

**University of Manitoba**

**Reshuffling The Deck: An Examination Of The Canadian  
Alliance's Attempt At Political Realignment**

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To The Faculty Of Graduate Studies  
In Partial Fulfilment Of The Requirements  
For The Degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Political Studies

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**RESHUFFLING THE DECK: AN EXAMINATION OF THE  
CANADIAN ALLIANCE'S ATTEMPT AT POLITICAL REALIGNMENT**

**BY**

**Ian Pudsey**

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University  
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree**

**of**

**Master of Arts**

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## **ABSTRACT**

As the 1990's drew to a close, the Reform Party was faced with a dilemma. The party had successfully established itself as a strong regional party within the Canadian party system. However its leadership felt that for the party to remain viable it would have to breakout of its regional party status and become a national party. The vehicle chosen for this breakout would be the christened the Canadian Alliance Party. The theoretical context for this thesis will be Peter McCormick's 1996 article, "The Reform Party of Canada: New Beginning or Dead End?".

The thesis will be divided into three parts. The first section will be comprised of two chapters. The first chapter will chronicle the growth of the Reform Party from its inception until the late 1990's when it firmly entrenched its regional party status. It will deal with Reform's success in gaining regional party status and the factors which hindered it from establishing itself as a national party. The second chapter will deal with the two year period in which Reform transformed itself into the Canadian Alliance, beginning with Reform's 1998 Biannual Convention and culminating with the first Canadian Alliance Party's leadership race.

The second section of the thesis will be comprised of three chapters. These chapters will evaluate the Canadian Alliance's success in establishing itself as a national party. The first will deal with policy, the second with finances and the third with the 2000 General Election.

The final section of the thesis will be comprised of one chapter. It will discuss the turmoil which engulfed the Canadian Alliance Party in 2001 and assess the impact that

these events had on the party's ability to transform itself as a national party and whether these events will threaten the Alliance's regional party status.

Ultimately the Canadian Alliance was successful in developing a platform which combined Reform and Progressive Conservative policies and which was more reflective of the views of Canadians. The Party was also able to reduce its reliance on donations from individuals and earned a solid level of support from corporate sources. This allowed the Alliance to conduct their 2000 Federal Election on a financial level that was nearly equal to the only national political party, the Liberals. However while the Alliance was successful in developing the necessary tools required for a party to establish itself as a national party, its bid was unsuccessful. In the 2000 Federal Election the Canadian Alliance failed to win enough seats east of Manitoba to be considered a national party. As well the events of the past year have furthered hindered the party's future prospects of gaining national party status and have even placed its current status as a regional party in jeopardy.

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## INTRODUCTION

“The Progressives, who had thus carried the West out of the traditional parties, knew at once the sweet thrill of victory and the bitter taste of defeat. For a new party they had done astonishingly well, and had caused what was felt to be a revolution in Canadian politics.”<sup>1</sup> The party had elected an impressive 65 members in the 1921 Federal Election yet they had failed to carry as many seats as they had hoped in Ontario. Moreover the Progressives carried only a single seat east of Ottawa.<sup>2</sup> The Progressives were the first in a long line of third parties which included the CCF, Social Credit, the NDP and the Creditistes. None however had the impact of the Progressives. Seven decades later another new party would make an equally dramatic impact on the Canadian political system. The Reform Party of Canada burst onto the Federal scene in the fall of 1993, earning 19% of the national vote and winning fifty-two seats in the House of Commons.

Peter McCormick, Chair of the Political Studies Department at the University of Lethbridge and a Research Associate with the Canada West Foundation in a 1996 article entitled “The Reform Party of Canada: New Beginning or Dead End?” offered three possible scenarios for the future of the Reform Party. These were:

- 1) It would be a one time wonder that would gradually but surely fade from its highwater mark to a vote threshold too low to win any seats. This was the fate of the Progressives, who after winning sixty-five seats in the 1921 Federal Election

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<sup>1</sup> W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party In Canada (Toronto, ON.: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 128.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.128-129

elected only 24 members in the 1925 Federal Election and one year later were essentially dead. "The Progressive party came to an end with the election of

1926." <sup>3</sup>

- 2) Its rise would be contained rather than reversed. As a result, the party would be limited to the role of a regional or ideological protest party (or both). In this scenario, Reform would maintain a solid block of seats in Alberta and B.C. and modest strength elsewhere. In other words, it would be a right-wing counterpart to the CCF/NDP's longstanding role as a left-wing conscience and generator of ideas.
- 3) Reform would consolidate its position in Western Canada and build upon its localized strengths in Ontario, the goal being for the party to emerge as a national force, particularly as the single alternative voice for English Canada. In this scenario, Reform would assume a role similar to that of the Progressive Conservatives from 1867 to 1993. <sup>4</sup>

Until the 1997 Federal Election, the question that remained was would the new party become a permanent element of the Canadian political system or was it a latter day Progressive Party, which would have a major impact in one election and then quickly wither away and die. In that election unlike the Progressives and other third parties, the Reform party improved upon its initial success when it again earned 19% of the national vote and increased its seat total to sixty, forming the Official Opposition.

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<sup>3</sup>        ibid., p.266.

<sup>4</sup>        Peter McCormick, "The Reform Party of Canada: New Beginning or Dead End?," in Party Politics In Canada, Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada Inc., 1996, p. 361.

However the party was unable to achieve the electoral breakthrough east of Manitoba required to achieve power, winning only one seat in Ontario during the two aforementioned elections. It was clear that the Reform Party was at a crossroads. It had established itself as the dominant political party in Western Canada and had achieved a greater level of success than any of the third parties which had preceded it in the Canadian political system. It had achieved the second of McCormick's scenarios, at least in the short-term. However it had been unable to make an electoral breakthrough east of Manitoba. It was clear to Reform's executive that a new direction was needed.

At the party's biannual convention in May of 1998, a new concept called the United Alternative was presented, which led to the first United Alternative convention. Thus in February of 1999, 1500 Canadians travelled to Ottawa for the first United Alternative Convention. The convention's goal was to lay the groundwork for a new political entity. During the fall of that year United Alternative Action Committees meet to develop policy platforms and a constitution. A second United Alternative Convention was held in January of 2000, where a new political party, the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance Party (Canadian Alliance) was born. The creation of the Canadian Alliance by certain members of the political right can be seen as an attempt to shift the Reform Party from McCormick's second scenario to his third.

This thesis will serve as a case study of Reform's attempt to transform itself from the type of party described in Peter McCormick's second scenario to the type of party described in his third scenario. The first chapter will deal with an explanation of the factors which prompted Reform's attempt as well as giving the reader a basic overview of the

party's history. The second chapter will deal with the process of how the transformation took place. The thesis will then shift to an analysis of the early results of this initiative in three key areas: party platform, financial resources and electoral results. The final chapter will explore the current dissension within the Canadian Alliance and offer insight into how this may impact the party's attempt to transform itself. Particular attention will be paid to the four leadership candidates and what path the party might take under their respective leaderships.

## CHAPTER ONE: BEGINNINGS

For over half a century from Confederation in 1867 until 1921, Canada had a classic two party political system, with the Liberals and the Conservatives the only two major political parties. In 1921, the Progressive Party of Canada shattered this two party system. Since that time, there have been a variety of third parties in the Canadian political system, some prominent, some minor, some temporary, some durable. In fact, since the 1921 Federal Election, third parties have won seats in every election. By third parties, I refer to any political party other than the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives. In a little over a decade, the Reform Party of Canada would form, fight three elections, become the dominant federal political party in Western Canada and form the Official Opposition in the House of Commons. All of which was unprecedented for a third party in the Canadian political system.

The Reform Party had proven that it was not a one time wonder but it still found itself trapped in McCormick's second scenario. As the 1990s drew to a close, Reform was the dominant political party in Western Canada but had been unable to achieve the level of support necessary to win seats east of the Manitoba/Ontario border. Consequently it remained a regional party.

This chapter will chronicle the evolution of the Reform Party from its formation until the late 1990's. It will discuss its success in establishing itself as a regional party within the Canadian electoral system, clarify the factors limiting its growth and explain why the party decided to attempt to shift itself from its position as a regional to the position of a national party.

## Origins

By the mid 1980's, there was growing discontent in Western Canada towards the Federal Government and federal parties in general. This alienation was fuelled by numerous government decisions, including the CF-18 decision and the Liberal's National Energy Policy (N.E.P.) of 1980 as well as the way in which patronage was handled by both the Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties. In 1986, two groups, one in British Columbia and one in Alberta began meeting to discuss Canada's, particularly Western Canada's future. The Alberta group was led by Ted Byfield and Preston Manning and included individuals with mainly conservative backgrounds, while the B.C. group was led by Stan Roberts and Francis Winspear and included individuals with mainly Liberal backgrounds. The meetings stemmed from the feelings of alienation that many Western Canadians felt. The two groups led by Manning and Roberts respectively met in Edmonton in early 1987. At this meeting the two groups agreed to come together and form the Reform Association of Canada and sponsor a conference in Vancouver later that year to consider the West's future. Francis Winspear provided the majority of the funding for the conference while Ted Byfield promoted the cause in the pages of his Alberta Report.<sup>1</sup>

The Western Assembly on Canada's Economic and Political Future was held from May 29 to 31, 1987 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver, British Columbia. Before

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Dabbs, Preston Manning: The Roots Of Reform. (Vancouver, BC: Greystone Books, 1997), 104-105, 120-122. Thomas Flanagan, Waiting For The Wave: The Reform Party And Preston Manning. (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing CO., Limited, 1995), 51. Trevor Harrison, Of Passionate Intensity: Right-Wing Populism and the Reform Party of Canada. (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 106-109. Preston Manning, The New Canada. (Toronto, ON: Macmillan Canada, 1992), 129-134.

the Assembly took place, Preston Manning had written to the leaders of each of the three traditional political parties inviting them to send a senior representative to explain why Western Canadians should still consider the traditional federal parties as adequate vehicles for expressing and promoting western demands for change in the federal arena. Liberal leader, John Turner and NDP leader, Ed Broadbent sent observers while Progressive Conservative leader, Brian Mulroney forbade his western M.P's to attend. The assembly attracted nearly 300 delegates. The initial goal of the assembly planners was to have 60 delegates from each of the four western provinces as well as 60 hand-picked at large delegates. The actual delegate breakdown was 58 from British Columbia, 100 from Alberta and 38 from Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Most of the delegates had been connected to one of the three traditional political parties at one time or another. Most of the Albertans had been involved with the Progressive Conservatives, while the remaining delegates were more of a mix, although the Tories and Liberals predominated. Moreover some of the delegates described themselves as uninvolved or unaligned. <sup>2</sup> The delegates were given four choices to consider:

- 1) work within an existing federal party.
- 2) support a new broadly based pressure group.
- 3) support a new broadly based political party.
- 4) other.

On the last day of the convention, a straw vote was held on the four options, 77% of the delegates voted in favour of establishing a new broadly based political party. At

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<sup>2</sup> Trevor Harrison, p.109-110. Preston Manning, p.134-135.

Vancouver, delegates voted in favour of the idea of a national party, with a western base, while also emphasising the need to grow. The delegates also agreed to meet again in the fall, to pick a name and leader, to draft an election platform and to organize financing for the 1988 Federal Election campaign.<sup>3</sup> The desire for a truly national party was reflected in the speech of Preston Manning, who stated that, "A new federal party representing the West should have "room to grow" into a truly national party. A new federal party, created initially to represent the West, should aspire to become that truly national party, and nothing should be done in the early stages of its conception and birth to preclude it from eventually gaining support all across the country, particularly in those regions of Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic Canada and Northern Canada which share many of our concerns and aspirations."<sup>4</sup>

Manning was essentially saying that he hoped that the Reform Party would eventually become another example of the historic coalitions that previous Conservative governments had been built upon, traditional Tories in Atlantic Canada, Conservatives in Ontario, backed by the Toronto financial interests, Western Canadian populists and business interests and French-speaking Quebec nationalists. This mix can be seen in the four long-term Conservative regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Borden/Meighen administration of 1911-1921, the Bennett regime of 1930-1935, the Diefenbaker government of 1957-1963 and the Mulroney/Campbell government of 1984-1993.

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<sup>3</sup> Frank Dabbs, p.122-123, 126. Thomas Flanagan, p.51-54. Trevor Harrison, p.109-111. Preston Manning, p.134-136,140,142-143.

<sup>4</sup> Murray Dobbin, Preston Manning And The Reform Party. (Toronto, ON: James Lorimer & Company, 1991), 78.

While Reform was originally created as a party in the mould of McCormick's second scenario, its founders did envision it eventually becoming a party in the mould of his third scenario.

The Reform Association held its first convention in Winnipeg, Manitoba at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on the weekend of October 30 to November 1, 1987. At the time of the conference, the movement had twenty-five hundred members. A total of 306 delegates attended. The convention was dominated by Alberta, who sent 140 delegates and British Columbia who sent 91 delegates. In comparison, there were only 65 delegates from Manitoba and a mere 10 from Saskatchewan. On the first day of the convention, the delegates chose as the party name, the Reform Party of Canada and approved the party's constitution. Preston Manning was chosen to lead the new party by acclamation but not without controversy. The only other leadership candidate, Stan Roberts dropped out of the race after a dispute over delegate registration rules and deadlines, as well as claims that fifty thousand dollars in party funds were unaccounted for. Roberts also accused Manning of trying to turn a western party into an Alberta party. The constitution adopted by the party in Winnipeg limited it to running candidates in Western Canada but this limitation was not permanent. Reform could decide at any time in the future to expand into Eastern Canada <sup>5</sup> One year after its formation, the fledgling Reform Party would contest its first Federal Election.

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<sup>5</sup> Frank Dabbs, p.128-131. Murray Dobbin, p.79. Thomas Flanagan, p.54. Trevor Harrison, p. 114-115,117. Preston Manning, p.145-146,151-153. Sidney Sharpe, Don Braid, Storming Babylon: Preston Manning And The Rise Of The Reform Party. (Toronto, ON: Key Porter Books Limited, 1992), 27.

## 1988 Federal Election

In its first election, Reform fielded candidates in seventy-two of the eighty-six Western Canadian ridings. It fielded candidates in all twenty-six of Alberta's ridings, in thirty out of thirty-two British Columbian consistencies, in twelve of Manitoba's fourteen ridings and only four out of Saskatchewan's fourteen ridings. Nationally, the party earned slightly more than 2% of the vote. It received a little more than 7% of the total Western Canadian vote and slightly less than 9% of the vote in those constituencies in which it fielded candidates. The party fared best in Alberta where it earned more votes than the Liberal Party of Canada. Nine Reform candidates finished second in their respective constituencies, including Reform Party leader, Preston Manning who earned 29% of the vote and finished second behind former Prime Minister, Joe Clark in the riding of Yellowhead. The party had one third place finish in both B.C. and Manitoba, while all four of its candidates in Saskatchewan finished fourth. <sup>6</sup> (For a complete summary of Reform's performance see Table 1 below).

**TABLE 1  
1988 ELECTION  
REFORM PARTY PERFORMANCE**

<b>Province</b>	<b>% of Vote</b>	<b>Seats Won</b>
Alberta	15	0
B.C.	5	0
Manitoba	3	0
Saskatchewan	1	0
<b>National</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

**Source: Elections Canada**

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<sup>6</sup> Preston Manning, p.181-183.  
<<http://www.elections.ca>> (May 25, 2001).

Reform did significantly better than the other “right-wing fringe parties” with which it was classified by academics and political pundits. Reform received 275,267 votes in 1988, which was more than all the other “right-wing fringe parties” combined. Comparatively Christian Heritage received 102,533, Confederation of Regions received 41,342 and the Party for the Commonwealth of Canada received 7,497. Reform received nearly 124, 000 more votes than these three parties combined (275,267 to 151, 372).<sup>7</sup>

### First Success Stories

On November 26, 1988, only five days after the General Election, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament Elect for the riding of Beaver River, John Dahmer died of cancer. A by-election was held on March 13, 1989. The Reform Party candidate for the by-election was Deborah Grey, who had contested the riding for the party in the previous general election. She had finished fourth. However Grey won the by-election by over 4200 votes, earning 51% of the vote and became the Reform Party of Canada’s first Member of Parliament, less than sixteen months after the party was formed.<sup>8</sup>

A second event which aided the Reform Party in its quest for respectability also took place in 1989. Early in that year, one of Alberta’s Senate seats became vacant and then Alberta Premier, Don Getty decided that the vacancy would be filled by the province holding a Senate election. The Meech Lake Accord which had been formulated but not officially ratified at that time included the provision that provincial Premiers could submit a list of potential appointees to the Prime Minister. In turn, the Prime Minister would fill the

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<sup>7</sup> Trevor Harrison, p.134.

