still problematic. Will Westerners come to perceive the new Conservative Cabinet, in which Western ministers began by holding a near majority of seats on the Priorities and Planning Committee, as ultimately just as dependent upon and just as responsive to Central Canadian interests as were its Liberal predecessors? The response of Quebec to the Conservative appeal, meanwhile, ensures that province a place at the Cabinet table and in the government caucus.

## **Regional Representation and Political Authority**

Are fundamental changes to the way regional interests are represented at the centre required to restore Ottawa's standing in some regions, especially in the West? As I argued in Chapter 1, a major theme in analyses of the Canadian political crisis emphasizes flaws in representation at the centre. The West, in particular, was chronically underrepresented in high places: in the government caucus and at the Cabinet table. If this underrepresentation undermines the legitimacy of the regime, as Easton would put it, the regime's difficulties might soon become those of the political community. The representational imagery echoes the rhetoric of the American Revolution and, before it, of the English Civil War. It reminds us that what ended as the complete separation of the American colonies from the Empire began as a demand for redress of grievances within the Empire. In the opening stages of the Revolution, Americans saw themselves as engaged in a patriotic act which they hoped Englishmen in England would emulate (Bailyn, 1967). What, then, are Canadians' feelings about representation in Ottawa, and how are those feelings structured geographically?

We can get some purchase on attitudes to representation from a 1983 survey on Senate reform. First, how salient is the question of regional representation? Secondly, how can regional representation be improved? Thirdly, if Canadians agree in the abstract on the need for change, do they also agree on the concrete details of the change? Finally, might changes which remedy defects in the present structure also undermine its virtues?

Two pieces of evidence do bear on the popular salience of representational change, especially for the most frequently discussed change, Senate reform. The Senate-reform survey respondents were asked to rate Senate reform and several other issues for their importance. The other issues included regional conflict, federal-provincial conflict, Indian rights, pornography, French-English tension, unemployment, inflation, pollution, the deficit and Canadian-American relations. Senate reform came off as by far the least salient issue. Only 14 percent of the Senate-reform study sample claimed that Senate reform itself was very important. In contrast, 79 percent of respondents made such a claim for unemployment. Moreover, the westward tilt in politicians' and some academics' demands for Senate reform was not mirrored in the mass public. Western survey respondents were, if anything, *less* interested than others in Senate reform.

Two other questions in the same survey confirm this picture. Respondents were first asked whether they thought that the Senate should be reformed, kept as it is, or abolished. Those who thought that the Senate should be reformed were then asked how high a priority such reform should be given. Those who said a "high priority" totalled only 11 percent of the sample, while another 18 percent were willing to grant Senate reform a "moderate priority". Regional differences in Senate-reform priority were not dramatic.

Senate reform is not the whole of the representative issue, of course. It may evoke a particularly weak response because of an inevitable psychological association with cynical feelings about the patronage-ridden geriatric institution that is supposed to be reformed. But Senate reform has been more in the air than any other representational issue and has been presented by some as a veritable panacea. For all its negative associations with the existing Senate, such reform could evoke more real response than almost any other scheme. Under these circumstances, response to Senate reform seems especially tepid.

Is the preferred method of dealing with the representational problem necessarily one of institutional reform? The Senate-reform survey canvassed several reasonable institutional options. One possibility, obviously, was Senate reform itself. A second possibility was reform of the electoral system, to break down the artificial dominance of a region by a single party and the concomitant exclusion of other parties from the region.<sup>10</sup> A third option would be to break down party discipline and so



**TABLE 2-8 Impacts of Changes on Regional Sensitivity  
of Federal Government**

Province	Senate Reform		Electoral Reform		Looser Party Discipline		Change Party in Power	
	% Less	% More	% Less	% More	% Less	% More	% Less	% More
B.C.	29.3 (157)	35.7	28.5 (165)	35.8	13.3 (165)	61.8	11.1 (191)	67.8
Alberta	22.1 (122)	36.9	26.8 (129)	52.8	14.2 (120)	60.0	11.5 (130)	72.5
Saskatchewan	39.5 (119)	32.8	37.3 (126)	37.3	11.5 (131)	64.1	13.0 (131)	64.1
Manitoba	30.3 (119)	37.8	26.1 (115)	47.0	15.0 (120)	65.0	14.8 (122)	65.6
Ontario	23.5 (378)	42.1	31.7 (398)	45.0	11.1 (397)	61.0	19.0 (415)	59.8
Quebec	40.5 (291)	30.9	34.1 (355)	39.2	22.1 (330)	57.3	33.8 (358)	45.5
N.B.	29.2 (96)	41.7	33.9 (109)	35.8	13.0 (108)	63.9	20.2 (109)	46.8
Nova Scotia	30.4 (92)	37.0	37.2 (94)	36.2	17.6 (102)	52.0	20.4 (103)	57.3
P.E.I.	29.4 (102)	35.3	39.3 (107)	44.9	8.3 (108)	68.5	25.2 (107)	54.2
Newfoundland	37.3 (75)	40.0	28.0 (82)	47.6	19.8 (81)	55.6	21.8 (87)	64.4
Canada	30.5 (1,587)	37.2	32.9 (1,716)	41.9	14.8 (1,697)	60.0	20.3 (1,772)	58.5

Source: CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

Item: Using a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "less sensitive" and 5 meaning "more sensitive," please tell me if, in your opinion, each of the following changes would make the Government of Canada more sensitive or less sensitive to your province's and region's needs: changing the rules in the House of Commons so that MPs would not always have to vote with their party; reforming the Canadian Senate; changing the way we elect Members of Parliament; . . . changing the party in power in the federal government.

make the exact regional distribution of parties' seats in the House of Commons less important than it is now.<sup>11</sup> Finally, one might accept the institutions as they are and wish for a change of government. This option has received relatively little attention in recent studies of representation in Ottawa. Although it would consist of change within the existing rules, it might, given the majoritarian bias of our system, be the most dramatic move. The other institutional changes would, by their design, actually diminish the impact of all subsequent electoral change.

According to Table 2-8, respondents vote for the existing institutions, but dislike the party discipline which is so central a feature of those institutions. The most widely chosen methods are the replacement of the

party now in power by another party and the loosening of party bonds on MPs. Far behind in third place is electoral reform, although the item on such reform seems especially weak. Senate reform comes a distant last. Regional differences over electoral reform and Senate reform are weak and not interpretable. Quebec respondents are understandably less likely than others to say that a change of party would increase the sensitivity of Ottawa to their region. They are also less likely to argue for looser party discipline.

Opinion of this sort is not, of course, conclusive. While the idea of change of government is easily understood, proposals for reform are typically arcane. Scholars disagree over the implications of each reform. The implications often depend on the details of the change. On the other hand, one cannot but be struck by the faith that respondents have in party politics, even if those respondents would be surprised when confronted with evidence of their faith.

When one moves to the specifics of the reform, the picture becomes even more confused. Consider response to two basic questions: How many Senators should represent each province? What should be the role of francophone or Quebec Senators?<sup>12</sup>

Opinion about the number of Senators per province divides East from West, as Table 2-9 shows. Ontario and Quebec respondents overwhelmingly favour Senate representation in proportion to population; this opinion comes as small surprise. Westerners are divided between representation by population and equal representation for each province. While representation by population would improve the West's position relative to the Atlantic provinces, it would still leave the West at a disadvantage relative to Ontario and Quebec. An equal number of seats per province would also improve the West's position at the expense of Central Canada. Most curious is the majoritarian orientation of respondents from the smallest region: Atlantic provinces' residents favour representation by population. One wonders what this suggests about the level of comprehension in the sample.

Either of the generally preferred representation schemes, proportional or equal, could generate much bitterness. We cannot say just how much bitterness would be engendered by the various schemes, as respondents were asked neither for a preference ranking nor for an indication of how intense their preferences were. At the moment, feelings may not run high on these matters.

If debate over Senate representation were truly joined, however, and if the implications of the various options were explored in some detail, regional differences would probably shift and then harden. The Atlantic provinces' support for a proportional scheme seems peculiar in light of the regional defence role typically mooted for a reformed Senate. If a reform were launched, we should not be surprised to see opinion reverse itself in the Atlantic provinces. Westerners might also notice that how-

TABLE 2-9 Representation in a Reformed Senate

Province	Representation Rule			Overrepresentation of Smaller Provinces	(N)
	Same Number per Region	Same Number per Province	Proportional to Population		
B.C.	9.3%	35.1	40.4	15.2	(151)
Alberta	5.8%	35.5	40.5	18.2	(121)
Saskatchewan	11.7%	39.8	37.5	10.9	(128)
Manitoba	2.6%	44.7	35.1	18.4	(114)
Ontario	6.0%	16.8	66.2	11.3	(382)
Quebec	4.1%	27.8	65.2	2.1	(270)
New Brunswick	7.3%	24.8	44.0	23.9	(109)
Nova Scotia	10.0%	26.0	52.0	12.0	(100)
P.E.I.	4.9%	16.5	59.2	19.4	(103)
Newfoundland	6.7%	22.7	44.0	28.0	(75)
Canada	6.5%	27.0	53.1	13.4	(1,594)

Source: CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

Item: In a reformed Senate, which of the following options would you prefer: the same number of Senators for each region of Canada; the same number of Senators for each province; a number of Senators based upon the population of each province; or more Senators for small provinces than the size of their population would have given them?

**TABLE 2-10 Attitudes to French or Quebec Special Status by Province**

Province	Special Status Alternatives	
	French on Language Culture (%)	Quebec-General (%)
B.C.	16.1 (174)	4.4 (180)
Alberta	19.6 (138)	3.7 (134)
Saskatchewan	12.5 (144)	9.0 (144)
Manitoba	19.0 (126)	9.6 (125)
Ontario	22.9 (424)	5.6 (427)
Quebec	66.9 (293)	33.8 (293)
New Brunswick	48.2 (112)	14.4 (111)
Nova Scotia	26.4 (106)	5.6 (107)
P.E.I.	30.4 (109)	7.3 (109)
Newfoundland	39.3 (84)	11.3 (80)
Canada	31.2 (1,747)	11.2 (1,745)

*Source:* CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

*Note:* Entry is percent willing to see special status.

*Items:* French: In a reformed Senate, would you be willing to see French-speaking Senators have special powers in questions touching upon French language and culture?

Quebec: In a reformed Senate, would you be willing to see Quebec have a status different from that of the other provinces?

ever much their own position might improve with a shift to proportionality, Central Canada would command a majority of Senate seats under a population-proportional rule just as it now does in the House of Commons. The West, too, might then shift toward the equal-representation pole. The Central provinces, especially Quebec, would almost certainly oppose any such equal-representation scheme.

The only thing that might persuade Quebec to abandon the Senate as now constituted or to abandon support for a proportional-to-population option would be a veto over, or special status for, language questions. Such a status would be anathema outside French Canada. Opinion on two special-status alternatives is given in Table 2-10. Québécois themselves oppose a general purpose special status for Quebec representatives. But Quebec and New Brunswick respondents do favour special

status on language matters for francophone Senators.<sup>13</sup> Everywhere else, overwhelming majorities oppose such status.

The distributions of opinion on the inevitably linked questions of regional representation and francophone special status suggest that Senate reform might create as many problems as it resolves. The prospects for any proposal might be very problematic. Under the existing amending formula, a change would have to satisfy at least one Central Canadian province along with most of the outlying provinces. A more compact coalition could emerge if both Central Canadian provinces agreed to a change, but one can readily imagine a division pitting the eight outlying provinces against the two central ones, a division which would produce a deadlock. Deadlock was the experience of much of the period before 1980, and the very inconclusiveness of constitutional disputes in that period may have been as much a cause of popular disaffection as the substance of the disputes. If, instead of deadlock, a new Senate were to emerge, the body could well prove illegitimate in the view of some significant group or region.<sup>14</sup>

The possibility of deadlock in constitutional negotiations over representative institutions raises the general question of the popular legitimacy of decision rules. Most proposals for representational reform embody an argument for more or less consensual decision rules, rather as argued by Calhoun or, more recently, by Lijphart. The argument starts from reasonable enough premises. Calhoun himself provides an especially clear account of coercion by majorities:

If the whole community had the same interests so that the interests of each and every portion would be so affected by the action of the government that the laws which oppressed or impoverished one portion would necessarily oppress or impoverish all others — or the reverse — then the right of suffrage, of itself, would be all-sufficient to counteract the tendency of the government to oppression and abuse of its powers, and, of course, would form, of itself, a perfect constitutional government. . . . But such is not the case. On the contrary, nothing is more difficult than to equalize the action of the government in reference to the various and diversified interests of the community; and nothing more easy than to pervert its powers into instruments to aggrandize and enrich one or more interests by oppressing and impoverishing the others; and this, too, under the operation of laws couched in general terms and which, on their face, appear fair and equal.<sup>15</sup>

Calhoun's argument was tainted by its original use as a defence of slavery, but it has been rehabilitated for modern use by Lijphart (1977). Rogowski (1975) casts Lijphart's normative use of consensual rules in positive terms. Rogowski argues that the less interchangeable are the members of society, the more likely they are to demand consensual rules as a precondition for granting legitimacy to a political order. The search for consensual decision rules, however, is a quest for the impossible. As

Rae (1975) puts it, "unanimous universal consent has the logical form of the square circle" (p. 1281). The heart of the problem is the

. . . ubiquitous forcing of choice: even when explicit outcomes can be postponed, tacit ones are *ipso facto* chosen. In the schemes proposed by Calhoun and Wolff, this suggests that *some outcomes* and not others are subject to the requirement of unanimity. If *all* outcomes were subject to unanimity, then we would risk the position in which we both refused to change policy and refused to keep it the same (Rae, 1975, p. 1279).

From this perspective, it may be telling that the institution which some Canadian advocates of institutional reform hold as a possible model, the United States Congress, itself excites great popular disdain. A major theme in recent studies of Congress has been the divergence between constituents' feelings about individual congressmen and their feelings about Congress as an institution. Congress has dropped in popular esteem over the last two decades and has done so more than either of the other branches of the American federal government. Turnout in Congressional elections has dropped over the same period. But re-election rates of incumbent congressmen have gone up. Survey respondents generally claim satisfaction with their incumbent congressman. The argument has been made that the two apparently divergent trends are functionally related. Congressmen, it is argued, increase their chances of re-election by ignoring their constitutional role as legislators and by emphasizing, instead, casework on behalf of individual constituents, along with the traditional pork-barrel projects. It is even said that "the best way to run for Congress is to run against Congress". The problem of organizing Congress has become more acute as, thanks to the high re-election rate, more and more members accumulate seniority. The lengthening seniority queue has forced further decentralization of Congressional power. Party leaders have been weak since about 1910, of course, but now power has dropped to the subcommittee level and below. The result, on this account, is an institution which is little more than an aggregate of irresponsible egoists, an institution which is even more an arena for minority veto now than in the heyday of civil-rights struggles. Accordingly, survey respondents hold Congress in low esteem.<sup>16</sup>

A similar fate could await any Canadian institution designed to block legislative initiatives. We may detect intimations of this in the Senate-reform evidence already considered. The strong preference for a simple change of government is consistent with a majoritarian orientation; this is somewhat contradicted by the similarly strong preference for the weakening of party ties. The resistance of respondents to a general purpose Quebec veto may also indicate an uneasiness, even in the major linguistic minority, with consensual rule.

In the end, however, public opinion evidence in the area cannot be decisive. The particular evidence to hand presents respondents with

stimuli that are impossibly vague or difficult to assess in the absence of any context; what a respondent feels about a rule could easily depend on the other rules in force. These are not, in any case, questions about which respondents are likely to have thought much. Even recorded sentiment about existing institutions may be deceptive. There is reason to suppose that citizens do not believe that politics is necessarily conflictual. The conflict that citizens actually see is upsetting. Institutions which encapsulate this conflict commonly get tarred by the attitudinal brush of the conflict itself (Citrin and Elkins, 1975). Representative institutions thus may never appear popular, even when their existence is vital to the legitimacy of a regime or community. Arguments about institutional reform do as well to turn on theories of representation as on what opinion polls make the people seem to want.

## **The Integrity of the Union**

Does variation in confidence in the federal government also indicate variation in the perceived moral claims of the federation itself? Such an inference seems embedded in much of the analysis of the Canadian political crisis. Any weakness in Ottawa's support in Quebec would stem from Québécois' sense of detachment from the political community over which Ottawa presides. A problem with this expectation, of course, is that Ottawa finds its greatest support in Quebec. The weak support for Ottawa in the West might, however, foreshadow a decline in support for the Canadian community in that region. Averting just such a possibility is a major goal of advocates of representational reform.

Analysis in this section will proceed in two distinct ways. First will come indirect analyses. Here I shall look at thermometer data on feelings toward places and governments, and at Decima confidence data on the two levels of government. The abiding concern here is with the social or geographic structure of response to the different items or with the statistical relationships between the different kinds of items. The second approach is more direct. In various surveys, respondents have been asked about their sense of national and regional identity. Here respondents reflect, in a relatively self-conscious way, on who they are.

Table 2-11 gives a provincial breakdown of thermometer scores for four objects, taken from the 1974, 1979, and 1980 National Election Studies. The table facilitates three kinds of comparison between objects: between province of residence and the country as a whole; between Canada, the country, and the Government of Canada; and between the Government of Canada and the government of each province.

Feelings about the country do not simply mimic feelings about the central government. In every province but two, Canada receives higher scores than do most respondents' province of residence. The margin is usually small, however, and Newfoundland and Quebec stand out as

**TABLE 2-11 Feelings About Places and Governments by Province**

	1974				1979				1980			
Province	Canada	Province	Govt.	Govt.	Canada	Province	Govt.	Govt.	Canada	Province	Govt.	Govt.
B.C.	87.1 (252)	84.6 (250)	60.4 (248)	45.6 (246)	83.9 (270)	83.4 (270)	59.8 (259)	58.2 (270)	85.8 (180)	86.8 (179)	53.2 (177)	55.1 (179)
Alberta	84.7 (177)	84.8 (176)	59.0 (174)	71.4 (173)	80.2 (192)	83.9 (193)	60.3 (183)	73.6 (191)	84.6 (110)	88.2 (109)	50.5 (108)	73.6 (110)
Saskatchewan	86.4 (99)	81.4 (101)	59.2 (99)	56.9 (96)	81.0 (112)	81.4 (113)	58.4 (105)	66.6 (111)	82.7 (67)	82.8 (67)	51.8 (66)	68.9 (66)
Manitoba	86.7 (112)	79.3 (111)	57.8 (110)	53.1 (109)	85.7 (127)	73.3 (127)	59.2 (122)	58.0 (123)	84.3 (89)	74.4 (89)	58.3 (87)	55.1 (87)
Ontario	90.7 (694)	79.5 (690)	64.6 (692)	54.3 (673)	85.2 (730)	78.6 (730)	56.4 (698)	60.5 (717)	89.2 (479)	82.1 (476)	61.6 (466)	63.6 (469)
Quebec	74.5 (692)	70.9 (692)	62.7 (677)	53.7 (677)	71.5 (713)	75.6 (721)	53.7 (697)	53.9 (717)	75.0 (434)	81.5 (436)	67.7 (435)	60.1 (432)
New Brunswick	81.7 (133)	69.8 (133)	65.3 (131)	58.5 (132)	78.4 (142)	69.3 (146)	56.0 (142)	46.8 (141)	85.7 (76)	72.3 (75)	67.1 (73)	51.2 (75)
Nova Scotia	89.4 (174)	82.9 (175)	61.7 (166)	62.1 (164)	86.0 (188)	82.6 (191)	61.7 (183)	59.1 (185)	87.7 (131)	85.0 (130)	66.8 (125)	64.3 (127)
P.E.I.	85.8 (93)	85.8 (95)	65.4 (92)	67.2 (90)	81.6 (106)	85.5 (107)	60.8 (104)	62.1 (104)	82.0 (76)	85.8 (79)	67.7 (74)	64.1 (78)
Newfoundland	76.2 (97)	82.0 (98)	65.4 (94)	50.0 (95)	75.3 (109)	77.8 (112)	59.4 (108)	61.0 (107)	81.6 (69)	83.1 (69)	67.3 (65)	66.1 (69)
Canada	83.8 (2,523)	78.1 (2,521)	62.7 (2,483)	55.6 (2,455)	80.1 (2,689)	78.5 (2,710)	57.1 (2,603)	58.8 (2,666)	83.5 (1,711)	82.5 (1,709)	62.1 (1,676)	61.8 (1,692)

*Source:* National Election Studies, 1974, 1979, 1980.

*Note:* Entry is mean thermometer score.

Item: See H.D. Clarke et al., *Political Choice in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979).



exceptions. The story in Quebec is one of reversal, from a small initial margin favouring Canada to small 1979 and 1980 margins favouring the province. In none of the years, however, do Quebec respondents rate their own province particularly high by the standards of other provinces. Newfoundland respondents never rate Canada higher than they do Newfoundland.

Canada always outperforms "the Government of Canada". In the national sample, the difference is typically over twenty "degrees". Quebec and Newfoundland again reveal a different pattern. Although Canada always does better than the national government in those two provinces, the margin is always smaller in Quebec and Newfoundland than elsewhere.

The relative standing of the national and provincial governments differs markedly among provinces. Alberta anchors one extreme: there, the provincial government is consistently strongly preferred to the federal government. Saskatchewan moves, from 1974 to 1980, to resemble Alberta. New Brunswick is at the other extreme, with the federal government consistently more popular than the provincial government. In 1974 and 1980, Quebec resembles New Brunswick in preferring the federal over the provincial government. Note, however, the exception for 1979. In the remaining six provinces, differences are small or unstable.

Some sense of the individual-level relationship between evaluations of each of these objects can be gained from Table 2-12, which gives correlations among feeling-thermometer scores. Strikingly, feelings about province of residence correlate strongly with feelings about Canada as a whole.<sup>17</sup> Canadians clearly do not confine their affection, or lack of affection, to one place. Rather, geographic loyalties, where they exist, are usually multiple.<sup>18</sup> Running through these data about places must be some general factor which generates or suppresses, as the case may be, warmth of response. One pole of this factor might be designated "misanthropic" and the other pole, "philanthropic". Whatever the level of the disposition, the disposition itself generalizes across objects. Thus, the more you like Quebec, for example, the more you like Canada, and vice versa.

Feelings about places tend also to be correlated with feelings about governments, although here relationships are weaker and less stable. For instance, feelings about the province correlate with feelings about the provincial government to about the same extent as do feelings about the geographic units with one another. The same is true for feelings about Canada and feelings about the federal government.

The story for covariance between feelings about each kind of government is more complex. In 1974 and 1979, feelings about the two governments exhibit as strong positive correlations as do any pair of objects in Table 2-12. In contrast, the 1980 correlation between federal and provincial thermometer ratings is effectively zero. This may reflect the fact that

**TABLE 2-12 Correlations Among Thermometer Scores**

	Provincial Government	Canada	Federal Government
<b>1974</b>			
Province	0.30 (2,441)	0.32 (2,502)	0.21 (2,466)
Provincial Govt.		0.15 (2,441)	0.30 (2,428)
Canada			0.34 (2,471)
<b>1979</b>			
Province	0.41 (2,660)	0.33 (2,677)	0.14 (2,594)
Provincial Govt.		0.03 (2,638)	0.36 (2,574)
Canada			0.32 (2,589)
<b>1980</b>			
Province	0.33 (1,680)	0.32 (1,701)	0.04 (1,667)
Provincial Govt.		-0.02 (1,684)	0.002 (1,655)
Canada			0.30 (1,669)

Source: National Election Studies, 1974, 1979, 1980.

Item: See H.D. Clarke et al., *Political Choice in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979).

fieldwork for the 1980 survey was under way as the referendum battle was unfolding. It may also reflect the extent to which the 1980 election was fought explicitly over competing conceptions of Confederation. Even where respondents' natural disposition is to respond similarly to both governmental levels, conflict between those levels can force the respondent to choose. Striking evidence of this phenomenon appears, below, in the Decima data for the conflict-laden 1980-83 period.

Before we go into more detail on federal-provincial convergence and divergence, consider similarities and differences between response to the federal government and response to Canada, the country. Table 2-13 gives ordinary least square regression (OLS) estimations directly parallel to those, above, in Table 2-7. In the earlier table, the dependent variable was feelings toward the federal government. Here feelings for the country itself play that role.

Most striking is the reversal of several signs between the "Canada" equations here and the "government" equations in Table 2-7. The sharpest and most consistent reversals are exhibited by residents of Newfoundland. French-speakers also show dramatic reversals, but only for

**TABLE 2-13 Structure of Feeling About Canada**

Independent Variable	Year		
	1974	1979	1980
Years schooling	-0.21 (-1.97)	-0.22 (-1.98)	-0.44 (-3.53)
Manual	-1.10 (-1.43)	-0.97 (-1.21)	-1.49 (-1.63)
Farm	-1.75 (-1.15)	-0.56 (-0.43)	-1.24 (-0.80)
French	-11.04 (-7.98)	-10.99 (-6.90)	-11.95 (-6.40)
Other language	3.13 (2.17)	0.19 (0.11)	-4.52 (-2.04)
B.C.	-3.46 (-2.78)	-1.46 (-1.09)	-3.49 (-2.34)
Alberta	-5.82 (-4.06)	-4.46 (-2.90)	-5.06 (-2.77)
Saskatchewan	-4.50 (-2.42)	-4.99 (-2.56)	-7.96 (-3.54)
Manitoba	-3.84 (-2.24)	-0.21 (-0.12)	-5.57 (-2.84)
Quebec	-6.63 (-4.54)	-4.20 (-2.49)	-4.00 (-2.03)
New Brunswick	-4.00 (-2.36)	-2.74 (-1.51)	-0.72 (-0.33)
Nova Scotia	-0.76 (-0.51)	0.85 (0.55)	-1.67 (-0.97)
P.E.I.	-4.62 (-2.43)	-2.80 (-1.43)	-6.75 (-3.15)
Newfoundland	-14.23 (-7.58)	-10.09 (-5.17)	-9.01 (-3.96)
Intercept	93.48 (62.55)	88.27 (54.47)	95.63 (51.62)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.16	0.11	0.13
N	2,394	2,507	1,609

Source: National Election Studies, 1974, 1979, 1980.

Note: Dependent variable is feeling-thermometer score. Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1974 and 1980. To talk of reversal may be a bit extreme, as the French and Newfoundland coefficients in the earlier government equations are not always significantly different from zero. Still, the contrast among equations is striking. The coefficients for Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island tend to move in the same direction among equations as do the coefficients for Newfoundland and for francophones, but

the shifts are less dramatic. The "Other Language" coefficient for the Canada equations suggests a secular change from relatively positive response in 1974 to relatively negative response in 1980. Recall that over the same period, other-language speakers remain relatively positive about Liberal governments. The coefficients for the four Western provinces indicate clearly different dynamics between attitudes to Canada and attitudes to her government. In contrast to their 1974–79–80 somersaults in the government equations, the four Western provinces have consistently negative, if small, coefficients in the Canada equations.<sup>19</sup> The only variable the effect of which does not change from the earlier to the later table is years of schooling.

More generally, the government equations are less stable than the Canada equations. This warns us not to impute too general a significance to variation in feelings about the federal government. Confidence in or warmth of feeling toward a government has a major partisan component; when the partisan identity of the government shifts, so does the social structure of feeling toward it (Citrin, 1974). Feeling about Canada, on the other hand, has a more stable structure. Feeling about Canada *is* differentiated, however. Francophones, especially in Quebec, express less warmth toward Canada than do most other groups.<sup>20</sup> But Newfoundlanders rival French Québécois in their psychological distance from Canada as a country.

The feeling-thermometer evidence hardly depicts a country about to break up over dissatisfaction with its central government. Everywhere feelings about Canada are very positive, even if less so in some places or in some social groups than in others. The parts of Canada where feelings about Ottawa are the most acidly negative tend to rival Ontario in warmth of feeling for the country. In the places where simple loyalty to the country is weakest, support for the federal government is relatively strong.

The fabric of Canadian political loyalties may never have been more strained than in the 1980–81 constitutional crisis. Quebecers were the first to be forced to choose. Each side on the referendum tried to qualify the sharpness of the choice, to be sure. The *non* side asserted that their preference was still an authentically Québécois one. The *oui* side framed the question in a deliberately ambiguous way and sought to profit from confusion over the meaning of sovereignty-association. Still, the referendum was as close to a clear choice of loyalties as one is likely to see, at least within the bounds of civilized behaviour. The aftermath of the referendum then forced all of us to choose, or to agonize about whether or not we wanted to choose. What, then, do data on confidence in both federal and provincial governments in the period reveal?

Figure 2-2 presents Decima Quarterly Report evidence for the 1980–83 period. The figure presents evidence in three ways. One is the time series of mean confidence ratings for the national sample and for the four

largest provincial sub-samples: British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec. The second, along the bottom margin of each figure, is the quarterly individual-level correlation between provincial and federal confidence. The third is the OLS regression of the provincial mean confidence rating on the federal mean confidence rating.

For the national sample and for two of the four provinces, the correspondence across levels is dramatic. British Columbia and Ontario reveal the same picture as the national sample, although each has a different starting point. As we know from Table 2-5, British Columbia and Alberta exhibit the most consistently negative judgments about Ottawa. If one looked only at federal government data, one might conclude that the two westernmost provinces pose the biggest challenge to the political authority of the centre. But British Columbians also express, by national standards, little confidence in their own provincial government. The mean federal-provincial difference in British Columbia is not unusually great. In contrast, Alberta yields the largest federal-provincial gap. The Alberta government's mean rating is the only one

**FIGURE 2-2 Temporal Dependence in Federal and Provincial Confidence**

**A. British Columbia**

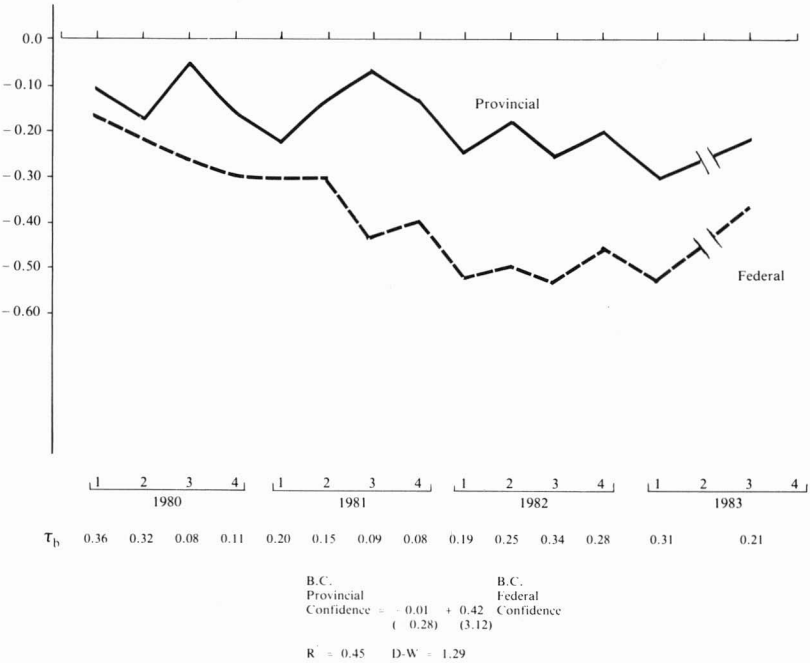
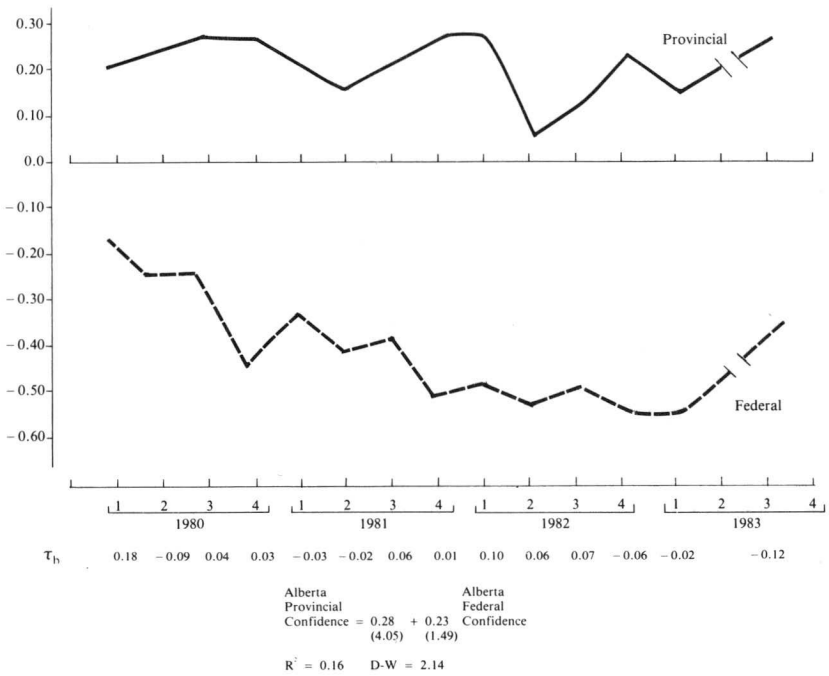


FIGURE 2-2 (cont'd)

B. Alberta



C. Ontario

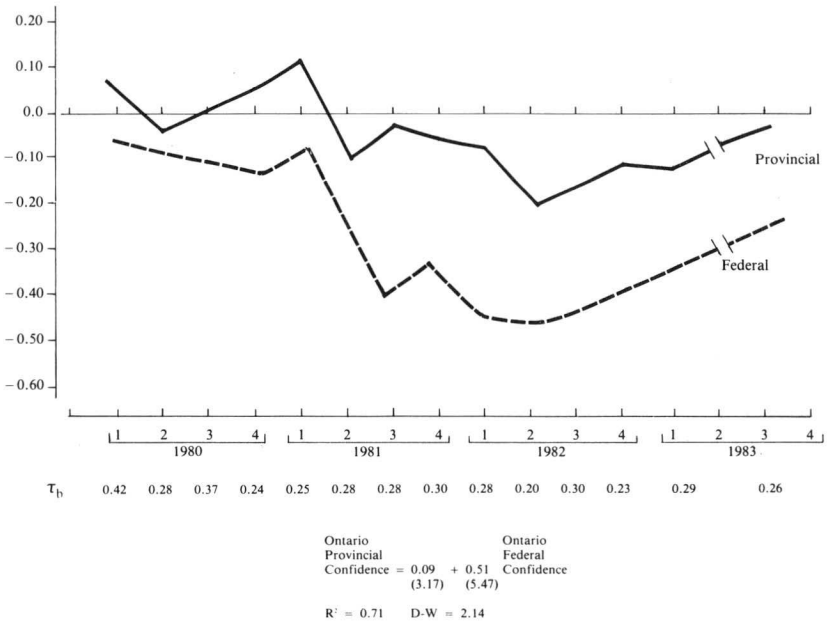
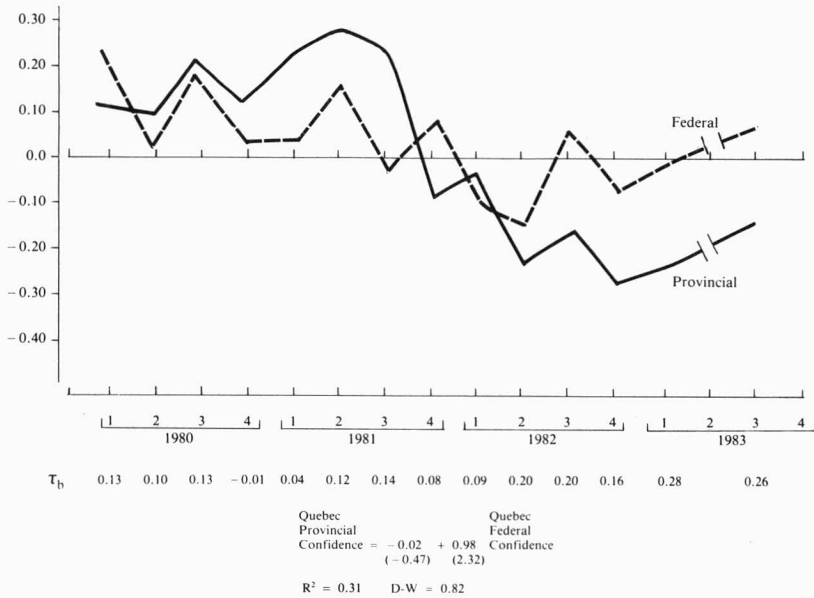


FIGURE 2-2 (cont'd)

D. Quebec



Source: Decima Quarterly Report

which never crosses over into negative figures. Albertans thus single out Ottawa more than do the citizens of any other province. The contrast is especially marked with British Columbia.

Quebec yields yet another pattern. Although the federal and provincial levels generally track each other in Quebec, the two levels are quite close to each other. Indeed, Quebec is the only province in which the federal government ever receives a higher score than the provincial government and, for that matter, in which the federal government frequently receives a positive mean score. The provincial government outscores Ottawa from the second quarter of 1980 to the third quarter of 1981, that is, during the constitutional crisis. Otherwise, with the exception of one quarter, the federal government is seen in a better light.

Now consider statistical relationships among levels. Begin with the correlations along the bottom margin of each panel in Figure 2-2. In most quarters and in most samples, the correlations are positive. Recall, however, that Table 2-12, with thermometer data, also demonstrated that of all the pairs of objects, the federal and provincial governments showed the most unstable correlations. I raised the possibility that this instability reflects competition between respondents' general misanthropy or philanthropy, on the one hand, and the vagaries of federal-

provincial conflict, on the other. In the Decima data, the Quebec and Alberta sub-samples confirm this interpretation vividly. In Alberta, the correlation between provincial and federal sentiment is negative in five of the fourteen quarters, although the negative coefficient is often very small. In Quebec, the sign is negative in one quarter. In each of these two provinces, the picture is not so much one of a dominant negativity as of competition between the general institutional response factor, which normally produces positive correlations, and some more time-specific factor which occasionally tries to push correlations toward or through the zero point. The latter factor corresponds remarkably to the intensity of federal-provincial conflict. In Alberta and Quebec, the correlations drop in the period of maximum conflict and then seem to rise as the conflict eases. The same is true for the British Columbia sub-sample, although there the correlation never gets close to zero. In contrast, in Ontario, an ally of Ottawa in the constitutional crisis, no attenuation of the correlation ever occurs. Even at their high points, however, the correlations in Alberta and Quebec never reach the heights which normally prevail in British Columbia and Ontario. Even as crises advance and recede, then, Quebecers and Albertans feel more strongly compelled than the rest of us to choose between orders of government. Again, the most striking contrast is between British Columbia and Alberta.

Much the same picture emerges from statistical analyses of time series, at the bottom of each panel of Figure 2-2. British Columbia and Ontario resemble each other closely. In each province, the dependence between levels is unmistakable. Not surprisingly, Ontario has a larger and more stable coefficient than British Columbia. Quebec exhibits much the same pattern as do Ontario and British Columbia, but with some variations on the theme: Quebec's coefficient is the highest, but also the least stable. Alone among provinces, Alberta exhibits no significant temporal dependence across levels. Visual inspection of Figure 2-2 suggests that in some periods, judgments on Ottawa and Edmonton move together, but this is offset by other periods in which the two judgments move in markedly contrary ways.

Analysis to this point has been, in a sense, indirect. Direct questions on regional alienation, threats of separation, and primary geographic identifications offer even more dramatic evidence. In the paragraphs which follow, I shall synthesize evidence from several surveys: the 1974 and 1979 National Election Studies; the 1977 Quality of Life Study; and the 1983 Senate Reform Study.

The Senate Reform study is particularly rich in indicators of regional alienation. Western respondents were asked, among other items, whether they agreed or disagreed that the "West is usually ignored in national politics". Overwhelming majorities in each Western province agree. Similarly overwhelming majorities agree that "People living in the



**TABLE 2-14 Perceptions of Fairness in the Federation  
by Region/Province**

Province	(A) Quality of Life, 1977 Ottawa's Treatment of Province				(B) NES, 1979 Region Pay Fair Share?		
	Fair All of Time	Fair Most of Time	Fair Some of Time	Fair None of Time	More	Fair Share	Less
Nfld.					18.9%	59.5 (37)	21.6
P.E.I.					0.0%	73.5 (49)	26.5
N.S.	4.7%	34.6	54.8 (361)	5.8	7.9%	78.7 (89)	13.5
N.B.					16.4%	78.2 (55)	5.5
Que.	6.5%	37.3	48.3 (979)	7.9	25.7%	69.8 (354)	4.5
Ont.	10.2%	58.6	29.8 (1,011)	1.5	38.7%	58.4 (344)	2.9
Man.					32.9%	64.4 (73)	2.7
Sask.	2.3%	38.3	53.5 (355)	5.9	39.3%	60.7 (61)	0.0
Alta.					46.4%	50.0 (112)	3.6
B.C.	3.7%	31.4	61.5 (296)	3.4	46.4%	51.7 (151)	2.0
Canada	6.8%	43.7	44.8 (3,002)	4.8	31.5%	63.2 (1,325)	5.4

Source: Quality of Life, 1977; National Election Study, 1979.

Items: (A) Do you think that this province is treated fairly by the government in Ottawa all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, or none of the time?

(B) In terms of the costs of governing Canada, do you feel that the (region you live in) region pays its fair share of the cost, more than its fair share, or less than its fair share?

West are not adequately represented by the federal government". Opinion is divided on whether Western alienation would subside with a change of government in Ottawa. Similarly divided is opinion on whether improvement in the economy would reduce regional alienation. This division suggests that substantial numbers of Westerners see Western alienation as more than merely partisan or economic disgruntlement. Sentiment in the Atlantic provinces, where comparable questions can be put, resembles that in the West.

A similar story emerges from the 1977 Quality of Life survey, as indicated by Table 2-14. Respondents were asked if Ottawa treats their province fairly. Sense of grievance, as indicated by the sum of "Some of the time" and "None of the time" responses, increases as a simple function of distance from Ontario. Outside of Ontario, only minorities, if

rather large ones, concede that Ottawa treats their province fairly most or all of the time. On the other hand, a response of "Some of the time", the category into which most non-Ontario respondents fall, hardly reads like a call to the barricades.

The other "fairness" question in Table 2-14 comes from the 1979 National Election Study. Respondents are asked if they think their province is paying its fair share, or more or less than its fair share of national costs. Newfoundland residents aside, the proportion saying that the respondent's own region pays more than its fair share increases as one moves West. In three of the four Atlantic provinces, more respondents concede that their region pays less than its fair share than say that the region pays more than its share. In the West, such a concession is never made. But in each Western province more respondents say that the region's share is fair than say that it is more than the fair share. The margin is narrow in British Columbia and Alberta, but only a little narrower than in Ontario. Some of the response this question evokes may be controlled by perceptions of equalization or by perceptions of net fiscal transfers among provinces, rather than given simply in terms of felt regional grievance. By accident or design, this question may reveal that support for fiscal equalization is considerable.

If respondents are asked directly about their willingness to countenance the separation of their region or province from the rest of the country, only small minorities answer in the affirmative. In the 1983 Senate Reform survey, Western, Quebec and Newfoundland respondents were asked if they agreed with the opinion that "Only the threat of separatism will get Ottawa to pay any attention to (respondent's region)". The percentage disagreeing was 63 in Newfoundland, 70 in Quebec and 69 in the West. This could be read as either overwhelming disagreement or unexpectedly lukewarm disagreement, depending on one's political purpose. Western and Quebec respondents were also asked more direct questions, response to which appears in Table 2-15. The overwhelming majority of Westerners fall into the two essentially negative categories. The percentage supporting immediate independence is negligible. The percentage willing to grasp the conditional separation alternative is not so negligible. Whether that percentage should be taken as evidence of deep or of shallow support for Western independence is not clear. Quebec respondents were asked to respond to an uncompromising statement. There, about one respondent in five is willing to claim support for independence.<sup>21</sup> In neither region, then, is support for separation widespread. But the frequency of separatist sentiment, even if conditional in its expression, does suggest a fairly deep sense of grievance.<sup>22</sup>

The importance that respondents attach to these questions is only middling, however, as far as we can tell from the Senate Reform study. Recall that Senate Reform respondents were asked how important each

**TABLE 2-15 Support for Western and Quebec Independence**

<b>(A) Favour Western Independence?</b>					
<b>Province</b>	<b>Never Support</b>	<b>Probably Never</b>	<b>If No Improvement</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	<b>(N)</b>
B.C.	41.0%	37.1	20.2	1.7	(178)
Alberta	35.8%	40.3	20.9	3.0	(134)
Saskatchewan	39.4%	34.5	23.9	2.8	(142)
Manitoba	45.2%	29.8	22.6	2.4	(124)
West	40.3%	35.5	22.0	2.4	(578)

<b>(B) Favour Quebec Independence?</b>				
<b>Province</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Depends</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>(N)</b>
Quebec	78.4%	5.3	19.1	(361)

*Source:* CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

*Items:* (A) West: Recently there has been talk about Western separatism. Which of the following statements comes closest to *your own* on this issue: The West should declare its independence as soon as possible; If conditions do not improve, I would consider supporting Western independence; It is very unlikely that I would ever support Western independence; I would never support the independence of the West from the rest of Canada.

(B) Quebec: Personally, do you favour Quebec becoming an independent country?

of several issues was. Twenty-eight percent say that conflicts among regions are very important, while 31 percent say the same of federal-provincial conflict. The two kinds of conflict thus have about the same salience in 1983 as aboriginal rights, pornography and French-English tension. In contrast, economic issues are very important to one-half to four-fifths of the sample, depending on the specific issue. The only issue which is dramatically less salient to the Senate Reform respondents than regional conflict is Senate reform itself.

Finally, some things can be said about respondents' primary geographic identifications. Table 2-16 gives evidence on each kind of identification, with data from the 1977 Quality of Life survey and the 1983 Senate Reform survey. Identification with Canada is the overwhelming norm in every province west of the Ottawa River. East of the river, Quebec and Newfoundland stand out as the distinctively provincialist places and Newfoundland as decidedly more so than Quebec. Identification with Canada, rather than with the province, *is* related to reported satisfaction with the federal government, as it is to attitudes to Ottawa's treatment of the respondent's province.<sup>23</sup> But even those who feel most intensely that the province has been ill-treated yield a majority Canadian identification.

The Senate Reform study contains, along with its battery of regional grievance items, a battery of national identification questions. Response to these questions suggests a nation pretty much at one with itself. Strong majorities agree that Canadians are basically similar to one

**TABLE 2-16 Primary Geographic Identification**

(A) Quality of Life, 1977					(B) Senate Reform, 1983			
Province	Both Canada Equally		Province	(N)	Canada	Both Equally Province		(N)
Nfld. }	53.4%	10.0	33.9	(380)	39.6%	14.3	46.2	(91)
P.E.I. }					55.0%	4.6	40.4	(109)
N.S. }					68.1%	27.7	4.2	(109)
N.B. }					78.1%	18.5	3.4	(116)
Que.	52.5%	20.2	25.1	(1,069)	50.0%	14.4	35.3	(388)
Ont.	85.7%	3.6	5.9	(1,105)	94.4%	0.9	4.6	(432)
Man. }	76.5%	9.5	11.4	(370)	87.2%	2.4	10.4	(125)
Sask. }					72.6%	12.3	15.1	(146)
Alta. }					70.2%	18.4	11.3	(141)
B.C.					73.2%	13.4	13.4	(179)
Canada	69.6%	10.8	16.4	(3,258)	71.5%	8.5	20.0	(1,873)

*Sources:* Quality of Life, 1977; CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

*Items:* (A) 1977: Some people say they are (name residents of province) first, and Canadian second, while others say that they are Canadian first and (name residents of province) second. How would you describe yourself?

(B) 1983: Do you think of yourself *first* as a Canadian or as a (name resident of province)?

another, regardless of province of residence. Not surprisingly, Quebecers are the most divided on this question. Majorities in each province agree that their own province has an equal say in Confederation; Nova Scotians and Westerners are the least likely to affirm this view. Strong majorities in each region see themselves as closer to Canadians in other regions than to Americans; Quebecers are relatively moderate in their agreement with this notion. Overwhelming majorities affirm that being Canadian is important to them; again, this majority is less overwhelming in Quebec than elsewhere.

In sum, expressions of dismay with Ottawa coexist with strong feelings of loyalty to the country and sense of identification with her people. Esteem for the federal government seems to be distributed in dramatically different ways from esteem for the country: the provinces in which identification with Canada is weakest exhibit the strongest support for the federal government and vice versa. It is almost as if some sort of compensation principle is at work: where the federal government fails to perform, sentiment does the job instead. Some of the response is, I suspect, tainted by acquiescent response set, a common problem with agree/disagree items (Berg, 1967). Because of the possibility of ritual acquiescence, reading either a centralist or a decentralist message into response to a single item would be premature and tendentious. Whether Canadians are on balance centralist, decentralist or neither, the data in this section do not support a case that unhappiness with Ottawa necessarily signals a fundamental threat to Confederation.<sup>24</sup> Whether such

unhappiness poses a threat to the federal government itself is a question for Chapter 6.

## **Political Confidence in Institutional Context**

All of the analysis so far assumes that the Canadian family is unhappy in its own way. This assumption has, I think, dominated most accounts of the crisis politics of the 1970s and 1980s. The data do reveal marked linguistic and geographic discontinuities in feelings toward the federal government as reflections of the country's particular social structure and its particular lines of conflict. But should we assume that all of the story about political legitimacy is peculiar to Canada? As I argued at length in Chapter 1, many Western industrial democracies have had their basic institutions called into question. The ubiquity of the perception, if not necessarily of the reality, of delegitimation suggests that accounts of the Canadian crisis should look for analytical inspiration not just within Canada, but also abroad.

Outside Canada analyses extend beyond governmental institutions. *All* institutions are said to experience a crisis of confidence. Most telling is American evidence. Data from several American sources converge to suggest a pervasive decay in the assessment of institutions, especially in assessments of government, business and labour. Most institutions display the same downward trend. At any cross-section, confidence ratings exhibit a powerful underlying factor, common to most institutions. Some institutional attitudes, however, are more closely related than others (Lipset and Schneider, 1983). Whether this apparent decline extends to European democracies is mainly a matter of conjecture. Much recent commentary on European politics suggests that it does, but direct evidence is scanty.

To establish such a case for Canada, we should ideally relate long-term change in confidence in Ottawa to long-term change in confidence in other institutions, but again such a comparison is not possible in the Canadian case. We can, however, use Decima data to look at change over a shorter period and at cross-sectional relations between attitudes. Consider first some cross-sectional comparisons.

Table 2-17 gives the standing of several institutions, averaged across the quarters in which the confidence questions were asked. The federal government's standing is clearly below the 20-institution average. The provincial governments score collectively around the average.<sup>25</sup> Only four institutions seem less popular than Ottawa: multinational corporations, the tobacco industry, oil companies and labour unions. On the other hand, while the federal government's standing does seem weak, Ottawa is hardly alone in its negative net score. Thirteen of the 20 institutions score below zero, an indication that more respondents have

**TABLE 2-17 Mean Confidence Ratings in Institutions**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>(N)</b>
Airlines	0.21	(18,000)
Forest industry	0.21	(16,500)
Banks	0.12	(19,500)
Schools	0.12	(15,000)
Railways	0.07	(18,000)
Courts	0.07	(16,500)
Mining industry	0.07	(12,000)
Provincial government	-0.02	(21,000)
Newspapers	-0.02	(16,500)
Organized religion	-0.03	(15,000)
Chemical industry	-0.08	(13,500)
Beer companies	-0.09	(13,500)
Civil service	-0.11	(16,500)
Television	-0.11	(16,500)
Insurance companies	-0.15	(15,000)
Federal government	-0.21	(21,000)
Multinational corporations	-0.24	(21,000)
Tobacco industry	-0.24	(15,000)
Oil companies	-0.28	(19,500)
Labour unions	-0.39	(21,000)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Item: See Figure 2-1.*

“almost no” confidence than have a “great deal” of confidence in each institution.

