

Social Class and Canadian Politics:

Replication and Extension

by

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CHAPTER I

SOCIAL CLASS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR: CANADA AS A DEVIANT CASE

Introduction

There is a widespread belief among students of politics that Canada is virtually unique among Western industrialized democracies in that the association between social class and its electoral politics appears to be almost non-existent (see Alford, 1963, 1967). This is indicated by a very low level of the class vote (see Figure 1.1). In addition, neither of the two major parties in Canada appeals to working class interests (see Ogmundson, 1975c). A review of the literature shows that there are two opposing lines of explanation which have attempted to illuminate this anomaly - the "mass" explanation (which explains the classless nature of Canadian politics mainly in terms of the nature of mass sentiments) and the "elite" explanation (which explains the classless nature of Canadian politics mainly in terms of elite activities). The research will examine the utility of these two perspectives in two different contexts - Canada and the United Kingdom. This will be done by comparing Canada with the United Kingdom in terms of elite activities and mass sentiments. In the course of doing this, the work of Ogmundson (1972) with the 1965 Canadian election data will be largely replicated using the 1968 and 1974 election data. It is expected that the findings in this research will support one or the other of these general lines of thought. Consequently, the findings will cast some light on the oddities associated with Canadian politics. It is also expected that this research will give further insights into the democratic processes of Western industrialized countries.

FIGURE 1.1

INTERNATIONAL RATES OF VOTING ON THE BASIS OF CLASS

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| .58 | - | Norway, 1957 |
| .49 | - | Finland, 1958 |
| .40 | - | United Kingdom, 1952-1962 (.35-.44) |
| .33 | - | Australia, 1952-1962 (.27-.37) |
| .28 | - | France, 1956 |
| .26 | - | Netherlands, 1956 |
| .16 | - | United States, 1952-1962 (.13-.23) |
| .08 | - | Canada, 1952-1962 |

The figures for the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom are drawn from Alford, 1963:102. The figure for the Netherlands is drawn from Lijphart, 1971:20. The other figures are drawn from Lenski, 1970:362. All of these figures are calculated using Alford's Index of Class Voting which subtracts "the percentage of non-manual workers voting for "Left" parties from the percentage of manual workers voting for "Left" parties. We have taken the liberty of putting a point in front of them so as to make these figures similar to the tau beta which we will use in our own calculation. The numbers are very similar in any case.

Class and Politics

The relationship between social class and political behaviour has been one of the major concerns of students of politics at least since the time of Marx. Class phenomena have attracted great interest since "they represent a junction between the social, the economic and the political order". (Campbell et al, 1960:184) One usually expects to find some degree of class sentiments within the populations of industrialized countries. Given these sentiments, one expects that they will be related to the party system and politics generally. Eulau (1955:364) suggests:

"Voting for one party or the other is obviously very much related to people's socioeconomic position and to the social structure of society generally. Indeed, from Aristotle to Harold J. Laski, the relationship between "class" and "party" has been one of the "grand problems", so called, of political speculations."

Similarly, Alford (1963:37) asserts that an association between social class and voting behaviour is a natural phenomenon in Western democracies due to the existence of class interests, the regular association of certain parties with these interests, and the tendency of voters to adhere to class loyalties. Furthermore, Epstein (1967:85) has also suggested that:

"..... class regularly receives and probably deserves the most attention because it seems to divide twentieth-century parties, in substantial though varying degrees, in every western democracy"

It is widely believed that political parties in electoral democracies will represent any interest which concerns a large number of voters. Thus, in a system where class interests exist, political parties are expected to assume political stands which reflect the

interests of different classes. At the same time, a substantial proportion of the voters are also generally expected to vote for one party or the other in accordance with their class interests (see MacIver, 1974:123). Indeed, empirical findings have generally shown that there is some relationship between social class and the vote (see Alford, 1967: 68). As Butler and Stokes (1971:6) argue: "..... the enfranchisement of the industrial working class in Britain created circumstances favourable to the rise of a working class party and a greater polarization of electoral alignments along class lines." Furthermore, Lipset (1960: 234) has suggested that social class forms the chief basis of political cleavages in Western democracies:

"More than anything else the party struggle is a conflict among classes, and the most impressive single fact about political party support is that in virtually every economically developed country the lower-income groups vote mainly for parties of the left, while the higher-income groups vote mainly for parties of the right."

More recently, Lipset and Rokkan (1967; see also Epstein, 1967: 85, 87) have suggested that additional social cleavages, such as religion and region, also influence political behaviour. Furthermore, an empirical study by Rose and Urwin (1971:222) of 17 democracies has found that "normal" countries base their politics on two main cleavages - class and religion. Hence, class, while not being as predominantly important as was earlier anticipated, is nonetheless one of the two major cleavages with which political behaviour in Western democracies is generally associated.

Social Class and Canadian Politics

Various studies (e.g. Alford, 1963; McDonald, 1969; Meisel, 1972;

Schwartz, 1974) have suggested that Canadian politics is quite "normal" in that its voting behaviour is strongly related to religion. However in the spectrum formed by Western industrialized democracies, Canada stands out distinctly as a country in which the relationship of social class to electoral politics appears to be almost non-existent. Alford (1963:102), using Gallup Polls from 1952-1962 as his data base, reports that the association of social class (whether measured by occupation, education or income singly or in combination)¹ with voting averages only about .08. This figure is the lowest among the four countries - the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Canada - he studied. Lenski and Lenski (1974:356), in a survey of nine countries, found that the association of social class with the vote as measured by Alford's Index of Class Voting² varies from a high of +58 in Norway to a low of +7 in Canada (see Figure 1.1).

According to the findings of the 1965 and 1968 Canadian National Surveys, Canada also deviates from the international norm in terms of party class support (see Gagne, 1970; Meisel, 1972). The class support which Canadian parties receive apparently differs immensely from what many students of politics would have predicted. The Liberals - the major party considered by Alford and Dawson to be "Centre-Left" (Alford, 1963) - is supported predominantly by the middle classes³ instead of the working classes. Meisel (1972:4), in his 1968 Canadian study, finds that the Liberal party has the greatest appeal to the middle class groups (whether measured by occupation, education or subjective class status) and least to unskilled labour and farmers. The Progressive Conservatives - the major party viewed by conventional experts as being to the Right - receives inconsistent class support across the provinces. Meisel

(1972:4-5) reports that the Conservatives are supported mainly by the middle classes in Ontario and the Atlantic provinces and by farmers in the Prairies. As well, Meisel finds that among the manual workers, the unskilled were more disposed than the skilled to vote Conservatives. The New Democratic Party (NDP) - the minor party to the Left - gains its major support from skilled labour. In Quebec, however, it attracts people of the middle classes - especially the high-ranking occupational groups (Meisel, 1972:5). The Social Credit Party and the Creditistes in Quebec - the minor parties conventionally viewed as "Radical Right" - receive most of their support from the working classes (Meisel, 1972:8).

Internationally, Rose and Urwin (1971:220), in their survey of seventeen countries, found that Canada is among the three - the United States, Ireland and Canada - without a nationwide class party. Furthermore, experts (e.g. Scarrow, 1965) who compare the United States and Canada have suggested that political parties in the United States are much more clearly associated with class than in Canada.

All this serves to indicate that Canadian political parties and Canadian voting behaviour provide an exception to the usual generalizations one would make about the role of social class in Western industrialized democracies. Indeed, the apparently minimal role of social class in Canadian politics has presented us with an interesting deviant case. Its analysis, consequently, is likely to be unusually fruitful (Lipset et al, 1956:12).

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS FOR THE CLASSLESS NATURE OF CANADIAN POLITICS

The Mass Explanation

A review of the literature shows that there are two differing lines of explanation which attempt to illuminate the anomalies associated

with Canadian politics. One line of explanation - which we shall call the "mass explanation" - suggests that the classless nature of Canadian politics may be explained largely in terms of mass sentiments (see Alford, 1963; McLeod, 1966:335; Fox, 1966:337; Engelmann and Schwartz, 1967; Smith, 1967:192; Beck, 1968:420; Meisel, 1972:60). It argues that Canadians in general are simply not as interested in class issues as people of other Western industrialized countries. This is generally thought to be due to Canada's fragmented and heterogeneous social structure. In addition to social class, Canada is characterized by numerous other social cleavages - ethnic, religious, linguistic and regional cleavages. Consequently, people are thought to be so concerned about these latter issues that the salience of social class becomes greatly diminished. The fact that the major parties do not differentiate on the basis of class is thus felt to be a reflection of mass sentiments. This also suggests that the response of the electorate to politics is a major determinant of the structure of the party system. Alford (1963: 257), therefore, argues that the classless nature of Canadian politics is a faithful reflection of the opinions of the electorate: "Neither class nor national identities are well-developed, and the major diffuse loyalties or attachments of people are to regional and religious loyalties." Engelmann and Schwartz (1967:58), speaking of Alford, further emphasize that:

"His interpretation, compatible with our own view of Canadian society is that regional-ethnic and regional-economic interests and loyalties are so strong, that even in the case of economic interests, they work against the emergence of national class-oriented behaviour."

The mass explanation, placing the explanatory burden on the nature of mass social structure and public opinion, therefore, implicitly

contends that the Canadian political elites have been responsive to the desire of the citizenry. It also argues that Canadians, at the aggregate level, prefer non-class politics and they apparently do so consciously. Meisel (1972:60), for example, suggests that:

"The trouble with Canada, from the viewpoint of the reformer, is thus not so much the character of its party system as the attitudes and priorities of the citizens, who have not demanded of their party system that it help them move visibly towards the establishment of a Just Society."

An underlying implication of this view is the opinion that the political process is functioning in accordance with democratic ideology. For example, as Engelmann and Schwartz (1967:48) have stated:

"It is not our task to tell the Canadian people what to want It should be obvious by now that we do not feel that Canada's political system distorts her social structure. We expect that outputs issuing from the governmental structure will tend to satisfy articulated demands and, hopefully, real needs of our society"

Hence the mass explanation has implicitly legitimized the present form of political arrangements by putting the onus for the status quo on the Canadian citizenry.

The Elite Explanation

In more recent years, an alternative and competing line of explanation - which we shall call the "elite explanation" - has emerged. Alford (1967), on noting the findings of Schwartz (1967) that Canadians care more about class-related economic issues than others such as the Quebec Question, revised his earlier view and has argued that explanation of the low class vote in Canada has more to do with the Canadian party system than the sentiments of Canadian voters. Schwartz (1974:589) also argues that:

"..... class-based voting exists; it is consistent class-based parties that are missing."

While Alford (1967) and Schwartz (1974) have made only brief mentions of the party system as an important variable for the explanation of the oddities associated with Canadian politics, Ogmundson (1972, 1975a, b, c, 1976, 1977) has examined the issue in a greater depth. He suggests that on an a priori basis it is conceivable that an explanation of the classless nature of Canadian politics may lie more with the nature of elite activities than with the nature of mass sentiments (1972:Chps. 2, 3). He argues that the literature indicates that the nature of mass sentiments in Canada is not sufficiently classless to account for the anomalies associated with the Canadian case, and that, on the other hand, it does indicate that the nature of Canadian political parties is sufficiently deviant to provide an exploratory variable of some importance (see Ogmundson, 1972:Chp. 2). He also points to the fact that many prominent authorities (e.g. Sartori, 1968; Butler and Stokes, 1971; Converse and Valen, 1971; Hamilton, 1972) have expressed the view that the influence of elites on the political system can be very significant in modern democracies. Duverger (1954:372), for example, has argued that:

"Every system constitutes a frame imposed upon opinions, forming it as well as deforming it. The party system existing in a country is generally considered to be the result of the structure of its public opinion. But the converse is equally true; the public opinion is to a large extent a consequence of the party system"

Ogmundson's subsequent study of the data provided by John Meisel's 1965 Canadian national survey provides empirical evidence which supports the elite explanation which suggests that the classless nature of Canadian politics has more to do with the elite activities than with

mass sentiments. He uses six major indicators to measure political party class positions: academic opinions; voter support - to find out whether the parties are supported distinctly by the different social classes; voter perceptions - to find out how voters perceive the class positions of the major parties; values of Members of Parliament; occupational status of Members of Parliament; and the sources of campaign funding. The nature of the mass sentiment was measured by the three major indicators: voters' response to open-ended questions - to find out the salience of class issues relative to others; the rate of subjective class voting - as ascertained by a new measure of the class vote which takes into account voters' perceptions of who they vote for, and which thus is a better tool for the inference of voter motivation; and a comparison between actual-Ideal party class image - to find out whether there is any discrepancy between what the voters want (Ideal party class image) and what they see themselves receiving (actual party class image).

Through an extensive survey of the literature and a detailed analysis of data, Ogmundson comes up with two major findings: first, class issues have indeed been minimized by the two major political parties; second, Canadians do care more about class issues than previously thought. Indeed, responses to open-ended questions indicate that class is the most important issue to Canadians. These findings, therefore, give further support to the argument made by the elite explanation that the minimal role of social class in Canadian politics has more to do with the nature of the elite activities than with the nature of the mass sentiments.

The elite explanation, placing the explanatory burden on the political parties, asserts that the classless nature of Canadian politics is largely due to the failure of the major political parties

to appeal to and represent class interests. A Canadian voter, therefore, must be highly motivated in order to behave according to his class identity in the electoral sphere. This, in turn, helps to explain why the voters in general do not vote along class lines. The elite explanation, therefore, suggests that the classless politics in Canada has more to do with the nature of elite activities than with the nature of mass sentiments.

While the "mass explanation" has made little attempt (except through the conventional class vote and an examination of the elite culture) to give empirical evidence to support their assumptions about public opinion, the various measures which have supported the "elite explanation" - at both the elite and the mass level - have been tested only once in the Canadian context. Consequently, it is difficult to draw a conclusion as to which of these explanations better illuminate the Canadian case. This thesis is an attempt to shed further light on the Canadian politics by replicating Ogmundson's study and by extending the research to the United Kingdom. There are two main reasons for replicating the 1965 study with the 1968 and 1974 data. First, to increase the confidence in the findings of the 1965 study (since the various measures used by Ogmundson have not been replicated elsewhere); and second, to utilize the better quality data provided by the 1968 and 1974 study. We have chosen to do a comparison because comparative data have generally been considered as essential to test opposing arguments. As Giddens (1972:36) suggests:

"..... the use of comparative method
is the primary means of empirical verification
in Sociology."

We have chosen to compare Canada with the United Kingdom largely because of the comparability of the data available on both countries.

Wherever comparable data are available in other western democracies, these will also be taken into consideration. The construction of an international comparison will help to better interpret the situation of Canada and the United Kingdom.

In sum, the main objectives of this research are: first, to test the reliability and the validity of the measures used by Ogmundson in his original study; second, to find out which line of thought better explains selected aspects of Canadian and English politics.

RESEARCH DESIGN⁴

The Data⁵

The 1968 Canadian data for this research come from a national survey on the 1968 federal election which was collected by John Meisel of Queen's University. Data were gathered from a random survey of 2767 Canadian voters soon after the 1968 Canadian Federal Election according to a stratified sampling procedure. The 1974 data were collected by Harold Clarke and Lawrence Leduc, both of the University of Windsor, and Jane Jenson and Jon Pammett, both of Carleton University.

"The sample design for the 1974 national election study was a multi-stage, stratified, cluster sample of 2562 respondents, weighted by province to allow for some systematic over-sampling of several of the smaller provinces"
(Source: the 1974 Canadian Codebook.)