<sup>8</sup> Frank Dabbs, p.138, 140. Trevor Harrison, p.140-141. Preston Manning, p.184-185, 193.

vacancy by choosing an individual on the list. Getty stated his list would have one name, that of the Senate election winner. There were six candidates, one Liberal, one Progressive Conservative, one Reformer and three independents. The election was held on October 16, 1989. It was won by Reform candidate, Stan Waters. Waters captured 260,000 votes nearly doubling the support of his nearest competitor, Liberal Bill Code who received 140,000 votes. Shortly after the election, Getty sent a letter to the Prime Minister asking him to appoint Stan Waters to the Senate. However then Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney refused to appoint Waters and instead chose to delay. Finally on June 11, 1990 after a delay of two hundred and thirty-eight days Mulroney agreed to the appointment, likely because the Meech Lake Accord had still not been officially ratified and he needed Getty's support. Stan Waters became the first Reformer appointed to the Senate on June 19, 1990.

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### Eastern Expansion

While Reform had fought the 1988 Federal Election only in Western Canada and its two initial success took place in Alberta, the party had always held the goal of becoming a national party. Consequently the Reform Party appointed a task force in June of 1989 to investigate the issue of eastern expansion.

At their 1989 convention held in Edmonton, Alberta in November, delegates rejected a motion to limit the party to Western Canada, reaffirmed its long term goal to be a national party based on political values born in the west and endorsed the establishment

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Frank Dabbs, p.139-143, 154. Trevor Harrison, p.141-142. Preston Manning, p.199-200, 202,204, 212-214, 243.

of a permanent committee to deal with the question of expansion. The task of the expansion committee was to look for opportunities and assess potential dangers of expansion. The committee was given the responsibility of investigating possibilities for Reform Party expansion into these areas with a minimum investment of human and financial resources from its western base. Conference delegates also approved the idea of Manning conducting an eastern exploratory tour. In March of 1990, Manning went on a two week exploratory tour of Ontario and Atlantic Canada as part of this process. He took a second trip to Ontario in September of 1990.

The first Ontario Reform riding association was established in Brampton, Ontario and by the time Reform held its next national convention in April of 1991, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Reform already had 6000 Ontario members and 50 interim constituency associations had been established. This work had been done by a group led by Reg Gosse, in an attempt to demonstrate to the Saskatoon delegates that Ontario was fertile ground for the party. At the convention, party delegates voted on a motion to expand the party into Eastern Canada, excluding Quebec. The motion was supported by 97% of the delegates (762 to 27). Following this decision by convention delegates the party held a mail in ballot, of the general membership on the resolution. More than 24,000 members responded and the party announced on June 3, 1991, that 92% of those who voted, voted in favour of expansion. The mail-in balloting was held on top of the delegate's decision at the convention because some delegates feared that making such a monumental decision without the approval of the party's entire membership could fracture the party. By June of 1991, Reform associations had been organized in eighty-five of Ontario's ninety-nine

ridings.<sup>10</sup>

## 1993 Federal Election

The thirty-fifth Federal Election, held on October 25, 1993 was a watershed for both the Canadian political landscape and the Reform Party of Canada. Reform fielded 207 candidates (the party ran none in Quebec, only twenty in Atlantic Canada and did not run a candidate in the Ontario riding of Timmins-Chapleau). Reform won fifty-two seats electing members in five provinces (B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario), while gaining nearly 19% of the popular vote (27% in the ridings in which it ran).

The party's strength was concentrated in Western Canada, particularly British Columbia and Alberta. It elected fifty-one of its fifty-two members in Western Canada (of which forty-six were from B.C. and Alberta) and earned 38% of the popular vote in Western Canada. It was not as strong in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Additionally, Reform finished second in twenty-two Western Canadian ridings (Manitoba (8), Saskatchewan (5), Alberta (4), B.C. (5)).<sup>11</sup>

The Reform Party earned 20% of the popular vote in Ontario but was only able to win a single seat, Simcoe Centre, which was won by Ed Harper. Reform finished second in fifty-seven Ontario ridings, however in most cases they trailed the winner by a large margin. A troubling statistic for Reform was that they received nearly 250,000 more votes

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<sup>10</sup> Frank Dabbs, p.161-162. Murray Dobbin, p.84. Thomas Flanagan, p.66-68. Trevor Harrison, p. 180-182. Preston Manning, p.219-220, 231-232, 262, 270-271, 278-279, 281. Sidney Sharpe, Don Braid, p.28-29.

<sup>11</sup> Thirty-Fifth General Election, 1993 Official Voting Results. (Ottawa, ON: The Chief Electoral Officer Of Canada, 1993), 25, 27-31, 119-1180, 1183-1239, 1243-1370, 1373-1540.

in B.C. and Alberta (242,726) than they did in Ontario (1,223,649 votes to 980,923 votes).<sup>12</sup>

Reform's performance in Atlantic Canada was poor. While Reform finished third in fourteen of the twenty ridings (New Brunswick (6), Nova Scotia (8)) it contested in Atlantic Canada, these were all distant third place finishes. The party's closest race in the region took place in the New Brunswick riding of Carleton-Charlotte, where it finished 10,143 votes behind the winner. Moreover none of its Atlantic Canadian candidates earned more than 8,288 votes.<sup>13</sup>

The Reform Party established a Western Canadian base in 1993, increasing their percentage of the Western Canadian vote from 7% to 38%. In addition, they went from one seat in Western Canada to fifty-one, increasing their number of seats in all four western provinces. (For a complete summary of Reform's performance, see TABLE 2 below).

**TABLE 2**  
**1993 ELECTION - REFORM PARTY PERFORMANCE**

PROVINCE	% OF VOTE	SEATS WON
Alberta	52	22
British Columbia	36	24
Manitoba	22	1
New Brunswick	9	0
Newfoundland	1	0
Nova Scotia	13	0
Ontario	20	1
Prince Edward Island	1	0
Quebec	0	0
Saskatchewan	27	4
<b>National</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>52</b>

Source: Elections Canada

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<sup>12</sup> Thirty-Fifth General Election, 1993 Official Voting Results. p. 27-31, 629-1116.

<sup>13</sup> Thirty-Fifth General Election, Report Of The Chief Electoral Officer. p.27-31, 107-139, 143-154, 157-210, 213-257.

The majority of Reform's support was derived from former supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party. Thirty-five of the fifty-two seats won by Reform in 1993 were in constituencies which had elected a Conservative in 1988 (the other seventeen ridings were won by the NDP in 1988). In addition, five of the other seats won by Reform were in ridings that had traditionally voted Progressive Conservative but which had voted NDP in 1988. In Ontario, Reform had its greatest success in those ridings located in the outer suburbs of Toronto, the Niagra Peninsula and the "cottage country" of central Ontario, regions that were former bastions of Tory support.<sup>14</sup> A post-election survey by Harold Clarke also revealed this trend. The survey asked individuals how they voted in both the 1988 and 1993 Federal Elections. It found that 38% of those who voted Conservative in 1988 voted for the Reform party in 1993. This voter migration was most marked in Western Canada where 55% of those who voted Tory in 1988 voted Reform in 1993. Clarke's survey found that nationally 70% of those who voted Reform in 1993 had voted for either the Progressive Conservative or Reform parties in 1988. In Western Canada it was 81%. Essentially a substantial amount of Reform's 1993 electoral support was the result of a secessionist movement from the Progressive Conservative Party. In comparison, the survey found that only 15% of those who had voted Liberal in 1988 and only 11% of those who voted NDP switched to the Reform party in 1993.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas Flanagan, p.153-155.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Flanagan, p.160-163.

## **Reform/Tory Vote Splitting In The 1993 Election**

The Reform Party and the Progressive Conservative Party split the vote in a number of ridings in the 1993 Federal Election. This problem was one of the factors which contributed to the Reform Party being a regional party as opposed to a national party.

There is some evidence that Reform/Progressive Conservative votes are reasonably transferable. Polling done by Michael Marzolini of Pollara in 1999 found that 87% of Reformers and 68% of Conservatives would transfer their votes to the UA.<sup>16</sup>

However there have also been studies which have indicated that a complete one to one transfer in regards to Tory and Reform votes is not likely. In a 1998 study, Pollara found that 51% of Tory supporters would have voted for the Liberals as their second choice, while Reform was the second choice of only 14% of respondents. Conversely only 38% of Reform supporters would have voted for the Tories as their second choice.<sup>17</sup> This research does not assume that Reform and Tory votes are one hundred percent transferable. Rather it mentions vote-splitting simply as one of the factors Reform would have to overcome in order to become a national party. Specifically, if Reform was able to earn those votes in the aforementioned ridings which were cast for the Tories it would move closer to national party status.

This problem was most prevalent in Ontario, where in 24 ridings, a Reform/Tory split allowed the Liberal candidate to prevail. This also occurred in 19 Western Canadian

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<sup>16</sup> Edward Greenspon, "Numbers vary on new party." Toronto Globe and Mail, 20 February 1999, A9.

<sup>17</sup> <[http:// www.pollara.ca](http://www.pollara.ca)> (March 9, 2002).

constituencies. (For a complete summary see Table 3 below).

**TABLE 3**  
**VOTE SPLITTING IN THE 1993 FEDERAL ELECTION**

PROVINCE	RIDING	REF/PC VOTE	WINNER'S VOTE	DIFFERENTIAL
Alberta	Edmonton East	14,479	11,922	2,557
Alberta	Edmonton North	23,936	19,536	4,400
Alberta	Edmonton West	16,072	12,599	3,473
B.C.	Burnaby-Kingsway	18,716	18,273	443
B.C.	Richmond	28,993	21,457	7,476
B.C.	Vancouver Centre	27,599	20,095	7,504
B.C.	Vancouver Quandra	20,447	20,364	83
B.C.	Vancouver South	23,651	17,215	6,436
B.C.	Victoria	22,027	21,557	470
Manitoba	Brandon-Souris	19,399	12,130	7,269
Manitoba	Dauphin-Swan River	15,132	10,600	4,532
Manitoba	Portage-Interlake	16,837	14,506	2,331
Manitoba	Provencher	17,228	16,119	1,109
Manitoba	Selkirk-Red River	18,099	16,003	2,096
New Brunswick	Charlton-Charlotte	16,990	13,970	3,020
Newfoundland	St. John's East	20,682	20,270	412
Nova Scotia	Central Nova	17,971	16,329	1,642
Nova Scotia	Cumberland-Colchester	21,297	18,241	3,056
Ontario	Bramalae-Gore-Malton	19,752	17,675	2,077
Ontario	Burlington	25,612	22,880	2,732
Ontario	Cambridge	28,663	22,121	6,542
Ontario	Durham	33,483	22,383	11,100
Ontario	Elgin-Norfolk	19,431	17,439	1,992
Ontario	Etobicoke-Lakeshore	22,979	19,458	3,521
Ontario	Guelph-Wellington	28,308	24,359	3,949
Ontario	Halton-Peel	35,176	22,278	12,898
Ontario	Hamilton-Wentworth	31,084	29,695	1,389
Ontario	Huron-Bruce	24,316	21,845	2,471
Ontario	Makham-Whitchurch-Stouffville	37,631	35,909	1,722
Ontario	Mississauga South	22,355	21,478	877
Ontario	Niagra Falls	20,602	20,567	35
Ontario	Oakville-Milton	36,544	34,124	2,420
Ontario	Ontario	44,969	38,680	6,289
Ontario	Oshawa	17,966	15,651	2,315
Ontario	Oxford	23,510	19,669	3,841
Ontario	Parry Sound-Muskoka	22,551	20,427	2,124
Ontario	Perth-Wellington-Waterloo	23,020	20,125	2,895
Ontario	Simcoe-North	30,639	23	2,225

**TABLE 3 (Continued)**  
**VOTE SPLITTING IN THE 1993 FEDERAL ELECTION**

PROVINCE	RIDING	PC/REF VOTE	WINNER'S VOTE	DIFFERENTIAL
Ontario	Victoria-Haliburton	28,284	20,511	7,773
Ontario	Waterloo	31,025	26,269	4,756
Ontario	Wellington-Grey-Dufferin	34,045	20,415	13,630
Ontario	York-Simcoe	38,419	26,932	11,487
Saskatchewan	Mackenzie	12,082	9,438	2,644
Saskatchewan	Saskatoon-Clark's Crossing	15,263	12,266	2,997
Saskatchewan	Saskatoon-Humboldt	14,685	12,838	1,847
Saskatchewan	Souris Moose Mountain	15,368	10,917	4,451
Saskatchewan	The Battlefords-Meadow Lake	13,342	9,772	3,570

**NOTE: THE TERM REF/PC REFERS TO THE COMBINED NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED BY THE REFORM AND PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN THE RESPECTIVE RIDINGS**

**Source: Elections Canada**

### 1997 Election

In spite of Reform's success in 1993, many observers of the Canadian political scene remained convinced that the party was a one election phenomenon that would fade in the next election. Reform's goal for the 1997 election was to consolidate its base in Western Canada, while at the same time making significant inroads in Ontario to establish a national presence for the party.<sup>18</sup> The thirty-sixth Federal General Election was held on June 2, 1997. The electoral results were a mixed blessing for the Reform Party. The party became only the fourth party since Confederation to form the Official Opposition. It again earned 19% of the national vote (26% in the ridings in which it fielded candidates). Overall Reform increased its seat total by eight from fifty-two to sixty. However it lost its only

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<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Carty, William Cross, Lisa Young, Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics. Vancouver, (BC: UBC Press, 2000), 52, 54.

seat in Ontario.

Reform's success was once again concentrated in Western Canada where it captured 46% of the vote and all sixty of its seats. The party increased its seat total in Western Canada by nine from fifty-one to sixty. Reform also finished second in 18 Western Canadian ridings (Manitoba (4), Saskatchewan (5), Alberta (2), B.C. (7)).<sup>19</sup>

Reform gained only 19% of the Ontario vote, a 1% drop from 1993 and lost its only seat in the province. Additionally the party received over 94,000 fewer votes than it had in 1993. Reform came closest to winning an Ontario seat in the riding of Simcoe-Grey. Reform finished second in 39 Ontario ridings down 18 from 1993. For the second straight election, Reform received more votes in B.C./Alberta than it did in Ontario (1,233,250 votes to 886,797 votes). In Quebec, where it ran candidates for the first time, no individual candidate gained more than 3% of the vote in his or her riding.<sup>20</sup>

The party's results in Atlantic Canada were again meagre. Reform Party candidates failed to finish higher than fourth in any of the ridings the party contested in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Its greatest success in the region came in New Brunswick, where the party had four third place finishes and its greatest vote total, 28% which it captured in the riding of Tobique-Mactaquac. The party did increase its percentage of the vote in 3 of 4 Atlantic Provinces but these increases were minor. However Reform lost votes in Nova Scotia, earning only 10% of the vote in that province

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<sup>19</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/process/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E>> (May 31, 2001)

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

after earning 13% in 1993. Overall the party earned slightly more than 8,000 more votes in 1997 than it had in 1993. Reform earned 12% of the vote in the Atlantic Canadian ridings it contested. Reform increased its number of candidates in Atlantic Canada, but only by three to twenty-three, still short of a full slate.<sup>21</sup> (For a complete summary of Reform's Performance see TABLE 4 below).

**TABLE 4**  
**1197 ELECTION - REFORM PARTY PERFORMANCE**

<b>PROVINCE</b>	<b>% OF VOTE</b>	<b>SEATS WON</b>
Alberta	55	24
British Columbia	43	25
Manitoba	24	3
New Brunswick	13	0
Newfoundland	3	0
Nova Scotia	10	0
Ontario	19	0
Prince Edward Island	2	0
Quebec	0.3	0
Saskatchewan	36	8
<b>National</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>60</b>

Source: Elections Canada

In three elections, the Reform Party of Canada established a solid base of support in Western Canada. The party went from earning zero seats in 1988 to earning sixty seats in 1997. It also increased its share of the popular vote by 39% from 7% in 1988 to 46% in 1997. (See TABLE 5 below for a complete summary of Reform's performance).

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<sup>21</sup>

ibid

**TABLE 5**  
**REFORM'S GROWTH IN WESTERN CANADA BETWEEN THE**  
**1988 AND 1997 ELECTIONS**

Province	% of Vote		Seats Won	
	1988	1997	1988	1997
Alberta	15	55	0	24
British Columbia	5	43	0	25
Manitoba	3	24	0	3
Saskatchewan	1	36	0	8

Source: Elections Canada

In Ontario, Reform's support actually declined slightly from 1993 to 1997. It lost its only Ontario seat in 1997, while its popular support decreased. In Atlantic Canada, the party increased its percentage of the popular vote in three of four provinces. However in Nova Scotia, Reform's support dropped. (See Table 6 for a complete summary of Reform's performance).