At the same time, feelings about each institution are correlated with feelings about each other institution. This is the lesson of Table 2-18. As a full correlation matrix would be impossibly unwieldy, Table 2-18 gives only the correlation between the federal government and each other institution. The correlations are everywhere positive and significant.<sup>26</sup> Some, not surprisingly, are more positive than others. Some of the tightest federal government bonds are to the other governmental institutions, but the tightest of all are to two federally regulated industries: banks and railways. Even recent antagonists to the federal government, however — oil companies, multinational corporations and labour unions — move with the federal government, although the fit is not very tight. Some indication of the power of a general institutional factor is revealed by response to two antagonistic non-governmental institutions: banks and unions. Over the 11 quarters in which both institutions were evaluated simultaneously, the correlation between their evaluations was 0.066. This is certainly a small correlation, but that it should even be positive is striking. The correlation is even positive, or at least non-negative, in British Columbia and Quebec, the two provinces with the most intense labour-management conflict.

**TABLE 2-18 Correlations in Institutional Confidence**

<b>Institution</b>		<b>Institution</b>	
Civil Service	0.272 (16,500)	Organized religion	0.168 (15,000)
Banks	0.234 (19,500)	Chemical industry	0.161 (10,500)
Railways	0.228 (18,000)	Television	0.144 (16,500)
Courts	0.204 (16,500)	Forest industry	0.141 (13,500)
Provincial government	0.202 (21,000)	Multinational corporations	0.137 (21,000)
Oil companies	0.183 (19,500)	Mining industry	0.136 (9,000)
Insurance companies	0.179 (15,000)	Newspapers	0.134 (16,500)
Airlines	0.174 (15,000)	Labour unions	0.125 (21,000)
Schools	0.170 (15,000)	Tobacco industry	0.089 (12,000)
		Beer companies	0.059 (19,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entries are  $\tau_b$ .

Finally, consider the temporal interdependence of institutional evaluations. Table 2-19 gives time-series regression estimates of confidence in the federal government on confidence in each of 11 other institutions. Generally, the time-series evidence confirms the correlational findings above. Most institutions do not appear as antagonists, but as complementary objects. This is especially clear among governmental institutions, but, again, is striking for such disparate groups as banks and unions. Curiously, the only institution to move significantly against the federal government is organized religion. Oil companies, not inappropriately, also seem detached from the federal government, but there is no suggestion of a negative relationship. The other notably weak association with the federal government relates to confidence in the schools.

Canadians thus exhibit mainly complementary responses to their institutions. Feelings about the federal government are not held in isolation from feelings about other governments or about non-governmental institutions. Although Ottawa does especially badly, most other institutions also receive negative mean judgments. Judgments on governmental and non-governmental institutions tend to co-vary, across individuals and over time. Along with this complementarity of evaluation is evidence of divergent judgment. Although all interinstitutional correla-

TABLE 2-19 Temporal Dependence in Institutional Confidence Ratings

Quarterly Mean Rating For	Intercept	Slope	$\rho$	R <sup>2</sup>	D-W	(N)	Type of Estimation
Provincial government	-0.17 (-4.58)	0.78 (2.55)	0.61 (2.92)	0.72	1.85	14	C-O
Civil Service	-0.08 (-1.36)	0.82 (3.48)	0.78 (4.09)	0.80	1.60	11	C-O
Schools	-0.22 (-2.18)	0.52 (1.57)	0.81 (4.34)	0.61	1.04	10	C-O
Courts	-0.23 (-3.53)	0.97 (3.88)	0.86 (5.54)	0.85	0.94	11	C-O
Banks	-0.30 (-18.89)	0.77 (8.97)	—	0.88	2.17	13	OLS
Railways	-0.27 (-16.00)	1.09 (7.52)	—	0.85	1.60	12	OLS
Insurance companies	-0.11 (-0.97)	0.60 (2.27)	0.91 (7.04)	0.78	0.78	10	C-O
Oil companies	-0.07 (-0.69)	0.45 (2.36)	0.90 (7.66)	0.71	1.21	13	C-O
Unions	0.14 (1.34)	0.83 (3.45)	0.84 (5.81)	0.80	1.17	14	C-O
Multinational corporations	-0.06 (-0.56)	0.46 (2.40)	0.90 (7.85)	0.72	0.96	14	C-O
Organized religion	-0.25 (-6.08)	-1.59 (-2.16)	—	0.40	1.33	9	OLS

Note: Dependant variable is quarterly mean federal confidence rating. Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

C-O = Cochrane-Orcutt.

OLS = ordinary least squares.



tions tend to be positive, some are considerably more positive than others as a reflection of political conflicts and alliances. Some institutional time series are unrelated or are negatively related to the federal government-ratings series, but most move with the federal series. The data hint, then, that any decline in the federal government's position is not unique to that institution. Rather, it would be part of a more general decline in institutional confidence.

## **Economic Policy and Government Popularity**

If the Canadian government shares its predicament with other institutions in Canada and abroad, then we should look beyond the peculiarities of federal-provincial, regional and linguistic conflict. Perhaps the most general mass experience of the 1970s and 1980s has been stagflation.

It may be no coincidence that the polities which have excited some of the most anguished analyses in the last decade, Canada, the United States, and Great Britain, also had, over that period, by the standards of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), relatively sluggish economies. In Canada as elsewhere, the decline in Gallup-poll approval of the prime minister's performance seems to coincide with the emergence of stagflation and a marked slowing of productivity and real-income growth. And the 1980-83 Decima data are especially suggestive: confidence in the federal government seems to decline and recover more or less as the economy declines and recovers. What does a more systematic time series analysis say about the relationship between economic performance and support for the federal government?

In the analyses which follow, four macroeconomic indicators appear. One is the unemployment rate in the quarter in which the survey observation appears. The second is the twelve-month percentage change in the consumer price index. The rationale for each of these indicators should be obvious. The third variable is the twelve-month percentage change in real per capita personal income. The fourth is the twelve-month percentage change in real per capita personal disposable, or after-tax, income. The last two variables never appear in the same equation, as each is too closely related to the other to permit estimation of their separate effects. Each income variable merits consideration, however. The measure of disposable income derives theoretical warrant from work elsewhere on the political consequences of macroeconomic variation. Citizens are commonly hypothesized to generalize about the whole economy from their own experiences within it. That experience may be better captured by take-home pay than by the pre-tax gross pay. A stronger version of this argument says that citizens care only about the take-home component anyway. Empirically, real disposable income has

a good track record.<sup>27</sup> Alternatively, imagine that the social wage is truly important to citizens. In this case, the total personal income variable might better represent the political consequences of rates of economic growth or decline. This distinction between personal and social bases of economic reasoning can also be examined directly with Decima data.

The argument here has been encapsulated by Kinder and Kiewiet (1979; 1981) in a distinction between “egocentric” and “sociotropic” reasoning. Under egocentric reasoning, the citizen cares only about his or her personal economic situation. Under sociotropic reasoning, citizens truly act as citizens and are moved by their perceptions of the whole economy. This conception does not require that citizens be pathologically self-sacrificing. But they do have a sense that their own economic fate is linked to the fate of other citizens, and that the long-term enjoyment of the fruits of a division of labour may require short-term losses in personal welfare. Besides, information about the performance of the economy or of large sectors within it is more likely to be directly pertinent to his or her evaluation of government performance than is information about the individual’s own pocketbook. It may not be very rational to base such evaluation on personal experiences which may, after all, be quite idiosyncratic.

Analyses with the Gallup series on approval of the prime minister’s performance appear in Table 2-10. The Gallup evidence establishes a *prima facie* case that economics are a very big part of the story in prime ministerial approval. In this table, unemployment has a robust effect. It is true that from 1956 to 1982, both the inflation rate and the unemployment rate tended upward. Over the same period, however, other things, not measured in our equation, may also have undermined confidence in the prime minister. The presence of other factors may be reflected in the significant autoregressive parameter,  $\rho$ . Equations (3) and (4) approach the problem from a different angle. Each represents an estimation for half the series; equation (3) gives OLS estimates for the St. Laurent-Diefenbaker years, and equation (4) gives OLS estimates for the Pearson-Trudeau period.<sup>28</sup> At first, equation (3) seems to undermine our general case. Unemployment does nothing, while inflation does the wrong thing: the higher the inflation, the greater the approval of the prime minister. It may be that the St. Laurent-Diefenbaker equation reflects the very smallness of the inflation and unemployment numbers. The positive sign of inflation could indicate an effect of economic growth rather than of inflation as such. The estimate is, in any case, rendered suspect by the low D-W for the equation. But equation (4) looks reassuringly familiar. For the Pearson-Trudeau period, the effects are as for the full period: a significant negative effect from unemployment and nothing of significance from inflation or from real income. Here, autoregression seems less threatening. The split series tests do not settle much by themselves, as the number of observations in each is derisory,

**TABLE 2-20 Macroeconomic Factors in Approval of Prime Minister's Performance**

Variable	Equation			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Full Series	Full Series	St. Laurent-Diefenbaker	Pearson-Trudeau
U	-3.07 (-2.31)	-2.88 (-2.14)	0.96 (0.34)	-4.40 (-2.37)
P	-0.47 (-0.40)	-0.28 (-0.24)	15.66 (2.15)	0.14 (0.13)
ΔRPI	-0.72 (-0.78)	—	0.64 (0.33)	-0.28 (-0.24)
ΔRPDI	—	-0.37 (-0.42)	—	—
Constant	80.33 (6.49)	77.31	31.77 (1.12)	79.43 (5.04)
ρ	0.57 (3.12)	0.58 (3.21)	—	—
R <sup>2</sup>	0.62	0.61	0.52	0.70
D-W	2.21	2.19	0.85	2.45
N	20	20	10	10

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

Variables: Approval: See Table 1-2.

Unemployment: Statistics Canada 71-001.

Inflation: Statistics Canada 62-010.

Personal Income: Statistics Canada 13-533.

Personal Disposable Income: Statistics Canada 13-533.

Population in the calculation of per capita personal income and personal disposable income: Statistics Canada 91-001.

and as even the second series, for the Pearson-Trudeau years, starts before the greatest growth in unemployment and inflation.

Help in interpreting the 1956-82 findings comes from the 1980-83 Decima data. The shorter span and greater frequency of the Decima series saves it from the major alternative interpretations to which the Gallup series is prey. Further, the 1980-83 period includes both economic decline and economic recovery. If the economic explanation has any power, it should drive not just political decline, but political recovery as well. Table 2-21 justifies our hopes. As with the Gallup series, unemployment has a significant negative effect on confidence and a stronger effect than does inflation. Here, however, inflation also has a significant impact. As with the Gallup series, neither personal income variable has a significant effect.

The Gallup and Decima estimations thus partly reinforce each other. Unemployment has a consistently powerful effect. The movement from the 2 and 3 percent unemployment typical of the mid-1950s to the 10

**TABLE 2-21 Macroeconomic Factors in Confidence  
in the Federal Government**

Variable	Equation	
	(A)	(B)
U	-0.06 (-3.37)	-0.06 (-2.71)
$\dot{P}$	-0.03 (-2.49)	-0.04 (-2.75)
$\Delta RPI$	-0.001 (-0.52)	—
$\Delta RPD I$	—	-0.001 (-0.38)
Constant	0.68 (2.92)	.71 (2.36)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.66	.66
D-W	1.60	1.57
N	14	14

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

Items: (A) Confidence: see Figure 1-1.

(B) Macroeconomic Indicators: see Table 2-20.

percent or higher unemployment of the early 1980s may be responsible for 20 or more points of the drop in prime ministerial approval. Unemployment alone may thus account for over half the cumulative decline in approval. Inflation also has an effect, at least in the more recent data, but not as powerful an effect as that of unemployment. Real-income change, whether before or after taxes, has no independent effect. Real income is especially closely related to unemployment; the weakness of the income variables may thus be an artifact of multicollinearity.<sup>29</sup> Equally plausible, however, is an argument in terms of the way individuals perceive the macroeconomy. Real-income shifts may not be all that readily perceived. Respondents commonly report real-income losses even in years of substantial real gains; the “money illusion”, in short, finds little empirical warrant (Peretz, 1983). In a perceptual sense, unemployment may be a “harder” variable. All this assumes that the critical intervening variables are perceptual. Could it be, instead, that individuals simply project onto the macroeconomy the economic changes that they see in their personal lives?

Tables 2-22 and 2-23 begin the work of relating perceptions of the economy to political confidence. Table 2-22 gives response to a question which seems pretty clearly “egocentric”,<sup>30</sup> to use Kinder’s and Kiewiet’s terminology. Table 2-23 presents an item which is clearly “sociotropic”. Ideally, we should relate each question simultaneously to political confidence, but such an analysis was precluded by the Decima

**TABLE 2-22 Personal Economic Condition and Political Confidence**

Quarter		Personal Prospects			$\tau_b$
		Worse	Same	Better	
Spring	1980	-0.17 (36)	-0.13 (518)	-0.05 (334)	0.114
Summer	1980	-0.21 (565)	0.01 (283)	-0.01 (624)	0.135
Fall	1980	-0.19 (541)	0.00 (268)	0.05 (672)	0.143
Winter	1980	-0.30 (654)	-0.02 (300)	-0.02 (526)	0.175
Spring	1981	-0.27 (602)	-0.02 (278)	-0.04 (596)	0.147
Summer	1981	-0.28 (612)	-0.07 (276)	-0.05 (594)	0.147
Fall	1981	-0.40 (787)	-0.10 (273)	-0.15 (427)	0.158
Winter	1981	-0.38 (806)	-0.14 (250)	-0.07 (434)	0.184
Spring	1982	-0.41 (891)	-0.27 (206)	-0.18 (399)	0.147
Summer	1982	-0.43 (915)	-0.28 (227)	-0.26 (347)	0.116
Fall	1982	-0.40 (842)	-0.17 (239)	-0.19 (411)	0.144
Winter	1982	-0.39 (851)	-0.29 (254)	-0.18 (390)	0.136
Spring	1983	-0.40 (760)	-0.26 (260)	-0.17 (473)	0.145
Fall	1983	-0.33 (604)	-0.19 (285)	-0.11 (602)	0.149
14-Quarter Average		-0.35 (9,466)	-0.13 (3,917)	-0.08 (6,829)	0.169

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean confidence rating for federal government.

Item: How would you say your personal prospects for the future are now compared to how they were four or five years ago? Do you think they are better or worse now?

software. Here we must content ourselves with a comparison based on bivariate analyses. Political confidence seems more under the control of sociotropic than of egocentric judgments. Within each quarter, the whole-economy item seems to spread confidence ratings out more than does the personal-prospects item. Within whole-economy perception

**TABLE 2-23 Perceptions of the National Economy  
and Political Confidence**

Quarter	Canadian Economy				$\tau_c$
	Poor	Only Fair	Good	Excellent	
Spring 1980	-0.27 (295)	-0.01 (790)	0.23 (375)	0.32 (27)	0.207
Summer 1980	-0.29 (310)	-0.10 (767)	0.07 (375)	0.41 (35)	0.182
Fall 1980	-0.28 (306)	-0.07 (736)	0.14 (403)	0.31 (39)	0.198
Winter 1980	-0.32 (391)	-0.11 (785)	-0.01 (285)	0.11 (27)	0.141
Spring 1981	-0.33 (328)	-0.18 (755)	0.10 (385)	0.18 (23)	0.198
Summer 1981	-0.34 (414)	-0.13 (727)	0.00 (316)	0.39 (32)	0.182
Fall 1981	-0.44 (618)	-0.23 (627)	0.05 (232)	0.18 (13)	0.211
Winter 1981	-0.41 (707)	-0.17 (594)	0.06 (181)	0.57 (12)	0.213
Spring 1982	-0.51 (772)	-0.21 (563)	0.10 (155)	-0.36 (8)	0.246
Summer 1982	-0.45 (983)	-0.25 (429)	0.04 (85)	0.29 (2)	0.158
Fall 1982	-0.43 (795)	-0.21 (597)	0.07 (121)	-0.11 (4)	0.187
Winter 1982	-0.46 (826)	-0.17 (549)	0.00 (113)	0.21 (8)	0.219
Spring 1983	-0.43 (707)	-0.25 (637)	0.08 (142)	0.08 (10)	0.189
Summer 1983	—	—	—	—	—
Fall 1983	-0.38 (472)	-0.19 (750)	0.01 (259)	-0.15 (14)	0.175
14-Quarter Average	-0.41 (7,923)	-0.16 (9,287)	0.08 (3,427)	0.24 (256)	0.231

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note:* Entry is mean confidence rating for federal government.

*Item:* Generally speaking, how would you describe Canada's economy today? Would you say it is excellent, good, only fair, or poor at this time?

levels, the 14-quarter shift in political confidence seems less dramatic than within the personal-prospects levels. More of the action in Table 2-23 than in Table 2-22 consists of transfers between categories on the independent variable. The comparison cannot carry too much weight, however. The coding scheme differs between the sociotropic and the egocentric questions; some of the statistical differences may thus be artifactual. Even in the sociotropic case, much variation in confidence remains to be explained. Each economic perception item is probably

related to the other; a proper test would control for each simultaneously. And each economic item may be as much consequence as cause of the confidence rating; to the extent that this is true, we would expect the whole-economy item to be more closely related than the personal-prospects item to the confidence rating simply because of its national, as opposed to personal, orientation. Further explorations in this realm will come in Chapter 4.

## Some Reflections

The evidence in this chapter confirms the gist of the theoretical literature in breaking the sources of political confidence into two parts. One we might call the Eastonian, or sociological, part. Here confidence is structured socially by groups and regions. These groups and regions probably diverge over substantive questions of policy. Confidence judgments themselves diverge between objects of judgment. Feeling about the federal government seems to conflate response about the "regime", to use Easton's term, with feelings about the incumbent authorities. Feeling about Canada as a country seems to reflect the sociological distinctiveness of its parts. The more self-contained the community, the less attachment it expresses to the Canadian whole.

The other major source of confidence judgments is performance oriented and may not be so socially or geographically divisive. The critical element in government performance is its mastery of the macro-economy. Stagflation, especially the growth in unemployment, has caused the largest part of whatever measured decline we can find in governmental approval.<sup>31</sup>

Each of these parts is analytically quite distinct from the other. The regional and social differences explored in the first part of the chapter cannot be resolved into the economic factors discussed toward the chapter's end. In particular, the regions and groups with the lowest incomes and the highest unemployment were, at the typical cross section, the *most* supportive of Ottawa. This cross-sectional pattern is thus the reverse of the historical pattern established in the time-series analyses. Each major part of the larger story of political confidence merits consideration in its own right.

## Recapitulation

In brief, we have found out the following about confidence in the federal government:

1. Evidence on change in federal government support is mixed. Gallup-poll data suggest that "big government" has supplanted "big labour" and "big business" as the greatest perceived threat to the country's future. Gallup evidence also indicates that approval of prime

ministers has dropped over the years from 1956 to 1982; the problem does not seem peculiar to the individuals in the office. In contrast to the Gallup approval rating, National Election Study data on party commitments indicate no shift from 1965 to 1980; evidence on warmth of feeling for the federal government indicates no net shift from 1974 to 1980. National Election Study and Quality of Life Study data on respondents' sense of political efficacy suggest some decline in the frequency of the efficacious response, but the decline is barely perceptible and may not be significant. *Decima Quarterly Report* data alert us to variation missed by the relatively infrequent and irregular Gallup- and university-based readings: short-term flux, in which the federal government's standing can increase as well as decrease.

2. Feeling toward the federal government differs among regions, but not always in ways that overt political conflict leads us to expect. The region most supportive of Ottawa is Quebec. British Columbia and Alberta are the least supportive. Over the life of a single government, as from 1980 to 1983, temporal shifts in support tend to occur uniformly across regions. Changes of government, as in 1979 and 1980, produce regional shifts in support. Support thus has a major partisan component.

3. Reform of central government institutions to remedy defects in the representation of the aggrieved regions is not salient to survey respondents, nor is it expected to do much good. Expectations are much higher for a simple change of party in power. Respondents do say that they favour some kind of change from the present Senate, but regional and linguistic differences over the geographic basis of representation and over minority-language special status may undermine any Senate-reform scheme. Respondents seem generally quite majoritarian, in contrast to the consensual bias of most institutional reform proposals, but the evidence here is slender.

4. Feelings about the federal government do not readily translate into feelings about Canada. Not surprisingly, feelings about government are less stable than those about the country. Canada is always more highly regarded than the Government of Canada, but she is also typically more highly regarded than Canadians' provinces of residence. Quebec and Newfoundland are exceptions to this rule. Evidence on the relative standing of federal and provincial governments is mixed. National Election Study data suggest slightly more support for the federal than for the provincial government. *Decima* data indicate a fairly strong margin favouring the province. The only exception in the *Decima* data is Quebec, whose samples often favour Ottawa over Quebec City. By several measures, Québécois prove to be among the Canadians most supportive of the federal government, even as they are among the least enthusiastic about the country itself. Something of the same is true of Newfoundland samples.

Direct evidence on regional and national identities and on felt griev-



ances is similarly mixed. Respondents in many regions affirm a sense of regional grievance. But the sense of grievance coexists with powerful affirmations of a unitary national identity. Separatist sentiment exists in the West and in Newfoundland, as well as in Quebec, but it, too, coexists with strong affirmations of national sentiment.

5. If the federal government has lost popular support, it may not be alone. Attitude to the federal government is positively correlated with attitudes to provincial governments and with attitudes to major non-governmental institutions. From 1980 to 1983, the decline and recovery in federal government support was tracked by support for most other institutions. The fit was especially close between federal and provincial governments. Canadians evidently see institutions, even ones as disparate as banks and trade unions, in much the same light. This syndrome of institutional confidence, or lack of confidence, is an international phenomenon, or so it is claimed. Accounts of political confidence in Canada should thus look abroad for at least some analytic inspiration.

6. The most frequently cited factors in accounts of delegitimation in other countries are economic. Macroeconomic indicators prove to play a major role in Canada as well. The 1956–82 decline in approval of prime ministers reflects, in particular, the growth in unemployment rates. Unemployment also plays a major role in the fall and rise of federal government support from 1980 to 1983. Inflation has some effect in the latter period as well. In neither series is real-income change, either before or after taxes, a significant factor in political support. The translation of economic fluctuations into variation in political support seems to occur more through citizens' general perceptions of the economy than through their immediate personal experiences.



# The Social Structure of Opinion on Policy

What is the social structure of Canadian opinion on policy questions? This question follows directly from the preoccupations in the first part of Chapter 2. Conceivably, social and geographic differences in support for the federal government mirror differences in preferences on substantive policy questions. Moreover, the acrimony which dominated national politics in the 1970s and early 1980s may have stemmed from flaws in the federal-provincial division of powers. The federal government may just happen to hold a divisive brief, while each provincial government may benefit from an internally less divisive one. Will the questions which dominate the federal agenda in the rest of this decade be as divisive as the questions which dominated the past decade? Aside from their fit with the division of powers, social and geographic differences are also important for what they indicate about the policy coalitions which form and reform in Canada. Do the same groups always hang together, or do groups circulate between coalitions? Do the same groups always win?

This chapter will begin with a review of the issues thrown up by the structure of public opinion. Then will come a modest technical detour into the measures I propose for assessing the power of geographic and non-geographic bases of opinion. Here I shall also say a few words about the data source, the Gallup poll. After the digression on measurement will come the actual description of issue areas. I shall begin with questions clearly in Ottawa's domain, move to concurrent and contested areas, follow with clearly provincial matters, and conclude with questions which concern each level, but which are neither in concurrent nor in contested domains. Then I return to the questions which open the chapter.

As it happens, issues which are unequivocally federal are not usually

very divisive, geographically or otherwise. Where provincial differences are sharp, the question is usually squarely in the provinces' domain. The major exception is a trio of questions which I call "contested": Medicare, energy and language. Each order of government is inevitably involved in these questions, but the regional and social differences are sharp. These are the very questions which have dominated Canadian politics over the last decade; conflict between élites and certain of the differences in federal and provincial support that we saw in Chapter 2 have a grounding in real cleavages in the mass public.

Groups circulate between policy coalitions fairly freely. Canadians are thus not highly compartmentalized or segmented, to use Lijphart's terminology. Cleavages in Canadian politics typically cross-cut, rather than reinforce one another. But one cluster of questions does evoke a fairly stable set of opposed groups. At the core of this cluster is the great bugbear of Canadian politics: language. The language question is, however, one of many for which key swing groups exist, so that the sometime losers can also be sometime winners. Unfortunately, the same groups always seem to turn up as the swing ones: Ontarians and the university educated.

## Policy Conflict in a Federation

If confidence in Canadian institutions is weak, it may be so because we have divided power between Ottawa and the provinces in inappropriate ways. A related possibility is that powers which by their very nature must be centralized engender sharp geographic differences. If this happens, we may be locked into an inescapably frustrating political order, a problem without a solution. A third possible source of malaise, if the latter exists, is a policy struggle in which the pattern of winners and losers is perceived as unfair.

Is the present division of powers the one which, subject to technical constraints, minimizes conflict within the federation? A standard observation in the literature on fiscal federalism is that, where possible, responsibility for a policy should be assigned to territorial units within which variation in policy preferences is minimized (Oates, 1972; Boadway and Norrie, 1980). By this means, as few citizens as possible are forced to live with policies they oppose. If we observe powerful provincial differences over a policy question, we may have a *prima facie* case for decentralization. Certainly, advocates of provincial rights typically assume, often without evidence, that such differences are great. Is it possible, however, that on many policies within the provinces' own jurisdiction, conflicts occur *within* provinces as much as, or more than, they occur between provinces? Canadians may be distracted by "artificial" provincial boundaries from the "real" non-geographic cleavages that divide them and from a "real" underlying national unity of purpose.

By the same token, we may observe sharp geographic differences over policies which are inescapably the federal government's responsibility. Some domains belong to the federal government by their very logic. For instance, commercial policy has been a staple of regional controversy since at least 1878. But for all that export-oriented regions may oppose the tariffs in the National Policy, few serious observers in any region have argued that provincial governments should acquire the power to levy tariffs. Such an assignment of power would defeat the purpose of an economic union. Other responsibilities of the central government similarly rest on logical grounds. Ottawa's primacy in macroeconomic management is accepted even by its sternest critics. Provinces are debarred from monetary policy, of course, and most have little real hope of making a fiscal policy work; for most provinces, most of the demand management would simply leak across the provincial boundary (Oates, 1972). Other federal powers, over such responsibilities as foreign policy and defence, require little further comment. We may still ask how much regional conflict there will be in domains which do belong to Ottawa. Will the issues of the later 1980s and the 1990s, to the extent that we can anticipate them, generate as much regional conflict as the energy and linguistic battles of the 1970s and early 1980s? Questions about the dynamics of the federal agenda, no less than questions about the division of powers, require us to have some idea of the geographic structure of opinion.

A full understanding of the geographic bases of opinion requires information about the non-geographic bases. For example, how much is a given difference "intrinsically" geographic, and how much of it can be explained by the geographic distribution of some other, non-geographic trait? For example, to what extent are apparent East-West differences "really" disguised ethnic or religious differences? To explain away a conflict in these terms is not necessarily to deny that the conflict is in some sense regional. Ethnic groups, for instance, cluster in some places and shun others because to do so may be a condition of cultural survival. But where the ethnic group divergence over policy is sharper than the "intrinsic" geographic difference, the implications for policy or for the division of powers could be highly equivocal, as we know from the recent history of minority official-language groups.

But the full estimation of the social structure of policy opinions also allows us to address indirectly the third possibility with which the chapter opened: the fairness of the policy process. Does a group which loses on one issue have a reasonable probability of winning on some other issue? Or does the group always wind up on the same side of each issue? A necessary, although not sufficient, condition for some mixture of wins and losses in a group's portfolio is some circulation of the groups which compose each side of each issue. The circulation of groups between winning and losing sides has been a major preoccupation of pluralist theory (Dahl, 1982). Unfortunately, observers disagree over

whether a society is better off where lines of cleavage “cross-cut” one another, or where cleavages reinforce one another. Where cleavages do reinforce one another, but where a large middle group exists to swing elections back and forth between the major blocs, the political order may provide some distributive justice along with an apparent simplicity and decisiveness.<sup>1</sup> This might describe British politics in their 1945–70 Golden Age. Where one or more groups are threatened with permanent exclusion from power, however, cleavages which reinforce one another may spell disaster, or at least the prospect of a chronically exploitative political order. The most acceptable accommodation in these circumstances seems to be the “consociational” politics of the so-called “segmented pluralist” societies, as argued by Lijphart (1977). Some authors, meanwhile, idealize the society with multiple cross-cutting cleavages. Here, coalitions form and re-form, and most groups get at least occasional kicks at the policy can. The United States, with its diversity of organized groups and its two relatively amorphous parties, epitomizes such a society. But even cross-cutting cleavages can go sour if they generate an unworkable party system, a situation of “polarized pluralism”, as Sartori (1966) puts it. While this chapter’s opinion data do not lend themselves to the direct estimation of group probabilities of winning and losing on issues, they do permit some issue-by-issue tracking of which groups hang together with which other groups. I shall not engage in formal analysis, as do Rae and Taylor (1970), of the extent to which Canadian policy cleavages cross-cut or reinforce one another. I shall, however, try to summarize the pattern toward the end of this chapter.

## Measurement Considerations

I propose to represent the social and geographic differences among Canadians by a multivariate technique akin to that used in Chapter 1 for the analysis of feeling thermometers. There, I used ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to examine the structure of feelings about the government of Canada and about the country itself. Here, policy equations are estimated by probit analysis. A technique like probit is necessitated by the dichotomous coding of the dependent policy-preference variable. For each policy question, I have identified the most clear-cut response or group of responses, assigned such response(s) a value of one, and assigned all other responses a value of zero.<sup>2</sup> Where the dependent variable is dichotomous, OLS estimation can lead to predicted values outside the zero-one range, which is an absurdity. Moreover, OLS does not allow for the possibility that as a respondent moves toward the boundaries of probability (that is, toward zero or toward one), the marginal effect of some independent variable diminishes relative to that same variable’s effect when the respondent’s prior likelihood of choosing each policy alternative is closer to 50/50. Probit and techniques like it explicitly represent such a curvilinear pattern of effect.

The reader should realize, however, that the coefficients which appear in this chapter's tables are not straightforward estimates of the effect of each variable. The coefficients indicate the amount of shift, in standard deviations, in the dependent variable, induced, *ceteris paribus*, by a shift of one natural unit in the independent variable.<sup>3</sup> To calculate what an estimated shift in the dependent variable implies for shifts in the probability of choosing zero or one on the policy variable, one needs to know the respondent's score on each of the other independent variables and to use a table of the normal distribution. Readers familiar with the technique can calculate the probability for themselves.

The reader can still make sense of the results quite without the exact probabilities. The sign of the coefficient indicates the direction of effect. The larger the coefficient, the more powerful the variable's effect. The sum of the coefficients for a particular profile of scores on the independent variables indicates whether the respondent is more likely to score one or to score zero on the dependent variable. A respondent whose coefficients, for those dummy independent variables with a value of one for that respondent, sum to a value greater than zero is more likely than not to choose one on the policy variable. A respondent with a coefficient sum less than zero, for those dummy independent variables with a value of one, is more likely than not to choose zero on the policy variable. The greater the absolute value of the sum of coefficients, on dummy variables with the value of one, the more likely is the indicated choice, one or zero, on the policy variable. Respondents with a coefficient sum of zero are equally likely to choose one or zero on the dependent variable.

This estimation strategy is not without pitfalls. Three, in particular, come to mind. The strategy does not allow for interaction between dimensions of the social structure. For example, Catholic/non-Catholic differences may be greater in one province than another; the direction of difference between two groups may even reverse itself from one province to another. My estimation strategy suppresses such interaction. It imposes an additive design on the data: a Catholic in one province can turn out to have a higher or lower probability of scoring one on the policy variable than a Catholic in another province, but the direction and magnitude of the Catholic/non-Catholic *difference* is constrained to be the same in each province. Thus the design will "paper over" what are undoubtedly major interactions between places and groups. The alternative, however, would be to allow for several (in principle, all possible) interactions. The number of terms in the estimation is already uncomfortably large; to add interaction terms would make the presentation of results impossibly unwieldy. The reader should recognize, nevertheless, that the picture in this chapter is a deliberate simplification of the texture of Canadian public opinion.

Another way in which my estimation strategy simplifies the structure of opinion is in the avoidance of continuous, as opposed to discrete, variables. Every variable on the right-hand side of my equations is a

dummy variable. It would have been desirable to represent, say, schooling as a continuous variable. For practical reasons, this proved impossible. Again the reader should be aware, however, that some of the variables may represent an artificially heightened contrast between groups which are not distinctly demarcated by exact boundaries.

Finally, the estimation is vulnerable to multicollinearity. An abiding perversity of econometric methods is that the very variables which we most want to distinguish from one another are the most difficult to distinguish in practice. When two or more variables are strongly correlated, each interferes with estimates of the effect of the other(s). In these data, the problem is especially acute at the intersection of religion, language and region: the French, Quebec and Roman Catholic variables overlap one another heavily. As it happens, effects in this ethno-cultural domain are typically remarkably robust, notwithstanding the multicollinearity.<sup>4</sup>

All of the data in this chapter come from the Gallup poll. The Gallup surveys are virtually the only ones that will serve my purposes. The academically sponsored National Election Studies ask very few questions which allow us to impute a substantive policy preference to a respondent; typically, the Election Studies ask only about the importance the respondent attaches to the issue. The Quality of Life study carries a rich vein of policy questions, but does not allow us to identify respondents' province of residence.<sup>5</sup> The Decima file does not permit the kind of multivariate analysis we need. The Gallup data have the additional merit of taking us back over thirty years.<sup>6</sup>

The choice of particular questions for analysis was inevitably rather arbitrary. Time and expense prevented me from analysing every usable Gallup question, unlike Simeon and Blake (1980). Where possible, I have chosen for each issue one question from each decade from the 1950s to the 1980s inclusive. This has not always proved possible; Gallup questions tend to follow current political fashion. Energy, for instance, was not an issue in the 1950s and 1960s. Even where questions appeared, they were not always usable.

## **Federal Powers**

In this section we shall consider questions which are unequivocally in the federal government's jurisdiction. Questions available here cover Commonwealth and other external relations, macroeconomic management, wage and price controls, commercial policy, foreign investment and capital punishment.

Table 3-1 gives data on external relations.<sup>7</sup> The one Commonwealth question comes from 1956 and may or may not be of contemporary relevance. Regional differences in Commonwealth sentiment, net of ethnic and religious differences, are clear, but rather surprising. While



Quebec is less pro-Commonwealth than Ontario, so is each other province. The regional differences, as estimated, come on top of language differences. A typical Quebec resident who speaks French will come up as significantly less pro-Commonwealth than would, say, a typical Albertan who speaks English. Still, an anglophone who lives outside Ontario is much less likely to affirm the value of Commonwealth ties than would be an anglophone living in Ontario.<sup>8</sup>

The rest of the external affairs questions tap "Cold War" feelings. The 1959 response to a question about recognition of China has a rather robust regional base. Roughly speaking, support for recognition increases from East to West. Some of the apparent regional difference may really be ethnic or religious; unfortunately, neither ethnic nor religious variables were available for this estimation. The 1971 question exhibits no readily interpretable geographic structure, and the 1982 question evokes no regional structure at all. English-speakers and "Other"-language speakers are, however, significantly more anti-Cruise testing than are French-speakers. A regional effect comparable to that in 1969 might have appeared in 1982, had the language and religious variables been omitted. Most striking for each "Cold War" question, however, is the power of education: in each year, resistance to the pro-Cold War position increases with educational attainment.

Table 3-2 shifts the focus to macroeconomic policy. Here province of residence has virtually no effect on policy choices. The only province to have more than one significant coefficient is British Columbia; but the direction of that province's coefficient changes. The only province which has a coefficient at least as large as its standard error, and which also remains consistent in sign across the three surveys is Manitoba; but the Manitoba coefficient is significant only once. The overall provincial pattern could easily have been produced by random variation. No other variable emerges as the explanatory core of macroeconomic sentiment. Not even union members emerge as a distinctively anti-unemployment group, contrary to findings elsewhere (Hibbs, 1979; 1982). Instead, Canadians tack back and forth between inflation aversion and unemployment aversion, following movements in the macroeconomic indicators themselves. This is revealed by the instability from one year to the next of the proportion indicating unemployment aversion. Here, then, is a clearly national policy responsibility which evokes very little regional disagreement.<sup>9</sup>

Where Table 3-2 looked at orientations to macroeconomic targets, Table 3-3 examines sentiment toward a potential instrument: wage and price controls. The response of organized labour to the 1975-78 controls might lead us to expect at least a union/non-union difference in response to these questions. In fact, controls as an instrument evoke about as undifferentiated a response as do inflation and unemployment as targets. In 1966 and 1973, there is a hint of relative aversion to controls among



**TABLE 3-1 External Relations**

	Commonwealth May 1956 <sup>a</sup>	China May 1959 <sup>b</sup>	U.S.S.R. Nov. 1971 <sup>c</sup>	Cruise Missile Dec. 1982 <sup>d</sup>
Newfoundland	-1.21 (-4.12)	-0.23 (-0.34)	—	0.18 (0.72)
P.E.I.	-0.29 (-1.04)	-0.27 (-1.02)	-0.22 (-0.84)	—
Nova Scotia	-0.25 (-1.44)	-0.64 (-1.78)	-0.64 (-2.44)	-0.19 (-0.87)
New Brunswick	0.16 (0.65)	-0.36 (0.54)	0.12 (0.29)	-0.40 (-1.44)
Quebec	-0.35 (-2.62)	-0.40 (-2.81)	0.20 (1.04)	-0.16 (-0.87)
Manitoba	-0.48 (-2.80)	-0.18 (-0.62)	0.49 (1.68)	0.12 (0.57)
Saskatchewan	-0.40 (-2.59)	0.49 (2.19)	-0.09 (-0.40)	0.11 (0.52)
Alberta	-0.41 (-3.15)	0.49 (2.32)	-0.54 (-2.21)	-0.05 (-0.36)
B.C.	-0.47 (-3.73)	0.37 (2.07)	0.0002 (0.0008)	0.08 (0.60)
Catholic	—	—	0.0003 (0.0002)	0.10 (0.89)
English	0.48 (3.92)	—	0.18 (0.87)	-0.38 (-2.07)
"Other" language	—	—	0.11 (0.54)	-0.37 (-1.85)
High school	—	0.37 (3.11)	0.24 (2.16)	-0.11 (1.20)
University	—	0.71 (3.91)	0.88 (4.59)	-0.25 (-2.16)
Union member	-0.01 (-0.15)	0.14 (1.15)	0.14 (1.26)	-0.09 (-0.87)
Farm	0.09 (0.97)	-0.44 (-2.60)	-0.15 (-0.85)	0.02 (0.11)
Intercept	0.16 (1.23)	-0.70 (-5.63)	0.06 (0.26)	0.43 (2.07)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.07	0.10	0.06	0.02
L.R.T. (df)	100.98 (12)	70.42 (13)	45.88 (15)	23.07 (15)
<i>N</i>	1,408	658	721	1,041
$\bar{Y}$	0.60	0.32	0.67	0.52

Source: CIPQ.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1 = pro-Commonwealth.

b. 1 = pro-recognition.

c. 1 = favours closer ties.

d. 1 = pro-test.

**TABLE 3-1 (cont'd)**

<i>Items:</i>	
May 1956	Which of these policies would you like to see Canada follow: *Continue as a member of the British Commonwealth as at present ..... 1 Leave the British Commonwealth and become a part of the U.S.A ..... 2 Leave the British Commonwealth and become a completely separate nation ..... 3 Undecided ..... 4
May 1959	Do you think Canada should or should not officially recognize the Communist government of China — that is, appoint an ambassador to China and have dealings with that government? *Yes, should recognize ..... 1 No, should not ..... 2 No opinion ..... 3
November 1971	As you may know, Canada is working to develop good relations with Russia in developing trade and sharing mutual problems following Mr. Trudeau's visit to Russia, and Premier Kosygin's visit to Canada recently. Do you think it would be a good thing, or not, for Canada and Russia to work more closely together? *Good thing ..... 1 Not good ..... 2 Undecided ..... 3
December 1982	Have you heard or read anything about negotiations going on between Canada and the United States for the testing of US Cruise missiles in the Cold Lake area of Alberta? Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 The United States wants to use a northern Canadian area because the guidance system must be tested in an arctic-like climate. In the proposed test, the Cruise missiles would not have either conventional or nuclear warheads. How do you feel about this testing? Do you think Canada should or should not permit the United States to test these missiles in its territory? *Yes, should ..... 1 No, should not ..... 2 Don't know ..... 3

union members, but in neither year is the effect significant. The direction of the union/non-union difference reverses from 1973 to 1982. No other non-geographic variable even hints at affecting this question. Geography is of little consequence for this question. From time to time a province variable pops up as significant, but no province persists in its apparent distinctiveness. Conceivably, the weakness of group or regional differences reflects the ambiguity in the item, which is about controls on prices as well as on wages. Controls have, however, usually been packaged this way in Canada, and so the Gallup question reflects the effective agenda.

Table 3-4 gives three readings on commercial policy. Tariff policy has been a staple of regional conflict, at least among élites, from virtually the beginning of Prairie settlement. The regionally divisive 1911 election

**TABLE 3-2 Inflation Versus Unemployment**

	January 1971	March 1975	January 1983
Newfoundland	-5.40 (-0.005)	-0.002 (0.01)	1.07 (2.77)
P.E.I.	—	—	—
Nova Scotia	—	—	0.20 (0.94)
New Brunswick	-0.16 (-0.58)	0.19 (0.98)	0.32 (1.06)
Quebec	0.14 (0.74)	-0.06 (-0.38)	0.15 (0.82)
Manitoba	-0.58 (1.78)	-0.29 (-1.40)	-0.23 (-1.29)
Saskatchewan	0.28 (1.31)	-0.13 (-0.57)	0.19 (0.88)
Alberta	-0.10 (-0.42)	-0.27 (-1.64)	0.05 (0.28)
B.C.	-0.50 (-2.39)	0.31 (2.25)	0.01 (0.06)
Catholic	0.13 (0.89)	0.87 (0.78)	0.01 (0.11)
English	0.07 (0.32)	-0.09 (-0.54)	0.09 (0.46)
“Other” language	0.03 (0.15)	0.20 (1.05)	0.40 (1.91)
High school	0.08 (0.70)	-0.24 (-2.58)	0.12 (1.30)
University	0.05 (0.23)	-0.11 (-0.88)	0.09 (0.79)
Union member	0.02 (0.16)	0.04 (0.50)	-0.001 (-0.01)
Farm	-0.86 (-3.25)	0.08 (0.46)	0.09 (0.48)
Intercept	-0.74 (-2.98)	0.25 (-1.33)	0.03 (0.13)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.05	0.03	0.02
L.R.T. (df)	38.44 (14)	27.79 (14)	21.40 (15)
$N$	710	1,058	
$\bar{Y}$	0.25	0.35	0.60

Source: CPIO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = reduce unemployment.

Item: Which do you think the federal government should give greater attention to — trying to curb inflation or trying to reduce unemployment?

Curb inflation..... 1

\*Reduce Unemployment..... 2

No Opinion..... 3

Undesignated..... 4

turned in great part on this very question. An econometric analysis of that election suggested a fine sensitivity to the commercial policy stakes in some groups and regions, and what must have been at least symbolic commitments on the question in other regions (Johnston and Percy, 1980).<sup>10</sup> Conflict among regions or regional élites finds only a pale reflection in the Gallup data, however. Quebec, for instance, twice seems distinctively anti-tariff, contrary to the historic position of that province's élite. Aside from Quebec, the strongest support for free trade seems to come from the Atlantic provinces. Some provinces are intermittently anti-tariff, as compared with Ontario, but no Western province is so more than once, and Manitoba and Saskatchewan never diverge significantly from Ontario.<sup>11</sup> In 1968, Roman Catholic respondents also seem relatively supportive of free trade with the United States; why Catholics should have a distinctive position on such an issue is a matter for conjecture. Twice, university-educated respondents are the least supportive of free trade.

Response to the question could reflect either substantive views on commercial policy, the appeal of lower taxes, or a generalized aversion-attraction to the United States. Whatever the question's exact orientation, the regional structure in response to it is surprising: the regional differences that exist differ from what conflict among the élites would lead us to expect. Response to the question seems to suggest fairly widespread support for tariff reduction.<sup>12</sup>

Table 3-5 gives evidence on attitudes to American direct investment in Canada. Although regional differences are less time honoured here than in commercial policy, much of the talk about investment controls seems to imply a Western Canadian aversion to them. That expectation is confounded, as is that for the tariff. In none of the four equations does any regional structure worthy of the name appear. Certainly, the Western provinces never appear as significantly more pro-capital importation than does Ontario. The non-geographic elements in the social structure exert a similarly weak purchase on the question. In 1959, university-educated respondents were more in favour of American investment than were less well-educated respondents, but by 1967 that difference had disappeared. Opinion on the investment is simply homogeneously negative.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, consider attitudes to capital punishment, in Table 3-6. The lack of regional structure to capital-punishment attitudes suggests that we have not erred in assigning the Criminal Code to Ottawa. The only truly robust effect on capital-punishment attitudes derives from education: university-educated respondents are significantly less in favour of capital punishment than are less well-educated respondents. Not even the university-educated group emerges as strongly abolitionist, however. University respondents are divided, while every other group knows its collective mind clearly: opinion was one-sidedly pro-capital punishment

**TABLE 3-3 Wage-Price Control**

	October 1966	March 1973	July 1983
Newfoundland	0.07 (0.16)	-0.04 (-0.09)	-0.82 (-1.69)
P.E.I.	—	—	0.11 (0.24)
Nova Scotia	0.17 (0.70)	0.003 (0.004)	-0.21 (-0.84)
New Brunswick	-0.51 (-1.88)	0.01 (0.05)	0.03 (-0.13)
Quebec	0.27 (1.73)	0.11 (0.27)	0.36 (2.17)
Manitoba	-0.17 (-0.64)	-0.13 (-0.44)	0.63 (3.26)
Saskatchewan	0.18 (0.93)	-0.21 (-0.70)	0.34 (1.68)
Alberta	-0.31 (-1.47)	-0.27 (-0.88)	0.03 (0.15)
B.C.	0.63 (3.32)	-0.07 (-0.29)	0.03 (-0.20)
Catholic	-0.01 (-0.09)	-0.15 (-0.77)	0.11 (1.00)
English	-0.10 (-0.51)	-0.10 (-0.24)	-0.05 (-0.28)
"Other" language	0.06 (0.30)	0.06 (0.13)	-0.13 (-0.68)
High school	—	0.03 (0.18)	0.09 (0.95)
University	—	-0.26 (-1.15)	0.14 (1.10)
Union member	-0.14 (-1.34)	-0.30 (-1.29)	0.11 (1.07)
Farm	-0.18 (-1.37)	0.42 (0.60)	0.28 (1.55)
Intercept	0.14 (0.66)	0.40 (0.91)	-0.86 (-4.32)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.04	0.02	0.04
L.R.T. (df)	31.63 (13)	8.17 (15)	46.21 (16)
<i>N</i>	701	373	1,050
$\bar{Y}$	0.54	0.60	0.34

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = favours controls.

Items:

October 1966

It has been suggested that prices and wages (salaries) be frozen — that is, kept at their present level, as long as there is a threat of inflation. Do you think this is a good idea or a poor idea?

\*Good idea..... 1  
 Poor idea ..... 2  
 No opinion..... 3

**TABLE 3-3 (cont'd)**

March 1973	As you may know, temporary wage and price controls have been imposed both in the US, and in Britain. Would you approve imposition of temporary wage and price controls in Canada, or do you think that other measures should be sought for halting inflation?
	*Approve wage/price freeze ..... 1
	Other measures ..... 2
	Can't say ..... 3
July 1982	Would you favour the imposition of wage and price controls by the Federal government?
	*Favour ..... 1
	Oppose ..... 2
	Don't know ..... 3

in each year. The restorationist sentiment of the 1980s was not a reaction after the fact to abolition. Rather, the abolition of the death penalty itself came in defiance of public opinion.

On balance, the federal questions for which we can marshal evidence do not evoke strong regional divisions. The divisions are strongest, ironically, in the area in which a united face most needs to be presented: in external relations. But this difference may not be over external relations as much as over the ethnic character of the Canadian nationality, over how British Canada is or should be. Commercial policy evokes regional differences as well, but in rather surprising ways.

### **Concurrent Powers**

In this section appear issues which, by virtue of the division of powers, implicate both orders of government. Concurrence for immigration and pensions is explicit. Abortion and divorce are effectively concurrent as other powers enumerated separately to different governments force each order to be involved. Conflict has been sharp in each of these issue areas, but it has not as a rule been transformed into conflict over the division of powers.<sup>14</sup> This stands in contrast to the issues discussed in the next section.

Immigration issues produce sharp differences in Canadian survey samples, according to Table 3-7. But the differences have undergone an historic reversal. British Columbia emerged in the 1970s as possibly the most anti-immigration province. Alberta appears to have joined British Columbia in this camp in 1982. The other pole of the reversal is Quebec. In 1961, Quebec and, possibly, New Brunswick defined the anti-immigration pole. The spare 1954 results suggest the same pattern: Catholics were more anti-immigration than non-Catholics, and English-speakers were more pro-immigration than non-English-speakers. This seems con-

TABLE 3-4 Tariffs

	June 1963	February 1968	May 1983
Newfoundland	—	—	0.78 (2.51)
P.E.I.	0.46 (2.03)	0.34 (1.47)	-0.14 (-0.36)
Nova Scotia	0.55 (1.91)	—	0.34 (1.58)
New Brunswick	0.39 (0.94)	—	1.24 (3.97)
Quebec	0.08 (0.51)	0.35 (2.06)	0.94 (3.01)
Manitoba	0.12 (0.56)	0.08 (0.33)	0.16 (0.84)
Saskatchewan	0.28 (1.22)	0.16 (0.85)	0.05 (0.22)
Alberta	0.46 (2.32)	0.22 (1.05)	0.23 (1.51)
B.C.	0.17 (0.96)	0.11 (0.59)	0.32 (2.38)
Catholic	-0.05 (-0.33)	0.45 (3.43)	—
English	-0.25 (-1.80)	0.11 (0.58)	0.61 (1.99)
"Other" language	—	0.16 (0.77)	—
High school	-0.14 (-1.32)	-0.08 (-0.78)	—
University	-0.31 (-1.61)	-0.28 (-1.70)	—
Union member	-0.16 (-1.37)	0.30 (0.30)	—
Farm	-0.10 (-0.71)	-0.15 (-0.95)	—
Intercept	0.17 (1.07)	-0.19 (0.91)	-0.72 (-2.29)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.03	0.06	0.03
L.R.T. (df)	21.59 (14)	43.40 (13)	34.33 (10)
$N$	709	723	1,050
$\bar{Y}$	0.50	0.56	0.54

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = favours abolition of tariffs.