Comparison of the Canadian findings with those of the United Kingdom is made possible with the data provided by the United Kingdom national surveys in 1963, 1964 and 1966. The data were collected by David Butler of Oxford and Donald Stokes of the University of Michigan.

"A total of 2009 respondents were interviewed between 24 May, and 13 August, 1963. This 1963 wave was a self-weighting, multistage, stratified

sample of the adult population of England, Wales and Scotland living in private households or institutions. This cross-sectional sample was also the starting point for a series of Panels. These panels were the results of reinterviewings which took place after the general elections of 1964, 1968 and 1970. In 1964 and 1966 electorate samples were also obtained"
(Source: the 1963-1970 British Codebook.)

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

As stated previously, this research will replicate the various major measures used in the Ogmundson study and will extend research to the United Kingdom. In Canada, at the mass level, two measures will be used for replication - voters' response to open-ended questions in 1968 and 1974, and the subjective (self-perceived) class vote in 1968. (The 1974 study does not have a comparable measure.) The measures used in the comparison of Canada with the United Kingdom will be the responses to open-ended questions, the self-perceived class vote and the awareness of class membership. At the elite level, we will use academic opinions, voter support, voter perceptions, occupational status of Members of Parliament and the source of campaign funding as measures of party class position. The operationalization of these variables will be presented along with the findings. Chapter II of this thesis will compare Canada and the United Kingdom in terms of elite variables. Chapter III, IV, and V will focus on the replication and comparison of mass variables. Chapter III will concern itself with open-ended questions; Chapter IV with the subjective class vote; and Chapter V with awareness of class membership. The final Chapter will summarize the results.

Footnotes

- ¹ Alford deletes the occupational category of "farmers" from his analysis.
- ² Alford's Index of Class Voting is computed by subtracting the percentage of persons in nonmanual occupations voting for the Left parties from the percentage of persons in manual occupations voting for Left parties.
- ³ While Alford's classification of the class position of the political parties of Canada is probably the predominant one, it has been challenged by Ogmundson (1975c) who argues that both the Liberals and Conservatives should be classified as "middle class". For further discussion, see Chapter II.
- ⁴ The term "social class" is one of those which is used widely, though loosely, by social scientists. Its meaning differs according to the scientific and ideological position of those using it. The definition of class differs considerably. Some argue that it should be defined by relationship to the means of production. Others argue that class should be defined by occupation, education, income, or occupational prestige. Likewise people disagree on how many classes there are and how they ought to be demarked. Some argue that social class is an analytic reality which exists regardless of the perceptions of people. Others maintain that social class does not exist unless it exists in the minds of the people involved. (For discussions, see Campbell et al, 1960; Marx, 1967; Kahl, 1966; Gordon, 1964; and Warner et al, 1949. In Canada, see the debate of Heap (1972) and Porter (1972).) A compromise position, probably adopted by most social scientists, is that of Campbell et al (1960) who argue that it has both an objective and a subjective dimension. This is the position adopted here.

If there is much debate on what "class" means, it follows that there is much debate on what "class politics" means. Here again, one finds the term used loosely. Disagreements are likely to appear only when operationalizations take place - as in this thesis. Here the scientific difficulties are even more clouded by ideological factors. Those with a conservative view will likely minimize class as an analytic category. By way of contrast, a leftist is likely to be able to analyze every issue in terms of class struggles.

All this leaves the student in dilemma. Clearly, an empirically-oriented master's thesis in Sociology is not the place to attempt to disentangle issues which have occupied the best theoretical minds of generations. Our attempt in this thesis will be to be conventional. Class will be assumed to have two relevant dimensions - the objective (e.g. occupational position) and the subjective (e.g. class self identification). (For a discussion of these distinctions, see Campbell et al, 1960; Pomper, 1975.) As is traditional, the division among classes most often used will be the manual/non-manual ones. (For a discussion of this problem, see Butler and Stokes (1969) and Hamilton (1972).)

The operational definition of class issues in Chapter 4 will present a special problem both because disagreements about the nature of class are likely to be readily apparent when specific points are raised, and because this is so far as we are aware, a pioneering effort. Clearly people with different theoretical conceptions of class will differ in their preferred operationalizations of class issues. Just as clearly, ideological perspectives will also obscure the matter. However, as mentioned earlier, this thesis cannot hope to disentangle these disputes. Furthermore, unlike the cases note above, there is no authoritative compromise to provide a precedent. Indeed, we can search classics like The American Voter (Campbell et al, 1960), Political Parties in Western Democracies (Epstein, 1967), and Political Representation and Elections in Britain (Pulzer, 1972), in vain for a definition of class politics or class issues. This thesis does not attempt to exceed the standards set by these recognized classics.

⁵ All the data in this research are provided by the Inter-University Consortium For Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Manitoba.

CHAPTER II

ELITE FACTORS: THE SOCIAL CLASS POSITION OF THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

The purpose of this chapter is to compare Canada and the United Kingdom in terms of elite variables - specifically the class positions of the political parties.¹ An assessment of the positions of Canadian political parties which utilizes six indicators - a review of academic opinions, voter support, voter perceptions, the occupational status of M.P.s, the values of M.P.s, and the sources of campaign funding - will be presented. For purposes of comparison, information of five of these indicators - academic opinion, voter support, voter perceptions, the occupational status of M.P.s, and the sources of campaign funding - will be provided in the case of the United Kingdom.

Measurement of Party Class Positions

Respected academic authorities such as that of Alford and Dawson, have traditionally provided the means of assessing the class positions of political parties. In most countries, this technique has proved satisfactory because academics have generally agreed among themselves as to what the approximate positions of the parties were, and this opinion has also been widely shared by the electorate. In recent times there has been a need to refine the verbal approximations of academics with more precise measures. The nature of voter perceptions has been widely adopted for this task (see Converse and Valen, 1971; Barnes and Pierce, 1971). As Barnes and Pierce (1971:646) suggests: "This method of ordering the parties transfers the subjectivity involved in the measurement process from the researchers to the population involved."

And the measurement technique permits us to report statistics at the ordinal level". The use of this measure has generally been found satisfactory, partly because it has usually served mainly to empirically refine what academics felt that they already knew. (For the United Kingdom, see Butler and Stokes, 1969; Norway, Converse and Valen, 1971; France, Converse and Pierce, 1970; Italy, Barnes and Pierce, 1971.)

In Canada, however, these traditional measures have run into some difficulty. To begin with, scholars have often had great difficulty distinguishing the two major political parties² on the basis of the class dimension (for example, Scarrow, 1965). While Alford (1963) has, basing his opinion of the work of Dawson (1954), established what is probably still a conventional wisdom on this issue by classifying the Liberals as "Left-Center" and the Conservatives as "Right", this conventional wisdom has been subject to much attack. Many (for example, Scarrow, 1965:62; McLeod, 1966:328; Engelmann and Schwartz, 1968:187; Mallory, 1967:25-26; Smith, 1967:191; Kornberg et al, 1969) have argued that the class positions of the two major parties are virtually the same while others have added the opinion that these positions are relatively conservative (Horowitz, 1966:68; Porter, 1965:296, 368, 373). Indeed, both Dawson (1963) and Alford (1967) themselves, express doubts about whether the parties differ significantly on class issues. It is important to note that although Alford himself classifies the parties differently for purposes of the measurement of the class vote, he argues at many points that the parties are essentially classless (1963:100, 109, 257, 260). Furthermore, Dawson (1948:122; 1963:122) himself makes this comment: "The view and policies which have distinguished the two major parties are not easily enumerated, for they have frequently been

changeable and inconsistent." In sum, many academics seem to agree that, contrary to the Alford/Dawson classification, the two major parties in Canada take very similar positions on class issues. As well, academic experts have generally agreed in classification of the CCF/NDP as working class or "Left" and in classification of the Social Credit/Creditistes as middle class or right-wing (see, for example, Pinard, 1971:Chp. 1).

The voter perceptions measure has indicated that the Canadian populace, in the aggregate, agrees with the view that both the Liberals and the Conservatives are "Centre-Right" parties (see Ogmundson, 1975a: 570). However, as is the case among academics, there is dissensus among the Canadian population on this question (see Ogmundson, 1972, 1975b:181). Ogmundson (1972), for example, finds that while forty-one percent of the electorate views the two major parties as taking up middle class position on class issues, twenty-nine percent sees the Conservatives as being more working class than the Liberals and vice versa. Furthermore, the Canadian citizenry completely disagrees with the consensus view of academics that the Social Credit/Creditistes are highly conservative and right wing, and they classify them as being more liberal than both the Conservatives and Liberals! Hence, the voter perceptions measure, by itself, has not been sufficient to settle the issue in the Canadian case.

This situation has encouraged a search for other empirical measures of class positions of political parties. Some of which might be used are: the study of legislative behaviour (Pedersen, 1967); the study of the expressed positions of political parties (Borg, 1966; Mellos, 1970); the study of the nature and opinions of party personnel (Valen, 1966; Kornberg, 1967); and the study of the nature of voter support (Abramson,

1971:147; Rose and Urwin, 1971). It should be noted that all of these measures are subject to meaningful criticism. Academic opinions are "subjective" and nonempirical. The measure of the socioeconomic statuses of Members of Parliament may also be misleading because, as Prewitt and Stone suggest: "Social origin does not guarantee political outlook" (1973:187). Similarly, the political outlook of Members of Parliament may not be reflected in actual behaviour since attitude-behaviour links are often weak (see, for example, Ehrlich, 1969:29). Even if Members of Parliament do act according to their social origins or political outlook, there is no guarantee that these actions will have any significant effect on party policy. As Scarrow (1965:67) suggests, the relationship between the opinions of Members of Parliament and the policy, pronouncements, and actions of party leaders is likely to be quite weak because of the strength of party discipline and the concentration of power among the leaders.

In a situation such as this, where any one measure is weak, the only safe course is to attempt to compensate for this weakness by using as many measures as possible. If most of them point in one direction, one may then be able to draw plausible conclusions. Fortunately, this had already been done in Canada by Ogmundson (1975a). His findings will now be reported.

The Social Class Position of the Major Political Parties in Canada

Ogmundson (1975a) found that a variety of measures indicated that the two most important parties in Canada appear to take similar, somewhat conservative, positions on class issues. The minor parties, especially the New Democratic Party, appeared to take positions more

favourable to the working classes (see Table 2.1).

It may facilitate comparisons with the United Kingdom to outline quickly findings for Canada on the five indicators which we will have available for that country - academic opinions, voter perceptions, voter support, occupational status of M.P.s by party, and the source of campaign funding. As previously noted, there is some dissensus among academics as to the class positions of the two major parties. However, a majority seem to favour the notion that the two major parties take very similar positions on class issues while many add the opinion that these positions are conservative. Although there is also considerable dissensus among the general population, they tend, in the aggregate, to support the view that the two major parties are similar and moderately conservative. This is shown by findings of the 1965 and 1968 Canadian national surveys, in which respondents were asked to evaluate parties on a seven-point semantic differential scale on whether the parties were "for the middle class" or "for the working class" (see Table 2.2). In terms of voter support, Meisel (1972:Table 1) found that in 1968, the New Democratic Party received the highest proportion of its support from "lower class" (i.e. working class people) (62 per cent) followed in descending order by the Social Credit Party (51 per cent), the Progressive Conservatives (45 per cent) and the Liberals (39 per cent). Similarly, Kornberg and Winsborough (1970:231) discovered that the occupational status of the elected members of Parliament from 1945 to 1965 would also place the parties in this order from lowest status to highest status: New Democratic party (\bar{X} SES = 51.6), Social Credit party (\bar{X} SES = 52.6), Progressive Conservative party (\bar{X} SES = 64.9), and Liberal party (\bar{X} SES = 68.3). In terms of party financing, both the Conservatives and Liberals draw virtually all

TABLE 2.1

CLASS POSITIONS OF CANADIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AS INDICATED BY
SEVEN DIFFERENT MEASURES

| | LEFT | | CENTRE | | RIGHT | |
|------------------------|---------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| | Radical | Social Democrat | Left | Right | Conservative | Reactionary |
| Alford- Dawson(a) | - | NDP | Liberal | - | P. Conservatives | Social Credit |
| Other experts(b) | - | NDP | - | Liberal- Conservative | - | Social Credit |
| MP values(c) | - | NDP-Liberal | - | - | Conservative- Social Credit | - |
| Voter support(d) | - | NDP | Social Credit | Conservative | Liberal | - |
| MP SES(e) | - | NDP-Social Credit | - | - | Conservative- Liberal | - |
| Voter perception(f) | - | NDP | Social Credit | Conservative- Liberal | - | - |
| Party finance(g) | - | Social Credit-NDP | - | - | Conservative- Liberal | - |

(a) Drawn from Alford, 1963:13

(b) See Ogmundson, 1975a

(c) Kornberg, 1967:Chp. 7

(d) Meisel, 1972:Table I

(e) Kornberg and Winsborough, 1970:231

(f) Meisel, 1972:Chp. 2; Ogmundson, 1972:Chp. 5

(g) Paltiel, 1970:Chps. 2,3,4

A hyphen between any two parties (e.g. Conservative-Liberal) indicates great similarity between the parties according to that measure. However, given this similarity, the ordering attempts to capture apparent distinctions between the parties.

Source: Ogmundson, 1975a:568

TABLE 2.2

COMPARISON OF THE CLASS IMAGES OF THE CANADIAN POLITICAL PARTIES
- 1965 and 1968

| | <u>Conservatives</u> | <u>Liberals</u> | <u>NDP</u> |
|------|----------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1965 | 3.62 | 3.61 | 5.26 |
| 1968 | 3.80 | 3.60 | 5.30 |

The 1965 figures are taken from Ogmundson, 1972:71. The numbers presented are mean scores. The higher the score the more "for the working class" the image on a scale from 1 to 7. The 1968 figures are drawn from Meisel, 1972:70. The scale has been reversed from 1-7 "for the working class" to "for the middle class" to a 1-7 scale extending from "for the middle class" to "for the working class" so that it will be comparable to the 1965 scale.

their financial support from big business (Paltiel, 1970:Chp. 2). The New Democratic party depends mainly on trade union support although individual contributions remain important (Paltiel, 1970:Chp. 3). The Social Credit and Creditiste parties depend on grass roots support from their lower middle and working class base (Paltiel, 1970:Chp. 4).

In sum, these five indicators tend to suggest that both the major political parties in Canada are moderately conservative parties which generally take up middle class positions on class issues. A third party - the New Democratic party - the minor party to the Left - is the party in Canada which takes up a working class position. (For further discussion, see Ogmundson, 1975a)

The Social Class Position of the Major Political Parties in the United Kingdom

In order to find out whether there are any differences between Canada and the United Kingdom in the class positions of the major political parties, similar measures as those used in the 1968 Canadian study - academic opinion, voter support, voter perceptions, occupational status of Members of Parliament, and the source of campaign funding - will be used to ascertain the social class position of the two major parties - the Conservatives and Labour - in the United Kingdom.

A review of academic opinion suggests that, unlike Canada, there is consensus that class constitutes one of the major issues differentiating British political parties. Epstein (1967:86), for example, suggests that social class is most closely associated with party preference in the United Kingdom and least closely in Canada. Class, in the United Kingdom, not only leads to party division on the basis of class, it is also the major determinant for voting preference. Butler and Stokes (1969:65)

have suggested that class has always played a unique role in British voting behaviour:

"In contemporary interpretation of British voting behaviour class is accorded the leading role There is, in fact, evidence that party allegiance has followed class lines more strongly in Britain than anywhere else in the English-speaking world."

