

DISSIDENT CRITICS: INTELLECTUAL  
CONSERVATISM IN CANADA,  
1945-1980

BY  
GRAEME VOYER

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Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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University of Manitoba  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with exploring the ideas and development of a group of Canadian intellectual conservatives that became prominent after World War II, and to which several scholars have made cursory reference. Through careful examination of the works of these writers, it seeks to elucidate their basic goals, their primary themes, and to document the evolution of their thought in response to various trends and events in post World War II Canada. It is contended that Canadian intellectual conservatism in the period being studied was marked by an intense concern with preserving Canada's British institutions and the British orientation of Canadian society.

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## INTRODUCTION

Several commentators have remarked on the emergence, after World War II, of a particularly articulate group of English-speaking Canadian scholars and writers who shared certain goals and concerns reflecting a conservative disposition. Identified with this group of intellectual conservatives are the historians Donald Creighton, W.L. Morton, and Roger Graham; the political scientists and economists John Farthing, Eugene Forsey, and, often, H.A. Innis; a philosopher, George P. Grant, and a journalist, Judith Robinson.

According to Carl Berger, these individuals comprised "a small circle of people who shared anxieties about certain features of Canadian politics." These features have been commented on if seldom fully explained by Canadian historians. Yet A.B. McKillop described Morton, Grant, and Creighton as the leading critics, during the 1960's, of the Liberal tradition in Canada. William Westfall argued that Innis, Creighton, and Grant were informed by pessimism which derived from their perception that Canada was "ignoring the values of her history and pursuing a course that will lead inevitably to the destruction of her culture." For Ramsay Cook, English-Canadian historical writing in the twentieth-century has been dominated by two opposing schools: continentalists, like A.R.M. Lower and Frank

Underhill, and conservative nationalists who emphasize Canada's British links --Innis, Creighton, and Morton. Gad Horowitz cited Forsey, Morton, and Grant as exemplars of 'red toryism', a peculiarly Canadian political and philosophical position which fuses aspects of socialism and traditional conservatism. Terry Cook, furthermore, has recently affirmed that Graham, Creighton, Morton, Farthing, and Grant expounded "a new way of looking at the past, a different set of principles for viewing our national culture and traditions." They articulated "a conservative perspective in Canadian history and society."<sup>1</sup> An intriguing cadre of thinkers that emerged in the mid-twentieth century, then, has been identified.

The observations of scholars about the mid-twentieth century Canadian intellectual conservatives, however, have tended to be sketchy; they demand substantiation. This thesis is directed toward exploring the notion that there was a group of Canadian tory thinkers active in the post W.W. II period. It will do so by examining the main ideas that these intellectuals held, especially regarding contemporary social and political developments. It emphasizes, therefore, the occasional writings of these thinkers, their essays, articles, and lectures which comment on some issue. Their strictly scholarly output, although cited when appropriate, is not the focus of this discussion. Rather, this thesis is concerned primarily with their social criticism. It does not



attempt to present a history of scholarly inquiry, but of an intellectual style which was practiced by several Canadian writers who gained prominence in the mid-twentieth century.

Although these thinkers did not invariably agree, they did share, this discussion will argue, certain fundamental ideas and orientations. Primarily, they held a conception of Canada as a nation shaped by a British cultural inheritance. This view was reflected, for example, in the interpretations of Canadian history developed by Creighton, Morton, and Grant. Defending Canada's British inheritance against perceived threats was a central concern of Canadian intellectual conservatism in the immediate post W.W. II period.

Empirical inquiry, then, may confirm, to a considerable extent, generalizations which scholars have made about recent Canadian intellectual conservatism. Before examining the ideas of these tory thinkers, however, it is initially necessary to define precisely who these thinkers were; the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to brief biographical treatment of the major figures considered in this study.

Donald Creighton (1902-1979) was one of Canada's preeminent historians in the mid-twentieth century. His father, a Methodist minister and journalist, encouraged his son's literary inclinations.<sup>2</sup> Educated at the University of Toronto and Oxford, where he studied Modern History,

Creighton taught history at Toronto from 1927 to 1970.

Initially, he had hoped to devote his career to exploring the French Revolution. Lacking funds to pursue research in Europe, however, he abandoned this plan, and became interested in the politics of Lower Canada in the 1830's.

His numerous works include a two-volume biography of Sir John A. Macdonald and two surveys of Canadian history, Dominion of the North (1944) and Canada's First Century (1970). In 1960, he was appointed to the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Creighton's writings are informed by what he described as his "belief in the value of Canadian national state."<sup>3</sup> His scholarship is often strikingly polemical, even, at times, strident: he was a tireless critic of forces that he perceived as threats to the integrity of the Canadian polity.

John Farthing (1897-1954), the son of an Anglican Bishop of Montreal, studied arts at McGill University and Oxford. He fought in W.W. I with the McGill Battery of the Canadian Field Artillery. From 1924 to 1929, he taught economics and political science at McGill; he then resigned his position to pursue independent study. In 1940, he returned to teaching, becoming a master at Bishop's College School, Lennoxville, Quebec. His Freedom Wears a Crown was published posthumously in 1957; it was edited by Judith Robinson, a cousin of George Grant, who was a journalist writing for various Toronto newspapers, notably the Toronto Telegram, between the 1930's

and 1950's.

Eugene Forsey (1904-) was raised in Ottawa, in the home of his maternal grandfather, who served as Chief Clerk of the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons; his father, a Methodist missionary, had died when he was six months old. Forsey was educated at McGill University and Oxford. His primary scholarly interest was British constitutionalism and its expression in Canada. From 1929 to 1941, he was a member of the Department of Economics and Political Science at McGill; he subsequently became Director of Research for the Canadian Congress of Labour and Canadian Labour Congress. He supported Prime Minister Pierre E Trudeau, and, in 1970, was appointed to the Senate of Canada.

A democratic socialist, Forsey was a founding member of the League for Social Reconstruction. He ran as a candidate for the C.C.F. in federal and provincial elections during the late 1940's. However, writing to his friend, Arthur Meighen, he observed that he was "temperamentally and fundamentally a conservative"<sup>4</sup>; in a letter to E. Davie Fulton, he described himself as a "Conservative fellow-traveller."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Forsey, as Creighton averred, embodied throughout his career a singular amalgam of constitutional traditionalism and social radicalism.<sup>6</sup>

Roger Graham (1919-1988) was born in Montreal; his father was a doctor. Graham grew up in both Montreal and Chicago, studied Canadian history at the Universities of Manitoba and

Toronto, and was employed in an aircraft factory during W.W. II. His Ph.D. thesis was a study of the career of Richard Cartwright. After the war, he became professor of History at the University of Saskatchewan. In 1968, he joined the Department of History at Queen's. His major work was a three-volume biography of Arthur Meighen, published in 1960, 1963, and 1965.

George P. Grant (1918-1988), Ramsay Cook argued, was "one of the most important social and political thinkers in recent Canadian intellectual history."<sup>7</sup> Grant's father was headmaster of Upper Canada College from 1917 to 1935. His mother, who exerted a particularly strong influence on her son, was one of the first women to graduate from McGill.<sup>8</sup> During W.W. II, Grant was in London, England. A pacifist, he joined the Air Raid Precaution Service. He studied at Queen's University and Oxford; at the latter, he was introduced, by Austin Farrer, to "theological rationalism--the heart of Christian intellectual life."<sup>9</sup> In 1947, Grant became a member of the Department of Philosophy at Dalhousie, where he remained for twelve years. He then taught at York and McMaster, but returned to Dalhousie in 1980. Grant's most celebrated work is Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism, published in 1965.

Harold Adams Innis (1894-1952) grew up in a pious Baptist family, on a farm in rural Ontario. In W.W. I, he was a

private in the field artillery: he participated in the attack on Vimy Ridge (April, 1917), and was wounded a few months later. He studied at McMaster University and the University of Chicago, earning a Ph.D. from the latter institution in 1920; his doctoral thesis, supervised by the economic historian Chester Wright, was an examination of the Canadian Pacific Railway. A political economist, Innis taught throughout his academic career at the University of Toronto. From 1947 to 1952, he also served as Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. His The Fur Trade in Canada (1930) is, Carl Berger affirmed, a seminal work of Canadian history.<sup>10</sup> In this book, Innis expounded the staples theory of Canadian history, the notion that "the exploitation of succession of staples commodities explains the nature of Canadian development and the singular patterns of its institutions and culture."<sup>11</sup>

W.L. Morton (1908-1980) was born in rural Manitoba, "one of the first major historians of Canada who brought to his field of study a perspective moulded by the cultural milieu of the prairie west."<sup>12</sup> Morton's grandfather and father were farmers and had been involved in provincial politics; Morton, however, chose to pursue an academic career. He studied history at the University of Manitoba and Oxford. At Oxford, he took a course given by the imperial historian, Vincent Harlow, on "the expansion of the British peoples overseas," and explored the regulation of the Newfoundland

cod fishery in the late eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> From 1942 to 1966, Morton was a member of the Department of History at Manitoba; he then moved to Trent, ultimately becoming the university's chancellor. In 1974, he left Trent to serve as visiting professor at the University of Otago in New Zealand. He returned to Winnipeg in 1975.

Morton's career was marked by two main phases. Initially, he was primarily concerned with Western Canadian subjects: he wrote a study of agrarian protest and histories of Manitoba. After about 1957, however, Morton increasingly embraced national themes; he became an interpreter of the entire Canadian experience. During this latter period, he produced such works as The Canadian Identity (1961) and The Kingdom of Canada (1963), served on the Board of Broadcast Governors, and edited, with Creighton, the Canadian Centenary Series, a sixteen-volume history of Canada.

There are some striking similarities in the backgrounds and experiences of several of the intellectual exponents of Canadian conservatism in the post W.W. II period. For example, Creighton, Farthing, Forsey, Grant, and Morton studied at Oxford. Forsey, Grant, and Morton received Rhodes Scholarships. The fathers of Creighton, Farthing, Forsey, and Grant were employed in the opinion-moulding professions: teaching, journalism, the ministry. Grant, Morton, and Farthing shared a devotion to Anglicanism, while the families of Creighton and Forsey were Methodist--Forsey served as an

elder and steward in a United Church. Most of these thinkers lived and worked in central Canada.

Many of these conservative intellectuals were friends who corresponded frequently. Forsey exchanged letters regularly with Creighton, Graham, Farthing, and, at least in the 1970's, Morton. Occasionally, these writers collaborated on some enterprise, or wrote about one another's work. In 1952, Forsey, Robinson, and Farthing planned a book regarding the British tradition in Canada. Robinson, as previously mentioned, edited Farthing's Freedom Wears A Crown; she was one of the individuals to whom Grant dedicated his Lament for a Nation. Creighton wrote a biography of Innis and biographical essay on Forsey. In the 1970's, Morton and Forsey attempted to organize a book of essays about the Canadian monarchical tradition.<sup>14</sup> Forsey read and corrected the manuscript of Creighton's Canada's First Century. These are some examples of the links between Canadian conservative thinkers in the mid-twentieth century.

The following discussion seeks to explore the broad range of concerns articulated by recent Canadian intellectual conservatives. It begins by recapitulating the conservative vision of Canada, and documenting how conservative writers responded to developments in the late 1940's and early 1950's which they perceived as incompatible with their notion of the 'Canadian identity.' It proceeds to consider these writers' views on the increasing American presence in Canadian society

after W.W. II, and on the related issue of capitalism itself; it delineates their preoccupations with partisan politics in the 1950's, and with the structure of Canadian federalism in the 1960's and 1970's. The conclusion considers American and British conservatism in the postwar era, and offers some reflections on the nature and significance of recent Canadian conservative thought.



## Notes to Introduction

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11. Ibid., 85.
12. Ibid., 238.
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## CHAPTER ONE:

"Fighting for our Lives": Canada's British  
Inheritance in the Post World War II Era

English-speaking Canadian conservative intellectuals of the immediate post World War II era unequivocally embraced and expounded a conception of the 'Canadian identity': Canada, they maintained, was a country that had been shaped decisively by British ideas and institutions. While generally appreciative of French Canadian culture, they stressed the determinative influence of Canada's inheritance from Britain. "The essential thing about Canada," Eugene Forsey observed, "is not that it is part of North America, but that it is British North America."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, this British character was confirmed by the various interpretations of Canadian history that conservative writers articulated: George Grant, for example, identified adherence to European traditions as the distinguishing characteristic of Canadian society; Donald Creighton and W.L. Morton similarly underscored the importance of Canada's British connection. Ultimately, however, the policies of a series of Liberal Governments began to erode the congruence between the conservative vision of Canada and external reality. Under the Prime Ministerships of Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent, symbols of Canada's historic relationship with Britain were discarded from public life, while the Canadian tradition of parliamentary government, integral to a British

cultural inheritance, was manifestly vitiated. Canadian conservative thinkers responded with a spirited critique of Liberal initiatives; their rear-guard action is central to the intellectual history of Canada in the mid-twentieth century.