**TABLE 6**  
**REFORM'S GROWTH IN ONTARIO AND ATLANTIC CANADA**  
**BETWEEN THE 1993 AND 1997 ELECTIONS**

Province	% of Vote		Seats Won	
	1993	1997	1993	1997
New Brunswick	9	13	0	0
Newfoundland	1	3	0	0
Nova Scotia	13	10	0	0
Ontario	20	19	1	0
Prince Edward Island	1	2	0	0

Source: Elections Canada

## Reform/PC Vote-Splitting In The 1997 Federal Election

The problem of vote-splitting would plague the Reform Party in the 1997 Federal Election just as it had in 1993. The problem was once again most pronounced in Ontario, where it occurred in twenty-eight constituencies. The phenomenon also hurt the party in Western Canada where a total of eight seats were lost to the Liberals and the NDP. In Atlantic Canada, vote-splitting resulted in the Liberals capturing an additional three seats, while the NDP captured an additional two. The NDP picked up the Yukon's sole constituency as a result of this "right-wing" vote splitting. The ability to gain some or all of these seats would have allowed the party to move closer to national party status. (For a complete summary see TABLE 7 below).

TABLE 7

### VOTE SPLITTING IN THE 1997 FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION

PROVINCE	RIDING	RP/PC VOTE	WINNER'S VOTE	DIFFERENTIAL
Alberta	Edmonton North	15,343	14,749	594
Alberta	Edmonton West	17,903	16,451	1,452
B.C.	Richmond	18,262	18,114	148
B.C.	Vancouver Quandra	19,766	18,793	973
B.C.	Victoria	18,842	18,068	774
Manitoba	Charleswood-Assiniboine	16,138	15,084	1,054
Manitoba	Provencher	18,722	14,571	4,151
New Brunswick	Fredericton	18,650	12,252	6,398
New Brunswick	Miramichi	15,390	14,004	1,386
Newfoundland	Humber-St. Barbe-Baie	13,794	12,057	1,737
Nova Scotia	Dartmouth	14,713	12,270	2,443
Nova Scotia	Sackville-Eastern Shore	17,525	12,418	5,107
Ontario	Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	26,723	23,582	3,141
Ontario	Bramlea-Gore-Malton	19,321	18,807	514
Ontario	Bruce-Grey	27,383	17,927	9,456
Ontario	Burlington	24,950	21,921	3,029
Ontario	Cambridge	20,068	17,671	2,397
Ontario	Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	25,849	20,957	4,892
Ontario	Durham	22,104	19,918	2,186

TABLE 7 (Continued)

VOTE SPLITTING IN THE 1997 FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION

Ontario	Elgin-Middlesex-London	21,794	17,874	3,920
Ontario	Erie-Lincoln	19,095	17,553	1,542
Ontario	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	22,244	20,934	1,310
Ontario	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox-Addington	24,409	18,350	6,059
Ontario	Lanark-Carlton	29,924	28,150	1,774
Ontario	Leeds-Greenville	26,145	19,092	7,053
Ontario	Niagra Falls	20,960	15,702	5,258
Ontario	Northumberland	21,792	21,010	782
Ontario	Oakville	24,487	24,523	35
Ontario	Oshawa	18,947	15,924	3,023
Ontario	Oxford	24,067	16,086	7,981
Ontario	Parry Sound-Muskoka	22,345	17,750	4,595
Ontario	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	25,388	19,569	5,819
Ontario	Simcoe Grey	29,173	17,899	11,274
Ontario	Simcoe North	25,123	22,774	2,349
Ontario	St. Catherines	21,410	21,081	329
Ontario	Victoria-Haliburton	31,140	18,093	13,047
Ontario	Waterloo-Wellington	22,330	20,032	2,298
Ontario	Wentworth-Burlington	23,708	19,576	4,132
Ontario	York North	24,545	22,933	1,612
Ontario	Wentworth-Burlington	23,708	19,576	4,132
Ontario	York North	24,545	22,933	1,612
Saskatchewan	Churchill River	7,888	7,246	642
Yukon	Yukon	5,421	4,002	1,419

**NOTE: THE TERM RP/PC REFERS TO THE COMBINED NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED BY THE REFORM AND PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN THE RESPECTIVE RIDINGS**

Source: Elections Canada

Vote-splitting was a problem for Canada's two parties of the right, the Reform Party and the Progressive Conservative Party in both the 1993 and 1997 Federal elections. A total of eighty-nine seats were won by either the Liberals or NDP because of the phenomenon, eighty-one by the Liberals and eight by the NDP. The problem was greatest in Ontario where a total of fifty-two seats were won by the Liberals. It also made a noticeable impact in Western Canada, where twenty-seven seats, twenty-two for the Liberals and five for the

NDP were effected. The phenomenon had a small impact in Atlantic Canada, where only nine seats were effected, two for the NDP and seven for the Liberals. One seat was also won in the Yukon by the NDP. The phenomenon had no impact in the province of Quebec because Reform did not run any candidates there in 1993 and only ran 10 in 1997. <sup>22</sup>

Reform had established itself as the dominant political party in Western Canada in the 1990's, however it still required the strong support of either Ontario or Quebec if it was to achieve its goal of becoming a national party. Based on Reform's history, Quebec was not a viable option for the immediate future, thus Ontario was the region Reform needed to capture. Reform was able to earn approximately 20% of the vote in Ontario in both 1993 and 1997, however it won only one seat due to the first past the post system.

## Conclusion

After only ten years of existence, the Reform Party of Canada had achieved a higher level of success than any of the non-traditional parties that preceded it. With the exception of the Progressives, who won 65 seats in 1921, Reform's sixty seats in 1997 were more than any other third party had ever won. Unlike some other non-traditional parties such as Social Credit, which was primarily an Albertan phenomenon and the Bloc Quebecois and the Creditistes which are/were Quebec only parties, Reform had established a solid level of support in four provinces, Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Reform had also been able to build on its support in 1997, gaining 60 seats, a gain of 8

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<sup>22</sup>

Thirty-Fifth General Election, Report Of The Chief Electoral Officer. p.107-139, 143-154, 157-210, 213-257, 629-1116, 1119-1180, 1183-1239, 1243-1370, 1373-1540.

from 1993. In comparison, the Progressives lost forty-one seats in 1925, winning only twenty-four, Social Credit went from seventeen seats in 1935 to ten in 1940 and the Creditistes won only twenty seats in 1963, after gaining twenty-six in 1962. Even the Bloc Quebecois, which had “broken out” with Reform in 1993, suffered seat loses in 1997, dropping from fifty-four to forty-four.<sup>23</sup> In 1997, Reform succeeded the Bloc Quebecois, as the Official Opposition in the House of Commons becoming only the second non-traditional party to do so (In 1921, the Progressives actually won the second greatest number of seats and could have formed the Official Opposition but chose not to).

As the 1990's came to a close, the Reform Party of Canada seemed locked into the role of Western protest party. When its leaders pondered the future of the party, two possible destinies emerged. These were:

- 1) The party would suffer the fate of other “Western protest parties” such as the Progressives and Social Credit, who enjoyed briefs periods of influence and initial electoral success and then suffered lengthy declines.
- 2) Reform would remain a part of the Canadian party system but only as a small regional party, representing the concerns of Western Canada.

In other words at best the party would remain the type described in McCormick’s second scenario and at worst suffer the fate of McCormick’s first scenario. The leaders of Reform decided that instead of allowing the party to settle into either of the aforementioned futures a new course of action was required. Reform needed to become a

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<sup>23</sup> Allain, Gagnon, Brian Tanguay, “Minor Parties in the Canadian Political System,” in *Canadian Parties in Transition*. ed. Allain Gagnon, Brian Tanguay, (Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 1996), 112, 558-578.

national party. The challenge in doing so would be to maintain its western base of support while making an electoral impact east of Manitoba. This new course of action would lead to the United Alternative.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE UNITED ALTERNATIVE EXPERIENCE

Historically numerous Canadian political movements began in Western Canada. Most have been intent on winning control of the national government from the perceived Central Canadian elites and reforming the federal political system. These movements have had mixed results, but none have achieved the level of success of the Reform Party. Some third parties such as the Progressives, Social Credit and the Creditistes eventually withered away and disappeared, while the NDP continues to exist to this day, but it has never been more than a third party. If the Reform Party was ever to move beyond being just a historical asterisk or a footnote in the history of western political movements, it needed to expand its base in Eastern Canada.

As outlined previously, Peter McCormick predicted three possible destinies for the future of the Reform Party. A decade into its existence, Reform had avoided the first fate. The 1997 Federal Election did not bring a decline in the party's fortunes instead it brought an upswing. However at this time, Reform was a regional party or the type of party described in McCormick's second scenario. However the leadership of the party wanted it to shed its regional status and become a national party or the type of party outlined in McCormick's third scenario. This goal was rooted in Reform Party Leader, Preston Manning belief that in some respects political parties are like businesses, if they don't continue to grow they will wither and die.<sup>1</sup> In order to achieve this goal the leadership knew that the Reform Party would have to recreate itself. This chapter will describe the process by which the transformation of the Reform Party into the Canadian Alliance Party

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Carty, William Cross, Lisa Young, p. 65.

took place.

On May 29, 1998 at a Reform Party assembly in London, Ontario, Party Leader, Preston Manning, received permission from the party's members to begin exploring the option of some form of coalition between Canada's conservative groups. The ultimate goal of this exercise was to convert Reform from a regional party into a national party. It was a controversial concept. The United Alternative proposal was presented on day one of the three day, Reform Party Assembly. The United Alternative proposal was essentially an invitation to any members of other parties (particularly the federal Progressive Conservatives), who shared Reform's beliefs in fiscal and social "responsibilities", reformed federalism and democratic accountability to join forces. Passage of the resolution would allow Reform's leadership to hold a special assembly to discuss policies and a platform which would appeal to like minded voters of other political parties. <sup>2</sup> At the time, this concept was supported by Mike Harris and Ralph Klein. <sup>3</sup> The 1,000 delegates at Reform's 1998 convention voted 91% in favour of convening a United Alternative conference to discuss a platform and action plan. <sup>4</sup>

In a speech which introduced the concept, Preston Manning offered a number of target groups for this plan. They included: Filmon Conservatives in Manitoba, Klein Conservatives in Alberta, Harris Conservatives in Ontario, supporters of the Saskatchewan

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<sup>2</sup> Paul Samyn, "Reformers try to pick up vote fragments," Winnipeg Free Press, 29 May 1998, Sec B, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> Norm Ovenden, "Reform future tied to plan for united front," Edmonton Journal, 30 May 1998, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>4</sup> Norm Ovenden, "Reformers to explore coalition," Edmonton Journal, 31 May 1998, Sec A, p.1.

Party (a provincial party comprised of Liberals, Conservatives and Reformers), supporters of the B.C. Reform, Liberal and NDP parties, supporters of various political groups in Quebec such as the Liberals and the Action Democratique du Quebec and supporters of various Atlantic Canadian political parties.

There was fear among Reform members that this concept was akin to dancing with the devil. At first, Manning's plan was met with both confusion and opposition from his fellow Reformers. Two-thirds of those who spoke at the policy workshop where the plan was introduced were opposed to the proposal. A popular statement of those in opposition was, "being a Reformer means never having to say that you are a Tory."<sup>5</sup> The strongest opposition to the United Alternative proposal came from delegates who resided in Western Canada, while the delegates most in favour of the proposal tended to be from Ontario. Opponents of the proposal stated that they were not willing to allow the dilution of Reform's founding principles in order to gain power. However few of the delegates flatly rejected Manning's proposal. Proponents of the concept were quick to point out that this was not an advocacy of a merger or amalgamation with the Federal Progressive Conservative Party.<sup>6</sup>

Senior Reform Party officials argued that the party was not bargaining away its cherished principles in the political backroom in order to gain power. They claimed that Reform was not going to change its name, leader or policies to win over Eastern

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<sup>5</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Manning's plan puzzles party faithful," Calgary Herald, 29 May 1998, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>6</sup> Norma Greenway, "Reformers, lets stick to our guns" Ottawa Citizen, 29 May 1998, Sec A, p.4.

Canadians, particularly those who had traditionally voted for the Tories. The United Alternative proposal had two planks: 1) convince members of other parties to join the Reform Party and 2) get political co-operation from those who share similar views but who would not join the Reform Party. <sup>7</sup> Manning also stated that he was willing to put his leadership on the line for the United Alternative saying that it was worth putting his leadership on the line in order to get the opportunity to implement Reform principles. He stated that the United Alternative was not in any way an abandonment of Reform principles. However at the same time he left open the possibility that the party platform could be modified. <sup>8</sup>

The official resolution stated, "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Reform Party of Canada authorize the leadership of the party to convene and participate in a special United Alternative Assembly whose purpose is to discuss the platform and political actions to elect a majority of MPs who are committed to fiscal responsibility , social responsibility, democratic accountability, and a strengthening of the federation characterized by equality and rebalanced powers, and; That the leader of the Reform Party of Canada will report to the party members within 30 days of this special United Alternative Assembly and put any policy, constitutional, or other issues related to the Reform Party of Canada that may emerge from this Assembly before the Reform Party membership through means such as a party referendum or a special Reform Party

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<sup>7</sup> Peter O'Neil, "Reformers balk at united right," Vancouver Sun, 29 May 1998, Sec A, p.1-2.

<sup>8</sup> Peter O'Neil, "I'll give it all up to unite the right, Manning tells Reformers," Vancouver Sun, 30 May 1998, Sec A, p.1-2.

Assembly called for this purpose.”

The United Alternative Conference was initially proposed for the fall of 1998 but the date was pushed back until 1999 because Reform did not want their conference to conflict with the Progressive Conservative leadership selection process which was scheduled to be held in November of 1998. The Reform Party did not want to compete with the Tories for media attention and they also did not want to compete for supporters who potentially would have attended the United Alternative conference if they did not like the new Progressive Conservative leader.<sup>9</sup>

Gary Filmon, the Progressive Conservative Premier of Manitoba met with Manning in October of 1998. He later stated that he favoured a partnership at the national level, although he himself would stay on the sidelines. Mike Harris, Ontario's Progressive Conservative Premier remained on the sidelines, neither becoming actively involved or even commenting on the initiative. Alberta's Conservative Premier, Ralph Klein agreed to give the keynote address at the 1999 United Alternative convention. Klein suggested that the Federal Progressive Conservative Party was on life support and called for an amalgamation or coalition saying that we can't have the two parties fighting each other.<sup>10</sup>

The United Alternative convention was held at the Congress Centre in Ottawa in February of 1999, and attended by more than fifteen hundred delegates. Critics claimed that the United Alternative was simply the Reform Party under a different name. This was

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<sup>9</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Reformers give nod to United Alternative," Calgary Herald, 31 May 1998, Sec A, p.1-2.

<sup>10</sup> Claire Hoy, Stockwell Day: His Life And His Politics. (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co., Limited, 2000), p. 111.

not true, of the 1512 delegates, only 861 (57%) were Reformers, while just 651 (40%) were provincial or federal Progressive Conservatives. There were also a handful of soft nationalists from Quebec in attendance. Ontario was the province which was most represented with 684 delegates, including several provincial Cabinet ministers. Reform's heartland was also well represented: there were 328 delegates from Alberta and 238 delegates from B.C. However there were 118 more delegates from Ontario than from Alberta/B.C. combined. There were even 62 delegates from Quebec.<sup>11</sup>

The keynote address was given by Alberta Premier, Ralph Klein. Klein argued that Reform must moderate its views on Quebec and explosive social issues such as abortion and gay rights in order to achieve a Reform/Progressive Conservative alliance. He stated that no provinces should be given special powers but that Quebec's differences must be recognized because it is an inescapable historical fact that Quebec was recognized as different at the time of Confederation. He also said that the new party should not endorse policies which interfered with Canadian's personal morality. He claimed that neither Reform or the Tories were a national party but the conservative movement in Canada was not dead. Klein asserted that Canadians should have an alternative to vote for and that such an alternative could only be built with moderation. He urged delegates to vote in favour of an initiative that would bring the two groups together to form a party capable of implementing lower taxes, less government and tougher law and order. He noted that the

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<sup>11</sup>        *ibid*, p.114.

two groups had split the vote in the last two elections.<sup>12</sup>

The delegates were given four options to consider, including:

- 1) The creation of a new party.
- 2) Co-operation between the Reform and Progressive Conservative Parties at the riding level, which would take the form of fielding joint candidates, especially in Ontario.
- 3) Uniting behind one of either the Reform or Progressive Conservative Parties.
- 4) A merger of two or more parties.

The creation of a new party was the preferred option with 665 votes or 55% of those who cast ballots. In second place with 273 votes (22%) was the co-operation option. 252 delegates (20%) wanted to unite behind one of the parties, while only 33 delegates (3%) opted for the merger of two or more parties (289 delegates did not vote). The voting results meant that the twenty-one member steering committee had the authority to begin planning a founding convention for the new party, with a leadership convention to follow.