Likewise, Alford (1963:123) shares the same viewpoint, "social class is usually presumed to be the fundamental social membership affecting voting behaviour in Great Britain." (Also see Alford, 1963:170, 1967:76; Finer, 1970:142; Smith, 1972:37.) The literature suggests that the Conservative party, being an anti-Labour party, represents mainly interests of the Church, aristocrats and landowners (see Rose, 1974:485; Lipset, 1963:295, 297; Pulzer, 1967:63). McKenzie and Silver (1967:115) further note that the Conservative party was formed, specifically, by people who resisted the idea of political equality. The Labour party, on the other hand, carries objectives which are very different from the Conservatives, economically, socially and educationally (Epstein, 1967:172). More importantly, it has very strong links with the trade unions (see, for example, Alford, 1963:127; Zureik, 1974). The Labour party, thus, acts primarily as a vehicle for members of the working class. Indeed, the opinions expressed by students of politics on British politics can be best summarized by Pulzer (1967:98):

"..... class is the basis of British party politics, all else is embellishment and detail."

In sum, the literature indicates that in the United Kingdom, while the Conservative party takes up a middle class position on class issues, the Labour party takes up a working class position. By the indicator of academic opinions, therefore, there are great differences between the class positions taken up by the two major parties in the United Kingdom.

The second indicator, voter support, also suggests that the two major parties differentiate on the basis of class, and that they emphasize such divisions. A distinct characteristic is that people in manual occupations (working class) usually support Labour while those in non-manual occupations generally support the Conservatives (see, for example, Pulzer, 1967:102). Pulzer (1967) reported that Kahan et al (1966), using occupation as the measure of social class, found that the two major parties in the United Kingdom are strongly supported by class however lower-non-manual occupations are classified (see Tables 2.3, 2.4). Butler and Stokes (1969:76) in their surveys of the British general elections (1963-1966) report that while seventy-nine percent of the voters who identified themselves as members of the middle class supported the Conservatives, seventy-two percent of those who identified themselves as members of the working class supported Labour (see Table 2.5). Similar findings are reported with a seven class self-placements index (see Table 2.6). (Butler and Stokes, 1969:77) Butler and Stokes further assert that the strong relationship between class and voter support for the two major political parties in the United Kingdom has been confirmed in all other public opinion polls and voting studies (1969:76).

In terms of voter perceptions of the social class position of the two major political parties, a random half sample of the respondents in each of three British national surveys (1963, 1964 and 1966) were asked to place the Conservatives and Labour on a 7-point semantic differential scale extending from middle class to working class. This scale is very similar to the one used in the 1965 and 1968 Canadian studies. Butler and Stokes (1971:66) report that while 90 percent of the respondents

TABLE 2.3

PARTY SUPPORT BY CLASS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
COUNTING LOWER-NON-MANUAL AS MIDDLE CLASS - 1963*

| | Middle Class % | Working Class % |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Conservative | 77 | 27 |
| Labour | 23 | 73 |
| | <hr/> 100% | <hr/> 100% |

Source: Pulzer, 1967:102

* Examples of lower-non-manual occupations are: shop assistants, policemen.

TABLE 2.4

PARTY SUPPORT BY CLASS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
COUNTING LOWER-NON-MANUAL AS "WORKING" CLASS (SUMMER 1963)

| | Middle Class % | Working Class % |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Conservative | 80 | 32 |
| Labour | 20 | 68 |
| | <hr/> 100% | <hr/> 100% |

Source: Pulzer, 1967:102

TABLE 2.5

PARTY SUPPORT BY CLASS SELF-IMAGE, 1963

| | | Class Self-Image | |
|------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| Partisan Self-Image | | <u>Middle</u> | <u>Working</u> |
| | | % | % |
| | Conservative | 79 | 28 |
| | Labour | 21 | 72 |
| | | <u>100%</u> | <u>100%</u> |

Source: Butler and Stokes, 1969:76.

TABLE 2.6

PARTY SELF-IMAGES BY EXTENDED CLASS SELF-IMAGE, 1963

| | Upper Class % | Upper Middle % | Middle Class % | Lower Middle % | Upper Working % | Working Class % | Lower Working % |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Conservative | 100 | 84 | 79 | 76 | 48 | 28 | 23 |
| Labour | <u>0</u> 100% | <u>16</u> 100% | <u>21</u> 100% | <u>24</u> 100% | <u>52</u> 100% | <u>72</u> 100% | <u>77</u> 100% |

Source: Butler & Stokes: 1969:77.

placed the Conservatives towards the middle class end of the scale, 83 percent put Labour towards the working class end. Butler and Stokes (1969:89) further asked respondents how would they expect people of their own class to vote. One-third of the middle class respondents stated that most of the middle class would support the Conservatives, and three-fifths of the working class respondents answered that the working class would mainly support the Labour party. Butler and Stokes (1969) note that although many of these respondents actually supported the party of the opposite class, almost no one perceived that the middle class support Labour or the working class, the Conservatives. These findings are by no means unexpected as academic opinions and voter support have both shown that the two major parties in the United Kingdom take very different class positions.

The fourth indicator, the occupational status of Members of Parliament, also give the Conservative party a higher status than the Labour party. Epstein (1967:179) and Pulzer (1972:69) find that a somewhat higher percentage of Conservative M.P.s than Labour M.P.s were in high status occupations (see Table 2.7). In terms of the source of campaign funding, the Conservative party depends wholly on big business. The Labour party, on the other hand, draws its financial support mainly from trade unions and individual contributions (see, for example, Epstein, 1967:243, 244; Pulzer, 1972:87). As Lees and Kimber (1972:64) note:

"..... The trade unions have always been the financial mainstay of the Labour Party nationally, and individual unions also sponsor financially candidates in particular constituencies, while business and financial organizations provide the backbone of the national finances of the Conservative Party."

TABLE 2.7

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT BY PARTY
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (1951 and 1966)

| | <u>1951</u> | | <u>1966</u> | |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | Conservative % | Labour % | Conservative % | Labour % |
| Professions | 41 | 35 | 46 | 43 |
| Business | 37 | 9 | 29 | 9 |
| Farming | 15 | 1 | 12 | 1 |
| Workers | 0 | 37 | 1 | 30 |
| Other | 7 | 18 | 13 | 17 |

Source: Pulzer, 1972:69.

In sum, evidence provided by these five indicators have suggested that the two major political parties in the United Kingdom take very different positions on class issues.

Summary and Discussion

The most important conclusion one can draw from findings of these five indicators - academic opinion, voter support, voter perceptions, occupational status of Members of Parliament and the source of campaign funding - is that they all show that the nature of the two major political parties in Canada and the United Kingdom is very different. It was found that both major parties in Canada, the Conservatives and Liberals, take very similar positions on class issues. Conversely, the two major political parties in the United Kingdom have been found to be consistently and distinctly divided along class lines. In sum, our review of the literature indicates that there is a significant difference between Canada and the United Kingdom in terms of the activities of the political elites.

We have examined the nature of elite activities in Canada and the United Kingdom. We find that there is a very significant difference between the two countries at the elite level. Is there a big difference between Canada and the United Kingdom at the mass level too? In the following three chapters we will be looking at the nature of the mass sentiment in both countries using three different measures.

Footnotes

- ¹ It should be pointed out here that a complete study would include consideration of class positions of all elites - mass media, intellectual, religious, and so forth. Such study would probably find that Canadian elites generally minimize class issues (see Ogmundson, 1977 for a preliminary discussion) and that United Kingdom elites give them much more attention.
- ² We define major parties as those parties which have a realistic chance to win federal power in any given election.

CHAPTER III

OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS AND THE NATURE OF MASS SENTIMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

One of the major variables in this research - the nature of elite activities - has already been examined. In this and the following two chapters, we will be looking at the other major variable in this research - the nature of mass sentiments. In his study of the 1965 Canadian data, Ogmundson (1972) used three major measures - voter's response to open-ended questions, the self-perceived (subjective) class vote and the comparison between Ideal-actual party class image - to find out Canadian interest in class issues. As stated previously, we will only be using the first two of these measures in both the replication and comparison because the Ideal party measure was not used in the United Kingdom studies. A new measure - the awareness of class membership - will also be included in this research.

We will begin this chapter by briefly describing some of the advantages of using open-ended questions. Then we will present findings on the open-ended question which asked respondents to list the most important problems facing the country in the 1968 and 1974 Canadian national surveys. This will be followed by a comparison between Canada (1965, 1968 and 1974 averaged) and the United Kingdom (1963)¹ on a comparable measure. As well, we will also present findings of similar open-ended questions available in other Western democratic countries.

On the Use of Open-ended Question as a Measure to Ascertain the Salience of Class Issues Relative to Others

The open-ended question that we will use as a measure to ascertain people's interests in class issues is one which asks respondents to

list what they think are the most important problems facing the government. The usefulness of such an open-ended question in this research is obvious. It allows one to determine whether Canadians are more concerned about class-related economic issues than other national cleavages - such as regional, religious, linguistic and ethnic cleavages - or vice versa. More particularly, the availability of a similar measure in the United Kingdom allows one to make a comparison between the British and Canadian interests in class issues relative to non-class issues. In responding to open-ended questions, respondents are asked to provide their own answers to the question. Kerlinger (1973:483) notes that:

"Open or open-end items are an extremely important development in the technique of interviewing. Open-end questions are those that supply a frame of reference for respondents' answers, but put a minimum of restraint on the answers and their expression. While their content is dictated by the research problem, they impose no other restrictions on the content and manner of respondent answers"

Thus, open-ended questions have the advantage of allowing interviewers or researchers to make better estimates of respondents' true intentions, beliefs, and attitudes (see Kerlinger, 1973:483; Babbie, 1973:140). In particular, for our purposes, it allows one to ascertain the relative salience of various issues. (They have the unfortunate disadvantage that multiple responses are often difficult to code.)

In the 1965, 1968 and 1974 Canadian national surveys, and the 1963 United Kingdom national survey, there was an open-ended question which asked voters to state what they think are the most important problems facing the government. The answers provided by respondents, therefore, provide a good measure of what kind of issues are especially

salient to the general population.

Let us turn back to the Canadian situation. It has often been assumed that Canadians are more concerned about religious, regional and ethnic issues than about class issues. An open-ended question asking Canadian voters what they think are the most important problems facing the country should cast light on such an opinion.

The Salience of Class Issues Relative to Others in Canada

Gallup Polls conducted in Canada seldom use open-ended questions to find out what voters think are the most important problems facing the government (see Schwartz, 1967:217). However, from the available public opinions polls that include such an open-ended question, Schwartz (1967:228) found that Canadians are more concerned about class-related economic issues than the others.

"From time to time the Gallup Polls have asked respondents unstructured questions on their personal evaluation of the main issues facing Canada No attempt has been made to assemble all these, but two such questions were available for the surveys which we are intensively analyzing. In both of these, the first asked in 1957 and the second in 1960, the largest single majority mentioned unemployment as the main problem Beginning with unemployment, these were mainly of an economic nature. It is noteworthy that none of the other national problems which we have considered in this study were spontaneously mentioned."² (See Table 3.1)

As well, Schwartz (1967:228) reports that in structured questions asked in public opinion polls, respondents also give class-related economic issues as the most important issues facing the country.

"In two surveys conducted in 1961 and 1962, respondents were given structured questions listing issues and then asked to rank them in order of importance. In both years, the four high-ranking issues were unemployment, medical insurance, taxation, and old-age benefits - all issues have relevance to the role of government"

TABLE 3.1

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FACING CANADA, DECEMBER, 1957 AND JULY, 1960

| | <u>1957</u> % | | <u>1960</u> % |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | (N=2,105) | | (N=717) |
| Unemployment | 41 | Unemployment | 40 |
| War | 8 | Threat of war | 24 |
| Farm markets | 6 | Rising cost of living | 6 |
| Population problems | 5 | Economic situation | 5 |
| Cost of living | 4 | Russia | 4 |
| Personal faults | 2 | Farm situation | 2 |
| Housing | 1 | Labour unions | 2 |
| Social security | 1 | Trade | 2 |
| Education | 1 | Lack of religion | 2 |
| Youth problems | 1 | Immigration | 1 |
| Communism | 1 | Other | 9 |
| Russia | 1 | Do not know | 5 |
| Sputnik | 1 | | |
| Taxes | a | | |
| Other | 6 | | |
| Cannot say | 17 | | |

Source: Schwartz, 1967:229

a. Less than 1 per cent

Clearly, these four major problems reported by Schwartz (1967) are class-related economic issues.³ This also implies that Canadians are more concerned about class issues than the others - such as ethnic, religious, regional and linguistic cleavages. More recently, Ogmundson (1972) in his study of the 1965 Canadian data also found that Canadians are more concerned about class-related economic issues than others.

Respondents were asked this question:

"You hear a lot about the problems facing the country today and we are interested in getting opinions on these from you. In your opinion what problems facing the country are most important?"

It is reported in the codebook that "economic problems" have a first mention of 35.6% by respondents. "Political problems" have a first mention of 21.5%. "Social security" and "foreign relations" have 17% and 8.8% of the first mentions respectively. (In terms of the second mentions category, a similar pattern was found.) As well, respondents were then further asked the question, "Which of these problems is of special concern to you personally?" A similar response pattern was found with the first mentions by respondents. (For all this, see Tables 3.2 and 3.3) These results, therefore, confirm findings by Schwartz in Gallup Polls which suggest that Canadians are substantially more concerned about class issues than others. The figures provided in Table 3.2 seems to suggest that what voters see as important for the government is also important for individuals' livelihood. On the basis of the literature and his findings, Ogmundson (1972:28), therefore, argues that Canadians do participate in a social culture which is at least normal in the nature of its class-related aspect. The reliability of the open-ended question can be tested with the data provided by the 1968 and 1974 Canadian national surveys.

TABLE 3.2

THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FACING CANADA AT THE GOVERNMENT
AND PERSONAL LEVEL, 1965

| | <u>Government</u> % | <u>Personal</u> % |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Economic problems | 35.6 | 33 |
| Political problems | 21.5 | 14.7 |
| Social security problems | 17 | 17.7 |
| Foreign relations | 8.8 | 5.1 |
| Social problems | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| All other problems | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| Labour-management problems, strikes | 0.7 | 0.6 |
| Religious and moral problems | 0.7 | 0.8 |
| Irrelevant, no special problems | 1.0 | 0.7 |
| Don't know/NA | 9.5 | 21.1 |

Source: The 1965 Canada National Survey Codebook.

The figures presented are the first mentions of the most important problems. N=2721

TABLE 3.3

THE SALIENCE OF CLASS-RELATED ECONOMIC ISSUES RELATIVE TO
NON-CLASS ISSUES IN CANADA AT THE GOVERNMENT AND PERSONAL
LEVEL, 1965

| | <u>Government</u> % | <u>Personal</u> % |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Class-related economic issues | 61.2 | 68.7 |
| Non-class issues | 38.8 | 31.3 |

This is a simplified version of the figures presented in Table 3.2. The items: "economic problems", "social security problems", and "labour-management problems" were considered as class-related economic issues. The items "political problems", "foreign relations", "social problems" and "religious and moral problems" were considered as non-class issues. The items "all other problems" and "irrelevant, no special problems" were excluded because we do not know whether they are class or non-class issues. Also it is customary to exclude the "Don't know/NA" category.