Item:

1963, 1968, 1983: Do you think Canada would be better off, or worse off, if U.S. goods were allowed in here without tariff or customs charges and Canadian goods were allowed into the U.S. free?

\*Canada better off ..... 1  
Worse off ..... 2  
Can't say ..... 3

sistent with the demographic stake of French Canada in limiting additions to the pool of anglophones, not least within Quebec itself (Lieberson, 1970). Whatever the demographic stakes, Quebec became, by the 1970s, the most pro-immigration province; the shift is confirmed by the 1982 data. Catholics seem to have moved in the same direction even when linguistic and regional variables also appear in the equation. One could understand a shift, *ceteris paribus*, in the position of the Catholic community, as immigrants themselves have become steadily more important in that community. Nevertheless, the movement of Quebec residents in the same direction is startling and bespeaks, one suspects, a collective self-confidence that may hitherto have been absent.<sup>15</sup>

Other factors are also engaged in immigration sentiment. Union members were relatively anti-immigration in the first two studies. Again, this attitude may have been consistent with unions' interest in controlling the supply of labour. Whatever its source, union members' distinctiveness in opposing immigration evaporated in the 1970s. The 1975 reading suggests that union members have become less hostile to immigration than others; the 1982 result indicates no union/non-union differences. University-educated respondents are consistently more pro-immigration than are less well-educated groups. Finally, "Other"-language speakers are, not surprisingly, more pro-immigration than are English-speakers.

The items in Table 3-8, relating to pensions and the family allowance, turn mainly on universality, although the 1951 pension question also seems to tap support for the public pension scheme itself. On universality, virtually no consistent pattern appears. Few non-geographic variables have significant coefficients, and none has such a coefficient more than once. Provincial dummy variables exert similarly little effect. In 1951, most provinces seemed less supportive than Ontario of the extension to the Old Age Security (OAS) scheme, but in subsequent surveys, no province is consistently distinct; few are distinct even episodically. The balance of support for selectivity fluctuates, but it is not as unanimously negative as recent commentary on social insurance programs might lead us to expect. The fluctuation reflects, I suspect, not so much the times as the wording of questions.<sup>16</sup>

The structure of opinion on abortion appears in Table 3-9. On abortion, a trend appears toward less structure. In 1965, abortion sentiment seems clearly differentiated along the lines we might expect. Catholics were by far the most distinctly anti-abortion group. University-educated respondents anchored the other end of the issue. Several provinces appeared significantly different from Ontario, but the provinces' differences did not add up to a coherent pattern. The most interesting case was that of Quebec. That province's significantly pro-abortion coefficient must be considered in the light of the positive coefficient on the Catholic variable. In 1965, the typical Québécois would still have been less in favour of abortion than would the typical Ontarian. But a Quebec



**TABLE 3-5 Support for Foreign/U.S. Investment**

	May 1959	March 1969	June 1975	July 1982
Newfoundland	1.01 (1.75)	—	-0.26 (-0.68)	-0.82 (-1.69)
P.E.I.	0.88 (3.47)	0.16 (0.67)	—	0.11 (0.24)
Nova Scotia	0.15 (0.48)	-0.24 (-0.79)	—	-0.21 (-0.84)
New Brunswick	6.31 (0.03)	0.27 (0.58)	-0.20 (-0.83)	-0.03 (-0.13)
Quebec	0.05 (0.35)	-0.13 (-0.60)	0.06 (0.37)	0.36 (2.17)
Manitoba	0.35 (1.27)	-0.12 (-0.42)	-0.53 (-1.73)	0.63 (3.26)
Saskatchewan	0.20 (0.84)	-0.05 (-0.25)	0.26 (1.10)	0.34 (1.68)
Alberta	0.11 (0.50)	0.18 (0.81)	0.04 (0.20)	0.03 (0.15)
B.C.	0.43 (2.25)	-0.25 (-1.20)	-0.04 (-0.23)	-0.03 (-0.20)
Catholic	—	-0.12 (-0.81)	0.04 (0.31)	0.11 (1.00)
English	—	0.07 (0.33)	-0.15 (-0.77)	-0.47 (-0.28)
"Other" language	—	-0.26 (-0.97)	-0.36 (-1.53)	-0.13 (-0.68)
High school	0.17 (1.37)	-0.02 (-0.14)	-0.13 (-1.20)	0.09 (0.95)
University	0.45 (2.38)	0.02 (0.11)	0.03 (0.22)	0.14 (1.10)
Union member	-0.05 (-0.42)	-0.11 (-0.90)	-0.11 (-1.05)	0.11 (1.07)
Farm	0.17 (1.06)	-0.27 (-1.43)	0.16 (0.99)	0.28 (1.55)
Intercept	-1.00 (-6.80)	-0.58 (-2.27)	-0.83 (-3.43)	-0.86 (-4.32)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.07	0.02	0.02	0.04
L.R.T. (df)	43.67 (14)	16.33 (15)	20.43 (14)	46.21 (16)
$N$	656	680	1,067	1,050
$\bar{Y}$	0.25	0.24	0.15	0.27

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = favours more investment

Items:

May 1959

If "Good thing"

Do you think there is enough U.S. capital in Canada now, or would you like to see more U.S. capital invested in this country?

**TABLE 3-5 (cont'd)**

	Enough now .....	1
	*Like to see more.....	2
	Don't know .....	3
March 1967	Do you think there is enough U.S. capital in Canada now, or would you like to see more U.S. capital invested in this country?	
	Enough now .....	1
	*Like to see more.....	2
	Don't know .....	3
June 1975	Now, thinking about U.S. capital invested in Canada — do you think there is enough now or would you like to see more U.S. capital invested in this country?	
	Enough now .....	1
	*Like to see more.....	2
	Don't know .....	3
July 1982	Now thinking about U.S. capital investment in Canada — do you think there is enough now or would you like to see more U.S. capital invested in this country?	
	Enough now .....	1
	*Like to see more.....	2
	Like to see less.....	3
	Don't know .....	4

Catholic would have been less anti-abortion than an Ontario Catholic. Catholic respondents remained distinctively anti-abortion in 1975 and 1979, but the coefficient shrank across each interval. University-educated respondents remained the most distinctively pro-choice group in 1975, but were not significantly distinct in 1979. Note that anglophones seemed to emerge in 1979 as a distinctly pro-choice group; note also, however, that the 1979 Quebec coefficient bespeaks a relatively pro-choice orientation for that province. French-speaking Québécois get about the same score as English-speaking Ontarians. But Catholic Québécois are more pro-choice than Catholic Ontarians. The latter, in turn, are less pro-choice than their non-Catholic co-residents. Regional differences, pure and simple, tend to pale before the Catholic/non-Catholic division over this issue; the biggest regional difference involving Quebec seems to be a local modification of the general Catholic position.<sup>17</sup>

The story for divorce, in Table 3-10 exhibits some of the same features as that for abortion. In 1966, Catholics were a distinctively anti-divorce group. By 1979, their distinctiveness had evaporated. Similarly, language has ceased to be a predictor of divorce opinion. University-educated respondents remain more pro-divorce than do elementary- or high-school respondents. Province of residence does seem to play a role. Once again, Quebec's position is equivocal, but in a different way than it is for abortion: as Roman Catholics became less distinctively anti-divorce, Québécois became distinctively more anti-divorce from 1966 to 1975. The fragmentary results from the Atlantic provinces suggest that

**TABLE 3-6 Capital Punishment**

	January 1965 <sup>a</sup>	March 1975 <sup>b</sup>	September 1982 <sup>b</sup>
Newfoundland	—	-0.18 (-0.90)	-0.07 (-0.28)
P.E.I.	-0.30 (-1.13)	—	—
Nova Scotia	-0.03 (-0.10)	—	-0.04 (-0.16)
New Brunswick	—	0.22 (1.01)	0.09 (0.35)
Quebec	-0.08 (-0.48)	-0.14 (-0.89)	-0.21 (-1.21)
Manitoba	0.16 (0.74)	-0.02 (-0.12)	0.22 (0.93)
Saskatchewan	0.01 (0.02)	0.57 (2.15)	0.35 (1.43)
Alberta	-0.60 (-2.72)	-0.09 (-0.56)	0.28 (1.67)
B.C.	0.23 (1.34)	-0.10 (-0.74)	0.17 (1.12)
Catholic	—	0.17 (1.50)	0.12 (1.15)
English	0.27 (1.54)	0.12 (0.67)	0.08 (0.43)
"Other" language	0.32 (1.49)	-0.10 (-0.48)	0.06 (0.30)
High school	—	-0.02 (-0.21)	0.10 (1.04)
University	—	-0.37 (-2.69)	-0.30 (-2.42)
Union member	-0.10 (-0.85)	0.07 (0.74)	0.05 (0.44)
Farm	-0.21 (-1.23)	0.43 (2.21)	-0.11 (-0.82)
Intercept	-0.51 (-2.80)	0.44 (2.25)	0.46 (2.30)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.04	0.03	0.03
L.R.T. (df)	24.98 (11)	31.73 (14)	28.92 (15)
<i>N</i>	732	1,058	1,054
$\bar{Y}$	0.35	0.69	0.71

Source: CIP0.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1965: 1 = abolish.

b. 1975, 1982: 1 = retain; restore.

Items:

January 1965

Some people say we should do away altogether with capital punishment — that is executing a person for murder. Do you think we should or should not abolish capital punishment?

**TABLE 3-6 (cont'd)**

March 1975	*Should abolish it . . . . .	1
	Should not abolish it . . . . .	2
	No opinion . . . . .	3
	Do you favour or oppose capital punishment for the killing of any innocent person?	
September 1982	*Favour . . . . .	1
	Oppose . . . . .	2
	Don't know . . . . .	3
	A suggestion has been made that at the time of the next federal election, voters be given the opportunity to express their opinion regarding capital punishment — that is the death penalty.	
	If such a vote were held, would you favour a return to capital punishment, or would you oppose it?	
	*Favour . . . . .	1
	Oppose . . . . .	2
	Don't know . . . . .	3

those provinces are relatively anti-divorce. The most consistently anti-divorce province, however, is Saskatchewan. British Columbia, not surprisingly, emits hints of being consistently pro-divorce. Divorce opinion evidently mirrors the divorce rate.

Abortion and divorce each seem to sit astride the great ethno-religious divide within Canada. Catholics remain less willing than non-Catholics to countenance abortion. Francophone Catholics seem, however, to have moved toward anglophones' position on this question. Divorce originally divided Catholics from non-Catholics, but it now seems to divide Canadians, regardless of denomination, along the Ottawa River.

### **Contested Powers**

Under this rubric appear Medicare, energy, and language policy. I have grouped these three issues separately from the issues in the previous section mainly for editorial convenience. For one reason or another, each of these policy areas is effectively concurrent. Language policy is concurrent as a result of the Constitution Act, 1867, the Manitoba Act, and Charter guarantees made to official-language minorities. Energy is implicitly concurrent through the convergence of ownership, the trade and commerce power, and taxation on oil and gas resources. Medicare is concurrent because the federal government has made it so under the spending power. Unlike the issues in the preceding section, however, these issues often provoke conflict between Ottawa and the provinces. Governments have appealed to public opinion in support of their respective positions. Sometimes the appeal has been to opinion on the division of power itself; sometimes it has been to attitudes on the substance of the issue.

Federal-provincial conflict over Medicare finds only a pale reflection

**TABLE 3-7 Immigration**

	1954 <sup>a</sup>	March 1961 <sup>a</sup>	June 1975 <sup>b</sup>	November 1982 <sup>b</sup>
Newfoundland	—	—	-0.05 (-0.14)	—
P.E.I.	—	-0.30 (-1.36)	—	-1.06 (-2.30)
Nova Scotia	—	-0.21 (-0.78)	—	-0.36 (-1.72)
New Brunswick	—	-0.58 (-1.34)	-0.87 (-4.65)	-0.45 (1.57)
Quebec	—	-0.33 (-2.09)	-0.22 (-1.30)	-0.31 (-1.80)
Manitoba	—	-0.22 (-0.99)	-0.02 (-0.09)	-0.19 (-1.11)
Saskatchewan	—	-0.32 (-1.56)	-0.30 (-1.30)	-0.01 (-0.05)
Alberta	—	0.08 (0.39)	0.08 (0.43)	0.33 (1.88)
B.C.	—	-0.16 (-0.86)	0.54 (2.66)	-0.34 (2.52)
Catholic	-0.17 (-2.30)	0.003 (0.02)	0.10 (0.76)	-0.14 (-1.43)
English	0.13 (1.67)	—	0.08 (0.42)	0.03 (0.18)
"Other" language	—	—	-0.42 (-1.98)	-0.36 (-1.84)
High school	—	0.52 (4.97)	-0.03 (-0.29)	-0.01 (-1.10)
University	—	1.67 (-6.23)	-0.38 (-2.67)	-0.20 (-1.74)
Union member	-0.25 (-3.42)	-0.16 (-1.36)	-0.21 (-2.18)	-0.04 (-0.39)
Farm	-0.001 (-0.01)	0.001 (0.004)	-0.10 (-0.67)	-0.14 (-0.83)
Intercept	-0.005 (-0.06)	-0.03 (-0.25)	1.15 (5.47)	0.33 (1.67)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.02	0.11	0.05	0.06
L.R.T. (df)	37.74 (4)	86.92 (13)	55.05 (14)	63.07 (15)
<i>N</i>	1,865	704	1,067	1,066
$\bar{Y}$	0.49	0.54	0.82	0.55

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1954, 1961: 1 = pro-immigration.

b. 1975, 1982: 1 = anti-immigration.

Items:

1954

Since the war many people from other countries have come to live in Canada. On the whole do you think this is a good thing for Canada or not?

TABLE 3-7 (cont'd)

	*Good thing.....	1
	Not a good thing.....	2
March 1961	Since the war many people from other countries have come to live in Canada. On the whole, do you think this is a good thing for Canada, or not?	
	*Yes, a good thing.....	1
	Not a good thing.....	2
	Qualified.....	3
	Don't know.....	4
June 1975	If it were your job to plan an immigration policy for Canada at this time, would you be inclined to increase immigration, decrease immigration or keep the number of immigrants at about the current level?	
November 1982	Increase.....	1
	*Decrease.....	2
	Same level.....	3
	Don't know.....	4

in Gallup data, according to Table 3-11. The only two usable questions come from 1956 and 1967, before the creation of the federal transfer payment for physicians' services. In this period, a fairly clear geographic structure existed. Respondents in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Quebec gave the clearest support to Medicare, in the sense of wanting medical payments to come from taxes even at the price of higher rates of taxation. Manitoba was the most clearly negative province in this period; one wonders if that remained true throughout the 1970s. From 1956 to 1957, Alberta seemed to shift from relative support to relative opposition. Other effects were inconsistent or insignificant. English-speakers appear as significantly less supportive of Medicare in 1967, but as relatively supportive in 1956. Catholics reveal the opposite pattern. The language and religious variables overlap each other, of course, and each overlaps the regional variables. The instability of the religious and linguistic coefficients may thus reflect multicollinearity. Union membership might be expected to predispose respondents to favour social insurance schemes such as Medicare, but this does not happen. In neither year were union members significantly distinct, and the sign on the union coefficient changes between the years. Education variables appear only in 1967. They suggest a curvilinear effect, with high-school respondents more negative than either elementary-school or university-educated respondents. I hesitate to impute much meaning to the curvilinearity, however. The most compelling pattern in Table 3-11 is geographic; within provinces, differences are weak. Distinct province-wide Medicare climates seemed to exist, at least before the program became a fact. It may be no accident, then, that the three distinct provinces,

**TABLE 3-8 Pensions and Income Security**

	Pensions <sup>a</sup>		Family Allowance <sup>b</sup>	
	August 1951	August 1966	January 1971	December 1979
Newfoundland	0.18 (0.34)	—	-5.47 (-0.004)	0.18 (0.63)
P.E.I.	-1.27 (-3.70)	-0.23 (-0.88)	—	0.33 (0.52)
Nova Scotia	-0.65 (-4.49)	-0.12 (-0.48)	—	-0.12 (-0.57)
New Brunswick	-0.35 (-2.02)	0.42 (0.91)	-0.51 (-1.67)	-0.17 (-0.65)
Quebec	-0.34 (-2.58)	0.20 (1.21)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.12 (-0.69)
Manitoba	-0.07 (-0.44)	0.15 (0.63)	-0.45 (-1.46)	-0.16 (-0.78)
Saskatchewan	-0.24 (-1.79)	-0.09 (-0.46)	0.09 (-0.41)	-0.47 (-2.32)
Alberta	-0.42 (-3.03)	0.04 (0.18)	0.26 (1.15)	0.02 (0.13)
B.C.	-0.42 (-3.59)	-0.22 (-1.24)	0.27 (1.54)	0.06 (0.38)
Catholic	—	0.02 (0.16)	-0.17 (-1.08)	-0.05 (-0.47)
English	-0.15 (-1.22)	0.11 (0.58)	0.48 (1.94)	0.04 (0.20)
“Other” language	—	-0.09 (-0.46)	-0.05 (0.18)	-0.18 (-0.89)
High school	—	-0.01 (-0.01)	-0.15 (-1.33)	0.03 (0.27)
University	—	-0.002 (-0.01)	0.21 (0.94)	-0.10 (-0.76)
Union member	—	0.20 (1.83)	-0.03 (-0.27)	0.001 (0.01)
Farm	—	0.14 (0.85)	-0.21 (-1.00)	—
Intercept	1.23 (10.01)	-0.33 (-1.45)	-0.97 (-3.60)	0.51 (2.47)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.03	0.02	0.06	0.01
L.R.T. (df)	45.39 (10)	13.82 (15)	44.76 (14)	14.38 (15)
<i>N</i>	1,946	732	710	1,013
$\bar{Y}$	0.81	0.43	0.22	0.66

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. Pensions: 1951: 1 = approve general pension.

1966: 1 = favour means test.

b. Family Allowance: 1971, 1979: 1 = approve selectivity.

**TABLE 3-8 (cont'd)**

*Items:*

August 1951	Next year every Canadian 70 years of age or over will start getting a pension of \$40.00 per month, regardless of their financial position. Do you approve or disapprove of this?
	* Approve ..... 1
	Disapprove ..... 2
	Undecided ..... 3
August 1966	Now thinking of old age pensions — Some years ago they were paid only after a means test — that is only to those who needed it. Now everyone gets it, and it is paid out of taxes. If the old age pension were raised from \$75 a month to say \$105 — do you think it should be paid to everyone as at present, or only to those who need it through a means test?
	Paid to everyone ..... 1
	* Only after a means test ..... 2
	Qualified ..... 3
	Undecided ..... 4
January 1971	The government is considering revising the Family Allowance programme, so that those families in which the income is ten thousand and over, will not receive Family Allowance cheques — and the money will go to increase payments for poor families. Some people approve of this idea — others do not. What is your opinion?
	* Approve ..... 1
	Disapprove ..... 2
	Undecided ..... 3
December 1979	As you may know, the Federal Government is considering changing the Family Allowance programme sometimes known as Mother's allowance or baby bonus — perhaps by eliminating or reducing payments to well-to-do families; would you approve of this or not?
	* Approve ..... 1
	Disapprove ..... 2
	Qualified ..... 3
	Undecided ..... 4

British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Quebec, have not yet resorted to extra-billing for physicians' services.

Table 3-12 gives evidence on energy questions. The first usable question appears only in 1970; this may be a fair reflection of the low salience of energy questions before October 1973, but even since that year, Gallup has mirrored the disputes very poorly. The most useful questions appear in the early phase of Alberta-Ottawa conflict. The structure of response to these 1974 questions probably fairly represents the pattern for later energy disputes. Curiously, the 1970 question on natural gas exports evokes more structure than do either of the 1974 questions. Region does not provide much of the 1970 structure, however. Instead, one sees an education-based pattern which also pervades response to one of the 1974 questions. The higher the respondent's educational attainment, the more hostile he or she is to gas exports. Support for a Crown energy corporation (not yet named in the 1974 question) also increases sharply with education. Union members also favour the Crown corporation. The



**TABLE 3-9 Abortion**

	June 1965 <sup>a</sup>	July 1975 <sup>a</sup>	February 1979 <sup>b</sup>
Newfoundland	-0.26 (-0.44)	-0.79 (-3.18)	-0.25 (-1.01)
P.E.I.	—	—	-0.46 (-1.09)
Nova Scotia	0.70 (2.74)	—	0.13 (0.54)
New Brunswick	0.39 (1.42)	0.09 (0.36)	0.001 (0.002)
Quebec	-0.54 (-2.66)	-0.02 (-0.09)	0.51 (3.16)
Manitoba	-0.06 (-0.22)	-0.10 (-0.39)	0.14 (0.70)
Saskatchewan	-0.94 (-2.21)	0.28 (0.91)	-0.31 (-1.27)
Alberta	0.37 (1.55)	0.26 (1.38)	-0.06 (-0.34)
B.C.	-0.31 (-1.25)	0.16 (0.88)	0.18 (1.24)
Catholic	0.78 (5.04)	-0.47 (-3.66)	-0.38 (-3.54)
English	0.07 (0.36)	-0.13 (-0.55)	0.40 (2.31)
"Other" language	-0.12 (-0.48)	-0.35 (-1.41)	0.16 (0.81)
High school	-0.15 (-1.22)	0.35 (3.35)	0.05 (0.55)
University	-0.47 (-1.86)	0.61 (3.53)	0.06 (0.47)
Union member	-0.07 (-0.53)	0.15 (1.46)	0.02 (0.20)
Farm	0.06 (0.31)	-0.06 (-0.32)	-0.23 (-1.31)
Intercept	-1.09 (-4.71)	0.99 (3.89)	-0.11 (-0.54)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.12	0.07	0.04
L.R.T. (df)	71.18 (15)	65.06 (14)	44.21 (16)
<i>N</i>	692	1,039	1,018
$\bar{Y}$	0.18	0.83	0.57

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1965: 1 = anti-abortion.

b. 1975, 1979: 1 = pro-choice.

Items:

June 1965

As you may know, present Federal law considers abortion legal in only one instance: to save a mother's life. Recently a provincial Medical Association recommended that abortion be legalized, as

TABLE 3-9 (cont'd)

	well, to preserve a mother's physical or mental health. Would you approve, or disapprove of such a step?	
	Approve .....	1
	*Disapprove .....	2
	Qualified .....	3
	No opinion .....	4
July 1975	Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?	
	*Legal under any circumstances .....	1
	*Legal only under certain circumstances .....	2
	Illegal in all circumstances .....	3
	Don't know .....	4
February 1979	Do you agree, or disagree with the following statement: 'The decision to have an abortion should be made solely by a woman and her physician'?	
	*Agree .....	1
	Disapprove .....	2
	Can't say .....	3

regional structure of feelings on the corporation is very simple: producers, actual or potential, versus consumers. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland are the clear opposition provinces; no other province is significantly distinct from Ontario. Attitudes on an oil-price freeze have an even simpler structure. Only Alberta and Newfoundland oppose a freeze. Alberta's coefficient in this equation is as large as any in this chapter. Virtually no other difference appears on the freeze. Education, for example, which is so important on the implicitly nationalist questions of gas exports and the Crown corporation, yields no purchase on the producer-versus-consumer question of the freeze.

Finally, consider language policy, represented in Table 3-13. In the 1960s, at least, response in this domain was very powerfully differentiated. The 1973 and 1980 questions evoked less structure. It is not clear which kind of decline this apparent shift reflects, in the intensity of linguistic disputes or in the quality of the questions. Certainly, the 1973 and 1980 questions are weak reeds: they appear for lack of alternatives. The two earlier questions are very pointed, however, and evoke a commensurately pointed response.

The 1963 question on French Canadian rights divides Canadians along virtually every ethnic, cultural and regional line. Among provinces, Quebec, not surprisingly, anchors one pole. The other end is secured by Saskatchewan. In Quebec's 1963 coalition is a curious group: Newfoundland, British Columbia and, possibly, Nova Scotia. English-speakers are significantly different from French-speakers, but "other"-language speakers are not. Catholics are significantly more supportive than non-Catholics of the francophone view; this religious effect is indepen-

**TABLE 3-10 Divorce**

	October 1966	October 1975
Newfoundland	-0.28 (-0.59)	-0.34 (-1.38)
P.E.I.	—	—
Nova Scotia	-0.49 (-2.03)	—
New Brunswick	-0.50 (-1.91)	-0.72 (-3.97)
Quebec	0.17 (1.03)	-0.44 (-2.31)
Manitoba	0.23 (0.78)	0.05 (0.24)
Saskatchewan	-0.64 (-3.27)	-1.16 (-4.13)
Alberta	0.45 (1.75)	-0.44 (-2.89)
B.C.	0.24 (1.22)	0.19 (1.36)
Catholic	-0.47 (-3.08)	-0.06 (-0.48)
English	0.54 (2.73)	0.17 (0.88)
"Other" language	0.06 (0.25)	-0.27 (-1.31)
High school	—	0.20 (2.17)
University	—	0.40 (2.87)
Union member	-0.05 (-0.48)	0.08 (0.89)
Farm	0.01 (0.09)	-0.19 (-1.09)
Intercept	0.18 (0.86)	-0.03 (-0.15)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.12	0.10
L.R.T. (df)	91.62 (13)	115.0 (14)
<i>N</i>	701	1,038
$\bar{Y}$	0.61	0.49

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = pro-easier divorce.

Items:

October 1966

Do you think it should be easier to get a divorce in Canada than it is at present?

\*Yes, easier . . . . . 1

No . . . . . 2

Undecided . . . . . 3

TABLE 3-10 (cont'd)

October 1975	Do you approve or disapprove of the idea of "no fault" divorce where only the needs of the concerned parties are assessed, and where no effort is made to assess guilt or innocence?
*Approve .....	1
Disapprove.....	2
Qualified.....	3
Don't know .....	4

dent of the specifically linguistic variables. Schooling seems to exert a curvilinear effect again, for reasons that are no more obvious here than they were before.

Reflect for a moment on some combinations of variables. Quebec francophones are more likely than francophones outside Quebec to agree that French Canadians have not been given their full rights. This might seem surprising in light of the actual location of the most celebrated rights violations, in Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick. Conceivably, the mobilization of sentiment on language issues requires a concentration of francophones on the scale to be found only in Quebec. Alternatively, Québécois may have focused on the French-English economic differences within their own province. Opinion is structured within English Canada as well. Catholic respondents are significantly more sympathetic to the French view than are non-Catholics; this difference appears even with the language variable in the equation and thus reflects a division among non-francophones.

For the 1969 item relating to the Official Languages Act, Quebec and Saskatchewan still anchor the geographic poles. In 1969, however, the other three Western provinces have fallen into line with Saskatchewan. Alberta is next to Saskatchewan in extremity of opposition, while British Columbia and Manitoba are more moderate. The coefficients for Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia suggest that the Atlantic provinces are allies of Quebec on language matters; this notion is consistent with hints from the 1963 question. Language no longer exerts an effect independent of province, but religion still does. Indeed, the Catholic coefficient is now the second strongest in the equation (after Saskatchewan's negative coefficient). The Catholic coefficient may be picking up a language-use effect, because of collinearity between the religion and language variables. The record of the other equations suggests, however, that the religious effect derives from denomination itself. In 1969, university-educated respondents make their appearance as supporters of the Official Languages policy.

Although the 1973 question evokes less structure than did the earlier two questions, the structure which does emerge is subtly different from, but not wildly inconsistent with, the earlier cases. By 1973, geography seems to have become a more critical factor in its own right. Quebec and

**TABLE 3-11 Medicare**

	July 1956	November 1967
Newfoundland	-0.17 (-0.81)	—
P.E.I.	-0.46 (-2.02)	0.13 (0.56)
Nova Scotia	0.05 (0.28)	0.24 (0.91)
New Brunswick	0.09 (0.51)	-0.12 (-0.26)
Quebec	0.17 (1.45)	0.30 (1.73)
Manitoba	-0.47 (-3.74)	-0.46 (-1.78)
Saskatchewan	0.40 (2.44)	0.34 (1.70)
Alberta	0.28 (1.78)	-0.24 (-1.13)
B.C.	0.98 (5.28)	0.41 (2.36)
Catholic	0.14 (1.55)	-0.17 (-1.26)
English	0.12 (1.05)	-0.35 (-1.80)
"Other" language	—	0.13 (0.64)
High school	—	-0.18 (-1.71)
University	—	-0.09 (-0.50)
Union member	0.12 (1.44)	-0.11 (-1.01)
Farm	-0.05 (-0.55)	-0.001 (-0.003)
Intercept	0.34 (2.68)	0.39 (1.79)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.04	0.05
L.R.T. (df)	84.60	37.40
$N$	1,856	728
$\bar{Y}$	0.72	0.55

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = favour medicare; 0 = all others.

Items:

October 1956

Would you favour or oppose a government-operated plan whereby any hospital expenses you, or someone else, incurred would be paid out of taxes?

\*Favour..... 1  
 Oppose..... 2  
 No opinion..... 3

**TABLE 3-11 (cont'd)**

November 1967	As you may know, the Minister of Finance has announced that taxes will have to be increased to pay for Ottawa's Medicare programme. Under these circumstances, which of these statements comes closest to the way you yourself feel about it?
	*Should bring in as promised..... 1
	Should be postponed..... 2
	Should be dropped..... 3
	Can't say..... 4

the Atlantic provinces are no longer distinct from Ontario. The Western provinces, however, remain distinctly unhappy with Ottawa's language policy. Language itself is, if anything, even less significant than it was before. Religion seems also to have declined in importance, although Catholics remain significantly more sympathetic to the policy than do non-Catholics. The 1973 policy question is suspect, as it does not ask why, specifically, a respondent approves or disapproves of federal language policy; disapproval could be expressed for diametrically opposite reasons. This might help to explain the indistinctness of Quebec from Ontario. The question about federal language policy might also tap simple disapproval or approval of the federal government itself. This is a possible factor in the rough East-West approval gradient. Alternatively, that gradient and the indistinctness of Quebec from its immediate neighbours (remember, however, that the indistinctness arises *ceteris paribus*) may represent true differences in support for the extension of francophone rights.

## Provincial Powers

Gallup's coverage of specifically provincial questions is weak. My choices may thus seem rather idiosyncratic. I have chosen to consider three sets of questions, two of which bear on education. One set deals with religious instruction in the schools.<sup>18</sup> A second set considers discipline in the schools. The third set of questions considers recreational and commercial activity on Sunday.<sup>19</sup> The rest of the provincial political agenda fails to appear in the Gallup poll, except to the extent that it appears in the sections on concurrent and contested powers, above, or in the general section, below.

The questions relating to religious instruction in Table 3-14 do not, unfortunately, tap support for, or opposition to, public funding of denominational schools. Rather, the question is about religious instruction in the public school system; the boundaries of the public system may be vague, however, in light of the typical province's public support

TABLE 3-12 Energy

	Natural Gas Sale <sup>a</sup> November 1970	Crown Corporation <sup>b</sup> January 1974	Price Freeze <sup>c</sup> January 1974
Newfoundland	—	-0.62 (-1.97)	-0.62 (-1.95)
P.E.I.	—	—	—
Nova Scotia	0.73 (2.76)	—	—
New Brunswick	0.19 (0.73)	-0.39 (-1.89)	0.19 (0.77)
Quebec	0.82 (4.17)	-0.08 (-0.53)	-0.20 (-1.23)
Manitoba	0.06 (0.24)	0.14 (0.70)	0.46 (1.80)
Saskatchewan	0.07 (0.36)	-0.34 (-1.61)	0.24 (0.96)
Alberta	-0.13 (-0.55)	-0.34 (-2.26)	-0.80 (-5.11)
B.C.	-0.08 (-0.44)	0.26 (1.72)	0.01 (0.08)
Catholic	0.17 (1.21)	0.17 (1.48)	0.06 (0.48)
English	-0.21 (-0.95)	-0.01 (-0.06)	0.23 (1.24)
"Other" language	-0.25 (-1.16)	-0.18 (-0.96)	0.0003 (0.002)
High school	-0.29 (-2.55)	0.10 (1.08)	0.09 (0.83)
University	-0.64 (-3.77)	0.26 (2.07)	-0.03 (-0.25)
Union member	-0.04 (-0.34)	0.22 (2.49)	-0.05 (-0.53)
Farm	—	0.22 (1.39)	0.21 (1.21)
Intercept	0.03 (0.13)	0.14 (0.74)	0.60 (2.88)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.17	0.03	0.05
L.R.T. (df)	125.10 (14)	34.92 (14)	52.37 (14)
<i>N</i>	699	1,037	1,037
$\bar{Y}$	0.48	0.62	0.75

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. Gas Sale: 1 = approve.

b. Crown Corporation: 1 = approve.

c. Price Freeze: 1 = approve.

Items:

November 1970

Do you happen to have heard or read anything about the recent sale of about 2 billion dollars worth of natural gas to the U.S.A.?

TABLE 3-12 (cont'd)

	No .....	1
	(If yes) On the whole do you approve of this sale or not?	
	*Approve .....	2
	Disapprove .....	3
	Undecided .....	4
January 1974	I'm going to read off some of the things included in the policy [the Canadian-fuel policy announced by Prime Minister Trudeau in early December], and I'd like you to tell me if you approve or disapprove of each:	
	(a) The freeze on gas and oil prices is to extend until Spring of 1974	
	(b) The formation of a national petroleum corporation.	
	*Approve .....	1
	Disapprove .....	2
	Don't know .....	3

of denominational schools. The religious instruction questions stop in 1961. If Gallup's decision no longer to ask about religious instruction reflects a diminution in controversy over the issue, then Canada stands in sharp contrast to the United States. In any case, 20 years ago Canadians were divided fairly clearly on this question along religious, ethnic and regional lines. In each survey Catholics emerged as significantly more in favour of religious instruction than were Protestants.<sup>20</sup> Language was available as a variable in 1957, but not 1961. In the earlier year English-speakers were clearly more strongly opposed to religious instruction than were non-English-speakers. In addition to the ethno-linguistic differences, there are regional differences. The exact make-up of the regional cleavage shifts between 1957 and 1961, although the apparent shift probably stems from the change in specification of the equation. Sub-samples taken from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and British Columbia show significantly more opposition to religious instruction than do those taken from other provinces in both 1957 and 1961. In 1981, Alberta joins these first four provinces in opposition. Quebec moves the other way, most likely because the language term does not appear in the 1981 equation. Aside from the ethno-religious and regional factors, education also seems to shape sentiment on religious instruction: university-educated respondents are less supportive than are less highly educated respondents.

The religious instruction question evoked a sharply differentiated response. The particular structure which emerged reflected the familiar lines of controversy in Canada: ethnic and religious, with a regional overlay. It may be that "religious instruction" is understood by many to include denominational schools, particularly to the extent that part of the *raison d'être* of such schools is to provide a venue for religious



**TABLE 3-13 Language Policy**

	June 1963 <sup>a</sup>	March 1969 <sup>b</sup>	May 1973 <sup>c</sup>	August 1980
Newfoundland	-1.54 (-2.81)	—	-0.53 (-1.06)	-0.36 (-1.22)
P.E.I.	—	0.40 (1.68)	—	0.11 (0.18)
Nova Scotia	-0.29 (-1.29)	0.34 (1.10)	—	0.20 (0.92)
New Brunswick	0.14 (0.48)	-6.00 (-0.02)	0.13 (0.50)	1.10 (2.99)
Quebec	-0.81 (-3.86)	0.55 (2.64)	0.28 (1.15)	0.39 (2.32)
Manitoba	0.11 (0.46)	-0.39 (-1.62)	0.45 (1.94)	0.14 (0.64)
Saskatchewan	0.57 (2.32)	-1.13 (-4.97)	0.67 (2.74)	-0.002 (-0.01)
Alberta	0.11 (0.54)	-0.91 (-3.52)	0.53 (2.07)	0.08 (-0.48)
B.C.	-0.29 (-1.62)	-0.34 (-1.88)	0.26 (1.47)	-0.20 (-1.43)
Catholic	-0.44 (-2.89)	0.58 (3.73)	-0.28 (-1.79)	0.10 (0.90)
English	0.51 (2.29)	-0.32 (-1.36)	0.11 (0.41)	-0.11 (-0.63)
"Other" language	0.16 (0.66)	-0.52 (-2.21)	-0.06 (-0.21)	0.0004 (0.002)
High school	0.23 (1.94)	-0.02 (-0.14)	0.21 (1.67)	0.007 (0.08)
University	0.26 (1.27)	0.51 (2.91)	0.14 (0.72)	0.19 (1.53)
Union member	-0.17 (-1.30)	-0.18 (-1.47)	-0.09 (-0.67)	-0.13 (-1.15)
Farm	-0.03 (-0.21)	—	-0.17 (-0.73)	-0.20 (-1.26)
Intercept	-0.30 (-1.21)	0.38 (1.50)	-1.10 (-3.70)	0.36 (1.74)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.23	0.28	0.04	0.05
L.R.T. (df)	190.38 (15)	213.97 (14)	28.99 (14)	58.87 (16)
N	709	708	727	1,032
$\bar{Y}$	0.43	0.61	0.61	0.67

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1963: 1 = anti-French.

b. 1969, 1980: 1 = pro-French.

c. 1973: 1 = anti-bilingual.

Items:

June 1963

As you may know, there is considerable feeling that French-Canadians have not been given their full rights under Confederation. Do you agree with this or not?

**TABLE 3-13 (cont'd)**

	Agree . . . . .	1
	*Disagree . . . . .	2
	No opinion . . . . .	3
March 1969	As you may know, the Federal Government is planning a bill on Language Rights — by which, in all areas where 10 percent of the population is French-speaking, these citizens should have the right to deal with Federal officials in their area, in their own language. Do you approve of this idea, or not?	
	*Yes, approve . . . . .	1
	No, disapprove . . . . .	2
	Qualified . . . . .	3
	No opinion . . . . .	4
May 1973	(a) Can you tell me, just in your own words, what the government's bilingual policy is?	
	(b) In general, do you think this policy is a good one for Canada or not?	
	Good . . . . .	1
	*Not good . . . . .	2
	Qualified . . . . .	3
	Undecided . . . . .	4
	Inapplicable . . . . .	5
August 1980	Should a reformed constitution include a provision dealing with the issue of language rights or not?	
	*Yes, should . . . . .	1
	No, should not . . . . .	2
	Don't know . . . . .	3

teaching. Would the issue evoke a similar structure today? We may fancy that the issues have been settled. Such a perception may have underpinned the Ontario government's decision, in June 1984, to extend tax support to the entire Roman Catholic educational system. The controversy which has ensued suggests, however, that the issue continues to divide Canadians, although along precisely what lines we cannot say.

The question about discipline in the schools may be a surrogate for a question about the school quality. Whatever the discipline questions imply, Table 3-15 tells us that they evoke a much less structured response than did the religious instruction questions. In 1963, Quebec and British Columbia seemed more pro-discipline than the other provinces, but neither province was significantly different from Ontario for either of the 1979 questions. In 1979, a regional pattern does emerge, although it is stronger for secondary schools than for public schools. The division seems to be between Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, and the other seven provinces. The three provinces just mentioned are more pro-discipline than the others. It could be that attention to the question is a phenomenon of the more urbanized provinces. Elsewhere, discipline may not be perceived to have declined as much as it has in inner-city and suburban schools. Modifying this regional difference are the language coefficients. English-speakers and "Other"-language speakers are more

**TABLE 3-14 Religious Instruction**

	March 1957	May 1961
Newfoundland	-0.85 (-3.05)	—
P.E.I.	1.30 (4.55)	0.38 (1.69)
Nova Scotia	0.55 (4.04)	0.95 (2.01)
New Brunswick	0.05 (0.32)	0.13 (0.43)
Quebec	-0.02 (-0.11)	-0.54 (-3.50)
Manitoba	0.03 (0.26)	0.73 (3.32)
Saskatchewan	0.51 (4.13)	0.54 (1.78)
Alberta	-0.08 (-0.63)	0.87 (4.12)
B.C.	0.20 (2.00)	0.43 (2.49)
Catholic (1)	-0.33 (-3.70)	—
(2)	-0.51 (-3.51)	-0.31 (-2.38)
English	0.43 (3.37)	—
“Other” language	—	—
High school	—	0.13 (1.15)
University	—	-0.37 (-1.69)
Union member	-0.07 (-0.97)	0.06 (0.54)
Farm	—	0.20 (1.29)
Intercept	-0.37 (-2.70)	-0.18 (-1.50)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.13	0.17
L.R.T. (df)	291.23 (13)	128.97 (13)
<i>N</i>	2,109	692
$\bar{Y}$	0.45	0.45

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = opposed to religious course in school.

Items:

March 1957

Do you think that all public schools should offer a course in religion, or do you think they should leave this subject to the churches?

TABLE 3-14 (cont'd)

	School offer courses.....	1
	*Leave to churches .....	2
	Qualified .....	3
	No opinion.....	4
May 1961	Do you think that all public schools should offer a course in religion, or do you think they should leave this subject to the churches?	
	Schools should give course .....	1
	*Schools should not.....	1
	Qualified .....	2
	Undecided .....	3

pro-discipline than francophones. If language were dropped from the equation, the aggregate difference between Quebec and the provinces other than Ontario and British Columbia would weaken. University-educated respondents, meanwhile, are generally less pro-discipline than others, although the education difference disappears for attitudes to secondary school discipline.

The Sabbatarian questions appear in Table 3-16. Unfortunately the specific content of the questions changes from one survey to the next. As one moves from the 1957 question to the 1974 question, the structure of response weakens greatly. This could reflect the secularization of Canadian life over the period, in that denominations have become less committed to positions that used to be their hallmark. Alternatively, movies, sports and mercantile activities may each invoke a different pattern of response. My suspicion is that the secularization thesis carries more weight here, but I cannot test the suspicion directly. Regional differences fluctuate, but British Columbia seems the most consistently in favour of Sunday activity. The Atlantic provinces and Saskatchewan seem the most strongly opposed, at least in 1957. Quebec seems to bounce between support for Sunday movies and opposition to Sunday shopping. The distinctiveness of Quebec in 1957 is reinforced by the language and religion variables. Catholics are relatively favourable to Sunday movies and English-speakers are relatively unfavourable to them.<sup>21</sup> Language does not seem to be a factor in attitudes to Sunday sports, although religion most assuredly is. All of this may now be history, however, in light of the weak 1974 effects. Religion and language each ceased to affect opinion, and regional differences were not impressive. Once again, university-educated respondents stand out as a distinctly secular group.

## General Issues

Here appear questions which preoccupy each level, but which are not really either concurrent or contested. Union activity is one such ques-

TABLE 3-15 Discipline in Schools

	January 1969	Public School April 1979	Secondary School April 1979
Newfoundland	-0.98 (-1.76)	-0.33 (-1.37)	-0.68 (-2.82)
P.E.I.	—	-0.37 (-0.92)	-0.74 (-1.81)
Nova Scotia	0.29 (1.19)	-0.23 (-1.05)	-0.50 (-2.35)
New Brunswick	-0.19 (-0.68)	-0.27 (-1.11)	-0.54 (-2.25)
Quebec	0.39 (2.10)	0.06 (0.38)	0.18 (1.17)
Manitoba	0.06 (0.22)	-0.25 (-1.18)	-0.32 (-1.50)
Saskatchewan	-0.05 (-0.22)	-0.52 (-2.42)	-0.63 (-2.95)
Alberta	-0.06 (-0.30)	-0.27 (-1.76)	-0.56 (-3.62)
B.C.	0.52 (2.97)	-0.06 (-0.38)	0.02 (0.12)
Catholic	0.06 (0.42)	-0.07 (-0.71)	-0.05 (-0.51)
English	0.05 (0.25)	0.37 (2.32)	0.33 (2.03)
"Other" language	0.30 (1.40)	0.44 (2.31)	0.23 (1.18)
High school	-0.01 (-0.14)	0.08 (0.79)	-0.02 (-0.23)
University	-0.34 (-1.86)	-0.19 (-1.55)	-0.96 (-0.77)
Union member	-0.03 (-0.27)	0.09 (1.06)	0.05 (0.57)
Farm	0.07 (0.38)	-0.10 (-0.65)	-0.15 (-0.94)
Intercept	-0.35 (-1.56)	0.001 (0.007)	0.19 (1.03)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.05	0.03	0.04
L.R.T. (df)	34.11 (15)	27.94 (16)	42.04 (16)
$N$	711	1,029	1,029
$\bar{Y}$	0.44	0.58	0.61

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = favours more discipline.

Items:

January 1969      Do you think that discipline in the public schools in this area is too strict, or not strict enough?

**TABLE 3-15 (cont'd)**

April 1979	Too strict .....	1	
	*Not strict enough .....	2	
	About right.....	3	
	Undecided .....	4	
	Do you think that discipline in the public schools in this area is too strict or not strict enough?		
	And how about discipline in the secondary schools in this area, do you think it is too strict or not strict enough?		
		Public School	Secondary School
	Too strict .....	1	1
	*Not strict enough .....	2	2
	About right.....	3	3
	Can't say .....	4	4

tion. I have chosen two groups of union questions for analysis: a general question on union power and more specific questions on the right to strike in the public sector. A third set of questions bears on taxes and the size of government.

General questions about union power evoke a relatively stable and simple structure, although sentiment has evolved somewhat, according to Table 3-17. Opinion remained one-sidedly anti-union throughout the period.<sup>22</sup> In each survey, union members, not surprisingly, were significantly less likely than non-members to share this view. British Columbia and Alberta sub-samples were consistently more likely than those from other provinces to agree that union power was too great. The rest of the story seems to be one of mild homogenization of sentiment. In 1959, Quebec respondents were relatively sympathetic to unions; by 1982, Quebec was no longer distinct. University-educated respondents moved in the opposite direction.

While general attitudes to the union movement have become less differentiated, attitudes to a public sector right to strike seem to have become more highly differentiated. According to Table 3-18, union members are generally more favourable than non-members toward such a right. The union/non-union difference is weaker for teachers' rights than for a vaguely defined "civil service" right.<sup>23</sup> Language was not a factor in 1965, but seems to have become one by 1982: English-speakers are less strongly opposed to a public sector right to strike than are francophones and "Other"-language speakers. This situation may reflect a reaction by francophones to the 1982 government/union struggles in Quebec. Within English Canada, the three westernmost provinces seem less strongly opposed than do the others to a public sector right to strike. This stance is in curious contrast to the distinctiveness of Albert and British Columbia as anti-union on the general question. As opinion on public sector strikes has become more structured, it has also become more negative.

The same seems to be true of attitudes on taxation. Unfortunately, the

**TABLE 3-16 Sabbatarianism**

	Sunday Movies March 1957	Sunday Sports March 1957	Sunday Stores January 1974
Newfoundland	-0.24 (-0.98)	-0.69 (-2.85)	-0.06 (-0.19)
P.E.I.	-0.76 (-2.85)	-1.03 (-4.21)	—
Nova Scotia	-0.37 (-2.66)	-0.49 (-3.70)	—
New Brunswick	-0.96 (-4.20)	-0.69 (-3.98)	-0.15 (-0.72)
Quebec	0.59 (4.04)	0.03 (0.19)	-0.28 (-1.81)
Manitoba	0.06 (0.39)	-0.26 (-2.05)	0.35 (1.81)
Saskatchewan	-0.54 (-3.97)	-0.48 (-3.93)	0.13 (0.62)
Alberta	-0.12 (-0.97)	0.10 (0.82)	0.02 (0.13)
B.C.	-0.04 (-0.34)	0.27 (2.56)	0.58 (3.90)
Catholic (1)	0.60 (6.80)	0.58 (6.27)	0.11 (0.98)
(2)	0.56 (3.75)	0.47 (3.04)	—
English	-0.29 (-2.32)	-0.05 (-0.41)	0.07 (0.42)
"Other" language	—	—	-0.16 (-0.82)
High school	—	—	0.09 (1.01)
University	—	—	0.42 (3.31)
Union member	0.17 (2.49)	0.21 (3.04)	-0.01 (-0.17)
Farm	—	—	-0.06 (-0.37)
Intercept	-0.19 (-1.39)	0.17 (1.23)	-0.27 (-1.42)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.23	0.10	0.05
L.R.T. (df)	526.86 (13)	208.01 (13)	51.28 (14)
<i>N</i>	2,109	2,109	1,037
$\bar{Y}$	0.46	0.61	0.46

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = pro-Sunday activity.

Items:

March 1957

Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of allowing moving picture theatres in your community to remain open on Sunday?

**TABLE 3-16 (cont'd)**

	*Approve .....	1
	Disapprove .....	2
	Qualified .....	3
	No opinion .....	4
March 1957	Do you think organized amateur, professional and commercial sport and athletic contests should be allowed in this community on Sundays or not?	
	*Yes .....	1
	No .....	2
	Qualified .....	3
	Don't know .....	4
January 1974	In your opinion, should retail outlets in this area be allowed to sell goods or services on Sunday or not?	
	*Should .....	1
	Should not .....	2
	Don't know .....	3

1959 question in Table 3-19 does not lend itself to easy comparison with the 1965 and 1975 questions. The latter two, however, are fairly comparable with each other, although the 1965 question asks specifically about income taxes, while the 1975 question refers simply to "taxes." The proportion of respondents agreeing that income taxes are too high is rather smaller than the proportion saying the same about unqualified "taxes." Conceivably, the higher 1975 response level reflects the inclusion, by implication, of other taxes. On the other hand, the income tax seems to be the most visible and obvious tax, and the one most likely to provoke a political outcry (Hibbs and Madsen, 1981). One might argue that property taxes have a similar effect and might have been especially critical in the inflationary environment of 1975. In that year, however, the greatest inflation in property values occurred in Alberta and British Columbia, the very provinces in which agreement with the high-tax perception was least frequent. Provincial income taxes in those same provinces, on the other hand, were Canada's lowest. Union members appear to have moved to the high tax perception. University-educated respondents remained less anti-tax than others throughout the 1959-75 period.

### **Regional Conflict, the Division of Powers, and the Federal Agenda**

Issue areas differ greatly in their ability to evoke a geographically differentiated response. The most striking geographic effects appear for Commonwealth relations (at least in 1956), immigration (with a great reversal of the issue's polarity), abortion (here the geographic difference is not so much "intrinsic" as a product of the Catholic/non-Catholic



TABLE 3-17 Union Power: General

	September 1959	August 1968	November 1982
Newfoundland	5.71 (0.01)	—	—
P.E.I.	-0.38 (-1.45)	-0.03 (-0.13)	-0.20 (-0.47)
Nova Scotia	0.51 (0.91)	0.46 (1.35)	0.25 (1.13)
New Brunswick	-0.19 (-0.61)	-0.97 (-2.29)	0.15 (0.49)
Quebec	-0.40 (-2.68)	-0.09 (-0.50)	0.07 (0.41)
Manitoba	0.01 (0.05)	0.36 (1.22)	0.18 (0.98)
Saskatchewan	0.25 (0.90)	0.13 (0.59)	0.34 (1.40)
Alberta	0.21 (0.97)	0.36 (1.63)	0.34 (1.87)
B.C.	0.50 (2.38)	0.33 (1.85)	0.27 (1.99)
Catholic	-0.34 (-2.57)	0.27 (1.92)	-0.04 (-0.43)
English	—	0.19 (0.97)	-0.14 (-0.77)
"Other" language	—	0.25 (1.13)	-0.10 (-0.51)
High school	0.29 (2.59)	0.11 (1.00)	-0.06 (-0.60)
University	0.67 (3.46)	-0.15 (-0.89)	-0.10 (-0.86)
Union member	-0.48 (-4.17)	-0.96 (-5.56)	-0.48 (-4.57)
Farm	0.27 (1.73)	0.43 (2.19)	0.18 (1.01)
Intercept	0.43 (3.36)	0.13 (0.57)	0.60 (3.01)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.15	0.09	0.03
L.R.T. (df)	116.98 (14)	61.99 (15)	33.39 (15)
$N$	688	717	1,066
$\bar{Y}$	0.63	0.62	0.68

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

1 = unions too powerful.