Canadian intellectual conservatives of the post World War II era shared at least one characteristic: veneration for Canada's British connection, which, they maintained, was the source of the distinctiveness of Canadian society. "The big thing we agree on," Eugene Forsey wrote to Arthur Meighen in 1952, "is...the preservation of the British element in our Canadian tradition."<sup>2</sup> Canada, "alone on this continent, has kept and valued its links with its past"; this, Forsey affirmed, is "what makes Canada Canadian, and not merely a pale, smudged carbon copy of the United States."<sup>3</sup> Meighen, in a speech that Forsey liked to quote, recalled "the noble founders of our political faith," who would "urge us to be conscious of our mighty heritage, proud of the Imperial Fountain of our freedom and of the flag that above us...."<sup>4</sup> For John Farthing, "it has ever been the distinctive character of the Canadian nation that being North American we are also, essentially, British North American."<sup>5</sup> Donald Creighton, in the early 1970's, reiterated this theme in a speech at Memorial University:

Our Canadian traditions, which we derive from Great Britain, are unique on the continents of North and South America. We have stood for historical continuity rather than revolution,

for monarchy rather than republicanism, for parliamentary institutions and responsible government rather than congressional government and constitutional checks and balances.<sup>6</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that those conservative writers--Creighton, George Grant, and W.L.Morton--who sought to interpret the Canadian experience, to explain the meaning of Canadian history, emphasized Canada's Britishness--its origins and contemporary significance

Writing in 1945, George Grant undertook to expound the nature of Canadian society. Canada, Grant explained, was established by those, both French and English-speaking, who repudiated the American Revolution, and who valued and wished to preserve their European ties:

Is it a gigantic accident that across the northern half of this continent a nation has been built? I think not. For surely the basis of our nation is rooted in one historical fact. Where the U.S.A. broke away from its past and its connections with Western Europe, we never did so. The original people of both English and French speaking Canada were those men and women on this continent who did not wish to be part of the new American experiment but wished to build a different society. The French Canadians did not want to become part of the new republic. The English Canadians were mainly made up of those who left the U.S.A. rather than accept the new society. Both were able to accomplish their desired ends by maintaining their connection with the British Empire and eventually by uniting together into a nation. It is on this basis that our nation was founded and maintained.<sup>7</sup>

This passage epitomizes the conservative understanding of Canadian history; it is echoed in the writings of Creighton,

Farthing, and Forsey. Twenty years later, Grant discussed further the conservative intentions and European orientation of the founders of Canadian society in his 'tour de force' of Canadian intellectual conservatism, Lament For a Nation.

In his Lament, published in 1965, Grant explored the purposes of the early leaders and settlers of British North America. While the interest of the United Empire Loyalists in political theory should not, he observed, be unduly stressed, the refugees from the American Revolution who clustered in what was to become Upper Canada had imbibed the ethos of British conservatism. Because it is more of an attitude, a sentiment, than an ideology, this variant of conservative thought is difficult to define; it was expressed in Canada as "an inchoate desire to build...a society with a greater sense of order and restraint than freedom-loving republicanism would allow." The Loyalists' conservatism, Grant elaborated, "was essentially the social doctrine that public order and tradition, in contrast to freedom and experiment, were central to the good life." For Grant, then, the primary aim of the founders of English-speaking Canada was to establish a conservative dispensation.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly, Canada, according to Grant, was a conservative nation, nourished by European cultural traditions. Grant's interest in Canadian history, however, was peripheral to his main concern, philosophy. Consequently, the notion of Canadian society that he espoused was more fully developed in

the works of others--especially the historian Donald G. Creighton.

In the mid-twentieth century, Creighton, a University of Toronto professor, was, as George Grant remarked, "the leading contemporary theorist of the conservative view of Canadian history."<sup>9</sup> Perhaps Creighton's most significant contribution to the writing of history in Canada was his articulation of what came to be known as the Laurentian thesis, a historical interpretation which underscores the trans-Atlantic orientation of Canada's economy and culture.

The fundamental fact of Canadian history, Creighton maintained, was the existence of a river system, the St. Lawrence, which extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the center of the North American continent. It was the national purpose of Canada to realize the commercial potential of the St. Lawrence, to create a vast trading network linking the North American frontier with the cities of Europe. The achievement of this end, however, was imperilled by Canada's powerful southern neighbor, the United States, and its expansionist aims. Accordingly, Canadian statesmen relied on the power of Britain to counteract American pressure, and thereby to maintain the territorial integrity of what Creighton called the 'Dominion of the North':

Great Britain's military and diplomatic help was frankly regarded [by Canadians in the nineteenth century] as an essential counterweight to American preponderance. The old

world was brought in to redress the balance of the new.<sup>10</sup>

British influence, then, was indispensable to the survival of an independent Canadian polity.<sup>11</sup>

A scholar who criticized Creighton's thesis, but who concurrently affirmed the importance of Canada's British cultural inheritance, was W.L. Morton. To Morton, the Laurentian thesis was inordinately centralist: emphasizing the commercial activity of the metropolises, it neglects the experience of the hinterland.<sup>12</sup> Born in Gladstone, Manitoba, Morton, as Carl Berger observed, "possessed an exceptional feeling for the integrity and legitimacy of the western region and its localities."<sup>13</sup> He accordingly devoted the initial phase of his career to the study of Western Canadian history. Later, the focus of his work shifted; he embraced national, and especially constitutional, subjects. This shift did not, however, reflect a repudiation of his solicitude for the regional. Indeed, it was in Canada's monarchical tradition that Morton discerned the buttress of diversity in Canadian society.

British constitutional monarchy, Morton contended, represents one of the "permanent factors" in Canadian history.<sup>14</sup> In The Canadian Identity, he explored the import of this "monarchical element."

The moral core of Canadian nationhood," Morton observed, "is found in the fact that Canada is a monarchy."<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, the framers of the British North America Act were

determined to realize a monarchical dispensation; they unequivocally rejected American republicanism. The United States, Morton explained, is the product of a covenant, a social compact; such a society, he suggested, requires consensus, uniformity. In a monarchy, however, the basis of unity was not a covenant, an agreement among the like-minded, but rather allegiance to the sovereign. A monarchical order, then, permits considerable diversity:

Because Canada is a nation founded on allegiance and not on compact, there is no process in becoming Canadian akin to conversion, there is no pressure for uniformity, there is no Canadian way of life.<sup>16</sup>

Elsewhere, Morton asserted that "the society of allegiance admits of a diversity the society of compact does not, and one of the blessings of Canadian life is that there is no Canadian way of life...but a unity under the Crown admitting of a thousand diversities."<sup>17</sup> Canada, because of its variegated nature, required institutions compatible with cultural diversity; British constitutional monarchy was construed as singularly appropriate.

Clearly, the conceptions of Canadian history developed by English-speaking conservative intellectuals in the immediate post World War II period underscored the beneficial influence of the British connection. It is not surprising, therefore, that conservative writers decried what they perceived as the attempt of a series of Liberal Governments in the mid-twentieth century to undermine Canada's cultural inheritance



from Britain. In particular, Tory thinkers denounced the calculated removal of terms and symbols associated with Britain from Canadian public life, and the vitiation of parliamentary traditions.

Since Confederation, Canada had been designated a 'Dominion', a title devised by the British North American delegation to the London Conference of 1866-1867. The Canadian postal service, moreover, had traditionally been termed the "Royal Mail." In the late 1940's, however, these appellations began to disappear from public view. After an acrimonious national debate, furthermore, Canada, in 1965, adopted a new flag, which was devoid of any symbolism invoking the British inheritance. Canadian conservatives, who conceived of Canada as a nation informed by British traditions, deplored these Liberal initiatives; the preeminent critic of the Government on these matters was, unquestionably, Eugene Forsey.

In "Republic of Canada?" (1952) Forsey called attention to the quiet disappearance of 'Dominion' from official documents, and 'Royal' from post office vans. For Forsey, this unannounced Liberal policy was both sneaky and misguided. 'Dominion', he affirmed, "is perhaps the only distinctive word [Canadians] have contributed to political terminology."<sup>18</sup> Several decades of use have imbued it with "a special Canadian connotation and flavour."<sup>19</sup> What, he wondered, is the motive behind this attempt to expurgate the

Canadian vocabulary, and how will it end? "The whole thing has been thrust upon us," he averred, "without even a pretence of consultation, let alone approval. It is time to call a halt."<sup>20</sup>

Forsey's essay, and his manifold letters to the editor in various newspapers, aroused public opinion, and bolstered Opposition efforts to thwart the Liberal campaign against the term 'Dominion'. His personal correspondence in the early 1950's similarly expressed a profound concern with the declining visibility of traditional terms and symbols in Canadian public life.

In his letters, Forsey frequently underscored the gravity of the embroglio over 'Dominion'. "The more I contemplate this dismal affair," he wrote to his friend, Arthur Meighen, in 1952, "the more disgusted I get."<sup>21</sup> The Liberals, he asserted, "are attacking the essential genius of this country...".<sup>22</sup> In another letter, he warned that "the spirit which is behind this business will vitiate our whole national life, if it is not checked now."<sup>23</sup> Forsey was unequivocal on what he perceived to be the crux of the controversy:

The thing really boils down to this: is the British tradition part of our tradition? My answer is yes.<sup>24</sup>

He affirmed that "never was it more urgent for those of us who want to preserve the British tradition to buckle on our armour and fight our hardest."<sup>25</sup> Having written an essay

on the subject, he increasingly came to feel that "something a good deal bigger is needed."<sup>26</sup> Indeed, Forsey became so inflamed by the issue that he determined to produce, in collaboration with other conservatives, a book on Canada's British traditions.

The plan for a book was the direct result of a meeting between Forsey and Judith Robinson in early 1952. A joint effort, involving Forsey, Robinson, and John Farthing, was conceived; Meighen, Creighton, and George Grant were also asked to contribute essays, but declined. Forsey explained the rationale for the book in a letter to Grant:

I don't know whether echoes of the row over 'Royal' and 'Dominion' up here have reached you... . . .the row has been considerable enough to make some of us think that very serious issues are involved.<sup>27</sup>

Initially, work progressed apace--Forsey asserted that "The Conservative party is having some of its essential work done for it gratis, by Judith, Jack, and me... ."<sup>28</sup> Tension, however, soon developed between Robinson and Farthing, effectively terminating the project. Forsey reported to Meighen on June 24, 1952 that a "clash of temperaments" had occurred:

Judith was, I think, a bit tactless; Farthing was touchy; and I came downstairs from a letter I was writing...to find things in fragments.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, although the book was never realized, Forsey's role in the controversy over 'Dominion' was lauded by conservatives; as Arthur Meighen observed, "you took the lead

in the battle against the erosion of Canadian traditions."<sup>30</sup>

Eugene Forsey was certainly not the only conservative intellectual exercised by the Government's effacement of terms and symbols associated with Britain. Indeed, both Creighton and W. L. Morton deplored this process of eradication. According to Morton, "The long denigration of historic symbols...the pitiful escapism into symbols drawn from wildlife...are vivid examples of the results of national liberalism, crude utilitarianism, and mechanic statism." Canadian conservatives, he suggested, "will have a special task to undertake in the revival of acceptable symbols and of the power of such concepts and sentiments as loyalty, honour, and reverence." Creighton, meanwhile, discussed the controversy over a national flag in Canada's First Century, 1867-1967, his survey of Canadian social development since Confederation. Consisting of a red maple leaf on a white ground, with a red bar at each side, the new Canadian flag represented a "deliberate rejection of Canadian history"; it resembled the flag of "a nation without a past, and with a highly uncertain future."<sup>31</sup>

Successive Liberal Governments, Canadian conservatives charged, were steadily working to undermine Canada's British character. Indeed, conservatives wondered if, to the Liberals, anything British was sacred; the answer, of course, was no. The most significant target of this Liberal assault

on tradition was Parliament itself.

Canadian conservative intellectuals of the immediate post World War II era insisted that the Liberals were subverting the Canadian heritage of parliamentary government. The years of Liberal ascendancy, Roger Graham asserted, have witnessed "a decline in the authority and effectiveness of Parliament."<sup>32</sup> W.L. Morton argued in a letter to the Winnipeg Free Press that "the destruction of the independence of Parliament in Canada...is a work now far advanced, "and that this destruction "has been with rare exception the work of 'Liberal' governments... ."<sup>33</sup> The debasement of Parliament, identified by Graham, Morton, and others, originated, conservatives maintained, in the pronouncements and actions of Mackenzie King.

According to Graham, "Mackenzie King...did much to undermine the operation of responsible parliamentary governments."<sup>34</sup> Forsey was even more blunt: King, he declared, "tried to kill parliamentary responsible government."<sup>35</sup> For Morton, "King's victory in 1926 [was] the beginning of the erosion of parliamentary government in Canada."<sup>36</sup> Why was King blamed for the deterioration of Canadian parliamentary traditions? The conservative analysis of the ills of Parliament was cogently expounded by John Farthing.

Essential to parliamentary government, Farthing observed, is the principle that the Cabinet is accountable to the

elected representatives of the people, the Members of Parliament. Present practice, however, contravenes this precept: "it is now the openly affirmed and fully accepted principle of government in this country that the Cabinet does not owe any direct responsibility to Parliament in any sense whatsoever." This repudiation of parliamentary procedure stems from the machinations of Mackenzie King. As leader of a minority government, King, in 1926, sought to avoid defeat on a vote of censure by having an election called. The Government, for King, was not accountable to the people's representatives; it is responsible, he maintained, only to the electorate itself. With this notion, King departed from the parliamentary style of government, and inaugurated an era of plebiscitary democracy.<sup>37</sup>

Like Farthing, Forsey was deeply disturbed by the maneuvers of King during the King-Byng crisis of 1926. King's request for an election, Forsey argued, contradicted parliamentary theory and practice; it was correctly denied by the Governor General, Lord Byng. Indeed, parliament can be dissolved "only when there are substantial reasons for doing so"--e.g., the emergence of a new and significant issue, the inability of the existing parliament to produce an alternative to a defeated Government, or the conclusion of the parliamentary term. In 1926, however, none of the legitimate preconditions for dissolution existed. Moreover, King's request was doubly improper because it was made while

a motion of censure on his Government was being debated in the House. If King had been granted a dissolution, a precedent would have been established whereby a Prime Minister could allow Parliament to sit only as long as he believed that it would vote in accordance with his will--this would reduce parliament to a creature of the Prime Minister. King's conduct, therefore, was decidedly unconstitutional, incompatible with parliamentary responsible government.<sup>38</sup>

King's actions in 1926 were not, according to conservatives, his only contribution to the erosion of parliamentary traditions. His comments occasioned by the appointment of Lester B. Pearson to the Cabinet represented an additional instance of his disregard for the integrity of Parliament. Forsey explained the implications of King's remarks in an essay which appeared in Saturday Night.