The Saliency of Class Issues Relative to Others in Canada: A Replication

Replication of the 1965 Canadian data is possible with the 1968 and 1974 data since there is also a question in each of these surveys which asks respondents to name what they think are the most important problems facing the government. The question used in the 1968 survey was:

"What do you personally feel are the most important problems the government should try to take care of as soon as possible?"
(See Meisel, 1972:14)

The 1974 question was:

"Now, I would like to ask you some more specific questions about the recent federal election. What, in your opinion was the most important issue to you, personally, in that election?"
(See 1974 Canada Codebook.)

The findings are presented in Tables 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6. One will notice immediately that they confirm Schwartz' (1967) and Ogmundson's (1972) findings in Canadian Gallup Polls and the 1965 Canadian National Survey respectively. Both the 1968 and 1974 data indicate that Canadians are more concerned about class-related economic issues than the other national issues such as regional, religious and ethnic cleavages. For example, one will notice that among the 10 most important problems mentioned by respondents in 1968, only one was not related to economic issues, i.e. the Quebec issues (which was ranked 4th). In contrast, respondents considered inflation, unemployment, housing and welfare as the first, second, third and fifth most important national problems respectively. (It should be noted that 8.9 percent of the respondents had no answer to the question.) In 1974, the 10 most important problems mentioned were: inflation (36.4%), cost of living (7.6%), majority government/stable government (7.3%), the economy (4.8%), wage and price

TABLE 3.4

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FACING THE GOVERNMENT IN CANADA, 1968

| | % |
|---|------|
| Inflation, cost of living | 18.6 |
| Unemployment | 10.5 |
| Housing | 10.4 |
| Quebec in Confederation | 7.3 |
| Other welfare, including child | 6.9 |
| Other economic, including poverty | 5.8 |
| Taxes | 4.8 |
| Labour | 4.6 |
| Education | 4.2 |
| Medicare | 3.4 |
| Other | 2.7 |
| Wheat sales | 2.0 |
| Regional inequality | 1.9 |
| Problems with the political system (including majority government) | 1.8 |
| Farm problems | 1.8 |
| Foreign policy | 1.7 |
| Youth | 1.1 |
| Other social policy | 1.1 |
| Minority groups | 0.9 |
| Don't know/NA | 8.6 |

The figures presented are the first mentions by respondents. The categories are provided by the 1968 Codebook. N=2,767

TABLE 3.5

THE SALIENCE OF CLASS-RELATED ECONOMIC ISSUES RELATIVE TO
NON-CLASS ISSUES IN CANADA, 1968

| | % |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Class-related economic issues | 80 |
| Non-class issues | 20 |

The figure for class-related economic issues is calculated by adding the percentages of the 10 domestic economic issues (71%) as reported in Table 3.4. (These include: inflation, unemployment, housing, other welfare, other economic, taxes, labour, education, medicare and farm problems.) Then we divide 71% by the overall total percentage of the 18 most important issues mentioned (88.8%) and multiplied the figure by 100. Similarly, the figures for non-class issues is calculated by adding the percentages of the other 8 non-class issues (17.8%), divided it by the overall total and multiplied the figure by 100. (The items: "Other" and "Don't Know/NA" were excluded from calculation.)

The figures provided are the first mentions of the most important problems.



TABLE 3.6

THE SALIENCE OF CLASS-RELATED ECONOMIC ISSUES RELATIVE TO
NON-CLASS ISSUES IN CANADA, 1974

| | % |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Class-related economic issues | 79.7 |
| Non-class issues | 20.3 |

The figures are calculated for the first mentions of the most important issue. Examples of class-related economic issues are: inflation, cost of living, wage and price controlling/freezing, taxes, old age pension, social welfare and health programs/hospitalization. Examples of non-class issues are: rights of minority groups (Indians, Metis), majority government, immigration, and relations between provinces.

controlling/freezing (4.7%), old age pension (4.6%), the leader (3.1%), price controlling/freezing (2.3%), unemployment/jobs/employment (2.2%) and budget (2.0%). Thus, among these 10 issues mentioned, only two of them were not related to class. It should be noted that "inflation" - a class-related economic issue - was considered by respondents in both surveys as the first most important problem. As well, the 1968 findings also indicate that the Quebec question does not seem to be as important a problem as generally thought. As Meisel (1972:14) notes:

"..... The other largely political question, that of the status of Quebec, was considerably less important. Among the economic issues, inflation was the most telling, particularly among the newer parties. It was, in fact, the relative importance attached to economic questions which was the chief distinguishing feature between the parties ranging the Liberals, Conservatives and Social Crediters on one side, the NDP and Creditistes on the other"

In the 1974 survey, the Quebec Question was not even included in the 10 most important problems mentioned by respondents.

A comparison between the findings of 1965, 1968 and 1974 shows that Canadian interests in class issues in 1968 and 1974 have increased substantially since 1965 (by 18.8% and 18.5% respectively). (See Table 3.7) On the average (1965, 1968 and 1974), 73.6 percent of the most important national problems mentioned by Canadian voters were class-related economic issues.

In the next section, we will be comparing Canadian and the British interests in class issues with the same measure.

Comparison Between Canada (1965, 1968 and 1974 Averaged) and the United Kingdom on the Salience of the Class Issue Relative to Other National Concerns

In the 1963 British National Survey, respondents were asked this

TABLE 3.7

A COMPARISON BETWEEN 1965, 1968 AND 1974 ON THE SALIENCE OF
CLASS-RELATED ECONOMIC ISSUES RELATIVE TO NON-CLASS ISSUES IN CANADA

| | <u>Class-related economic issues</u> % |
|---------|---|
| 1965 | 61.2 |
| 1968 | 80 |
| 1974 | 79.7 |
| Average | 73.6 |

open-ended question:⁴

"What do you yourself feel are the most important problems the government should do something about
....."

The findings are presented in Table 3.8. One will notice immediately that more than four-fifths (86.4%) of the most mentioned national problems were class-related economic issues. It is important to note that the five most important issues mentioned by respondents were class issues: pensions (19.3%), housing (17.8%), employment (5.1%), cost of living (3.9%), and improved housing standards (3.7%). Butler and Stokes (1969:343), further notes that the salience of class issues relative to the others in the United Kingdom is confirmed by Gallup Polls taken in the period between 1963-1964:

"..... The newspaper polls throughout this period offer a similar picture. When they asked people to choose the most important problems, housing, pensions and education invariably came in the top five. Only the cost of living and taxation attracted a comparable number of mentions."

It is, thus, apparent that results of public opinion polls correspond quite closely with those found in the 1963 national survey in the United Kingdom. As one will remember, findings in Canadian public opinion polls (as reported by Schwartz, 1967) also corresponded quite well with those found in the 1965, 1968 and 1974 Canadian National Surveys. All this would seem to suggest the reliability of open-ended questions as a measure in ascertaining mass interests in class issues.

A comparison between Canadian and the British interests in class issues as measured by these comparable open-ended questions is presented in Table 3.9. One will notice immediately that class-related economic issues are considered by voters of both countries as the most important problems facing the government. It was found that more than eighty-percent

TABLE 3.8

THE SALIENCE OF CLASS ISSUES RELATIVE TO THE OTHERS IN
THE UNITED KINGDOM AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL,
1963

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| | % |
| Class-related economic issues | 86.4 |
| Non-class issues | 13.6 |

These figures are calculated for the first mentions of the most important problems. Class-related economic issues include such items as: economic, financial and tax policy, health and welfare, housing, and education. Non-class issues include such items as: transport, crime and punishment, security and morality, immigration and race, defense and peace, Britain's international role, commonwealth, aid to developing countries and common markets. ("Other Problems" and "No Mention" were excluded from calculations.)

TABLE 3.9

COMPARISON BETWEEN CANADA (1965, 1968 and 1974 AVERAGED) AND
THE UNITED KINGDOM (1963) ON THE SALIENCE OF CLASS ISSUES
RELATIVE TO THE OTHERS AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL

| | <u>Class-related economic issues</u> % |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Canada (1965, 1968 and 1974 averaged) | 76.3 |
| United Kingdom, 1963 | 86.4 |

and seventy-percent of the most important problems felt by British and Canadian voters respectively are class-related economic issues. This also implies that the citizenry in both Canada and the United Kingdom would prefer that their governments give the greatest priority to economic issues while executing their policies. However, one should note that the British seem to be even more concerned about class issues than the Canadians (by 12.8%). On the other hand, it is important to note that the difference found between the two countries is substantially smaller than what one would have expected based on findings on the class vote (UK - .40; Canada - .08) reported by Alford (1963). Thus, the findings seem to give moderate support to the elite explanation, i.e. class sentiments between Canada and the United Kingdom is not as different as generally thought. The underlying implication is that public preferences are weighted against a lack of class distinctions of the level of the party in Canada.

Since the data used for comparison between Canada and the United Kingdom were collected in the 1960s and the early 70s, one might wonder if similar results will be found with data taken from more recent national surveys and Gallup Polls in both countries. My suspicion is that class-related economic issues will still be the most important concern for people of both countries. This is based on the fact that both Canada and the United Kingdom have been undergoing a prolonged period of inflation. In the case of Canada, since the separatists have assumed control of the Provincial Government in Quebec several months ago, Canadians would probably show increased concern for the Quebec question. Apparently, the immigration problem has also attracted increasing attention from the Canadian media. Thus, one might expect

more Canadian voters to rate these two problems as being important government problems. However, with inflation, the rising cost of living and high rate of unemployment, still prevailing in Canada, one might safely predict that Canadians are still more concerned about class issues than the others, such as regional, religious and ethnic cleavages.

How do Canadians and the British rank among voters of other Western democratic countries in terms of the salience of class issues relative to others? It is fortunate that there are comparable open-ended questions to those found in Canada and the United Kingdom, available in the national surveys of a number of countries - Netherlands, Norway, United States, Australia and Israel. (The question in Israel is not strictly comparable to the others, and thus will not be used in the international comparison. Nonetheless, the findings will be presented.) Before looking at the findings, one must point out that the differences found among these countries could be due to the different forms of open-ended questions asked, and also the different methods used in coding in each of these countries. (For more detail, see Footnote 5.) For example, in the United States (1968), the open-ended question asked of respondents was more elaborate than those found in Canada and the United Kingdom.

"As you well know, the government faces many serious problems in this country and in other parts of the world. What do you personally feel are the most important problems the Government in Washington should try to take care of."

While it is possible that part of the variability might be due to the different forms of the open-ended questions used and the different ways used in coding, one must bear in mind that these questions basically

did ask the same question of voters. In any case, one has to be content with the best data available. Furthermore, we have no a priori reasons to suspect that these factors biased the responses in any way. The findings are presented in Table 3.10. One will notice immediately that the United Kingdom ranks first among the six Western industrialized countries compared, followed by Canada. This would seem to indicate that the British and the Canadians are more concerned about class issues than the average voters in other Western industrialized countries. One will also notice that the Americans were found to be much more concerned about non-class issues than class issues. It was found that the two major concerns of Americans were: "war problems" and "foreign affairs", and "higher defence against Russia and the other Communist nations". These results were not surprising since the United States was involved in the Vietnam War in 1968 although not in 1960 when two of our measures were taken. (One will remember that of the four surveys we have used, American interests in non-class issues was highest in 1968.) This would seem to illustrate that voters do give genuine feelings about what they think are the most important problems facing the government. It is also interesting to compare this indicator of mass sentiment with the degree of class politics in various countries as indicated by the conventionally measured class vote (see Table 3.11). There appears to be no consistent relationship between mass sentiment as measured by open-ended questions and the degree of class politics as indicated by the conventionally measured class vote. Canada's mass sentiment on class issues is high, and yet it has very low class vote. Similarly, the Netherlands has relatively low class vote, and yet mass sentiment on class issues is very high. Norway has a moderate level of mass sentiment but it has very high class

TABLE 3.10

AN INTERNATIONAL SPECTRUM ILLUSTRATING THE SALIENCE OF CLASS ISSUES
RELATIVE TO THE OTHERS AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL

| <u>Class-related economic issues</u> | |
|--|----------|
| | <u>%</u> |
| United Kingdom, 1963 | 86.4 |
| Canada, 1965, 1968 and 1974 averaged | 73.6 |
| Netherlands, 1970 | 72.2 |
| Norway, 1965 | 66.1 |
| Australia, 1967 | 56.7 |
| United States, 1960, 1968 and 1972 averaged* | 29.5 |

* The figures for the U.S. have been: 1960 (Pre-election), 32%; 1960 (Post-election), 34.7%; 1968, 21.2%; and 1972, 30%.

TABLE 3.11

AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON BETWEEN RESPONSE TO OPEN-ENDED
QUESTIONS AND THE CONVENTIONALLY MEASURED CLASS VOTE

| <u>Response to Open-ended Questions</u> | | <u>The Rate of Class Voting</u> | |
|--|------|---------------------------------|-----|
| | % | | |
| United Kingdom, 1963 | 86.4 | Norway, 1957 | .58 |
| Canada, 1965, 1968 and 1974 averaged | 73.6 | United Kingdom, 1952-1962 | .40 |
| Netherlands, 1970 | 72.2 | Australia, 1952-1962 | .33 |
| Norway, 1965 | 66.1 | Netherlands, 1956 | .26 |
| Australia, 1967 | 56.7 | United States, 1952-1962 | .16 |
| United States, 1960, 1968 and 1972 averaged | 29.5 | Canada, 1952-1962 | .08 |

vote. The United Kingdom, Australia and the United States remain relatively consistent by both indicators.

All in all, we have found that Canadians are more interested in class issues than the other national cleavages - such as religious, regional, ethnic and linguistic cleavages. It is important to note that Canadians and the British have somewhat similar levels of interests in class issues compared with the other countries. More importantly, Canada ranked second in the international comparison of the saliency of class issues even though it has the lowest rate of class voting.

In the next chapter, we will be discussing the second measure used to ascertain the mass sentiment in this research - the subjective (self-perceived) class vote.

Footnotes

- ¹ Due to the nature of the panel studies of the British National Surveys (1963, 1964, 1966 and 1970), respondents were asked the open-ended question only in the 1963 survey.

One problem with secondary analysis is that one must do the best one can with data collected by others for other purposes. As we shall see, measures are often not used at precisely the same time in different countries and are often different in their forms. All this makes analysis more difficult. Nonetheless one must do the best job possible with the data available. In our opinion, it is better to have incomplete knowledge than no knowledge at all. If social science failed to do research merely because measures had not been perfected, there would be no social science. Likewise it is better to look into important problems with less desirable data than unimportant problems with good data.

- ² Schwartz (1967) was referring to problems such as those related to national identity, regionalism and the Question Question.

- ³ Our attempt to operationalize in this case will be a pioneering effort which may well be subject to considerable criticism and refinement. Nonetheless, some of our guidelines will be these. First, a class issue must be related to economics just as class itself is rooted in economics. Hence, issues of a nature which are predominantly "social" in their content (e.g. capital punishment, morals, race, immigration, and Quebec) will not be considered to be class issues even if it is well known that opinions on them tend to be differentiated on the basis of class. Second, a class issue must be related to the question of the distribution of goods and services within an economic unit. Class has to do with the division of the pie, not with the size of the pie. Hence economic issues which are related to international questions (e.g. membership in the Common Market) will not be considered as class issues even where opinions on them differentiate on the basis of class. This leaves a wide variety of domestic economic issues which can be considered to be related to the distribution of the wealth with given societies. They typically include issues like taxation, education, inflation, and unemployment. (For a study of ways in which these matters are related to class in Canada, see Adams et al, 1974.) They will be considered to be "class-related" because of this analytic quality and not because public opinion on it happens to differentiate by class. The precise operationalizations of this position are readily available in the text. The reader should remember that the original coding was not done with this study in mind. This can create difficulties (as when "building, housing and plot policy" are linked in Norway). At times it was necessary to be arbitrary. Nonetheless this was necessary if the study was to proceed.