Items:

September 1959

Do you think some of the big national unions are, or are not,  
becoming too powerful?

\*Becoming too powerful . . . . . 1

No, are not . . . . . 2

No opinion . . . . . 3

**TABLE 3-17 (cont'd)**

August 1958	Do you think labour unions are getting too strong in Canada, or not?	
	*Yes.....	1
	No .....	2
	Undecided .....	3
November 1982	Do you think that labour unions are becoming too powerful, are not powerful enough, or are about right?	
	*Too powerful .....	1
	Not powerful enough .....	2
	Don't know .....	3

composition of each province), divorce, Medicare, energy, language, and religious instruction in schools (at least in 1961 and before). The least regionalized issues are Cold War ones (at any rate, in recent years), wage and price controls, macroeconomic policy, American investment, universality in pensions and the family allowance, and discipline in the schools (although recent years may have seen some regional polarization). Tariffs evoke regional differences, although not precisely the ones that elite conflict leads us to expect.

The most strongly regionalized questions are typically in the provincial domain or in the political no-man's land that I have called "contested". The least regionally divisive issues are mainly federal ones. Certainly, of the questions which are exclusively federal, only Commonwealth relations and, in its curious way, the tariff are regionalized. Of exclusively provincial questions, only discipline in the schools lacks a major geographic component.<sup>24</sup>

The sticking points, perhaps inevitably, are what I have called "contested" powers: energy, language and Medicare. Here regional differences among provinces have been translated into disputes between some provinces and the federal government. Sometimes the dispute between elites seems to rest on a mass base which combines strong between-province variation and, at least in some provinces, weak within-province variation. Ottawa seeks support from those provinces where populations more or less homogeneously share Ottawa's position on the question. The energy dispute took this form, at least until Ottawa's need for revenue overcame its desire for popularity with the mass of energy consumers. Other disputes, notably about language, are geographically more complex. Mass opposition to federal government language policy is strongest where French Canadians are numerically weakest, that is, in the West. Where francophones are more numerous, so, commensurately, is support for the official languages agenda greater, even among non-francophones.

Intergovernmental conflict in areas such as Medicare, energy and lan-

**TABLE 3-18 Public Sector Strikes**

	Civil Service September 1965	Teachers July 1975	Civil Service August 1982
Newfoundland	0.75 (1.77)	-0.20 (-0.83)	-0.65 (-2.15)
P.E.I.	—	—	-0.78 (-1.83)
Nova Scotia	0.55 (2.33)	—	-0.48 (-2.18)
New Brunswick	0.36 (1.54)	0.21 (1.12)	0.02 (0.09)
Quebec	0.34 (1.87)	0.12 (0.55)	0.15 (0.91)
Manitoba	0.07 (0.30)	0.03 (0.13)	-0.16 (-0.81)
Saskatchewan	0.15 (0.75)	-0.60 (-2.29)	-0.43 (-2.19)
Alberta	0.10 (0.44)	0.15 (1.06)	-0.34 (-2.03)
B.C.	-0.18 (-0.91)	-0.34 (-2.39)	-0.19 (-1.37)
Catholic	—	-0.07 (-0.63)	-0.07 (-0.63)
English	-0.09 (-0.53)	-0.29 (-1.37)	-0.39 (-2.21)
"Other" language	-0.17 (-0.85)	0.04 (0.18)	-0.10 (-0.51)
High school	—	0.02 (0.27)	-0.14 (-1.49)
University	—	-0.20 (-1.52)	0.01 (0.05)
Union member	-0.49 (-4.16)	-0.19 (-2.27)	-0.47 (-4.72)
Farm	—	0.10 (0.65)	0.53 (2.79)
Intercept	-0.33 (-1.84)	0.16 (0.69)	0.80 (4.12)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.05	0.04	0.09
L.R.T. (df)	40.48 (11)	46.18 (14)	91.14 (16)
$N$	715	1,039	1,060
$\bar{Y}$	0.36	0.46	0.63

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.  
1 = anti-public sector strikes.

Items:

September 1965      Do you think strikes by Civil Service employees such as office workers, postal workers, customs men, etc. should or should not be forbidden by law?

TABLE 3-18 (cont'd)

	*Yes, forbidden.....	1
	No, not forbidden.....	2
	Qualified.....	3
	No opinion.....	4
July 1975	Do you believe that teachers should or should not have the right to strike in this province?	
	Yes.....	1
	*No.....	2
	Don't know.....	3
August 1982	Do you think strikes by Civil Service employees — such as office workers, postal workers, customs men, etc. — should or should not be forbidden by law?	
	*Yes, forbidden.....	1
	No, not forbidden.....	2
	No opinion.....	3

guage may be inevitable. To begin with, regional differences in opinion are sharp. The élite conflict thus often reflects genuine underlying disagreements in the mass public. Sometimes geography by itself seems to structure mass opinion. Sometimes the structure comes from the geographically heterogeneous distribution of non-geographic traits. And sometimes both effects are at work, as groups not sharing the geographically differentiated trait are influenced by the proximity of others who have the trait. But the sharp geographic differences cannot be accommodated by the simple expedient of decentralizing jurisdiction. Questions of externalities or of justice force the federal government into the picture.

In policy areas which can be compartmentalized, the Fathers of Confederation may have executed the compartmentalization more wisely than we commonly give them credit for. The questions which are exclusively federal do not, as a rule, call up strong regional differences in mass response. Strong differences among provinces are, however, the norm for the few exclusively provincial questions which I was able to study. A more comprehensive accounting for federal and provincial responsibilities may well have generated substantial contrary evidence: federal questions with strong provincial differences and provincial questions with little geographic structure. But the evidence to hand in this chapter supports neither the view that the present division of powers is artificially decentralized, given the real geography of opinion (Stevenson, 1979; Simeon and Blake, 1980), nor the view that a radical decentralization of power must occur to accommodate the fissiparous tendencies in the Dominion (Canada, Task Force on Canadian Unity, 1979). Where possible, the existing division accommodates geography quite nicely. Where it seems to fail, as in energy or language questions, no airtight division of powers is possible.

What of the federal agenda itself? Will the coming decades be as regionally divisive as were the 1960s and 1970s? We cannot, of course,

**TABLE 3-19 Taxes**

	July 1959 <sup>a</sup>	January 1965 <sup>b</sup>	January 1975 <sup>b</sup>
Newfoundland	— (1.21)	0.99 (2.61)	-0.48 (-1.65)
P.E.I.	0.26 (1.21)	—	—
Nova Scotia	-0.11 (-0.34)	0.16 (0.64)	—
New Brunswick	1.45 (3.25)	0.71 (2.64)	0.17 (0.90)
Quebec	-0.35 (-2.22)	-0.02 (-0.12)	-0.08 (-0.49)
Manitoba	0.53 (2.33)	0.16 (0.71)	-0.51 (-2.45)
Saskatchewan	-0.09 (-0.40)	0.06 (0.27)	-0.36 (-1.68)
Alberta	-0.22 (-0.81)	0.16 (0.82)	-0.29 (-1.83)
B.C.	0.01 (0.07)	-0.59 (-3.23)	-0.25 (-1.82)
Catholic	—	—	0.13 (1.17)
English	—	-0.33 (-2.00)	-0.16 (-0.98)
“Other” language	—	-0.02 (-0.11)	-0.15 (-0.82)
High school	0.30 (2.37)	—	-0.04 (-0.45)
University	0.56 (2.81)	—	-0.52 (-3.84)
Union member	-0.04 (-0.27)	0.16 (1.43)	0.18 (1.97)
Farm	0.07 (0.46)	-0.32 (-2.01)	-0.20 (-1.46)
Intercept	-1.07 (-8.01)	0.16 (0.90)	0.65 (3.34)
$\hat{R}^2$	0.06	0.06	0.06
L.R.T. (df)	40.69 (12)	43.72 (12)	60.09 (14)
$N$	680	732	1,057
$\bar{Y}$	0.20	0.49	0.66

Source: CIPO.

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

a. 1959: 1 = favours more taxes.

b. 1965, 1975: 1 = taxes too high.

Items:

July 1959

If the time should come when the government's income cannot pay for all the things in the budget, which would you favour: cutting back on certain things or increasing taxes?

**TABLE 3-19 (cont'd)**

	Cutting back .....	1
	*Increasing taxes .....	2
	Other .....	3
	No opinion .....	4
January 1965	Do you think that present income taxes in Canada are too high or about right?	
	*Too high .....	1
	Too low .....	2
	About right .....	3
	No opinion .....	4
	Don't pay income tax .....	5
January 1975	Do you think that taxes are too high or about right?	
	*Too high .....	1
	About right .....	2
	Can't say .....	3

answer the question precisely as put. We can, however, survey the federal agenda and observe which parts of it are divisive, and which are not. Readers can then speculate which parts of the agenda are likely to dominate the immediate future.

Recent years have been dominated by those federal questions which I have called "contested powers". These are precisely the questions which most divide Canadians along geographic and parageographic lines. But if the next decade places before federal politicians questions that are exclusively within the federal portfolio, then regional disputes in national politics may well decline. Indeed, just such a tendency seems to have dominated the last few years. The decline of the economy has provoked a renewed emphasis on macroeconomic questions, on investment policy, and on trade policy. Very little in the way of geographic variation appears on the first two of these questions. Indeed, the inflation/unemployment trade-off evokes very little variation of any sort. Aversion to one or the other target is nearly unanimous: if unemployment is high, overwhelming majorities think unemployment is more important than inflation; when inflation is high, the reverse is true. Commercial policy may be a genuine sticking point, but the geographic differences in the Gallup data on tariffs suggest that support for free trade is strongest where dislocations from a movement toward free trade would be greatest. The Gallup data here are at odds however, with the Decima data in Chapter 5.

The dominance of the agenda by questions on which regional differences are small would not necessarily mean that the federal government would come to inspire more confidence than before. But even with doubts about Ottawa's ability to act, Canadians may still concede that no other organization has any more ability to take on the most important questions. Two cheers, from Ottawa's perspective, may still be better than none.

## **The Circulation of Groups and Provinces between Policy Coalitions**

Do groups and provinces in Canada play a kind of round-robin on policy, in which coalitions on each question crosscut coalitions on each other question? Or do they instead play for keeps, with no circulation between coalitions from one question to the next? Each description captures part of the truth.

Of the questions considered in this chapter, four evoke virtually no group or geographic polarization: inflation/unemployment aversion, wage and price controls, universality in pensions and the family allowance, and (most of the time) discipline in the schools. Not all Canadians agree on these issues, of course, but when they do disagree on them, the sides to the dispute exhibit no obvious social differentiation.

On each other issue, polarization of some sort is reasonably clear. Provinces and groups do, however, seem to move in and out of coalitions with one another. Consider the four largest provinces. Quebec is isolated twice, but neither time on questions at the heart of its interests. Quebec was the most anti-Commonwealth province in 1956 and the most anti-tariff in 1967. Otherwise, when it seemed to take sides, it found partners. The identity of the partners changed, although by no means in a random way. The Atlantic provinces lined up with Quebec four times, more or less as a group; once Newfoundland was a sole Atlantic partner for Quebec. Ontario joined Quebec three times. British Columbia and Saskatchewan each "allied" with Quebec once.

The two largest Western provinces tended to find allies only among their immediate neighbours. In the estimations offered in this chapter, Alberta was never isolated. The other Western provinces joined Alberta more or less as a group three times; the Atlantic provinces as a group did so once. British Columbia and Newfoundland each "allied" with Alberta once. British Columbia, like Quebec, was isolated twice. Also like Quebec, it was not isolated on questions central to collective interests of the province. It found support three times from the West as a whole region and once each from Alberta and Saskatchewan. Quebec also found its way once into British Columbia's camp (or vice versa).

Often, Ontario emerged as the critical "swing" province. Ontario was isolated once, over Commonwealth relations. Twice it was indistinguishable from the provinces to its east. But a fairly typical pattern saw Ontario positioned more or less equidistantly between blocs of potential allies.

The sharp non-geographic distinctions were typically along religious, linguistic and educational lines. Not surprisingly, religion and language travel together. On language questions, Roman Catholic anglophones tend to be relatively supportive of their francophone co-religionists.

Some might expect Irish Catholics, in particular, to be an especially francophobe group, as a legacy of struggles over language in separate schools.<sup>25</sup> In our data, we do see evidence of disgruntlement with official languages policy among those who normally speak neither official language, a group which is disproportionately Catholic. On balance, however, the poll data indicate that religious affinity overrides intra-denominational conflict in generating acceptance outside French Canada for the official languages agenda. French Canadians do not reciprocate, however, on an issue important to the Catholic clergy: abortion. Catholic laity are clearly less sympathetic to arguments for access to abortion than are non-Catholics. But this generalization is less true for Catholics in Quebec than for those elsewhere.

Education exerts leverage on many of the questions under analysis. Notable among these are Cold War issues, the tariff, capital punishment, immigration, energy, language, religious instruction in the schools, and taxation. University-educated respondents are relatively unsympathetic to free trade with, and to gas exports to, the United States. On the other hand, they are sympathetic to closer ties with Communist countries. At the same time, university-educated respondents are relatively supportive of the official languages agenda and of immigration. They are relatively unlikely to support religious instruction in the schools and capital punishment. This same highly educated group is relatively unlikely to see taxes as too high and is relatively willing to embrace the Crown energy corporation. It is difficult to see a single thread in all of this. One strand does seem to be a resistance to xenophobic appeals, except when they involve the United States. Another seems to be a greater-than-average willingness to countenance government intervention in the economy, particularly the intervention of the federal government. Two items in the preferences of university-educated respondents seem of particular importance. First, French Canada finds in the university-educated group another ally in English Canada. Secondly, Ottawa itself finds the same ally. Whatever the Canadian mass public thinks of the federal government or the anglophone mass public thinks of French Canada, articulate opinion in English Canada seems, on balance, relatively supportive of these two objects. That support may be a critical resource in the elite negotiations which dominate so much of Canadian politics. From that perspective, Alberta may be more isolated on energy questions than Quebec is on language questions, or than Ottawa is on any question.

The picture here is one of considerable mass-level circulation among policy coalitions. Some barriers to movement do exist, however, and some provinces and groups are especially favoured. First, there does appear to be a loose, but comprehensive, ethno-religious cleavage. The questions of language, religious schooling and, to a lesser extent, abortion evoke the same coalitions on each side of the dispute. Even here,



however, important qualifications must be made. Quebec residents, most of whom are at least nominally Catholic, tend to be more secularized than do Catholics elsewhere, active or fallen away. Secondly, Ontario, probably to no one's surprise, enjoys a tactically favourable location. Over the full range of issues, Ontario has defined a pole of debate only once: on Commonwealth relations in 1956. Otherwise, Ontario is indistinguishable from provinces to its east or finds itself part way between the blocs which do define the poles of debate. In contrast, while Alberta or British Columbia do not typically lack for allies, neither province is positioned to provide a swing vote on some key questions. Ontarians as a collectivity are usually the "median voters", in Downs' (1957) sense. Ontario's power in Confederation may thus derive from more than mere weight. It is a commonplace in the formal theory of coalitions that disproportionate power is enjoyed by groups who can provide the critical votes or resources which decide which coalitions win, and which lose (Riker and Ordeshook, 1973). From this perspective, Ontarians help themselves, not merely by being numerous, but also by thinking the right thoughts. Thirdly and finally, university-educated respondents are, most of the time, a useful group to have on one's side. And they do appear willing to take sides. In doing so, they add weight to the following interests: official language minorities, economic nationalists, internationalists of a non-economic sort, and the central government itself.

## **Recapitulation**

The following conclusions seem justified by this welter of evidence:

1. Over questions which are exclusively in Ottawa's jurisdiction, Canadians differ little from province to province. One major exception is Commonwealth relations; evidence for this exception comes from 1956, however, and the exception may or may not hold at present. The other major exception is the tariff. Some federal questions, too, evoke little non-geographic structure.

2. Issues which I have chosen to call "concurrent" evoke a fairly regionalized response. Immigration and divorce pick up geographic differences apart from the social make-up of each province. Abortion divides Catholics from non-Catholics, but this division imparts a geographic tone to the debate, as provinces differ greatly in their Catholic/non-Catholic composition. Attitudes on universality in pensions and the family allowance exhibit no interpretable social structure.

3. Issues which I call "contested", because of their centrality to recent federal/provincial conflict, display sharp differences among provinces. Medicare opinion seems structured almost exclusively by province of residence. Energy pits producer regions against consumer regions. Language pits Québécois against the West, but each side finds

plenty of allies. Language opinion is also tightly structured by language itself, by religious denomination, and by educational attainment.

4. Provincial powers evoke provincial differences, at least for the handful of questions available for analysis. The questions — relating to religious instruction in schools (not asked after 1961), discipline in schools, and the recreational and commercial use of Sunday — do not, however, represent fairly the universe of provincial politics.

5. Despite the criticism levelled at the division of powers under the Constitution Act, 1867, that division fares not badly in this analysis. Most exclusively federal powers do not evoke sharp regional differences. The exclusively provincial powers do evoke such differences, at least in our limited sample of items. Geographic differences are sharpest over certain concurrent powers. The great struggles over language and energy policy are not mere creations of overimaginative, jurisdiction-seeking politicians; they reflect real divisions, including geographic ones, in the mass public. The conflict would not, however, readily be resolved by turning the contested areas over the provinces. In language policy, for instance, the provinces themselves would continue to be crucibles for conflict. Conflict over Medicare and energy may be similarly inescapable. Energy, in particular, is fraught with externalities which spill over from province to province.

6. In the next few years, the federal government's own agenda need not be as laden with regional conflict as it has been in recent years. If the 1980s truly do signal a shift from energy and language questions to economic questions, over macroeconomic targets and instruments, or over investment, the federal government may no longer be quite the same focus for regional wrath that it used to be. In light of the intractability of some of these questions, however, groups defined other than by geography may well continue to harass that government.

7. Canada does, on balance, seem to be a place in which groups circulate fairly freely among policy coalitions. But ethno-cultural questions constitute one broadly defined domain in which the same coalitions tend to form and re-form, issue after issue. Even here, however, key swing groups appear: Ontario residents, and in each region, individuals with university educations. These last two groups may be critical to victory on several other issues as well.



# Macroeconomic Attitudes and Perceptions: *A Political Business Cycle?*

Are voters themselves to blame for the economic malaise which has undermined, at least by some measures, confidence in the federal government? An argument to this effect has gained ground in some academic and many journalistic circles. On this view, absent-minded voters and cynical politicians conspire to sell later generations short by willfully mismanaging the economy for short-term economic and political gains. The short-term economic gains to voters cannot mask the long-term deterioration in economic performance. The long-run economic decay feeds directly into a deepening popular cynicism about, and distrust of, government. But the voters themselves share much of the blame.

The vehemence with which some have made this argument masks a dearth of evidence. After a brief review of some pertinent literature, this chapter considers survey data which bear on the thesis. The account will start with popular preferences over the unemployment-inflation trade-off. Then will come evidence on voters' long-term economic memories. This leads to a consideration of how economic judgments and expectations are formed. Finally I shall offer some evidence on perceptions of and attitudes toward macroeconomic policy instruments.

While the data will not permit ironclad conclusions, they will suggest that Canadians are concerned about inflation at least as much as they are about unemployment. Canadians do not simply project their personal concerns onto the political economy, but instead respond as citizens. As citizens, however, Canadians have rather weak information about the future of their economy and hold, at best, rather soft opinions on specific instruments which might affect that future.

## A Political Business Cycle?

Chapter 2 established that such change as we can find in support for the federal government is, in large part, the result of stagflation. Unemployment seems to be the key to political decline, but inflation may also play a direct role. Such a relationship should not surprise us. Politicians have helped to politicize the macroeconomy, and voters have been perfectly reasonable in calling the politicians' bluff. But are voters themselves part of the problem? Do voters ask politicians to perform the technically difficult feat of reconciling low inflation and low unemployment? Are voters absent-minded enough to allow politicians to manipulate their perceptions of the economy, at least in the short run?

On one view of the economic policy cycle, the answer to each of these questions is yes. On this view, business cycles originate as much in deliberate political choices as in autonomous movements in consumption or private investment. The most systematic statement of this point of view is Nordhaus (1975). According to Nordhaus, electorates are always more averse to unemployment than to inflation. Electorates are also myopic in that they fail to see the inflationary consequences of full employment strategies, and in that they do not much care about the future anyway. Unemployment aversion and myopia combine to induce a governing party to drive down unemployment just before an election and to wait until after the election to clamp down on the price increases generated by the earlier excess demand. Governments can get away with this strategy because voters are not just myopic, but also forgetful. The long-run effect of this political business cycle is to drive the Phillips curve for the economy progressively farther away from the origin and, thus, to rob the economy of productive potential. Citizens ultimately pay the price of their absent-mindedness and greed.

The evidence Nordhaus actually produced was weak and merely suggestive. Unemployment declined immediately before elections in only three of the six countries he examined. Two of the three cases consistent with his dynamic prediction, Germany and the United States, have among the lowest average inflation rates in the industrialized world. Nordhaus' evidence was entirely of a macroeconomic quantity which was supposed to be the object of manipulation; no evidence appeared for the manipulatory instruments. Tufte (1978) provided a mixed bag of evidence for both targets and instruments. Some of his findings are persuasive; others are not.<sup>1</sup>

Polemic on both the left and right echoes the more technical work of Nordhaus and Tufte. From the right, Brittan (1977) argues that democracy is inherently inflationary, for reasons approximately like those in Nordhaus. A strikingly similar view can be found on the left. The most pointed analysis, that of O'Connor (1973), is not preoccupied with a political business cycle as such. O'Connor does, however, see social

spending and full-employment strategies as instruments for the legitimization of the capitalist social order. The legitimization exercise is rendered problematic by the needs of capital. The accumulation of capital requires postponement of consumption and by its very nature generates wide inequalities. The tension between the need to maintain a climate conducive to investment and capital accumulation, and the need to devote surplus to buying off discontent produces an economic dialectic which, even if it does not take precisely the form that Nordhaus predicts, nevertheless provokes a fiscal crisis. The crisis should move the legitimization-accumulation dialectic to a new synthesis. Brittan might say instead that at this critical point, liberal capitalist society explodes under its economic contradictions, but his very choice of terms indicates that he means much the same as O'Connor does. The difference between left and right in this dispute is not so much in analysis as in the moral evaluation of the outcome.

Before we conclude that the apocalypse is at hand, we must await further evidence. The evidence that has accumulated so far suggests that the particular form that Nordhaus and, to a lesser extent, Tufte impute to the political business cycle may not be the predominant one. Somewhat stronger evidence underpins an argument that political business cycles reflect not the electoral calendar, as Nordhaus argues, but the alternation in office of parties of the left and the right. The clientele of Social Democratic and Labour parties is more averse to unemployment than is the clientele of parties of the right. All social groups seem to dislike inflation; indeed, evidence presented later in this chapter suggests that aversion to inflation and unemployment may even be positively correlated. But the trade-off, at least in the short run, between the two macroeconomic targets forces voters and parties to choose in terms of their relative aversion to each problem. Parties of the left are more likely than parties of the right to reduce unemployment and are relatively willing to risk higher inflation. The opposite is true for parties of the right. Evidence for this view comes in two forms. First, Hibbs (1977) related inflation and unemployment rates for several OECD countries to the proportion of postwar years that Social Democratic or Labour parties have held office. In general, the larger the left-wing share, the lower the average postwar unemployment and the higher the inflation. Such static comparisons are open to rival interpretations, however.<sup>2</sup> Hibbs' stronger evidence came from analyses of British and American postwar unemployment time series. Hibbs concluded that the alternation of left and right parties produced, after some lag, significant differences in the macroeconomic indicator. Somewhat counterintuitively, the British difference was smaller than the American. Beck (1982) has produced rather smaller estimates than Hibbs for the party difference in America.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Hibbs' version of the political business cycle finds at least as much support as Nordhaus' version.

Hibbs' cycle, however, has very different implications for our understanding of the policy process. Parties, in Hibbs' view, are not merely cynical strategic manipulators. This is not to say that they are necessarily purely principled or ideological; the parties' calculations may well be made largely in terms of votes from their core clienteles. Still, the parties themselves, in this view, do stand for something. And parties on the right maintain a position which no party would dare maintain in the Nordhaus model: a consistent aversion to inflation. Neither general position, aversion to inflation or aversion to unemployment, entirely precludes countercyclical actions.

Still another view of parties was adumbrated by MacRae (1977) and tested further by Alt (1979). Here parties are seen as vote maximizers, but over an indefinitely long term. Parties act as if voters care about what happens to their economy over the long term and are prepared to reward or punish parties accordingly. Parties responding to such a vote motive would not produce a business cycle tied to the electoral cycle at all. As often as not, in MacRae's and Alt's tests, the longer-term model prevails. The shift, in the late 1970s, of both the Callaghan Labour government and the Carter Democratic administration to tight-money postures may exemplify such an orientation.

A final view worth canvassing originates with Mosley (1976; 1978) and might be described as a political science version of bastard Keynesianism. Here governments "satisfice": they act against whichever indicator is drawing the most adverse public attention. If some indicator, be it unemployment, inflation, the balance of payments, or the cost of borrowing, exceeds some threshold, then action is concerted to bring the indicator back within the band of acceptability. Thereupon, attention shifts to whichever other indicator threatens to exceed its threshold. Economic theory might not always dictate dealing with precisely the indicator which attracts the most attention, but this version of crisis management does have a rough and ready countercyclical quality. Again, *contra* Nordhaus, unemployment is not the only indicator which earns politicians' pre-election attention.

In fact, none of these models can claim overwhelming empirical support. The rivals to Nordhaus' electorally induced cycle often perform as patchily as does his original formulation. The evidence adduced to test the theories is commonly of targets rather than of instruments. Almost never does information appear about what voters actually perceive and want.

Much of the pertinent evidence was not collected with the business-cycle literature in mind.<sup>4</sup> The evidence is, in any case, equivocal. Analysis of electoral time series yields support for simple retrospective models of reward and punishment.<sup>5</sup> Other analyses, however, suggest that voters do not simply reward and punish, but respond to the general inflation unemployment postures of parties, *à la* Hibbs (Stigler, 1973;

Hibbs, 1979, 1982); that abstention by the economically distressed nullifies macroeconomic effects on elections (Arcelsus and Meltzer, 1975; Rosenstone, 1982); that voters punish governments for economic distress, but fail to reward them for good times (Bloom and Price, 1975); and that macroeconomic effects may not be as simple as any of the foregoing analysis implies, but may instead require considerable time for their full impact to unfold (Monroe, 1981). The most concerted survey-based studies of economic factors in the American vote yield mixed results, but lean toward Hibbs' model of voters with relatively fixed preferences, rather than to a retrospective reward-and-punishment view (Fiorina, 1981; Kiewiet, 1983).<sup>6</sup>

The one study which explicitly attempts to estimate parameters in a full model of a cycle is that of Golden and Poterba (1980). Golden and Poterba found, as have others, that voters do respond to the macroeconomy. But the "price" of government popularity, that is, the magnitude of changes in targets necessary to produce a given increment in popularity, proved to be exorbitant. Even more telling was their attempt to estimate electoral-cycle reaction functions for macroeconomic targets and instruments. No electoral cycle effects on either targets or instruments appeared.

What little evidence exists for Canada is almost maximally contradictory. A time-series analysis of Gallup hypothetical elections data suggests that Canadians are, if anything, perverse: the worse the economy becomes, the larger the share of vote intentions the government receives (Erickson and Monroe, 1984).<sup>7</sup> The New Democratic Party (NDP), unlike left-wing parties elsewhere, benefits from good times, not bad times. The one analysis based on panel data from surveys suggested that Canadians mix retrospective judgments, particularly about unemployment, with anticipatory ones; the evidence for this conclusion was weak, however (Johnston, 1983). A time-series cross-section analysis of post-war elections supports a simple retrospective model for Canadian elections, with a particular emphasis on movements in after-tax income (Happy, 1984). The electoral cycle, meanwhile, seems to give little purchase on Canadian governments' fiscal and monetary choices (Foot, 1977; Bothwell, Drummond, and English, 1981).

Each of the models demands attention to at least four areas of public opinion. The first and most obvious question pertains to unemployment and inflation aversion. Are Canadians more averse to unemployment than to inflation as Nordhaus seems to require? Or do Canadians divide along class lines in a more or less stable manner as Hibbs leads us to expect? Or do Canadians tack between aversions according to the times as Mosley predicts? We have some preliminary evidence from Chapter 3 that this last image is probably the most appropriate. The second question asks how long Canadians' memories are. Nordhaus and Mosley assume that voters have short memories. Hibbs' class-based model



assumes the opposite. The third question bears on voters' myopia: Do voters forecast the likely long-run effects of current macroeconomic choices? Nordhaus says no; Alt and, in spite of himself, MacRae say yes. The fourth question is ignored by most of the students of the political business cycle, but should be raised if only, ultimately, to be dismissed: Have voters attitudes about specific policy instruments? Could it even be that voters are averse to the use of the very instruments necessary for the realization of their own preferences over macroeconomic targets? Credit conditions and the deficit are two instruments which come readily to mind here. The rest of this chapter will consider each of these major questions in turn.

## **Inflation versus Unemployment**

In this section, I shall tap Canadians' relative aversion to unemployment and inflation in several ways. The simplest will be to look at response to questions about the most important problem facing the country. Akin to this will be response to the few questions which give respondents some sense of an inflation/unemployment trade-off. Then the relationship between quarterly fluctuation in inflation and unemployment emphases and quarterly fluctuation in inflation and unemployment themselves will give further evidence on the balance of aversion. Next, I shall look at the role of each macroeconomic indicator in the formation of respondents' judgments on their own, and on the nation's, economic well-being. Finally, I shall review evidence, from Chapter 2, on the relative power of inflation and unemployment in driving approval of, or confidence in, government. Canadians will come out of these analytic contortions as more sensitive, in the short run, to unemployment than to inflation, but with an underlying permanent bias against inflation.

Tables 4-1 and 4-2 give information from the Gallup poll and from the *Decima Quarterly Report*, respectively. Each source tells much the same story. The Gallup data hint that the politicization of the macroeconomy postdates the early 1960s.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, we have only one early-1960s observation, and this can be taken only as a hint. Otherwise, the message in each data set is one of great fluctuation in emphasis. Note that Gallup lumps "inflation" together with other "economic" problems. The left column of Table 4-1 is thus of little use. But the right column is relatively pure and shows clearly the volatility of the unemployment emphasis. The volatility in each emphasis burns through the *Decima* data with special clarity. In the space of 16 quarters, the inflation emphasis spans a range of some 27 percentage points. Over the same period, the unemployment emphasis spans some 40 points. The speed of the shift from an inflation emphasis to an unemployment emphasis is startling.



**TABLE 4-1 Most Important Problem**

Date	CIPO	% Economic Inflation (1)	% Unemployment (2)	(1) & (2)	(N)
Jan. 1961	286		24.2	24.2	(604)
Aug. 1964	308	17.9	38.5	56.4	(597)
Oct. 1965	314	15.5	21.7	37.2	(1,126)
Sept. 1972	355	38.4	35.7	74.1	(708)
Sept. 1973	361	53.6	7.8	61.4	(741)
Mar. 1974	364	60.0	8.1	68.1	(1,027)
Oct. 1974	369	84.0	2.9	86.9	(986)
July 1975	378	53.9	14.1	68.0	(1,009)
Oct. 1975	381	65.4	8.3	73.7	(1,017)
Apr. 1976	387	56.0	11.7	67.7	(1,048)
Sept. 1976	392	53.0	9.4	62.4	(1,020)
Mar. 1977	398	45.3	18.3	63.6	(998)
Jan. 1977	401	42.3	28.8	71.1	(997)
Sept. 1978	416	48.0	30.3	78.3	(1,002)
Apr. 1979	423A	51.6	28.2	79.8	(998)
Nov. 1981	455.4	64.5	11.7	76.2	(959)
June 1982	462	55.9	26.7	82.6	(1,017)
Dec. 1982	468.1	44.8	39.5	84.3	(1,024)

Source: CIPO.

Item: What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?

**TABLE 4-2 Most Important Problem Facing Canada**

Quarter	% Inflation (1)	% Unemployment (2)	(1) & (2)
1.80	26	10	48
2.80	24	12	49
3.80	26	14	53
4.80	26	11	49
1.81	28	14	57
2.81	36	9	63
3.81	34	8	73
4.81	23	12	70
1.82	21	23	72
2.82	20	27	79
3.82	17	40	79
4.82	12	46	73
1.83	11	48	70
2.83	10	49	73
3.83	10	47	66
4.83	9	43	61
16-quarter average	21	26	65

Source: Decima Quarterly Report.

Note: N = 1,500.

Item: In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing Canada today — in other words, the one that concerns you personally the most?

Not all observers are convinced that issue-emphasis items truly measure aversion to one or the other target (Fischer and Huizinga, 1982). Table 4-3 records response to questions which seem more clearly to tap attitudes to the trade-off. As in the earlier data, emphases shift. It is true that unemployment is the greater concern in eight of the 10 surveys, but pointed questions about the trade-off are themselves much more likely to be asked in times of high or rising unemployment than in times of serious inflation. The two surveys which do indicate greater concern about inflation are the only two which fall in double-digit inflationary periods. The flux in Table 4-3 encourages me to treat the "important problem" measures in Tables 4-1 and 4-2 as proxies for an aversion measure.

Table 4-4 uses Decima data to explore the sources of inflation and unemployment emphases. Each equation regresses the inflation-unemployment emphasis on the unemployment and inflation rates for the quarter in which the survey question was put. The autoregressive specification allows for the possibility of lagged effects from earlier fluctuation in the indicators. As it happens, history matters little here: the autoregression coefficients ( $\rho$ ) are never significant. More will be made of this in the next section. Here, the crucial elements are the intercept for the equation and the coefficients for each macroeconomic target. The equations carry a double message. The intercepts indicate a permanent underlying bias against inflation. The implication of equation (1), for instance, is that at zero inflation and zero unemployment, about 26 percent of a Decima sample would claim that inflation is the most important problem. Equation (2) indicates, in contrast, that the unemployment surface lies much closer to the axis of zero emphasis. Equation (3) puts the inflation and unemployment emphases together in a simple way. Here the dependent variable is the difference between the percentage saying that inflation is most important and the percentage saying that unemployment is most important. At zero inflation and zero unemployment, the inflation emphasis has a 34-point advantage. At zero inflation, the unemployment rate would have to rise to 4 percent for unemployment to gain as frequent mention as inflation. As point estimates of the sensitivity of the inflation-unemployment emphasis in the low-inflation/low-unemployment range, these numbers should be taken with a grain of salt. They do, however, bespeak a standing aversion to inflation relative to unemployment.

In contrast, the slope coefficients in Table 4-4 indicate that unemployment shifts produce more sudden short-term change of emphasis than do inflation shifts. This conclusion follows not so much from the comparison of the inflation and unemployment coefficients themselves (something of an apples and oranges comparison) as from the robustness of each estimate: the unemployment coefficient is very impressively stable. Thus, even though the whole system seems tilted toward inflation

TABLE 4-3 Inflation versus Unemployment

Date	Study	Priority			
		Inflation (1)	Both/ No Opinion (2)	Unemployment (3)	(1)/(3) (N)
Jan. 1971	CIPO 345	21.7%	33.7	44.6	0.49 (710)
Mar. 1975	CIPO 374	57.9%	7.2	34.9	1.66 (1,058)
Dec. 1976	CIPO 394	42.4%	9.4	48.2	0.88 (1,053)
1979	QOL	36.1%	42.5	21.4	1.69 (1,436)
Feb. 1982	CIPO 458	42.5%	8.8	48.8	0.87 (1,048)
Spring 1982	Decima	33.2%	8.2	58.1	0.57 (1,495)
June 1982	CIPO 462.1	38.6%	4.8	56.6	0.68 (1,048)
Summer 1982	Decima	35.1%	4.5	58.3	0.60 (1,495)
Sept. 1982	CIPO 465.4	42.7%	5.7	51.6	0.83 (1,047)
Jan. 1983	CIPO 469.1	32.3%	7.2	60.5	0.53 (1,055)

Sources: CIPO; *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Items: (1) CIPO 345 (January 1971): If the government of Canada had a choice between: (a) slowing down the rate of price increases, creating more unemployment

(b) reducing unemployment in Canada, but causing prices to rise as fast or even faster than at present, which of the two do you think the government ought to choose?

(2) Other CIPO studies: Which do you think the government should give greater attention to: trying to curb inflation or trying to reduce unemployment?

(3) Quality of Life: In your opinion, which is the more serious problem: inflation, or unemployment? (Not clear whether "both equally serious" is a voluntary response only.)

(4) Decima: Many people say that government cannot fight inflation and unemployment at the same time. Which do you think should be the first priority of the federal government's economic policy: fighting inflation or creating jobs? ("Both" is a voluntary response.)

**TABLE 4-4 Macroeconomic Sources of Information  
and Unemployment Aversion**

Independent Variable	% Inflation Most Important (1)	% Unemployment Most Important (2)	% Inflation – % Unemployment (3)
U	– 2.19 (– 4.36)	5.44 (6.75)	– 6.69 (– 7.06)
$\dot{P}$	1.57 (3.77)	– 1.93 (– 2.88)	3.48 (3.83)
Constant	26.24 (3.30)	– 7.11 (– 0.56)	34.04 (1.97)
$\rho$	0.17 (0.69)	0.18 (0.72)	0.14 (0.58)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.90	0.93	0.94
D-W	1.71	1.44	1.48

*Note:* Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.  $N = 16$ .

*Items:* % Inflation and % Unemployment: see Table 4-2.

U and  $\dot{P}$ : see Table 2-20.

aversion, growth in unemployment can produce more dramatic shifts toward unemployment aversion than growth in inflation produces in inflation aversion. The other side of the coin, however, is that concern about unemployment can evaporate more quickly than can concern about inflation.<sup>9</sup>

Now consider what unemployment and inflation do to evaluations of other situations or things. Table 4-5 gives estimates for effects on personal and national economic well-being.<sup>10</sup> Personal economic prospects respond to unemployment and inflation about equally, although each (but especially unemployment) seems to be a carrier for effects from real after-tax income. Neither unemployment nor inflation does much work in driving assessments of national economic performance; that assessment is overwhelmingly under the control of after-tax income. But the inflation coefficient creeps closer to significance than does the unemployment coefficient. Finally, recall the pattern, in Chapter 2, of inflation and unemployment effects on government approval or confidence. The Gallup-poll data gave strong priority to unemployment in driving approval of the prime minister. The Decima data also gave priority to unemployment, but only just. Inflation also had a significant effect on quarterly movements in confidence in the federal government.<sup>11</sup>

Where does this leave us? The public seems highly volatile in its aversions. Some evidence suggests that these aversions are more responsive to variation in unemployment than to variation in inflation. But there is also ample evidence for their responsiveness to inflation itself. And the whole system seems tilted against inflation. The data do

**TABLE 4-5 Macroeconomic Sources of Personal and National Economic Perceptions**

Independent Variable	Personal Prospects (N = 15)			National Economy (N = 16)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)
U	-0.51 (-2.70)	-0.50 (-1.84)	0.11 (0.35)	-0.03 (-0.88)	-0.02 (-0.64)	0.02 (0.69)
$\dot{P}$	-0.43 (-2.73)	-0.43 (-2.55)	-0.29 (-1.47)	-0.04 (-1.33)	-0.04 (-1.29)	-0.04 (-1.46)
$\Delta RPI$	—	0.02 (0.08)	—	—	0.01 (0.59)	—
$\Delta RPD I$	—	—	0.39 (1.82)	—	—	0.05 (2.34)
Constant	7.81 (2.62)	7.55 (2.05)	0.02 (0.005)	2.47 (5.45)	2.40 (4.99)	1.93 (4.35)
$\rho$	0.35 (1.44)	0.36 (1.51)	0.67 (3.47)	0.82 (5.78)	0.81 (5.58)	0.88 (7.51)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.66	0.66	0.71	0.74	0.75	0.82
D-W	1.88	1.88	1.57	1.76	1.70	1.24

Note: Entries in parentheses are t-statistics.

Items: Personal Prospects: see Table 2-22.

National Economy: see Table 2-23.

U, and  $\dot{P}$ ,  $\Delta RPI$  and  $\Delta RPD I$ : see Table 2-20.

not square with Nordhaus; Canadians do not exhibit a standing bias against unemployment. Similarly, the volatility of sentiment is not consistent with Hibbs' (1977) emphasis on relatively fixed, class-related aversions.<sup>12</sup> Instead, the data suggest a satisficing model, as in Mosley. In their attitudes to unemployment and to inflation as targets, Canadians are an economist's version of *le bourgeois gentilhomme*: Keynesians without realizing it.

## Memories of Economic Events

The usual assertion in the political business-cycle literature is that citizens' economic memories are short. This, of course, is a core assumption for Nordhaus. Empirical work seems to confirm the assumption, however, in its emphasis on instantaneous effects and on change variables with 12-month maximum periods. But some work in this field presupposes longer memories. Hibbs' work on class differences in demand for economic outcomes makes such an assumption. And memories of parties' characteristic biases on the inflation/unemployment trade-off must be fairly long if voters choose among parties according to those biases rather than in simple reward-and-punishment terms (Kiewiet, 1983).

The measurement strategy here is to refer to the autoregressive structure in those of my time-series estimations which used macroeconomic indicators. The estimations include those in Tables 2-20 and 2-21, with Gallup approval ratings and Decima confidence ratings respectively, and in Tables 4-4 and 4-5. The key indicator is the coefficient,  $\rho$ , which gives the amount of autocorrelation in the series. The larger the value of  $\rho$ , the more lagged effect there is in the series.  $\rho$  itself indicates the effect of one observation on the next. The effect on observations still later in the series can be discerned by taking  $\rho$  to appropriately higher powers.

The longest memories seem to be in the Decima “national economy” series and in the Gallup approval series. In the Decima series, the  $\rho$  is well over 0.80. In quarterly data, a coefficient of this magnitude indicates that even after two years, effects from an initial economic shock will still be discernible. Similarly, the Gallup data hint that economic effects will still be felt on prime ministerial approval after more than two years. The Gallup estimate is especially fragile, however. The average interval between the Gallup observations is 16 months, and the estimate of  $\rho$  is between 0.55 and 0.60. However, the actual spacing between Gallup observations is uneven; most of these observations are fairly closely bunched, but large gaps yawn between the bunches.

In any case, other time-series estimations suggest shorter memories. The Decima “personal prospects” series has a rather weaker lag structure than does its “national economy” counterpart. The Decima quarterly confidence series, in sharp contrast to its Gallup analogy, has no autoregressive structure at all. Essentially, the same is true for the Decima quarterly “most important problem” series. In the last two series, all effects are instantaneous, although some indicators (inflation and change in personal income) themselves embody data spanning 12 months. Especially striking is the speed with which emphasis shifts between inflation and unemployment.

The evidence, as usual, is mixed. Respondents seem not to remember what last quarter’s problem was when asked what this quarter’s problem is. History plays a similarly small role in driving short-term confidence ratings. But longer-term approval ratings and respondents’ sense of how the national economy is performing may reflect the past, at least two years of it.<sup>13</sup>

## **Economic Perceptions and Expectations**

How myopic are voters? Short-sightedness is critical to Nordhaus’ version of events. Long-sightedness is characteristic of parties and, presumably, of voters in Alt’s and MacRae’s versions. But evidence on the matter is hard to come by. Indeed, some of the material I shall present here is probably of dubious relevance to the larger theme, however compelling it may be in its own right.

I shall approach the matter on two fronts. First I shall consider the personal basis of national economic judgments. An ability to transcend the personal seems to me to be a necessary, although not a sufficient, condition for voters to worry about the future of the national economy. The second approach will be to look at the fragmentary data on respondents' actual expectations for the future. Respondents, it will appear, do transcend their personal circumstances. Without the anchor of personal experience, however, respondents do not seem to know how to proceed.

Much of the work on economics and politics assumes that only personal experience matters. Voters are deemed to be either unable or unwilling to go beyond their immediate economic circumstances. But at least some observers give primacy to collective, as opposed to individual, judgments (Kinder and Kiewiet, 1979; 1981). Other observers suspect that voters do not, in the main, regard it as proper to demand that the state solve their personal difficulties (Sniderman and Brody, 1977; Brody and Sniderman, 1977). Feldman (1982) has explored circumstances which help or hinder projection of the personal on the national. He argues that relatively few respondents are really in a position to make such a projection; those who are in such a position, however, do make the projection.

My first piece of evidence, from the *Decima Quarterly Report*, appears in Table 4-6. The table gives the percentage of respondents, within levels of response to the question about personal economic prospects, who say that the performance of the national economy is poor. Clearly, part of the shift in collective judgments reflects shifts in personal circumstances. Over the series, those who claim that their personal situation has worsened are about twenty-five points more likely than those whose situations have improved to say that the national economy is performing poorly. Meanwhile the proportion reporting a decline in personal prospects grows from the beginning of the series to a peak in the summer of 1982 and then shrinks to late 1983. But the shift in personal reports hardly scratches the surface of change in collective judgments. If one took the national ratings along the row for, say, summer 1980 and multiplied them by the personal-prospects proportions for summer 1982, one would account for only four points of the 44 percentage-point rating difference between the two quarters. Most of the change comes *within* personal condition categories. Readings on the national economy typically transcend personal circumstances, however much personal and national fortunes move together.

Now consider the reported impact of inflation on respondents' personal situations. Decima asked several questions in this domain in the high-inflation second quarter of 1981. For reasons of space, I shall confine myself to a brief discussion of the major findings; no tables will be given. Only minorities in each income group reported having to adjust their lives partially or totally to inflation, and those respondents who reported having to adjust were weak on the specifics of adjustment.

**TABLE 4-6 “Egocentric” and “Sociotropic” Judgment  
on Economic Performance**

		Personal Prospects							
		Worse		Same		Better		Total	
Quarter		(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
Spring	1980	22	(36)	31	(518)	16	(334)	20	(1,500)
Summer	1980	32	(565)	16	(283)	12	(624)	21	(1,500)
Fall	1980	30	(541)	14	(268)	15	(672)	20	(1,500)
Winter	1980	36	(654)	20	(300)	16	(526)	26	(1,500)
Spring	1981	34	(602)	16	(278)	13	(596)	22	(1,500)
Summer	1981	40	(612)	24	(276)	16	(594)	28	(1,500)
Fall	1981	54	(787)	32	(273)	24	(427)	41	(1,500)
Winter	1981	56	(806)	39	(250)	37	(434)	47	(1,500)
Spring	1982	59	(891)	42	(206)	39	(399)	51	(1,500)
Summer	1982	73	(915)	54	(227)	54	(347)	66	(1,500)
Fall	1982	64	(842)	39	(239)	39	(412)	53	(1,500)
Winter	1982	65	(851)	44	(254)	40	(390)	55	(1,500)
Spring	1983	58	(760)	39	(260)	34	(473)	47	(1,500)
Summer	1983	46	(656)	27	(280)	25	(557)	35	(1,500)
Fall	1983	42	(605)	27	(285)	22	(602)	31	(1,500)
Winter	1983	41	(641)	24	(260)	22	(593)	30	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage “poor” judgment on Canadian economy.

Items: Personal Prospects: see Table 2-22.

National Economy: see Table 2-23.

Lower-income groups were more likely than higher-income groups to report adjustment. A large majority claimed not to have stalled purchases in the previous six months, and a similarly large minority claimed not to expect to have to stall a purchase in the coming six months. Again, the majorities were smaller in lower- than in higher-income groups. The higher a respondent’s six-month/inflation expectation, the more likely he or she is to expect to stall a purchase. In one sense, such a relationship suggests irrationality. It may, however, indicate either an uncertainty engendered by expected inflation increases or an expectation of being rationed out of the market. Whether irrationality, uncertainty, or rationing is the key process, the impact of inflationary expectations falls disproportionately on lower-income respondents. Even lower-income respondents, however, do not seem to be in a collective panic. Although they are more pessimistic than higher-income respondents about the price level itself and about its effects, most lower-income respondents do not actually report past or expected personal effects from inflation.<sup>14</sup>

What, then, of unemployment? Refer to Table 4-7. Concern over personal or household unemployment, in contrast to expectations for collective unemployment, is often scrutinized by Decima, and many respondents report such concern. Even in the relatively low-unemploy-



**TABLE 4-7 Concern Over Personal/Household Unemployment**

Quarter		Not Concerned At All	Not Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned
Fall	1980	34%	20	19	26
Spring	1982	22%	14	24	39
Summer	1982	17%	15	25	42
Fall	1982	23%	16	25	34
Winter	1982	23%	14	23	39
Spring	1983	24%	16	22	37
Summer	1983	23%	18	25	34
Fall	1983	23%	16	23	38
Winter	1983	25%	14	22	38

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Item: How concerned are you that either you or the main income earner in your household is, or might become, unemployed? Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?

ment third quarter of 1980, nearly half the sample reports being very or somewhat concerned. In the later recession quarters, 60 to 70 percent of the sample claims such concern. The concern persists into the recovery quarters of 1983; but then, so did double-digit unemployment. Regional and income differences appear, but they are not very strong. The dominant impression left by the personal-concern data is of a macroeconomic phenomenon whose flow touches many more people than the stock measure of unemployment in a given month suggests. The cumulative cycling of individuals through unemployment experience and the spread of concern beyond those immediately unemployed may be at work in these data.

Concern for unemployment in the household *is* related to the percentage of respondents giving unemployment as the most important national problem. This is the message of Table 4-8. But the other message of Table 4-8 should be familiar by now: most of the variation is between quarters within each level of concern. As unemployment mounts, so does the percentage of respondents who say that unemployment is the biggest problem, even among those not at all concerned for their person or their household. Conversely, when unemployment is not the dominant concern, as in fall 1980, even those respondents who are very much concerned personally about unemployment typically offer something else (usually inflation) as the biggest problem. Unemployment, then, represents a pervasive personal fear even when inflation is the apparently more pressing national policy problem.<sup>15</sup> Personal unemployment concern does seem to translate into a macroeconomic policy priority. But this translation from personal to collective problem is swamped by across-the-board movements to and from unemployment as the biggest national problem.

**TABLE 4-8 Concern Over Personal/Household Unemployment and Problem Perceived as Most Important**

		Concern Over Personal/Household Unemployment			
Quarter		Not At All (%)	Not Very (%)	Somewhat (%)	Very (%)
Fall	1980	9 (420)	12 (281)	12 (281)	24 (384)
Spring	1982	15 (325)	20 (213)	20 (364)	29 (588)
Summer	1982	18 (256)	19 (225)	30 (277)	31 (626)
Fall	1982	34 (352)	32 (239)	43 (381)	46 (503)
Winter	1982	39 (349)	40 (211)	44 (346)	54 (578)
Spring	1983	41 (364)	43 (236)	48 (333)	54 (548)
Summer	1983	40 (338)	42 (277)	48 (369)	59 (508)
Fall	1983	34 (342)	41 (235)	46 (342)	58 (576)
Winter	1983	36 (373)	37 (217)	46 (329)	48 (567)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage saying unemployment is most important problem.