When he appointed Pearson to the Cabinet in 1948, King declared that the civil service is a "steppingstone to the ministry." This, Forsey asserted, "is a constitutional principle as novel as it is subversive of parliamentary government." Indeed, King's statement "utterly confounds the distinct, and in many ways opposite, functions of the minister and the civil servant." Perhaps the primary purpose of the latter, Forsey contended, is to provide expert advice to the former, who, as an elected representative, evaluates and makes decisions on the basis of this advice in light of his understanding of public needs. If, however, the minister

is himself an expert, rather than a layman, he will not be sufficiently sympathetic to the concerns of the public to use properly the counsel that he receives. In addition, if the civil service is to be regarded as a 'steppingstone to the ministry', ambitious bureaucrats will be inclined not to perform their legitimate task--i.e., proffering disinterested expert advice--but rather to "give...the advice the government wants to hear." King's notion of the relationship between the civil service and the Cabinet, then, would severely disrupt the existing scheme of government in Canada.<sup>39</sup>

Five years after Pearson's appointment, another civil servant became a Cabinet minister in a Liberal Government, when J.W. Pickersgill replaced Gordon Bradley as Secretary of State. Pickersgill's "easy transfer from the anonymity of the civil service to the publicity of party politics," Creighton wrote in the mid-1970's, "cast a revealing beam of light on the state of government in Canada as it had developed during twenty years of Liberal rule." The Canadian civil service had come to be closely associated with the Liberal Party. Civil servants "were intimate friends of Liberal ministers; they were committed to Liberal policies which they had largely framed themselves; they rejoiced at the success of Liberal Party stratagems, which were not infrequently of their own invention." The British ideal of impartiality had been abandoned: in Canada, "civil servants



and Liberal politicians were simply two divisions of the same armed forces--different members of a large, rapidly growing, and extremely happy family."<sup>40</sup>

The Liberal practices denounced by Creighton may have been inconsistent with British standards, but did not constitute a radical departure from the Canadian civil service tradition. In 1878, John A. Macdonald remarked that "Every government selected for the civil service their own friends and no one could object to it." This "spoils system," Granatstein asserted in The Ottawa Men, "lasted well into the [twentieth] century, affecting almost every position in Ottawa": the Canadian civil service had been for decades a highly politicized body.<sup>41</sup>

Nonetheless conservative intellectuals believed that Canadian parliamentary government had been virtually undermined by Mackenzie King and his legacy. This Liberal onslaught against Parliament culminated in an episode which probably incited more anger among conservative thinkers than any other single event: the pipeline debate of 1956.

In May, 1956, C.D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce and Defense Production, submitted a bill to Parliament that would subsidize the construction of a pipeline in Western Canada by a predominantly American company. Both the C.C.F. and the Progressive Conservatives opposed and endeavored to resist this proposal. Howe, nevertheless, was determined to pass the measure. Accordingly, the Government invoked

closure on four separate occasions during debate. The pipeline bill became law on June 7, 1956.

The pipeline debate, conservatives maintained, was the single most blatant manifestation of the Liberal Party's contempt for Parliament. It "crystallized the many resentments of Canadians," W.L. Morton suggested, "towards the ever-growing penetration of their national life by American capital and American ways--not least, perhaps, Howe's own lack of patience with Parliament and its traditions."<sup>42</sup> To Creighton, the events of spring, 1956 demonstrated that the Liberal Government was "the ruthless tyrant of Canada."<sup>43</sup> Twenty years of ascendancy had instilled in the Liberals a "complacent belief in [their] own wisdom, a contemptuous disregard of criticism, and a truculent impatience at all delay."<sup>44</sup> A close observer of the debate was Judith Robinson; her accounts appeared in the Toronto Telegram, and were subsequently collected in a book, This is on the House (1957), a sustained polemic against the Liberal Party of the 1950's.

C.D. Howe's pipeline bill, Robinson affirmed, was "an alien's plan for the exploitation of Canadian resources...by aliens." It was passed by "smash[ing] the rules of Parliament and destroy[ing] its authority... ." Robinson was particularly critical of Howe:

It must be a great satisfaction to Mr. Howe. He had accomplished so much in twenty-one years. When he came to power in this country's government, Canada was poor like all the world, but it

had a free Parliament, free by tradition and inheritance

Now Canada is rich and it no longer has a free Parliament. The Canadian Parliament's freedom of debate got in Mr. Howe's way. It is not longer in his way any longer; it need never again be in the way of any Minister hungry of power. The precedents set...during the passage of the [pipeline bill] are enough to see to that.

Ultimately, the actions of the Liberal Party during the pipeline affair "cut away the foundation of responsible government in this Dominion." Using their majority to curtail debate, the Liberals disregarded "the rules free men must accept for their governance if they wish to remain free"; parliament "will not function and...cannot survive where the rules of its existence are not honoured and upheld."<sup>45</sup>

Robinson's This is on the House offered a series of caustic observations about the significance of the pipeline debate. The most involved and scholarly analysis of the Liberals' conduct, however, was expounded, predictably, by Eugene Forsey.

The passage of the pipeline bill, Forsey argued, was ill-advised for two reasons. First, the bill was intrinsically flawed; second, the manner in which it became law was a perversion of parliamentary procedure. Forsey developed this argument in two essays: "Constitutional Aspects of the Canadian Pipeline Debate" and "Pipeline and Parliament."

The pipeline bill itself, according to Forsey, was faulty. The project which it financed was erroneously characterized by C.D. Howe as 'all-Canadian'<sup>46</sup> It

represented, moreover, an irrational "hodge-podge of public and private enterprise."<sup>47</sup> More significant than the inherent defects of the bill, however, were the tactics which the Government employed to ensure its passage.

For several reasons, the pipeline bill should have been thoroughly debated. Involving enormous sums of public money, it was "one of the most important [measures] ever to come before the Parliament of Canada."<sup>48</sup> It was also highly contentious, opposed by both Opposition parties. Furthermore, "neither the bill nor anything like it had ever been before the electors for decision. The Government had no mandate for it."<sup>49</sup> While the bill, then, was highly significant, it was not adequately considered: rather, it was "rammed through by the repeated use of closure in circumstances absolutely unprecedented... ." <sup>50</sup>

The Government's use of closure during the pipeline debate, Forsey maintained, contravened parliamentary procedure. Indeed, closure was invoked four times in twenty-two days--invariably under unexampled circumstances. This delimitation of discussion represented a "gross and flagrant breach of the spirit of our Constitution."<sup>51</sup> The ultimate import of these actions, to Forsey, was patent: with the pipeline bill, "parliamentary government [in Canada]... disappears."<sup>52</sup>

The pipeline debate, for conservative writers, was a traumatic event. It symbolized a development which had

obtained under successive Liberal Governments, and which Tory writers had consistently protested: the progressive erosion of Canada's British traditions--traditions that, conservatives argued, were central to the very distinctiveness of Canadian society, the 'Canadian identity'. However, the elimination of manifestations of Britishness was only a symptom, perhaps the culmination, of entrenched diplomatic and economic trends; it is these developments that this discussion must now consider.

## Notes to Chapter One

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3. Ibid, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Feb. 7, 1952.
4. Arthur Meighen, Unrevised and Unrepented (Toronto: Clark, Irwin, and Co. 1949), 206.
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7. G. Grant, "Have We a Canadian Nation?" Public Affairs, 8 (1945), 162.
8. G. Grant, Lament for a Nation (Ott.: Carleton University Press, 1986), 70-71.
9. Grant, Lament, 24.
10. D. Creighton, "American Pressures and Canadian Individuality," The Centennial Review, 1 (1957), 356.
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12. W.L. Morton, "Clio in Canada: The Interpretation of Canadian History," (1946) Approaches to Canadian History, ed. Carl Berger (Toronto: U. of T. Press, 1983), Pp. 46-7.
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14. W.L. Morton, The Canadian Identity (Toronto: U. of T., 1961), 89.
15. Ibid., 85.
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18. Eugene Forsey, "Republic of Canada?" Public Affairs, 14 (Winter, 1952), 13.
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20. Ibid., 17.
21. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Dec. 17, 1951.
22. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Feb. 7, 1952.
23. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Dec. 26, 1951.
24. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Feb. 4, 1952.
25. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Feb. 7, 1952.
26. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Dec. 26, 1951.
27. N.A.C., Forsey Papers, vol. 3, letter from Forsey to Grant, Feb. 29, 1952.
28. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, Apr. 25, 1952.
29. N.A.C., Meighen Papers, vol. 223, Series 6, letter from Forsey to Meighen, June 24, 1952.
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## CHAPTER TWO:

Canadian Conservative Intellectuals on  
Continentalism and Capitalism

Articulate Canadian conservatives, in the 1950's, were disturbed by the decline of Canada's British traditions; a concomitant and reciprocal trend--the increasing American presence in Canadian society--evoked similar alarm. Canada's political, cultural, and economic relationship with the United States in the post W.W. II period was a concern of George Grant, W.L. Morton, and H.A. Innis; it was a subject on which Donald Creighton was particularly vociferous. Related to these writers' response to Canadian-American relations and American investment in Canada was their thought on capitalism, something that they probed throughout their intellectual careers. Their attitudes toward the Americanization of Canadian life, and their views on the more fundamental question of the desirability of private enterprise, are the focus of this chapter.

In 1940, Canadian society, according to the liberal scholar, Frank Underhill, witnessed a revolution: it abandoned its "British century," and began its American era. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Underhill explained, Canada had relied on its ties with Britain to counteract the "geographical pull of the United States."<sup>1</sup> Gradually, however, Canada established its autonomy from Britain, and continental forces increasingly shaped Canadian life. While Canadian conservative intellec-

tuals would not have disputed Underhill's characterization of the tenor of Canadian history, they could not have share the satisfaction with which he expressed it. Donald Creighton stated the conservative view of Canadian external affairs perhaps more explicitly and coherently than any single writer; to Creighton, the achievement of autonomy from Britain only facilitated Canada's political, economic, and cultural domination by the United States.

In the 1920's, Canadian foreign policy, formulated by Prime Minister Mackenzie King and his Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, O.D. Skelton, became decidedly isolationist--it sought to "reduce the ties which bound Canada to the outside world and in particular to Britain."<sup>2</sup> This development represented a departure from the approach to external relations espoused by Canadian conservatives: Robert Borden and Arthur Meighen had advocated a common foreign policy for all the nations of the British Empire-Commonwealth; each Dominion, they maintained, should participate in the determination of that policy. For King, however, the countries of the Commonwealth should devise their own foreign policies, in accordance with their respective interests; he established this principle at the Imperial Conference of 1923. King, then, endeavored to expand Canadian autonomy, a tack that necessarily involved a movement away from Britain.

King's isolationist foreign policy was, for Creighton,

the source of manifold subsequent ills. Britain, Creighton emphasized, had played a highly significant role in Canadian history: it served to check American expansionist impulses, and thereby maintain Canadian sovereignty. In his pursuit of autonomy during the 1920's, however, King had severely weakened Canada's British connection; consequently, Creighton argued, the Liberal Prime Minister expedited the subordination of Canada to American interests.

Mackenzie King, according to Creighton, "was essentially a North American, rather than a Canadian, citizen"; hence, he was indifferent, if not hostile, to Canada's British cultural heritage.<sup>3</sup> It was this continentalist disposition which prompted King to eschew extensive links with Britain. Significantly, the expression of this isolationist impulse coincided with a marked expansion of American economic activity in Canada. Thus, the British connection, essential to offsetting American pressures, to preserving a distinctive Canadian society in North America, was being repudiated when it was most needed.<sup>4</sup>

Canadian foreign policy in the 1920's, for Creighton, was misguided; his notion of the proper approach to external relations was akin to that of Borden and Meighen. In particular, he viewed the Commonwealth as the vehicle through which Canada could have played a significant role in international affairs. To Creighton, the Commonwealth, prior to the mid-1920's, provided an opportunity "for Canada, along

with the other Dominions, to share the influence and take part in the decisions of a world power." Through the Imperial War Cabinet and the Prime Ministers' Conference of 1921, Canada "was able to play a part in world politics such as she had never done before and would never do again."

Harold Innis, like Creighton, was an exponent of Canadian involvement in the Commonwealth; Canada's sovereignty, he wrote in 1948, can only be preserved by a "third bloc designed to withstand the pressure of the United States and Russia." Grant, too, saw the Commonwealth as "a counter-balance in a world which was increasingly polarized between the United States and the Soviet Union."<sup>5</sup>

Creighton, Innis, and Grant's emphasis on the value of Canadian participation in the Commonwealth reflected a primary concern of tory intellectuals in the post World War II era: the drift toward continental integration, the development of increasingly close ties between Canada and the United States. Indeed, in 1964, Morton remarked that Canadian society "is so irradiated by the American presence that it sickens and threatens to dissolve in cancerous slime."<sup>6</sup> Continental integration was most significantly manifest in three realms--diplomacy, economics, and culture.

During the middle decades of the twentieth century, Canadian foreign policy was geared toward cultivating a close relationship with the United States. Indeed, it appeared that Canada had detached itself from the British Empire only

to enter the American orbit. For example, the Ogdensburg Agreement (1940), struck by Mackenzie King and the American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, provided for cooperation between Canada and the United States in the defence of the North American continent. On a series of diplomatic issues after W.W. II, moreover, Canadian pronouncements rigorously accorded with those of the United States. In the 1940's and 1950's, then, Canadian foreign policy evinced a pro-American orientation; this development was excoriated by Creighton.