In an address to the delegates, Reform Party leader, Preston Manning told delegates that if the Tories and Reformers could end their vote-splitting, they could knock the Liberals from power, provide real tax relief and better healthcare for Canadians, as well as end the national unity soap opera.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Norma Greenway, "Bury the past, Klein urges right," Ottawa Citizen, 20 February 1999, Sec A, p. 1-2. Brian Laghi, Daniel Leblanc, "United Right must respect Quebec, Klein warns," Toronto Globe and Mail, 20 February 1999, Sec A, p.1,9. Peter O'Neil, "Reform must be more moderate on Quebec, social issues: Klein," Vancouver Sun, 20 February 1999, Sec A, p.1-2.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Samyn, "Manning speaks to the hearts of right-wing convention goers," Winnipeg Free Press, 21 February 1999, Sec A, p.2.

Progressive Conservative leader, Joe Clark declined Preston Manning's invitation to attend the conference, stating Canada did not need a political facelift. Clark stated, "I have no interest in a new party. I intend to make my party work."<sup>14</sup> Clark also indicated that he felt the United Alternative movement would not meet the expectations of its proponents. Clark claimed that his Progressive Conservatives were the only party with the potential to unseat the governing Liberals because the Reform Party had shown an inability to breakout of its western base.<sup>15</sup> Clark also stated that he would stand ready to pick up the pieces following the United Alternative convention, which he predicted would leave many participants disillusioned. He felt that following this failure, many Reformers would turn to his party.<sup>16</sup> At this time Clark was involved with his Canadian Alternative Campaign. It was his belief that if a new party did emerge from the convention that it would have no roots or be as limited in appeal as the Reform Party. He called the United Alternative convention a Reform Party meeting that drew poorly from Quebec and some other provinces.<sup>17</sup>

Many important issues were not discussed at the conference including who would lead the new party, what the new party would be named, as well as potentially explosive policy questions. These included Quebec, ethnic minorities, homosexuality, abortion and

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<sup>14</sup> Gary Rennie, "New party, 'no roots,'" Ottawa Citizen, 22 February 1999, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> Nelson Wyatt, "Clark in Quebec calls united right flash in pan," Winnipeg Free Press, 19 February 1999, Sec A, p.11.

<sup>16</sup> Phillip Auiter, "United Alternative 'cake' nothing but a donut says Joe Clark," Edmonton Journal, 20 February 1999, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>17</sup> Gary Rennie, Sec A, p.3.

capital punishment. Delegates defeated a resolution which embraced the concept of a Triple E senate but did pass one which called for an elected senate. The policy resolutions which were discussed and passed were extremely basic. For example, on economic and fiscal themes, delegates endorsed the concepts of lower taxes and paying down the deficit. On social themes, delegates endorsed a notion which called for policies which built upon Canada's traditional values of strength and compassion.<sup>18</sup> While the topic of immigration was raised, discussion was quickly cut off. Delegates also defeated a resolution which was deemed anti-immigrant, and supported a resolution that supported genuine refugees and immigration where it was a positive source of economic growth. Delegates also passed resolutions recognizing the family as the essential building block of society and one which called for holding federal institutions, particularly the judiciary more accountable to Canadians.<sup>19</sup>

At the end of the convention, there was acknowledgement among the delegates that the new party would have to be up and running by the next election. Preston Manning indicated that he would enter the future leadership race. Other potential leadership candidates speculated upon at the time included Ralph Klein, Deborah Grey, Tony Clement and Stockwell Day. Klein quickly ended the speculation surrounding him by

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<sup>18</sup> Norma Greenway, "Hot items take backseat on road to unity," Edmonton Journal, 21 February 1999, Sec A, p.1,14. Paul Samyn, "What price unity," Winnipeg Free Press, 22 February 1999, Sec A, p. 1-2.

<sup>19</sup> Mike Blanchfield, "Resolutions steer clear of Morality," Ottawa Citizen, February 22 1999, Sec A, p.3.

stating he would not run one day after the convention.<sup>20</sup>

Critics suggested that the convention results and the approval of a new party by delegates were preordained. The decision to form a new party also raised fears among critics that the new party could lead to three parties of the right, the new party, a Reform splinter and the Progressive Conservatives which would further exacerbate the right wing vote splitting problem. They also raised concerns that there would still be a new party/Tory vote split in the next election, particularly with the election of Joe Clark as Progressive Conservative Party leader.<sup>21</sup>

The actual level of public support for the United Alternative was difficult to accurately gauge at this stage. At one extreme, the Toronto Star published a poll which found only 18% of Canadians would vote for the UA, while at the other extreme a National Post poll claimed that 53% of Canadians would vote for the UA. Reform Party pollster, Andre Turcotte claimed that his polling had found that 37% of Canadians would vote for the UA.<sup>22</sup>

Shortly after the United Alternative Convention, Preston Manning stated that the United Alternative would turn to provincial parties if it failed to gain support from the Federal Progressive Conservative Party and its leader, Joe Clark. While indicating that he

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<sup>20</sup> Mike Blanchfield, "Manning will fight for leadership," Edmonton Journal, 22 February 1999, Sec A, p.3. Larry Johnsrude, "Klein ready to support Day if he runs for leadership," Edmonton Journal, 23 February 2000, Sec A, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> Norma Greenway, "Not all Reformers united on United Alternative" Ottawa Citizen, 21 February 1999, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>22</sup> Edward Greenspon, "Numbers vary on new party," Toronto Globe and Mail, 20 February 1999, Sec A, p.9.

was leaving the door open to Clark and the Tories, Manning proclaimed that there were other Conservative parties in Canada, citing the Harris, Klein and Filmon Conservatives as examples. Manning stated that these parties had numerous resources at the riding level. However he did not shut the door on the Federal Tories saying he was willing to meet with Joe Clark under any condition. <sup>23</sup>

Not all Reformers were pleased with the convention's results, fearing a new coalition would water down Reform's policies. Preston Manning wrote to every party member urging them to vote in favour of the United Alternative concept. The ballots on whether to go forward with the United Alternative initiative were sent out in early May. In June of 1999, 61% of Reform Party members voted in favour of continuing to explore the United Alternative process. The plan was approved by the majority of Reformers in every province except Saskatchewan. However only 48% of the party's membership voted in the referendum. Fifty percent plus one was needed for the resolution to pass. In addition, the majority support of all the provinces and territories was also required for the resolution to pass. It should be noted that in 1999, P.E.I., the N.W.T. and Nunuvaut did not have the membership totals required by the Reform Party to be recognized as a region. (For complete: referendum results see Table 1: at the end of the chapter).

In the fall of 1999, at their national convention, the Progressive Conservatives rejected any formal partnership with the Reform Party of Canada. At that time, they endorsed a motion christened the 301 amendment that called for the party to run

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<sup>23</sup>

Mark Stevenson, "Reform leader says new party could court provincial Tories," Ottawa Citizen, 23 February 1999, Sec A, p.5.

candidates in all three hundred and one of Canada's ridings. The motion was supported by the vast majority of convention delegates. According to party officials only 2% of the convention delegates were opposed to the proposal. Party leader, Joe Clark stated that fielding three hundred and one candidates in the next election was the prerequisite for being a party which claimed to be national. This decision ended any possibility of participation by the federal Tories in the creation of a new party as well as ending the possibility of the two parties fielding joint candidates in the next election.<sup>24</sup>

In the fall of 1999, Ontario Progressive Conservative Premier, Mike Harris made it clear that he would not enter into the fight between Reform and the Federal Progressive Conservative Party. Harris stated, "I am tied to no federal party nor will I be this year or next year or five years or ten years in the future. My job is to do the best that I can for the people of Ontario. I aspired to that job, I sought it and I intend to keep it for a good deal of time to come including the next election."<sup>25</sup>

The second United Alternative convention was held in Ottawa, Ontario at the Ottawa Congress Centre. The convention was divided into two parts, the United Alternative Convention, which was held between January 27 and 29 and the Reform Assembly which was held on January 29 and 30. The keynote speaker was Alberta Finance Minister, Stockwell Day. The convention chairs were Val Meredith (Reform Party) and Tom Long (Ontario Provincial Conservative Party). A resolution was passed by more than

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<sup>24</sup> Graham Fraser, "Tories slam door on Reform," Toronto Globe and Mail, 2 October 1999, Sec A, p. 1,4.

<sup>25</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "UA doesn't need Tories to succeed, Manning says," National Post, 5 October 1999, Sec A, p.6.

1,100 delegates to form a new political party. Preston Manning had threatened to resign as party leader if the United Alternative effort was not given the required two-thirds majority in the upcoming March mail-in balloting. The party was divided at the time of the conference. A survey by the National Citizens Coalition of Reformers released as the United Alternative conference opened revealed that 48% of Reformers were in favour of the concept, while 47% were opposed. Manning also faced dissent from some members of his caucus. Dick Harris a Reform M.P. from British Columbia issued a challenge to Manning's leadership and threatened to help defeat the fledgling movement. Harris stated, "Come hell or high water we will defeat the United Alternative". Saskatchewan M.P. Lee Morrison also opposed the United Alternative plan. In addition, party chair Gee Tsang had resigned on January 11, 2000 over his opposition to the United Alternative. Opposition to the United Alternative also came in the form of a splinter group known as G.U.A.R.D.. This stood for Grassroots United Against Reform's Demise and was lead by George Burns. The movement was supported by Reform M.P, Jake Hoepfner. The movement was small and largely ignored by Reform officials.<sup>26</sup>

A poll released at the conference by Reform's party pollster, Andre Turcotte revealed that 34% of Canadians would vote for the new party. In Ontario, the results were encouraging. The poll revealed that the Liberals would receive 54% of the vote, the Tories 21%, Reform 16% and the NDP 8%. However the United Alternative would receive 31% of the vote while the Liberals would receive 42% of the vote, the NDP 17% and the

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<sup>26</sup> Norm Ovenden, "Day urges Right-wing to accept vote," Edmonton Journal, 27 January 2000, Sec A, p. 1, 16. Norm Ovenden, "Reform hires non-partisan moderator for debates," Edmonton Journal, 27 January 2000, Sec A, p.6.

Tories only 6%. Turcotte's poll also revealed that support was highest on the Prairies and in B.C and among Canadian's 18 to 25 years of age. His poll had the UA ahead of the Liberals in B.C. (44% to 29%) and the Prairies (39% to 33%), while trailing the Liberals in Atlantic Canada. In Quebec, the UA was third behind the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois.<sup>27</sup>

At the 2000 conference, the fledgling Saskatchewan Party was held up by many delegates as an example and a model for the United Alternative movement. The party formed in the late 1990's is a coalition of provincial Liberals and Conservatives as well as federal Reformers. It won 26 seats in its first election in September of 1999, reducing the governing NDP from 42 to 29 seats. The Saskatchewan Party was cited as a model for the way that divided and weak opposition parties can threaten governments when they put aside their different labels and forge stable policy based alliances.<sup>28</sup> Party leader Elwin Hermanson was quoted as saying, "There's a vacuum at the federal level that's quite like what we had in this province before the Saskatchewan Party....We should be bringing people together, rather than fragmenting the political landscape."

There was also the feeling among delegates that the new right wing party could replicate the success of the Harris Conservative government in Ontario on the national stage. Tom Long made comparisons between the new movement and the Harris Conservatives in the early 1990's. He stated that both parties were given little credibility

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<sup>27</sup> John Geddes, "Reform's Gamble," *Macleans*, 31 January 2000, 36-37.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Stockland, "Joe Clark fast becoming Joe Who again in UA," *Calgary Herald*, 29 January 2000, Sec A, p.3.

and had leaders who were deemed by the media as too rural, unsophisticated and right wing to ever form government. He said that the task for the new party was to rebrand itself as the Harris Conservatives did with the Common Sense Revolution slogans in order to open the political debate and get people to listen to the message. <sup>29</sup>

The United Alternative's Steering Committee was a mix of Reformers, federal and provincial Progressive Conservatives and members of the Saskatchewan Party. Six members were Reformers, Rick Anderson, Deborah Grey, Cliff Fryers, Ken Kalopsis, Jason Kenney and Nancy Branscombe, while Clayton Manness was a former Manitoba Progressive Conservative MLA. Michael Burns and Peter White were both formerly involved with the Federal Progressive Conservatives. Tony Clement and Tom Long were active members of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. Donald Morgan and Bill Boyd were both former members of the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party and were active with the Saskatchewan Party. Rod Love was a former Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff for Alberta Premier Ralph Klein. Robert Dechert, Ken Langley, Thompson McDonald and John Mykytyshyn had no discernable past involvement with any political party. <sup>30</sup>

The United Alternative delegates were given four choices of names for the new party. These were: Reform Party of Canada, Canadian United Reform Alliance, Reform Party of Canada Alliance and Canadian Conservative Reform Alliance. The name chosen

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<sup>29</sup> Peter O'Neil, "Repackaged Reform only way to go, strategists say," Vancouver Sun, 28 January 2000, Sec A, p.9.

<sup>30</sup> Peter O'Neil, "Moment of Truth for UA," Vancouver Sun, 29 January 2000, Sec A, p.22.

was the Canadian Conservative Reform Alliance. The new name caused some embarrassment among the delegates when it was realized that if party was added to the name, the party's acronym was C.C.R.A.P. As well, the acronym was the same as the one used by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. Delegates also approved a seventy-five policy platform, which included a call for a 17% flat tax for all Canadians.

Conference delegates passed resolutions which called for sharply lowering Canadian's tax burden, legislating repayment of Canada's debt, M.P. recall and more free votes, greater freedom for Canadians in choice of healthcare and recognition of Canada as a bilingual country and protection of minority language rights.

Preston Manning also had to survive a leadership review on Sunday. Under the Reform Party's constitution failure to do so would have resulted in an automatic leadership race which would have taken several months. This of course would have halted the United Alternative movement in its tracks. Manning received a 75% approval rating from the 900 Reform Party delegates which was higher than expected, although it was six percent lower than the 81% he had received in his previous leadership review in 1998.<sup>31</sup>

A mail-in vote was held for all Reformers between February 14 and March 17, 2000, on whether or not they approved of the adoption of the party constitution and policy framework of the new party. A two-thirds majority of support, as well as fifty percent plus one in all provinces and the combined territories was needed for the resolution to pass. The results of the mail-in vote were announced on March 25, 2000 at an event held at the Calgary Metropolitan Centre. 92% of those who responded favoured the formation of a

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<sup>31</sup> Norm Ovenden, "Let Reform die-Manning," Edmonton Journal, 31 January 2000, Sec A, p. 1,5.

new party. This was a much stronger endorsement than expected. The question was: "Shall the Reform Party of Canada adopt the new constitution and party policy declaration of the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance." Yes or No. Roughly two thirds of the party's members voted (48,838 out of 73,437). It should be noted that 75% of those who voted resided in Western Canada (36,000 out of 48,000). (For complete results see Table 2. at the end of the chapter). The Reform name continues to be owned by the Alliance federally and in all provinces and territories except British Columbia. Additionally it is still registered with Elections Canada. All of the assets of the Reform Party of Canada were automatically transferred to the Canadian Alliance. The party's caucus had to vote on whether or not to accept the new name and if it was accepted they were required to inform the speaker of the house of the change. However Chief Electoral Officer, Jean Pierre Kingsley still had to rule on whether or not the new name could be used as the Tories had filed a complaint arguing that it was too close to their own.<sup>32</sup>

The results of the first round of the leadership race were announced on June 24, 2000 in Calgary Alberta. The leadership race rules stated that no new party memberships could be sold between the first and second leadership votes. As well, no spending limits were set for the leadership campaigns. There were a number of leadership candidates. They included: Preston Manning, Stockwell Day, Tom Long, Keith Martin and John Stachow. The Canadian Alliance's leadership race took a different form than those that preceded it. This was the first time the leader of a federal party was chosen directly by the party's rank

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<sup>32</sup> Jennifer Ditchburn, "Reform lived a short but full life," Winnipeg Free Press, 26 March 2000, Sec A, p.5. Norm Ovenden, "New political party born," Edmonton Journal, 26 March 2000, Sec A, p.1,12.

and file members. Essentially any individual who bought a ten dollar Canadian Alliance membership was eligible to vote. Those members west of Quebec received a ballot which could be marked at the polling station in their constituency. Those members who resided in rural ridings or east of Ontario voted by phone through the use of a special access code. In order to win, a candidate was required to earn a minimum of 51% of the votes cast. If no winner emerged on the first ballot, a second run-off would take place between the top two vote getters.

Approximately 116,000 Canadian Alliance members voted in the first round of balloting. On the first round of balloting, Stockwell Day emerged as the front runner with 50,994 votes (44%), a lead of more than 9,000 votes over Preston Manning, who was second with 41,623 votes (36%). Tom Long was third with 21,603 votes (19%). Keith Martin received slightly more than 1% of the vote and John Stachow received 0.2% of the vote. Stockwell Day captured every province west of Quebec with the exception of British Columbia. It is interesting to note that approximately 100,000 Canadian Alliance members declined to vote in the first round of balloting. A second vote would take place on July 8, 2000. (For complete results see Table 3. at the end of the chapter).