Item: See Tables 4-2 and 4-7.

If voters detach their collective judgments from their personal experiences, what do expectations for inflation and unemployment look like? According to Table 4-9, inflationary expectations move with the actual inflation rate. The peak for expectation of further increases in the rate of inflation (not in the cost of living, but in inflation) is in the second quarter of 1981. The lowest inflationary expectations were reported in the first quarter of 1983. Note, however, that the percentage expecting inflation to increase is never small, and it is usually larger than the percentage expecting inflation to decrease.

We cannot, unfortunately, track movement in unemployment expectations as the unemployment question was asked in only three closely spaced quarters. The three unemployment readings exhibit more evenly balanced expectations than we found for inflation. Do respondents grasp the idea of unemployment more readily than they do the idea of inflation? Or do respondents understand inflation more or less correctly, yet reflect a latter-day conventional wisdom of pessimism about the phenomenon? Could it be that each of these questions asked too much of the sample?

We can begin to get some purchase on these questions by examining how inflation and unemployment expectations behave in different edu-

**TABLE 4-9 Expectations for Inflation and Unemployment**

Quarter	(A) Inflation in 6 Months		(B) Unemployment in 6 Months	
	% Lower	% Higher	% Lower	% Higher
Summer 1981	14	75	—	—
Winter 1981	15	73	—	—
Summer 1982	16	77	—	—
Fall 1982	42	48	—	—
Winter 1982	39	49	—	—
Spring 1983	45	36	42	45
Summer 1983	41	39	—	—
Fall 1983	29	47	34	52
Winter 1983	26	54	41	45

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Item: (A) Inflation Expectation: Over the past year, the rate of inflation in Canada has been running at  $xx.x$  percent. Do you think that in six months the inflation rate will be higher or lower than it is now?

(B) Unemployment Expectation: Over the next six months, do you think that the number of people who are unemployed will be higher or lower than it is now?

cation groups. The presumption here is that education helps to sharpen perceptions of the macroeconomy. The pertinent evidence appears in Table 4-10. Panel A gives two readings of the effect of education on inflation expectations. The first reading is for the peak-inflation second quarter of 1981. The second is for the recession-struck first quarter of 1983. To the extent that high-inflation expectations rest on a misapprehension, higher education should produce lower forecasts. At the same time, however, an expectation of higher inflation is more reasonable when inflation is truly rampant than when the economy is failing. If this expectation holds, the effect of education should be weaker in summer 1981 than in spring 1983. In each of these quarters, inflation expectations do go down as education goes up. And, as predicted, the education difference is greater in 1983 than 1981. But the 1981–83 difference is weak and probably not worth making much of, in contrast to the clear and consistent main effect of education. Even that main effect, however, is not colossal: the maximum difference between the educational extremes is 16 points. Even university-educated respondents tend to expect inflation to worsen.

Now consider the effect of education on unemployment expectations. Education differences appear here as well. The spring 1983 education difference is smaller for unemployment than for inflation, as we might expect. But the inflation/unemployment contrast is not great and will carry little interpretive weight.

We might feel better about mass perception of the macroeconomy if

**TABLE 4-10 Education and Macroeconomic Expectations**

		Education Level		
		Elementary	Secondary	Post-Secondary
<b>(A) Inflation in Six Months</b>				
(% expecting higher inflation)				
Summer	1981	82 (208)	76 (791)	72 (491)
Spring	1983	48 (142)	37 (846)	32 (500)
<b>(B) Unemployment in Six Months</b>				
(% expecting higher unemployment)				
Spring	1983	51 (142)	46 (846)	40 (500)
<b>(C) Inflation Expectation by Unemployment Expectation</b>				
(% expecting higher unemployment)				
Inflation lower		30 (54)	31 (379)	31 (241)
Inflation about the same		34 (19)	34 (138)	35 (87)
Inflation higher		72 (68)	71 (313)	57 (158)
		0.036	0.336	0.202

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: See Table 4-9.

popular expectations for unemployment and inflation reflected the short-run trade-off between those quantities. Again, educational attainment may sharpen any perception of a trade-off. Panel C of Table 4-10 suggests, however, that no such trade-off is perceived by the mass public; rather, expectations for unemployment and inflation are correlated with each other not negatively, but positively. The positivity of the association does decline with education. And the education difference comes from those who think that inflation will be higher: university-educated respondents who think that inflation will be higher are much less likely than either high-school or primary-school respondents to think that unemployment will also be higher.

Table 4-10 thus gives us a decidedly mixed picture. Some of the response must indicate simple misapprehension either of the economic situation or of the meaning of inflation. So, at least, the education controls seem to say. But the effect of education is not particularly great. At the 1981-83 extremes, the balance of opinion among university-educated respondents is on the same side as among primary-school respondents and, although university respondents exhibit a less positive association between inflation and unemployment expectations, the association is positive nonetheless. Running through the data seems to be a general optimism/pessimism factor, on which most respondents find themselves toward the pessimistic end.<sup>16</sup>

**TABLE 4-11 Inflation Expectations and Concern with Inflation**

Quarter	Six Months Inflation Expectation		
	Lower (%)	Same (%)	Higher (%)
Summer 1981	32 (212)	31 (147)	37 (1,131)
Winter 1981	25 (228)	18 (185)	23 (252)
Summer 1982	21 (237)	21 (92)	20 (1,154)
Fall 1982	16 (633)	14 (141)	18 (714)
Winter 1982	9 (578)	11 (176)	15 (739)
Spring 1983	10 (682)	9 (245)	11 (541)
Fall 1983	10 (434)	8 (332)	11 (711)
Winter 1983	7 (383)	8 (283)	10 (817)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage saying inflation is most important problem.

Item: See Tables 4-2 and 4-9.

**TABLE 4-12 Inflation Expectations and Concern with Unemployment**

Quarter	Six-Month Unemployment Expectation		
	Lower (%)	Same (%)	Higher (%)
Spring 1983	51 (626)	41 (195)	46 (670)
Fall 1983	50 (517)	45 (200)	46 (773)
Winter 1983	42 (608)	40 (207)	45 (681)

It may not matter quite what is at work in generating pessimism or optimism in macroeconomic expectations, however. For both unemployment and inflation, expectations bear no relationship to the perceived importance of either target. Table 4-11 establishes this for inflation expectations. In each quarter the distribution of concern over inflation is rectangularly distributed across expectation levels. Instead, inflation concern moves up and down between quarters across the board. The same is true for the relationship between unemployment expectations and unemployment concern as far as we can tell from the three quarters recorded in Table 4-12.

If these data are to be believed, they do suggest that the mass public is

myopic, as Nordhaus and others assume. Expectations seem routinely pessimistic, but exert no force on policy emphases: if the inflation rate is currently high, then regardless of what one thinks inflation will do in the future, one is likely to want the government to deal with inflation now; if the unemployment rate is currently high, then that indicator should be the one attacked. But the myopia does not embrace a systematic bias against unemployment. Rather, it leads, as we have seen, to satisficing choices between inflation and unemployment, as hypothesized by Mosley.

## **Attitudes to Policy Instruments**

Are Canadians as Keynesian in their view of macroeconomic instruments as they seem to be in their view of targets? Here the territory is largely uncharted. Many fewer questions are asked about instruments than about targets. The few that are asked about instruments are often awkward or slightly off the “real” question as I see it. Still, the Decima file covers some of the obvious areas, and it can be supplemented from time to time by other sources. The discussion here will emphasize fiscal instruments and controls for various markets. I shall begin, however, with a word on monetary policy.

“Interest rates” crop up from time to time as a major problem in the Decima open-ended questions. But when interest rates are quoted as a problem by some respondents, even more respondents register distress at a major consequence of high interest rates: unemployment. No Canadian survey firm has asked directly about the money supply in relation to the exchange rate, even though the exchange rate does sometimes appear as a problem in open-ended response. The only direct Decima question remotely within the area relates to controls on credit, about which more will be said below.

Fiscal policy does get some attention from Decima in the guise of questions about the national deficit. Three times over 1982 and 1983, Decima asked a general question about the effect of deficit reduction on the performance of the national economy. The national sample response appears in Table 4-13. The modal response is “Help somewhat”, followed by “Help a great deal.” Altogether, some 60 percent of the sample believe that reducing the deficit will help the national economy to a greater or lesser degree. Only in fall 1982 are there regional differences worth mentioning. In that quarter, Quebec is the only province in which more than 10 percent of the sample say that reducing the deficit will hurt a great deal. British Columbia and Quebec are the only provinces in which more than 20 percent believe that reducing the deficit will hurt at least somewhat. But everywhere at least 60 percent believe that reducing the deficit is a good thing. Regional differences are trivial in the other two quarters as are differences between income quintiles in all three quarters.

**TABLE 4-13 Attitudes to the Deficit, by Quarter**

Quarter		Help a Great Deal	Help Somewhat	No Difference	Hurt Somewhat	Hurt a Great Deal	(N)
Fall	1982	22%	46	13	11	9	(1,415)
Spring	1983	19%	44	18	14	6	(1,426)
Fall	1983	21%	41	13	17	7	(1,434)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Item:* There has been a lot of discussion about government deficits, the fact that governments spend more money than they collect in taxes. Some people say that governments must reduce their deficits in order to get the economy growing again. Other people say that in tough economic times, governments should stimulate the economy even if it means having large deficits. Do you think it would help the economy a great deal, help it somewhat, not make any difference, hurt it somewhat, or hurt it a great deal if deficits were reduced?

We do not know, of course, precisely what theory about the deficit is at work in Canadians' minds. Is the concern with the crowding out of borrowers from capital markets, with the general climate for investment, or with transfers from later generations to the present one? I suspect, rather, that Canadians simply draw an analogy to budgeting in households. Here the projection is not egoistic, but is simply a generalization of a folk maxim of prudence.

Whatever the precise psychology is, political appeals to confront the deficit may resonate quite deeply in the mass public. Counter-evidence to this proposition will appear in Chapter 6, below. When respondents are asked whether the deficit should be reduced by tax increases or by service cuts, the majority favour service cuts. But when specific service cuts are proposed, respondents typically oppose them. The strongest opposition was often reserved for the largest spending programs. Should we conclude, on balance, that the majority support for reducing the deficit is more apparent than real? As I have argued already, the data do not really authorize such a conclusion any more than they authorize the opposite conclusion. At least one government in Canada, that of British Columbia, has gambled that anti-deficit sentiment is a political force to be reckoned with. We cannot yet conclude that their political gamble will fail.

Other potential instruments for macroeconomic management receive very patchy coverage. A program which does receive attention is Unemployment Insurance. Even if many respondents in high-unemployment periods name unemployment itself as the biggest problem, respondents may also suspect that some of the unemployment is created by the very instruments designed to cope with it. Decima asked about eligibility for and benefits from unemployment insurance in the third quarters of 1981, 1982 and 1983. Table 4-14 gives some details. In each quarter, clear majorities agree that eligibility should be tightened. The margin shrinks from the relatively low-unemployment third quarter of 1981 to the high-unemployment third quarters of 1982 and 1983, but it is never narrow.

**TABLE 4-14 Unemployment Insurance: Eligibility and Benefits**

Quarter	(A) Eligibility Attitude		
	Loosen	No Opinion	Tighten
Fall 1981	20%	14	66
Fall 1982	29%	15	56
Fall 1983	34%	11	55

Quarter	(B) Benefits Attitude		
	Increase	No Opinion	Decrease
Fall 1981	59%	24	17
Fall 1982	67%	24	9
Fall 1983	66%	20	14

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Items: (A) Eligibility: In [month], xxx thousand Canadians were out of work. xxx thousand of these were able to and did collect unemployment insurance benefits. Do you think the eligibility requirements should be loosened up so that more people who are out of work could collect such benefits, or do you feel the requirements should be tightened up to reduce the number of people who could collect such benefits?

(B) Benefits: The average Canadian collecting unemployment benefits receives about \$xxx a week. Do you think this amount should be increased or decreased?

The Prairie provinces and Ontario are typically the most conservative regions, while British Columbia and Quebec are the least conservative. Response in the last two provinces may reflect the cyclical and seasonal quality of each province's resource economy.

Attitudes to benefits diverge from attitudes to eligibility. Majorities always favour increasing the benefit. Opinion here is even more one-sided than is opinion on eligibility. Do respondents who favour increased benefits set tightened eligibility as a condition? One could argue that such a position is intellectually consistent and might reveal an especially deep concern with unemployment among heads of households. In fact, no such reasoning controls response to the two questions. Table 4-15 indicates, instead, that response is moved by a general disposition for or against unemployment insurance as such. Those who favour tightening eligibility are less, not more, likely to favour increasing the program's benefits. Opinion on increasing benefits is so one-sidedly positive, however, that a small majority favours an increase even among those who want eligibility tightened.

One other aspect of unemployment-related policy appears in the Decima file. In the first quarter of 1982 and 1983, respondents were asked if they favoured direct government hiring of the unemployed or assistance to private companies; overwhelming majorities favoured assistance to private companies. Table 4-16 breaks down the two quarters' response by income quintiles, the background variable which gives



**TABLE 4-15 The Relationship Between Opinion on UI Eligibility and Benefits**

Attitude on Eligibility	Attitude on Benefit			(N)
	Increase	No Opinion	Decrease	
Loosen	83%	13	4	(1,244)
No Opinion	56%	40	4	(610)
Tighten	57%	23	20	(2,646)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: See Table 4-12.

**TABLE 4-16 Direct Employment versus Subsidized Private Employment, by Income Quintile**

Income Quintile	Preferred Method		(N)
	Direct Hiring	Subsidies to Private Employees	
First (bottom)	29%	66	(563)
Second	18%	78	(561)
Third (middle)	21%	73	(606)
Fourth	17%	77	(576)
Fifth (top)	11%	83	(549)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report* (Spring 1982 and Spring 1983).

Item: If the government decided to spend more on creating jobs, how do you think they should do it? Should the government hire people directly itself, or should the government give money to private companies to encourage them to hire new people?

the most purchase on this policy. The lowest quintile is two to three times as likely as the highest quintile to favour direct government hiring. But even in the lowest quintile, support for private employment outnumbers that for public employment by over two to one.

The final instruments to consider are controls. In general, controls command widespread support, although more for some markets than for others. Decima asked questions about controls in three markets: capital, commodities (specifically, food) and labour. These questions were put in the high-inflation second quarter of 1981. Other sources will supplement Decima's data on wage and price controls.

Controls on credit received mixed reviews. Nationally, a small majority favoured credit limits. Not every region yielded such a majority, but whichever side had the edge in a region had it by a narrow margin. The four lowest quintiles narrowly favoured credit limits, while the highest quintile strongly opposed the limits. Decima were not very specific, however, about quite what was meant by "credit limits." Response may well have reflected a generalized fear of credit as a snare for the unwary.

Food-price controls received overwhelming support in each region and income group. The majorities were 6:3 in British Columbia, in the

**TABLE 4-17 Approval of "Wage and Price" Controls, 1979**

<b>Feelings About Controls</b>	<b>Union Membership</b>		<b>Total (%)</b>
	<b>Member (%)</b>	<b>Non-Member (%)</b>	
Positive	22.4	32.5	30.1
Positive, with qualifications	30.9	20.9	23.2
Neutrals	11.0	11.1	11.0
Negative, with qualifications	6.5	4.9	5.2
Negative	29.3	30.7	30.3
(N)	(246)	(822)	(1,068)

*Source:* National Election Study, 1979.

*Item:* How do you feel about wage and price controls? (Codes derived from open-ended response.)

Prairie provinces, and in Ontario; 8:1 in Quebec; and 75:20 in the Atlantic provinces. Support goes from about 3:1 in the lowest- to 5:4 in the highest-income group. Respondents were then asked to name the particular food sector to which controls should be applied. Fifty percent of the respondents named supermarkets, 30 percent named processors, and 13 percent named farmers.

The strength and the pattern of sentiment concerning food-price control may stand as a parable for attitudes to controls in general. Food-price increases are particularly visible. They seem to strike at the very means of human survival and may force the most frequent adjustments, even if nominal incomes usually more than catch up eventually. The overwhelming support for food-price controls may thus say more about the salience of food than about the specific appeal of controls. This interpretation is supported, I think, by the sectoral pattern of support for food-price controls. Administrators and economists may recoil at the prospect of regulating supermarket pricing, but the supermarket is the most immediate venue where consumers can register their response to food-price increases. Other possible sources cannot be reached directly by the consumer. The consumer may then assume that the same is true for official regulators. The folk wisdom about the "middleman" may also be at work in these data.

What, then, of wage controls? Gallup-poll readings in the 1970s seemed to indicate considerable support for controls; support seemed to wane in the 1980s.<sup>17</sup> Nearly 55 percent of the sample approve wage and price controls, while 35 percent disapprove. Disapproval is more intense than approval, however. On the disapproval side, the union/non-union difference is negligible. On the approval side, proportionally as many union members approve as do non-members, but union members are more diffident in their approval. There is a problem with all of this, of course. The question asks for feelings about wage *and* price controls. We

**TABLE 4-18 General Emphases in Controls**

Quarter		Price of Goods	Wages	Corporation Profits	Other/ No Opinion
Winter	1980	34%	20	35	11
Summer	1981	28%	13	49	10
Spring	1982	29%	15	37	19

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Item: If the federal government were to move to control inflation by introducing wage and price controls, what would you like to see them concentrate on . . . the price of goods, the wages of workers, or the profits of corporations?

have seen already that price controls, at least for food, receive overwhelming support. Conceivably, much of what appears to be support for wage and price controls is really support only for the price component.

This suspicion is reinforced by the *Decima* data in Table 4-18. The table does not, of course, give the preference rankings for individuals; all we have is the aggregate distribution of first preferences. The plurality first preference is always for controls on profits. Prices always come second as an object of control, and wages always come last.

Can we draw any general conclusions about popular feelings toward macroeconomic policy instruments? Coverage of opinion here is much less complete than for feelings about, and perceptions of, macroeconomic targets. Two patterns do burn through the data on instruments, however. First, respondents do not want controls on themselves, but the external things that respondents do want controlled are relatively visible. The food sector is the one for which controls gain almost universal support. This is true even in high-income groups, who presumably spend the smallest proportions of their family budgets on food. Within the food sector, the rank order of objects of control is a direct function of proximity to the consumer: retailers, processors and farmers. When the question is put in terms of priority across the economy as a whole, profits outrank prices and wages. Profits are not really "visible" in the same sense that food prices are, of course, but they are part of a popular demonology.

The second pattern emerges from the fragmentary data on fiscal policy. Most respondents accept the view that the national deficit is a bad thing, and that reducing it would help the Canadian economy, notwithstanding the generally slack demand in that economy. Such contrary sentiment as exists appears most frequently in Quebec and British Columbia, the two provinces which experienced the greatest social upheaval over attempts to reduce provincial deficits. It is not clear exactly what respondents have in mind when they accept the view that deficit reduction is "a good thing". Nevertheless, attitudes to this most basic fiscal instrument do sit uneasily with attitudes to the mac-

roeconomic targets at which that instrument is usually pointed. On targets, Canadians are, as I have argued above, unconscious Keynesians: their preferred target shifts as the macroeconomy shifts. On instruments, however, Canadians seem decidedly pre-Keynesian: few feel comfortable with a large peacetime deficit, even if that deficit is mostly the product of automatic stabilizers. On a Keynesian view of fiscal policy, Canadians are unwilling to grasp the instruments necessary to reduce the unemployment about which they are so often concerned. This divergence between two aversions, one to unemployment and the other to deficits, may be a factor in our political malaise. If this is so, however, it would represent ironic comment on the political business-cycle literature.

## **Recapitulation**

On macroeconomic matters, the following conclusions seem warranted:

1. On balance, the now-classic formulation of the political business cycle finds little support in Canadian attitudinal data. Canadians are not systematically more averse to unemployment than to inflation; if anything, the opposite is true. Over time, aversion shifts back and forth sharply, according to whichever of inflation or unemployment yields the worse reading. So far, Mosley's "satisficing" model seems most apt.

2. Canadians may or may not have lengthy economic memories. Their priorities shift quickly and seem unaffected by contrary evidence even from the quarter immediately before the priority question is posed. By some estimations, however, the effect of the economy on political support is not so fickle. Events early in a parliament's sitting could conceivably still tell in the balance on its dissolution. The evidence here is exceedingly weak, however. If Canadians are basically fickle, they are so in ways which, again, favour Mosley over Nordhaus.

3. Canadians are not willfully myopic. Their views on national policy are not simple projections from their personal or household fortunes. Precisely how the national estimations are formed remains a mystery, however. Expectations for inflation and unemployment, while somewhat responsive to events, are typically more pessimistic than those events seem to warrant. This is especially so for inflation. Again, this pessimism about inflation seems inconsistent with Nordhaus.

4. Canadians seem to have a pre-Keynesian view of fiscal policy, in contrast to their somewhat Keynesian preoccupation with macroeconomic targets. Data on other policy instruments seem very soft. But I suspect that Canadians' own attitudes on most of those instruments are equally so; a possible exception may be represented by the deficit. Rather, Canadians, like citizens of most democracies, are preoccupied with economic results, with ends more than with means.



# Microeconomic Attitudes and Perceptions: *Personal Insecurity and Mercantilist Policies*

## Introduction

Do voters demand that governments use mercantilist policies to try to stabilize or increase employment in particular sectors, even if such policies reduce the incomes of the average Canadian, and even if the policies might underpin the stagflation which figures so prominently in attitudes to the federal government? Again, do voters will the very economic malaise which besets them?

Here, in contrast to Chapter 4, the answer to these questions may be a highly qualified yes. Canadians are deeply preoccupied with job and income security, partly because most feel committed to the work they do at present. Canadians seem to fear the impact of new technology on employment prospects and on work itself. They are sceptical of any positive effect from technological change on the price or quality of goods. But fears for the workplace seem unrelated to feelings about unions and collective bargaining. Unions are held in low esteem, but not for any obvious reasons related to work or the labour market. Governments, rather than unions, appear to be Canadians' chosen instruments to deal with occupational fears. Although free-trade oriented response can be induced by survey questions, Canadians seem, on balance, highly protectionist. This is so even for regions with a great stake in trade liberalization. Canadians seem similarly uneasy about immigration. Foreign investment is not popular, but Canadians seem prepared to accept it if they believe that jobs will be created thereby. Finally, Canadians seem reconciled to the existing level of government ownership in the economy. Some want more, some want less, but the decisive preference seems to be the *status quo*.

The stagflation which bedevils both governments and private citizens may have its origins not just in commodity supply shocks or in fiscal or monetary mismanagement, but also in the microstructure of the domestic economy. The most influential recent statement of this thesis appears in Olson (1982). In Olson's account, producer groups demand special protective legislation. Protection may be immediate to the group, consisting in restrictions on the supply of labour or on the introduction of new technology in the sector. It may be less immediate, in the form of tariffs or quotas on the import of certain commodities. Whatever its precise form, the protection shields the group at the expense of those outside it. Other groups, however, make their own demands on the system. Satisfaction of the new demands may remedy some inequities in the original legislation, but some groups never receive protective legislation, and the round robin of specific demands leaves everybody worse off than before.<sup>1</sup> Employment is encouraged in low-productivity sectors, and the economy is hindered in its response to technological change and to international economic pressures. Barriers to adjustment make possible the coexistence of the high unemployment and high inflation with which this chapter began.

The Olson thesis is suggestive, but to this point lacks much of an empirical base. The scraps of evidence in Olson's original 1982 volume admit of alternative interpretations. The empirical volume (Mueller, 1983) inspired by Olson's original thesis is a mixed bag of supportive and unsupportive evidence. Lacking in each volume is evidence concerning what citizens actually think about some of the key issues. This chapter presents fragments of evidence on some of the critical parts of Olson's thesis.

I begin with respondents' immediate jobs and incomes and then work outward, through attitudes on unions and labour markets, to policies which governments might be expected to adopt. First comes evidence on feelings about income as compared to job security. Does an apparent concern for job security represent a real commitment to the job presently held, or is it only a disguised concern for income security? Circumstantial evidence on this question comes from feelings about work and the work-place. Technological change holds both promise and threat: How, on balance do Canadians feel about it? Do unions promote or hinder the realization of workers' goals? How much are attitudes to unions tied to an analysis of their role in the labour market, and how much to general symbolic predispositions or to feelings about the high-growth area for the labour movement, that is, about public employees? Should governments maintain or adopt protectionist commercial policies such as tariffs or quotas? Do protectionist sentiments at the national level extend to economic relations between provinces? Are feelings about investment like those about trade? One view sees foreign investment as not increasing, but rather reducing, the employment potential of the Canadian

**TABLE 5-1 Higher Salary or Job Security by Income, Winter 1982**

Salary/Security	Income Quintile					Total
	First (lowest) (%)	Second (%)	Third (%)	Fourth (%)	Fifth (highest) (%)	
Higher salary	10	12	11	14	26	15
No opinion (voluntary)	2	2	1	1	1	1
More job security	88	86	89	85	73	84
N	(345)	(230)	(223)	(311)	(305)	(1,415)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: If you had a choice between a higher salary or greater job security, which would you choose?

economy. How do survey respondents react? Again, are citizens or companies in other provinces deemed “foreign” when it comes to capital movements? Has immigration an influence on the supply of labour? Finally, do citizens want less or more public ownership in the economy? Do opinions vary by economic sector?

### Income and Employment Risk

A staple assumption of analyses of risk preference is that economic actors are risk averse. Opinions may differ on how precisely to represent this assumption, and some disconfirmatory evidence exists,<sup>2</sup> but the assumption continues to dominate the literature. The Decima data in Table 5-1 seem broadly consistent with the dominance of risk aversion. The table relates to income the preference between a higher salary, on the one hand, and greater job security, on the other. Income groups differ significantly in their preferences, but in each group the preference of the overwhelming majority is for greater job security. The income differences in risk preference are the most significant. Significant but weak differences also appear by gender, education and union membership. Women are more risk averse than men, but the percentage difference in job-security preference is only eight points. More highly educated respondents are less risk averse than less well-educated ones; this difference may be a disguised income effect. Union families are more risk averse than non-union families, but the difference is slight. No differences appear among regions and age groups or between households with children and households without children. The overwhelming fact, then, is a concern for job security.

Variations on this theme appear elsewhere in the Decima data. In the spring and summer of 1982, the income-security trade-off was queried in a collective bargaining framework. Response to this question appears

**TABLE 5-2 Acceptability of a Wage Freeze for Job Security  
by Union Membership**

Union/ Non-Union	Willingness to Accept Wage Freeze					(N)
	Very Willing	Somewhat Willing	No Opinion (voluntary)	Somewhat Unwilling	Very Unwilling	
<b>Spring 1982</b>						
Union Family	27%	42	5	13	13	(567)
Non-Union Family	36%	39	5	11	8	(928)
Total	33%	40	5	12	10	(1,496)
<b>Summer 1982</b>						
Union Family	25%	49	3	16	8	(580)
Non-Union Family	33%	46	4	10	7	(911)
Total	30%	47	3	12	7	(1,491)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Item:* As you may know, some unions in the United States, for example in the auto industry, have reached agreements with their companies to accept wage freezes and benefit reductions in exchange for greater job security. Would you be very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling, or very unwilling to accept wage freezes and benefit reductions in exchange for greater job security?

against union membership in Table 5-2. Respondents were asked whether they would be willing to accept wage freezes and benefit reductions in return for greater job security. Overwhelming majorities displayed such a willingness, although the modal response was the lukewarm "Somewhat willing." Differences here are, if anything, even slighter than in the more general question in Table 5-1. In contrast to the general risk-preference item, income groups differ not at all on willingness to accept a freeze. The only difference worth mentioning is the one in the table itself: union families are less willing than non-union families to accept a wage freeze and benefit reduction. Even so, the difference is small, and the vast majority of union families would accept such a freeze.

Work sharing and voluntary short time are variants on this theme, explored in Table 5-3. Again, union membership seems to be the most pertinent control. As it happens, no union/non-union differences appear in response to either work sharing or voluntary short time. Nearly three respondents in four are highly or somewhat favourable to work sharing as a method of providing employment. This work-sharing question is pitched at an uncomfortably high level of generality, however. Respondents may favour work sharing, but only for others. The second part of Table 5-3 poses a question with more immediate purchase on respondents' work situations. Here respondents are asked if they themselves would be willing to work shorter hours for commensurately less pay. The example given is for a reduction from 40 to 32 hours of work per week. Response here directly mirrors that to the more general question: about one respondent in three is willing to take shorter hours to provide more



**TABLE 5-3 Work Saving and Voluntary Short Time, Summer 1983**

	Union Membership		Total (%)
	Union Member (%)	Non-Member (%)	
<b>(A) Work Sharing</b>			
Very favourable	22	21	21
Somewhat favourable	50	53	53
Somewhat unfavourable	17	15	16
Very unfavourable	11	10	10
<b>(B) Shorter Work Week</b>			
Very willing	22	23	23
Somewhat willing	50	48	48
Somewhat unwilling	18	15	15
Very unwilling	10	13	13
(N)	(254)	(1,244)	(1,498)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Items: (A) "One type of change in the work place which people are talking about is "work sharing" — that is, where two or more people are employed part-time to do one job. Would you say your impression of this method is very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable?"

(B) "Another type of change in the work place being talked about is the idea of having a shorter work week. That is, instead of working and being paid for 40 hours a week, people would work and be paid for 32 hours a week. Would you be very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling, or very unwilling to work fewer hours and be paid less, if it meant that there would be more jobs for Canadians?"

jobs. Neither question evokes differences between union and non-union respondents; other differences in response were similarly trivial.

Response to these questions is clear and consistent. Respondents value security pre-eminently and are willing to sacrifice income to guarantee employment for themselves and others. The general preference for job security over higher income is mirrored in more specific questions about collective bargaining and the labour market.

## **Risk Preference and the Quality of Work**

The first section leaves a major question hanging: are respondents who avow a concern over job security saying that they want to continue to hold their particular job, or are they saying that they simply want a more stable income, for which any job will do? The policy implications of the difference are enormous. If citizens are psychologically committed to their particular jobs, then economic adjustment in response to technological change or to international market forces will be doubly painful. Not only will incomes be threatened, at least temporarily, but so will occupational ways of life. Response in the first section, however, may only *appear* to be about job security because the risk-averse response

happens to be couched in such terms. If the response is a disguised statement about the income that derives from work rather than about the work itself, then individuals may be willing to bear the occupational dislocation that comes with economic adjustment as long as, by some means, their incomes are kept whole.

The existing literature on the sociology of work generates mixed expectations. In one view, whatever pre-industrial work was like, industrial and post-industrial forms of work are becoming progressively more trivial and less inherently attractive (Braverman, 1974). In these circumstances, leisure becomes a critical compensation for work. Leisure itself can be seen as something to be managed, just as work is. Alternatively, leisure, in emancipating individuals from work, the domain of necessity, may be a pre-condition for full participation in the new *polis*, the domain of freedom (Marcuse, 1964). Work itself, however, remains an oppressive necessity, although it becomes less necessary as time passes.

Not everyone agrees that work, even in industrial settings, is inherently or increasingly obnoxious. As Andrew puts it:

Job-holding (regardless of the objective usefulness of the job held) confers a sense of citizenship in the wider economy, of identity, of participation in common purpose, of service or doing something useful for others, of public recognition of worth in the form of money, and, occasionally, of challenge or accomplishment (Andrew, 1981, p. 178).

The importance of work to Canadians is reflected in Table 5-4. In five quarters, Decima asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that income was more important than type of work. Mean scores on the 10-point agree/disagree scale appear for each income quintile in each quarter. In each quarter and income group, work dominates income, as indicated by the negative mean scores. The modal category of response is almost always the extremely pro-work one. The extent of this domination varies across income levels and over time. Lower-income groups always yield more agreement than higher-income groups with the emphasis on money. This seems entirely reasonable in light of the kind of work actually done for low wages and of the typically decreasing marginal utility of money. In light of the cross-sectional pattern, however, the variation over time is surprising. We might have expected agreement with the money emphasis to increase as the economy worsened. Instead, the opposite happens. The two quarters in which emphasis on intrinsic attributes of the job is greatest are winter 1982 and summer 1983. Variations aside, the main story in Table 5-4 remains one of great emphasis on the job itself, apart from the income it generates.

Table 5-5 relates this work/income emphasis to the choice between higher income and job security. The connection is possible in only one quarter: winter 1982. The evidence embodies an irony, but only a small

**TABLE 5-4 Work as Compared to Money by Income Quintile**

		Income Quintile					Total
Quarter		First (lowest)	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth (highest)	
Spring	1980	-0.23 (258)	-0.81 (258)	-0.66 (255)	-0.95 (379)	-1.21 (241)	-0.78 (1,391)
Fall	1980	-0.85 (254)	-0.45 (234)	-1.00 (260)	-1.14 (387)	-1.67 (280)	-1.05 (1,421)
Spring	1981	-0.84 (208)	-0.38 (219)	-0.61 (241)	-0.77 (396)	-0.98 (352)	-0.75 (1,416)
Winter	1982	-0.64 (345)	-0.97 (230)	-1.23 (223)	-1.31 (311)	-1.54 (305)	-1.13 (1,415)
Summer	1983	-0.77 (326)	-1.32 (241)	-1.32 (217)	-1.58 (306)	-1.73 (347)	-1.35 (1,437)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale.

Item: Now, I'm going to read you a list of statements various people have made. I'd like you to tell me how you personally feel about each statement by giving me a number between plus or minus 5, where +5 means you totally agree with the statement and -5 means you totally disagree with the statement. Many people's opinions fall somewhere between these two points depending on how they feel about the statement. The first statement is. . . . The amount of money I receive for the work I do is more important to me than the type of work I do.

**TABLE 5-5 Work as Compared to Money by Income as Compared to Job Security, Winter 1982**

Salary as Compared to Security		
Higher Salary	No Opinion (voluntary)	Job Security
-1.30 (216)	-1.04 (23)	-1.14 (1,261)

$$\chi^2 = 32.62; p < 0.05$$

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on work versus money scale.

Items: See Tables 5-1 and 5-4.

one. Those who choose higher income over job security are *more*, not less, likely to reject the money emphasis. This is perfectly consistent, of course, with the effect of income on response to these two questions. We know, from Table 5-1, that lower-income groups are more risk averse than higher-income groups. We also know, from Table 5-4, that lower-income groups are more likely than higher-income groups to emphasize the income from the job. The suggestion, then, is that some of the *differences* in concern over job security really represent differences in concern over the stability of the incomes that flow from those jobs. But to emphasize the differences would be to miss the larger story: any way

**TABLE 5-6 Importance of Pride in Job by Income Quintiles, Summer 1983**

Income Quintile					
First (lowest)	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth (highest)	Total
4.27 (123)	4.34 (153)	4.54 (133)	4.21 (225)	4.52 (288)	4.38 (921)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale.

Item: (Preamble) . . . It's very important to me to be able to take pride in what I do in my job.

the data are cut, they tell a story of considerable psychological investment by individuals in the kind of work they do.

Table 5-6 gives the final bit of evidence about the importance of work. Respondents yield nearly unanimous agreement with the statement emphasizing pride in work. Virtually every respondent gives the maximum-agreement response to this item. One could argue that the item evokes an especially acute social desirability bias. Even if some of the response is deliberately misleading, however, the direction of the socially desirable response is worth noting. The direction suggests an absence of cynicism about work.<sup>3</sup>

Individuals may still not like the particular jobs they hold at present. Recall the argument that the work actually on offer in industrial capitalism is not rewarding in itself. However much respondents value work, they may still be frustrated with the particular work they do. Evidence in the existing literature is somewhat contradictory. Accounts of objective skill requirements have emphasized changes rather than levels. Evidence on the changes is a matter of contention: Kerr, Dunlop, and Myers (1960) argue for a long-term upgrading, Braverman (1974) for a downgrading, and Horowitz and Herrenstadt (1966) for little net change. A recent systematic study of the American occupational structure does suggest a slight upgrading of average skill requirements between roughly 1967 and 1979 (Spenner, 1979). Survey evidence on feelings about existing work is similarly mixed. In American surveys, for example, very high proportions report that they are satisfied with their work. But O'Toole and his collaborators<sup>4</sup> argue that this response indicates not so much great satisfaction as an absence of deep dissatisfaction. They note that most American workers would not voluntarily choose their present work again, and that only one in 20 non-professional workers would use the extra two hours of a 26-hour day for work.

Canadian data seem more positive, but the evidence remains mixed. The first batch is from the *Decima Quarterly Report*. Table 5-7 indicates generally great satisfaction with the present job. The first three parts of the table give response to a question about challenges presented each

**TABLE 5-7 Appeal of Present Job by Income Quintiles**

		Income Quintile					
Quarter		First (lowest)	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth (highest)	Total
(A) Job Provides Challenges							
Summer	1981	2.18 (402)	2.34 (246)	2.30 (199)	2.65 (295)	3.04 (237)	2.48 (1,380)
Spring	1982	2.01 (350)	1.85 (213)	1.60 (223)	2.16 (315)	2.52 (327)	2.07 (1,429)
Summer	1983	1.16 (326)	1.70 (241)	1.56 (217)	1.73 (305)	2.50 (347)	1.76 (1,437)
(B) Look Forward to Work							
Winter	1982	2.29 (345)	2.37 (230)	2.73 (223)	2.76 (311)	2.77 (305)	2.58 (1,415)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale.

Items: (A) (Preamble) . . . My job provides me with new and interesting challenges every day.

(B) (Preamble) . . . I look forward to going to work and doing my job every day.

day by the job. Considering the almost embarrassingly up-beat wording of the question, the magnitude of agreement is startling. On a scale of -5.0 to +5.0, the mean response is always about +2.0. The modal response is always the maximum-agreement one. Response does vary across income levels, to be sure. Lower-income respondents always express less fervour about the challenge of work than do higher-income groups, but even the lowest-income quintile is, on balance, strongly positive. The fourth part of the table records response, also within income groups, to a question about looking forward to going to work. Opinion here is even more positive, and income differences are even less robust than with the sense of challenge in the job.

The evidence does not, however, clearly authorize the conclusion that Canadians are deeply committed to the particular job they presently hold. One can enjoy one's job and still be prepared to move to a similar job at another location or to a job that is similarly challenging. Here the data are conflicting. Two Decima questions give some hint of a potential for mobility that is nevertheless consistent with commitment to work as such. Each question appears in Table 5-8. The first asks how important the people on the job are, as compared to how important the work itself is. Agreement with an emphasis on people may indicate a certain unwillingness to move from a personally congenial setting. Whatever it indicates, such agreement is not the prevalent response. In each income group, a majority rejects the emphasis on people, although the rejection is rather more one-sided in the upper- than in the lower-income groups. More telling is reaction to a question about the extent to which the job taps the respondent's potential. Opinion on this is divided in the sample

**TABLE 5-8 Other Aspects of Present Job by Income, Summer 1983**

	Income Quintile					Total
	First (lowest)	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth (highest)	
<b>(A) People Over Job Type</b>	-0.09	-0.17	-0.57	-0.65	-1.06	-0.61
<b>(B) Job Doesn't Top Potential</b>	0.94	0.10	0.13	-0.11	-0.70	-0.09
	(123)	(153)	(133)	(225)	(288)	(921)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale.

Items: (A) (Preamble) . . . I really don't care that much what I do; it's the people I work with that matter most to me.

(B) (Preamble) . . . My job doesn't really allow me to use all my skills and abilities to their potential.

as a whole and varies greatly with income. The two highest quintiles reject, on balance, the proposition that the job does not tap their potential. The lower-income groups accept the proposition and do so more strongly the further down the income ladder they find themselves. In each quintile, response is centred much more around the midpoint than is response to the other "disagree" items in the domain. For all the commitment to work in general and to the particular jobs that individuals presently hold, dissatisfaction with existing occupational arrangements does exist.

The 1977 Quality of Life survey plumbed job satisfaction with particular acuteness. Table 5-9 gives the percentage agreeing with statements about the job within manual and non-manual groups. Satisfaction seems to prevail in response to most of the statements, including those which tap most directly the intrinsic worth of work. Most Canadians agree that the work they do is interesting, develops skills, is recognized for its worth, and makes a social contribution. A large majority also agree that they have considerable freedom to carry on their work as they see fit. In each of these domains, manual/non-manual distinctions are small. The widest occupational difference is over interference with one's personal life. Surprisingly, fewer non-manual than manual employees report such interference; this may indicate less psychological compartmentalization between work and personal life in the non-manual group. Each occupational group is internally divided about its members' chances of getting ahead and about their ability to influence superiors.

Another critical item in the evaluation of work appears in Table 5-10. About three respondents in four claim that they can control the pace of their work. Control of time on the job is, for some, the very central question in the politics of work. Thompson (1967) argued that getting erstwhile peasants to accept the discipline of factory work was the most difficult task for early capitalists. Even now, one suspects that the

**TABLE 5-9 Agreement with Job Statements by Occupation**

	Occupation			Total (%)
	Non-Manual (%)	Manual (%)	Other (%)	
The people you work with are competent and helpful.	93.3 (939)	92.1 (441)	92.3 (271)	92.8 (1,651)
The pay is good.	82.9 (947)	80.5 (451)	70.9 (285)	80.3 (1,683)
The physical surroundings are pleasant.	86.4 (952)	74.1 (449)	86.8 (287)	83.2 (1,688)
The work is interesting.	91.1 (953)	82.7 (450)	84.7 (287)	87.7 (1,690)
The job security is good.	83.0 (944)	73.6 (446)	74.6 (280)	79.1 (1,670)
The chances for getting ahead are good.	61.0 (934)	52.4 (441)	53.0 (279)	57.4 (1,654)
There is an opportunity to develop your skills and abilities.	80.8 (951)	68.6 (446)	62.5 (283)	74.5 (1,680)
Your supervisor is good at his/her job.	88.9 (821)	87.1 (378)	89.8 (205)	88.5 (1,404)
The job does not interfere with your personal life and leisure activities.	70.4 (953)	66.5 (451)	69.9 (283)	69.3 (1,687)
There is the recognition you deserve for your work.	83.4 (941)	74.1 (440)	77.2 (280)	79.9 (1,661)
You can influence important decisions that are made by your supervisor.	72.7 (847)	62.6 (385)	55.6 (207)	67.5 (1,439)
There is a great deal of freedom to decide how to do your work.	86.3 (944)	76.7 (446)	82.4 (283)	83.1 (1,673)
The work you do makes a real contribution to other people.	92.2 (943)	91.1 (447)	91.2 (284)	91.8 (1,674)

Source: Quality of Life, 1977.

Note: Entry is percentage who say "very true" or "somewhat true."

resistance of some employers to unionization derives less from fear of union wage scales (which they often match) than from fear of loss of control over the shop floor. Most Canadian workers believe they do retain control, although this perception may operate within fairly narrow margins of discretion.

**TABLE 5-10 Ability to Control Pace of Work by Occupation**

<b>Control?</b>	<b>Occupation</b>			<b>Total (%)</b>
	<b>Non-Manual (%)</b>	<b>Manual (%)</b>	<b>Other (%)</b>	
Yes	77.2	74.6	74.6	76.1
No	22.8 (949)	25.4 (448)	25.4 (287)	23.9 (1,684)

*Source:* Quality of Life, 1977.

*Item:* Can you determine the pace at which you do most of your work?

**TABLE 5-11 Choice of Occupation by Present Occupation**

<b>Choose Same Work Again?</b>	<b>Occupation</b>			<b>Total (%)</b>
	<b>Non-Manual (%)</b>	<b>Manual (%)</b>	<b>Other (%)</b>	
Yes	71.1	62.9	65.5	68.0
No	28.9 (942)	37.1 (448)	34.5 (284)	32.0 (1,674)

*Source:* Quality of Life, 1977.

*Item:* If you had the choice to make again, would you choose the same occupation or type of work you now do?

Finally, would they choose the same job again? About two respondents in three say that they would, according to Table 5-11. The proportion is higher among non-manual than among manual employees. Table 5-11 can be read in two ways. On the one hand, most Canadians are happy where they are in the work-force or, at least, would apparently be made less happy by a shift. On the other hand, one employee in three (nearly two in five in the manual group) would not choose the same job again.

Does this add up to a blank cheque for painless economic adjustment? Clearly not, for at least two reasons. First, work is important to Canadians as a source of pleasure and pride. Most Canadians derive great satisfaction and challenge from the work they do. If one takes seriously a right to satisfaction in work, then changes in the structure of work in response to technological or international economic change should, at the very least, preserve the existing distribution of challenge and reward in the work-place. Secondly, there is no guarantee that the individuals most willing to shift jobs are the ones who will actually do the shifting. The data in this section suggest that large-scale and rapid transformation of work in Canada will leave many Canadians less happy about the work world than they are now. For some, the shifts may be mitigated by financial bridging schemes, but for many, such schemes will not touch the essential loss. That said, satisfaction with the existing structure of work is far from complete. Considerable potential exists for positive



**TABLE 5-12 Automation and Work by Union Membership**

Quarter	Union Membership <sup>a</sup>		Total (%)
	Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
(A) More Leisure			
Summer 1980	70 (557)	68 (937)	68 (1,495)
Spring 1983	70 (567)	73 (928)	72 (1,496)
(B) More Worker Depersonalization			
Winter 1980	76 (274)	74 (1,220)	74 (1,493)
Spring 1982	68 (248)	65 (1,247)	65 (1,495)
Summer 1983	72 (254)	72 (1,244)	72 (1,073)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note: Entry is percentage agreeing with statement.*

*Items: (A) (Preamble) . . . Automation will provide the average Canadian with more leisure time. [-5 to +5 response has been collapsed to agree/disagree.]*

*(B) With the many new advances to technology, it is likely that we'll be relying more and more on machines and automation in the future. Do you think automation in the work place will lead to — depersonalization for the average worker?*

a. For (A), "union membership" is actually "union family."

response to an occupational restructuring which enhances work, rather than trivializes it.

## Technological Change

Change in the technology of production is Janus-faced: on the one hand, it promises efficiency and leisure; on the other, it is perceived to threaten jobs and occupational ways of life. Control of the introduction of new technology figures prominently in collective bargaining. What do ordinary citizens think of all this? This section will look at perceptions of technological change in the work-place, in labour markets, and in commodity markets. It will also examine expectations of the pace of change and of the ability of the work-force to adapt.

Table 5-12 gives evidence on two facets of technological change in the work-place. Each attitude question here and in the tables to follow is broken down by union membership, as unions are the principal vehicle by which concern over technological change is expressed. In both union and non-union groups, agreement is overwhelming that "automation" will provide more leisure. Workers do not seem to want much more leisure, however, as another Decima question suggests.<sup>5</sup> And more

**TABLE 5-13 Automation and the Labour Market  
by Union Membership**

		Union Membership		Total (%)
		Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
(A) More Unemployment				
Winter	1980	75 (274)	72 (1,220)	72 (1,493)
Spring	1982	68 (248)	64 (1,247)	64 (1,495)
Summer	1983	76 (254)	72 (1,244)	72 (1,498)
(B) More Manpower Training				
Winter	1980	89 (274)	87 (1,220)	87 (1,493)
Spring	1982	87 (248)	89 (1,247)	88 (1,495)
Summer	1983	93 (254)	90 (1,244)	90 (1,498)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note: Entry is percentage agreeing with statement.*

*Items: (Preamble: See Table 5-12.)*

(A) Higher levels of unemployment?

(B) A greater need for (manpower) training programmes?

automation may make the work-place itself a less inviting place. Such, at least, seems to be the fear of most respondents, according to response to the second question in Table 5-12. In each of the three quarters that the question of depersonalization of the work-place was put, strong majorities among both union members and non-members agreed that automation would bring "depersonalization for the average worker."

Along with concern for the work-place goes fear for the future of employment. According to Table 5-13, 70 percent or more of Decima respondents believe that automation will bring higher unemployment. With this conviction goes the belief that more employment training will be required. To neither of these items is response affected by union membership.

If automation is perceived to threaten both the nature and the availability of work, will it nevertheless bring benefits in the form of better or cheaper products? Will it help or hurt the economy taken as a whole? Table 5-14 gives evidence on product quality and price. On product quality, opinion is initially closely divided. But in 1982 and 1983, opinion moves fairly strongly to acquiescence in the view that quality will improve. The acquiescence is never as one-sided, however, as on the adverse work-place and labour-market effects of automation. The pattern for prices is very much like that for quality. In 1980, a small majority

**TABLE 5-14 Automation and Commodities**

		Union Membership		Total (%)
		Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
Quarter				
(A) Lower Prices				
Winter	1980	38 (274)	41 (1,220)	41 (1,493)
Spring	1983	55 (248)	54 (1,247)	54 (1,496)
Summer	1983	52 (254)	52 (1,244)	52 (1,498)
(B) Higher Quality				
Winter	1980	46 (274)	47 (1,220)	47 (1,493)
Spring	1982	54 (248)	54 (1,247)	54 (1,496)
Summer	1983	63 (254)	59 (1,244)	60 (1,498)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage agreeing with statement.

Items: (Preamble, see Table 5-12.)

(A) Lower prices for consumer goods?

(B) Improvements in the quality of products?

**TABLE 5-15 Automation and the Economy as a Whole**

		Union Membership		Total (%)
		Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
Quarter				
Stronger Economy?				
Winter	1980	38 (274)	42 (1,220)	41 (1,493)
Spring	1982	51 (248)	48 (1,247)	49 (1,496)
Summer	1983	60 (254)	53 (1,244)	54 (1,498)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage agreeing with statement.

Item: (Preamble, see Table 5-12.) A stronger economy?

rejects the view that automation will yield lower prices for goods. In 1982 and 1983, a similarly small majority leans the other way. Opinion on the effect of automation on the strength of the economy as a whole appears in Table 5-15. The story is again the same. Narrow rejection of the optimistic view shifts to narrow acceptance of that view.

The picture so far is one of mild pessimism. Large majorities seem to believe that automation will reduce the amount of work, and that it will depersonalize the work that remains; only small majorities believe that

**TABLE 5-16 Anticipated Speed of Technological Change**

Speed of Change	Union Membership		Total (%)
	Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
Rapid-major	41	34	35
Gradual adaptation	58	65	64
DK; NA	1 (254)	1 (1,244)	1 (1,498)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: There has been some talk that the economic and technological changes which are occurring in Canada will cause major changes in the work-place, from the types of work people do, and the number of hours they work, to the number of jobs there will be available. Generally speaking, do you expect that there will be rapid and major changes in the work-place, or do you feel that the work-place will be gradually adapted to deal with changes and that things will go along pretty well as they always have?

DK = don't know

NA = not ascertainable.

**TABLE 5-17 Unemployment Expectations, Perceived Adaptability of Work Place, and Attitude to Work Sharing**

	(C) Expectation of Higher Unemployment		
	No (%)	No Opinion (%)	Yes (%)
<b>(A) Speed of Change</b>			
Rapid-major	35	27	36
Gradual	64	73	63
DK; NA	1 (375)	0 (39)	1 (1,086)
<b>(B) Reaction to Work Sharing</b>			
Very favourable	22	18	21
Somewhat favourable	53	70	52
Somewhat unfavourable	16	10	16
Very unfavourable	9 (375)	2 (39)	11 (1,086)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Items: (A) See Table 5-16.

(B) See Table 5-3.

(C) See Table 5-13.

prices of goods will decline, and that quality will rise. Other response suggests less pessimism. Decima asked respondents whether they expect change to be rapid or gradual so that things will "go along pretty well as they always have." Response to this question appears in Table 5-16. Almost twice as many respondents expect change to be gradual as expect it to be sudden. No union/non-union differences appear. We might expect fear of automation-induced unemployment to affect perceptions of the adaptability of the work-force and to affect attitudes toward work sharing. No such relationships exist, however, according to Table 5-17.