- ⁴ The reader will note that the wording of the question used in the United Kingdom is somewhat different than the wording of the questions used in Canada. However, in this case, the wording seems unlikely to bias the responses in a manner relevant to our concerns. It may, however, be worth noting that the question used in Canada would appear likely encourage more mentions of more problems.

- 5 The following is the list of the form of open-ended questions used in the national surveys in each of the different countries. The way we have dichotomized issues into class-related economic issues and non-class issues is also presented. Response to these questions for all the following countries are first mentions of the most important national issues except for Australia (and Israel). We have provided the classifications of the class vs non-class issues arbitrarily, except for Canada, 1965 and Australia, 1967, which we got the classifications from the respective codebooks.

For references to Canada and the United Kingdom, refer to text.

Netherlands: (1970)

Question: "As you know, the government faces many serious problems in our country and abroad, what do you think are the most important problems our government should try to take care of."

The figures (class issues - 72.2%; non-class issues - 27.8%) are calculated for the first mentions of the most important problems. Examples of class-related economic issues are: finance, economy, prices and rent, inflation, devaluation of money wages, rates of social supplies, and public housing. Examples of non-class issues are: recreation, spatial plannings, traffic, keeping law and order, and aid to developing countries.

Norway: (1965)

Question: "As you know, there are many serious problems, waiting to be solved, both in this country and in other parts of the world. The Question is: what should be done about them? Now we would like to hear if there are any matters on which you think the Storting and the Government should make a decision during the coming 4 years period? It is your personal opinion we are interested in. First, can you mention one important matter you think should be taken up when the new Storting convenes after the election?"

The figures (class issues - 40.4%; non-class issues - 59.6%) are calculated for the first mentions. Examples of class-related economic issues are: taxation policy, social matter, building, housing and plot. policy, and economic policy. Examples of non-class issues are: district development and communications, and morals and religion.

Australia: (1967)

Question: "In your opinion, what are the most important problems the federal government should do something about?"

The figures (class issues - 56.7%; non-class issues - 45.3%) are calculated for the 1st to 5th mentions. Examples of class-related economic issues are: economy, employment, pensions, education and housing. Examples of non-class issues are: trade, immigration, state aid, and roads and transport.

U.S.: (1960) - Pre-election

Question: "What would you personally feel are the most important problems the government should try to take care of when the new President and Congress take office in January. (Do you think of any other problems important to you.)

The figures (class issues - 32%; non-class issues - 68%) are calculated for the first mentions. Examples of class-related economic issues are: social welfare problems, labour problems, union-management relations, and economic, business and consumer problems. Examples of non-class issues are: racial and public order problems, foreign affairs problems, national defense problems, and problems relating to the functioning of the government.

U.S.: (1960) - Post-election

Question: "What do you personally feel is the most important problem the government should try to take care of when Kennedy and the new Congress take office in January"

The figures (class-issues - 34.7%; non-class issues - 65.3%) are calculated for the first mentions. For classifications of the issues, see U.S. 1960, pre-election.

U.S.: (1968)

Question: "As you well know, the government faces many serious problems in this country and in other parts of the world. What do you personally feel are the most important problems the Government in Washington should try to take care of."

The figures (class issues- 21.2%; non-class issues - 78.8%) are calculated for the first mentions. For classifications of the issues, see U.S. 1960 Pre-election.

U.S.: (1972)

Question: "Of all you've told me, what would you say is the single most important problem the country faces?"

These figures (class issues - 30%; non-class issues - 70%) are calculated for the first mentions. Examples of class-related economic issues are: social welfare problems, labour problems, union-management relations, and economic, business and consumer problems. Examples of non-class issues are: agricultural and national resources problems, racial and public order problems, foreign affairs problems, and national defense problems.

Israel: (1969)

Question: "Of the basic problems listed on this card, please cite the one which seems to you to be the most important one for Israel today."

The figures (class issues - 0.5%; non-class issues - 99.5%) are calculated for the first mentions.

The following is a table showing response (in percentage) to the question. (Two phases were included.)

| | <u>Phase 1</u> | <u>Phase 2</u> |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| 00 No answer | 1.6 | 0.0 |
| 01 Relations with world powers | 11.1 | 8.4 |
| 02 Economic Independence | 8.4 | 12.6 |
| 03 Peace in the area | 56.8 | 57.4 |
| 04 Labour Relations | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 05 Relations with the Arab Population in Israel and the territories | 1.1 | 1.5 |
| 06 Military strength | 12.4 | 10.7 |
| 07 Image of Israel in the world | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| 08 Absorption of immigrations | 5.0 | 5.6 |
| 09 Place of religion in the state | 1.3 | 0.8 |
| 10 Relations among the ethnic groups | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| 11 Other. Which? | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 12 I don't know which topic is most important | 1.6 | 1.0 |

The item "labour relations" was considered as a class-related economic issue, and the rest were considered as non-class issues. As we have mentioned in the text, the figures for Israel will not be used in the comparison.

CHAPTER IV

THE "SUBJECTIVE" CLASS VOTE IN CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM A COMPARISON OF WHAT VOTERS THINK THEY ARE DOING

In this chapter, we will be using the second measure of voter interest in class issues - the subjective (self-perceived) class vote - in order to ascertain the nature of mass sentiments in Canada and the United Kingdom. In Canada, the relatively low level of class vote (.08) reported by Alford (1963) has been one of the most important pieces of empirical evidence used by most supporters of the mass explanation (see, for example, Alford, 1963; Engelmann and Schwartz, 1967). The nature of mass sentiments (i.e. voter motivation) has been inferred from the conventional measure. However, more recently, Ogmundson (1972), using a newly devised class vote measure - the self-perceived class vote - found that Canada has a much higher level of class vote (.18), in terms of voter perceptions of what they are doing, than that recorded using conventional measures. This new figure appears to put Canada within the normal range in the international spectrum of class voting in terms of what voters are trying to do. Consequently, Ogmundson (1972) has argued that the unusually classless nature of Canadian politics cannot entirely be explained by differences in mass sentiments.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of measurement of the class vote. This will be followed by a discussion of the class vote in Canada, a discussion of the class vote in the United Kingdom, and then a comparison of the results for the two countries.

Measurement of the Class Vote

At this point, a very important question can be raised: - how

does one calculate the rate of class voting? The standard method used to estimate the rate of voting on the basis of social class is by cross-tabulating the social class position of the political parties with the social class position of the respondents. (See Figure 4.1) The rate of the class vote has generally been calculated with Tau Beta (see Blalock, 1960:232-234) or with Alford's Index of Class Voting which is based upon the index of dissimilarity. (See Alford, 1963: 79-86) According to Ogmundson (1972), who cites Converse, these two statistics give essentially similar results when the marginals of the fourfold table are not extremely skewed. This research will utilize this standard cross-tabulation and tau beta.

The calculation of the class vote requires measures of three variables - the class position of the respondents, the class position of the political parties, and political partisanship. Obviously, if any of these variables were poorly measured, it could have a marked effect on the level of the class vote. Four different measures of the social class position of the respondents - occupation, income, education and subjective class - can be used (as can be various combinations thereof). The vote or party identification can be used to measure partisan behaviour. The literature on class vote, in general, depends upon academic opinions for the social class position of the parties. In Canada, however, the measure of the social class position of the political parties constitutes a serious problem. Ogmundson (1975a) suggests that the unusual dissensus among academics, and between the population and academics as to the social class position of the parties renders it questionable to depend upon the conventionally used Alford/Dawson opinions for the social class position of the parties in the

FIGURE 4.1

STANDARD MEASURE OF THE CLASS VOTE

Social Class
of
Respondents

Social Class Position of Parties

Middle Class

Working Class

Middle Class

Partisan Behaviour

Working Class

Canadian case.

It will be remembered that in his calculation of the class vote in Canada, Alford (1963) grouped the Liberals and NDP together as "working class" parties, and the Conservatives and Social Credit together as "middle class" parties. As we saw in Chapter II, this classification of Canadian political parties is doubtful. In the aggregate, Canadian voters perceive the Liberals and Conservatives as middle class parties, and NDP, Social Credit and Creditistes as working class parties. (See Ogmundson, 1972:1975c) This, however, does not mean that there is total agreement among the electorate as to the social class position of the parties. Ogmundson (1972), for example, finds that while forty-one percent of the electorate views the two major parties as taking up middle class position on the class issue, twenty-nine percent sees the Conservatives as being more working class than the Liberals and vice versa.

All this serves to illustrate the point that dissensus on party class positions between academics and voters and within the electorate itself is considerable in the Canadian case. Ogmundson (1975a), consequently, argues that using the Alford/Dawson classification would very likely underestimate the degree of intended class voting by the Canadian citizenry. Ogmundson (1972:94) stresses that:

"..... dissensus between academics and the electorate, and dissensus among the electorate itself as to the class position of the parties, would reduce the level of the class vote when conventional measures which assume clear electoral alternatives are used."

One could illustrate with the example that a working class Canadian might remember that former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker raised the old age pension and decide to vote Conservative. This will usually be

interpreted as a sign that the voter is not motivated to vote in a class consistent way even though he actually was. At the national aggregate level, such cases will likely lead to an underestimation of the degree of voter interest in class issues. Though the number of such cases may be minimal in other countries, it is likely to be considerable in the Canadian case. Hence, if we desire to infer voter motivation, the conventional measure is not suitable to our purposes.

Thus, Ogmundson (1972) devised a new measure of class voting - the self-perceived class vote - and recalculated the class vote for Canada with the 1965 Canadian National Survey data. The self-perceived class vote allows the party class position to be assigned in accordance with the national aggregate means provided by voter perceptions (on the 7-point semantic differential scale which we have already discussed in Chapter II). As well, it also allows each individual voter to assign the class position of the party he votes for. (See Figure 4.2) Ogmundson (1975a:509), argues that one could get a better idea what the voter thinks he is voting for if one allows the voters themselves to assign the class position of the parties. Hence, this method ascertains the state of voter motivation better than the others.

As in the case of measurement of class position of an individual, each of these measures of the class vote taps a somewhat different, though related, aspect of reality. Clearly it is important to have an objective view of a person's position. Just as clearly however, it is important to know what a person believes his position to be. It is important to know, not only what people are, but what they think they are. This is so if only because what a person believes to be true is likely to influence their behaviour. For example, if a blue collar

FIGURE 4.2

REVISED MEASURE OF THE CLASS VOTE

Social Class of
Respondents

Voter Perception of Social Class
Position of Parties

Middle Class

Working Class

Middle Class

Partisan Behaviour

Working Class

worker mistakenly classifies himself as middle class he is quite likely to vote for a party representing middle class interests. The importance of the perceptual aspect in individual identification is clearly indicated in the insistence of scholars that class vote rates be calculated using "objective" measures of class such as occupation as well as "subjective" measures such as class self-image. Precisely the same point obviously applies to class positioning of the political parties. Clearly it is important for scholars to classify political parties according to objective, scientific criteria. This, as in the case of occupation in the case of measurement of individual class position, provides a measure of "objective" reality. However, if one wishes to understand behaviour and especially motivation, it is important that one also ascertain what the individual, as opposed to the scientist, thinks he is doing. Hence, as is in the case of perception of one's own class self image in the case of measurement of individual class position, a measure of perception of political party class position is also important. This provides what is, to continue the analogy, a measure of "subjective" reality. Just as a voter might misperceive his class position and vote in a non class consistent way because of this misconception, so may a voter misperceive the class position of political parties and vote in a non class consistent way when motivated to do otherwise. The scientist will objectively classify this as a vote which is not class consistent. However when he is attempting to explain or understand why the voter voted the way he did (i.e. voter motivation, or by aggregate extension, mass sentiment) he must obviously ascertain both what the voter thinks his class position is and what the voter thought he was voting for.¹ (It is theoretically

possible, of course, that there may be a very high subjective class vote and a very low objective one. Indeed, the reverse is also conceivable. One might have a high objective class vote and a low subjective one.)

Since our interest in the present case is to infer voter motivation and the state of mass sentiment generally, the measure of subjective reality is more appropriate to our purposes. Results for both measures will, however, be presented.

Class Voting in Canada

The literature has suggested that in Canada the relationship of social class to electoral politics is found to be minimal. Alford (1967:81), in his classic study of four Western industrialized democracies, finds that:

"Class voting is consistently higher in Australia and Great Britain than in Canada and the United States, as indicated by a number of public opinion surveys taken in each country between 1952 and 1962. It seems justified, further, to rank the countries in the following order: Great Britain, Australia, the United States and Canada."

Table 4.1 illustrates that internationally, while the United Kingdom has the third highest rate of class voting (.40) of countries for which we have data, Canada has the lowest rate (.08). Specifically, Alford (1963:25) notes that: "..... class voting is low in Canada whether education, income, or occupation are used, singly or in combination, as the measure of social class position" These findings lead Alford to conclude that Canadians are more interested in issues other than class.

In the 1965 Canadian study, respondents were asked to classify

TABLE 4.1

INTERNATIONAL RATES OF VOTING ON THE BASIS OF CLASS

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| .58 | - | Norway, 1957 |
| .49 | - | Finland, 1958 |
| .40 | - | United Kingdom, 1952-1962 (.35-.44) |
| .33 | - | Australia, 1952-1962 (.27-.37) |
| .28 | - | France, 1956 |
| .26 | - | Netherlands, 1956 |
| .16 | - | United States, 1952-1962 (.13-.23) |
| .08 | - | Canada, 1952-1962 (-.01 - .17) |

The figures for the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States and Australia are drawn from Alford, 1963:102. The figure for the Netherlands is taken from Lijphart, 1971:20. The other figures are drawn from Lenski, 1970:362. The figures are calculated using Alford's Index of Class Voting. The index of class voting was computed by subtracting the percentage of nonmanual workers voting for "Left" parties from the percentage of manual workers voting for such parties.

the class positions of the parties themselves. With this new measure, a vote would be considered to be a class consistent vote if a middle class voter would vote for a party that he perceives to be taking up a middle class position or, likewise, if a working class voter would vote for a party that he perceives to be taking up a working class position.