114,000 party members voted in the second round of balloting and Stockwell Day received 64% of the vote on the second ballot to become the first leader of the Canadian Alliance Party. Preston Manning earned 36% of the vote and finished second.<sup>33</sup>

Progressive Conservative Party leader, Joe Clark stated that Stockwell Day's win

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Samyn, "Handicapping Alliance Race," Winnipeg Free Press, 24 June 2000, Sec A, p.1-2  
Paul Samyn, "Day takes Round 1," Winnipeg Free Press, 25 June 2000, Sec A, p.1-2. Peter Stockland, "Day leads after first ballot," Calgary Herald, 25 June 2000, Sec A, p. 1,7.

demonstrated the Canadian Alliance's narrow base of support. Clark also challenged Day to run against him in a by-election in the riding of Calgary Centre.<sup>34</sup> (For complete results see Table 4. at the end of the chapter).

A Compass poll released just prior to the final round of leadership balloting revealed that the Liberals had the support of 44% of Canadians while the Alliance was second with 25%. The Progressive Conservatives were at 14%, the NDP 10% and the Bloc Quebecois 9%.<sup>35</sup>

## **Conclusion**

By the end of the 1990's, the Reform Party had established itself as a regional party in the mould of the type described in McCormick's second scenario. However the leadership of the party decided that in order for Reform to survive and prosper in the long term a new direction was needed. This new direction was a shift away from regional party status towards national party status. It was out of this that the United Alternative was born. Initially the party sought to create a coalition comprised of Filmon Conservatives in Manitoba, Klein Conservatives in Alberta, Harris Conservatives in Ontario, supporters of the Saskatchewan Party (a provincial party comprised of Liberals, Conservatives and Reformers), supporters of the B.C. Reform, Liberal and NDP parties, supporters of various political groups in Quebec such as the Liberals and the Action Democratique Du Quebec and supporters of various Atlantic Canadian political parties. However this hope was not realized and ultimately the new party would be a coalition between the Reform Party, the

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<sup>34</sup> Eric Beauchenge, "Day's win seen as Clark's loss," Calgary Herald, 10 July 2000, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>35</sup> <<http://www.compass.ca>> (June 27, 2001).

Saskatchewan Party and the Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario provincial Progressive Conservative Parties. This decision to transform the Reform Party would lead to a two year process which would ultimately result in the creation of a new party, the Canadian Alliance and a new party leader, Stockwell Day. The next question to be answered was whether this new party would be able to establish itself as a national party like the one described in McCormick's third scenario or whether it would suffer the fate of its predecessor and remain a regional party.

**TABLE 1**  
**RESULT OF 1999 REFERENDUM OF REFORM PARTY MEMBERS ON**  
**WHETHER OR NOT TO PROCEED WITH UA EXPERIMENT**

PROVINCE	IN FAVOUR	PER CENT	OPPOSED	PER CENT
ALBERTA	6,558	62	4061	38
BRITISH COLUMBIA	5,625	64	3138	36
MANITOBA	788	51	772	49
NEW BRUNSWICK	299	68	140	32
NEWFOUNDLAND	43	72	17	28
NOVA SCOTIA	283	57	215	43
ONTARIO	5,008	62	3067	38
P.E.I.	None	None	None	None
QUEBEC	78	64	44	36
SASKATCHEWAN	1,836	37	1155	63
TERRITORIES	30	34	58	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,393</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>12,667</b>	<b>39</b>

Source: Kenneth Carty, William Cross, Lisa Young, Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics, (Toronto, ON: UBC Press, 2000), p.60.

**TABLE 2**  
**RESULTS OF 2000 REFERENDUM OF REFORM PARTY MEMBERS ON WHETHER OR NOT**  
**THE PARTY SHOULD TRANSFORM ITSELF INTO THE CANADIAN ALLIANCE PARTY**

PROVINCE	IN FAVOUR	PER CENT	OPPOSED	PER CENT
ALBERTA	16,076	95	936	5
BRITISH COLUMBIA	12,862	93	948	7
MANITOBA	1,752	81	414	19
NEW BRUNSWICK	638	96	25	4
NEWFOUNDLAND	95	94	6	6
NOVA SCOTIA	568	87	87	13
ONTARIO	10,328	91	1,026	9
P.E.I.	47	92	4	8
QUEBEC	122	91	12	9
SASKATCHEWAN	2,331	83	483	17
TERRITORIES	63	81	15	19

Source: [www.canadianalliance.ca](http://www.canadianalliance.ca)

**TABLE 3  
LEADERSHIP BALLOTING - ROUND ONE**

CANDIDATE	ALBERTA	BRITISH COLUMBIA	SASKATCHEWAN	MANITOBA	ONTARIO	NOVA SCOTIA	NEW BRUNSWICK	NEWFOUNDLAND	TELEVOTERS
Day	4,399	11,717	1,399	912	13,041	154	480	21	20,859
Manning	5,843	9,547	697	582	8,358	181	543	66	17,344
Long	1,536	1,538	139	333	11,952	82	114	99	6,010
Martin	517	139	12	16	352	12	4	2	619
Stachow	11	39	3	5	91	1	0	0	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,306</b>	<b>22,980</b>	<b>2,250</b>	<b>1,848</b>	<b>33,794</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>1,141</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>44,891</b>

Source: Mahoney, Jill. "Technically - It Was A Mess", Toronto Globe and Mail, June 26,2000, Sec. A, p.6.

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**TABLE 4  
LEADERSHIP VOTE - ROUND TWO**

CANDIDATE	ALBERTA	BRITISH COLUMBIA	SASKATCHEWAN	MANITOBA	ONTARIO	NOVA SCOTIA	NEW BRUNSWICK	NEWFOUNDLAND	TELEVOTERS
Day	6,543	11,698	1,413	1,180	19,127	240	651	27	30,578
Manning	5,026	7,911	569	487	8,186	169	560	64	18,330
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,569</b>	<b>19,609</b>	<b>1,982</b>	<b>1,667</b>	<b>27,313</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1,211</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>48,908</b>

Source: Langhi, Brian. "Manning Washed Away by the Changing Tide", Toronto Globe and Mail, July 10, 2000, Sec. A, p.6

## **CHAPTER THREE: POLICY AND PLATFORMS**

### **Introduction**

The Canadian Alliance Party was created to serve as the mechanism which would allow the Reform Party to cease its existence as a regional party and begin a new existence as a national party. In order for the Canadian Alliance to break out of its regional party status and achieve national party status, it would have to develop a platform which would allow the party to retain the Reform Party's traditional base of support while at the same time attracting the support of those who traditionally voted for one of the other parties. While supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party would serve as the Alliance's primary target, it would also need to attract individuals who in the past had voted Liberal or NDP as well as swing voters. This chapter will compare and contrast the Canadian Alliance's 2000 Federal Election platform with the 1997 Federal Election platforms of the Reform and Progressive Conservative Parties and will also compare these policies with various public opinion polls. The purpose of this chapter will be to determine the extent to which the Canadian Alliance was able to create a platform which retained traditional Reform Party policies, while at the same time included policies endorsed by supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party and Canadian public opinion as a whole.

### **Policy Comparisons**

#### **1. Economic Policy**

The Canadian Alliance platform for the 2000 Federal Election offered lower federal tax rates. A 17% rate on incomes up to \$100,000. 2) a 25% rate on money earned above \$100,000. The 25% bracket would be cut to 17% in the second term of an Alliance

government. At the time of the election, the tax rates were as follows, 29% for the top bracket, 24% for the middle bracket and 17% for the lowest bracket. This policy is similar to the one adopted by the Alliance's predecessor, the Reform Party in the 1997 Federal General Election, when it vowed to collapse the number of federal income tax brackets from five to two. One minor difference between the two policies is that the Alliance specified what the two rates would be, while Reform did not. Moreover the Alliance plan called for there to eventually be a single rate. The policy is also similar to the one adopted by the Progressive Conservatives in 1997. They pledged to phase in a ten percent reduction in federal income tax.<sup>1</sup>

The Canadian Alliance's platform also included a legislated annual debt repayment of six billion dollars, as well as a requirement that 75% of unexpected surpluses be allocated to debt repayment. At the time of the election, Canada's national debt was five hundred and sixty-five billion dollars. In addition, the national debt cost Canadians forty-two billion dollars a year in interest payments or twenty-five cents of every dollar Ottawa received. The Alliance offered no deadlines on when the debt would be eliminated. Again this policy is similar to the one adopted by the Reform Party in 1997. They promised to set aside ten billion dollars a year for national debt repayment.<sup>2</sup>

A survey conducted by Ipos-Reid during the early stages of the election revealed that taxes were the second most important issue to Canadians. This was especially true

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Samyn, "Charest pushes income tax cut," Winnipeg Free Press, 6 May 1997, Sec B, p.2.  
Paul Samyn, "Deficit tough balancing act," Winnipeg Free Press, 20 May 1997, Sec A, p.8. Aldo Santin, "A Taxing Decision," Winnipeg Free Press, 6 November 2000. Sec A, p.9.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Samyn, "Deficit tough balancing act," Sec A, p.8. Aldo Santin, Sec A, p.9.

among males. In the survey 31% of males indicated that taxes were their major concern. Furthermore in the same survey, the debt/deficit was the third most important issue. In that survey, 22% of male respondents listed the debt/deficit as their major concern.<sup>3</sup>

The Canadian Alliance pledged to increase the basic personal exemption for wage earners and their spouses to ten thousand dollars. This policy would have removed 1.4 million low income earners from the tax rolls. This policy parallels ones adopted by both the Reform Party and the Progressive Conservative Party in 1997. Reform promised to increase the basic tax exemption from \$6,459 to \$7,900 and to increase the spousal exemption from \$5,380 to \$7,900, while the Tories pledged to increase the basic income tax credit from \$6,549 to \$10,000.<sup>4</sup>

The Alliance planned to reduce payroll taxes, introduce a ten percent reduction in small business taxes and to drop the corporate tax rate to twenty-one percent. The plan to reduce business taxes was also adopted by the Federal Tories in 1997. They pledged to reduce small business rates from 12% to 8%.<sup>5</sup>

The party promised to reduce the capital gains tax to fifty percent of investment earnings at a maximum rate of fourteen and a half percent. This was a slight change from Reform's 1997 policy. While both parties promised to decrease the tax, the Alliance pledged to reduce it by twenty-five percent, while Reform pledged to reduce it by fifty percent. (Reform promised to reduce the capital gains inclusion rate from 75% to 37.5%).

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<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.angusreed.com>> (July 21, 2001)

<sup>4</sup> Linda Goyette, "Key Issue Is Work," Calgary Herald, 6 May 1997, Sec A, p.17. Aldo Santin, Sec A, p.9.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

The Alliance promised to eliminate the GST but only on fuel. The party promised to reduce the federal excise tax on gasoline and diesel fuel and at the same time alter the way the GST is levied at the pump to ensure that it did not tax the other taxes that are built into the price of fuel. In contrast, Reform had vowed to eliminate the Goods and Service Tax.<sup>6</sup>

The Canadian Alliance called for a 16% cut on employer EI premiums. In 1997, Reform had vowed to slash employer contributions to Employment Insurance by 28%. The Alliance and Reform both advocated the concept of lower EI premium contributions for employers, but Reform's plan reduced the premiums by nearly double what was envisioned in the Alliance's plan.<sup>7</sup>

The Canadian Alliance platform retained the child care deduction but increased the ceiling to \$7000. The party also called for exemptions of three thousand dollars a year per child or ten thousand dollars for the first child of a single mother. The Reform Party had promised to introduce a \$3,000 child tax credit. Reform's stance on the child care deduction was to convert it to a tax credit and extend it to all families.<sup>8</sup>

The Alliance's declaration of policy stated that the party was committed to passing legislation which would require the government to balance its budget every year, except in the cases of true national emergencies (which are not defined). This pledge is the same as one made by the Tories in the 1997 election campaign. In that campaign, they pledged to

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<sup>6</sup>     ibid.

<sup>7</sup>     ibid.

<sup>8</sup>     ibid.

pass a balanced budget law similar to that which was adopted in Manitoba by the Filmon Conservatives. It also is a logical extension of promises made by both Reform and the Tories in 1997, when they both pledged to eliminate the national deficit. However since the Chretien government accomplished this in their budget tabled on February 28, 2000 such a pledge is now obsolete.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Populism

The Alliance supported the concept of citizen-initiated referenda. These binding referenda could be held on any issue that a group chose. The Alliance stated that it was committed to establishing a threshold which would prevent any frivolous attempt to hold a referendum. The party stated it would not inhibit citizens from bringing forward referendums on any issue and cited the monarchy, capital punishment and monetary reform as possible subjects on which a referendum might be held. The Alliance cited Australia and Switzerland as two nations where such a practice is used. The Alliance also promised more free votes in the House of Commons, M.P. recall, more say for the public in the constitution through citizen assemblies, and a guarantee of democratic accountability. All of these policies were a direct continuation of policies previously held by the Reform Party.

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The Canadian Alliance platform was committed to the idea of elected Senators but was non-committal on the issues of Senate equality and effectiveness. This differed from a long standing commitment of the Reform party to the concept of a Triple E Senate (Equal,

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<sup>9</sup>       ibid.

<sup>10</sup>       Eric Beauchense, "Promises, Promises," Calgary Herald, 5 May 1997, Sec A, p.12. Joan Bryden, "Day ducks abortion questions," Winnipeg Free Press, 7 November 2000, Sec A, p.15.

Elected and Effective).

The Alliance pledged that top officials appointed by the government such as judges, the ethics counsellor and the presidents of Crown Corporations would have to be approved by an all party parliamentary commission. In other words, merit and qualifications not money, blood relation or previous political works would decided who received the appointments. This policy is similar to one advocated by the Progressive Conservatives in 1997. The Tories also pledged to reform the appointment process, with the effect of reducing the role of the Prime Minister increasing the role of the provinces for some appointments to the Senate, and giving an all parliamentary committee a central role in major appointments for Governor-General, Ambassadorial posts and the Supreme Court Justices. <sup>11</sup>

### **3. Justice Policy**

In the area of Justice, the Canadian Alliance pledged to introduce a tougher Young Offenders Act. One such change in this area would have been that sixteen and seventeen year old offenders would be tried in adult courts and sent to adult prisons. This pledge was a variation of Reform policy from 1997. In that campaign, Reform pledged to eliminate the Young Offenders Act and replace it with laws making juvenile offenders responsible for their own actions. These included an age limit for juveniles of ten to fifteen, adult court for those fourteen and fifteen charged with a serious offense and adult court for any offender over the age of sixteen. The concept of "toughening" the Young Offenders Act was also

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<sup>11</sup> Susan Delacourt, "Tory Plan Built On Tax Cut Promise," Toronto Globe and Mail, 27 May 1997, Sec A, p.10. Jennifer Ditchburn, "Day vows reform in appointment process," Edmonton Journal, 23 November 2000, Sec A, p.2.

endorsed by the Progressive Conservatives in 1997. They wanted to lower the applicable age of the Young Offenders Act from twelve to ten, as well as holding the parents of young offenders financially responsible for their children's behaviour. In the case of the Alliance and the Tories, they embraced the same concept but differed on their chosen methods of implementation.<sup>12</sup>

The Alliance, Reform and the Progressive Conservatives all promised to eliminate the "faint hope clause" from the Canadian Criminal Code. (Section 745 of the Criminal Code). Section 745 of the Criminal Code of Canada allows prisoners convicted of first degree murder to apply for parole after serving fifteen years of their sentences.<sup>13</sup>

One area where Reform and the Alliance differed was on the issue of capital punishment. In 1997, the Reform Party promised a capital punishment referendum, while the Alliance did not. The Canadian Alliance did call for referenda, as had Reform, so potentially there could have been a referendum on the subject under a Canadian Alliance government but only because a significant segment of the Canadian population wanted one, not because of an electoral pledge.<sup>14</sup>

The Alliance promised to introduce lifetime probation and supervision for those convicted of a second serious violent or sexual offence. It also committed to a no parole

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<sup>12</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Alliance unveils tough approach to crime fighting," National Post, 15 November 2000, Sec A, p.11. Sandra Cordon, "No 'faint hope' for killers, Charest vows," Calgary Herald, 5 May 1997, Sec A, p.12. David Kuxhaus, "Manning says Reform stands for Unity," Winnipeg Free Press, 24 May 1997, Sec A, p.7.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Day accuses Liberals of being soft on crime," National Post, 14 November 2000, Sec A, p.8. Eric Beauchense, Sec A, p.12.

quota law and no statutory release after the completion of two-thirds of a life sentence. In 1997, The Reform Party had promised a reformed parole system. The only difference is that the Alliance platform describes in part what a reformed parole system would involve, while the Reform platform was silent on what changes their pledge would bring. A National Post/Southam News/Global poll published on November 25, 2000 suggested that the vast majority of Canadians (88%) believed that the penalties for crimes involving violence were too lenient.<sup>15</sup>

The Alliance pledged to eliminate Bill C-68, as both Reform and the Tories had in 1997. Bill C-68 was most greatly opposed in British Columbia and the Prairie Provinces. A December 1996 Ipsos-Reid poll revealed that while only 29% of the Canadian population was opposed to gun control, 34% of British Columbians, 46% of Albertans and 51% of the residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan were opposed to the Federal government's gun control legislation. In 1997, all sixty of Reform's seats were in these two regions, while in 1993, fifty-one of Reform's fifty-two seats were in these two regions.<sup>16</sup>

The Alliance promised legislation which would have made biker gangs criminal enterprises and made it a crime to join one. It also would have introduced mandatory sentencing and parole ineligibility for members of organized crime.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "Canada Could Use A Fresh Start", Winnipeg Free Press, 15 May 1997, Sec A, p.10. Anne-Marie Owens, "Canadians Split On Creationism," National Post, 25 November 2000, Sec A, p.1,6. Mike Tricky, "Day unveils get tough law plan," Calgary Herald, 15 November 2000, Sec A, p.21.