Popular reaction to technological change thus seems decidedly mixed. Sentiment is widespread that technology threatens both the quality and the quantity of work. Rather smaller majorities expect positive effects on commodity markets and on the economy as a whole. Most respondents are actually rather sanguine about the pace of adaptation to technological change. The support, registered in earlier sections of this chapter, for work sharing and wage freezes is not tied to expectations of technologically induced unemployment, but instead appears as a free-standing near-consensus.<sup>6</sup>

## Unions and Labour Markets

Do respondents see unions as a bulwark against unwanted or too-swift change in the work-place? Are unions seen as increasing or decreasing the security of employment? Or is sentiment toward unions not related to such labour-market issues? Is it, instead, under the control of feelings more remote from respondents' immediate occupational concerns?

No straightforward predictions emerge from thinking about labour-market issues. One could imagine opposition to unions to the extent that they lead to employers to substitute capital and higher wages for jobs, in the face of Canadians' emphasis on job security. Canadians might also be willing to see contracts which transmit macroeconomic flux to salaries and wages, rather than to numbers on the job; the opposite typically happens now, of course. But even if unions make life less predictable for some, they make it more predictable for many others, through seniority rules and pension schemes. In the whole population, then, sentiment on unions may bear no relation to feelings on labour-market issues.

The political standing of the union movement appears weak, at least at first glance. From Chapter 2 we know that unions receive the lowest ratings of any institution in the *Decima Quarterly Report*. Table 5-18 confirms that union sentiment is, on balance, negative in each quarter, even in union families. Conceivably, negative response might carry a different meaning among union respondents than it would among non-union respondents, but there is no evidence for this. Opinion is fairly sharply split among union/non-union lines over a second Decima question, a forced-choice item polarized on union power versus the continuing need for unions. According to Table 5-19, the balance of opinion in the whole sample favours the view that unions are too powerful. This is not quite the majority opinion among union families. Even in that group, however, nearly as many respondents choose the "too powerful" alternative as choose the "still needed" response.

We cannot really say whether this apparently weak position in the early 1980s represents the culmination of an historical shift of opinion against unions. Gallup gives us a few observations on the matter, but they provide very weak evidence. The first two rows of Table 5-20 record response to an approve/disapprove question. The percentage approving

**TABLE 5-18 Confidence in Unions**

Quarter	Union Family	Non-Union Family	Total
Spring 1980	-0.13 (501)	-0.41 (965)	-0.31 (1,466)
Summer 1980	-0.29 (557)	-0.52 (937)	-0.43 (1,495)
Fall 1980	-0.20 (604)	-0.46 (889)	-0.34 (1,494)
Winter 1980	-0.20 (587)	-0.47 (906)	-0.36 (1,493)
Spring 1981	-0.17 (556)	-0.39 (934)	-0.31 (1,490)
Summer 1981	-0.15 (579)	-0.46 (914)	-0.34 (1,493)
Fall 1981	-0.26 (628)	-0.49 (845)	-0.39 (1,473)
Winter 1981	-0.19 (551)	-0.45 (943)	-0.35 (1,494)
Spring 1982	-0.29 (567)	-0.48 (928)	-0.41 (1,496)
Summer 1982	-0.30 (580)	-0.54 (911)	-0.45 (1,491)
Fall 1982	-0.29 (568)	-0.51 (925)	-0.43 (1,494)
Winter 1982	-0.37 (629)	-0.57 (864)	-0.48 (1,493)
Spring 1983	-0.28 (588)	-0.49 (904)	-0.41 (1,492)
Fall 1983	-0.22 (573)	-0.48 (919)	-0.38 (1,492)
All Quarters	-0.24 (8,070)	-0.48 (12,786)	-0.39 (20,856)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note:* Entry is mean confidence rating.

*Item:* Now I'm going to name some institutions in this country, and I'd like you to consider the people who run these institutions. How about the people who run labour unions? Would you say you have a great deal of confidence in them, only some confidence in them, or hardly any confidence in them?

is slightly smaller in 1976 than in 1961. The five "good thing/bad thing" observations indicate no monotonic trend. For the 1980s, the Decima quarterly observations recorded in Table 5-18, above, yielded the curvilinear patterns typical of the period for most institutions. Thus, the two items with some frequency of repetition, the Gallup good/bad question and the Decima confidence question, span too short a period. The one item with a fifteen year span, the Gallup question on approval/disapproval, has only two observations. On trends in general attitudes to unions, then, one should maintain a prudent silence.

We can at least venture to explore the correlates of current opinion on

**TABLE 5-19 Unions: Power versus Need**

Union Membership	Unions Powerful/Needed			(N)
	Unions Too Powerful	No Opinion	Unions Needed	
<b>Summer 1981</b>				
Member	36%	4	60	(257)
Non-member	56%	9	36	(1,235)
Total	52%	8	40	(1,493)
<b>Summer 1982</b>				
Member	43%	9	48	(238)
Non-member	64%	7	28	(1,253)
Total	61%	8	31	(1,491)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: Some people say that unions in Canada have become too powerful. Others say that unions are necessary in Canada to protect workers from exploitation. Which of these points of view best reflects your own?

**TABLE 5-20 Approval of Labour Unions**

Date	CIPO No.	Percentage Approving	(N)
Sept. 1961	291	74.4	(601)
Feb. 1975	373	68.9	(867)
Oct. 1976	393	53.8	(814)
Oct. 1978	417	52.5	(883)
July 1979	427B	59.0	(863)
Oct. 1980	443-1	63.9	(884)
Nov. 1982	467	52.5	(958)

Source: CIPO.

Items: 1961-75: In general, do you approve or disapprove of labour unions?

1976-82: Generally speaking, do you think that labour unions have been a good thing or a bad thing for Canada?

unions. The Decima file allows us to compare the relative impact of labour-market considerations and of attitudes to public sector unions. Table 5-21 presents correlations between union confidence and three labour-market items and one public service item. None is particularly striking in its connection to general sentiment, but the public sector item exerts quite a bit more leverage than does any of the labour market items. The item on general attitude to job security has essentially no effect on union confidence. It could be that any shift in support for labour unions and for collective bargaining stems not so much from anything that private sector unions have done or failed to do as from the introduction of collective bargaining in the public sector. Further hints of this will appear below.

What does the apparently low standing of the union movement imply for policy? At a general level, support is fairly strong for more govern-

TABLE 5-21 Correlates of Confidence in Labour Unions

Confidence in Unions with:		Average $\tau_b$
(A) Higher salary versus job security	0.04 (Winter 1982)	0.04
(B) Accept wage-benefit freeze [in return] for job security	-0.10 (Spring 1982)	-0.11
(C) Restrain wages for economic growth	-0.10 (Summer 1982)	-0.11
(D) Disapprove Civil Service strikes	-0.17 (Winter 1981)	-0.19
	-0.09 (Fall 1982)	-0.15 (Winter 1982)
	-0.12 (Summer 1982)	
	-0.20 (Fall 1982)	

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is  $\tau_b$ .

Items: (A) See above, Table 5-1.

(B) See above, Table 5-2.

(C) How willing would you be to accept wage increases lower than the rate of inflation if by having everyone do that, we could get the economy growing again? Would you be very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling, or very unwilling?

(D) (Preamble) . . . People employed in the civil service should not have the right to strike. [Response scored -5 to +5.]



**TABLE 5-22 Government-Control Over Labour Union Activity by Union Membership**

Quarter	Membership Status		Total (%)
	Union Member (%)	Non-Member (%)	
Summer 1980	68 (261)	67 (1,233)	67 (1,495)
Summer 1982	49 (238)	59 (1,253)	57 (1,491)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage favouring controls.

Item: Would you favour or oppose greater government control over labour union activity?

**TABLE 5-23 Public Sector Right to Strike**

	Union Membership		Total (%)
	Union (%)	Non-Union (%)	
(A) Teachers' strike (1977)	58.0 (600)	60.3 (1,026)	59.5 (1,626)
(B) Civil Service strikes (Winter 1981)	42 (243)	65 (1,251)	62 (1,494)
(C) Civil Service strikes (Fall 1982)	45 (270)	62 (1,224)	58 (1,494)

Sources: (A) *Quality of Life*, 1977.

(B) and (C) *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage opposed. "Depends," "Neither" categories are included in the calculation.

Items: (A) Teachers should not have the right to strike.

(B) and (C) (Preamble) . . . People employed in civil service should not have the right to strike.

ment "control," whatever that means. According to Table 5-22, union/non-union differences on this item were non-existent in 1980 and weak in 1982. Note, however, that as confidence in unions, as in other institutions, declines, so also support for control over unions declines.

More specific evidence on policy toward industrial disputes is mixed. Little support can be found for a right to strike in the public sector, according to Table 5-23.<sup>7</sup> The *Quality of Life* survey asked about teacher strikes and found clearly negative sentiment on the prospect. The balance of opinion is similarly negative in the *Decima* question on public service strikes. Union/non-union differences are typically strong on the public sector items, although less so for the teacher-strike questions than for the more generally worded public sector items.<sup>8</sup> But even among union members represented in the recent *Decima* data, support for public sector strikes seems weak.

**TABLE 5-24 Support for Right to Strike, General**

Date	CIPO	Right to Strike?			(N)
		Yes	No	Undecided	
March 1974	364	66.4%	23.5	10.1	(1,047)
January 1977	396	57.9%	30.6	11.6	(1,030)
September 1977	404	57.2%	30.2	12.6	(1,211)
January 1978	408	60.9%	26.9	12.2	(1,018)
September 1978	416	58.5%	30.1	11.5	(1,028)
September 1981	453-1	54.8%	35.0	10.1	(1,045)

Source: CIPO, No. 364.

Item: Do you think workers should or should not have the right to strike?

**TABLE 5-25 Right of Employers to Replace Striking Employees by Union Membership**

Forbid Replacing Strikers?	Membership Status		Total (%)
	Union Member (%)	Non-Member (%)	
Strongly agree	21.4	12.0	14.0
Agree	42.9	49.1	47.8
Neither	7.1	7.4	7.4
Disagree	25.0	20.4	21.3
Strongly disagree	0.0	2.8	2.2
Depends	3.6	8.3	7.4
(N)	(28)	(108)	(136)

Source: Quality of Life. 1979.

Item: During a strike, management should be prohibited by law from hiring workers to take the place of strikers.

Where no context is specified for the dispute, however, response on strikes is much less antipathetic. Gallup evidence appears in Table 5-24. The table hints at a negative trend, but not too much should be made of the hint. It is true that the first observation yields the highest support and the last observation, the lowest, but the intervening observations are rather saw-toothed, and the total number is small. Even at the end of the period, those supporting the right to strike still outnumber opponents by a fair margin. A final piece of information appears in Table 5-25, from the 1977 Quality of Life study. Here the question is whether companies should be forbidden to hire replacements for striking employees. A very large majority agrees with such a prohibition. The union/non-union difference on the question is remarkably small.

In conclusion, unions as an institution are not popular by any standard, but we cannot say unequivocally that unions have become *less* popular than they were before. It is difficult to connect sentiment on unions to attitudes on labour-market questions. Some of the general popularity of unions probably comes from specific disapproval of public sector industrial action. General antipathy to unions may have weak-

TABLE 5-26 Free Trade versus Protection

Region	Item				
	(A) General Competitiveness			(B) Restrict Japanese Car Imports	
	Winter 1981	Fall 1982	Fall 1983	Fall 1982	Fall 1983
B.C.	2.92 (161)	3.04 (161)	3.03 (170)	0.44 (161)	0.17 (170)
Prairies	2.82 (248)	2.26 (248)	2.55 (261)	0.99 (248)	0.45 (261)
Ontario	3.07 (540)	2.79 (540)	2.68 (532)	1.08 (540)	1.18 (532)
Quebec	3.04 (408)	2.73 (408)	3.13 (399)	1.24 (408)	1.13 (399)
Atlantic	2.99 (143)	2.64 (143)	2.48 (138)	1.52 (143)	1.09 (138)
Canada	3.00 (1,500)	2.70 (1,500)	2.80 (1,500)	1.08 (1,500)	0.91 (1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale.

Items: (A) (Preamble) . . . We should make Canadian industry more competitive in foreign markets rather than protect Canadian industry from foreign competition.

(B) (Preamble) . . . the government should restrict the number of Japanese cars sold in Canada.

ened support for the right to strike, but majorities do still approve that right and disapprove some policy changes that would undermine it.<sup>9</sup>

## Commercial Policy

Now we turn to roles that the state might play directly to protect Canadians against economic adversity. One approach might be to restrain the flow of trade. How popular are protectionist measures such as tariffs or quotas? Similarly, how much support is there for government assistance to ailing firms or industries? Does sentiment to restrict access to the Canadian market extend to restrictions on access by other Canadians to respondents' own provincial markets?

The answers depend, yet again, on precisely how the survey items are framed. Table 5-26 gives a regional breakdown of agreement with two Decima free-trade items, one general and one specific. The choice of region as a control reflects the rhetoric of Canadian commercial policy. Although a region as such cannot have a stake in commercial policy, regions do depend differentially on industries with stakes in commercial policy, stakes which, in the short run at least, conflict. And popular response in a region may reflect calculations of personal interest only imperfectly. The dominant opinion in the region may be adopted even by groups adversely affected by that dominant position.<sup>10</sup> In any case,

**TABLE 5-27 Support for Unviable Industry**

Quarter		Region					
		B.C. (%)	Prairies (%)	Ontario (%)	Quebec (%)	Atlantic (%)	Canada (%)
Fall	1980	40 (161)	36 (248)	38 (540)	58 (408)	38 (143)	43 (1,500)
Summer	1981	33 (161)	36 (248)	38 (540)	57 (408)	42 (143)	43 (1,500)
Spring	1982	26 (161)	32 (248)	31 (540)	47 (408)	35 (143)	36 (1,500)
Fall	1982	27 (161)	33 (248)	35 (540)	53 (408)	38 (143)	39 (1,500)
Spring	1983	31 (170)	31 (261)	34 (532)	58 (399)	40 (138)	40 (1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage in favour.

Item: Do you think governments should be protecting jobs by financially supporting industries that are not economically viable?

regional differences do not always clearly follow the pattern that rhetoric leads us to expect. On the general competitiveness-versus-protection question, the West is not always the anti-protectionist area. British Columbia is usually the extreme free-trade province, but the Prairie provinces, the traditional home of anti-tariff sentiment, now usually appear as the most protectionist. The more traditional pattern emerges when we shift to the very specific question of Japanese car imports. British Columbia, not surprisingly, is easily the least restrictive province, but it is more striking that British Columbia, like every other region is, on balance, protectionist. In each quarter, the mean British Columbia score is positive, and the modal response is the maximally protectionist one. The divergence here between measures of the same general disposition is striking: when "protection" is juxtaposed to "competitive," respondents flock to the latter as the culturally more approved term; the rather deadpan item about automobile quotas evokes a diametrically opposed distribution of response.

Tables 5-27 and 5-28 provide another example of the divergence. Table 5-27 offers a regional breakdown of response to a question on support for industries that are no longer viable. Strong majorities reject such support in each quarter. Only in Quebec do majorities support the concept. The key expression may, however, be "not economically viable." In a particular case, citizens may readily persuade themselves that an industry "really" would be viable, given the proper assistance.

Table 5-28 brings us back to free trade versus protection, but now with reference to a specific trading partner, the United States. Notwithstanding the general approval of competitiveness in Table 5-26, above, most Canadians oppose free trade with the United States, although not by

**TABLE 5-28 Free Trade with the United States**

Quarter	Region					
	B.C. (%)	Prairies (%)	Ontario (%)	Quebec (%)	Atlantic (%)	Canada (%)
<b>Fall 1982</b>						
Free Trade	47	42	37	37	37	39
Protection	47	55	58	59	57	57
DK; NA	5	3	4	4	5	4
(N)	(161)	(248)	(540)	(408)	(143)	(1,500)
<b>Fall 1983</b>						
Free Trade	48	45	43	34	45	42
Protection	47	50	55	63	53	55
DK; NA	5	5	2	3	2	3
(N)	(170)	(261)	(532)	(399)	(138)	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: I am going to read you two statements. Please listen carefully and then tell me which one you agree with more. Canada should enter into a free trade agreement with the United States that would eliminate any trade barriers and tariffs on goods flowing between the two countries . . . or, Canada should protect Canadian industry from American competition through tariffs and limiting the amount of goods entering Canada from the United States.

DK = don't know.

NA = not ascertained.

**TABLE 5-29 Correlations Among Commercial Policy Items, Fall 1982**

	Industry Competitive	Unviable Industries	Japanese Imports
Unviable industries	0.107	—	—
Japanese imports	0.005	-0.092	—
Free trade with United States	-0.097	-0.094	0.108

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is  $\tau_b$ .

Item: See Tables 5-26, 5-27 and 5-28.

lopsided majorities. Regional differences are surprisingly weak. The only province not on the side of protection is British Columbia. Even there, opinion is closely divided.

Now consider Table 5-29, which shows correlations among the four commercial policy items. No correlation is particularly strong. The strongest association is between the two most general items. Each general item is essentially uncorrelated with each specific item. The specific items are correlated with one another slightly more strongly than each is with the general items. In short, opinion on commercial policy has, at best, a very weak internal structure.

One question appears about restrictions on interprovincial trade. The

**TABLE 5-30 Provincial Government Purchasing Policy by Region**

	Exclude Outside Suppliers?					(N)
	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion (voluntary)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
B.C.	3%	18	5	57	16	(161)
Prairies	3%	21	8	58	11	(248)
Ontario	1%	19	9	50	22	(540)
Quebec	2%	23	8	54	13	(408)
Atlantic	2%	29	5	53	11	(143)
Canada	2%	21	8	53	16	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: Provincial governments should have the right to exclude companies located outside their province as suppliers of goods and services for that reason alone.

item is couched in terms of provincial governments' purchasing strategies. Respondents are asked if provincial governments should exclude "outside" suppliers. The wording in terms of "exclusion" might restrain agreement with this item. On the other hand, purchasing policies may seem more innocuous to respondents than might some other kinds of trade restriction. As worded here, according to Table 5-30, exclusive intraprovincial purchasing is opposed by clear majorities in each region. Differences between regions are trivial.

On commercial policy, we see the now-familiar divergence between general and particular. As with earlier divergence of this sort, the data do not, in themselves, tell us which kind of response is more "real." Still, it is striking how protectionist the public seems in response to items with a straightforward and specific wording. An astute politician might be able to put free trade in a successful rhetorical framework, but a maladroit politician risks a repetition of the 1911 election. Meanwhile, the data give a hint of opposition to provincial protectionism. The data on this question are weak, however. The apparent opposition to provincial protectionism may be as vulnerable to change in item wording as is Canadians' abstract commitment to international competitiveness.

## Controls on Factors of Production

Canadians seem to support certain restrictions on trade. Do they also want restrictions on the movement of capital and other factors of production? The political climate seems to have shifted toward more support for restrictions on investment over the last decade, although doubts have been expressed over the depth of recent nationalist sentiment (LeDuc and Murray, 1983). Immigration has been a source of controversy throughout this period, and purchase of land by "outsiders" has occasioned controversy in some provinces.

**TABLE 5-31 Mean Confidence Ratings for Multinational Corporations**

Quarter		Mean Rating
Spring	1980	-0.18
Summer	1980	-0.37
Fall	1980	-0.24
Winter	1980	-0.32
Spring	1981	-0.29
Summer	1981	-0.27
Fall	1981	-0.29
Winter	1981	-0.20
Spring	1982	-0.21
Summer	1982	-0.28
Fall	1982	-0.18
Winter	1982	-0.17
Spring	1983	-0.15
Fall	1983	-0.16
All Quarters		-0.24

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Item: See, e.g., Table 5-18.

Decima have asked several questions which bear directly or indirectly on capital flows. First, consider confidence in multinational corporations. Recall from Chapter 2 that multinationals excited even less confidence than the federal government. Indeed, the only institutions in which less confidence was expressed than in multinational corporations were unions and oil companies; most respondents probably see oil companies as only a variant of the multinational corporation. Table 5-31 gives 1980–83 quarterly confidence ratings for multinational corporations. Sentiment was negative in each quarter. Confidence dips and recovers with the economy. Regional differences in confidence (not reported in the table) are weak and do not, in any case, fit very well with differences among regional political élites. Contrary to expectation, the centre of anti-multinational sentiment is often the West. More striking, though, is the general antipathy to multinationals in every region.

Does the antipathy imply anything for policy? We should be wary by now of drawing such inferences. It is not even clear that “multinationals” are bracketed as a policy target with “foreign investment.” Table 5-32 gives evidence on a more pointed question about limits on foreign ownership of business in Canada. The table actually embraces two questions. The first presents an unqualified favour/oppose item. The second asks those who initially favour controls whether they would still do so if less foreign ownership meant fewer jobs. The leftmost column represents diehard pro-control opinion and the rightmost column,

**TABLE 5-32 Control of Foreign Ownership**

Quarter		Favor Controls Unconditionally	Favour Controls in Abstract; Oppose if Jobs Lost	Oppose Controls Unconditionally	(N)
Fall	1980	30%	32	38	(1,357)
Spring	1982	31%	34	36	(1,473)
Fall	1982	25%	37	38	(1,436)
Summer	1983	22%	31	46	(1,431)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: (1) Would you favour or oppose governments limiting foreign ownership of business in Canada?

- (2) [If "Favour" or "No opinion" ask:] What if less foreign ownership of business meant fewer jobs for Canadians? Would you favour or oppose governments allowing less foreign ownership of business in Canada?

diehard anti-control opinion. The middle column includes the "trimmers": those who favour controls initially, but who move to opposition if controls lead to a loss of jobs. Consistently, over one-third of the sample oppose controls in any circumstances. The opposition is greatest in summer 1983; this may reflect the aftermath of the recession. In the abstract, then, over three-fifths of Canadians favour controls on foreign investment, although that number may be shrinking. When confronted with the job question, however, at least half the initial supporters of controls defect to the opposition. In the last two quarters, about 60 percent defect. Thus, although over the four quarters, controls are supported in principle by about a 60:40 margin, when job loss is threatened, controls are opposed by about a 30:70 margin. Regional differences in this shift exist, but are not impressive.

The hinge for opinion in this domain is clearly the impact of controls on the jobs. In a sense, the Decima question forces respondents who initially favour controls into an invidious position. Would such a thing happen in the real world of politics? There, one of the key areas for rhetorical struggle would presumably be the very question of the impact of controls on jobs. Part of the argument for investment controls has been that foreign investment in a sector reduces its overall employment potential through under-allocation to research, absence of head-office functions, weak linkages to suppliers, and politically motivated decisions to add value in the home country rather than in Canada.

What do survey respondents themselves think of the likely impact of controls on economic well being? Indirect evidence on the question comes from Decima in the fall quarter of 1981. Respondents were asked about the possible consequences of reduced activity by foreign-owned companies. On balance, Canadians seem to hold a pessimistic view of reduced foreign involvement. Two respondents in three, according to Table 5-33, agree that reduced activity would hinder job creation, slow economic growth, and harm Canada-U.S. relations. A smaller majority



**TABLE 5-33 Expected Impact of Lessened Foreign Investment on Jobs, Fall 1981**

	Expected Impact		
	No	No Opinion (voluntary)	Yes
(A) Fewer jobs	31%	6	62
(B) Slower growth	25%	8	67
(C) Lower standard of living	43%	8	49
(D) Less competitive in foreign markets	40%	10	50
(E) Worse Canada-U.S. relations	25%	8	67
(F) U.S. retaliation	33%	12	55

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note:  $N = 1,500$ .

Items: Some people feel that, if governments in Canada discriminate against foreign-owned companies and favour Canadian-owned companies, foreign-owned companies may reduce the level of their activities in Canada. Do you feel that such a reduction of activities by foreign-owned companies would:

- (A) Result in the creation of fewer jobs?
- (B) Result in a slower rate of economic growth?
- (C) Result in a lower standard of living?
- (D) Reduce our ability to compete in foreign markets?
- (E) Result in worse retaliations between Canada and the United States?
- (F) Result in retaliation by the United States?

believes that the United States might actually retaliate. An even smaller majority agrees that lessened activity would reduce our ability to compete in foreign markets. In spite of all the foregoing, the sample is split on whether our standard of living would be reduced.

The conjunction of the pessimism expressed in Table 5-33 with the conditional character of opinion represented in Table 5-32 indicates a rather weak base for controlling the flow of foreign capital. One might argue that the preamble for the agree/disagree items in Table 5-33 loads the dice in favour of pessimistic response. The context is put in terms of *reduced* activity by foreign-owned companies. Conceivably, the objective of "repatriating" the economy could be achieved even as the existing level of foreign company activity is preserved. But this supposition may be naïve wish fulfillment. The achievement of substantially greater Canadian ownership in most sectors would probably involve, at present growth rates, some displacement of existing activity. If Canadians are serious about investment controls, they may indeed have to accept less foreign-company activity than exists at present. By that criterion, Table 5-33 suggests that Canadians are not serious about controls.

Table 5-34 gives side evidence on the same question. The rows in that table are defined by response to a general item about discrimination against foreign-owned companies in supplying energy projects. The

**TABLE 5-34 Commitment to Discriminatory Policy****Discriminate Against  
Foreign Companies****Canadian Government Reconsider**

(A) Fall 1981	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Total
Agree	57%	8	36	71%
No Opinion	34%	56	10	6
Disagree	59%	8	33	23
Total	56%	10	34	(1,500)

**(B) Winter 1982**

Agree	61%	5	35	71%
No Opinion	34%	42	27	3
Disagree	69%	3	28	27
Total	62%	5	32	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Agree/Disagree categories are collapsed for clarity.

Item: (A) Discriminate: Governments in Canada should discriminate against foreign-owned companies which want to supply goods and services for major energy projects and should favour Canadian-owned companies. Would you say you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

(B) Reconsider: If governments in Canada discriminate against foreign-owned companies and favour Canadian-owned companies, and the government of the United States takes action to restrict the growth of Canadian companies operating in the United States, governments in Canada should reconsider their decision to favour Canadian companies. Would you say you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

distribution of response suggests that Canadians are perfectly ready to discriminate. But if the government of the United States then acts to restrict the growth of Canadian companies in that country, opinion swings around spectacularly. The shift comes in spite of the fact that American restrictions, in deterring exports of Canadian capital, would serve the same mercantilist goal as the original Canadian restrictions. As LeDuc and Murray (1983) have already observed, Canadians are timorous nationalists.

Is the energy sector special? Rates of return in the sector may be perceived as permanently higher than elsewhere, for reasons that have nothing to do with the relative riskiness of investment. Federal and provincial governments may find it particularly difficult to capture this rent as foreign-owned oil firms use transfer pricing to shelter their revenues against taxation. Companies which are owned and which operate primarily in Canada may be less slippery.<sup>11</sup> This economic argument may be supplemented by a more cynical political one. Chapter 2 indicated that oil companies were even less popular than other multinationals. They may be politically vulnerable as a result.

**TABLE 5-35 Special Canadianization Effort in the Oil and Gas Industry, Fall 1980**

	Special Effort?			(N)
	Yes	No Opinion (voluntary)	No	
B.C.	49%	4	47	(161)
Prairies	43%	11	46	(248)
Ontario	7%	10	53	(540)
Quebec	38%	9	52	(408)
Atlantic	32%	8	59	(143)
Canada	39%	9	52	(1,500)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Item:* How about the oil and gas industry? Do you think this area should be subject to special efforts to cut back on foreign ownership, or do you think the oil and gas industry should be treated just like all other industries?

Three Decima questions bear directly on ownership in the oil and gas industry. The first, recorded in Table 5-35, asks if special efforts should be made to cut back foreign ownership in the sector. This question was posed on the eve of the introduction of the National Energy Policy (NEP). On balance, Canadians did not believe that the energy sector should be singled out. Contrary to expectation, support for special emphasis on energy was greatest in the West, especially in Alberta and British Columbia. Even in those provinces, however, the demand for special attention was hardly overwhelming.

To say that energy need not be singled out is not to say that efforts at Canadianization should not be made. Respondents may be saying that *all* sectors should be Canadianized, energy as well as the rest. This seems to be the implication of Table 5-36, at least for the earlier quarters. In winter 1980, support for Canadianization of the oil and gas sector seems to have been overwhelming. Opinion is distributed remarkably evenly across the regions. This, of course, was an election period, in which energy issues figured very conspicuously. Support for Canadianization remains high and fairly evenly distributed until late 1981. In each of these quarters, the province with the highest level of support is British Columbia. Now, to support "Canadianization" is not necessarily to make a commitment to any particular plan of action. The item here lacks the hard edge of the item in Table 5-35. Conceivably, one could oppose virtually every part of the NEP and still maintain a ritual support for Canadianization. This does not appear to have happened, however. As the energy sector declined, so did support for even a "motherhood" wording of Canadianization. In spring 1982, as the bulk of the legislation to implement the NEP staggered through the House, a clear majority opposed Canadianization as a goal. By the next quarter, Canadianization was back in favour, but now with much smaller majorities than it had

**TABLE 5-36 Support for Canadianization of the Oil and Gas Industry**

		Region					Total (%)
		B.C. (%)	Prairies (%)	Ontario (%)	Quebec (%)	Atlantic (%)	
Winter	1980	70 (161)	63 (248)	72 (540)	72 (408)	67 (143)	70 (1,500)
Spring	1981	66 (161)	61 (248)	69 (540)	64 (408)	64 (143)	66 (1,500)
Fall	1981	72 (161)	60 (248)	66 (540)	67 (408)	65 (143)	66 (1,500)
Spring	1982	30 (161)	34 (248)	27 (540)	19 (408)	25 (143)	26 (1,500)
Summer	1982	55 (161)	53 (248)	61 (540)	68 (408)	59 (143)	61 (1,500)
Summer	1983	53 (170)	53 (261)	51 (532)	61 (399)	54 (138)	55 (1,500)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note:* Entry is percentage supporting Canadianization.

*Item:* As you probably know, the federal government has announced measures to increase Canadian ownership of the oil and gas industry to 50 percent. Would you say you favour or oppose such measures?

earlier enjoyed. Shifts over the six quarters hardly disturbed the fairly even regional distribution. Canadians are not divided by this goal along regional lines; the depth of their commitment to the goal of Canadianization does not seem great, however.

As a final bit of evidence on energy, consider opinions in late 1983 on the National Energy Policy itself. These appear in Table 5-37 as mean ratings, on a scale of  $-2.0$  to  $+2.0$ , of four facets of the policy. Opinion is mixed in each region but, in contrast to the opinion on Canadianization as a general goal, divides sharply among regions. Opinion is narrowly positive on the NEP's role in reducing shortages, helping to reach 50 percent Canadian ownership, and promoting energy self-sufficiency. It is rather more clearly negative on the NEP's role in averting major price increases. On most of the questions, regions differ roughly as we might expect. Opinion in the Prairies is clearly the least positive. Most supportive by far is Quebec. British Columbia and Ontario, for all the rhetorical exchanges over energy between their governments, are the middling provinces. Regional convergence over Canadianization as a goal should not, then, blind us to the sharp regional divergences over means.<sup>12</sup>

Capital is not the only factor the movement of which can be controlled. The movement of labour is an even more traditional concern, a concern which has often been explicitly tied to concern about job security. Canada is, of course, a major destination for international migrants. But native Canadians have often indicated opposition to large-scale immigration from abroad.<sup>13</sup> The strongest opposition has com-

**TABLE 5-37 Evaluation of the National Energy Policy, Fall 1983**

	Region					Total
	B.C.	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	
(A) Reduction of shortages	0.22	0.05	0.22	0.61	0.49	0.32
(B) Attainment of 50% Canadianization	0.30	0.07	0.35	0.63	0.41	0.37
(C) Energy self-sufficiency	0.22	0.06	0.30	0.77	0.60	0.40
(D) Keeping prices down	-0.42	-0.33	-0.34	0.05	-0.26	-0.24

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating.

Item: As you may know, in 1980, the federal government introduced its National Energy Program. This program was set up to achieve a number of goals. In your opinion, has the federal government's National Energy Program helped a great deal, helped somewhat, not made any difference, hurt somewhat, or hurt a great deal:

(A) in reducing the chances of Canada facing energy shortages?

(B) in reaching the goal of increasing Canadian ownership of the oil and gas industry to 50 percent?

(C) in making it possible for Canada to be self-sufficient in energy by 1990?

(D) in keeping the price of oil and gas products down?

monly come from British Columbia, itself usually a major immigrant destination within the country. The *Decima Quarterly Report* has framed immigration questions in two ways; each question appears in Table 5-38 controlled for ethnicity, region, union membership and employment status by sex. Employment status and union membership tap labour-market sources of immigration sentiment. We might expect Canadians who are out of work to be more anti-immigrant than those in work, to the extent that respondents perceive the stock of jobs to be fixed. Similarly, union members might be more anti-immigrant than non-members. Historically, the labour movement has been ambivalent about immigration. On the one hand, immigrants are often seen as competitors for a relatively fixed supply of jobs. On the other hand, unions have to do some of their recruiting among blue-collar immigrants. Indeed, the very ethos of unionism was established in Canada by certain immigrant groups, and the immigrant union leader is a staple of anti-union demonology. Ethnic and regional controls represent rival sources of pro- or anti-immigrant sentiment. The precise structure of ethnic sentiment is difficult to predict. Non-British/non-French ethnics might be relatively pro-immigrant, particularly to the degree that that group consists heavily of immigrants. The French/British difference is harder to predict. In a fairly concrete sense, French Canada is more deeply threatened by immigration than is English Canada to the extent that immigrants almost invariably swell the ranks of the anglophone group. On the other hand, as immigration into English Canada has proceeded, the British character of English Canada

TABLE 5-38 Immigration: General and Skilled

	(A) General Immigration			(B) Skilled Immigration		
	Fall 1981	Fall 1982	Fall 1983	Fall 1981	Fall 1982	Fall 1983
<b>(A) Union/non-union</b>						
Union family	-1.92	-1.82	-1.73	0.64	-0.49	-0.65
Non-union family	-1.95	-1.76	-1.79	0.67	-0.14	-0.19
<b>(B) Employment status: gender</b>						
Employed male	—	-1.78	-2.11	—	-0.12	-0.31
Employed female	—	-1.97	-1.40	—	-0.71	-0.54
Not-employed male	—	-1.83	-1.63	—	-0.17	-0.03
Not-employed female	—	-1.58	-1.70	—	-0.18	-0.47
<b>(C) Ethnicity</b>						
British	-2.58	-2.35	-2.38	0.60	-0.51	-0.59
French	-0.99	-1.00	-0.70	0.49	-0.16	-0.21
Other	-1.87	-1.68	-1.92	0.92	-0.00	-0.10
<b>(D) Region</b>						
British Columbia	-2.87	-2.75	-2.87	0.57	-0.56	-0.69
Prairies	-2.31	-2.06	-2.34	0.44	-0.66	-0.88
Ontario	-2.39	-2.32	-2.21	0.69	-0.38	-0.35
Quebec	-0.64	-0.47	-0.33	0.91	-0.30	-0.30
Atlantic	-2.13	-1.95	-1.81	0.16	-0.61	-1.00
Total Sample	-1.93	-1.78	-1.79	0.66	-0.27	-0.34

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is mean rating on scale of support.

Items: (A) (Preamble) . . . Anyone who wants to should be able to immigrate to Canada.

(B) (Preamble) . . . People who have a skilled trade should be encouraged to immigrate to Canada.

has been correspondingly attenuated, to the dismay of many Canadians of British descent. The Gallup data in Chapter 3 indicate an historic reversal of the French/English difference over immigration. Regional differences may reflect only the ethnic composition of each region. Still, some regions which are ethnically similar differ markedly in their drawing power as migrant destinations. Simple exposure to immigrant numbers may affect attitudes in each region. The existing literature on ethnic contact and ethnic attitudes generates mixed expectations, however. In one view, simple contact promotes sympathy among groups. Rival views suggest that realities are more complicated: the nature of contact may be as important as its frequency (LeVine and Campbell, 1972).

Data appear in Table 5-38. In the overall sample, support for each pro-immigration statement is weak. Opinion is clearly negative on the general item. On the more specific skilled-immigration item, opinion is closely divided. Opinion on the general item does not become more negative as the economy goes into recession. Recession does, however, seem to reduce support for skilled immigration.

The two labour-market variables have little effect on general immigration attitudes. No union/non-union differences appear in any of the three quarters, and differences among employment-gender groups are unstable. Union membership does, however, seem to affect attitudes to the immigration of skilled workers. In the two high-unemployment quarters, union families are rather less sympathetic to skilled immigration than are non-union families. Again, differences between employment-gender groups are unstable.

Regional and ethnic differences are much sharper than are labour-market differences, but the differences are surprising. French-Canadians are almost always the most supportive of immigration. As a reflection of this fact, Quebec is the province with the highest level of support for immigration. Evidently, French Canadians do not attend to the opinions of their demographers. Canadians of British ancestry anchor the other attitudinal pole: in each quarter, British Canadians are the most negative on the general item; the same is true, two quarters in three, for the skilled-immigration item. On the general item, opinion is most negative in the regions with the greatest postwar exposure to immigration, British Columbia and Ontario. On skilled immigration, opinion is less clearly structured by region.

In sum, Canadians seem uneasy about their country's role as a major destination for international migration. The uneasiness is less sharply felt for skilled immigration than for immigration in general. Opinions about immigration do not, however, reflect labour-market experiences. Instead, in the dominant role of ethnicity and region, primordial factors seem to be at work. But the ethnic and regional structure of immigration attitudes contains a surprise: the group with possibly the most to lose

**TABLE 5-39 Capital and Labour Movements Among Provinces,  
Fall 1980**

	Region					Total (%)
	B.C. (%)	Prairies (%)	Ontario (%)	Quebec (%)	Atlantic (%)	
(A) Investment by companies outside province	62	58	66	65	51	63
(B) Free movement of workers	68	64	64	52	59	61
(C) Extraprovincial ownership of land	84 (161)	68 (248)	79 (540)	66 (408)	72 (143)	74 (1,500)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note:* Entry is percentage opposed to restriction.

*Item:* (A) Provincial governments should have the right to stop Canadian companies located outside their province from investing in their province.

(B) Provincial governments should not have the right to stop a Canadian citizen from another part of the country from working in their province.

(C) Provincial governments should have the right to stop Canadian citizens from another part of the country from owning land in their province.

from immigration, French Canadians, seems by far the most receptive to immigrants.

Finally, consider attitudes to the movement of productive factors among provinces. Table 5-39 gives attitudes on capital and labour movement and on extra-provincial ownership of land. Here, as with provincial purchasing policies, opinion generally favours maintaining the integrity of the economic union. Clear majorities reject the view that provinces should inhibit investment by Canadian sources outside the province. This majority stands in each region. Curiously, the majority is weakest in the region which most needs outside investment, the Atlantic provinces. Majorities similarly reject the argument that provinces should be able to restrict the movement of labour. Understandably, regional differences are sharper for labour than for capital movements. Only a bare majority of Quebec respondents opposes provincial controls on labour migration.<sup>14</sup> A larger majority opposes labour controls in the Atlantic provinces, but that region's majority is still smaller than in the richer regions west of the Ottawa River. Restrictions on the sale of land evoke the strongest opposition of all. Again, Quebec exhibits the smallest such majority, but even there over 60 percent oppose restrictions on land sales.



## Public Ownership

For some, the direct government ownership of the means of production is a means of stabilizing and even increasing employment and economic activity. At one extreme, public ownership could be part of a regime of administered prices and supply. At the other, public ownership could be a piecemeal tactic for preserving existing jobs, particularly in politically critical ridings: "receivership socialism", in short. Aside from its employment-stabilization role, public ownership can underpin other elements of a *dirigiste* industrial strategy. At least one observer contends that Canada's is, by historical chance, a "public enterprise culture" (Hardin, 1974). Does this culture appear in the public opinion data?

Two facets of public ownership opinion appear in Table 5-40. One item asks respondents whether ordinary Canadians' interests are better served by government or by private industry. Opinion is fairly closely divided in the two quarters the question was put, but typically, majorities favour the private sector. Opinion tilts fairly sharply on a rough East-West axis. West of the Ottawa River, respondents favour the private sector by nearly two to one. In Quebec and Newfoundland, small majorities actually favour the public sector. New Brunswick opinion is split, and Nova Scotia resembles Ontario and the West. A similar pattern holds for the second question, which asks about general impressions of Crown corporations. In the national sample, opinion is closely divided but, on balance, slightly favourable. In British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba, however, the average impression is negative. Quebec and Newfoundland again anchor the positive pole. In each province, opinion on Crown corporations clusters in the mild agreement/disagreement categories. If a public enterprise culture exists in Canada, not everyone participates in it. Its strongest supporters come from places which the market, for whatever reasons, has served ill.

Some Canadians may disdain public corporations for their failure to serve the goal of profitability. For all that Crown corporations may also serve other ends, the choice of the corporate over the departmental form does indicate a commitment to business-like methods. Does this leave unprofitable corporations with a hostage to fortune? Table 5-41 suggests not. No relationship holds between profit emphasis and the general impression of Crown corporations. Regardless of the impression, a slight majority deems profits unimportant. Indeed, those most favourably impressed by Crown corporations are also the most profit oriented.

Finally, consider the relationship between general impressions of Crown corporations and opinions about public ownership in certain sectors of production and services. In Table 5-42, the strongest association between general and particular lies in the current frontier for public ownership, the energy sector. The weakest relationship is for one of the

TABLE 5-40 Public versus Private Economic Agents

	Region									
	B.C. (%)	Alta. (%)	Sask. (%)	Man. (%)	Ont. (%)	Que. (%)	N.B. (%)	N.S. (%)	Nfld. (%)	Canada (%)
(A) Best Serves Economic Interests? (Summer 1982)										
Government	31	23	40	39	37	54	47	42	52	41
Private industry	59	74	58	52	57	44	47	52	43	54
DK; NA	10	2	2	9	6	2	7	6	5	5
	(161)	(120)	(60)	(68)	(540)	(408)	(44)	(54)	(37)	(1,500)
(B) General Impression of Crown Corporations (Fall 1983)										
Very favourable	2	2	8	3	3	6	4	6	2	4
Somewhat favourable	39	37	52	47	53	61	57	54	67	52
Somewhat unfavourable	47	45	29	33	31	21	22	31	18	31
Very unfavourable	11	16	11	17	12	10	14	7	13	12
	(170)	(138)	(60)	(63)	(532)	(399)	(43)	(52)	(35)	(1,500)

Items: (A) Thinking for the moment about government and private industry in Canada, who do you think best serves the economic interests of the average Canadian . . . government or private industry?

(B) Public corporations are usually known as Crown corporations and can be owned by either the federal or provincial government. Generally speaking, how would you describe your impression of Crown corporations? Would you describe your impression as very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable, or very unfavourable?

DK = don't know.

NA = not ascertained.

**TABLE 5-41 Profit Orientation for Crown Corporations, Fall 1983**

General Impression	Orientation			(N)
	Profit	Profits Not Important	DK; NA	
Very favourable	49%	51	0	(62)
Somewhat favourable	40%	59	0	(782)
Somewhat unfavourable	41%	57	2	(462)
Very unfavourable	44%	53	3	(177)
No opinion	25%	72	3	(17)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Items: Impressions: See Table 5-40.

Orientation: Some people have also said that Crown corporations should invest and be involved in activities only where profits can be made. Other people have said that because Crown corporations are financed by tax dollars, they have a responsibility to invest and be involved in areas that are important to Canada, and that it doesn't really matter if they make a profit. Thinking of these two points of view, which one best reflects your own?

DK = don't know.

NA = not ascertained.

oldest public enterprise fields, utilities. Most of the other sectors fall in between. In general, the public does not seem gripped by enthusiasm for either more or less public ownership. Opinion is evenly balanced on ownership in transportation, oil and gas, and high technology. By a small margin, more respondents prefer less than prefer more public ownership of the media, of financial institutions, and in the agricultural sector. The opposite is true for public ownership of utilities. In each case, many respondents prefer things as they are. These respondents are numerous enough to ally with either of the other groups to block any shift in public ownership. As a collectivity, then, Canadians seem to favour the public/private *status quo*.

## Some Reflections

In general, public opinion is pretty much as Olson would predict. Canadians are pre-eminently concerned with job creation and protection. This preoccupation is not focused simply on the size of the income the job yields. Rather, the underlying concern is with *security*: perhaps of income, but arguably of the occupational culture as well. Canadians value their work for itself and commonly perceive threats to it from new technologies. Sometimes these attitudes lead to mercantilist demands; sometimes not.

In their basic preoccupations if not always in their policy prescriptions, Canadians seem to fit Olson's model precisely. It may not matter that the concern is as much to protect a way of life as to protect an income. What counts is the resistance to change. But this provokes two observations, each somewhat contradictory to the other.

First, is the commitment to existing work and the fear of change not to

TABLE 5-42 General Impressions and Ownership in Specific Sectors, Fall 1983

	General Impression of Crown Corporations					$\tau_c$	Total
	Very Favourable	Somewhat Favourable	Somewhat Unfavourable	Very Unfavourable			
<b>(A) Transportation</b>							
% More private	38	29	40	59	0.134	36	
% More public	40	40	34	23		36	
<b>(B) Oil and Gas</b>							
% More private	23	29	43	61	0.182	37	
% More public	59	42	30	25		37	
<b>(C) Utilities</b>							
% More private	25	25	35	43	0.09	30	
% More public	48	43	40	33		41	
<b>(D) Media and Broadcasting</b>							
% More private	39	32	46	56	0.136	39	
% More public	35	35	26	21		30	
<b>(E) Financial</b>							
% More private	37	29	39	54	0.124	35	
% More public	47	35	27	28		32	
<b>(F) High Technology</b>							
% More private	34	26	46	48	0.160	35	
% More public	45	39	28	24		34	
<b>(G) Agriculture</b>							
% More private	35	35	53	66	0.154	44	
% More public	40	36	29	25		33	

*Items:* Now, some people say that there are some industries in which there are too many Crown corporations operating, and that some should be sold to the private sector. Other people feel that there are some industries in which more Crown corporations should be involved. Do you think there should be more private ownership, about the same amount of public ownership, or more public ownership in:

- (A) the transportation industry?
- (B) the oil and gas industry?
- (C) the utilities, such as hydro-electric and telephone companies?
- (D) the media and broadcasting?
- (E) the high-technology industry?
- (F) agriculture?

be respected as a defensible position in its own right, or at least as a position that one takes the time to argue with? Olson assumes such conservatism as a given, but seems not to respect the motive. Survey respondents may recognize that although the market rests on individualistic presuppositions, the summary operation of a market economy does not always respect the individual persons within it. Individual transactions may have a Paretian logic: if the transaction does not make both parties better off, it will not be consummated. However, the terms of trade each individual faces may shift adversely as a result of countless other transactions, of acts of God, and of technological change. As a worker, the individual may feel trapped by a production-side version of the tyranny of small decisions. The traditional argument that capital investment requires a stable environment may find a parallel in individuals' investment in human capital. Canadians, like citizens of other democracies, may thus look not just to the maximization of income, but to its stabilization as well.

My second observation exists in some tension with the first. Canadians' fears do not lead to a single coherent package of policy choices, at least not in response to any survey items that I could find. Opinions seem a mixture of shrewd calculation and response to manipulative symbols. Here, as elsewhere, Canadians' response depends, to an important extent, on how the stimulus is framed. I suspect that in the microeconomic domain, as with macroeconomic policy, Canadians are mainly interested in results. Policy makers might do better to attend more to what their choices imply for Canadians' basic occupational values than to what Canadians appear to want on some rather abstruse policy matter.

## **Recapitulation**

The following seems to be true of Canadians' attitudes on what might be called microeconomic issues:

1. Most Canadians are risk averse. Most prefer job security to higher incomes. This preference surfaces in response to abstract questions, in replies to more specific questions about wage settlements, and in a general willingness to consider work sharing. Differences by income exist, but are weak. The same is true for union/non-union differences.
2. The concern for job security seems to be more than just a concern for income security. In overwhelming numbers, Canadians reject the argument that the work actually done on the job is less important than the income attached to the work. Canadians agree that pride in work is important, and most look forward to going to work each day. Evidence on satisfaction with the present job is more mixed. Most Canadians find their work challenging and consider that most of the major criteria by which the quality of employment might be assessed as positive are met. Agreement is less unanimous that the present job taps respondents' full

potential. About one respondent in three would not choose the present job again. Where occupational differences in satisfaction with work appear, manual employees are less satisfied with work than are non-manual workers.

3. Most Canadians expect adverse effects on the work-place from technological change. Strong majorities think that work will become less personalized, and that unemployment will increase. Less strong majorities have come to admit that automation will improve the quality and reduce the prices of products. In spite of their apparent pessimism about technological change, most Canadians do expect the work-place to adapt to the changes and things to go on much as they have in the past.

4. Unions are generally unpopular. It is difficult to say whether they have become markedly less popular over the last two decades. Current confidence in unions does not seem closely related to any other particular set of attitudes. It is especially hard to pin antipathy to unions on particular attitudes to labour-market questions. The strongest correlate of union confidence is attitude about public servants' right to strike. A public sector right to strike is widely opposed. On the general public sector right, opinion is sharply divided on union/non-union lines. No such division appears on teachers' right to strike. Where no context is specified, opinion on policy is not particularly anti-union. Majorities still favour the general right to strike, although those majorities may have narrowed somewhat. In at least one study, a majority approved banning the hiring of replacements for striking workers.

5. Canadians affirm in the abstract the need for Canadian industry to be internationally competitive. In more concrete cases, however, most Canadians seem protectionist. Majorities oppose free trade with the United States. Only in British Columbia was opinion on free trade even closely divided. Similarly, majorities favour quotas on the import of Japanese automobiles; this is true, although only narrowly, even in British Columbia. Although we have only one rather weak item on the matter, Canadians do not seem as protectionist within the economic union.

6. Canadians do not like multinational corporations and do favour, in the abstract, controls on foreign investment. In practice, however, support for nationalist measures seems shallow. When asked whether they would still support foreign-investment controls if jobs were lost, most respondents supporting such controls in the abstract change their minds. Most respondents do seem to accept the view that reduced foreign-company activity would hurt the economy.

However little they like oil companies, Canadians do not seem to single out the oil and gas sector. Support for Canadianization of gas and oil nevertheless appeared quite strong in 1980 and 1981. It waned in 1982 and then rallied somewhat. The NEP itself, as means of realizing Canadianization and other goals, receives mixed reviews. Evaluation of the

NEP is much more sharply differentiated by region than is the affirmation of Canadianization as a general goal.

Canadians generally do not affirm an open immigration policy and are divided on encouraging skilled immigrants. Opinion on immigration is not much structured by labour-market experiences. Much more powerful are ethnicity and region. French Canadians favour immigration most strongly, and Canadians of British descent favour it least. The least favourable province is the one most exposed to international immigration, British Columbia.

Canadians generally oppose restrictions on the flow of capital and labour among provinces. They also oppose controls on extraprovincial ownership of land. Of these questions, the one on movement of persons evokes the sharpest regional differences; Quebec respondents affirm the unity of the population with least enthusiasm.