"The process by which [Canada] became a branch-plant dependency and a military satellite of the American Republic," Creighton affirmed in 1969, "began with the Ogdensburg Agreement of 1940... ."7 When seeking to establish Canadian autonomy from Britain, King had insisted that his Government could not assume any external commitments without consulting the Canadian Parliament. When, however, Roosevelt proposed to King the creation of a joint commission regarding North American defense, the latter readily acquiesced--he did not even inform his Cabinet. The significance of the resulting agreement was considerable: involving "unspecified objects" and an "indefinite length of time," it "bound Canada to a continental system dominated by the United States and largely determined Canadian foreign and defense policy for the next thirty years."<sup>8</sup>

If Canada, through the Ogdensburg Agreement, left its "British century," and entered its American era, this

movement was probably epitomized by the infamous Suez crisis. In 1956, Egypt seized the Suez canal, prompting a military response from Britain, France, and Israel. Although most Canadians sympathized with British claims,<sup>9</sup> Prime Minister St. Laurent was infuriated by, and refused to condone, the British Government's action. Predictably, the Canadian leader's stance upset conservatives. Creighton observed in Canada's First Century that the official Canadian reaction to the crisis reflected the disintegration of the British Commonwealth and the "submission of its members...to American leadership in world politics."<sup>10</sup> Writing to Arthur Meighen, Roger Graham denounced the Liberals' "gratuitous and self-righteous condemnation of Anglo-French action in the Middle East."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, to intellectuals who saw the distinctiveness of Canada rooted in its British character, the Suez crisis was a dramatic illustration of the extent to which the traditional relationship between Britain and Canada had been abandoned.

Soon after the Suez crisis, another diplomatic issue generated considerable controversy in Canada. In 1957, Herbert Norman, the Canadian Ambassador to Egypt, committed suicide; he had been accused of maintaining 'communist sympathies' by a committee of the United States Senate. The response of the Canadian Government to Norman's death was, to some conservative commentators, restrained--the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson, appeared

anxious to avoid offending American officials. In a letter to Meighen, Eugene Forsey observed that "...Mr. Pearson's statement in the House of Commons about Norman was much too mild. Not so, I warrant, would you have spoken, or Sir Robert [Borden], or R.B. [Bennett]."<sup>12</sup> According to Morton, "the Canadian government neither received proper satisfaction nor adequately vindicated its ambassador's name... ."<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Creighton censured, in The Forked Road, the "casual, unconcerned, perfunctory fashion in which both the Canadian and American governments treated the [Norman affairs]."<sup>14</sup>

Clearly, Creighton and other conservatives disapproved of the tenor of Canadian foreign policy in the 1940's and 1950's. However, indications of the elaboration of ties between Canada and the United States, and the corresponding decline of the Anglo-Canadian alliance, were not confined to the realm of diplomacy; hence, after World War II, an additional manifestation of the increasingly continentalist orientation of Canadian society infuriated conservative writers--the American economic 'takeover' of Canada.

In the 1920's, the United States replaced Britain as the primary source of foreign investment in Canada. The participation of American interests in the Canadian economy became especially pronounced during the immediate post World War II period: between 1945 and 1955, U.S. capital in Canada doubled from \$4.9 billion to \$10.3 billion, underwriting a

resource and manufacturing boom.<sup>15</sup> (British and European capital in Canada at this time totalled roughly \$3 billion.)<sup>16</sup> American investment was significantly different from British. The latter involved primarily the purchase of railway, industrial, and government bonds; Canadians used the funds derived from the sale of these bonds to further independent Canadian enterprises. Americans, however, sought equity: they invested directly in particular ventures, thereby acquiring ownership and control.<sup>17</sup> Hence, although American investment precipitated considerable prosperity, not all Canadians were pleased. Creighton articulated the misgivings of a dissident minority.

"In the economic as in the political world," Creighton observed in 1970, "Canada has gained autonomy in one empire only to become the colony of another."<sup>19</sup> With the decline of the British connection, Canada witnessed an influx of American capital. A continental economy emerged, dominated by--and designed to serve the interests of--the United States. This process was "actively encouraged and assisted" by Liberal Governments, for which "the independence of Canada...was not a major concern...".<sup>19</sup> The Liberals, Creighton contended, "watched the massive postwar accumulation of American capital in Canada apparently without a tremor of apprehension...".<sup>20</sup> Despite its material benefits, the continentalism fostered by the Liberals has, according to Creighton, had a disastrous effect on Canadian



society: it "divorced Canadians from their history, crippled their creative capacity, and left them without the power to fashion a new future for themselves."<sup>21</sup>

The aspect of economic continentalism which particularly incensed Creighton was the American control of Canadian natural resources. For Creighton, this phenomenon proceeded from the very nature and goals of American society; he developed this argument in "Continentalism and the Birthright of Canada" (1971).

The primary American ideal, Creighton asserted, is 'progress'--"the liberation of man through the progressive conquest of nature by technology."<sup>22</sup> According to the exponents of progress, "the possibilities of the future...are infinite; there must be no limitation on the satisfaction of whatever human wants industry decides to create by modern advertising."<sup>23</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the United States, in seeking to implement this doctrine, has greatly depleted its natural resources, and has come to rely on those of Canada. American money "pours into the smelting and refining of Canadian base metals, and from the first it acquired a dominating influence in the new resource industries of petroleum and natural gas."<sup>24</sup> Because most American investment in Canada involves direct ownership and control, Canadians have effectively relinquished their natural endowment: they have, Creighton declared, "sold out their birthright to make a quick buck."<sup>25</sup>

Creighton's analysis of economic continentalism was reinforced by the writings of George Grant. In the past decades, the actions of Canada's economic and political elite have, Grant argued, virtually undermined Canadian independence. Traditionally, the Canadian economy had been geared toward exporting raw materials to Europe. The mid-twentieth century, however, witnessed a reorientation of Canadian economic activity, as the dominant groups of Canadian society determined that they could "make more money by being the representatives of American capitalism in Canada... ." Hence, presently, the primary role of Canada is to serve as a "branch-plant of American capitalism"; the Canadian elite "looks across the border for its final authority in both politics and culture"<sup>26</sup>

The restructuring of the Canadian economy was, according to Grant, abetted by the Liberal Party, the "political instrument" of Canadian business interests. "It was under a Liberal regime," Grant suggested, "that Canada became a branch-plant society... ." Economic policies pursued by the Liberals "homogenized the culture of Ontario with that of Michigan and New York." Canada, it was decided, must be integrated into the complex of American corporate capitalism. The end of the Liberals was to achieve such integration "as fast as possible and at all costs."<sup>27</sup>

The reorientation of the Canadian economy to which Grant referred had been elucidated by H.A. Innis in the 1940's. In

the nineteenth century, the Canadian economy was "an east-west system," exporting wheat and other agricultural products to Britain and continental Europe. However, Innis observed, "since the turn of the century, the United States has had an increasing influence on this structure." American industry exhausted American resources; consequently, substantial demand emerged in the United States for Canadian raw materials. A close economic relationship developed between the U.S. and Canada, in which the latter was subordinate, affected significantly by American economic policies, but unable to influence the formulation of those policies. This relationship was further cemented in the early twentieth century by the Canadian system of tariffs encouraging trade with Britain, which paradoxically promoted the establishment of American branch plants in Canada. "American imperialism," Innis asserted, mocking Underhill, "has replaced...British imperialism." Canada, he observed in a parody of the title of a famous book by the Liberal historian, A.R.M. Lower, "moved from colony to nation to colony"<sup>28</sup>

Concomitant with economic continentalism was the permeation of Canadian society by films, television programs, and periodicals from the United States. Morton lamented that "home and school...thought and ideal" have been penetrated by the "strident tones, the careful conformity, the insidious and calculated mediocrity of the mass American culture."<sup>29</sup>

This facet of continental integration deeply concerned Innis. In The Strategy of Culture, he advocated an "energetic national programme" to mitigate what Creighton termed the "continual hammering" of the Canadian identity by the American mass media.<sup>30</sup>

American newspapers and magazines, Innis observed, have increasingly come to dominate Canadian markets. This trend, he affirmed, has had a highly deleterious effect on Canadian culture--it has obscured the distinctive character of Canada, which derived from its British inheritance:

We are indeed fighting for our lives. The pernicious influence of American advertising reflected especially in the periodical press and the powerful persistent impact of commercialism has been evident in all the ramifications of Canadian life. The jackals of communication systems are constantly on the alert to destroy every vestige of sentiment toward Great Britain holding it of no advantage if it threatens the omnipotence of American commercialism. This is to strike at the heart of cultural life in Canada.<sup>31</sup>

Canada's British tradition, and hence its distinctiveness on the North American continent, can only be preserved, Innis warned, by "taking persistent action at strategic points against American imperialism in all its attractive guises."<sup>32</sup>

Innis's essay, published in 1952, probably represented an endorsement of the proposals of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, chaired by Vincent Massey. Established in 1949, the Massey Commission assessed "Canadian attainments in arts and letters

with the purpose of recommending adjustments so that Canadian culture might be allowed to blossom proportionately to the country's...economic development and population growth." The Commission determined that Canadian culture was "derivative and subordinate rather than distinctive and thriving"; it advocated federal funding for universities and cultural institutions.<sup>33</sup> Creighton, dismayed by the impact of American communications media on Canadian society, lauded the Commission and its propositions.

The report of the Massey Commission, Creighton asserted in The Forked Road (1976), was marked by "panoramic amplitude and pitiless detail." It was the first major expression of concern over the Americanization of Canadian life. Previously, "nobody...seemed to show the slightest uneasiness or anxiety at this growing American predominance." Thus, "long before politicians, economists, and journalists began to suspect that the real threat to Canadian identity and independence lay in American imperialism, the Massey Commissioners revealed the truth with candour and restraint." It was not until seven years after the Massey Report had been tabled in the House of Commons, however, that the Government implemented one of the Commission's principle recommendations, the creation of a Canada Council to provide grants to individual scholars or institutions. Hence, in the early 1950's, the Massey Commissioners were "lone, lost voices, virtually unheard of in the deaf ears and closed

minds of the Government of Canada."<sup>34</sup>

The critique of the American presence in Canada formulated by conservative writers suggests that articulate Canadian Tories were not proponents of unrestricted private enterprise. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a consideration of the attitude of recent Canadian conservative thinkers toward capitalism.

Canadian conservative intellectuals expressed a range of views on private enterprise. George Grant, Eugene Forsey, and W.L. Morton, for example, may be described as critics of economic liberalism, although Morton's position was ambivalent. Creighton's attitude, meanwhile, changed over time: in the 1930's, he construed capitalism as a creative, progressive force; by the 1970's, he was urging the state's intervention in economic affairs to promote nationalist ends. These preeminent Tory thinkers shared a skepticism toward the ostensible benefits of a market economy; nevertheless, there was no clear consensus among intellectual conservatives on capitalism.

W.L. Morton's views on private enterprise were somewhat ambiguous, although he was certainly not an exponent of unrestrained capitalism. Morton advocated the "frank and loyal acceptance of the welfare state," which, he asserted, "is not in any conflict with Conservative principles, of which laissez faire and rugged individualism are no part."<sup>35</sup> In "The Possibility of a Philosophy of

Conservatism," he moved from a qualified endorsement to an apparent and radical rejection of the market economy.

"Experience," Morton observed, "suggests that the state should undertake no more than it has to. Much enterprise, therefore, is best left free."<sup>36</sup> This apparent approbation of capitalism, however, was tempered:

...no enterprise, private or public, should be allowed to operate except under laws and conventions that it does not interpret and in humane conditions which allow the common welfare full play. The free enterpriser is in no sense free of private and social obligation.<sup>37</sup>

Subsequently, Morton affirmed that "human freedom is a very different thing from the laissez faire freedom of the capitalist." England, he noted "has not yet recovered from the ravages of its industrial revolution, as the United States has not... ."<sup>38</sup> Indeed, toward the end of his essay, Morton outlined some of the means by which a more humane society can be realized; his proposals seem to imply a rejection of capitalism.

Man, Morton argued, must never be determined by technology; he must not be reduced to an appendage of a machine. Individuals, rather, should control technology, and direct it toward humane ends. "The only way to ensure this," he asserted, "is to sever wages from work and pay everyone a living wage merely for being, and extra rewards for specialist, difficult, or unpleasant work." Technology has made such a scheme feasible; it is only "the outmoded concept

that particular machines must make a profit on their particular capital cost" which prevents its implementation.<sup>39</sup>

Morton, clearly, was not a defender of a capitalist 'status quo'. The extent to which he had repudiated economic liberalism is, however, uncertain. Even greater alienation from capitalist society, meanwhile, was evinced by George Grant and Eugene Forsey. Grant, "an intellectual founding father of the New Democratic Party,"<sup>40</sup> explored the shortcomings of private enterprise in a cogent essay, while Forsey similarly wrote critically about capitalism, and was, in the 1930's, a prominent member of the democratic socialist League for Social Reconstruction.

Throughout his intellectual career, George Grant was a critic of capitalism. As a student, he had been a supporter of the C.C.F.: according to Ramsay Cook, he was "one of a small cell of young socialists at Upper Canada College... ." <sup>41</sup> In 1945, Grant lauded "strong movements in Canada--like the cooperatives, the C.C.F., and Social Credit--that want to impose order on the undisciplined money changers."<sup>42</sup> Perhaps Grant's most thorough elaboration of his thought on capitalism is found in his essay, "An Ethic of Community," which was included in Social Purpose for Canada (1961).