<sup>16</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Alliance unveils tough approach to crime fighting," Sec A, p.11. Eric Beauchense, Sec A, p.12. <<http://www.angusreed.com>> (August 1, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Alliance unveils tough approach to crime fighting," Sec A, p.11. Sheldon Alberts, "Day accuses Liberals of being soft on crime," Sec A, p.8.

The Canadian Alliance pledged to make conditional sentences not applicable to violent, weapons, sex or drug related offenses and promised to introduce automatic penalties. It committed to eliminate concurrent sentencing. The Alliance committed to introducing an automatic dangerous offender status law for those convicted of a third serious or violent sexual offense. The party promised to bypass the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms if necessary to deal with issues such as child pornography, biker gangs and immigrant smuggling. They also pledged to introduce mandatory DNA sampling for anyone charged with a serious indictable offence.<sup>18</sup> The platform pledged a shift away from rehabilitation and a shift towards punishment. It pledged to eliminate minimum security prisons. The Alliance also promised truth in sentencing legislation. For example, under such a system a five year term of imprisonment would result in the convicted spending five years incarcerated. The party also hinted that a life sentence could be increased from the current twenty-five years but did not specify how much they would increase this.<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Healthcare**

In the realm of healthcare policy, the Alliance touted the idea of replacing federal cash funding with a transfer of tax points. The Alliance wanted to open discussions with the provinces on the issue of transferring tax authority to the provinces, which would enable them to fund healthcare without having to rely on federal cash transfers. The party stated that they would allow greater flexibility for the provinces to innovate in the areas of

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<sup>18</sup> Mike Tricky, "Day unveils get tough law plan," Calgary Herald, 15 November 2000, Sec A, p.21

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

financing, management and the delivery of healthcare, but the provinces would still have to honour the Canada Health Act. This devolution of powers is a continuance of previous Reform Party policy. In 1997, Reform stated that there should be a diminished role for the Federal Government and a transfer of powers to the provinces. It advocated that the Federal government be responsible for national defence, foreign affairs and national standards and that the provinces should have jurisdiction over social services, language and culture. They proposed to give to every province the same set of rights. Healthcare is of course a social service. The concept of replacing federal cash funding with a transfer of tax points was advocated by the Progressive Conservatives in 1997. As part of their "Canadian Covenant", the federal government would have surrendered to the provinces tax points corresponding to their share of health care and post secondary educational funding. This would remove the provinces from the mercy of Ottawa's budget cutbacks.<sup>20</sup>

The Alliance committed to working with the provinces to develop national standards that ensured respect for the five principles of the Canada Health Act. The party advocated a collaborative approach to healthcare, which would see the provinces and the federal government negotiate standards which would apply across Canada. This pledge is similar to one adopted by the Federal Progressive Conservatives in 1997. The Tories pledged to negotiate with the provinces to establish a "Canadian Covenant" which would establish benchmarks for health care, post secondary education and inter-provincial trade. In exchange for the transfer of tax points, the provinces would have been required to come

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<sup>20</sup> Sheldon Alberts, Robert Fife, "Health care 'issue of campaign,'" National Post, 1 November 2000, Sec A, p. 1,16. Eric Beauchense, Sec A, p.12. "The Jean Charest Healthcare Guarantee," Toronto Globe and Mail, 9 May 1997, Sec A, p.12.

to an agreement with the federal government on quality standards for services provided in these areas, national norms which would have the force of law. The Tories like the Alliance had promised that the basis for these standards would be the Canada Health Act.<sup>21</sup>

The Alliance also promised to immediately restore full funding to the healthcare system and not wait until March of 2002, as the Liberals had with the twenty-three billion dollar deal they reached with the provinces shortly before the election. The Alliance promised to put their commitment to certain levels of healthcare funding into law.<sup>22</sup> The party wanted to amend the Canada Health Act to entrench stable five year funding that would include regular increases. It also pledged to restore an additional four hundred million dollars to the 18.3 billion pledged for the 2001/2002 cash transfer to the provinces. The party called the Liberals September 2000 funding promises a good first step. This policy parallels the Progressive Conservative platform of 1997. In 1997, the Tories had pledged to increase healthcare funding and to ensure future funding growth. It is also similar to Reform's 1997 platform, which pledged to add an additional four billion dollars to healthcare transfer payments.<sup>22</sup>

The Canadian Alliance also declared its support for the five principles of the Canada Health Act, which are accessibility, universality, comprehensiveness, portability

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<sup>21</sup> Sheldon Alberts, Robert Fife, "Health care 'issue of campaign,'" Sec A1, p.1,16. "The Jean Charest Healthcare Guarantee," Sec A, p.12

<sup>22</sup> Eric Beauchense, Sec A, p.12. Norma Greenway, "Chretien distorting our health policy\_Day," Edmonton Journal, 29 October 2000, Sec A, p.11. Norm Ovenden, "Firefight over Medicare," Edmonton Journal, 1 November 2000, Sec A, p.1. "The Jean Charest Healthcare Guarantee," Sec A, p.12.

and public administration. A survey taken during the election revealed that the majority of Canadians support the principles of the Canada Health Act. The Alliance also promised that it would not introduce a two-tiered healthcare system. The Canadian Alliance pledged to restore transfer payments to the provinces to the 1994 level of 18.7 billion dollars. It also pledged to rewrite the Canada Health Act to ensure stable federal funding. The Canadian Alliance pledged to establish a health care dispute resolution system, developed by Ottawa and the provinces that would prevent such abuses as extra billing and queue-jumping by the wealthy. The Alliance proclaimed that they were committed to a universally available healthcare system which was publicly financed and operated and that they were not in favour of expanding the private system at the expense of the public system.<sup>23</sup>

Surveys conducted by Ipos-Reid and Environics at the start of the election campaign revealed that among Canadians, healthcare was considered the most important election issue. In the Ipos Reid poll, nearly half of all Canadians (48%) listed healthcare as the most important electoral issue, while in the Environics poll, it was 24%.<sup>24</sup>

#### **4. Spending Cuts**

The Canadian Alliance promised to eliminate regional development agencies and to seek private investors for the CBC, VIA Rail and other Crown Corporations. The Canadian Alliance pledged to cut funding to the Heritage department by eliminating some programs such as the twenty million dollar Canadian flag giveaway which was established

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<sup>23</sup> Norma Greenway, "Chretien distorting our health policy\_Day," Sec A, p.11. Norm Ovenden, "Firefight over Medicare," Sec A, p.1.

<sup>24</sup> <<http://www.environics.com>. > (July 31, 2001) <<http://www.angusreed.com>. > (July 31, 2001)

by Liberal Heritage Minister, Sheila Copps. The party believed that lower taxes and other incentives would stimulate more voluntary sponsorship and would create the best possible climate for the arts. The Alliance planned to make spending cuts in areas they deemed to be low priorities such as business subsidies, job creation programs and the cultural area.

The Reform Party had promised to eliminate regional development agencies such as the department of Western Diversification. It had also pledged to eliminate the CRTC and the Offices of Official Languages. It had committed to privatizing VIA Rail, Canada Post, CBC Television and French CBC Television. Essentially the Alliance policy was just a continuation of Reform's. The party promised six billion in spending cuts (about 5% of current government spending). The Reform party had also advocated government spending cuts in 1997. However the difference is in severity. Reform had promised a 94 billion dollar government, which at the time represented a spending cut of fourteen percent or fifteen billion dollars. Reform's plan to reduce the size of the Federal Government was seen as the primary vehicle for job creation.

The Tories had also pledged spending cuts. For example, the Department of Agriculture would have received a 600 million dollar cut, Natural Resources would have seen their funds cut by 400 million dollars and Public Works would have seen their budget reduce by 1.4 billion dollars. The Tories had also pledged to eliminate the departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Public Works and Services, Natural Resources, Fisheries and the Environment. Those six departments would have then been combined into one department, which was to be named the department of Sustainable Development.

## **5. Agricultural Policy**

The Canadian Alliance promised to maintain supports to farmers. The party promised to guarantee the existing farm safety net programs for five years, which was a commitment of five and a half billion dollars. This included programs such as the emergency disaster relief fund, crop insurance and net income stabilization. The Alliance also pledged to launch an aggressive campaign through the W.T.O. and N.A.F.T.A. to reduce foreign subsidies. It also promised to ensure that this money was distributed to farmers. It committed to allowing farmers to make their own marketing choices including doing so through the Canadian Wheat Board. This funding pledge included emergency relief. This platform was completely opposite to Reform's 1997 position. Reform had advocated the elimination of all farm subsidies.<sup>25</sup>

## **6. Equalization Payments**

The Alliance platform stated the party's support of the principle of equalization payments. Equalization payments are unconditional transfer payments given to most of the provinces from the Federal Government, which are calculated on the ability of each province to raise revenue. They enable the less affluent provinces to provide an average level of public services without needing to resort to excessively high taxation levels.

In 1997, the Reform Party had discussed the concept of removing three provinces from the federal equalization formula. The three provinces in question were Manitoba,

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<sup>25</sup> "Alliance adds ag plank," Winnipeg Free Press, 22 November 2000, Sec A, p.13. Eric Beauchense, Sec A, p.12. Lisa Schmidt, "Alliance agriculture platform has little new to offer: Analysts," Winnipeg Free Press, 16 November 2000, Sec A, p.9.

Quebec and Saskatchewan. They argued that equalization needed to be refocused to help the poorest provinces. They also stated that overall equalization payments could be lowered by maintaining current levels for Atlantic Canada but either giving only two billion dollars to the three “middle provinces” or eliminating them from the program altogether.<sup>26</sup>

## **7. Aboriginal Policy**

In the area of Aboriginal policy, the Alliance stated that Aboriginals should be taxed like all other Canadians. At the time of the election, Aboriginals paid taxes on goods and services bought off reserves but not on those purchased on reserves. They also paid no income tax on any money earned on the reserves or while they were doing band related off reserve work, although those working off reserve paid income tax like the rest of Canadians. The belief was that since Aboriginals have the right to vote, they should also have the same responsibilities as other Canadians.<sup>27</sup>

They also espoused the notion that Aboriginals should also abide by the same hunting, fishing and logging quotas as the rest of Canadians, arguing that if national resources were not protected then they would be lost for all Canadians.<sup>28</sup>

However the party also stated that it would respect existing treaties. It have would allowed Aboriginal governments to collect their own local taxes. The Canadian Alliance also committed to negotiating delegation of local powers to Aboriginal governments and to

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<sup>26</sup> Dan Lett, “Reform plan costs Manitoba \$1 Billion,” Winnipeg Free Press, 17 May 1997, Sec A, p.1.

<sup>27</sup> Gloria Galloway, “Day wants full taxation for natives.” Winnipeg Free Press, 16 November 2000, Sec A, p.15.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

ensure that band councils were accountable to their own communities. The party supported self government for Aboriginals only if it involved the delegation of municipal style powers. The party pledged to introduce direct individual ownership of land on aboriginal reserves. Under this plan the Indian Act would either be overhauled or abolished entirely.<sup>29</sup>

The Alliance's Aboriginal policy is in many ways an extension of the Reform Party's philosophy that all citizens and provinces should be treated equally and accorded the same rights, privileges and freedoms.

### **8. Employment Equity**

The Alliance promised to hire on merit and to repeal the Liberal's quota legislation, although it did commit to preserving the programs which ensured equality of opportunity for the disabled. This pledge was similar to one made by the Harris Conservatives during the 1995 Ontario Provincial Election campaign, when they pledged to remove Ontario's employment equity legislation, arguing that it was government's job to ensure equality of opportunity not to establish and enforce quotas. At the time, Ontario's employment equity legislation required most employers to meet specific targets of employment for groups such as women, racial minorities, aboriginals and the disabled. A National Post/Southam News/Global poll published on November 25, 2000 revealed that Canadians were evenly split on the issue of employment equity and affirmative action when it pertained to women. The poll found that 36% were in favour, while 40% were opposed. However the poll did find that the majority of Canadians (53%) opposed such programs for visible minorities,

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<sup>29</sup>      *ibid.*

while only 26% supported them.<sup>30</sup>

### **9. Interprovincial Trade**

The Canadian Alliance promised to break down barriers to interprovincial trade arguing that many Canadian companies found it easier to do business with other nations than with other provinces. The Alliance's pledge echoed that of the Tories in the previous Federal Election. In 1997, the Progressive Conservatives had promised to negotiate for one year with the provinces to eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers. If this had proved unsuccessful, they would have then proceeded to use Ottawa's constitutional powers over trade and commerce to remove barriers.<sup>31</sup>

### **10. National Unity**

One area where the Alliance platform was quiet was the issue of national unity. In the United Alternative's declaration of policy, principle 66 addresses the issue. It states, "We believe in a united Canada as a balanced federation of equal citizens, and provinces with equal powers. In the event that a province proposes to secede, negotiations will be based on the rule of law, democratic legitimacy and the primary interests of Canada. The principle is similar to Reform policy in the sense that both it and Reform's 1997 platform (The Fresh Start for Unity) stated that any secession negotiations would focus on the interests of Canada. However except for this statement, the Alliance was silent on the issue, whereas Reform was very vocal on the subject and made it the centerpiece of their

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<sup>30</sup> Murray Campbell, Martin Mettelstadet, James Rusk, "Harris would junk 'unfair' equity hiring," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 6 May 1995, Sec A, p.3. Anne-Marie Owens, Sec A, p.1,6.

<sup>31</sup> Linda Goyette, Sec A, p.17.

1997 campaign.

Reform's 1997 platform encapsulated what has been called the Plan B Approach to separation. It pledged that any deal on the separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada would not be a deal cut between Quebec sovereigntists in the Quebec National Assembly and Quebec federalists in Ottawa. It also discussed the potential partition of Quebec, debt sharing, the revoking of passports and citizenship of secessionists, transportation rights across an independent Quebec and the approval of the secession agreement by all Canadians through a national referendum. Reform also stated that the rights of Canadians within a seceding part of the province to remain a part of Canada must be respected. Additionally it was clear that the party was opposed to any distinct society status for Quebec.<sup>32</sup>

However while rejecting the Reform stance, the Alliance also did not embrace the stance of the Progressive Conservatives in 1997. In 1997, the Tories defended the concept of Quebec as a distinct society as part of their electoral platform, stating that the concept of distinct society should be used to recognize Quebec's unique language, culture and civil code of law. They believed that the symbolic inclusion of a distinct society clause was essential to national unity. They criticized the Plan B approach to Quebec which advocates laying out of all of the legal and practical terms for independence. The platform's national unity plank called for Ottawa to use its resources, including both constitutional and spending power, to provide national standards in healthcare, to set the stage for national

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<sup>32</sup> Jeff Adams, "Canadians back Grit, Reform Unity Lines," Calgary Herald, 10 May 1997, Sec A, p.10.

standards in education and to eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers.<sup>33</sup>

In 1997, the Canadian Alliance's predecessor, the Reform Party of Canada had been very vocal on the subject, advocating a harsh stance towards Quebec. However this shift can be explained at least in part by environmental change. In 1997, it had been less than two years since the 1995 referendum in which the no vote was narrowly victorious. Additionally, on May 7, 1997, it was revealed that former Parti Quebecois leader, Jacques Parizeau, had written in a forthcoming book that the Quebec government could have proclaimed Quebec sovereignty immediately after receiving majority in the 1995 Referendum.<sup>34</sup> Consequently federalist responses to separatist threats dominated the election campaign. Since that time, the Liberals have taken a page out of Reform's "tough love" approach by asking the Supreme Court to provide guidance about federal involvement in future referenda and by passing the Clarity Bill (Bill C-20) in March of 2000.