Four different measures of the social class position of respondents - income, education, occupation and subjective class - were used. These were used in order to increase confidence in the findings. As well, four different classifications of the political parties were also used. The first classification - the Alford/Dawson Classification - puts the Conservatives, Social Credits and Creditistes together as "middle class" parties, while the Liberals and New Democrats are considered as "working class" parties. Ogmundson found that using this classification, unusual negative rates of class voting appear. The second classification - the National Aggregate Perceptions Classification - assigns party class position according to the aggregate perceptions of the population. The Liberals and Conservatives are both viewed as "middle class" while the other three parties are viewed as "working class" parties. As we saw in Chapter II, this measure agrees with most other measures of the party class position. Hence this classification may give us a measure which we would consider a measure of the objective class vote. Ogmundson (1975a) suggests that this classification will remove the effects of disagreement between the perceptions of academics and the citizenry. Using this classification, positive rates of class voting appear. The third and fourth classifications - the Individual Perceptions Classifications I &

II - allow the individual voters to classify the party they voted for according to their own perceptions. This is very easily done with cases where voters rated a party as "for the working class" at 5 to 7 on the scale of 7, or as "for the middle class" as 1 to 3. A problem, however, arises with the classification of a response of "4" on the scale. One might argue that a "4" response is one which favours no change, which is consequently for the status quo and continuation of the relatively privileged position of the middle classes, and call the "4" a middle class response. Indeed, the aggregate preference of the middle classes is for an Ideal Party with a position of 4. (Ogmundson, 1975c) On the other hand, one might throw out the "4's" leaving only those who voted for a party perceived as 1 to 3 as voting for a middle class party, and leaving those who voted for a party perceived as 5 to 7 as voting for a working class party. This method loses some data while making no assumptions about the 4's. Both classifications will be used in this research. There is little difference in any case between these two classifications as indicated by Ogmundson's findings with the 1965 data. (See Table 4.2) (However, it should be noted that on mathematical grounds alone, the class vote rate is likely to increase when one removes the 4's.² For this reason, we will not use this classification for comparison. Nonetheless, the findings will be presented along with the other classifications.) The new class vote measure, according to Ogmundson (1975a), can remove the effects on the results of the measure which derives from dissensus within the population concerning the class position of the parties. More importantly, unlike the conventional measure, it has the advantage of taking into account what each voter thinks he is voting for. If the

TABLE 4.2

THE NATIONAL CLASS VOTE IN 1965 AS MEASURED BY TAU BETA
WITH DIFFERENT MEASURES OF RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL CLASS AND
DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

| <u>Measure of Social Class</u> | <u>Classification of Political Parties</u> | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Alford(a)</u> | <u>National(b)</u> | <u>Ind'l-I(c)</u> | <u>Ind'l-II(d)</u> |
| Income | -.09(2106) | .03(2106) | .11(1996) | .125(1212) |
| Occupation | -.03(1863) | .08(1863) | .11(1786) | .13 (1093) |
| Education | -.01(2171) | .07(2171) | .11(2055) | .18 (1246) |
| Subjective Class | -.06(2088) | .10(2088) | .18(1922) | .21 (1212) |

- (a) ALFORD CLASSIFICATION - The Liberals and New Democratic Party are classified as "Working Class" or Left and the Progressive Conservative Party, Social Credit Party and Creditiste Party are classified as "Middle Class" or Right.
- (b) NATIONAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION - Parties are classified on the basis of national means of perception of the Canadian population. The Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties are seen as "middle class" while the others are seen as "working class".
- (c) INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION I - A vote for a party viewed as being from 1 to 4 on scale from "for the middle class" at 1 to "for the working class" at 7 is classified as being middle class vote and vice versa.
- (d) INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION II - Same as the previous category except that votes for parties viewed as "4" are removed.

Source: Ogmundson, 1972:95.

In terms of the measures of social class, Ogmundson (1975c:509) states: "Since the main purpose of this research was to explore the political party variable, the measures of social class were dichotomized in the manner customary to studies of the class vote. Professional, executive, sales, clerical and other white collar occupations were classified as middle class. Those with twelve or more years of education were considered middle class. Those with an income of more than \$6,000 were classified as middle class. (The median income in 1965 was approximately \$5,200.) Those who identified themselves as upper class, upper middle class or middle class were also considered middle class."

previous measure gave us an "objective" indicator of the class vote, this measure gives us a "subjective" indicator analogous to that provided by class self-image for individual class position. Using the subjective class vote, Ogmundson (1975a) found that class vote in Canada has increased substantially (.18) when compared with that calculated with the Alford/Dawson Classification (-.06).

A major implication which can be drawn from the findings of Ogmundson's 1965 Canadian study is that the new rate of the class vote (.18) indicates that Canadian voters are much more interested in class issues than conventional measures (Alford Classification) indicate. This is compatible with previous findings with open-ended questions. Ogmundson (1975a:511), therefore, argues that the classless nature of Canadian politics cannot be attributed to a lack of voter interest in class issues:

"..... All this tends to focus attention on the important roles played by political elites and suggests that explanation of the anomalous Canadian pattern may lie with the nature of elite activities. In particular, it would appear that minimization of the issue by the two major political parties is crucial to a full explanation of the classless nature of Canadian politics and of the considerable dissensus on the positioning of the political parties. In short, the findings of this paper support the revised view of Alford (1967) and Schwartz (1974) that explanation of the classless nature of electoral politics has more to do with Canadian political parties than with the Canadian voters."

Findings of the study of 1965 data, therefore, support the position maintained by the elite explanation.

Since the self-perceived class vote was newly devised by Ogmundson (1972) in his 1965 Canadian study, it has never been used elsewhere. Consequently, replication of the 1965 study with the 1968 Canadian data on this measure will test the reliability of this new

measure. This will now be done.

Class Voting in Canada: A Replication

Using the new measure - the subjective (self-perceived) class vote, findings similar to those reported in the 1965 study are found with the 1968 data. (See Table 4.3) One will notice that using the Alford Classification, a negative rate of class vote prevails whether income, occupation, education or subjective class is used as the measure of the social class of respondents. (It ranges from $-.11$ to $-.02$.) Using the National Aggregate Perceptions Classification, a positive rate of class vote is found even though it is still relatively low. (It ranges from $.02$ to $.14$.) When the Individual Perceptions Classification is used, the class vote further increases again. (It ranges from a low of $.14$ to a high of $.18$.) The replication, therefore, supports Ogmundson's argument in that Canadian voters are motivated to vote on the basis of class and in turn, this also means that voters are much more interested in class issues than previously thought. While comparing the findings of the 1965 and 1968 studies, one finds that the rates of class vote is very similar. (See Table 4.4) Two major conclusions can be drawn at this stage. First, the findings confirm and enhance the reliability of Ogmundson's new class vote measure. Second, since there is little variability in the rate of class voting in these two years (the greatest difference found is only $.07$, using the Alford Classification with education as the independent variable), one might suggest that mass sentiments in Canada have been relatively stable.

We have established the reliability of this measure. However,

TABLE 4.5

THE CANADIAN NATIONAL CLASS VOTE IN 1968 AS MEASURED
BY TAU BETA WITH DIFFERENT MEASURES OF RESPONDENT'S
SOCIAL CLASS AND DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION OF THE
POLITICAL PARTIES

| <u>Measure of Social Class</u> | <u>Classification of Political Parties</u> | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | <u>ALFORD</u> | <u>NATIONAL</u> | <u>IND'L-I</u> | <u>IND'L-II</u> |
| Income | -.11(2277) | .02(2277) | .15(2217) | .18(1385) |
| Occupation | -.02(1239) | .14(1239) | .16(1218) | .17(761) |
| Education | -.08(2272) | .08(2272) | .14(2216) | .18(1386) |
| Subjective Class | -.02(2172) | .13(2172) | .18(2119) | .21(1329) |

For details of classification of political parties, and measures of
social class, see the text.

TABLE 4.4

COMPARISON OF THE CANADIAN NATIONAL CLASS VOTE IN
1965 AND 1968 AS MEASURED BY TAU BETA WITH DIFFERENT
MEASURES OF RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL CLASS AND DIFFERENT
CLASSIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

| <u>Measure of Social Class</u> | <u>Classification of Political Parties</u> | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | <u>ALFORD</u> | <u>NATIONAL</u> | <u>IND'L-I</u> | <u>IND'L-II</u> |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| 1965 | -.09 | .03 | .11 | .125 |
| 1968 | -.11 | .02 | .15 | .18 |
| Difference | .02 | .01 | .04 | .055 |
| <u>Occupation</u> | | | | |
| 1965 | -.03 | .08 | .11 | .13 |
| 1968 | -.02 | .14 | .16 | .17 |
| Difference | .01 | .06 | .05 | .04 |
| <u>Education</u> | | | | |
| 1965 | -.01 | .07 | .11 | .18 |
| 1968 | -.08 | .08 | .14 | .18 |
| Difference | .07 | .01 | .03 | 0 |
| <u>Subjective Class</u> | | | | |
| 1965 | -.06 | .10 | .18 | .21 |
| 1968 | -.02 | .13 | .18 | .21 |
| Difference | .04 | .03 | 0 | 0 |

without comparable data, Ogmundson's interpretation of the findings of the new measure cannot be substantiated. On the one hand, a plausible argument can be made that the use of this new measure in other countries would not result in similar increases, and that a general re-calculation of rates of the class vote would place Canadians more closely to the international norm. (See Ogmundson, 1972; 1975c)³ On the other hand, a plausible argument can be made to the effect that the increases found in Canada are a mere artifact of the new measure, and that a general re-calculation of class vote rates would leave Canada in much the same position as before. Consequently, a comparison of the Canadian data with those of another Western electoral democracy is necessary. A discussion of the class vote in the United Kingdom, utilizing the new measure, follows. (To the best of our knowledge, the United Kingdom is the only country for which strictly comparable data is available.)

Class Voting in the United Kingdom: 1963, 1964 and 1966

Comparison of the 1968 Canadian national survey on subjective class vote with the 1963, 1964 and 1966 United Kingdom data is possible since respondents in the United Kingdom surveys were also asked to rate the political parties on a similar 7-point semantic differential scale like the one used in Canada, i.e. whether parties are "for the middle class" or "for the working class". The rate of class voting - using the self-perceived class vote - in the United Kingdom, therefore, will be calculated and compared.

It will be remembered that in the United Kingdom, unlike Canada, there is general consensus between the position of Alford and the

perceptions of the population as to the social class position of the two major parties, i.e. that while the Conservatives take up a middle class position, Labour takes up a working class position. (See, for example, Alford, 1963; Butler and Stokes, 1969.) It is important to note that (as we have discussed in Chapter II) voter perceptions on the social class position of the two major parties agree with all the other four measures - academic opinions, voter support, occupational status of Members of Parliament and source of campaign funding - used in this research. Therefore, there will be three instead of four different classifications of the social class position of the parties as were used in the Canadian studies. (The Alford Classification is the same as the National Aggregate Perceptions Classification in this case.)

Will the rate of class voting in the United Kingdom also increase substantially just like that found in Canada? If so, it could be argued that the increased class vote in Canada is simply an artifact of the new measure. Consequently, the utility of the subjective class vote can be queried. Advocates of the "mass" explanation will likely expect such an outcome. On the other hand, if the class vote in the United Kingdom remains stationary or drops, this could be interpreted as an indication both that the increases in the rate of the class vote ascertained by Ogmundson's measure were not artifactual and that the difference in the degree of mass interest in class issues between Canada and the United Kingdom is not as great as generally thought by those who have used the class vote measure to infer voter motivation. Consequently, the gap found between the two countries on the international spectrum of class voting will be smaller. This is what advocates of the elite explanation will expect to find. Thus, to the degree the difference remains or

grows, the mass explanation is supported. To the degree the difference declines, the elite explanation is supported.

The results are presented in Table 4.5. Several observations can be made. First, one will notice that class votes, using income and education as measures of the social class position of respondents, are much lower than expected even with the Alford Classification. (Alford (1963) reported that the United Kingdom has a class vote of .40.) They varied from a low of .10 to a high of only .26. The rate is especially low with income as the independent variable. Conversely, with occupation and subjective class, the class votes range from a low of .42 to a high of .46. Obviously, this range is very close to what Alford (1963) has reported (.40). Also, it should be noted that using these two measures of class, the rates of class voting for the three years (1963, 1964 and 1966) have been found to be quite steady. Second, with the Individual Perceptions Classification, when income and education are used as the independent variables, the class votes, again, are much lower than Alford reported. (They ranged from .12 to .26.) On the other hand, with occupation and subjective class, the rates varied from .33 to .42. Third, one finds that the class votes are quite similar when the Alford/National Perceptions Classification is compared with the Individual Perceptions Classification. However, with occupation and subjective class in particular, one might notice that there is a slight drop of the class votes when the Individual Perceptions Classification is used. Fourth, it is important to note that the rate of class voting is very different when the different measures of social class (independent variables) are used. This is true with both the Alford/National Perceptions Classification and the Individual Perceptions

TABLE 4.5

THE BRITISH NATIONAL CLASS VOTE (1963, 1964, 1966) AS MEASURED
BY TAU BETA WITH DIFFERENT MEASURES OF RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL CLASS
AND DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

| <u>Measures of Social Class</u> | <u>Classification of Political Parties</u> | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Alford/National(a)</u> | <u>Ind'l-I(b)</u> | <u>Ind'l-II(c)</u> |
| <u>Income</u> | | | |
| 1963 | .21(1355) | .23(794) | .23(711) |
| 1964 | .16(1226) | .16(669) | .15(592) |
| 1966 | .10(1253) | .12(654) | .12(601) |
| <u>Occupation</u> | | | |
| 1963 | .45(1426) | .36(829) | .38(744) |
| 1964 | .42(1339) | .41(720) | .41(635) |
| 1966 | .42(1420) | .33(725) | .34(667) |
| <u>Subjective Class</u> | | | |
| 1963 | .46(1435) | .42(838) | .44(752) |
| 1964 | .42(1322) | .39(709) | .40(752) |
| 1966 | .43(1377) | .37(711) | .39(660) |
| <u>Education</u> | | | |
| 1963 | .25(1512) | .25(876) | .25(786) |
| 1964 | .26(1004) | .25(503) | .24(457) |
| 1966 | .26(1387) | .26(698) | .08(382) |

In Britain, unlike Canada, the perceptions of Alford and those of the citizenry coincide. Hence the Alford/National Perceptions are one and the same in the United Kingdom.

- (a) ALFORD/NATIONAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION - The Conservative Party is classified as "middle Class" and the Labour Party is classified "working class".
- (b) INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION I - A vote for a party viewed as being from 1 to 4 on scale from "for the middle class" to "for the working class" at 7 is classified as being middle class vote and vice versa.
- (c) INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION II - Same as the previous category except that votes for parties viewed as "4" are removed.

In terms of measures of social class, those with an annual income of £750 and above were classified as "middle class". Respondents whose occupations fall into the non-manual category were classified as "middle class". Those who left school after 15 were classified as "middle class". Those who identified themselves as middle class were classified as "middle class". Similarly, those who identified themselves as working class were classified as "working class".

Classification. The class votes for the former varied from a low of .10 to a high of .46, and the latter from .12 to .42.

A Comparison Between Canada (1968) and the United Kingdom (1963, 1964 and 1966 Averaged) on the Rate of Class Voting

A comparison of the rate of class voting between Canada (1968) and the United Kingdom (1963, 1964 and 1966 averaged) is presented in Tables 4.6 and 4.7. Several observations can be made from the comparison. First, one will notice that using the Alford Classification, while the rates for Canada have been consistently negative (from $-.10$ to $-.03$), the rates for the United Kingdom vary from a low of .16 to a high of .44. Consequently, there is a significant difference found in the rates of class voting between these two countries. (They varied from .26 (with income as the independent variable) to .47 (with subjective class as the independent variable). Second, using the National Perceptions Classification (i.e. the new objective measure), the differences found between the two countries are much less than using the Alford Classification for comparison. They ranged from .13 (with income as the independent variable) to .30 (with subjective class as the independent variable). This is due to the fact that while the class vote for the United Kingdom with this measure is the same as that of the Alford Classification, the class vote in Canada has increased. Third, using the subjective measure (i.e. the Individual Perceptions Classification), the differences found in the rate of class voting between these two countries have been substantially decreased. They ranged from .04 (with income as the independent variable) to .21 (with subjective class as the independent variable). More particularly, one will notice that there is a huge difference on

TABLE 4.6

A COMPARISON OF THE CANADIAN (1965, 1968 AVERAGED) AND THE UNITED KINGDOM (1963, 1964, 1966 AVERAGED) NATIONAL CLASS VOTING AS MEASURED BY TAU BETA WITH DIFFERENT MEASURES OF RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL CLASS AND DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

| <u>Measures of Social Class</u> | <u>Classification of Political Parties</u> | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | <u>Alford</u> | <u>National</u> | <u>Ind'l-I</u> | <u>Ind'l-II</u> |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Canada | -.10 | .03 | .13 | .15 |
| UK | <u>.16</u> | <u>.16</u> | <u>.17</u> | <u>.17</u> |
| | .26 | .13 | .04 | .02 |
| <u>Occupation</u> | | | | |
| Canada | -.03 | .11 | .14 | .15 |
| UK | <u>.43</u> | <u>.43</u> | <u>.40</u> | <u>.38</u> |
| | .46 | .32 | .26 | .23 |
| <u>Education</u> | | | | |
| Canada | -.05 | .08 | .13 | .18 |
| UK | <u>.26</u> | <u>.26</u> | <u>.26</u> | <u>.19</u> |
| | .31 | .18 | .13 | .01 |
| <u>Subjective Class</u> | | | | |
| Canada | -.03 | .14 | .18 | .21 |
| UK | <u>.44</u> | <u>.44</u> | <u>.39</u> | <u>.41</u> |
| | .47 | .30 | .21 | .20 |

The Alford and the National Perceptions Classifications were the same in the United Kingdom but different in Canada.