7. Canadians are divided on the relative merits of private and public ownership. A small majority believes that average Canadians are better served by the private sector than by the government, but impressions of Crown corporations are, on balance, mildly favourable. Impressions of public companies are unrelated to expectations of profitability. Most, but by no means all, Canadians accept the view that Crown corporations might reasonably pursue goals other than profits. Impressions of Crown corporations are quite strongly related to support or opposition to an extension of the public enterprise role. On balance, however, Canadians do not seem seized by the need either to expand or to contract the scope of public enterprise.





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## Political Confidence and the Mandate to Rule

### Introduction

By many measures, the federal government's position is weak. By some measures, it is not merely weak, but declining. Only unions, multinational corporations, and the oil industry had a lower standing over the early 1980s. Yet evidence on specific policies, in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, indicates a broadly based desire for federal government intervention. The questions which weigh most heavily on Canadians are squarely within Ottawa's brief. In light of this, what does political confidence, as measured in public opinion surveys, imply for the political authority of the federal government, for its mandate to rule?

The evidence in this chapter will force us to conclude that the answer is "Not much." General questions on the division of power and on intergovernmental conflict yield contradictory response, although with a definite provincialist bias. Questions about jurisdiction over specific policies evoke the division of powers as it presently exists. A similar divergence appears in data on the relative importance to Canadians of each order of government. Canadians usually say that the province is more important. When asked which issues are most important, however, they usually name matters in Ottawa's domain. Yet another divergence emerges from questions about government as such, regardless of order. Government in the abstract is the object of hostility. Specific programs, on the other hand, are usually popular.

The literature on political support and the usages of parliamentary government converge to suggest that political confidence ought to be related to political authority. Recall that Easton's (1965) picture of the political system featured dynamic exchanges between the state and its

environment. Scholars differed over how quickly programmatic failure by a government would be registered in a loss of support, but most agreed that such a loss would occur, later if not sooner. In turn, a loss of support would hamper the state in its attempts to recover its position; some measure of support was necessary for the government to act. Governments can exert raw power for a time, but without support their acts may cease to be authoritative, that is, to be legitimate.

Some such logic underpinned much of the commentary on Canadian politics in the 1970s, as I have already argued. Ottawa was deemed either to have lost authority irrevocably, and thus to be well advised to surrender jurisdiction to some or all of the provinces, or to have lost authority by an accident of history and geography, an accident which could be overcome only by institutional reform.

Even the ordinary language of responsible government encourages us to read the survey evidence as speaking to Ottawa's moral authority. In parliamentary commentary, the word "confidence" is used quite specifically to denote the moral authority of the government of the day. It is recognized that the legal foundations of the Crown's authority, while a necessary part of the framework, do not suffice to authorize more than a caretaker role for Cabinets. The Cabinet must enjoy the confidence of the popularly elected House, even if the exact boundary between what is and what is not a question of confidence is vague. Survey respondents might reasonably be expected to invest with the same meaning their response to items which speak of confidence.

The scope of the usage, however, may vary from the most general to the most particular. In examining Easton's and kindred analyses, one has the sense that authority is conferred or reserved at the highest level. Although Easton talks of support for incumbent authorities, most compelling is his account of the fate of communities and regimes. But the question can also be defined in less apocalyptic terms. May, for example, a government with a given level of support raise taxes, or must it cut services? How general or how specific are feelings about taxes and services? Respondents may have particular services in mind when they say that they want service cuts. Similarly, some taxes may be more vexatious, or by the same token, more acceptable than others. What, over all, is the relationship between the general and the particular in the domain of confidence?

These questions lead us to evidence of four sorts. First come general attitudes to federal and provincial governments, on the division of power and on intergovernmental conflict. Second come attitudes on jurisdiction over specific areas of policy. Third will come evidence on which order of government is deemed more important, an indirect indicator of political support. Finally we consider opinions on government as such, regardless of its order. Here opinion will be both general and specific, and will cover both fiscal and regulatory matters.

## General Questions on Conflict and the Division of Powers

Data on general orientations can be made to tell a very provincialist story, but they can also easily tell a centralist one. I shall begin with the provincialist version, move to a centralist riposte, and then try to assess whether either can claim to prevail over the other.

The opening salvo in the provincial attack is represented in Table 6-1. Evidence spanning nearly a decade confirms that voters feel closer to the government of their province than they do to the federal government. The first piece of evidence is taken from the 1974 National Election Study. When asked to which government they felt closer, respondents said, in overwhelming numbers, that they felt closer to the provincial government. The provincialist majority prevailed in every province except Ontario.<sup>1</sup> Much the same story emerges from the questions asked in the 1980 Radio-Canada poll and the 1983 Council on Canadian Unity (CCU) poll about which order of government best looked after respondents' needs.<sup>2</sup> Again, the provincial government was usually the majority choice. Reversals do occur: the federal government was the plurality choice in the Atlantic provinces in 1980 and in Quebec in 1983. Nevertheless, these data seem to imply a *prima facie* advantage for the provinces over the federal government as more responsive to citizens' needs.

If citizens feel closer to the provinces, they nonetheless have a sense that the federal government is creeping up on them. Evidence on this perception appears in Table 6-2. Gallup twice asked respondents whether the federal government's influence had increased, decreased or stayed about the same. In both 1974 and 1982, overwhelming majorities claimed that federal government influence had increased. Three times Gallup asked whether the current influence of the federal government was too much or too little. Each time, majorities said that Ottawa had too much influence. The proportion responding "Too much" doubled from 1977 to 1982. In none of the surveys did many respondents say that Ottawa had too little influence. The growth of the "Too much" margin came from the share of the "About right" response.

The Gallup respondents' general aversion to the federal government is confirmed by data in Table 6-3 from the 1977 Quality of Life study and from the Radio-Canada and Council on Canadian Unity polls. If respondents are asked which government, if any, should have more power, the majority always and everywhere say that provinces should gain power. As in the Gallup polls, very few say that the federal government should have more power; the second-largest share is almost always held by proponents of the status quo. The 1980 poll also indicates some support for a more complicated shuffling of jurisdictions.

Response to questions about federal-provincial conflict resembles response to questions about the division of powers, according to Table

TABLE 6-1 Citizens' Choices Between Federal and Provincial Governments, by Province

Province/Region	(A) NES		(B) Radio-Canada				(B) CCU	
	1974		1979		1980		1983	
	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.
Newfoundland	18	67						
		(94)						
P.E.I.	14	77						
		(94)						
Nova Scotia	25	55	35	42	45	32	26	62
		(154)		(n.a.)		(208)		(n.a.)
New Brunswick	21	60						
		(111)						
Quebec	31	45	34	34	26	42	41	37
		(621)		(1,199)		(877)		(n.a.)
Ontario	51	34	28	42	33	35	28	48
		(628)		(n.a.)		(307)		(n.a.)
Manitoba	22	60						
		(105)	15	56	28	42	n.a.	n.a.
Saskatchewan	25	65						
		(93)		(n.a.)		(149)		
Alberta	13	78	16	66	14	66	12	78
		(166)		(n.a.)		(159)		(n.a.)
B.C.	20	71	23	47	24	36	16	54
		(233)		(n.a.)		(139)		(n.a.)
Canada	34	49	30	40	28	41	28	50
		(2,175)		(2,346)		(1,839)		(2,019)

Sources: National Election Study, 1974; Le Centre pour recherches sur l'opinion publique (CROP); Radio-Canada, 1979, 1980; CROP; Council on Canadian Unity (CCU), 1983.

Item: (A) Would you say that you feel closer to the federal government in Ottawa, or to your provincial government here in (province)?

(B) Which government do you think looks after your interests and needs the best? The government of Canada or the government of (province)?

n.a. = not available.

**TABLE 6-2 Perceptions of Federal Government Influence**

<b>(A) Magnitude of Impact Compared with Ten Years Ago</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Greater</b>	<b>Lesser</b>	<b>About the Same</b>	<b>(N)</b>
March 1974	77.0%	8.9	14.1	(866)
Sept. 1982	66.4%	11.3	22.2	(962)
<b>(B) Appropriateness of Current Influence</b>				
	<b>Too Great</b>	<b>Too Little</b>	<b>About Right</b>	<b>(N)</b>
March 1974	46.0%	10.6	43.4	(869)
Aug. 1977	42.2%	16.5	41.2	(919)
Sept. 1982	80.6%	6.6	12.8	(944)

*Sources:* CIPO.

*Items:* (A) Do you think the federal government affects the way of life of the average Canadian to a greater extent or to a lesser extent than it did, say, ten years ago?

(B) Do you think the level of influence the federal government has today on the way of life of the average Canadian is too great, too little, or just about right?

**TABLE 6-3 Attitudes to Transfers of Power**

	<b>(A) Quality of Life</b>	<b>(B) Radio-Canada</b>		<b>(B) CCU</b>
	<b>1977 (%)</b>	<b>1979 (%)</b>	<b>1980 (%)</b>	<b>1983 (%)</b>
More federal power	16.5	16	14	14
Status quo	38.8	42	24	45
More provincial power	44.7	42	50	41
Increase some of each	—	—	12	—
(N)	(2,856)	(2,147)	(1,572)	(≈1,746)

*Sources:* Quality of Life, 1977; CROP: Radio-Canada, 1979, 1980; CROP: CCU, 1983.

*Item:* (A) In the future should the provincial governments have more power, the federal government have more power, or should things stay as they are?

(B) Thinking now of the division of powers between the federal and provincial governments, what would you favour? Would you favour . . . leave the division of powers the same; give more to the federal government; give more to the provincial governments?

6-4. In each province, an overwhelming majority agrees that "It's time (the respondent's province) got tougher with Ottawa." The distribution of agreement across provinces does not, however, conform to what the rhetoric of federal-provincial conflict would lead us to expect. Among the provinces with the lowest percentage agreement with the proposition are Newfoundland, Quebec and Alberta. Some residents of these last three provinces may recognize that their provincial governments are already among the toughest in dealing with Ottawa and so may hesitate to press for a still tougher line. But even in these three provinces, clear majorities affirm the need to "get tough" with Ottawa.

**TABLE 6-4 Attitude to Provincial Government "Toughness"  
by Province**

Province	Province Tougher with Ottawa?				(N)
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
B.C.	55.6%	28.1	12.3	4.1	(171)
Alberta	37.4%	32.1	17.6	13.0	(131)
Saskatchewan	47.4%	31.4	13.1	8.0	(137)
Manitoba	52.9%	30.3	11.8	5.0	(119)
Ontario	39.1%	26.8	20.6	13.5	(354)
Quebec	29.9%	37.9	17.5	14.7	(354)
New Brunswick	59.1%	20.0	12.7	7.3	(110)
Nova Scotia	60.0%	27.6	9.5	3.8	(105)
P.E.I.	40.7%	32.4	17.6	8.3	(108)
Newfoundland	46.7%	17.8	24.4	12.2	(90)
Canada	43.3%	29.6	16.5	10.5	(1,765)

*Source:* CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

*Item:* It's time [province] got together with Ottawa.

So far, the federal position seems exceedingly weak. Even so a fairly convincing centralist case could be marshalled with data from the same sources. Three survey samples have been asked which government, aside from the party in power, is "your" government. Data from each survey appear in Table 6-5. Each time, the whole-sample majority choice is the federal government. The only provincial exceptions to this national rule are Quebec and, at least in 1979, Newfoundland. Even in British Columbia, which often exhibits the strongest anti-federal feeling, the provincial government alone is the choice of less than one-third of the sample. In holding this attitude, British Columbia is often second only to Ontario. The distribution of sentiment here is a close parallel to the distribution, in Table 2-11, above, of feelings about the country and the exact reverse of 1974 and 1980 feelings about the federal government, recorded in the same table.

Table 6-6, which draws on 1977 Quality of Life data, may not greatly strengthen the centralist case, but it does weaken the provincialist one. Consider first the table's column margin. Almost as many respondents think that the federal government has too much power as think that its power is about right. Only a derisory minority believes that Ottawa has too little power. But the same story, in a more moderate form, holds for the provincial government. Certainly, significantly more respondents think that their provincial government has too much power than think that it has too little. As evidence recorded in Chapter 2 should lead us to expect, feelings about one order of government tend in the same direction as feelings about the other order. This is the message of the body of the table: respondents who think that the federal government is too

powerful are nine points more likely to feel the same way about the provincial government than are respondents who hold the opinion that the federal government has too little power. The overall relationship is lumpy because of the "About right" group. The "About right" response generalizes across governmental order even more than do the "Too much" or "Too little" responses; the hint is that some of the "About right" response is a disguised "No opinion". This table does suggest, however, that questions which force respondents to choose between orders of government mask antipathy to both orders. We should not infer from the apparent political weakness of one order too much about the strength of the other order.

The 1977 Quality of Life Survey also asked about the power of other institutions, notably large corporations and labour unions. As in the Decima confidence questions, response about private institutions is correlated with response to governmental institutions. Even more striking, however, is the simple distribution of sentiment about corporations and unions. Stunning majorities believe that each of these groups of institutions has too much power. About ten times as many people think that unions have too much power as think that they have too little. The margin for corporations is 40 to one. Only about half as many respondents say "About right" for corporations and unions as make this reply concerning federal and provincial governments. This is a startling reversal of the rank order in the confidence data dealt with in the previous chapter. It also seems to belie the "biggest threat" message from the Gallup poll, recorded in Table 2-1.

Now consider more data about one order of Canadian government "getting tough" with the other. Recall that according to Table 6-4, a large majority in the 1983 Senate Reform study agreed that it was time for provincial governments to get tough with Ottawa. But almost as large a majority, according to the column margin of Table 6-7, thinks that Ottawa should get tough with the provinces. Simple arithmetic suggests that many respondents must answer both questions affirmatively. The arithmetic is confirmed by the body of Table 6-7. Note that numbers build toward the extremes. Much of the response in the table must be under the control of attitudes to "toughness" as such, quite apart from any effect deriving from feelings toward one order of government or the other.

If a dispute is joined between federal and provincial governments, which side would Canadians support? Evidence on this query appears in Table 6-8. One-fifth to one-third of the sample, depending on the province, cannot choose which government to support. Usually, the plurality choice is the provincial government. This finding is consistent with evidence on perceived closeness and responsiveness of the governmental orders, but the percentage choosing the federal government is

TABLE 6-5 Psychological Identification with Governments

Province/Region	NES		Radio-Canada				CCU	
	(A) 1979		(A) 1979		(B) 1980		(A) 1983	
	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.
Newfoundland	27.3	62.7 (110)						
P.E.I.	47.2	40.6 (106)						
Nova Scotia	62.8	26.1 (188)	48	36	66	26 (208)	61	36
New Brunswick	53.5	29.9 (144)						
Quebec	34.7	48.2 (730)	38	42 (1,175)	33	48 (877)	40	53
Ontario	75.7	16.0 (729)	72	19	73	20 (307)	76	17
Manitoba	64.5	29.0 (124)	49	41	59	22 (149)	n.a.	n.a.
Saskatchewan	52.3	32.4 (111)						
Alberta	53.4	25.9 (193)	53	39	53	37 (159)	50	43



B.C.	52.2	33.3 (270)	55	32	60	26 (139)	62	26
Canada	54.0	32.7 (2,705)	50	35 (2,288)	50	35 (1,839)	60	32

Sources: National Election Study, 1979; CROP: Radio-Canada, 1979, 1980; CCU, 1983.

Item: (A) When you think of *your* government, which government comes to mind, the government of Canada or the government of (name province)?  
(B) Aside from the party in power, when you think of *your* . . . ? (1980 only)

**TABLE 6-6 Perceptions of Federal and Provincial Power**

Perceived Power — Provincial Government	Perceived Power — Federal Government			
	Too Much	About Right	Too Little	
Too Much	39.6%	20.2%	30.8%	29.5%
About Right	33.9	69.8	43.0	52.0
Too Little	26.5	10.0	26.2	18.5
	43.6%	48.3	8.1	(2,905)

Source: Quality of Life, 1977.

Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Item: Some groups in Canada have more power than others to get the things they want. I am going to read you a list of groups and would like you to tell me if you think each one has too much power for the good of the country, too little power for the good of the country, or about the right amount of power. Please use the answers on this card.

Much Too Much Power 1	Too Much Power 2	About Right 3	Too Little Power 4	Much Too Little Power 5	Depends 7	DK 8
... b The government of this province. ...						
... h The federal government in Ottawa. ...						

DK = don't know.

**TABLE 6-7 Attitudes to Intergovernmental Toughness**

(A) Ottawa Tougher with Provinces	(B) Province Tougher with Ottawa?				
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Strongly agree	31.0%	21.7%	35.6%	31.7%	26.7%
Somewhat agree	23.0	36.3	48.3	27.8	28.7
Somewhat disagree	22.4	30.4	34.4	17.2	26.3
Strongly disagree	23.7	11.6	13.7	23.3	18.3
	41.8%	30.2	17.3	10.7	(1,679)

Source: CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

Note: Figure do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Item: (A) It's time the federal government got tougher with the provinces.

(B) See Table 2-4.

**TABLE 6-8 Support in Intergovernmental Disputes**

Province	Government Supported				(N)
	Provincial	Federal	Both	Neither	
B.C.	56.3%	21.5	18.8	3.5	(144)
Alberta	52.5%	32.5	10.0	5.0	(120)
Saskatchewan	77.7%	16.2	4.6	0.8	(130)
Manitoba	50.5%	38.7	7.2	2.7	(111)
Ontario	34.6%	54.4	8.3	2.7	(373)
Quebec	44.8%	48.8	5.2	1.2	(326)
New Brunswick	62.7%	25.5	9.8	1.0	(102)
Nova Scotia	72.9%	17.7	7.3	2.1	(96)
P.E.I.	67.3%	25.7	6.9	1.0	(101)
Newfoundland	54.9%	24.4	19.5	1.2	(82)
Canada	52.1%	37.0	8.6	2.3	(1,610)

*Source:* CROP: Senate Reform 1983.

*Note:* Figures do not add to 100% due to rounding.

*Item:* If, in the years to come, serious conflicts developed between the government of (respondent's province) and the Government of Canada, which one would you be most inclined to support?

never trivial, and the federal choice is the plurality one in Central Canada. The margin is smaller in Quebec than in Ontario, but still lies in the same direction. The strength of federal support in Quebec is striking in light of conflicts between that province's government and Ottawa.<sup>3</sup>

General questions on the division of powers and on intergovernmental conflict carry two messages. First, on these general questions, support is tilted toward the provinces. This is more so in some provinces than in others, and the pattern of differences among provinces is not always what élite conflict leads us to expect. Even provincial samples that are relatively supportive of Ottawa are not very supportive in an absolute sense. At this general level, then, provinces enjoy a major political resource. Their demands for jurisdiction resonate with a general provincialist orientation in the mass public.

The second message prefigures much of what follows in this chapter. Respondents can be moved to give federalist responses, provided that the question is properly framed. Thus we see that many respondents who urge their provincial government to "get tough" with Ottawa also urge Ottawa to take the same line with the provinces. Ottawa gets more support in the event of a conflict than response about the division of powers might lead us to predict. And most Canadians see Ottawa as "their" government. The federalist tilt in some of these items only mitigates the general provincialist orientation in these data. But that federalist counterpoint warns us against reading too much into the distribution of response to any one question about the division of powers or about intergovernmental conflict. This warning is amplified by response to the specific policy items.

## Attitudes on Jurisdiction over Specific Policy Areas

Does Canadians' apparent provincialism in response to abstract or general questions imply a similar provincialism on concrete or specific policy questions? Evidence from other countries should caution us against expecting too simple a correspondence between abstract and concrete or between general and particular. Most of the evidence on this relationship will come from the *Decima Quarterly Report*. This section begins by setting attitudes on jurisdiction against the background of confidence in the federal government. Then will come evidence on the regional structure, to the extent that there is any, in these jurisdictional attitudes.<sup>4</sup>

Table 6-9 records opinions on primary responsibility for each of nine areas, in response to questions asked in spring 1982. The policy areas are ranked from highest to lowest frequency of attributed federal responsi-

**TABLE 6-9 Expenditure Responsibilities by Confidence in the Federal Government, Spring 1982**

Policy Area		Total	Confidence in the Federal Government			
			Hardly	Any	Only Some	A Great Deal
Unemployment insurance	%Fed.	61	63		59	56
	%Prov.	27	23		29	36
Pensions	%Fed.	57	57		58	50
	%Prov.	21	18		23	29
Elderly care	%Fed.	48	50		46	49
	%Prov.	40	38		43	42
Environmental protection	%Fed.	48	51		47	39
	%Prov.	36	34		37	45
Welfare	%Fed.	44	44		45	38
	%Prov.	44	44		44	54
Business	%Fed.	39	41		39	30
	%Prov.	29	30		28	30
Health care	%Fed.	35	34		34	38
	%Prov.	56	55		56	57
Job retraining	%Fed.	35	31		34	36
	%Prov.	39	43		38	27
Post-secondary education	%Fed.	28	26		29	29
	%Prov.	42	40		44	46
(N)		(1,500)	(605)		(660)	(205)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: For some time now, there has been a great deal of discussion about who should have the primary responsibility of paying for a number of areas that are important to society. I am going to read a list of some of these areas, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, who you think should have the primary responsibility of paying for them: federal government, provincial government, private sector or individual.

**TABLE 6-10 Opinions on Intergovernmental Transfers, by Confidence in the Federal Government, Fall 1981**

Transfer		Confidence			
		Hardly	Any	Only Some	Great Deal
Post-secondary education	% Increase	70		72	66
	% Decrease	11		9	11
Health services	% Increase	74		71	66
	% Decrease	9		9	7
Equalization	% Increase	61		59	63
	% Decrease	14		12	11
(N)		(605)		(660)	(205)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: At the present time, the federal government provides money for a variety of provincial government programmes. Do you think the amount of money which the federal government gives to the provincial government to pay for [programme] should be increased or decreased?

bility. A ranking from most to least provincial responsibility would not simply reflect the federal ranking, as "the private sector" or "individuals" can also appear as responses. Where there is an interesting non-governmental story, I shall mention it; otherwise, to save space, non-governmental choices do not appear in Table 6-9.

Table 6-9 recapitulates the existing division of power: respondents tend to assign responsibility to the government which already has it. Opinion is most divided on policy questions over which jurisdiction is itself divided. The questions in which the sum of federal and provincial response is the smallest are ones in which there is already a major non-governmental component: post-secondary education (tuition fees); job retraining (on-the-job training, including apprenticeship); pensions (private plans); and helping businesses (which presumably help themselves). Whether the federal-provincial and the implicit private-public distributions indicate opinion about the wisdom of the current arrangements or simply respondents' ability to identify those arrangements, without judgment on their wisdom, is not clear. Whatever the table means, it does *not* make an obvious case for the intergovernmental transfer of power in either direction.

The rest of the table relates the level to which responsibility is attributed to confidence in the federal government. If any relationship exists, it is negative: the less confidence respondents have in the federal government, the more they think that the federal government has primary responsibility. In many of the areas, confidence in the federal government produces support for *provincial* responsibility.<sup>5</sup>

The message is reinforced in Table 6-10, which deals with intergovernmental transfers. Confidence in the federal government has a weak negative relationship to support for increased fiscal transfers for post-

**TABLE 6-11 Control of Offshore Oil by Confidence  
in the Federal Government**

Confidence	Fall 1981			Summer 1982		
	Federal	Both	Provincial	Federal	Both	Provincial
Hardly any	37%	18	42	36%	9	51
Only some	44%	20	31	48%	11	37
Great deal	52%	19	27	66%	7	21
Total	42%	19	35	44%	10	42
(N)	(605)	(660)	(205)	(653)	(720)	(111)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: Now, on the topic of the control of offshore oil and gas resources. . . . Who do you think should have control over offshore oil and gas resources? . . . [rotate] the provincial governments or the federal government?

secondary education and health care. Confidence is unrelated to opinions about equalization.

Control of offshore oil evokes a seemingly more coherent response. Opinion is closely divided in the total sample, according to Table 6-11. Confidence is strongly related to belief that the federal government should control the offshore. The relationship between confidence and this belief sharpens as the offshore-oil dispute intensifies, from fall 1981 to summer 1982.

Table 6-12 spells out the regional structure of attitudes on primary responsibility for specific policies. In most areas the regional differences are not striking. A net reversal of direction between regions appears for only two issues: environmental protection and offshore oil. On environmental questions, Quebec residents favour the province by a small margin; elsewhere the federal government is favoured by about the same margin. On offshore oil the conflict was sharper, especially in 1982. Ontario stands out sensibly as much the most centralist region. Quebec moves from balanced opinion, with above average "No opinion" and "Both" shares, to a near-majority centralist position. Over the same interval, the Atlantic and Western provinces moved to stronger opposition to federal control. The rest of the regional differences are variations on a generally common theme. On post-secondary education, British Columbia and Quebec might seem at first to be the most strongly provincialist. But neither province has a below-average federal-responsibility share. Instead, both have the smallest proportions of respondents saying that individuals should bear the cost. On health care, Quebec is more provincialist than the other regions, but no other region is majority federalist. Quebec is the least centralist on pensions, but even in that province most respondents give the federal government priority. Does this pattern say something about the visibility of the Quebec Pension Plan or about the inevitable interlocking of pension decisions across orders of government? Ontario respondents are the least likely to

**TABLE 6-12 Primary Responsibility by Region, Spring 1982**

Region	Primary Responsibility					
	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.	% Fed.	% Prov.
	<b>Post-Secondary Education</b>		<b>Health Care</b>		<b>Job Retraining</b>	
B.C.	28	48	40	50	31	45
Prairies	26	41	34	56	29	42
Ontario	26	34	35	52	30	41
Quebec	33	51	27	69	38	32
Atlantic	27	40	52	40	39	42
	<b>Welfare</b>		<b>Help Business</b>		<b>Pensions</b>	
B.C.	42	47	42	33	67	15
Prairies	48	40	39	32	62	17
Ontario	44	43	39	29	59	14
Quebec	43	49	37	26	48	36
Atlantic	43	45	37	31	57	18
	<b>Unemployment Insurance</b>		<b>Elderly Care</b>		<b>Environmental Protection</b>	
B.C.	64	26	47	42	47	40
Prairies	60	26	50	38	49	30
Ontario	54	27	45	39	55	30
Quebec	67	29	52	45	38	47
Atlantic	63	23	48	35	49	34
	<b>Offshore Oil (Fall, 81)</b>		<b>Offshore Oil (Fall, 82)</b>		<b>(N)</b>	
B.C.	35	45	30	52	(161)	
Prairies	36	40	29	59	(248)	
Ontario	56	22	57	30	(540)	
Quebec	38	37	49	35	(408)	
Atlantic	22	56	22	64	(143)	

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Items: See Table 2-9.

accord the federal government primary responsibility for unemployment insurance. For Ontarians, the alternative to Ottawa is not the province, however, but individuals themselves.

Citizens' feelings about federal and provincial power seem to shift dramatically as they move from the general to the specific. It could be, as I have already noted, that many respondents treat the specific questions as a factual quiz. Even so, the questions as formulated do not bring out a detailed program of decentralization. The *prima facie* case is that Canadians are generally content with the existing division of powers. Where opinion is closely divided, so is jurisdiction. Few questions divide regions from one another, although differences of degree exist. The only truly sharp interregional disagreement in these data is over control of offshore oil.

## **The Importance of the Federal Agenda**

A theme in the federal government's declining popular standing has been Ottawa's irrelevance to Canadians' daily concerns. In this script, Ottawa bureaucrats spend their time thinking up costly, but fundamentally unnecessary, things to do, while the real work of government takes place in the provincial capitals and in the municipalities. Do survey respondents see the policy world in this way? What issues do they perceive as important, and whom do they want to address those issues?

Once again, two lines of questioning seem pertinent. Various surveys have posed general questions which reflect the rhetoric of debates about which government is more important. Such questions typically ask, with no context, which government has more impact on the respondent's life. But respondents have also been asked about the importance of particular issues. The issue questions typically do not cue the respondent about which government is responsible for the issues in question, but in labelling issues as important or unimportant, respondents are implicitly attaching importance to the governments responsible for each issue. Once again, specific response about issues diverges from general response about governments.

Table 6-13 records response, taken from the 1974 and 1979 National Election Studies, on the order of government deemed most important. In the total sample, the federal and provincial governments receive about equal shares. This "level pegging" masks provincial differences: the federal government seems most important to Ontarians and, to a lesser extent, to the residents of the Atlantic provinces. In Quebec and the West, the provincial government is clearly considered more important.

Now consider response about specific issues. The most telling evidence has already appeared, in Tables 4-1 and 4-2, above. Recall from these tables that emphasis shifts between inflation and unemployment, following on movement in the corresponding macroeconomic indicators, and that one or the other of these phenomena is always the most frequently mentioned problem. Together, clear majorities (at least since the early 1960s) cite economic problems as the most important.

Unemployment and inflation, however, are pre-eminently federal issues. They are freely conceded to be problems for Ottawa even by provincial premiers who are otherwise eager to assert jurisdiction. There is no direct time-series evidence that respondents see jurisdiction this way, but there is confirmatory cross-sectional evidence. The 1974 and 1979 National Election Studies include questions on responsibility for economic policy. In 1974, respondents were asked who is responsible for management of the economy. Seventy-one percent believed that only the federal government is responsible, 22 percent attributed joint responsibility to the federal and provincial governments, and only 7 percent



assigned responsibility exclusively to the provinces. In 1979, respondents were asked whether or not the federal government had a role in maintaining full employment and price stability. In each case, over 90 percent said yes. Most respondents, however, disapproved of the government's handling of each of these responsibilities.<sup>6</sup>

The same picture emerges in an especially telling way from the 1979-80 British Columbia Election Study. In that study, respondents were first asked to pick the three issues which were most important to themselves. They were then asked who should be responsible for handling each of their three important issues. Inflation and unemployment predominated, although not as overwhelmingly as in the more stringent Gallup-Decima single-issue format. Nearly 60 percent named inflation as one of the three issues, a preponderance consistent with the one 1979 Gallup reading in Table 4-1, above. About one-third of the sample gave unemployment as one of the three issues. Of respondents mentioning inflation, about one in two assigned responsibility exclusively to Ottawa. Most of the others offered combinations of responsibility which included the federal government. Only 7 percent attributed exclusive responsibility to the province. Unemployment in the British Columbia sample yields a more chequered pattern: 36 percent of those who had mentioned unemployment assigned exclusive responsibility to the federal government, while 17 percent assigned it to the province. Again, most other respondents argued for some combination of governments.<sup>7</sup>

Table 6-14 brings out, with B.C. Study data, the contradiction within individuals between general emphases on governments and specific emphases on issues. In this table the unit of analysis is the response; there are roughly three times as many responses as respondents. In answer to a general question, nearly half the British Columbia sample says that the provincial government makes the greatest impact on their lives. British Columbians are among the most likely respondents, according to Table 6-13, to make such provincialist claims. Yet when British Columbians are caught off guard, as it were, even they admit the primacy of the federal government's agenda. On specific policies, the federal government is the most frequently mentioned single government. This is so even among respondents who say that the government with the greatest impact on their lives is the provincial government.

### **A Plague on Both Your Houses?**

Could it be that questions about the division of power among governments and about the importance of each order mask feelings about governments as such? The general questions on the division of power hinted at this, notably in Table 6-6. In this section I shall examine Decima data on taxing and spending and on regulatory matters. As in the earlier sections, I shall move from general to particular.

TABLE 6-13 Importance of Government Levels

Province	Level Important			
	NES 1974		NES 1979	
	Federal	Provincial	Combination	Combination
B.C.	24.8%	44.7 (246)	30.5	47.9 (261) 24.1
Alberta	32.1%	44.2 (165)	23.7	42.9 (191) 36.7
Saskatchewan	27.6%	38.8 (98)	33.6	54.1 (109) 24.8
Manitoba	26.8%	34.8 (112)	38.4	39.8 (120) 26.7
Ontario	44.0%	23.5 (672)	32.5	24.8 (719) 32.7
Quebec	30.7%	34.0 (623)	35.3	40.1 (715) 34.3
New Brunswick	32.0%	31.3 (128)	36.7	27.5 (144) 39.2
Nova Scotia	31.0%	26.3 (171)	42.7	26.0 (185) 31.5
P.E.I.	26.9%	37.6 (93)	35.5	34.6 (107) 24.1

Newfoundland	39.8%	35.2 (88)	25.0	30.2%	50.9 (108)	18.9
Canada	33.9%	32.6 (2,396)	33.5	32.6%	36.1 (2,584)	31.3

*Source:* National Election Studies, 1974, 1979.

*Item:* As far as you are concerned personally, which government is more important in affecting how you and your family get on, the one in Ottawa, the provincial government here in [province] or the local government here in ( . . . )?

**TABLE 6-14 Responsibilities for Important Issues, by Level Seen as Having Most Impact**

(A) Who is Responsible for Important Issue	(B) Government with Most Impact				
	Federal (%)	Provincial (%)	Local (%)	Combinations (%)	Total (%)
Federal	46.2	39.2	36.7	35.2	39.6
Provincial	15.8	21.8	17.2	14.1	17.9
Local	1.3	2.8	8.3	1.8	2.5
Private citizens	4.0	4.5	3.3	4.6	4.3
Federal and provincial	15.0	13.5	11.7	18.2	14.9
Other or combinations of above	17.7	18.3	22.8	26.0	20.6
(N)	(747)	(1,374)	(180)	(735)	(3,153)

Source: *B.C. Election Study*.

Item: (A) Who should be responsible for handling this matter, the federal government in Ottawa, the provincial government in Victoria, your local government, private citizens like yourself, or some other group?

(B) As far as you are concerned personally, which government has more of an effect on you and your family, the federal government in Ottawa, the provincial one here in B.C., or the local government in this area?

**TABLE 6-15 Means for Deficit Reduction**

Date	Raise Taxes	Reduce Services	Neither	Both	DK; NA	(N)
Fall 1982	20%	65	9	5	1	(1,415)
Fall 1983	30%	53	11	6	0	(1,434)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: Governments are considering two different ways of reducing their deficits . . . by increasing taxes or by reducing the services which they provide. Which way do you think governments should reduce their deficits: increase taxes or reduce services?

DK = don't know.

NA = not ascertained.

Decima asked one straightforward question on the trade-off between taxes and services, in fall 1982. According to Table 6-15, a clear majority of respondents say that services should be cut rather than that taxes should be raised. This may be a high point for anti-tax sentiment; the question was put in a quarter when interest rates were very high, although falling, and the squeeze on personal budgets was particularly intense. On the other hand, as the recent recession began in this quarter, we might have expected strong support for maintaining public services. Nevertheless, our one general reading of fiscal opinion suggests that aversion to taxes outweighs demand for services by over three to one.

What about more specific policy matters? Table 6-16 gives evidence for ten policy areas from fall 1982. Here the question is whether the

**TABLE 6-16 Approval of Specific Services Cuts by General Attitude to Taxes and Services, Fall 1982**

Service Cuts	How to Reduce Deficits				Total (%)
	Increase Taxes (%)	Reduce Services (%)	Neither (%)	Both (%)	
Student aid	17	24	25	13	22
Reduce UIC eligibility	44	55	34	46	50
Postal service	51	58	48	58	55
Health-care access	10	13	4	9	12
R&D support	32	40	31	29	37
Family Allowance (cancel)	13	25	9	13	21
Job spending	21	33	25	30	30
Rail/ferry service	37	43	24	33	40
Public service	71	87	83	63	83
Support for CBC	48	52	47	39	50
(N)	(297)	(970)	(131)	(81)	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: Entry is percentage approving cut.

Item: Now I'm going to read you a list of ways in which governments could cut their spending in order to reduce their deficits and I'd like you to tell me whether you would approve or disapprove of each one, if making that spending cut could significantly help to reduce government deficits. How about . . . ? Would you approve or disapprove of government doing that in order to reduce deficits?

respondent would approve of service cuts in the policy area to help reduce the overall deficit. Respondents are not asked to rank services against a fixed budget line, but only to approve or disapprove service cuts *seriatim*. The table includes a cross-tabulation of specific policies against the general disposition to raise taxes or cut services. Of the 10 areas, five seem sacrosanct. Little support exists for cuts in student aid, health care, research and development support, family allowances, job creation, and rail and ferry services. At the other extreme, cutting the size of the public service receives almost unanimous support. In between comes response to items about unemployment insurance, the post office, and the CBC. The unemployment insurance question is couched in terms of eligibility, not of benefits. As we saw in Chapter 4, respondents feel very differently about these two aspects of the program. A small majority favours post-office cuts. It is not clear whether this represents a real willingness to sacrifice the service or a simple hostility to postal workers and a general perception of poor service. Considering the opprobrium usually visited on the CBC, that only half the sample approves cuts in support for the Corporation comes as a surprise.

Feelings about specific services are related only weakly to the general disposition relating to raising taxes or cutting spending. The weakest associations are for the CBC and health care. The strongest are for

**TABLE 6-17 Desired Levels of Government Activity**

Policy Area	Date	% More	% Less
Aid to unemployed	Spring 1981	36	42
	Spring 1983	49	25
Aid to the poor	Spring 1981	84	7
	Spring 1983	78	7
Aid to handicapped	Spring 1981	90	2
Aid to aboriginal people	Spring 1981	54	29
	Spring 1983	45	31
Aid to women	Spring 1981	62	19
	Spring 1983	55	18
Aid to immigrants	Spring 1981	35	43
	Spring 1983	27	46
Aid to physically handicapped	Spring 1981	93	2
Aid to senior citizens	Spring 1981	89	4
	Spring 1983	81	6

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Item:* Many different individuals and groups receive social services and benefits from government. I'd like to read a list of some of these groups to you and have you tell me, from your perspective, whether each of these groups should receive more or less social services and benefits from government than they do now. Would you say (name of group) should receive more or less social services and benefits from the government than they do now?

Unemployment Insurance, the Family Allowance, and the Public Service. No net difference of specific-program direction appears among respondents with different general dispositions on service cuts. Specific-program differences are only of degree. Thus much of the opposition to specific-service cuts must come from respondents who favour cuts in the abstract.

Table 6-17 gives evidence on desired levels of government activity in each of eight areas. A clear rank order exists of perceived moral claim to services. The poor, the physically handicapped, and senior citizens are deemed by nearly every respondent to deserve more assistance. From spring 1981 to spring 1983, opinion becomes a shade less consensual, but the pro-assistance majority remains overwhelming. At the other extreme are immigrants, who never command majority support for assistance, and whose perceived claim also weakens from 1981 to 1983. In between are women and aboriginal people. In each year, more respondents favour more assistance to women and aboriginals than favour less assistance; again, however, support for this assistance shrinks over the two years. The only group whose claim seems to strengthen is the unemployed. A small plurality favoured reducing unemployment assistance in 1981. By 1983, the share for increased assistance was twice that for reduced

**TABLE 6-18 Funding of Medical Services, Fall 1983**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
<b>(A) Is Funding Inadequate</b>				
11%	56	27	4	1
<b>(B) User Fees</b>				
6%	31	35	28	1
<b>(C) Extra Billing</b>				
3%	17	40	40	0
<b>Higher Taxes</b>		<b>User Fees</b>		<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>(D) Higher Taxes versus User Fees</b>				
47%		49		4

Note:  $N = 1,434$

Items: (A) As you are probably aware, there has been some discussion lately about the funding of health care in Canada. Some people say that the current level of funding is inadequate to maintain the current level of standards of health care. Would you say you strongly agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement?

(B) Some provinces have allowed and other provinces are considering allowing the introduction of special charges to people who use health care services. One type of special charge is called a user fee. That is, where people who are hospitalized are charged a small daily fee in addition to their regular health care premiums. Generally speaking, do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of charging user fees as a way of providing additional funding?

(C) How about extra billing by doctors? That is, where doctors charge more for their services, and the patient has to pay the difference between what the doctor charges and what the province's health care system allows in its fee schedules. Do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of extra billings as a way of providing additional funding for doctor's services?

(D) We have just talked of some of the different methods of providing additional funding for health care services. If you were given a choice, which would you rather do to provide more funding for health care: pay higher taxes to support the health care system or pay user fees when you use medical services?

assistance. Unemployment insurance opinion evidently moves with the business cycle.

So far, we have not confronted items which dramatize the impact of new spending on the level of taxation. Decima did, however, effect such a juxtaposition for spending on health care. It is claimed that health care enjoys especially deep support. Medicare and hospitalization schemes are quintessential social insurance programs, with only incidental redistributive effects. The life-or-death quality of at least some medical decisions moves Canadians to resist subjecting such decisions to market tests. Table 6-18, however, paints a more complicated picture. According to Panel A, twice as many Canadians agree as disagree that health care is funded inadequately. User fees for hospital services are opposed by over a 6:4 margin. Extra billing by doctors is opposed by a 4:1 margin. So far, we seem to have an unequivocal vote for more tax money and no more

private expenditures to support health care. However, when respondents are asked if they would actually be prepared to pay higher taxes to avoid user fees, response is split down the middle. Support for the higher-tax option is substantial, to be sure, but dramatically less than seemed to be implied by the context-free item about user fees. And some of the resistance to user fees may come from individuals who want to see funds transferred to health care from other spending areas, with no overall increase in tax liabilities. Unfortunately, Decima juxtaposed higher taxes only to user fees. We have no corresponding question for higher taxes versus extra billing for physicians' services. My guess would be that a similar weakening of resistance to extra billing would emerge. But antipathy to extra billing is so one-sided that even some erosion of the opposition would still probably leave opponents in a clear majority.

Attitudes on fiscal questions are clearly mixed. At the most general level, most respondents want no more of their income taken in taxes and are willing to countenance service cuts. At the most specific level, however, most respondents oppose most service cuts. Respondents even advocate more assistance to a number of categorical groups. The strongest pro-cut sentiment is directed toward the public service itself. When support for specific expenditures is pitted directly against resistance to higher taxes, the results probably fall between the extremes. We have direct evidence on only one such confrontation of taxing and spending.

Our data on taxing and spending dramatize a problem which pervades survey evidence on public opinion: it is folly to act on only one reading of opinion in a domain, especially if that opinion, whether it be general or specific, is evoked in a relatively context-free way. With opinion on several areas, we can derive a rough rank order of claims to fiscal resources, but we can say little, if anything, about whether or not citizens would accept the burden of paying more taxes if they really knew what services they would otherwise have to surrender.

Do attitudes to regulation follow those relating to taxing and spending? General antipathy to regulation, according to Table 6-19, is not as widespread as opposition to higher taxes. A slightly larger number of respondents disagree than agree that fewer regulations would be beneficial. Deregulation sentiment has a weak regional structure. The most pro-deregulation regions are the Prairie and the Atlantic provinces. Quebec and British Columbia favour deregulation the least. Differences among regions are dwarfed, however, by divisions within each region.

Response to this 1980 question may be dated; the recession and weak recovery of later quarters may have decreased support for regulation. Table 6-20 suggests that this is so. Although no evidence appears for the general attitude, the percentage calling for more regulation in specific areas always shrinks from 1980 to 1982. Even after the shrinkage, however, majorities favour more regulation in everything except the collec-



**TABLE 6-19 General Attitude to Regulation, Summer 1980**

	Attitude to Less Regulation			(N)
	Less in Public Interest	No Opinion	More in Public Interest	
B.C.	52	8	40	(161)
Prairies	46	9	45	(248)
Ontario	50	8	43	(540)
Quebec	53	9	37	(408)
Atlantic	42	10	48	(143)
Canada	49	9	42	(1,500)

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Item: If private enterprise and business were less regulated by government, do you think companies would work less in the people's best interests or more in the people's best interests?

**TABLE 6-20 Favour/Oppose More Government Control**

Area	Date	% Favour	% Oppose
Advertising	Summer 1980	55	38
	Summer 1982	48	45
Environmental standards	Summer 1980	86	9
	Summer 1982	80	15
Health and safety standards	Summer 1980	90	6
	Summer 1982	83	14
Corporate profits	Summer 1980	59	30
	Summer 1982	52	39
Collection of vital personal statistics	Summer 1980	39	50
Financial and business statistics	Summer 1980	61	29
Employee standards and regulations	Summer 1980	72	20
Labour-union activity	Summer 1980	67	26
	Summer 1982	58	35

Source: *Decima Quarterly Report*.

Note: N = 1,500.

Item: Generally speaking, would you favour or oppose greater government control over . . . ?

tion of vital personal statistics.<sup>8</sup> Where the regulation is imposed on some third party or is believed to serve some widely approved goal, such as health or safety, support for the regulatory activity remains widespread.

As with attitudes on taxing and spending, general attitudes on regulation translate into specific attitudes only weakly, as Table 6-21 indicates. The strongest relationship between general and specific attitudes is for

**TABLE 6-21 Regulation-General Disposition by Specific Areas,  
Summer 1980**

Regulation Area	General Disposition on Regulation			$\tau_b$
	Favour Less Regulation	No Opinion	Favour More Regulation	
Advertising	50%	56	59	0.092
Environment	82%	84	89	0.109
Health/safety	88%	87	93	0.077
Corporate profits	53%	53	65	0.110
Personal statistics	38%	28	41	0.037
Financial/business statistics	56%	49	67	0.100
Employee standards	69%	66	76	0.070
Unions	64%	62	70	0.068

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Note:* Entry is percentage favouring regulation;  $N = 1,500$ .

*Items:* See Table 2-16 and Table 2-17.

the environment, corporate profits, and for financial and business statistics. No reversal on a specific question occurs as one moves from general approval to general disapproval of regulation.

Attitudes to regulation, then, correspond somewhat to attitudes to taxing and spending. Certainly, more support exists for specific kinds of regulation than for regulation in general, just as most individual spending programs elicit more support than does the general idea of government spending. But regulation as a general attitudinal object does not elicit the one-sided antipathy that government spending as a general object evokes.

## Some Implications

The most striking phenomenon in this chapter is the divergence between general and specific. The divergence reappears in several guises. General questions tend to yield anti-federal government response, although the opposite tendency can be shaped, within the general-attitude domain, by appropriately worded stimuli. More specific questions produce opinions which are neutral, or even pro-federal, on jurisdictional questions; response actually tends to follow existing jurisdictional lines. Abstract questions also evoke antipathy to government as such, regardless of its order. But little antipathy to government as such emerges from the specific policy questions. The clearest exception proves the rule: respondents are ready to sacrifice public sector payrolls.

It is tempting to believe that opinion about concrete programs is somehow more real and less manipulable than sentiment about government in the abstract. In support of this contention, we might refer to the first section of this chapter, which showed how apparently contradictory general responses could be evoked by oppositely worded stimuli. At the same time, the resilience of existing programs with entrenched clienteles

is a staple of political commentary. In various American states, in the U.S. federal government, and in British Columbia, however, programs with seemingly strong support have met sudden death. Whether anti-tax sentiment or antipathy to the public service as the embodiment of an overweening state can be translated into a politically successful policy depends on control of the mass political agenda and, thus, on the successful manipulation of the public's perception of what the issue "really" is: is laying off public employees seen as necessary restraint, or is it seen as reducing access to highly valued services? A similar attitudinal tension underpinned the apparent shifts of opinion in California over taxes and services, from the overwhelming success of Proposition 13 to the similarly overwhelming failure of its kindred Proposition 9 two years later (Sears and Citrin, 1982). Other states saw similar campaigns as California, although none exhibited reversals quite as dramatic as occurred in that state.

Similar considerations apply to disputes between the federal government and the provinces. Attempts by the federal government to build support through general appeals to patriotism and the national interest find some echoes in this chapter's data. Survey respondents do, after all, tend to respond with a national orientation to questions that are themselves worded in national terms. Nevertheless, the federal government might be even better advised simply to get on with its job. Although the case is not airtight, survey respondents do seem to agree with the existing division of powers. In addition, survey after survey confirms the pre-eminence in voters' minds of economic concerns, concerns which clearly lie in the federal government's domain.

## **Recapitulation**

1. General questions on conflict and on the division of powers between the federal government and the provinces yield ambiguous results. Questions inviting provincialist response tend to receive overwhelming endorsement. Majorities agree that provincial governments are more responsive than the federal government and, accordingly, that provinces should have more power, and that Ottawa should have less. In most provinces, majorities would support the provincial government in a conflict with Ottawa. Overwhelming majorities in each province agree that their provincial government should "get tough" with the federal government. But majorities in most provinces also see the federal government as "their" government and agree that Ottawa should "get tough" with the provinces. Some of the jurisdictional and conflict questions mask a more generalized rejection of government, regardless of its order.

2. Opinion on specific policies and programs yields a more subtle picture. Opinions on the federal and provincial responsibility for policy

tend to reflect the existing division of powers. Opinion is divided where jurisdiction is also divided. Differences among provinces on most of these questions are weak. Confidence in the federal government is, if anything, *inversely* related to belief that Ottawa should be responsible for a policy area. Respondents may believe that they are being tested for general knowledge. Even so, data on specific policies do not contain an obvious mandate for change in the division of powers.

3. Although provincial governments are widely believed to have the most impact on citizens' lives, the policy questions which survey respondents deem most important are squarely within the federal government brief. Since 1970, at least, either unemployment or inflation is most frequently mentioned as the greatest problem. The joint share of unemployment and inflation hardly ever goes below 50 percent and sometimes approaches 80 percent of response to "greatest problem" questions. Survey respondents evidently share the official view that responsibility for macroeconomic policy lies with the federal government. In sum, the federal government is seen in the abstract as relatively unimportant, yet is expected to tackle the issues that are most important to Canadians.

4. Opinion about government as such echoes opinion on the division of power. In the abstract, Canadians do not want to pay any more taxes and are willing to sacrifice services to balance the budget. Yet Canadians support most specific services. They are especially supportive of the most expensive programs, the entitlement schemes. The fragment of evidence on willingness to pay higher taxes to support a particular program, hospital services, suggests a saw-off. We can only speculate what such a juxtaposition would yield for other spending programs. Attitudes to regulation show something of the same divergence as do attitudes toward taxing and spending. Even in the abstract, however, Canadians exhibit little stylized antipathy to regulation.



### **Conclusions:** *Contradictory Majorities and the Politics of Confidence*

This book began with an apparently simple question: how much support does the federal government enjoy? The answer has proved to be formidably complex. Support has many sources, means many things, and has very mixed implications for a government's ability to act. Moreover, in virtually every chapter, majority support for one side of an issue could be countered by majority support for the other side of the same, or of a closely related, issue.

This chapter addresses the implications of these contradictions for the study of political confidence. To begin, should we even take seriously the apparently contradictory majorities? There is a powerful argument in the study of public opinion that says we should not. The chapter begins by reviewing this argument and the major counter-arguments. I maintain that even if a substantial proportion of the apparent divergences are artifacts of non-attitudes or of measurement error, the proportion that is real is still politically significant. Contradictory majorities in survey response mirror a central process in both elite and mass politics: the struggle for the control of the agenda. In this struggle, the many kinds of support and opposition revealed in public opinion surveys are valuable resources. The chapter concludes with an account of the way in which these resources are mobilized.

#### **Ideological Constraint in Mass Publics**

Contradictory majorities in Canadian public opinion data could be more apparent than real. Respondents' movement from one side of an issue to the other could stem from two sources, neither of which indicates the operation of substantive reasoning about policy. One source is the

simple absence of opinion in the majority of cases. The second source is error in the measure; even individuals with real, stable and consistent underlying attitudes will respond somewhat randomly to poorly worded items. These individuals may truly be responding to divergences in the wording of items or to changes in the political context within which a given item is posed.