Social Purpose is a collection of essays by various writers. It was organized by a group of left-leaning



intellectuals (which included Forsey) who sought to redress what they perceived as a lack of social criticism in Canada, and to promote democratic socialist values.<sup>43</sup> In his contribution, Grant provided a forceful moral critique of capitalism.

Capitalist society, Grant maintained, is marred by two significant failures: it is unable to provide sufficiently certain goods and services integral to human welfare, and it does not distribute fairly the goods that it does produce. In a market economy, resources are allocated primarily to profitable activities. As a result, some highly important needs, which, like education, are not conducive to profit-making, are neglected. Moreover, vast disparities of income remain embedded in the capitalist order. Hence, while it has promoted a general improvement of the material conditions of life, capitalism, for Grant, has been, at best, a mixed blessing.<sup>44</sup>

Grant further developed his ethical critique of capitalism in later writings. Capitalism, Grant observed, is "a way of life based on the principle that the most important activity is profit-making."<sup>45</sup> In capitalist society, therefore, all traditions of virtue, all notions of the good, are subordinated to the pursuit of profit. It was the task of the philosophers of capitalism, Hobbes, Locke, Smith, and Hume, to dissolve "all ideas of the sacred," to discredit any conception of purpose which "transcended the economically

rational."<sup>46</sup>

Even more intimately associated with Canadian socialism in the mid-twentieth century than George Grant was Eugene Forsey. The latter's writings of the 1930's in particular reflect his disenchantment with capitalist society.

The "beatitude" of private enterprise, Forsey asserted, is "Blessed for the greedy for they shall inherit the earth." Indeed, a capitalist society is invariably marked by "the survival of the cunning and the vulgar and the crafty and the cruel." The ills of capitalism, Forsey emphasized, proceed logically from the very nature of a market economy-- "a flock of archangels administering our present economic system for the last four years," he wrote in 1933, "would probably have produced very much the same state of affairs as we see around us." There is, however, an alternative to capitalism: "It is becoming more and more apparent," he maintained, "that the Soviet Union is succeeding in building a new society, where the whole produce of labour belongs to the workers collectively, where unemployment and restriction of production are unknown, and where the standard of living is rising. How long can the world continue economically 'half slave and half free'?"<sup>47</sup>

Forsey's antipathy toward capitalism was reflected in his participation in the League for Social Reconstruction, an organization of democratic socialist intellectuals which was created during the Depression, and which was a precursor of

the C.C.F. One of its founders, Frank Underhill, had, around 1931, perceived a need "for a sort of Fabian society in Canada."<sup>48</sup> The L.S.R.'s manifesto advocated "the establishment in Canada of a social order in which the basic principles regulating production, distribution, and service would be the common good rather than the profit motive."<sup>49</sup> The League's principal publication, Social Planning for Canada (1935), a joint effort to which Forsey contributed, called for "the substitution of a planned and socialized economy in place of the inefficient and wasteful system that deprives certain classes and groups of the benefits of a liberal democratic society."<sup>50</sup> Generally, as Berger noted, the socialism espoused by the L.S.R. was "ameliorative, gradualist, and dedicated to peaceful change through the parliamentary system."<sup>51</sup>

The program of the L.S.R. was sarcastically dismissed in a review of Social Planning by H.A. Innis. The intellectuals who comprise the League, Innis contended, are "kindly" and "well-meaning," but devoid of any grasp of economic reality. Innis detested bureaucratic planning and centralization, and was therefore antipodal to the L.S.R. This aversion was further reflected in his review of the Report of the Rowell-Sirois Commission (1940). He assailed the Commission's proposals to expand the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, insisting that Provincial Civil Services were more efficient, more responsive to local needs, than Ottawa.

Innis, then, was a critic of the incipient Canadian welfare state.<sup>52</sup>

Influenced by Innis was Donald Creighton, whose views on capitalism represent a compromise between Innis's anti-statist disposition and the moderate socialism of Forsey and Grant. Early in his career, Creighton appears to have been decidedly sympathetic toward capitalism. During the 1930's, Berger asserted, he "not only analyzed and explained the aims of the [commercial class]; he embraced and celebrated its purposes."<sup>53</sup> For Creighton, the merchants of Lower Canada were "the creative and progressive group who imparted elan and direction to their society."<sup>54</sup> By the early 1970's, however, Creighton was no longer extolling the dynamic quality of private enterprise; rather, he was denouncing the unbridled pursuit of economic growth, and advocating state intervention to promote nationalist ends.

In "The Future in Canada" (1973), Creighton observed that, between the early 1940's and the early 1970's, the material standard of living enjoyed by most Canadians rose prodigiously. The mid-twentieth century was marked by technological growth and economic expansion:

The network of arrangements by which food, clothes, heat, light, comfort, and convenience were all lavishly made available to Canadians increased steadily in complexity. The airplane and the motor-car took over most of the business of transport; and huge airports, and multiple-lane highways, bordered with garages, service stations, and motels, appropriated more and more of the countryside. Technology, which created machines as huge as the 747 aircraft and as

small as the labour-saving devices in the normal Canadian kitchen, lightened the business of living to an extent which would have seemed miraculous only thirty years before.

During this period of prosperity, Canadians became self-indulgent: they "demanded more of everything--more growth, more money, more cars, more roads, more planes, more travels, more services, more comforts and conveniences--with a voracious and insatiable appetite." Indeed, for thirty years, they have been acting" on the principle that economic growth and prosperity is the only road to the good life." This tack, Creighton argued, will, through the depletion of natural resources, ultimately lead to disaster: "the decline in the supply of oil and natural gas will effect a transformation in the basic circumstances of our existence, the extent of which it is almost impossible to imagine." Only by tempering their appetites, by renouncing the pursuit of economic growth, can Canadians avert this fate.<sup>55</sup>

This argument was further developed by Creighton in "Surviving in the Post Keynesian Era," an essay published in Maclean's in 1975. Western society in general and Canadians in particular have, Creighton contended, uncritically embraced the notion that mankind is destined for progressively "higher uplands of affluent and gracious living." This conviction, however, has become untenable; a global shortage of food and fuel has emerged. The consumer societies of the West have virtually exhausted their supply of resources because they have committed themselves to

realizing "an annual, never-failing increment of convenience, comfort, leisure, and entertainment." For Canadians in the post W.W. II era, "it was no longer sufficient to avoid depressions and to maintain prosperity"; they demanded constant economic expansion. Accordingly, "every government and every corporation made growth its overriding aim"--all other considerations became secondary. In order to achieve the steady increase in prosperity that they desired, Canadians were obliged to sell their natural resources to the United States. "The depletion of the most easily accessible sources of their most lucrative, non-renewable fuels--petroleum and natural gas--had now [by 1973-1974] gone so far," Creighton observed, "that their total exhaustion was probable in less than a decade." Consequently, Canada's economic prospects, Creighton warned, are very grim.<sup>56</sup>

Clearly, Creighton, as has been noted earlier, was deeply disturbed by the sale of Canadian resources to American interests; he advocated the exertion of the power of the state to curb this trend. "To halt the growth of a continentally organized North America," he affirmed in Canada's First Century, would require "the invention of novel and daring policies designed to defend Canadian integrity and independence... ." <sup>57</sup> Such policies would necessarily involve vigorous governmental intervention: "The only power strong enough to prevent the destructive onward march of [continentalism];" Creighton asserted, "is the national

state."<sup>58</sup>

Although Creighton, during the late 1960's and early 1970's, urged an expanded role for the state in economic affairs, he had probably not embraced socialism. His concern over continentalism stemmed from his Canadian nationalism, his solicitude for indigenous Canadian enterprise. In 1970, he lauded "a gradual shift towards greater refinement and diversity in Canadian industry." If, however, Canadians continue to direct capital into the exploitation of resources for sale to the United States, "this slow movement towards greater economic strength through diversification and maturity," Creighton warned, "will now be slowed... ."<sup>59</sup> Creighton, then, was concerned with the maintenance of a vigorous Canadian capitalism.

Canadian conservative intellectuals of the post W.W. II era expressed a variety of views on private enterprise. Forsey and Grant were critics of capitalism. They had ties with the C.C.F./N.D.P., although each ultimately gravitated toward other parties for non-economic reasons. The attitudes of Morton and Creighton, meanwhile, were more ambivalent. Morton's thought regarding capitalism is ambiguous, but he was a supporter of the Progressive Conservatives during the 1970's. Creighton was prepared to accept considerable intervention by the state in economic affairs; his primary concern, however, was probably to promote the strength of Canadian-owned and controlled capitalist industry. Hence,

Canadian conservative intellectuals in their views of capitalism did not exhibit unanimity.

If tory thinkers were divided over the desirability of private enterprise, they shared a view of Canadian-American relations, especially in the economic sphere. They denounced what Creighton, writing to Innis in 1952, termed the "American tendencies of the present government at Ottawa."<sup>60</sup> These tendencies were manifest in diplomacy and in expanding economic ties. Simultaneously, American popular culture was being diffused throughout Canada, a phenomenon that intellectuals could not fail to discern and decry. In this context of declining British and growing American influence, some conservative writers were to look increasingly to the sphere of practical politics for the initiatives needed to preserve the integrity (as they saw it) of Canadian society.



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## CHAPTER THREE:

Preoccupations of the 1950's and 1960's:  
Party Politics and Canadian Federalism

In the late 1940's and 1950's, Canadian conservative thinkers were increasingly preoccupied with partisan politics, hoping that certain contemporary trends could be halted through the political process. The demise of the Diefenbaker Government in the early 1960's, however, induced disenchantment. The interest of writers like Creighton and Forsey soon shifted to Quebec's Quiet Revolution and the consideration of Canadian federalism that it provoked. Indeed, throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the desirability of bilingualism and the nature of the British North American Act were among the primary intellectual concerns of Creighton, Forsey, and W.L. Morton.

English-speaking Canadian conservative writers and scholars were disturbed by the transformation of Canadian society effected under the leadership of the Liberal Party during the middle decades of the twentieth century. They lamented the disintegration of formal ties with Britain, and the increasingly continental orientation of Canadian life; they were incensed by the Liberals' effacement of symbols of Canada's British cultural inheritance. Hence, exercised by the thrust of Liberal policies, intellectual conservatives embraced political alternatives, manifesting an affinity for one, or both, of the major opposition parties. Eugene Forsey

and Roger Graham, for example, developed a friendship with and wrote sympathetic studies of Arthur Meighen, former Conservative leader and briefly Prime Minister during the 1920's. Particularly in the 1950's, Canadian tory thinkers were acutely interested in partisan politics. While Forsey ran as a candidate for the C.C.F. in several elections, most intellectual conservatives avoided actual participation in the political process, and tended to identify with the Progressive Conservative Party. Almost invariably, however, the Party's conduct disappointed its intellectual supporters; nevertheless, virtually anything, for conservative writers, was preferable to the continued ascendancy of the Liberals. The intellectual conservatives' discussion of contemporary political developments represents a significant facet of their critique of trends informing Canadian society in the mid-twentieth century.

To some intellectuals, Arthur Meighen embodied Canadian conservatism. Becoming leader of the Conservative Party in 1920, he was Prime Minister of Canada from 1920 to 1921, and again in 1926. The conservative scholars most interested in Meighen were Eugene Forsey and Roger Graham.

In 1960, Forsey wrote an essay about Meighen for the Canadian Forum. Meighen, Forsey argued, has been widely misunderstood: contrary to conventional conceptions, he was neither an unsuccessful leader or a dogmatic defender of capitalism.

According to Forsey, Meighen was an effective leader of the Conservative Party. After an initial debacle, he proceeded, in 1925, to "recreate the Conservative organization outside Quebec, and ...sweep the rest of the country."<sup>1</sup> In the next election, one year later, he was defeated, but nevertheless increased the Conservative popular vote. Hence, the notion that Meighen failed as a politician is erroneous; similarly dubious, Forsey maintained, is the contention that the former Prime Minister was strictly a champion of business interests.

To Forsey, Meighen "was very far from being...a doctrinaire free enterpriser." Indeed, "he not only approved Bennett's New Deal of 1935, but piloted the bills through the Senate, and strengthened them in the process." He would, Forsey concluded, support "any legislation which he was convinced would really promote welfare."<sup>2</sup>

Forsey's interest in Meighen was not strictly academic; he was a close friend of the former Prime Minister. Indeed, their correspondence was prodigious: they regularly discussed contemporary issues, and even engaged in amiable debate. "I suppose our friendship," Forsey told Meighen, "is a mystery to most people in our respective parties. But to me there is nothing mysterious about one part of it: anyone who really knows you can't help being your friend."<sup>3</sup> Forsey's veneration for Meighen pervaded their letters.

Another conservative scholar who, in the 1950's,

developed a close relationship with Meighen was Roger Graham. They corresponded frequently, especially while Graham was preparing his three volume biography of Meighen. In "Some Comments on a Credible Canadian," an essay which appeared in the Canadian Historical Review, Graham depicted Meighen as a consummate parliamentarian.