TABLE 4.7

A COMPARISON OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CANADA (1965, 1968 AVERAGED) AND THE UNITED KINGDOM (1963, 1964, 1966 AVERAGED) IN THE RATE OF CLASS VOTING USING THE ALFORD CLASSIFICATION (ORIGINAL DIFFERENCE), THE NATIONAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION (THE NEW OBJECTIVE MEASURE), AND THE INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS CLASSIFICATION (REVISED DIFFERENCE)

| <u>Measures of Social Class</u> | <u>Original Difference Between Canada and UK (Alford)</u> | <u>Difference Between Canada and UK on the new objective measure (National Perceptions Classification)</u> | <u>Revised Difference Between Canada and UK on the subjective measure (Individual Perceptions Classification)</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Income | .26 | .13 | .04 |
| Occupation | .46 | .32 | .26 |
| Education | .31 | .18 | .13 |
| Subjective Class | .47 | .30 | .21 |

the class vote by different independent variables. With education and subjective class, the difference has been cut by more than half. With occupation, the difference has been cut by almost half, and with income, the difference virtually disappeared. Thus, mass sentiments in both countries can be considered, by the new measure, much more similar than previously thought. The fact that class voting in the United Kingdom remains steady or drops slightly (when the Alford Classification is compared with the Individual Perceptions Classification) supports Ogmundson's view that the substantially increased class vote in Canada cannot be attributed to an artifact of the new class vote measure - the self-perceived class vote.

The findings on the subjective class vote, therefore, may put Canada within the normal range of the international rates of motivation to class vote. However, without comparable data on the new measure for the other countries, any attempts to ascertain this will be futile.

In the next chapter, we will be discussing the last measure used to ascertain the mass sentiment in this research - the awareness of class membership.

Footnotes

- ¹ Clearly it is quite possible that the perceptions of voters are highly inaccurate and are fouled up by matters such as partisan identification. Indeed, this is precisely the point. From some standpoints, the interesting aspect of the Canadian case is that working class support have been effectively re-channelled by unusually skillful obfuscation of class issues by the two middle or upper class parties. An essential aspect of this has been the capacity of both the Liberals and Conservatives to convince a substantial proportions of working class people that they represent their interests, i.e. to think they are voting in a class consistent way when they are not.

However, we should not lose sight of our principal interest in the present case. We want to know what people think they are doing so as to ascertain mass sentiment. A discussion of cognitive misperceptions, "false consciousness" and the like must take place elsewhere.

- ² We are indebted to Professor McVicar for his observation on calculation with this Classification.
- ³ It could, for example, be argued that the rate of class voting in the United Kingdom might well be expected to drop because many people in the United Kingdom might cast "non-conscious" class vote (e.g. due to inherited partisan loyalty). Therefore, when the self-perceived class vote is used, the class vote is expected to go down. This would be an analogous to the findings in British Columbia by Ogmundson in his 1965 study in which using the new measure, the rate of class voting in British Columbia drops. (See Ogmundson, 1972:Chp. 6)

CHAPTER V

AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP AS A MEASURE OF THE NATURE OF MASS SENTIMENTS - AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

In the last two chapters, we have discussed results of two of the three measures which will be used in this research to ascertain Canadian and British interest in class issues at the mass level. In this chapter, we will report findings of a third measure - awareness of class membership - in order to further assess voter interest in social class. This chapter will begin with a discussion on the use of the measure. This will be followed by presentation of findings on this measure in Canada (1968 and 1974) and the United Kingdom (1963, 1964 and 1966), and a comparison of findings in these two countries. As well, we have included in our discussion countries for which comparable data are available - the United States, Norway, Netherlands and Australia. Consequently, we will be able to better ascertain where Canada and the United Kingdom stand in the international spectrum in terms of awareness of class membership.

On the Use of the Awareness of Class Membership Measure

A review of the literature on social class suggests that the form of the question used in surveys on class identification and class consciousness might affect the results found (see, for example, Centers, 1949; Kahl, 1966; and Schreiber and Nygreen, 1975).

Centers (1949) in his classic study on class identification in the United States has expressed such a viewpoint. To begin with, Centers (1940:30) notes that in a Gallup Poll conducted in 1939, respondents were asked this close-ended question:

"What social class do you consider that you belong to?"

1. Upper Class
2. Middle Class
3. Lower Class

It was found that 88 percent of the respondents claimed membership in the middle class, while only 6 percent claimed membership in either the upper or lower class. Centers (1949:31) argues that people who assumed that America is a middle class society based on these results were not very realistic because such a classification did not take into account the class names actually in use among a large segment of the population - the manual workers. Centers (1949) finds that these people usually like to be referred to as "working class" people rather than "lower class" people since the latter term carries the meaning of inferiority. Thus in a survey conducted in 1945, Centers (1949:76) asked respondents this question:

"If you were asked to use one of these four names for social class, which would you say you belonged in: the middle class, lower class, working class or upper class?"

Centers (1949:78) noted that only a very insignificant proportion of respondents answered "Don't Know" to the question. More importantly, he found that while 51 percent of the respondents say they belong to the working class, only 43 percent claimed to be belonged to the middle class. The latter figure dropped from what was reported in the Gallup Poll in which 88% of the respondents claimed to belong to the middle class. All this would serve to illustrate the effects of the forms of question on the results as far as class membership and class identification questions are concerned. Centers (1949:78) stresses that his

finding is confirmed in the follow-up studies conducted in February 1946 and in March 1947 respectively. All this leads Centers (1949: 225) to make the comment that comparative studies on class identification should be carried out "with questions worded as nearly alike as practicable". Kahl (1966:170), working on a similar topic, also states that the form of the question used in studying class awareness strongly influence the aggregate form of answers. Hamilton (1966), and Schreiber and Nygreen (1975:351), also express a similar viewpoint.

The Awareness of Class Membership in Canada: 1968, 1974

The reader will recall that the mass explanation argues that the classless nature of Canadian politics is largely a reflection of mass sentiments. Implicitly it also suggests that Canadians in general probably have a relatively low level of awareness of class membership. Apparently, only Pinard (1970) has published findings on the level of class awareness in Canada and his data is confined to Quebec.¹ In that study, respondents were asked the following question:

"There is much talk these days about different social classes. Most people say they belong either to the middle class or to the working class. Do you think of yourself as being in one of these two classes?"

Pinard (1970:100) reported that seventy-seven percent of the respondents answered "Yes" to this question. Campbell et al (1960:343) reported that in the United States, only sixty-six percent of the respondents answered "Yes" to a similar question. Since it has generally been assumed that the mass loyalties of Quebecois are ethnic rather than class (see Alford, 1963; Pinard, 1970), the argument follows that if there is a high level of awareness of class membership found in Quebec, an even higher level might be expected from the other provinces where the ethnic

issue is not as predominant. Consequently, this would indicate that Canadians would appear to be more class conscious than the Americans who have slightly higher class vote and political parties more clearly associated with class. On the basis of the available literature, therefore, one can maintain that there does not seem to be a low level of awareness of class membership among Canadians. In his study of the 1965 data, Ogmundson (1972) mentioned, but did not use 'awareness of class membership' as a measure of voter interest in social class because of the lack of a suitable question in that survey. Fortunately, there is an identical question in both the 1968 and 1974 Canadian National Surveys which can be used to measure the level of awareness of class membership in Canada.

"One hears a lot about different social classes.
Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to a
social class?"

The findings are presented in Table 5.1. It was found that in the 1968 survey, 40.8 percent of the respondents answered "Yes" to the question. This shows that somewhat less than half of the respondents were aware of being a member of a social class. The percentage of respondents saying "Yes" to a similar question in 1974 is 46.5 percent. Thus comparing the 1968 and 1974 figures, there is an increase of 5.7 percent of respondents indicating that they have thought of themselves as being member of a social class. However, the fact that slightly less than half of the respondents (43.7% - an average of 1968 and 1974) answered "Yes" to the awareness of class membership question might suggest that Canadians probably are not as interested in class as the other national issues. One will remember that the 1968 and 1974 figures reported here are much lower than that found by Pinard in Quebec in 1970 in which 77

TABLE 5.1

THE AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP IN CANADA, 1968, 1974

| | <u>Aware of Being Member of a Social Class</u> % |
|---------------------|---|
| 1968 | 40.8 |
| 1974 | 46.5 |
| 1968, 1974 Averaged | 43.7 |

The figures for 1968 and 1974 are calculated with responses to the following question:

- "One hears a lot about different social classes.
Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to a social class?"

Due to the small percentage of respondents answering "Don't Know", we will be concerned only with those who answered "Yes" and "No" to the question.

percent of the respondents have identified themselves as belonging to a social class. That Canadians at the national level appear to have a lower level of class awareness than the Quebecois, who are believed to have great concerns for the ethnic, religious and linguistic issues, is contrary to what one might have expected. It is important to note, however, that the question used by Pinard (1971) was more detailed and self-explanatory than the one found in the 1968 and 1974 Canadian National Surveys. Consequently, it is possible that the differences are due to the different forms of question used. It will be recalled that the literature on social class surveys has indeed demonstrated such cases. It is conceivable, therefore, that the differences found between the Canadian National Surveys and the Quebec survey could be attributed to the different forms of the question used to measure class awareness. Fortunately, it is possible to test this notion by analyzing the class awareness data by region (see Table 5.2). The findings indicate, contrary to what the conventional wisdom would likely anticipate (see, for example, Alford, 1963; Pinard, 1970), that class awareness is indeed much higher in Quebec than in the other regions. Nonetheless, the figures for Quebec is still a full 12% below that recorded by Pinard. This indicates that the different form of the questions may account for this much difference. However, without strictly comparable measures, this must remain in the realm of plausible speculation.

In the next section, a comparison between Canada and the United Kingdom on the class awareness measure will be presented. To the degree that the difference found is substantial, the mass explanation will be supported. To the degree that the difference found is small, the elite explanation will be supported.

TABLE 5.2

THE AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP IN CANADA BY REGION, 1974

| <u>Aware of Being Member of a Social Class</u> | |
|--|------|
| | % |
| The Maritimes | 42.1 |
| Quebec | 65.0 |
| Ontario | 39.3 |
| Prairies | 33.6 |
| British Columbia | 45.3 |

Comparison Between Canada (1968 and 1974) and the United Kingdom (1963, 1964 and 1966) on the Level of Awareness of Class Membership

In the United Kingdom, there was a question in each of the three national surveys (1963, 1964 and 1966) which can be used to find out respondents' level of class awareness. (In both the 1964 and 1966 surveys, respondents were divided into two samples - A and B. Each sample was asked a different version of the awareness of class membership question.) In the 1963, 1964-A and 1966-B surveys, respondents were asked this question.

"There's quite a bit of talk these days about different social classes. Most people say they belong to either the middle class or the working class. Do you ever think of yourself as being in one of these classes?"

A shorter version of the question was used in the 1964-B and 1966-A surveys:

"Do you think of yourself as belonging to a particular social class?"

The findings are presented in Table 5.3. Several conclusion can be drawn from the findings. First, if one will, for the time being, ignore the possible effects of the different forms of question might have on the findings, one finds that, on the average, 57.5 percent of the respondents answered "Yes" to the question. The implication is that a relatively greater proportion (13.8%) of the British do think of themselves as belonging to a social class than the Canadians. It appears, therefore, that the British are relatively interested in class issues. Second, when one combines the findings for 1964-A (59.5%) and 1964-B (50%), an average figure of about 55% will be obtained. This figure is quite similar to the average of 1966-A (46%), and 1966-B (66%), i.e. 56%. This shows that, on the average, the British level of

TABLE 5.3

THE AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED KINGDOM,
1963, 1964 A and B, and 1966 A and B

| <u>Awareness of Being Member of a Social Class</u> | |
|--|------|
| | % |
| <u>Long version question</u> | |
| 1963 | 66.1 |
| 1964-A | 59.5 |
| 1966-B | 66 |
| Average | 63.9 |
| <u>Short version question</u> | |
| 1964-B | 50 |
| 1966-A | 46 |
| Average | 48 |
| Average of 1963, 1964 A, B and 1966 A, B | 57.5 |

The figures for 1963, 1964-A and 1966-B are calculated with response to this long version question:

"There's quite a bit of talk these days about different social classes. Most people say they belong to either the middle class or the working class. Do you ever think of yourself as being in one of these classes."

The figures for 1964-B and 1966-A is calculated with response to this short version question:

"Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to a particular social class?"

awareness of class membership has been relatively stable. However, when one compares the 1964-B figure (short version question) with the other half sample (long version question) in the same survey, there was a difference of 9.5 percent of people answering "Yes" to the question. In 1966, there was a difference of 20 percent between these two versions of the question. Thus, there seems to be substantial variability (average 14.8%) between the results derived from the two versions of the question in the two different years. Again this could be attributed to the different forms of question asked, as in the case of Quebec.

Study of the contents of the two versions of the question shows that they might convey different meanings. To begin with, one will notice that in the long version of the question there is this statement: "There's quite a bit of talk these days about different social classes." Clearly, some respondents will hesitate to express ignorance about something that he has just been told is the topic of much conversation. Similar observations can be made about the statement: "Most people say they belong to either the middle class or the working class". One might consider this as a statement which may bias responses because the term "most people" gives respondents the feeling that the norm is that one should feel that one belongs to a class. Consequently, respondents may well feel that if they say "No" to the question, it might indicate that they are different or ignorant. As well, respondents asked this question are given another stimulus to remind them of what the question is about, i.e. either the middle class or the working class. The short version question, on the other hand, does not provide such stimuli to the respondents. Respondents, thus, are not encouraged to answer "Yes". Furthermore, the short version question consists of

only a short statement whose meaning is also ambiguous. What does "a particular social class" refer to? Respondents, therefore, might simply have misconceived the term "social class". As well, one might argue that the question is worded in a way such that respondents would feel if they say "Yes" to the question, it might indicate they are being snobbish or biased. For these reasons, one might expect that the percentage of respondents saying "Yes" to the long version question should be higher than the short version question.

In sum, the "long" version of the question, contained three stimuli which likely encourage a "Yes" response. The "short" version contains none. The Canadian question (1968 and 1974), which we might term the "medium" version, contains one of the three stimuli available in the "long" version question:

"One hears a lot about different social classes.
Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to a
social class?"