## **Conclusion**

If the Canadian Alliance was to breakout of its position as a regional party and establish itself as a national party, it needed to create a platform which would retain its traditional supporters, while at the same time attracting former supporters of other parties, particularly the Progressive Conservatives. The platform adopted by the Canadian Alliance for the 2000 Federal Election contained policies previously advocated by both the Reform

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<sup>33</sup> Rene Seguin, "Hard line will give separatists ammunition, Charest warns," Toronto Globe and Mail, 10 May 1997, Sec A, p.9.

<sup>34</sup> Andre Bernard, "The Bloc Quebecois" The Canadian General Election of 1997. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997. p.141.

and Progressive Conservative Parties and which reflected Canadian public opinion.

Economic policy was one of the major cornerstones of the Canadian Alliance's 2000 platform. Many of these policies were similar to ones previously adopted by the Reform and Progressive Conservative Parties and also demonstrate an awareness of Canadian public opinion.

The platform included advocacy of lower personal income tax levels, debt reduction, reduction in the level of capital gains taxes and balanced budget legislation. All of these policies were advocated by both Reform and the Tories in the 1997 Federal Election. Survey data taken at the beginning of the election campaign revealed that these policies had widespread support among Canadians. So these policies can be seen as an attempt by the Canadian Alliance to retain its traditional voter base and capture support from supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian public as a whole.

Healthcare policy formed a second cornerstone of the Alliance's 2000 platform. Overall the Alliance placed a far greater emphasis upon healthcare than its predecessor ever did. The platform included advocacy of replacing federal cash funding with a transfer of tax points, the creation of national standards that ensured respect for the five principles of the Canada Health Act, immediate increases in federal funding levels and a commitment to stable funding increases and a commitment to the five principles of the Canada Health Act. While the Reform Party advocated funding increases and a devolution of power to the provinces in the realm of healthcare in 1997, all of these policies are similar to ones adopted by the Progressive Conservative Party in 1997. In fact, in many respects the Canadian Alliance simply adopted the Tories 1997 healthcare policies. Survey data

taken at the beginning of the 2000 Election campaign revealed that healthcare was the first priority among Canadians. These policies can be seen as an attempt by the Alliance to capture support from supporters of the Tories and the Canadian public as a whole.

Justice policy also was prominent in the Alliance's 2000 platform. The platform included advocacy of a tougher Young Offenders Act and the repeal of Bill C-68 and Section 745 of the Criminal Code. All of these policies were advocated by both Reform and the Tories in the 1997 Federal Election. The platform also included pledges to reform the parole system and to introduce harsher sentences standards, which are similar to pledges made by the Reform Party. The Alliance's policies in this area reflect a mix of platforms, some designed to retain its voter base and others designed to increase its voter base.

The Canadian Alliance like Reform and the Progressive Conservatives before it advocated spending cuts by the Federal Government. While the specifics of what areas would be cuts and the overall level of cuts varied the belief in reducing government spending was held by all three parties.

One area of the platform which while designed to appeal to the party's base also had the potential to hinder the Alliance's ability to attract supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party. This was its support of voter referendums. While the concept was extremely popular among traditional supporters of the Reform Party, it was often rejected and ridiculed by supporters of the Tories.

The Canadian Alliance's aboriginal platform was radically different from those which are traditionally offered by Canadian political parties. While it did reflect Reform's belief in the equality of all citizens, it was not similar to anything advocated by the

Progressive Conservative Party. The Canadian Alliance's agricultural policy was a departure from previous Reform platforms, which had largely been silent of agricultural issues.

The Canadian Alliance was able to create a platform which retained Reform Party policies, adopted Progressive Conservative policies and reflected Canadian public opinion. This is particularly evident in the three cornerstones of its 2000 platform, economic, justice and healthcare policy.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINANCES

### Introduction

Joseph Israel Tarte, who was Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier's chief organizer and fundraiser in Quebec and New Brunswick in the 1890's, once remarked, "Les elections ne se font pas avec des prieres," which means prayers do not win elections.<sup>1</sup> More recently, Norman Atkins, who was the chairman of the Progressive Conservative party's extremely successful 1984 and 1988 election campaigns stated, "you can't run national campaigns on the proceeds from selling fudge."<sup>2</sup> During the 1993 Federal Election campaign, Liberal leader, Jean Chretien accurately summed up this political reality when he stated, "all parties need money."<sup>3</sup> Money is the fuel of political activity. Political parties require funds for at least four reasons:

- 1) To contest elections.
- 2) To maintain a viable inter-election organization.
- 3) To provide research and advisory services for the party's leadership and elected representatives.
- 4) For periodic party conventions.<sup>4</sup>

The Canadian Alliance Party needed to develop a stronger financial base in order to

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<sup>1</sup> W.T. Stanbury, Money In Politics: Financing Federal Parties And Candidates In Canada. Vol. One. (Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1991), 5.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>3</sup> W.T. Stanbury, "Regulating the Financing of Federal Parties and Candidates," in Canadian Political Parties In Transition. (Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 1996), 372.

<sup>4</sup> Stanbury, Money In Politics: Financing Federal Parties And Candidates In Canada. Vol. One, p.5.

establish itself as a national party. A truly national campaign would require a level of campaign spending significantly greater than the amounts the party had spent on previous campaigns. Increased campaign spending meant that the Alliance would need to raise their number and value of donations. Specifically the party would require increased corporate support. This chapter will be divided into two parts. The first will examine the evolution of the party's campaign spending over four elections between 1988 and 2000, comparing its spending levels to that of the other major political parties, the Liberals, NDP, Progressive Conservatives and Bloc Quebecois. The second section will examine the donation history of the party, paying particular attention to the relationship between individual and corporate donations.

### **Campaign Spending**

In their first election in 1988, every individual Reform Party riding was on its own in regard to funding. In total, Reform party candidates spent just under one million dollars (\$995,695) on election expenses and \$57,696 on personal expenses. The party itself spent a mere \$112,400. The Reform Party did not become a registered political party until October 21, 1988, the date that registration requirements for political parties, outlined in the Election Expenses Act were met. In order to become a registered political party, a party must nominate a minimum of fifty candidates for the upcoming election. Because Reform was not a registered political party, it could not issue receipts for tax credit for political contributions. However the Act does not prevent a candidate's agents from doing so once the candidate has been nominated and the electoral writ is dropped. In 1988, the party raised a total of \$171,570. In what would become a standard trend, more than 75%

(\$129,570) came from individuals, while the remaining \$42,000 came from corporations.<sup>5</sup>

Due to a number of factors the 1993 Federal Election campaign was the first in which the Reform Party itself conducted an actual party campaign. The party's election expenses for the 1993 Federal Election campaign were 1.47 million dollars. Comparatively, the Bloc Quebecois spent 1.9 million dollars, while the NDP spent 7.4 million dollars. The Tories spent the most, 10.4 million dollars and the Liberals spent 9.9 million dollars. It is interesting to note that the Reform Party spent less money than the National Party and the Bloc Quebecois, two other newer parties, which spent 2.1 million and 1.9 million dollars on their campaigns respectively.<sup>6</sup>

In their 1993 campaign, Reform's single largest expense was broadcasting on which it spent a total of \$328,845 (\$3,518 on radio and \$325,327 on television). For that election, the party was limited to buying seventeen minutes of prime time for ads on television. A party's allotment of broadcasting time is based upon its popular vote in the previous general election and the number of seats which it obtained. Other large expenses included: Preston Manning's leadership tour (\$255,870), advertising (\$258,235), professional services (\$224,354), salaries and benefits (\$61,658) and fundraising (\$51,634). During the campaign, Reform's National Office incurred expenses of \$249,389.

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In their 1997 campaign, the Reform Party spent a total of 4.9 million dollars. Of the

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<sup>5</sup> Stanbury, Money In Politics: Financing Federal Parties And Candidates In Canada. Vol. One, p.187-188.

<sup>6</sup> <<http://www.elections.ca>. > (September 14, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

five major parties, only the Bloc Quebecois, (1.6 million dollars) spent less than the Reform Party. Reform fielded 220 candidates, while the Bloc Quebecois fielded only 75. In comparison, the NDP spent six million dollars, the Progressive Conservatives 10.3 million dollars and the Liberals 11.2 million dollars.<sup>8</sup>

As was the case in 1993, Reform's single largest expense was broadcasting on which it spent 2.79 million dollars, the majority of which was spent on television (\$2,784,615). A mere \$7,096 was spent on radio. Other major expenses included: Preston Manning's leadership tour (\$1,157,709), advertising (\$411,037) and salaries and benefits (\$113,670). The Reform Party did not spend any money on professional services. During the campaign, Reform's National Office incurred expenses of \$153,680.<sup>9</sup>

During the 2000 Federal Election campaign, the Canadian Alliance Party spent 9.7 million dollars, almost double the amount Reform had spent in 1997. This was well below the Liberal Party of Canada which spent \$12.5 million. The Canadian Alliance however greatly outspent the three other major opposition parties. The Progressive Conservatives spent just under four million dollars (3.98 million dollars), the NDP 6.3 million dollars and the Bloc Quebecois 1.9 million dollars.<sup>10</sup>

As is usually the case for all political parties, the Canadian Alliance's largest

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<sup>8</sup>     ibid.

<sup>9</sup>     ibid.

<sup>10</sup>    <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/crca.pdf>> (September 14, 2001).  
      <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/bloc.pdf>> (September 14, 2001).  
      <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/plc.pdf>> (September 14, 2001).  
      <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/ppcc.pdf>> (September 14, 2001).  
      <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/cndp.pdf>> (September 14, 2001).

expense during the 2000 Federal Election campaign was broadcasting. During the campaign, the Canadian Alliance spent 6.26 million dollars on broadcasting, The majority of this money was spent on television, 6.25 million dollars, while only \$6,918 was spent on radio. Other major campaign expenses included print advertising (\$1,300,000), Stockwell Day's leadership tour (\$1,000,000), fundraising (\$81,923) and salaries and benefits (\$179,655). During the campaign the party's National Office incurred expenses of \$72,945. <sup>11</sup>

In 1993 and 1997, the Reform Party of Canada spent less money on its campaign than the other three national political parties (Liberals, Progressive Conservatives and NDP). However the Canadian Alliance Party spent more money on its campaign in 2000 than all the other parties with the exception of the Liberals. The party has gradually increased its budget for broadcasting both as a percentage of their overall campaign budget (from 22% in 1993 to 57% in 1997 to 65% in 2000) and in real dollar amounts. In real dollar terms the amount the party spent on broadcasting increased by nineteen times between 1993 and 2000. In 2000, the Canadian Alliance spent more on broadcasting than any other major party. (For a comparison of the Canadian Alliance's and the Liberal's election expenses for the 2000 Campaign, See Table 1, on Page 86).

## **Contributions**

In its early years the Reform Party of Canada was financed largely by contributions from individuals and party memberships. Two months after its formation, it received a

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<sup>11</sup> <<http://www.elections.ca/pollexp/crca.pdf>> (September 15, 2001)

donation of \$100,000 from Francis G. Winspear, a disenchanted supporter of the Liberal Party of Canada. The contributions that the party received from corporate sources were well below those of Canada's two traditional parties, the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives. In the early 1990's over 90% of the contributions the Reform Party received were from individuals. The party did not make a major effort to solicit donations from corporate sources until the fall of 1991, with an initial goal of raising two to three million in 1992.<sup>12</sup>

In 1988, Reform launched its "sustainer" program which consisted of direct mail appeals to its members. Direct mail fundraising by political parties or candidates consists of letters to individuals or organizations that solicit a contribution for the party or candidate. The object of these appeals is twofold: 1) to get members to renew their membership annually, 2) to get them to make further contributions to the party.<sup>13</sup> The sustainers used by the Reform Party were essentially news letters, often in the form of a newspaper which would inform the average party member of "what was up" and what the party had been doing in Ottawa. It would often include a questionnaire and a donation form at the end.

The Reform Party traditionally relied upon donations from its individual party members and membership fees for the majority of its financing. During the pre-writ period, contributions collected by constituency associations were split 80/20, with the local organization retaining 80% of the funds and the national office receiving the remaining

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<sup>12</sup> Stanbury, Money In Politics: Financing Federal Parties And Candidates In Canada. Vol. One, p.185-186, 200-201.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*, p.194.

20%. Contributions made to the national office also were split 80/20 with the national office receiving 80% of the funds, while the remaining 20% was sent to the constituency association from which the contribution originated. During the campaign period, the national campaign kept 100% of the funds that it raised through phone-a-thons and letter campaigns, while the constituency associations retained all funds raised by its efforts. The party's financing was two-tiered. The National Office maintained a national membership list and communicated directly with every member through the use of sustainer letters, issue statements, Reform newsletters and opinion surveys. Party members were automatically members of both their constituency association and the federal party. The annual ten dollar membership fee was split evenly between the constituency association and the national party.

Since the Reform Party transformed itself into the Canadian Alliance, there has been little to no use of the sustainers. Although there has been no official word on the demise of the sustainers, the tool seems to have been put on the backburner by the party, possibly indefinitely. The explanation for this shift has been that it was due to circumstances. Essentially the amount of correspondence the party sent out in 2000 combined with the fall election eliminated the possibility of using the tool. However this does not explain the absence of sustainers in 2001. There were a few one page letters in 2001 which requested donations but nothing similar to the sustainers used by the Reform Party.

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In terms of donations, the Canadian Alliance has retained the 80/20 split program

explained above. However in the case of membership fees, the Canadian Alliance's National Office retains 80% of the fee, while the individual constituency association receives the remaining 20%. The funds are required as a processing fee.

The Canadian Alliance's National Office has employed the tool of riding phone-a-thons. The National Office takes a list of identified previous large donors and new members in a riding and calls them seeking a donation. The ridings are told when the National Office will be calling and has the option of opting out of the phone-a-thon. However in order to opt out, the riding association must pay a percentage of the total amount raised by the National Office in that riding during the last phone-a-thon to the National Office. The actual phoning is done by a hired service.

Research has demonstrated the existence of what has been termed "the election year effect". The term refers to the sharp increase in the average contribution in election years and to the increase in the number of firms making a contribution. There does appear to be some evidence of an "election year effect" on donations to the major parties.<sup>15</sup>

Donations to the Reform Party of Canada increased tremendously between 1989 and 1993. In 1989, the party received 7,606 donations, by 1993 this increased to 50,927. It should be noted however that the party received its greatest number of donations in 1990, when it received 71,722. In terms of actual dollar amounts the party increased its contribution revenue every year. In 1989, the Reform Party raised 1.35 million dollars, by 1993 this total had risen to 7.1 million dollars. In this period, Reform received the vast majority of its donations from individual contributors, approximately 90% between 1989

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.217, 317.

and 1993.

In 1993, 97% of the contributions received by the Reform Party came from individual donors, while 2% came from corporate sources and 1% came from constituency contributions. In that year, the party received 49,488 donations from individuals, 1,230 donations from corporations and 209 donations from constituencies for a total of 50,927 donations.<sup>16</sup> This trend continued between 1994 and 1997. During this period total contributions to the Reform Party of Canada rose from \$4.78 million in 1994 to \$8.8 million in 1997. The value of the party's Individual contributions increased from \$3.4 million in 1994 to \$5.5 million in 1997. Similarly the value of contributions from corporate sources rose from \$569,907 in 1994 to \$1.9 million in 1997.<sup>17</sup>

In 1998 and 1999, the party's donations remained stable. In 1998, it received 4.4 million dollars in donations from individuals, in 1999 this dropped slightly to \$4.3 million. Similarly, the party received 1.3 million dollars in corporate donations in 1998 and \$1.5 million in 1999.<sup>18</sup>

The average contribution to the Canadian Alliance Party in the year 2000 was \$491. Comparatively the average contribution to the Liberal Party of Canada was \$892. The Alliance also greatly increased their total number of donations in every category compared to the Reform Party of Canada. They increased the value of their individual

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<sup>16</sup> <<http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=fin&documnet=table01&dir=fis&lang=e&textonly=false>> (September 19, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/ecFiscals/2000/table01\\_ewhatl.html](http://www.elections.ca/ecFiscals/2000/table01_ewhatl.html)> (September 20, 2001).

donations from \$5,538,165 in 1997 to \$11,954,957 in 2000. The value of their donations from businesses or commercial enterprises more than tripled from \$1,910,961 to \$6,753,356. As well, the party raised \$19,641,006 in 2000, more than double the amount raised by the party in 1997. In comparison, The Liberal Party of Canada raised \$20,067,820 from donations in 2000. A total of \$6,966,801 was derived from individuals and \$11,862,693 came from corporate sources. It is interesting to note that while the Canadian Alliance and the Liberals raised nearly identical amounts in 2000, the Alliance relied much more upon donations from individuals, while the Liberals relied more heavily upon donations from corporate sources. The Progressive Conservative Party only raised 5.6 million dollars in 2000. \$2.8 million was from corporate sources and \$2.8 million was from individuals. It is interesting to note that Tory donations decreased while Alliance donations increased.<sup>19</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The Canadian Alliance was successful in improving its financial base. It was able to spend significantly more in the 2000 Federal Election than it had in past campaigns. It was able to spend almost twice as much money in 2000 as it had in 1997. In fact, the Canadian Alliance spent more money on its 2000 campaign than the Reform Party spent on its three campaigns between 1988 and 1997. The party also went from spending the least of all major parties in 1993 to spending the second largest amount, trailing only the Liberals. The Canadian Alliance was also successful in increasing the level of donations to the party. Its level of corporate support increased significantly. The absence of sustainers in 2000 and

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<sup>19</sup>

<[http://www.elections.ca/ecFiscals/2000/table01\\_english.html](http://www.elections.ca/ecFiscals/2000/table01_english.html)> (September 23, 2001)

2001, which were once a backbone of party revenue is a sign of this increased success.