As an M.P., Meighen, Graham affirmed, invariably adopted unambiguous positions, and articulated his views unequivocally. He possessed "unequalled ability to state a case, to clarify an issue... ." Indeed, his speeches "almost always were models of disciplined thought and expression... ." Accordingly, if the purpose of Parliament is to focus issues and examine, in a clear-headed manner, public business, Meighen was "a parliamentarian 'par excellence'."4

Clearly, Graham and Forsey were devotees of Meighen; not all Canadian conservative intellectuals, however, shared their enthusiasm. To Creighton, for example, Meighen possessed a lucid but narrow intellect. Grant, perhaps significantly, omitted Meighen from a list of the principal exponents of Canadian conservatism. Morton suggested that "splendid parliamentarian as he was, Meighen was neither a solid thinker nor an acute gatherer of other men's thoughts."5

While Canadian intellectual conservatives of the immediate post World War II era considered the merits of Meighen, they also observed closely contemporary develop-



ments in public affairs. For them, the domination of federal politics by the Liberal Party was infuriating. Some feared that the Canadian party system was being transformed. Neither the Conservatives nor the C.C.F., however, earned their unqualified support.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Canadian conservative thinkers longed for the downfall of the Liberals; this desire animated their correspondence. Forsey was particularly frustrated by the protracted Liberal rule:

What a crew we have governing us! I hope to goodness [Conservative leader] George Drew and Co. will be roused by the accumulation of outrages, if by no single one.<sup>6</sup>

Writing in 1952, he asserted that "the mere mention of the word 'Liberal' just makes me froth at the mouth."<sup>7</sup> Later, he told Meighen that "I would do almost anything short of crime to get this crew out."<sup>8</sup> Graham, meanwhile, shared Forsey's sentiments; he affirmed, in a letter to Meighen, that "this country needs a change of Government almost more than it needs anything else."<sup>9</sup>

The exasperation expressed by Forsey and Graham stemmed partially from their concern, shared by other conservatives, for the integrity of the Canadian party system in an era of prolonged domination of national politics by a single party. "The Liberals have now been so long and so solidly entrenched at Ottawa," Graham warned, "that there is room for misgiving concerning the future of the party system... ." He observed that "long continued rule by one party...leads to ministerial

arrogance, inefficiency and contempt of Parliament... ."10  
Innis, in 1948, referred to "the futility of political discussion in Canada," the "political lethargy"<sup>11</sup> of Canadian society. John Farthing distinguished between the "traditional Liberal party" and the Liberal party since World War II. The former was "a true political party within a democratic state," while the latter had become "the permanent one-party instrument of power within a demagogic state."<sup>12</sup> W.L. Morton, moreover, described the "Byzantine atmosphere of Ottawa which had grown up in the capital under one-party domination... ."13 The roots of the Liberal monolith were explored by Graham in his biography of Meighen.

The transformation of Canada into a virtual one-party state, according to Graham, was the result of the approach to politics practised by Mackenzie King. To King, "the essence of the party leader's task was to listen to the many varied voices of the people." He catered to public opinion, rather than trying to shape it; he sought to be "as many things as possible to as many people as possible" in order to win the support of the majority. The "logical end product" of this approach, Graham contended, was the emergence of a state "dominated by one massive, omnibus party which had something to offer to everybody and was bound to no fixed positions... ."14

Canadian conservative thinkers, in the 1950's, impatiently awaited the displacement of the Liberals; their

enthusiasm for the opposition parties, however, was by no means unqualified. Creighton elaborated his thoughts on contemporary politics in a letter to Forsey, dated April 20, 1949: while expressing his hope that the Liberals would soon be unseated, he remarked that "the conduct of every one of the opposition groups haven't given me much satisfaction lately... ." <sup>15</sup> Writing to Creighton, Forsey manifested similar disenchantment: "When we retire," he suggested whimsically, "you and I had better start a real Conservative party!" <sup>16</sup> During the 1950's, Forsey was also disappointed with the policies of his own party, the C.C.F., which, he observed, "looks on me as a freak"--it did not share Forsey's solicitude for symbols of Canada's British inheritance. <sup>17</sup> The frustration articulated by Forsey and Creighton, especially regarding the Progressive Conservatives, was echoed in a lengthy, analytical letter to Meighen by Roger Graham.

For Graham, the Conservative Party, in 1955, was marked by "intellectual and moral poverty." Rather than framing policies rooted in conservative philosophy, it seemed merely to be parroting the Liberals and the C.C.F. While "there must be thousands of conservative-minded Canadians who are waiting for somebody in public life to give expression to their sentiments," preeminent Conservatives "give little evidence of having done any deep thinking about the trends and dangers of our age." The party, then, lacked imaginative

leadership; without a distinctive program, its electoral fortunes would be unlikely to improve.<sup>18</sup> Graham amplified this argument in "Can the Conservatives Come Back?," an essay which appeared in the winter, 1955-1956 issue of Queen's Quarterly.

The Conservative Party, Graham suggested, represents the only "practicable alternative to the present Liberal regime." Recently, however, the Party has been characterized by "a certain aimlessness"; it has "lacked a sense of identity and direction," and "has shown a tendency to succumb to expediency." Graham urged the Conservatives to fashion a program oriented towards defending the integrity of Parliament, curbing the expansion of the state, and preserving Canadian natural resources for the use of Canadians.<sup>19</sup>

When Graham expounded his critique of the Progressive Conservatives, the Tories had not held power at the federal level for twenty years. The Party, however, was about to witness considerable change. In 1956, George Drew, the Conservative leader since 1948, became ill; accordingly, he was obliged to retire from politics. The ensuing leadership convention, staged in December, 1956, was a focus of interest among Canadian conservative intellectuals. Three candidates--John G. Diefenbaker, Donald Fleming, and E. Davie Fulton--emerged; Forsey and Graham preferred Fulton.

Writing to Meighen in October, 1956, Graham explored the

race for the Conservative leadership. He respected Diefenbaker, but questioned his electoral credibility:

What do you think of the present leadership question? Out here almost everyone I have talked to, including many Grits and C.C.F.ers, is very pro-Diefenbaker. I have considerable respect for his talents but cannot believe he is the right man... . Surely he is a little too old... . For my money Davis Fulton is the man... . I have no idea how he is regarded in the party generally but I was greatly impressed by him in a conversation we had in Winnipeg a little over a year ago. I may be all wrong about this...but I have an uneasy feeling that Diefenbaker will get it [the nomination] and that under him the party won't get very far.<sup>20</sup>

A few days later, Forsey wrote to Meighen, expressing similar views: "I'd be happy with Diefenbaker, Fleming, or Fulton," he observed, "but, on the whole, think Fulton is the best bet for the long run."<sup>21</sup> Ultimately, of course, the convention selected Diefenbaker. Graham, however, remained skeptical: "I regret Diefenbaker's victory," he told Forsey. "Like you I favored Fulton... ."<sup>22</sup>

In December, 1956, Diefenbaker won the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party; a few months later, he became Prime Minister. The "Diefenbaker interlude" was a turbulent era in recent Canadian political history. It culminated in the Defense Crisis, a series of difficulties in Canadian-American relations during the early 1960's. The Crisis occasioned commentary by both Creighton and George Grant.

In 1959, Diefenbaker's Government sought to acquire Bomarc missiles from the United States. The Bomarc, however,

was only functional with a nuclear warhead, and American law prohibited the release of such weaponry to foreign powers: silos containing Bomarc missiles on Canadian soil would have to be guarded by American troops. This prospect could not be countenanced by Diefenbaker, an ardent nationalist; he accordingly delayed Canadian acceptance of the Bomarcs. In October, 1962, the American President, John F. Kennedy, imposed a naval blockade to prevent Soviet missiles from reaching Cuba. Canada, "a[lone] among Washington's allies...did not promptly co-operate."<sup>23</sup> Ultimately, Diefenbaker's failure to support American actions, and his reluctance to accept the Bomarcs, evoked the ire of the Kennedy administration, and precipitated his defeat in the House of Commons in February, 1963.<sup>24</sup>

Diefenbaker's handling of the Defense Crisis was sympathetically discussed by Creighton and Grant. Creighton was particularly riled by the pressure to accept the Bomarcs exerted on Canada by the American Government: "About the only manifestation of American power which was spared Canada in the crisis," he asserted in 1969, "was the sight of American tanks rumbling up Parliament Hill in Ottawa."<sup>25</sup> Grant, meanwhile, emphasized Diefenbaker's role in the controversy, praising the Prime Minister's integrity. During the Defense Crisis, Diefenbaker's actions were guided by the principle that the Canadian Government must frame its own defense policy, independently of the United States. The

Crisis, then, "revealed the depth of Diefenbaker's nationalism"; indeed, it was his commitment to Canadian sovereignty which "finally convinced the ruling class that he was more than a nuisance, that he must be removed."<sup>26</sup>

Diefenbaker's Government, according to Creighton and Grant, fell because it had incurred the opposition of powerful vested interests. However, Diefenbaker, they maintained, was not simply a victim of the forces of continentalism: he was also a victim of his own contradictions. This notion was a theme of Grant's Lament.

A source of Diefenbaker's failings, Grant argued, was his espousal of contradictory goals. Diefenbaker was a Canadian nationalist, but was also a devotee of free enterprise; in an era of multinational corporations, however, capitalism and nationalism are incompatible. Indeed, by the 1950's, only the "concentrated use of Ottawa's planning and control" could have preserved some measures of Canadian sovereignty; if Diefenbaker had been a "realistic nationalist," Grant observed, "he would have had to try some such policy."<sup>27</sup>

A similar awareness of the tension in Diefenbaker's thinking was demonstrated by Forsey and Creighton. In Canada's First Century, Creighton discussed the conflicting impulses of Diefenbaker's Government:

Diefenbaker's support of provincial rights conflicted with [his] party's basic belief in centralization. His humanitarian radicalism was confronted by the fiscal orthodoxy of some

of his cabinet ministers. The urge to escape from American domination in foreign affairs was held back by an uncritical acceptance of the validity of the Cold War... .<sup>28</sup>

Creighton's estimate of Diefenbaker was probably colored by their clash at the Couchiching Conference on Public Affairs in 1954, at which Creighton delivered an address on American Foreign Policy that was publicly criticized by Diefenbaker. Forsey sought, in a letter to Diefenbaker, to alert the Prime Minister to his contradictions:

I don't think you are doing yourself or your Government justice. You are making it appear that your main concern is a doctrinaire devotion to an abstract theory called 'free enterprise', to which you are prepared to sacrifice almost anything; whereas it seems to me that, on the contrary, you have tackled unemployment and other problems without any such doctrinaire preconceptions, but in the traditional conservative spirit: pragmatic, empirical, common-sense, down-to-earth, looking for the best practical solution, whether it involves more government interference or less, more public enterprise or less.<sup>29</sup>

Ultimately, Diefenbaker's Government--both its deficiencies and its demise--left conservative intellectuals crestfallen; in a letter to Forsey, Creighton affirmed that Diefenbaker had been "the most tragic disappointment of the twentieth century."<sup>30</sup>

Canadian conservative intellectuals of the immediate post World War II era closely observed Canadian politics, especially the fortunes of the Conservative Party. Their correspondence, in particular, was marked by discussion of contemporary developments in public affairs. Although, in



the 1940's and 1950's, they longed for the downfall of the Liberal Government, some of them embraced Diefenbaker reluctantly, and were disappointed with the results of the Conservatives' brief return to power. By the mid-1960's, however, the conservative intelligentsia had become less concerned with the vicissitudes of partisan politics, and increasingly preoccupied with an issue which was to dominate Canadian political discussion for the next several years: the aspirations of French Canada.

In Quebec, the 1960's and 1970's were particularly tumultuous years, witnessing the phenomenon of the "Quiet Revolution" and subsequent separatist agitation. These developments precipitated, throughout Canada, considerable discussion regarding the nature of the Canadian constitution. Three intellectuals who participated in this debate were Morton, Creighton, and Forsey; despite the conservative orientation of these writers, their views differed in some significant respects. To Morton, for example, Confederation represented a bicultural compact; bilingual programs should be adopted to reconcile French Canadians to the maintenance of a united Canada. Creighton, however, rejected each of these notions, while Forsey articulated an intermediary position, refuting the bicultural compact theory, but urging a considerable measure of bilingualism.

For Morton, the central fact of Canadian society is that

it includes two cultures within a federal state.

"Culturally," he asserted, "Canada is two nations. Politically, it is one."<sup>31</sup> Elsewhere, he observed that "there is a cultural duality in Canada which ought to be fully recognized and warmly cherished, but...political duality...does not exist, and ought not to exist [in the Canadian context]...".<sup>32</sup> Canada, then, represents a "dual culture in political union"<sup>33</sup>; this dispensation, Morton argued, was entrenched in the Confederation settlement of 1867.

Confederation, according to Morton, was the product of an agreement between French and English-speaking Canadians, a 'bicultural compact'. Both groups believed that they could best realize their respective purposes through political union.<sup>34</sup> The resultant state, elaborated in the British North America Act, was to be federal, but marked by strong central government. Indeed, the very survival of Canada requires unity under effective federal institutions:

For the simple truth is that neither of us, English or French, can reasonably hope to exist apart as distinct communities in North America of the twentieth century. Either we remain united and exist as English and French Canadians, or we separate and step by step become Americanized and American. We live by means of one another, and neither can live separate from the other.

To live at all, however, calls for a strong community with not only strong and efficient provincial governments, but with a strong central government supported by all the provinces and all parts of the Canadian community. Because this is so, I say we may refuse to accept any form of separatism or

associated status. These are but veiled forms of independence, and independence, difficult as it is for twenty millions of people to maintain, cannot be maintained by their served fragments.<sup>35</sup>

Morton further developed this argument in "Quebec--Federation or Association":

[All Canadian history] reveals the necessity in Canada of a strong central government. It is only such a government that can govern a country territorially so enormous and culturally and economically so diverse.<sup>36</sup>

With the emergence of French Canadian nationalism during the 1960's, however, strong central government, and hence the Canadian state itself, is threatened; Morton affirmed that coercion should be employed to prevent secession:

I deny that any province has any right to secede. I think that any such attempt should be resisted by every means, including force if necessary.<sup>37</sup>

There is, however, a better way to maintain national unity--the separatist movement would be defused if it was demonstrated to French Canadians that the realization of their aims is compatible with the continuance of Confederation.