The debate over attitudes and non-attitudes originates with Converse (1964; 1970). Converse found that opinions on different, but ideologically related, issues correlated only weakly from item to item. In a three-wave panel survey, response by the same individuals to the same items over two-year intervals was very unstable. Most striking of all was the finding that the weak correlations over the two-year interval did not become any weaker for responses separated by four years. Converse took this finding to indicate that the survey population fell into two camps. The smaller camp consisted of respondents with real attitudes; these real attitudes never changed. The other camp consisted of respondents with no attitudes; their responses could adventitiously appear stable, but all change, as measured, was random.<sup>1</sup> Converse concluded from this that analysts should not impute *systems* of beliefs to mass publics. Most people most of the time simply did not think about politics, and such thoughts as they had were not connected to one another.

Not everyone was persuaded that the problem lay with the mass public. Nie (1974) and Nie, Verba, and Petrocik (1976) pinned the blame on the élite politics of the period in which Converse's survey data were collected, the later 1950s. As the somnolence of that decade yielded to the conflict of the 1960s, ideological constraint, as indicated by correlations among separate issue items, increased. The mass public, in this view, is capable of thinking about issues, but requires an initial stimulus from politicians and political activists.

However attractive this argument might seem, it could not hold water. The years over which Nie and his colleagues observed increases in ideological constraint, as measured, were also ones over which the measures themselves changed. The change in the measures accounted for all of the observed increase in constraint (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1978; Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuchfarber, 1978a; 1978b). The sensitivity of correlations to measures suggested that some of what Converse interpreted as the random fluctuation of non-attitudes was, in fact, only the humdrum product of measurement error.

This was the explicit conclusion of Achen (1975) and Erikson (1979). The three waves of Converse's survey permitted Achen and Erikson to estimate the amount of error variance in the measures. This estimation could be used, in turn, to correct the original estimates of correlations between measures for the attenuation resulting from measurement error. After correction for attenuation, the mass public could be made to look ideologically quite constrained in its attitudes, even in the low-temperature 1950s.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever the relative merits of each party to this debate, each concedes that response divergence among items is something to be explained away. It can represent non-attitudes, apathy or measurement error. In rehabilitating the mass public, Achen and Erikson went only as far as demonstrating that earlier work had overestimated the amount of divergence. They did not address the response divergence that remained. A provocative attempt to confront the divergence directly is made by Zaller (1984).<sup>3</sup>

Imagine with Zaller that a survey respondent carries about a bundle of considerations that pertain to an issue. Some respondents have more such considerations than others; some have none at all. A survey stimulus will engage only some of the considerations in its domain. The number of considerations engaged depends on the complexity of the stimulus and the sophistication of the respondent. The exact relationship between either stimulus complexity or respondent sophistication, on the one hand, and the stability or apparent consistency of attitudes, on the other, may be highly convoluted.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, we should positively expect individual Canadians to appear to contradict themselves on political questions. Canadian society is not divided into clearly demarcated ideological camps. Some provinces, notably Quebec and British Columbia, may exhibit a more ideologically constrained style than others. But, in the main, Canada resembles the United States in the multiplicity of interests that contribute to the formation of policy opinions. This was the lesson of Chapter 3, which indicated that groups and regions tended to circulate among coalitions from issue area to issue area. Where policy opinions are formed on the basis of interests, rather than on the basis of prior intellectual commitments, we should expect sentiment to take on a loose structure (Marcus, 1984). Individuals will cluster into "issue publics"; they will form strong beliefs about some questions, beliefs which commonly reflect the individuals' stake in the policy area, but will have much weaker opinions, perhaps even non-attitudes, in other areas (Elkins, 1984). For those issues where opinions are formed in ways that transcend individuals' immediate interests, the distribution of opinion tends toward consensus, as with attitudes to macroeconomic targets.

One can, in short, make sense of divergent response even when a large proportion of the mass public has real and substantial attitudes about policy. Some of the divergence which remains after correcting for measurement error may still be a manifestation of Converse's non-attitudes. We cannot estimate the relative contribution of non-attitudes and of real attitudes to the total divergence, although Zaller's model gains plausibility from its ability to generate predictions and to help explain, after the fact, other patterns in data than Converse's particular finding of weak constraint. What counts for my purpose, in any case, is the high probability that more than a trivial proportion of the response divergence is real.

If even a small proportion of the citizenry has real attitudes, those who have such attitudes will cast the deciding votes. Response variation among those with no attitudes will be random and thus, usually, mutually cancelling. The exact extent to which those with real attitudes control the play depends on means and variances in their attitudes and on the means and variances in the distribution of non-attitudinal response. Because of the way in which random variation works, there may be occasions in which those with non-attitudes unwittingly overturn the majority preference among those with real attitudes, but these occasions should be rare.

## **The Political Analogy**

As they frame survey questions, survey researchers and polling firms mimic real politicians. In a mass democracy, one of the key political skills is the ability to frame questions. Whether or not a majority can be mustered behind a point of view can depend critically on how, precisely, that point of view is expressed. In parliaments and legislatures and in referenda and plebiscites, the framing of questions has an obvious significance. But the same is true of general appeals for support from the mass public. The making of mass appeals may be accompanied by more uncertainty and confusion that is typical of parliamentary manoeuvring, but the logic of each arena is essentially the same. This is true for relatively simple questions which embody only one dimension of evaluation. It is even more applicable to questions which embody two or more dimensions of evaluation, that is, for questions which are vulnerable to the paradox of voting.

In the unidimensional case, the likely success of one alternative or the other depends on where each falls on the continuum that defines the issue. If one alternative is framed in moderate terms while the other alternative lies closer to one extreme or the other, the more moderate alternative will typically win. This will be true even if the relatively more moderate alternative itself seems rather extreme by some absolute criterion. The choice will tend to become less determinate, the more each alternative converges on the preference of the "median voter", the citizen who represents the effective centre of the policy continuum. Similarly, the more each alternative diverges in opposite directions from the median, the less determinate the outcome might become. Sometimes one of the alternatives is implicit, and the other is explicit. The implicit alternative usually represents the status quo.

As an example of manoeuvring along a single dimension, imagine a struggle over budget cuts. A government might wish to cut the budget by 5 percent. If, however, it simply proposes a 5 percent cut, the issue will come to be framed as a choice between the status quo, that is, the current expenditure level, and the 5 percent alternative. The status quo could



very well be the preferred choice. The usual strategy then becomes one of shifting the effective choice: open with a 10 percent proposed cut and "settle" for a 5 percent apparent compromise.

The world of two or more policy dimensions places an especially high premium on political skills. In the multidimensional world, or the world in which not all preference rankings are "single-peaked" (Black, 1958), it is possible for majorities to "cycle": for A to defeat B; for B to defeat C; and for C to defeat A. This comes about as groups within the voting body are forced to evaluate each pair of alternatives according to two or more criteria. Each alternative embodies a mix of good and not-so-good characteristics from each of the evaluative dimensions. In legislatures, especially relatively open ones such as the U.S. Congress, this vulnerability of outcomes to infeasible alternatives underlies the strategy of the "killing amendment."<sup>5</sup> In appeals to mass publics, the paradox of voting lurks behind protagonists' attempts to control the definition of the issue.

Consider some recent Canadian examples. In British Columbia, in the months which followed the May 1983 election, the struggle was explicitly over the "essential" character of the agenda. Was the essential question one of restraint, a goal favoured by a clear majority of the population? Or was the question really one of maintaining services, which clear majorities also usually favoured? As I write, it remains unclear which definition of the situation will prevail in British Columbia's mass public.

As a second example, consider the federal-provincial dispute over Medicare. Was the issue essentially one of protecting universal access to physicians' services, as each federal party decided it was? Or was it rather, once again, one of restraint in taxation and expenditure, with some questions about Ottawa's own generosity thrown in for good measure, as most provinces would have preferred? The unanimity of the federal parties and the actual outcome of the dispute suggests that the federal government's definition of the situation prevailed. The evidence in Chapter 6 suggests that the provinces might have made a closer running on the question, at least for hospital services, than they actually did. In this instance, they were apparently outmanoeuvred.

The constitutional crisis of 1980-81 saw a succession of agenda struggles. First, the referendum battle in Quebec presented a contest between an emphasis on nationalist reasons for sovereignty, on the one hand, and, on the other, pragmatic and material reasons for continued association with the rest of Canada. Each side worked the competing themes into its own appeal. The struggle reflected a clear reading by both sides of the dynamics of opinion in the francophone mass public: Pinard (1980) nicely illustrates how sentiment on independence was under the joint control of nationalist feelings and of beliefs about the economics of an independent Quebec.

The next struggle, over the patriation of the *British North America Act*,

**TABLE 7-1 The Charter of Rights and the Patriation Package,  
Spring 1981**

	Support if Charter Removed			(N)
	Less Support	No Opinion	More Support	
<b>By Attitude to the Charter</b>				
Strongly oppose	27%	6	67	(138)
Oppose	28%	10	61	(392)
No opinion (voluntary)	13%	58	29	(331)
Support	44%	16	40	(525)
Strongly support	58%	12	30	(113)
<b>By Prior Attitude to Unilateral Action</b>				
Strongly oppose	34%	16	49	(417)
Oppose	31%	21	48	(537)
No opinion (voluntary)	12%	68	20	(124)
Support	40%	16	44	(308)
Strongly support	38%	20	43	(114)
Total	33%	23	45	(1,500)

*Source: Decima Quarterly Report.*

*Items:* Charter of Rights: Part of the federal government's constitutional package involves entrenchment of the Charter of Rights in the Constitution. Do you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose this aspect of the federal government's constitutional package?

Unilateral Action: The federal and provincial governments cannot agree on a way to bring our Constitution to Canada. Do you strongly support, oppose, or strongly oppose the federal government's proposal to bring the Constitution to Canada without the consent of this province?

If Charter Removed: Some people have suggested that the federal government's constitutional package should include only patriation of the Constitution along with an amending formula, and that the entrenchment of a charter of rights should be subject to further negotiations between the federal and provincial governments. Would you be more likely or less likely to support the constitutional package if the Charter of Rights was left out?

also turned heavily on the definition of the situation. As a unilateral act, the patriation gambit was disapproved by clear majorities in every poll of the period. Equally clear majorities approved the idea of a Charter of Rights. By linking the Charter to the patriation package, the federal government evidently hoped to shift the definition of the struggle from one over patriation to one over rights. We know that majorities were never induced to come over to Ottawa's side. But was support for the unilateral package nevertheless increased over what it otherwise would have been? Table 7-1 hints that Ottawa might have misconceived the exact connection that the mass public drew between the Charter and the unilateral address to Britain. The table looks at the effect on support for the patriation package of removing the Charter from the package. Panel A looks at the way its removal would work within categories of approval of the Charter. Panel B looks within levels of prior approval or disapproval of the unilateral address. In each case, the evidence hints that

inclusion of the Charter hurt rather than helped Ottawa's case. To be sure, those who favoured the Charter were less likely to be moved than were those who opposed the Charter. But among those who approved, a large minority claimed that they would be more, not less, likely to support the package if the Charter were removed. Prior approval or disapproval of the unilateral address is unrelated to increases in support with removal of the Charter. Those who approve and those who disapprove report a net increase in support. In the whole sample, almost half again as many respondents claimed that they would be more supportive as claimed that they would be less supportive if the Charter were removed. The evidence is merely suggestive. The response alternatives are not absolute but relative; a respondent could be more supportive than before and still not be "on side", as the saying went. The data strongly suggest, however, that inclusion of the Charter, rather than helping to build support for the package, undercut support even among those who favoured the Charter in its own right. Indeed, the Decima question might understate the extent to which this happened. The question about approval of the Charter was couched in terms, not so much of the Charter's own merits, as of its appropriateness in the unilateral package. Among those who opposed its inclusion might have been some respondents who would have answered a general question on the Charter in an approving way. Inclusion of the Charter made the unilateral action, already a violation of the norms of Canadian politics, an even greater violation. This violation was a major controlling element in popular response to the package, more powerful than were the rival claims of the Charter's own terms.<sup>6</sup> The data, for all their weakness, illustrate how complex can be the interaction between two evaluative criteria. A simple reading of the distribution of opinion on two different facets of a question does not necessarily indicate how each will work with the other.

In struggles for control of the agenda, several factors affect the outcome, aside from the relative skill of the participants. Some points of view will be strategically better placed than others. Placement will reflect the size and the certainty of gains and losses, the immediate past experiences of the citizens to whom appeals are made, the breadth and depth of support for, or antipathy toward, affected groups, and the stylized facts or scripts about public life that currently prevail in the mass public.

Gains and losses to members of the mass public are an obvious place to start. The greater the gains to a group, the more likely it is to support an initiative, other things being equal. A policy with a given expected gain is more likely to be supported, the more certain the gain is. Conversely, a policy threatening a loss of a given size is more likely to be opposed, the more certain the loss is. As an example, the pattern of expected gains and losses was a major factor in Californians' shifts over

successive tax-revolt propositions. The gains promised by Proposition 13 were large and immediate. The losses were a matter of hot dispute. Proposition 9, two years later, set out to do for income tax what its earlier cousin had done for property tax. Even though it promised dramatic tax savings, taxpayers believed that Proposition 9 would truly undercut the provision of highly valued services. Claims that Proposition 13 would force the termination of services had foundered against the property-tax surplus that had accumulated over the mid-1970s. No such surplus remained in 1980, and Proposition 9 failed by a margin that rivalled Proposition 13's success. Californians continue to express satisfaction with Proposition 13, but do not seem particularly available for a new tax revolt. In the aftermath of Proposition 13, most Californians report little loss of services, but do fear possible losses from further major tax reductions (Citrin and Green, 1984). The services which truly were lost may have been vital to a minority of Californians, but the minorities in question were either not visible to, or not popular with, the broad mass of Californian taxpayers.

The immediate background of a dispute should affect its outcome. For example, appeals for tax relief will resonate most deeply if tax liability has grown dramatically. This circumstance, of course, was critical to the passage of Proposition 13. Housing costs in California had risen much more quickly than the national average, and the state employed a relatively efficient assessment system. The surplus in the state property-tax account had mounted dramatically. In contrast, in the two years immediately preceding the tabling of Proposition 9, the state legislature had actually enacted income-tax cuts. Also telling in this respect are the contrasting experiences of the American and Canadian national income-tax systems. Canadians may have been less responsive than Americans to anti-tax appeals in the late 1970s and early 1980s because our income-tax system had already been indexed. In contrast, the American tax system continued to exercise fiscal drag into the 1980s. The politically dramatic 1981 cuts in U.S. federal income-tax rates did not imply actual reductions in tax liability until, curiously, the next presidential election year.<sup>7</sup>

Self-regarding motives are not the only ones which control response to appeals for or against taxing and spending. Also critical are the groups on whose behalf claims are being made. Evidence in Chapter 4 indicates that citizens reason about macroeconomic policy somewhat independently of their personal circumstances, and evidence in Chapter 6 suggests that citizens see a hierarchy of moral claims to public services. The hierarchy seems to mix liberal capitalist ideological principles with a social insurance orientation. At the top are groups which, all agree, cannot escape their predicament by their own efforts. Some of the groups represent categories which all of us can enter: the sick or the aged, for example. Some groups are more clearly demarcated, but they

are not expected to meet even relatively undemanding market criteria: the handicapped, for example. Middling on the hierarchy are groups such as women and aboriginal people. Individuals do not usually choose whether or not to belong to these groups, notwithstanding medical science and Status provisions in the *Indian Act*. But Canadians disagree about the political implications and moral claims of the group membership itself. Where membership in a category is relatively voluntary, sympathy with the group in question is often quite limited. Thus, immigrants are not perceived to have a particularly distinctive claim on services. The widespread belief that unemployment-insurance eligibility requirements should be tightened bespeaks a suspicion that moral hazard pervades that system. And unions are generally seen in a negative light.

In a struggle over a program, the moral status of its major clientele can be critical. Health-care programs gain strength from the fact that each of us may require the service, a concern compounded by the uncertainties, medical and financial, that sickness itself can bring. For less obviously universal programs, the rhetorical struggle may be over the issue of how voluntary membership in the clientele is perceived to be. The struggle over welfare outlays is, in part, a competition for the definition of the essential client: is this client, for example, the innocent child of a single mother, or is she or he someone who has turned down paid work to receive a roughly comparable sum of money from the state? The relative power of alternative scripts about the "typical" client for state services may reflect, as we have already suggested, the recent experiences of those called upon to adjudicate. Data in Chapters 4 and 6 indicate, for example, that sympathy shifted with the macroeconomy: support for social services was generally greater in the recession quarters of 1982 than in the more affluent quarters of 1980 and 1981.

This brings me to the conclusion of this section. The use of the word "script" in the last paragraph was deliberate. An emergent theme in the last decade of psychology and, to a lesser extent, of political science is that of scripts, or "cognitive schemata".<sup>8</sup> Individuals are thought to possess more or less detailed stylized facts about social groups, institutions and processes. "Everybody knows", for example, that bureaucrats are wasteful, that unions are too powerful, that corporations are unfeeling and make too much money, and that "little guys" are crushed by this unholy trinity of bureaucrats, unions and big corporations. Part of the rhetorical struggle, then, is to invoke scripts that favour one's own cause or harm an opponent's cause.

## **Public Opinion and the Politics of Support**

This book began with a discussion of political support. So should it end. The critical fact about political support is that it takes many forms. In its

many "incarnations," political support has equivocal implications for a government's mandate to rule and can even be turned against itself. Public opinion is not something that exerts a simple unidirectional pressure on the political order; public opinion is something that must be mobilized.

Easton (1965) argued that support could be differentiated by its object: the community, the regime or the authorities. But the weight of evidence is that even these categories are too comprehensive; each must be disaggregated. Loyalties to communities can be multiple. Canadians tend to like both their province of residence and the country as a whole. Moreover, feeling for one is positively, not negatively, correlated with feeling for the other. The controlling factor is not a we/they one, so much as a general capacity for identification with communities. If, as Black and Cairns (1966) argue, we have been building provinces, as well as the nation, since 1867, Canadians see no contradiction between the projects. Canadians can be forced to choose, of course, but are evidently uncomfortable when this happens.

Feelings about the regime can also be finely differentiated. How Canadians feel about the political executive may imply little about their feelings toward the judiciary. It is true that feelings about different institutions often run together, much as do feelings about communities. But not all institutions are equally tightly bound to one another. The ties may weaken or strengthen as conflict between institutions waxes or wanes.

But the politics of support for regimes turns not just on the constitutional structure, but also on the ability of the state to extract revenue, to spend the revenue on its programs, and to enforce the whole corpus of laws. Citizens naturally have opinions about at least some of these more specific items. It is here, in the struggle over particular policies and over taxing and spending that, most of the time, the real politics of support takes place. If we concentrate solely on the life and death of nations, or even on the life and death of party governments, we miss much of the role that public opinion really plays. Citizens can even continue to support particular elements of a regime long after the basic character of the total regime or even of the political community has changed.<sup>9</sup>

Public opinion thus does not act as a self-directed force, requiring only that someone pull the lever on the adding machine. The reporting of polls commonly seems to imply such an image: a majority of Canadians is said to favour some option, and that isolated fact is presented as a moral imperative on government. Instead, opinion is something to be evoked and mobilized. Majorities are built or split by the framing of questions. The underlying structure of sentiment on a question can itself be shifted, at least with the passage of some years. Formerly unpopular opinions can be rehabilitated by association with more popular opinions or groups. Popular opinions can be discredited by a mirror process. Sheer

exposure to an opinion or a program can make it more popular than it seemed to be at first. Politicians can blunder in their attempts to shape opinion or to mobilize it. And some opinion can shape itself, or at least it can respond to events out of politicians' control. Politicians may seek to turn to advantage economic adversity or an adventitious string of mass murders, for example, but they cannot always, or even usually, call up such external forces at will.

As the various parts of the structure of political support are used against one another, the summary effect may be to make citizens sceptical, if not cynical, about many of the claims of politicians. Is such scepticism necessarily a bad thing? Or is it rather, as Sniderman put it, an inevitable and possibly even a healthy attribute of a liberal democratic political order? Canadians may be sceptical about the federal government and about the people who run it. But, as much as ever, Canadians seem to want that government to get on with its job.



## Notes

### CHAPTER 1

1. The literature on the evolution of Quebec society and politics is vast, but for a recent overview, see Gagnon (1984). As a sample of late-1970s anglophone scholarly response, see Simeon (1977). For a review of the constitutional positions of governments, see McWhinney (1979).
2. The opening shots in what might be called the "structuralist critique" of Ottawa were Cairns (1968) and Smiley (1971). A recent statement of this critique, with a useful review of others' positions on the matter, is Gibbins (1982).
3. The bill also envisioned changes to the Supreme Court to answer criticisms of that institution as unfairly weighted toward the federal government interest. The best account of the content and logic of Bill C-60 is Cairns (1979).
4. But see below, Chapter 7.
5. For a representative selection of academic reaction to the constitutional accord, see Banting and Simeon (1983).
6. Easton also sees political support as the product of pre-political, early childhood socialization. Indeed, his own empirical work has pursued this pre-political emphasis. See Easton and Dennis (1969). To the extent that this is so, Easton could be classified with what Barry (1970) calls the "sociological" analysts of politics, in the company of Almond and Verba (1963). My use of "sociology" differs from Barry's. For Barry, sociological theories emphasize the role of values in maintaining the political order, as opposed to more limited rational calculations by citizens. I use "sociological" to denote an emphasis on the social base of the political system, particularly on those aspects of the base which change very little.
7. The classic statement is Dahl (1961); the current one is Dahl (1982).
8. For the political trust items, see Miller (1974) or Miller, Miller, and Schneider (1980). The items date back to the origins of the American National Election Surveys and thus predate much of the theoretical work that they have been used to test.
9. The political significance of the apparent growth in the "independent" share in response to the American party identification item is hotly disputed. For the poles of the debate, see Shively (1980) and Keith et al. (1977).
10. In addition, of course, Britain has seen racial tension and small-scale crypto-fascist political activity.
11. For two opinions on the limited applicability of the "overload" or "ungovernability" thesis to Canada, see Simeon (1976) and Meisel (1976).
12. My account of the Eurobarometre data is based mainly on the fairly complete discussion of "satisfaction" data in Eurobarometre (1982).
13. An account which is not so much microeconomic as microscopic can be found in Hirsch (1976). Hirsch argues in terms of inescapable social limits to growth. Most important, the existence of "positional goods", the supply of which is fixed, creates an inflationary spiral. A good in fixed supply must have its value inflate as the overall purchasing power of consumers grows. The competitive struggle for such goods produces a wage-push inflation. Moreover, the market undermines the self-restraint, inherited from the era before capitalism, which is necessary, ironically, for the market itself to function smoothly. Hirsch's linkage of inflation to a lack of self-restraint seems at first to echo Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki (1975). But, where Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki, see the decline in self-restraint as a result partly of the weakening of market discipline, Hirsch sees the market itself as undermining the psychological preconditions for its operation. In this Hirsch is actually more reminiscent of Bell (1976) and Habermas (1975).

The inflation and the continued unattainability of positional goods produces the malaise of which we write. Hirsch's argument is rooted in a theory of consumption by individuals, in their psychology or implicit moral philosophy, as shaped by the "tyranny of small decisions". Under this particular form of tyranny, individuals make a series of small choices which they might forswear if they could, collectively, make a



more nearly all-embracing choice which would obviate the need for the smaller choices. The classic example is the choice between driving one's own car and taking an overcrowded, typically late bus. Given the alternatives as they are usually presented, one may rationally drive one's own car. But if given the larger choice, those citizens who severally drive their own cars might jointly choose to tax themselves to support a better mass-transit system. Over time, however, the reiteration of the smaller choices erodes the political will to make the larger one. See Kahn (1966) and Weisbrod (1964). The picture Hirsch paints seems especially hopeless, short of a change in some of our most deeply held values.

Hirsch's thesis is exceptionally provocative, but unfortunately cannot be tested with the attitude data available for this study. A version of the tyranny of small decisions lurks in Chapter 5, however, in citizens' perceptions of technological change.

## CHAPTER 2

1. The 1981 wave of the Quality of Life survey arrived at the UBC data library too late to be used in this study.
2. The months-elapsd variable is correlated with the Diefenbaker-period dummy variable at  $-0.70$ , with the Pearson variable at  $-0.12$ , and with the Trudeau variable at  $0.92$ .
3. In spite of my strictures in the text, I did play with estimations of the separate effects of long-term and within-government decay. An equation with these two terms and no dummy variables yields a significant coefficient only on the long-term trend. An equation with the two trend terms and the dummy variables yields no significant coefficients, so tightly packed are the effects. But the long-term coefficient looks more stable again than the within-government coefficient. For what they are worth, these tests reinforce the interpretation in the body of the text.
4. As approval of the prime minister has deteriorated, Gallup respondents have become more opinionated. In the earlier years, when prime ministers were able to win considerable approval even as their governments crumbled, about one Gallup respondent in four would typically venture no opinion. More recently, "no opinion" responses have become much less frequent. Fewer than 15 percent of recent samples fail to venture an opinion on the prime minister. Although it is tempting to infer that the growth in negative opinion has come through the recruitment of hitherto-undecided respondents, we cannot exclude the possibility that recruitment to disapproval is across the board.

Although they have become less popular, Canadian prime ministers have not become less able to win elections. It could be that Canadians' feelings about their prime minister are now less stable than before. We may find it easier to abandon our leader psychologically as long as doing so has no political costs. As those costs become apparent with the approach of an election, many citizens may rediscover confidence in the incumbent. Alternatively, citizens may remain as cool about the prime minister during elections as between them. The units of account in transforming approval into votes may just have shifted. Whatever the exact mechanism, the Gallup data, together with what we know about elections, suggest that Canadians have increased the psychological distance between themselves and their prime ministers even as they continue to return them to power.

5. See Shively (1980) and Keith et al. (1977).
6. The field work for each National Election Study took place in the months immediately following the election in question. In some cases, the field work dragged on for several months.
7. Prince Edward Island is omitted for lack of cases.
8. This finding was anticipated with Gallup data by Lambert and Curtis (1979).
9. The French-language dummy variable is correlated with the Quebec dummy variable at  $0.81$ ,  $0.84$ , and  $0.85$  for 1974, 1979, and 1980, respectively.
10. The *locus classicus* for this effect is Cairns (1968).

11. The item finessed the question of how, precisely, party discipline would be broken down.
12. Two other major structural questions, about the method by which Senators might be chosen and about the powers of the reformed body, occasion less disagreement. Over 80 percent of respondents believe that a reformed Senate should be directly elected. Fewer than 20 percent think that the Senate should have an absolute veto, while over 25 percent believe that the Senate should have no power at all to block bills. On the assumption that preference orders in this domain are single peaked, I suspect that respondents at the extremes could live with the suspensive veto.
13. Note that the questions diverge in two ways: French versus Quebec and all questions in general versus linguistic questions in particular.
14. Conceivably a representational compromise might lie with the option which few claim as a first preference: overrepresentation of smaller provinces. Such overrepresentation might be everybody's second choice. Unfortunately, the data themselves do not speak to this possibility, as we do not have for each respondent a preference ranking over the representational alternatives.
15. Calhoun (1973) quoted in Rae (1975, p. 1272).
16. This is a synthesis of Fenno (1978); Mayhew (1974); Fiorina (1977); Cover (1977). Counter-arguments exist, however. On the possibility of a shift to more partisan Congressional elections, see Jacobson and Kernell (1983). For doubts about the alleged recent growth of the incumbency advantage, see Garand and Gross (1984). For an account of House roll-call voting that emphasizes straight partisanship, see Poole and Rosenthal (1984).
17. The correlation coefficients in Table 2-12 may strike some as not particularly high. The reader should bear in mind, however, that two factors constrain the coefficients. First, measurement error will attenuate a correlation coefficient or, indeed, any measure of statistical association linking two variables. One indicator of the reliability of the thermometer measures would be the correlations among repeated measures of the same sentiment. Over the 1979 and 1980 waves of the National Election Study panel, the province thermometer exhibits a test-retest correlation of 0.37, little higher than many of the correlations in Table 2-12. The Canada thermometer is more robust, with a 1979-80 correlation of 0.50. There is little reason to expect much true change in these measures over so short a span. Relative to the reliability of each measure, then, the correlations between many of the measures in Table 2-12 are really very strong.  
 The second constraint on the correlation coefficients is the variance in each of the measures to be correlated. Pearson product-moment coefficients are sensitive to these variances. For a given "intrinsic" level of association between two variables, the correlation coefficient will be smaller, the less the variance in either or both of the two variables. The thermometer scores for both Canada and the province of residence are crowded toward the maximum possible score; most Canadians like the province and the country in which they live. Not surprisingly, variances are larger for the government ratings; governments are objects about which Canadians disagree.
18. This observation is hardly new. See Gibbins (1977) and the discussion in Elkins (1980). I am tempted to call this the "Yvon Deschamps effect."
19. Recall that a negative sign does not necessarily indicate negative sentiment. The sign of a dummy-variable coefficient is defined relative to a reference category, in this case the province which is not represented directly in the analysis: Ontario. Westerners are very positive in their feelings about Canada. They are just not quite as positive as Ontarians.
20. The distinction between francophones in general and those resident in Quebec arises not from an explicit representation of different francophone groups, but from the fact that "French" and "Quebec" each have coefficients significantly different from zero, but with the same sign.
21. The 20 percent figure for Quebec is roughly consistent with the longer-term evidence in Pinard (1980).
22. It would be useful to know how many Ontarians or Nova Scotians would give a separatist answer, as a baseline for comparison with the other regions.

23. These observations rest on analyses, not presented in tabular form, with Quality of Life data. The first publication to use these particular data was Blishen (1978).
24. For an analysis with open-ended response to National Election Study questions which makes an argument altogether similar to the one here, see Kornberg and Stewart (1983).
25. The federal-provincial divergence here does not repeat the 1974, 1979, and 1980 feeling-thermometer patterns. According to the bottom row of Table 2-11, above, the federal government actually receives warmer thermometer readings than the provinces two times out of three. The difference between Tables 2-17 and 2-11 could stem either from differences in stimulus or from differences in the periods.
26. See above, note 17.
27. The classic demonstration is in Tufte (1978). For an example with Canadian data, see Happy (1984).
28. Note that equations (3) and (4) are re-estimations of equation (1). A re-estimation equation of (2) yields essentially the same results.
29. Collinearity between income and unemployment is more acute in the 1980-83 period than over the 1956-82 period. In the former, change in real per capita personal income is correlated with unemployment at  $-0.581$ ; the correlation for the disposable income variable is  $-0.553$ . In the 1980-83 period, before-tax income is correlated with unemployment at  $-0.821$ ; after-tax income is correlated at  $-0.865$ .
30. The spring 1980 distribution of cases in Table 2-22 differs markedly from the distribution over the next few quarters. I suspect a coding error somewhere in the Decima works. The reader should probably ignore the spring 1980 results.
31. The major distinction here in sources of confidence corresponds to a distinction which now is standard in work on voting and party preference, between prospective and retrospective voting. This distinction overlaps another one in the voting literature between policy-oriented voting and incumbent-oriented voting. For a discussion see Kiewiet (1983). Prospective or policy-oriented choice is akin to the evaluations that underpin the regional and group differences in the first part of this chapter. Retrospective or incumbent-oriented choice is akin to the economic performance judgments which underpin so much of the movement in the Gallup data and in the Decima quarterly data. There is no reason why both types of evaluation cannot coexist in Canadians' psyches. Nor is there any reason to expect the dynamics of one kind of reasoning to correspond to the statics of the other kind.

### CHAPTER 3

1. Of course, the middle, or swing, group might be seen by the polar groups as unfairly favoured by the process.
2. In the text which accompanies each of this chapter's tables, the response(s) scored as 1 is (are) indicated by an asterisk. The valence of the coding sometimes shifts from equation to equation in a given table. To help the reader make sense of the table, the meaning of the code of (1) is indicated in the note accompanying the table.
3. As in the earlier analysis, independent variables appear in dichotomous, or dummy variable, form.
4. At least two alternative estimation strategies exist, but neither gives me as direct and clear a picture of the structure of opinion as does the estimation of an equation. One technique is the analysis of variance. Analysis of variance has the great advantage of allowing us to partition variance into its geographic and non-geographic components and, thus, of comparing the relative weight of each component. This is especially appealing if the question before us is to assign such weights. Analysis of variance also estimates interaction effects between each pair of analytic dimensions. But analysis of variance does not help to identify the specific sources of variation within each type of factor. If we found, for example, that a significant geographic effect existed, we could not say without further analysis which particular provinces provided the key contrast. Such further analysis is certainly possible, but it raises the cost of exercise, and it makes the presentation of evidence unwieldy. In addition, analysis of variance

responds both to the size of each group and to the width of the differences between groups. Thus, for example, a small difference between Ontario and Quebec could outweigh, in a statistical sense, a large difference between Alberta and Ontario.

Another technique, loglinear analysis, also has considerable appeal. Loglinear analysis is not sensitive to multicollinearity and does estimate interaction effects directly. Unlike analysis of variance, the specific sources of the variation are identified fairly directly by the analysis. But loglinear technology is still relatively new and expensive and yields results that are less readily penetrable by the reader than do multivariate econometric techniques.

On balance, then, I believe that estimating equations is the most efficient way to deal with the plethora of data before me. In particular, the equations facilitate presentation in tables and description in text. The reader should, however, keep the pitfalls of the analysis in mind as he or she is led through the results.

5. This was true at the time my analysis was under way. Since then, Quality of Life data sets with a province-of-residence variable have become available.
6. With this advantage comes a defect: from time to time variables will disappear from the estimation. Where the missing variable is non-geographic, its absence from the analysis reflects its absence from the particular tape under analysis, or it reflects difficulties in reading the pertinent columns on the card image. Sometimes a province will disappear. This reflects a small number of cases in the province's sub-sample so that the equation cannot be identified without exclusion of that province's dummy variable.
7. Note that in each table, two whole-equation statistics appear:  $\hat{R}^2$  and the Likelihood Ratio Test (LRT). The former is rather like  $R^2$  in OLS regression. Achen (1979) has expressed doubt about its utility as calculated in conventional probit programs. Achen encourages attention to the LRT, however. The latter is distributed as chi-squared. The degrees of freedom (df) appear with each test, as an aid to readers who wish to consult a table of the chi-squared distribution.

I present each statistic because each does a different job. By analogy to  $R^2$  in OLS,  $\hat{R}^2$  is a rough indicator of the proportion of variance explained by the equation. The LRT assesses the possibility that the equation itself was produced randomly. As a rule of thumb, an LRT would have to be above about 20 to be significant by the chi-square test at the 0.05 criterion, given the degrees of freedom in the typical equation.

Finally, near the bottom of each table appears the proportion in the sample who give the policy response scored as 1; this is denoted as  $\bar{Y}$ . When I refer to the sample-wide balance of opinion on the question, this statistic provides the basis for the reference.

8. The Commonwealth Relations variable is probably more telling as an indicator of attitudes on domestic questions than as an external relations indicator. It taps the regional structure of sentiment on the British Connection and, more generally, on the "Britishness" of the Canadian nationality. For another facet of this area, see the analysis of language-policy opinions below. See also Simeon and Blake (1980).
9. For more on the dynamics of aversion to inflation and unemployment, see Chapter 4 below.
10. Ontario farmers were as favourable to reciprocal free trade in natural products as were Western farmers, according to the analysis in Johnston and Percy (1980).
11. Although British Columbia is relatively anti-tariff in one equation here and is generally relatively free-trade oriented in the evidence in Chapter 5, the province lacks a consistent record of opposition to the tariff. In 1911, for instance, each constituency of British Columbia increased its Conservative vote share. In that year, the tariff tapped attitudes to the British Connection, as well as to commercial questions as such. British Columbia was then an Imperial province *par excellence*. To the extent that Vancouver's prosperity rested on the railways, that city would also have had a strong material stake in the preservation of the National Policy.
12. But see below, Chapter 5.
13. Again, see below, Chapter 5.
14. Immigration policy has even been kept out of debate between parties. For the 1976 Immigration Act amendments, consensus was found across party lines. The device for consensus-seeking was an all-party committee which, after protracted hearings, drafted the essentials of the legislation. See Wood (1978).

15. The current pro-immigration position of Quebec respondents is confirmed with Decima data, below, in Chapter 5.
16. The 1971 and 1979 Family Allowance questions differ along two dimensions: the threshold for ineligibility and the treatment of those above the threshold. On each dimension, the 1971 question is far more specific, presumably as a reflection of a specific government proposal, the Family Income Security Program. The specific wording probably encourages disagreement with the item.
17. Overt conflict over access to abortion may be greatest in provinces which are muddling in the balance of sentiment. In British Columbia, struggles for control of hospital boards, with which comes the right to appoint or not appoint therapeutic abortion committees, have been fierce. Manitoba and Ontario have seen vigorous prosecution of abortion clinics.
18. The federal government is implicitly involved as a guarantor of denominational-schooling rights in some provinces. But language has displaced religion as the basis for intergovernmental educational contestation, and so I treat religious schooling as a provincial matter.
19. The *Lord's Day Act* is a federal statute, of course, but virtually all of the recent controversy over Sunday activities has occurred at the provincial or local level.
20. The two 1957 Catholic variables reflect Gallup's coding for that study. Gallup first asked each respondent if he or she were "a member of a church." Those saying yes were then asked, "Which denomination?" Those saying no were asked their religious preference, if any. Respondents who claimed to be members of a church and who identified that church as Catholic scored one on Catholic (1). Those claiming not to be members of a church, but who admitted to preferring the Catholic church were scored one on Catholic (2). Non-Catholics scored zero on each variable. Coefficients were estimated separately for Catholic (1) and Catholic (2) as a test of the effect of religious commitment on the sharpness of the denominational difference. The similarity of the two Catholic coefficients indicates that simple religious preference suffices to distinguish Catholics from non-Catholics.
21. See note 20, above, for the coding of the 1957 Catholic variables.
22. The one-sidedly negative view of unions that dominates general questions tends to dissolve, however, as questions became more specific. See below, Chapter 5.
23. This corresponds to differences between the teacher question and other public sector-strike questions in the Decima data, below, in Chapter 5.
24. Even equations which indicate significantly differentiated response typically explain only a small amount of the total variance in the policy question. Some of the weakness of the whole equation undoubtedly reflects error in the dependent variable. Gallup questions are often flabby. They tap the politically relevant domain imperfectly even as they often include distracting stimuli. Even if we allow for such error, however, we may still conclude that Canadians do not differ all that strongly over a broad range of issues. A major exception to this rule is language policy.
25. For the historical record of Irish/French-schools conflict, see Prang (1960) and Barber (1966).

#### CHAPTER 4

1. For a useful review of the entire political business-cycle literature, see Alt and Crystal (1982, Chapter 5). See also Peretz (1983).
2. See Kernell (1980).
3. Beck (1982) attributes more effect to intra-party inter-administration differences than to party differences as such. The unemployment aversion of the Nixon administration and the inflation aversion of the Carter administration seem to be the major culprits.
4. For a general review, see Monroe (1979).
5. The *locus classicus* is Kramer (1971). See also Fair (1978).
6. This is so in Fiorina (1981), even though he set out to find mainly retrospective reward-and-punishment effects.

7. Compare this perverse finding with the more straightforward effects of unemployment and inflation on confidence in the federal government and on approval of the prime minister's handling of his job (see above, in Chapter 2).
8. This is also Hibbs' (1979) conclusion.
9. On a possibly related point, Hibbs (1979) found that "at all *stable* unemployment rates a solid majority of the public is likely to be more averse to inflation than unemployment if the rate of inflation runs higher than 6 percent per annum." In general, Hibbs finds a systematic bias against inflation in his American data.
10. Estimates for the personal prospects equations rest on 15 observations. Recall that in the first quarter of 1980, only 36 respondents claimed "worse" prospects, in contrast to 565 such respondents in the immediately following quarter. I suspect a coding error and so have dropped this quarter's mean rating from the time-series estimation.
11. For comparative data from several other countries, see Kernell (1980).
12. Hibbs himself has been forced to revise his views, of course. See above, note 9.
13. Among the many weaknesses of each test is its reliance on the autoregressive parameter to indicate the length of voters' memories. Routing the long-term effects through a single coefficient imposes a common structure on the effects. There is no *prima facie* reason to assume that inflation and unemployment have the same lag structure. Moreover, the autocorrelation coefficient is not a direct indicator of any lag structure in the economic effects themselves. For an argument that all purported lagged effects from economic variables may reflect only the lag structure in the non-economic dependent variable (usually some kind of Gallup approval item) itself, see Norpoth and Yantek (1983).
14. The lack of reported personal impact from inflation is a pervasive finding in Peretz (1983).
15. Fischer and Huizinga (1982) also note respondents' ability to distinguish between the personal effects of unemployment and the sometimes overriding national effects of inflation.
16. The pessimism may strike some observer's as faddish and ignorant, but side evidence from Alt's (1979) work with British samples should make one a bit more optimistic about economic thinking in mass publics. Alt found that perceptions of current inflation and expectations of future inflation were typically wildly high, rather as implied by the Canadian data. Expectations, were, however, couched in additive rather than multiplicative terms: if current inflation moves a price from \$1.00 to \$1.50, then the same inflation over the next year is believed likely to yield a further price increase of \$0.50 rather than the strictly correct estimate of \$0.75.

If respondents were off the mark, they tended to be so in systematic ways which reflected ignorance of arithmetic rather than of economic reality. For example, perceptions of current inflation looked less bizarre once subjected to a logarithmic transformation. In Alt's two readings, February and October 1974, the mean perception in each month, as logarithmically transformed, was virtually identical with the actual year-over-year increase in the consumer price index for that month. No one should pretend that citizens actually make the transformation in question, but Alt may have picked up something in the structure of perception that a dismissal of popular economic beliefs as simply inaccurate would ignore.

There remained, however, considerable variation, skewed to the high side, across individuals at each cross-section. Some of this variation reflected economic knowledge: as in the Canadian data, education and similar factors systematically reduced perceived rates of inflation. Some of the variation may have reflected consumption experiences. Alt had no direct evidence on this. Neither, really, have we, but the Decima file contains indirect evidence. Respondents were asked in what commodities price increases were greatest. Overwhelming majorities reported food as the major locus of inflation. At the time of the question, the answer was essentially correct. Perceptions of inflation may thus have followed the composition of recent purchases. Poorer and less well-educated respondents would have had their purchases especially dominated by food; this may explain some of the education effects in Table 4-10, effects which I interpreted in the text as indicating correctness of perception. Regional differences also reflected reality. British Columbia respondents were the most likely to

see house prices as subject to the greatest inflation; respondents in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces were the least likely to give this answer.

Alt also examined expectations in the light of rival theories in the economic literature. February 1974 expectations seemed under the control of adaptive reasoning and not merely of extrapolation from current inflation perceptions. In October of the same year, as inflation accelerated, simple extrapolation did a better job than it had done earlier in the year as some rational-expectations models might predict.

17. See above, Table 3-3.

## CHAPTER 5

1. The smaller the group is and the less equal the sizes or incomes of the members of the group, the more likely demands are to be met. Each of these factors affects the extent to which the collective interest of the group coincides with the individual interests of the persons or firms within the group. Group organizations will also flourish to the extent that they can provide side benefits, not strictly related to the collective interest of the group, to which group members unwilling to pay to support the collective organization can be denied access. See also Olson (1965).
2. On risk preference in general, my understanding has been assisted greatly by Machina (1983). For a compendium of disconfirmatory findings on risk aversion in particular and expected utility reasoning in general, see Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky (1982).
3. Some observers question the persistence of an orientation to work rather than leisure. Yankelovich (1979) claims that a "New Breed" (*sic*) has arisen for whom leisure and consumption values are paramount. Katzell (1979) is not so sure. The Decima file contains an item asking whether or not the respondent's job permits enough leisure. Overwhelming majorities reject the idea that not enough leisure is provided. Of course, no attitudinal evidence definitively disproves Yankelovich. Respondents could be misrepresenting their preferences, or they could be reaffirming a cultural ritual which they then belie by their actions. All of this must be speculative, however; such data as we have suggest on their face the continued importance of work as an end in itself.
4. *Work in America* (1973, p. 13ff).
5. See above, note 3.
6. Elsewhere in the Decima file, there appears a question on government investment in high-technology industry. Most respondents favour such investment. In doing so, respondents may be acting on their sense of the positive effects of automation on product price and quality and on the economy as a whole, and not on their fears for the quality and quantity of work. On the other hand, respondents may be reacting only to the glamour of high-technology industry.
7. The handful of public sector right-to-strike questions in Chapter 3 indicates an evolution of public attitudes in the domain. In 1965, the Gallup sample seemed actually rather sanguine in face of the approaching era of public sector collective bargaining. In 1975, opinion on teachers' strikes was divided. By 1982, the majority opposed to the public service right to strike was as large as the 1965 majority in favour.
8. The equations estimated in Chapter 3 from Gallup data yield a union/non-union pattern consistent with this. The union coefficient is much stronger on the general public service items than on the specific teacher items.
9. The Canadian data available to me did not permit a replication of an important American finding, by Kochan (1979). Kochan's analysis of the 1977 Quality of Employment survey found a negative vein of response to unions which clustered around a core image of the "big union": powerful but unrepresentative. Another cluster of attitudes was much more positive: these items turned on particular aspects of union activity, mainly in the realms of bargaining and employee benefits. On balance, respondents in the U.S. Quality of Employment sample were satisfied with union performance even as they reaffirmed ritualistic anti-union sentiments.
10. The dominant regional position may even misrepresent the impact of existing policies on incomes, if not on property values. See Mackintosh (1964). For more recent discussions of the economics and electoral politics of commercial policy, see Johnston



and Percy (1980) and Percy, Norrie, and Johnston (1982). On how perceptions can override reality, at least in the West, see Norrie (1976).

11. See Richards and Pratt (1979) for a version of this argument.
12. Unfortunately, the data do not allow us to be any more specific about the means. The questions discussed in the text relate the whole NEP to its stated goals. It would be interesting to know the response to specific taxing, spending and regulatory components of the NEP in each region. Indeed, I wonder if parts of the program are visible only in some regions and not in others.
13. See above, Chapter 3.
14. This makes a curious contrast with Quebec response on international migration.

#### CHAPTER 6

1. Gibbins (1982, p. 177), makes the obvious point that the proportion of respondents seeing the federal government as closer falls off fairly uniformly with physical distance from Ottawa. He rightly cautions us against freightening these questions with more significance than they can bear.
2. Field work for the Radio-Canada and CCU polls was performed by *le Centre pour Recherches sur l'Opinion publique* (CROP).
3. The 1983 Quebec result, if it is to be believed, represents a reversal of earlier response to this CROP question. See Pinard (1980, p. 144). Some of the federalist margin must come from the anglophone minority. Even so, francophone Québécois are more federalist in this instance than the anglophone samples of every other province except Ontario.
4. This should not be confused with the exercise in Chapter 3, above, on the geography of substantive policy attitudes.
5. This apparently inverse relationship is produced mainly by Quebec respondents, who express relatively great confidence in Ottawa, but who are, for obvious reasons, relatively provincialist on the specifics of the division of power.
6. See Johnston (1983) for more details and for item wordings.
7. The statements in this paragraph are adapted from Elkins (1981, pp. 18–21).
8. The question is awkwardly worded, but probably evokes response mainly in terms of degree of antipathy to a perceived invasion of privacy.

#### CHAPTER 7

1. In stochastic processes, test-retest correlations can decay more slowly than predicted by the simple exponentiation of the turnover matrix for one or the other or both of two reasons. The turnover process can be of a higher order than the simple first-order one indicated by the exponentiation. Alternatively, the population can be heterogeneous. Converse assumed that the latter was the controlling factor in his data and assumed further that the heterogeneity was the particularly stringent kind in his "Black-White" model: one group which never changes and another group which moves randomly.
2. Neither Achen nor Erikson addressed the problem of slow decay in the correlations. It was this pattern which drove Converse to posit the Black-White model. In fact, Converse may have overinterpreted his data. As note 1 suggests, the pattern may also have been generated by a higher-order Markov process than the simple first-order one implied by his tests. If the test-retest pattern was produced, as Converse assumed, by heterogeneity among the respondents, the heterogeneity need not have conformed to the Black-White pattern that Converse imposed on it. It could just as easily have been a reflection of the social structure of opinion. See Bartholomew (1973).
3. Zaller's attempt to formulate a theory of the survey response builds on the psychological literature on question framing. The key references are Schuman and Presser (1981), and Tversky and Kahneman (1982).
4. Considerations can be evoked not just by a single item, but also by other items nearby in the questionnaire. For example, the apparent effect of self-interested economic items on party preference varies inversely with the physical distance between the location of the economic item and the location of the voting item (Sears and Lau, 1983).



5. The classic killing amendment was the Powell amendment. Congressman Adam Clayton Powell's insistence on tabling an amendment which required the U.S. federal government to withhold funds from racially segregated schools held up federal aid to education for several years. Although a majority of Americans favoured aid to education, and a majority favoured denying such aid to segregated schools, these respective majorities could not be marshalled into support for legislation embodying these two things. The Powell amendment would always pass, given the majority against school segregation. But the vote on the main motion as amended would force Southern Democrats, who favoured federal aid, to vote for its defeat. Republicans who opposed school segregation and thus supported the Powell amendment could not support the main motion because of their opposition to federal aid itself. Had parliamentary usage mandated voting on the main motion before voting on amendments, the Powell amendment would not have had its killing effect. For examples of this and other legislation, see Riker (1965) and Arrow (1951, p. 3). One of the arguments for party discipline in legislatures and parliaments is couched in terms of the desirability of reducing the voting system's vulnerability to the paradox. See Riker and Ordeshook (1973, p. 113ff).

The earliest recorded reference to the paradox and to the importance of voting rules is in a letter from Pliny the Younger to Titus Aristo, annexed to Farquharson (1969). The paradox was discovered in the modern age by Condorcet, after whom it is sometimes called, and Borda. Between their discovery in the eighteenth century and the placement of paradox at the centre of academic debate in the mid-twentieth century, by Black (1958) and Arrow (1951), the most astute student of voting systems and of the paradox was, appropriately, C.L. Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll. See Black (1958).

6. My argument in the text refers only to the wisdom of including the Charter from the perspective of building support for the patriation package. The Charter might never have been adopted other than by *force majeure*, and those who valued the entrenchment of the Charter might have been naïve or disingenuous to argue for a prior entrenchment of an amending formula.
7. Other elements of the 1981 tax package had immediate effects on tax liabilities for particular groups.
8. Sears and Citrin (1982), for example, discuss a tax-revolt schema. For review of the psychological literature on schema theory, see Taylor and Crocker (1981).
9. Quebec's civil law comes immediately to mind here.

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# Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada

RICHARD JOHNSTON

Drawing on wide-ranging public-opinion surveys, Richard Johnston presents in this volume a detailed analysis of the Canadian public's perceptions of the federal government and other institutions. His study assesses Canadians' confidence in government, their support of specific policies and their willingness to be taxed. He identifies regional trends in public attitudes as well as issues that realign regional coalitions.

Some interesting patterns emerge. Canadians, the author finds, shift their concern about economic issues from inflation to unemployment and back again, according to the economic climate. They are consistent, however, in considering technological change as much a threat as a promise and in valuing job security over higher income (although they do not translate that value into support for the union movement).

Contradictions abound. Canadians seem rather protectionist but affirm the virtue of international competitiveness. They are abstract nationalists but worry about the effect of nationalist policies on jobs. They express abstract hostility to all governments at all levels, but on specific policy issues they reaffirm the federal-provincial status quo. They demand more money for most programs but are unwilling to pay more taxes.

In general, Johnston concludes, Canadians' response to policy questions varies significantly with the stimulus. In this way public-opinion surveys in Canada mirror the attempts of politicians to shape public opinion.

RICHARD JOHNSTON is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

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