The Canadian version is, therefore, somewhat different from either form of the question used in the United Kingdom. In the absence of strictly comparable data, we have to settle for the best available data. In this case, we have chosen to compare the long version question in the United Kingdom (63.9%) with the "medium" version question (43.7%) used in Canada. As well, we have made an attempt to compensate for the different form of the question in Canada by attempting to make the Canadian figure comparable to the long version question. As observed earlier, the difference in Quebec using the "long" and "medium" version of the question was 12%. One might plausibly speculate that it would make a similar 12% difference if the two forms of the question were used across the country. Hence one might add 12% to the Canadian

national figure (43.7%). This will bring the Canadian figure to 55.7% (see Table 5.4).

Nonetheless, the major conclusion one can draw from the findings is that Canada has a lower level of awareness of class membership than the United Kingdom whether the original (by 20.2%) or the speculative version of the question (by 8.2%) were used. All this would seem to indicate that the British have greater interest in social class than Canadians. The findings, therefore, give support to the mass explanation.

The Level of Awareness of Class Membership: An International Spectrum

We have already examined the Canadian and the British cases. How do these two countries rank among other Western industrialized countries? It is fortunate that a comparable question is found in several countries: United States (1956, 1960, 1964, 1968 and 1972), Norway (1965), the Netherlands (1970), and Australia (1967). Three of these four countries (i.e. except Australia) have comparable long version questions. (Since the question used in the Australian National Survey is not similar to those found in the other countries, it will not be included in the discussion of the international comparison. Nonetheless, the findings will be presented.) The findings are presented in Table 5.5. As well, an international comparison on the level of awareness of class membership with the class vote can be constructed (see Table 5.6). Several conclusions can be made. To begin with, one will notice that the Netherlands has the highest level of class awareness (86%), followed by the United States (66.1%), the United Kingdom (63.9%), Norway (57.7%) and Canada (43.7%) in that order.

TABLE 5.4

A COMPARISON BETWEEN CANADA (1968 AND 1974 AVERAGED) AND THE
UNITED KINGDOM (1963, 1964-A AND 1966-B AVERAGED) ON THE
AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP

| <u>Aware of Being Member of a Social Class</u> | |
|--|------|
| | % |
| Canada (1968 and 1974 averaged) - medium version | 43.7 |
| Canada, speculative long version * | 55.7 |
| United Kingdom (1963, 1964-A and 1966-B averaged), long version | 63.9 |

* See text for explanation.

TABLE 5.5

THE AWARENESS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES (1956, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1972 AVERAGED), NORWAY (1965), NETHERLANDS (1970) AND AUSTRALIA (1967)

Awareness of Being Member of a Social Class

| | % |
|--|------|
| Netherlands, 1970 (a) | 86 |
| United States (1965-1972 averaged) (b) | 66.1 |
| Norway, 1965 (c) | 57.7 |
| Australia, 1967 (d)* | 84.8 |

(a) The question used in the survey in Netherlands was:

"People sometimes talk about the existence of social classes. Most people say they belong to the middle class or to the working class. Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to one of these classes."

(b) The figure for the United States is calculated with the averaged figure found in five years. The form of the question asked in 1956, 1960 and 1964 are similar:

"There's quite a bit of talk these days about different social classes. Most people say they belong either to the middle class or to the working class. Do you ever think of yourself as being in one of these classes."

The question used in 1968 and 1972 was:

"There has been some talk these days about different social classes. Most people say they belong either to the middle class or to the working class. Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to one of these classes?"

One will notice that the only difference between these two forms of questions is that in the former "quite a bit of talk" was used and in the latter the term "some talk" was used instead. Either form does not seem to make any difference to the results. It should be noted that the findings for the United States have been quite constant, except for the year 1960 when the percentage obtained is about 10 percent higher than those obtained in the other four years.

(c) The question used in the National Surveys in Norway was:

"There is a lot of talk about different social classes these days. Most people would say that they belong to one of two classes: either the working class or the middle class. Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to one of these classes."

(d) The question used in Australia was:

"Some people say that there are social classes in this country. Others disagree. Do you think there are, or are not social classes in Australia."

* As stated in the text, Australia will not be included in the comparison.

TABLE 5.6

AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF CLASS AWARENESS
AND THE RATE OF CLASS VOTING

| Mass Sentiment as Indicated by <u>Level of Class Awareness (%)</u> | | Objective Degree of Class Politics [*] as Inferred from <u>Rates of Class Voting</u> ^{**} | |
|---|-------------|---|-----|
| Netherlands, 1970 | 86 | Norway, 1957 | .58 |
| U.S., 1956-1972 | 66.1 | UK, 1952-1962 | .40 |
| UK, 1963, 1964-A and 1966-B averaged | 63.9 | Netherlands, 1956 | .26 |
| Norway, 1965 | 57.7 | U.S., 1952-1962 | .16 |
| Canada, 1968 and 1974 averaged | 43.7 (55.7) | Canada, 1952-1962 | .08 |

* As will be apparent to anyone who understood Chapter IV, the self-perceived class vote is meant to give a better measure of voter motivation. As a measure of objective reality, the traditional class vote measure is appropriate. The single exception is the Canadian case where the original Alford Classification of the parties was inaccurate.

** All the figures for the class vote were calculated with Alford's Index of Class Voting. The figures for U.S., Canada and U.K. are taken from Alford, 1963:136. The figure for Norway is taken from Lenski and Lenski, 1974:356. The figure for the Netherlands is taken from Lijphart, 1971:20.

Second, it is important to note that although Norway has almost the lowest awareness of class membership, its level of the class vote is higher than those of the United States and the United Kingdom, both of which have higher rates of class awareness. Conversely, the Netherlands has a relatively low class vote, and yet it has the highest level of class awareness. Similarly, the United States has the second lowest rate of class voting, and yet it ranked second highest in the level of class awareness. Thus, the United Kingdom which is well known for its strong class politics as ascertained by the class vote ranks lower than the United States in the level of class awareness.

(Interestingly enough, a similar situation by region is found in Canada. Ontario and B.C. have the greatest class politics although Quebec has the highest class awareness.) Finally, one should note that while the gap found between each of the countries on the class vote is substantial (from .58 to .40 to .26 to .16 to .08), the differences found on the class awareness measure are relatively small except for the Netherlands, (from 86% to 66.1% to 63.9% to 57.7% to 43.7% (55.7%). All this would serve to illustrate that there is a lack of consistent relationship between the level of class awareness and the rate of class voting. Hence one can suggest that awareness of class membership is not a factor critical to explanation of the degree of class politics in a country (or region). In any case, it would appear that class awareness (i.e. mass sentiment) is not related to class vote and class politics in any direct way. All in all, the differing findings in Canada and the United Kingdom are somewhat confounded due to the different forms of question used in these countries. However, in the absence of strictly comparable questions, it is probably logical to compare both countries

with the data available in the national surveys (i.e. U.K., 63.9%; Canada, 43.7%). Canada, therefore, has a lower level of awareness of class membership than the United Kingdom. This also implies that mass sentiments on social class is higher in the United Kingdom than Canada. The findings, thus, give some support to the mass explanation.

We have presented findings using the three measures - open-ended questions, the self-perceived class vote and the level of awareness of class membership - to ascertain the nature of mass sentiments in Canada and the United Kingdom. In the next chapter, a general discussion of the findings and their implications will be presented.

Footnotes

- ¹ While there is literature in Canada on class self identification (see, for example, Wilson, 1967; Meisel, 1972), to the knowledge of this author, only Pinard has presented data on class awareness in Canada.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

Summation

We began this research by examining the relationship of social class and Canadian politics. We found that in Canada, unlike the other Western industrialized democracies, the relationship between class and the vote appears to be almost non-existent. The Canadian case, thus, presented us with an interesting deviant case. A further review of the literature showed that there were two lines of explanation - the mass explanation and the elite explanation - which try to explain the anomalies associated with the Canadian case. While the mass explanation argues that the nature of elite activities reflects mass sentiments, the elite explanation, in contrast, maintains the view that the nature of mass sentiments is not a sufficient explanation of the nature of elite activities. While the mass explanation has made little attempt (except through the conventional measures of the class vote) to give empirical evidence to support their assumptions about public opinion, the elite explanation has been tested only once in the Canadian context by Ogmundson (1972) with the 1965 Canadian national survey data. Consequently, it is difficult to draw a conclusion as to which of these explanations better illuminates the Canadian case. This thesis is an attempt to cast further light on Canadian politics by replicating Ogmundson's study and by further examining the issue by extending the research to the United Kingdom.

Replication of Ogmundson's 1965 Canadian study with the 1968 and 1974 Canadian data, and comparison between Canada (1968 and 1974) and the United Kingdom (1963, 1964 and 1966) was done at both the elite and mass level. We ascertained the nature of elite activities

in Canada and the United Kingdom by examining the social class position of the two major parties. Of the six measures used by Ogmundson (1972), five - academic opinions, voter support, voter perceptions, occupational status of Members of Parliament and source of campaign funding - were used in this research for comparison. All five measures have unanimously indicated that both the two major parties in Canada - the Conservatives and Liberals - take up middle class positions on class issues. A third party, the New Democratic Party (which is a minor party to the Left), is the party which takes up a working class position on class issues. In contrast, the two major political parties in the United Kingdom have been found to be distinctly divided along the class line - while the Conservatives take up a middle class position on class issues, Labour takes up a working class position. In sum, our findings suggest that there is a very big difference between Canada and the United Kingdom in terms of the activities of the political elites.

The nature of mass sentiments in Canada and the United Kingdom was ascertained by three measures. Two of these measures - the open-ended question and the subjective class vote - were used by Ogmundson in his study of the 1965 data. The third measure used in this research is the awareness of class membership. Using the measure of open-ended questions, we find that class-related economic issues are considered by respondents of both countries as the most important problems facing the government. (The 1968 and 1974 Canadian findings show that Canadians are more interested in class issues than that reported by Ogmundson in his 1965 data.) A somewhat similar level of interest in class issues is found in Canada (73.6%) and the United Kingdom (86.4%). More significantly, the United Kingdom and Canada ranked first and second

respectively in an international spectrum consisting of these two countries and the United States, Australia, and Norway. The subjective class vote measure indicated that voter motivation in the two countries is much more similar than previously assumed. Comparison of results using three different measures of respondent's class - occupation, education, class self-image - indicated that the difference in the rates of the class vote in the two different countries was about half that found using conventional measures. When income is used as a measure of class, the difference in the rates of the class vote almost disappears. (The 1968 Canadian finding is very similar to that reported by Ogmundson on the 1965 data.) Finally, using the third measure, awareness of class membership, we find that Canada (43.7%) has a lower level of class awareness than the United Kingdom (63.9%). More significantly, the United Kingdom and Canada rank second and fifth respectively in the international spectrum consisting of these countries, the Netherlands, the United States and Norway. Of further interest is a comparison of the international spectrum constructed by the measures, the open-ended question and the awareness of class membership, with that constructed by the class vote (see Table 6.1). This shows that there is no consistent relationship between these two measures and the rates of class voting. Since the class vote has commonly been used as an indicator of a country's degree of class politics, it would appear that awareness of class membership and interests in class issues (i.e. by extension, mass sentiment on class issues) is not related to class vote and class politics in any simple or direct way.

Interpretation

In sum, at the mass level, using the open-ended question, we

TABLE 6.1

| <u>The Level of Mass Sentiment</u> | | <u>Degree of Class Politics</u> | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--|----------------------------|
| <u>Open-ended Question</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>The Awareness of Class Membership</u> | <u>The Objective Class</u> |
| | | <u>%</u> | <u>Vote</u> |
| UK, 1963 | 86.4 | Netherlands, 1970 | 86 |
| Canada, 1965, 1968 and 1974 averaged | 76.3 | US, 1956-1972 averaged | 66.1 |
| Netherlands, 1970 | 72.2 | UK, 1963, 1964-A and 1966-B averaged | 65.9 |
| Australia, 1967 | 56.7 | Norway, 1965 | 57.7 |
| Norway, 1965 | 40.4 | Canada, 1968 and 1974 averaged | 43.7 (55.7) |
| US, 1960-1972 averaged | 29.5 | | |

find that Canadians and the British have very similar levels of interest on class issues. This measure, therefore, strongly supports the elite explanation. Using the subjective class vote, we find that the difference between the two countries has been substantially narrowed. Hence, findings from the new class vote measure support the elite explanation moderately. Using the awareness of class membership measure, the findings are somewhat inconclusive due to the different forms of the question used in Canada and the United Kingdom. However, this measure probably gives moderate support to the mass explanation. Hence, of the three measures used in this research to ascertain the mass sentiment in Canada and the United Kingdom, one gives strong support to the elite explanation, one gives moderate support to the elite explanation and another gives some support to the mass explanation. Perhaps most important of all, the comparisons of measures of mass sentiment with the degree of class vote shows no consistent relationship between them. This supports the "elite explanation" in the general case.

Overall, this author tends to the opinion that our research has generally supported the line of thought which emphasizes the elite explanation. Nonetheless one must point out that these same facts are subject to varying interpretation according to varying perspectives. We are faced with a "FULLY-ONLY" dilemma - does one emphasize how great the difference in mass sentiment or how small? Here is a case where different paradigms and ideological positions would probably clash in terms of their interpretation of the data. Advocates of the "mass" interpretation, still utilizing the social psychological paradigm dominant in North America (see Westhues, 1976), drawn from liberal ideology, and buttressed by a sense of satisfaction with the state of

affairs, would probably argue that the apparent differences in mass sentiment we found are still quite sufficient to explain the difference in the elite politics of the two countries. (They might also at this point grudgingly concede a minor role to elite activity.) Proponents of the "elite" interpretation, working from an organizational or class paradigm (see Westhues, 1976) and, probably, a sense of dissatisfaction with the state of affairs, would probably argue that their viewpoint has received strong support and that most of the remaining variance can doubtless be attributed to differences in elite mobilization (as well as the wasted voter factor) in the two countries. One might perhaps hope that further empirical work might clarify the issue.

Implications

The findings in this research have clearly indicated likely directions for future research on class politics in Western democracies, i.e. we should look at elite as well as mass variables. However, the inconclusive data in this research have greatly limited the capacity to generalize the findings in other Western industrialized democracies. Four major suggestions will be made. First, there should be comparable questions on the three measures used in this research in the national surveys of the countries studied. We have already noted that the wordings for the open-ended question and the awareness of class membership should be as similar as possible in order to avoid biases. For the same reason, a similar coding system should be constructed. All this would help to yield the best comparable data. Also, comparable measures on subjective class vote should be included in the national surveys of other Western democratic countries. Consequently, we would be able to

compare voters' motivation across the nations. The best solution, obviously is that similar kinds of questions on all three measures would be used in the national surveys of the countries studied. Second, as was used in the 1965 Canadian survey, a similar 7-point scale as that used to find out the actual class position of the political parties should be used to find out what voters think is the Ideal class position of the parties (see Ogmundson, 1976:5-7). By comparing the class positions of the Ideal and actual parties, one can ascertain whether there is a discrepancy between what the voters want and what they see themselves receiving. Third, within Canada itself, a national survey can be conducted asking the Canadians to indicate which of the national cleavages in the country concerned them most: social class, ethnicity, language, religion, national unity or others. Also, questions should be asked as to how strongly they feel about each of these cleavages. This would certainly give a better indication of the nature of mass sentiments in Canada. A similar survey can also be conducted across the nations. Finally, since variation in time also may affect the findings, it would be ideal if surveys across nations could be conducted at the same period of time. If one can find out and construct international comparisons on both the elite and mass variables of all Western democratic countries, then politics in these countries could be better understood.

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