Various measures, Morton contended, should be undertaken to alleviate the grievances of French Canadians. The French language, he suggested, should be made official in principle throughout Canada by amending the British North America Act.<sup>38</sup> French "ought to be used in all federal departments of government and crown agencies, except where the absence of citizens of French speech would make such a

use mere posturing."<sup>39</sup> Moreover, "encouragement and aid ought to be given to French culture in any French community throughout Canada."<sup>40</sup> These steps, Morton maintained, would promote national unity by "making the whole [i.e., Canada] equally significant to every Canadian and every part of Canada."<sup>41</sup>

An interpretation of Canadian federalism which diverges from Morton's in some significant respects was articulated by Creighton. While Creighton agreed that the Fathers of Confederation intended to create a strong central government, he rejected both the notion of a bicultural compact and Morton's recommendations regarding bilingualism. Creighton expounded his conception of Confederation comprehensively in "The Use and Abuse of History," a speech delivered at Trent University in 1965.

For Creighton, the object of the Fathers of Confederation was patent--they sought to establish "a great transcontinental nation in the form of a constitutional monarchy under the British crown."<sup>42</sup> Although they would have preferred to effect a legislative union of the British North American provinces (i.e., create a single sovereign parliament for all of Canada), they realized that such an amalgam was impracticable:

...French Canada wished to guard its distinctive culture with some measure of local autonomy, and the Maritime provinces, which had not developed municipal institutions, would have been left literally without any local government at all if their provincial legisla-

tures had been abolished.<sup>43</sup>

Hence, the Canadian state would have to be federal.

If the Fathers of Confederation recognized the necessity of adopting a federal institutional framework, they did so with reservations. Indeed, when the union of the British American provinces was being planned, the United States was embroiled in civil war; the Fathers believed that the source of discord in the Republic was inordinate power vested by the American constitution in individual states. Accordingly, the framers of the British North America Act determined to ensure the preponderance of central institutions:

The greatest task facing the northern provinces was the task of preserving their separate collective identity in a continent dominated by the United States; and if they formed a union that broke up through internal weakness, it would likely mean that the fragments would be devoured at its convenience by the great republic. The only union which could ensure the survival of British America was a strong union; and if federalism had to be accepted as unavoidable, the forces of disruption latent within it must be systematically weakened and rigidly controlled.<sup>44</sup>

Confederation, then, embodied what Creighton termed the 'Great Compromise' between the imperatives of local autonomy and strong central government.

According to Creighton, Confederation was primarily a political union of provinces, and not, as Morton argued, a 'bicultural compact.' Creighton sought to refute the notion of a compact in "The Myth of Biculturalism"

The bicultural compact theory of Confederation,

Creighton observed, implied that the constitutional conferences in the 1860's which forged the British North America Act were informed by an exchange between English and French-speaking Canadians. However, these conferences, held at Charlottetown, Quebec, and London, England, "were not organized on ethnic or cultural lines, and their purpose was not a bilateral cultural agreement."<sup>45</sup> Their object, rather, was to establish the basis for a political union of separate provinces; the principal division was between Canadians both [English and French] and Maritimers. Indeed, the problem of cultural duality was not regarded as a pressing issue:

What took up the greater part of [the delegates'] time at Quebec and London was the discussion of federal institutions, the two houses of parliament, and the division of powers between the Dominion and the provinces; and these are, of course, the classic problems of every federal country, whether it is culturally homogenous or culturally heterogeneous.<sup>46</sup>

Hence, the bicultural compact, Creighton contended, was a myth, created by those who would depict the Quebec Conference as a "mid-Victorian Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in British North America... ." <sup>46</sup>

If the notion of a bicultural compact was, as Creighton claimed, fallacious, it nevertheless gained considerable currency among French Canadian nationalists in the 1960's. Creighton maintained that the theory had been contrived to justify certain political ends:

The uses to which the two-nation [bicultural compact] theory can be put are manifold. It can give support to the promotion of French in the public service or the increase of French taught schools in areas where the character of the population requires it. But its advocates are not usually content with such modest programs. The two-nation theory can be made to justify a bicultural senate and a bicultural Supreme Court. It is also the basis of the proposal that Quebec be made an associate state.<sup>48</sup>

Indeed, Creighton was an outspoken critic of French Canadian nationalism and the "Quiet Revolution." He explored developments in Quebec in a searing essay, "Beyond the Referendum," published a few months after the victory of the Parti Quebecois in the provincial election of November, 1976.

Since the era of Maurice Duplessis, Creighton declared, "Quebec has been playing the politics of blackmail." The representatives of French Canada--Liberal M.P.'s and the provincial government of Quebec--have used their leverage to promote "separate and exclusive French Canadian interests." English Canadian politicians, meanwhile, have largely acceded to Quebec's demands, producing a dubious policy of bilingualism:

Bilingualism in the federal civil service cost vast amounts of money, produced negligible results, and aroused angry resentment among English-speaking bureaucrats. The office of the Commissioner of Official Languages was soon crowded with a robust army of snoopers, and the commissioner...himself appeared to think that his most important public duty lay in abusing and hectoring English Canadians for their neglect of a language only an infinitesimal minority would ever have occasion to use.

...the French 'total immersion' courses in the schools did little more than deepen the illiteracy in English with which pupils tried to enter the universities.

Ultimately, however, such attempts at conciliation have been rebuffed; if the newly elected Parti Quebecois Government implements its program, which would make Quebec a unilingual province, English Canada will be obliged to abandon its "politics of appeasement," and concern itself with self-defense and self-preservation.<sup>49</sup>

Creighton's comments on Quebec generated considerable controversy; they prompted a rebuke from the Globe and Mail. Somewhat surprisingly, however, his foremost defender in the ensuing debate was W.L. Morton. While admitting that he "does not agree with Professor Creighton's view of the motives and actions of Quebec since 1960," Morton, in a letter dated August 2, 1977 to the Winnipeg Free Press, praised Creighton's forthrightness. Full and realistic discussion, he argued, will serve to illuminate the "unrevealed consequences of separation," and perhaps thereby reconcile undecided Quebecers to the maintenance of Confederation.<sup>50</sup> Creighton gratefully acknowledged Morton's support: "You have come nobly to my rescue at a time when--so far as I know--no other member of the historical profession in Canada has ventured to say a word on my behalf."<sup>51</sup>

Morton's defense of Creighton was also lauded by Eugene Forsey. "I'm glad someone is saying a word in support of



Donald," he told Morton. Forsey added that "I'm beginning to feel I should perhaps take a hand; though Donald may be greatly hurt if I differ on any point, and other people may be upset because I don't differ from him on what seems to be his main points... ."52 Indeed, Forsey accepted much, but not all, of Creighton's interpretation of the Canadian constitution and Quebec; he developed his thought on these matters in a series of articles and lectures.

Like Creighton, Forsey rejected the bicultural compact theory of Confederation. "I cannot find the slightest evidence," he declared, "that at Charlottetown, Quebec, or London the delegates lined up on linguistic lines."53 The notion that Confederation represented an agreement formulated by two opposing linguistic blocs is further discredited by the significant role played by the Maritime delegation at the various conferences--the Maritimers "took up considerably more time than most of the [English-speaking Canadians], and far more than the French Canadians... ."54 The bicultural compact theory of Confederation, then, is incompatible with historical reality.

If Forsey endorsed Creighton's conception of the genesis of Confederation, he did not share Creighton's antipathy toward bilingualism. Rather, he urged a considerable extension of bilingual programs:

The only way we can get French Canadians to feel that the whole country is their show as well as ours is to make it so, make it both English-Canadian and French-Canadian. If we

want... 'one Canada', Cartier's 'political nationality', a viable Canadian Economic and Political Community, then we must give the French-Canadians outward and visible signs that we really want it... . In concrete terms, I think that means a number of things. First, bilingualizing the central administration as completely and as quickly as we can. Second, giving French Canadian Ministers more of the important portfolios. Third, bilingualizing the New Brunswick administration just as far and as fast as possible. Fourth, doing the same in municipal government and the courts wherever there is a substantial French-speaking minority that wants it. Fifth, providing French education for French-speaking children wherever the parents want it and there are enough such children to make it possible.<sup>55</sup>

Such policies, Forsey maintained, are integral to preserving and strengthening a united Canada.<sup>56</sup> On the question of bilingualism, then, the views of Forsey and Morton were virtually identical.

Issues associated with Quebec's Quiet Revolution deeply interested Forsey, Creighton, and Morton. Indeed, Quebec, perhaps more than any other subject, was, for these tory writers, a source of discord. Nevertheless, some common themes did inform the thought of Creighton, Morton, and Forsey on Quebec and Canadian federalism. Each writer was a proponent of strong central government, and each was a Canadian nationalist, solicitous for preserving the integrity of the Canadian state. Their disagreements concerned means, not ends.

"The degree to which powers should be concentrated in authorities at one territorial head," Edwin Black observed,

"is a universal problem in politics... ." <sup>57</sup> Canadians, according to Black, have held various conceptions of the proper distribution of powers between the federal and provincial governments. To centralists, preponderance should be vested in the national government at Ottawa. Opposing this view have been notions of provincial rights--e.g., as identified with the Liberal Party under Laurier. The centralist conception has been preferred by conservative nationalists and was an "essential ingredient" of Canadian socialist thought, at least until the 1960's. <sup>58</sup> Appropriately, then, this view of Confederation was given forceful expression in the post W.W. II period in the writings of the conservatives, Creighton and Morton, and the conservative-socialist Forsey.

## Notes to Chapter Three

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12. Farthing, 91.
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24. Finlay and Sprague, 322-323.
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27. Ibid., 15.
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45. D. Creighton, "The Myth of Biculturalism," Towards, 261.
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47. Ibid., 260.
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## CONCLUSION: The Context of Conservatism

The intellectual conservatism elaborated in Canada in the post.W.W. II era was an instance of a broader rehabilitation of conservative thought in the North Atlantic world. In Britain, articulate Conservative politicians--e.g. R.A. Butler and Quintin Hogg--evoked traditional conservative principles to justify new policies, and fashioned a sort of 'red toryism'. In the United States, several writers, including Richard Weaver, Peter Viereck, and Russell Kirk, enunciated conservative themes eloquently and incisively. Like their British and American counterparts, Canadian tory thinkers expounded a philosophical conservatism.

Their substantial electoral defeat in 1945 prompted British Conservative politicians to reexamine their philosophy and policies. A group of "Right Progressives," including R.A. Butler, Harold Macmillan, Quintin Hogg, and Lord Hinchinbrook, emerged, and became increasingly dominant within the Conservative Party. These highly articulate statesmen were critical of competitive capitalism, and sympathetic toward state intervention in economic matters. They urged the implementation of the Beveridge Report (1942), "the most popular blueprint for social reform ever produced in Britain."<sup>1</sup> The thrust of their thought was embodied in the Industrial Charter, a policy document endorsed by the Conservative Conference in 1947. The Charter, according to Butler, "was intended firstly to counter the idea that the

Conservatives were the party of laissez-faire... ."2 Its proposals, Butler reflected, were inspired by Keynes's General Theory.<sup>3</sup> It committed British Conservatives, Gamble remarked, to a "new level of state spending," and represented, for Nigel Harris, the "high water mark of etatiste corporatiste thinking in the party... ."4

The principal philosophical justification for the tendencies in the British Conservative Party initiated by the Right Progressives was developed by Aubrey Jones. The effects on traditional institutions and social relationships of one hundred and fifty years of liberalism, Jones wrote in 1950, have been disastrous. Because it "rested everything on the individual, turned everything on individual wealth and achievements," liberalism "corroded the old corporate loyalties... ." Jones advocated an interventionist state, which, he hoped, would promote a "stabilized capitalism," mitigating conflict among classes, and protecting "the institutions essential to social order and moral health... from the corrosive influence of unchecked individualism." Jones was accordingly a supporter of the Industrial Charter.<sup>5</sup>

In post W.W. II Britain, statesmen and intellectuals explored conservative principles. In the United States, there was a corresponding renewal of interest in conservative philosophy. The self-styled "new conservatism," however, was primarily an academic, rather than a political, phenomenon; it had little affinity with the contemporaneous



American Administration.

The 1950's were marked, in the United States, by a resurgence of intellectual conservatism. Nash described a "traditionalist conservative renaissance after World War II"; he asserted that, by the mid-1950's, this 'new conservatism' had become a "recognized, almost fashionable, cultural force... ."6 According to Clinton Rossiter, "One of the many wonders of the post-war years has been the revival of conservatism as a vigorous, self-conscious force in American life."7 Roland Stromberg affirmed that "Intellectuals, novelists, and philosophers of the 1950's tended...to conservatism."8 He attributed this phenomenon to a widespread "distaste for ideology and fanaticism" which obtained in the wake of W.W. II. The conservatism salient in the intellectual milieu of the 1950's was, Stromberg explained, highly sophisticated and literate: the new conservatives "knew all thinkers and chose as the wisest not passionate and ignorant rebels but the godly mild and worldly wise, the disenchanted, or those angry beyond the reach of utopian gimmicks, those who had plumbed the depths of human corruption."9

The American new conservatism was distinguished by several characteristics. It was, for example, a scholarly movement: most of its exponents held positions at universities. The new conservatives were deeply interested in European thought, and tended "to place America in the perspective of the larger civilization of the West."10

Many were critical of laissez-faire capitalism. Nash observed that "nearly all of the leading new conservatives took pains to dissociate themselves from the 'nineteenth century liberalism' that was also enjoying a new vogue on the right."<sup>11</sup> Kirk emphasized that his thought was not a defense of the "dogmas of Manchesterian economic theory."<sup>12</sup> He maintained that "True conservatism, conservatism uninfected by Benthamite or Spencerian ideas, rises at the antipodes from individualism. Individualism is social atomism; conservatism is community of spirit."<sup>13</sup> In general, American new conservatism crystallized around a central impulse--to champion traditional institutions and standards against modern ideologies.

Like their British and American counterparts, Canadian tory thinkers were conscious philosophical conservatives inspired by the European conservative tradition. A brief consideration of their intellectual influences may illuminate the nature of their thought.

Prominent English-speaking Canadian conservative writers embraced various currents of British conservatism. Creighton, for example, was avowedly Burkean. In defending the relevance of humanistic study, he quoted Burke's notion of society as a partnership among generations, and affirmed that "This conception of civilization as an inheritance from the past and a legacy to the future is central to any understanding of the role which the humanities may play in a

modern democratic state."<sup>14</sup> Creighton's description of a politician (Alex Johnston) who was a friend of H.A. Innis is significant for its Burkean overtones:

Alex Johnston was a veteran politician and civil servant... . He had almost all the qualities which, in a public man, were likely to interest and impress Innis. A long and varied range of experience, an enormous memory for personalities and events...and a wise, tolerant, humorous attitude to life in general--they were all his. He was the kind of politician whose company Innis instinctively relished, just as he grew restive in the presence of a scholar who had suddenly entered public life. The scholar turned politician through messianic impulses was, in his view, only too apt to be a narrow, arrogant, fanatical, and dangerous man. But Johnston, passing through all the usual stages of his trade as apprentice and journeyman, had grown old and wise in the craft and mystery of politics.<sup>15</sup>

Other conservatives, meanwhile, drew strength from traditions that predate Burke's writings. "My own conservatism," Morton told Carl Berger, "goes back to Hooker and Filmer"--an indication, perhaps, of Morton's profound veneration for the institution of monarchy.<sup>16</sup> Grant sympathetically quoted Hooker, while Farthing cited the sixteenth century theorist of natural law as a primary intellectual influence, along with Shakespeare and Coleridge.<sup>17</sup> This interest in an early British conservatism concerned with defending a stable, hierarchical, collectivist social order reflects the organic orientation of recent Canadian conservative thinkers.

In their social thought, Grant, Morton, and the others espoused an organic ideal. Morton referred to "the serenity,

the common concern, and the social family, which the agrarian village roughly provided over millenia, and of which the destruction by industrial revolution was one of the greatest of human tragedies."<sup>18</sup> A chief characteristic of the conservative, he maintained, is a tendency to endow society and nation with "a sense of organic life."<sup>19</sup> Grant contrasted the atomistic liberalism of the United States with the conservative founding impulse of Canadian society:

The very origin of the U.S.A. is in the concept of revolution and the rights of the individual to be free. The very origin of Canada...is in the concept of holding the social fabric together and of the duty of the individual to preserve a decent order in society.<sup>20</sup>

Creighton emphasized that, in Canada, "We have tried to promote political stability, social order, and personal restraint. We have been ready to limit individual liberty and free enterprise in the interests of public welfare and the general good."<sup>21</sup> According to Joseph Levitt, Creighton and Morton "clung to the idealized conservative notion of organic unity, which held that the present generation could pay its debt to the past by providing for future generations. In such a conception, the interests of the community would prevail over those of the individual."<sup>22</sup> Farthing, in a similar vein, affirmed that "in the traditional Canadian or British view society is not a number of basically independent individuals. It is rather a community of persons bound together by a common spirit of loyalty in an essentially unitary society."<sup>23</sup> Forsey's socialism was perhaps also an

expression of this organic disposition.

If Canadian conservative thinkers held a tory view of society, some of them appropriately traced the roots of contemporary Canadian conservatism to the eighteenth century. Grant, of course, emphasized the centrality of the Loyalist legacy to Canadian political culture. Morton, too, identified the Loyalists among the principal influences on the Canadian conservative mind. French Canadian Catholicism and the "Second Tory" Party, responsible for the framing of the Constitutional Act of 1791, represented, he argued, additional "strains" from which Canadian conservatism has derived.<sup>24</sup>

The identification of the eighteenth century by Grant and Morton as the 'fons et origo' of Canadian conservatism, the organic tendency of postwar Canadian conservative thought, the criticism of private enterprise expressed by some conservative intellectuals--all of this suggests the validity of Gad Horowitz's notion of "red toryism." Horowitz's analysis is probably the best known and most controversial account of Canadian political and intellectual conservatism. He argued that the phenomenon of the red tory, embodied by Forsey et. al., was rooted in the founding experience of English Canada. The political culture of English Canadian society, Horowitz contended, unlike that of the United States, has included a "tory touch"--collectivist, hierarchical values which derive from the pre-liberal era,

and which were brought by the Loyalists, refugees from the American Revolution. This traditional conservatism is akin to socialism in one crucial respect: both subordinate individual rights to broader notions of the common good. Recent Canadian intellectual conservatism, Horowitz maintained, has reflected the affinity between toryism and socialism. Among prominent Canadian conservative thinkers since World War II have been W.L. Morton, "a conscious ideological conservative with some 'odd' socialist notions," and Eugene Forsey, "a conscious ideological socialist with some 'odd' tory notions." The epitome of what Horowitz calls the red tory, however, was George Grant, "who combines elements of toryism and socialism so thoroughly in a single integrated 'Weltanschauung' that it is impossible to say that he is a proponent of either one as against the other."<sup>25</sup>

Horowitz's conception of Canadian conservatism has been subjected to considerable criticism. For example, H.D. Forbes, who is not entirely unsympathetic to Horowitz, has affirmed that "only from a very odd angle" do tories and socialists seem to be expressing the same views.<sup>26</sup> Among Horowitz's most vociferous critics is Rod Preece, who maintained, in an essay published in 1978, that conservatism in Canada is distinguished chiefly by its solicitude for economic individualism; it is virtually devoid of collectivist elements. "Canadian conservatives," he asserted, "are --and have continuously been--the legitimate heirs to John

Locke, to the Whigs, and to classical liberalism... ."27

For Preece, George Grant cannot be a conservative because he does not support the Canadian Progressive Conservative Party; Eugene Forsey has become a Liberal Senator and therefore is not a red tory; W.L. Morton's "belief in greater individual responsibility places him squarely in the whig camp." Hence, to Preece, the red tory is a Canadian myth.<sup>28</sup>

Empirical evidence which this discussion has documented, however, suggests that some of Preece's contentions are highly dubious, and that several preeminent Canadian conservative thinkers since W.W. II have been sympathetic to socialism, or at least critical of capitalism--they have, in short, been 'red tories'.

Horowitz's 'red tory', then, is a term which aptly characterizes several recent Canadian conservative intellectuals. It is, however, only a label: it does not explain the role of these thinkers in recent Canadian history. To provide such an explanation, some reflections on the cultural function of conservatism elaborated in the 1960's by the American social philosopher Richard Weaver, "the morning star of the contemporary renaissance of conservative thought in the United States,"<sup>29</sup> furnish a useful conceptual framework.

A culture, according to Weaver, is defined by its "tyrannizing image." This is a "unifying and compelling" vision, a particular ideal of excellence which has the power to integrate. It imparts coherence to social life, providing

a standard according to which actions may be evaluated. Cultures manifest their ideals in various ways:

In some instances it has been a religious ritual; in others a sacred scripture; in others a literature which everyone is expected to know; codes of conduct (and even of warfare) may be the highest embodied form.

The task of the conservative, Weaver explained, is to nurture this central image, to assail developments in a culture which do not comport with its integrating ideals.<sup>30</sup>

Weaver's notion of the cultural role of the conservative can illuminate the thought of Grant, Forsey *et. al.* These writers upheld an image of Canada as a nation informed by British institutions. It was chiefly the British connection, they argued, which made Canada a distinctive society in North America. If, however, the source of Canada's distinctiveness was its British ties and character, a movement away from Britain could only issue in a corresponding diminution of 'Canadian individuality', culminating in the Americanization of Canadian society. This understanding of Canadian history induced the pessimism of Grant and Innis, the sporadic but intense anger of Morton, the sustained vehemence of Creighton.

It is the writings of Grant and Creighton which epitomize the themes of Canadian intellectual conservatism in the postwar era. Their historical accounts written in the 1960's and 1970's document and decry the disintegration of the Anglo-Canadian alliance, of Canada's Britishness. These



narratives have a dramatic quality; they delineate a process which ends in defeat. British North America, a stable society based on a transcontinental and transatlantic economy, is undermined by what Creighton termed "the forces of continentalism."<sup>31</sup> Its culture is ultimately homogenized with that of the United States. Perhaps, as Ramsay Cook suggested, Creighton exaggerated the imminence of Canada's demise in order to "warn and reawaken the Canadian people to their true destiny"<sup>32</sup>; nevertheless, much of the course of Canadian development in the twentieth century tory intellectuals could only contemplate with exasperation and dismay.

Curiously, the polemical quality of Creighton's (and, to some extent, Morton's) historical writings was not consistent with the conception of history embraced by these scholars. Both Morton and Creighton were influenced by the thought of R.G. Collingwood, who held that the historian must endeavor to "re-enact the past in his own mind."<sup>33</sup> Creighton, at least in the later stages of his career, was interested in the philosophy of history. Historical writing, he argued, is "the record of an encounter between character and circumstance." The task of the historian is twofold: to elucidate the character--the "hopes, ideals, purposes, and intentions"--of individuals who participated in historical events, and to describe the circumstances which conditioned the actions of these individuals.<sup>34</sup> Creighton, then, aimed

at a re-creation of past reality; a markedly partisan tone, however, pervades his work. This discrepancy was identified and deftly criticized by Frank Underhill: Creighton's biography of Macdonald, he suggested, would have been more convincing if it did not portray Macdonald's political opponents as "not only intellectually deficient and morally delinquent but also physically repulsive."<sup>35</sup>

What, ultimately, in the view of conservative thinkers, caused Canada's defeat? Why did Canada become a virtual "economic, political, and cultural colony of the United States?"<sup>36</sup> Grant and Creighton provided almost identical answers to these questions--answers which were also enunciated by Morton and Innis. Britain, after W.W. I, ceased to be a major economic power, able to pull Canadian trade eastward. Canadian capitalists, therefore, became increasingly oriented toward the United States. This trend was promoted by Liberal Governments, whose continuance in office, Grant argued, was contingent on the support of business interests.<sup>37</sup> Economic tendencies were mirrored in the diplomatic sphere: Mackenzie King, according to Creighton, "broke up the Britannic union without even attempting to devise policies for a separate and independent Canada."<sup>38</sup> For Innis, "autonomy following the Statute of Westminster has been a device by which [Canada] can co-operate with the United States as we formerly did with Great Britain."<sup>39</sup> Thus, an alliance of Liberals and capitalists, a combination

of economic forces and political decisions, transformed the character of Canadian society. It is highly ironic that the pursuit of profit, lauded by Creighton as an impulse central to the very existence of Canada, impelled the process that he deplored, and viewed as fatal to Canadian sovereignty: continental integration, the proliferation of economic ties between Canada and the United States.

The thought of other conservative intellectuals manifested similar ironies. Grant lauded the "conservatism" of the founders of English Canada, while denouncing twentieth-century Canadian capitalists, and capitalism 'per se'. However, it is possible that the early leaders of English Canada were as committed to capital accumulation as E.P. Taylor and C.D. Howe. The colonial administrators that came to British North America in the eighteenth century held an ideology, of which market liberalism, according to Whitaker, was a significant element.<sup>40</sup> In Morton's thought, moreover, there was a tension between sympathy for regional interests and devotion to strong central government which was not clearly resolved. An exponent of regional integrity, he was nevertheless prepared, as has been noted earlier, to invoke the military to prevent the secession of Quebec.

These ironies were, to some extent, a function of the central aim of Canadian conservative intellectuals, about which there was little ambiguity: to lament and castigate trends and policies that were incompatible with their

conception of Canadian society, to articulate and defend a vision of Canada as British North America. By the late 1960's, Grant and Creighton had virtually despaired for the survival of Canada as a separate and independent nation on the North American continent. Like Hooker, however, they were determined "not loosely through silence to permit things to pass away as in a dream."<sup>41</sup> Solicitude for Canada's British inheritance is a recurrent theme of the writings, both polemical and scholarly, of Grant, Creighton, Farthing, Forsey et. al.; it is this solicitude which distinguishes these commentators as a group that played a significant role in the intellectual history of Canada in the mid-twentieth century.

## Notes to Conclusion

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6. George H. Nash, The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945 (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 367.
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17. Grant, Lament, 6. Farthing, 3.
18. Morton, "Possibility," 282.

19. Morton, "Canadian Conservatism Now," 302.
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21. Creighton, "Peaceable," 42.
22. Joseph Levitt, A Vision Beyond Reach (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982), 180.
23. Farthing, 38.
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30. R. Weaver, "The Image of Culture," Modern Age, 8 (Spring, 1964), 186-199.
31. D. Creighton, "Canadian Nationalism and its Opponents," 273.
32. R. Cook, 158.
33. R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (London: Oxford University Press, 1982), 282. W.L. Morton, "Clio," 42. D. Creighton, "The Craft of History," Towards, 19.
34. D. Creighton, "Craft," 19.
35. F. Underhill, "The Revival of Conservatism in North America," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Series III, LII, 1958, 17, quoted in Berger, 225.
36. D. Creighton, "Continentalism and the Birthright of Canada," 291.
37. Grant, Lament, 48.

38. D. Creighton, "Decline and Fall," 167.
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40. Reg Whitaker, "Images of the State in Canada," The Canadian State, ed. L. Panitch (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), 36.
41. Quoted in Grant, Lament, p. 6.

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