While the average contribution to the Canadian Alliance was still less than that of the Liberals, the two parties raised almost identical amounts in 2000. Overall party finances can be viewed as an area of success for the Canadian Alliance.

**TABLE 1  
COMPARISON OF ELECTION SPENDING**

PARTY	ADVERTISING		LEADER'S TOUR	FUND- RAISING	NATIONAL OFFICE	SALARIES & BENEFITS	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
	WRITTEN	TV & RADIO					
CDN ALLIANCE	\$1,310	\$6,255	\$1,018	\$82	\$382	\$180	\$33
LIBERAL	\$3,520	\$4,171	\$2,283	\$254	\$73	\$800	\$197

**.NOTE: ACTUAL EXPENDITURES = TABULATED VALUES X 1000.**

**Source: Elections Canada. Registered Party Returns In Respect Of Election Expenses For The Canadian Alliance And Liberal Parties.**

**TABLE 2  
CORPORATE VERSUS INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS**

Source	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Individual	1,205	2,075	4,737	5,633	5,077	3,407	3,406	4,934	5,538	4,422	4,294	11,954
Corporate	141	138	490	613	1,021	569	815	907	1,910	1,291	1,504	6,753

**NOTE: ACTUAL EXPENDITURES = TABULATED VALUES X \$1000.**

**Source: Elections Canada.**

## CHAPTER FIVE: ELECTION 2000

### Introduction

The Reform Party transformed itself into the Canadian Alliance Party as an attempt to breakout of its position as a regional party within the Canadian party system and into a position as a national party. The ultimate indicator of their success in achieving this goal would be the party's ability to win seats in a general election. Specifically would the party be able to win seats east of the Manitoba/Ontario border or would it remain a success in only one region of the country, Western Canada. In order to accomplish its ultimate goal of national party status the Canadian Alliance Party would need to realize five smaller goals.

These were as follows:

- 1) Solidify the party's base in Western Canada.
- 2) Procure the long sought after electoral breakthrough in the province of Ontario.
- 3) Finish with a respectable showing in Quebec and Atlantic Canada.
- 4) End the vote splitting between itself and the Progressive Conservative Party.
- 5) Destroy the federal Progressive Conservative Party in order to demonstrate to Canadians that it had succeeded in uniting the right and had become the dominant conservative political party in Canada.

This chapter will examine the Canadian Alliance's success in attaining each of these five goals as success or failure in these areas would determine whether the party would achieve its ultimate goal, national party status.

## 2000 Federal Election

The Canadian Alliance Party won sixty-six seats in the 2000 Federal Election and captured 26% of the national vote. It increased its percentage of the national vote by 7% from 1997. The Alliance also placed second in an additional one hundred constituencies, an increase of forty-four from the 1997 election. The Alliance won the largest number of seats in three provinces (Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan) and won the second largest number in two provinces (Manitoba and Ontario). The Canadian Alliance received a total of 3,276,929 votes in the 2000 election, second only to the Liberals who received 5,525,031 votes. This was an increase of 763,849 votes from the 2,513,080 votes the party received in the 1997 Federal Election. Conversely the Progressive Conservatives received 879,707 less votes in the 2000 than they did in 1997.<sup>1</sup>

The Canadian Alliance suffered a setback during the campaign when it failed to field a full slate of candidates. The party fielded candidates in two hundred and ninety-eight of the three hundred and one federal ridings. It failed to field candidates in the ridings of Matapedia-Matane (Quebec), Nunavut (Nunavut) and Winnipeg North Centre (Manitoba). In comparison, only the Liberal Party fielded a full slate of candidates (301). The NDP also fielded two hundred and ninety-eight candidates, the Progressive Conservative Party two hundred and ninety-one and the Bloc Quebecois seventy-five.<sup>2</sup> Although this was the

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<sup>1</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7_e.html)> (October 10, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table8_e.html)> (October 10, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9_e.html)> (October 10, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>> (October 10, 2001).

largest number of candidates ever fielded by the party, it was still a symbolic blow as a full slate of candidates would have given additional credence to the party's claims that it was a national not a regional party.

## **The West**

The Canadian Alliance like its predecessor the Reform Party of Canada had its greatest electoral success in Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba). The party won sixty-four of its sixty-six seats in the region and 50% of the vote. The Canadian Alliance increased their share of the Western Canadian vote by 4% over that of the Reform Party in 1997 (50% to 46%). The Canadian Alliance increased its total votes in Western Canada by 386,884 votes in the 2000 Federal Election. The Canadian Alliance increased its seat total in Western Canada by four from sixty to sixty-four seats. (The party gained one seat in Manitoba and two seats in both British Columbia and Saskatchewan, while losing one seat in Alberta). The Canadian Alliance earned 1,892,329 votes in Western Canada, nearly twice as many as their nearest competitor the Liberals (958,042). In fact, the Canadian Alliance earned more votes in Western Canada than the three other major political parties combined (1,802,962).<sup>3</sup>

In Manitoba, they were victorious in four ridings: Dauphin-Swan River, Portage-Lisgar, Provencher and Selkirk-Interlake, all rural ridings. The Alliance finished second in six Manitoba ridings. This was double the number of second place finishes the party had in 1997. The party ran candidates in every Manitoba riding except Winnipeg North Centre.

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<sup>3</sup>

<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html). > (October 12, 2001).

<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html). > (October 12, 2001).

They won 30% of the vote in Manitoba, an increase of 6% over their total in the 1997 election. Manitoba was the least successful Western province for the party contributing only 148,293 votes. This was an increase of 35,430 votes over their 1997 total (112,863). The Alliance did receive the second largest vote total in the province trailing only the Liberals who garnered 158,713 and ahead of the NDP (101,741) and Progressive Conservatives (70,635).<sup>4</sup>

In Saskatchewan, the Alliance earned ten seats and finished in second place in four ridings. The party garnered 48% in Saskatchewan, a 12% increase from 1997. The party earned 207,004 votes in Saskatchewan, the largest total any party received. Comparatively, the NDP received 113,626, the Liberals 89,697 and the Tories 20,855. This was an increase of nearly 50,000 votes from 1997 (47,672).<sup>5</sup>

They won twenty-three seats in Alberta and finished in second place in the province's other three ridings (an increase of one from 1997). The Alliance increased their percentage of the Albertan vote by 4% from 55% to 59%. The Canadian Alliance earned 739,514 votes in Alberta, the largest total earned by any party. In comparison, the Liberals were second with 263,008, followed by the Progressive Conservatives (169,093) and the NDP (68,363). This total was an increase of over 150,000 votes from their 1997 showing (161,963). In fact, the Canadian Alliance won more votes in Alberta than the other three major parties combined (739,514 to 500,464).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html). > (October 14, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html). > (October 14, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

In British Columbia, the Alliance won twenty-seven seats. The party also finished second in six British Columbian constituencies, the same as in 1997. In British Columbia, the Canadian Alliance's percentage of the vote rose by 6% from 43% to 49%. The Canadian Alliance received the most votes in British Columbia (797,518). Comparatively, the Liberals earned 446,624, the NDP 182,993 and the Progressive Conservatives 117,614. This was an increase of over 140,000 votes from 1997 (141,819). In fact, the Canadian Alliance won more votes in British Columbia than the other three major parties combined.<sup>7</sup>

In respect to the party's first goal, the 2000 Federal Election was a complete success. The Canadian Alliance won 50% of the vote and sixty-four of eighty-eight seats in Western Canada, an increase in both votes and seats. Additionally the party earned more votes in the region than the other three major parties combined. Simply put, the Canadian Alliance dominated Western Canada and in doing so solidified their base of support in the region.

## **Ontario**

The Canadian Alliance had targeted Ontario before the election and party officials had high hopes that the 2000 election would bring a breakthrough in the province. In particular the Alliance had high hopes for Eastern Ontario, the ridings in the suburbs that ring Toronto and more far flung rural areas of the province. There were seventeen ridings located within the 905 area code, a region bordered by Oshawa to the east and Hamilton to the west. The 905 area code includes such cities as Brampton, Burlington and Hamilton. Other important areas included the 519, which consisted of farmlands and small cities such

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<sup>7</sup>       ibid.

as London, Windsor, Kitchener and Guelph. The 613 consisting of Eastern Ontario including such cities as Ottawa and Kingston. Finally the 705 embraced the Canadian Shield and Ontario's "lake country", which includes such cities as Sudbury, Peterborough, North Bay and Sault Saint Marie.<sup>8</sup>

Canadian Alliance officials "best case" scenario was that the party would win forty seats in Ontario. The Ontario campaign would have three foci. These were:

- 1) "Paul Martin Liberals". This would be done by focussing on the party's tax cut and deficit reduction platforms.
- 2) Small town Ontario voters. The focus here would be on the party's justice platform and Stockwell Day's personality.
- 3) Younger, less ideological voters. The focus here would be on Stockwell Day's relative youth (compared to Jean Chretien and Joe Clark) and on the Liberal's lack of accomplishments (at least from the Alliance's perspective). Party officials were also hoping to attract those voters who gave the Harris Conservatives two consecutive majority governments (eighty-two seats out of one hundred and thirty in 1995, fifty-nine out of one hundred and three in 1999).

During the campaign, party leader, Stockwell Day boasted of winning forty seats in the province. The Canadian Alliance's "Ontario Focus" can be summed up in a statement made by former Alliance M.P. Chuck Strahl, "There has been a tremendous amount of work put into it. The focus of the campaign as far as Stock's time, everybody knows that

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<sup>8</sup>

<<http://www.cageyconsumer.com/areacodes.html>> (October 17, 2001).

has been in Ontario.”<sup>9</sup> However, the Canadian Alliance won only two seats east of the Manitoba/Ontario border, both in the province of Ontario. The two ridings were: Lanark-Carleton, which was won by Scott Reid and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke which was won by Cheryl Gallant. Both the ridings that the Canadian Alliance won are located within the 613 area code. In fact they are located near Ottawa and border one another.

In terms of percentage of the vote, the Canadian Alliance gained 24% of the vote in Ontario, a 5% increase from 1997. In Ontario, the Alliance gained 1,051,209 votes, the second largest total in the province behind the 2,292,075 garnered by the Liberals. In comparison, the Progressive Conservatives received only 642,438, while the NDP received a mere 368,709. The Alliance’s total was an improvement of 164,412 votes from 1997. The Canadian Alliance finished in second place in eighty Ontario constituencies, more than double the number from 1997. However the Canadian Alliance earned 841,120 more votes in Western Canada than it did in Ontario.<sup>10</sup>

The Canadian Alliance failed to achieve their second and arguably most important goal in the 2000 Federal Election. While gaining nearly a quarter of the popular vote and winning two seats in a province where the party previously held none are accomplishments, they were not the breakthrough that the party sought. A minimum of twenty electoral seats coupled with a quarter of the popular vote would have been a breakthrough. However the reality was although the Alliance can claim a pair of moral victories, the party fell well

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<sup>9</sup> Sheldon Alberts, “No Breakthrough For Alliance,” National Post, 28 November 2000, Sec A, p.3.

<sup>10</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html). > (October 15, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html). > (October 15, 2001).

short of its long sought after Ontario breakthrough.

## Quebec

The party tallied 6% of the vote in Quebec, a 6% improvement from 1997. 212,874 Quebecers voted for the party, an increase of over 200,000 from 1997 (202,107). The Canadian Alliance received the third highest vote total in Quebec behind the Liberals who garnered 1,529,642 and the Bloc Quebecois who earned 1,377,727. In comparison, the Tories earned 192,153 and the NDP only 63,611. The Canadian Alliance won no seats in Quebec in 2000.<sup>11</sup> The party ran seventy-four candidates in the province a considerable increase from the ten it ran in 1997. The Alliance's best finish in Quebec was third place, a feat the party accomplished forty-seven times. The greatest number of votes any Alliance candidate received in Quebec was 9,152, which Jacques Bergeron received in Levis Et Chutes-De La Chaundiere. The Canadian Alliance's closest finish was in the riding of Manicouagan, where Laurette De Champlain finished 10,398 votes behind the winner, Ghislain Fournier of the Bloc Quebecois.<sup>12</sup>

When the history of the Canadian Alliance's predecessor, the Reform Party is considered, the party's results in Quebec can be seen as positive. The party ran a near full slate of candidates in Quebec and established for itself a marginal presence in the province. These are considerable improvements over the party's previous results of a handful of candidates and virtual non-existence in the popular vote.

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<sup>11</sup>     ibid.

<sup>12</sup>     <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>> (October 20, 2001).

## Atlantic Canada

Similarly to 1993 and 1997 the party won no seats in the four Atlantic Provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland). Overall, the Canadian Alliance won 10% of the vote in Atlantic Canada. The party increased its total votes in Atlantic Canada by a mere 10,370 votes. The Alliance fought strong campaigns in two New Brunswick ridings, Fredericton and Tobique-Mactaquac but lost both ridings to the Liberals. The 2000 federal election was the first in which the Canadian Alliance ran a full slate of candidates.

New Brunswick was the Atlantic Province where the Canadian Alliance had its most success, they earned 16% of that province's vote, a 3% increase from 1997. In New Brunswick, they earned 60,277 votes, a total which trailed the Liberals (159,803) and the Tories (116,980) but which led the NDP (44,778). Additionally this was an increase of 7,957 votes from the party's 1997 showing.<sup>13</sup> The Alliance had one second place finish in New Brunswick in the riding of Moncton- Riverview-Dieppe. It also had seven third place finishes. The party garnered its greatest support in the riding of Tobique-Mactaquac where Adam Richardson received 9,570 votes. This was also the riding where the Alliance had its closest finish (1,330 behind the winner). The Alliance finished third in both of its targeted ridings, 1,330 and 5,361 votes behind the leader respectively.<sup>14</sup>

They won 10% of the vote in Nova Scotia, the same as in 1997. In Nova Scotia

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<sup>13</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html). > (October 19, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html). > (October 19, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>.> (October 19, 2001).

they received only 41,752 votes, a total which placed them fourth behind the Liberals (158,870), Progressive Conservatives (126,557), and NDP (104,277). This total was a decrease of nearly 3,500 votes from 1997 (3,455).<sup>15</sup> In Nova Scotia, the Canadian Alliance's best results were three third place showings in the ridings of Cumberland-Colchester, South Shore and West Nova. The party garnered its greatest number of votes and had its closest finish in the constituency of West Nova, where Mike Donaldson captured 6,581 votes finishing 6,202 votes behind Liberal Robert Thibault.<sup>16</sup>

The Canadian Alliance earned 5% of the vote in Prince Edward Island, a 3% increase from 1997. The Alliance won only 3,719 votes in Prince Edward Island, a total which placed them a distant fourth behind the Liberals (35,021), the Tories (28,610) and the NDP (6,714). However this was an increase of 2,663 votes from 1997 or an increase of nearly 300%.<sup>17</sup> In Prince Edward Island, the Canadian Alliance had two third place and two fourth place finishes. The party's greatest success came in the constituency of Malpeque, where Chris Wall finished third with 1,263 votes. The closest race came in the riding of Hillsborough where Gerry Stewart finished 7,272 votes behind the winner, Liberal Shawn Murphy.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html).> (October 19, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html).> (October 19, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>.> (October 22, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html).> (October 21, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html).> (October 21, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>.> (October 22, 2001).

The party won 4% of the vote in Newfoundland, a 1% increase from 1997. Only 8,837 Newfoundlanders voted for the Canadian Alliance, which placed the party behind the Liberals (103,103), the Progressive Conservatives (79,157) and the NDP (29,993). This was an increase of 3,205 votes however.<sup>19</sup> In Newfoundland, all seven of the Canadian Alliance's candidates finished in fourth place in their respective races. Orville Penney earned the most votes (1,912 votes) of any Alliance candidate in Newfoundland. The party's closest race was in Labrador, where Eugene Burt finished 6,476 votes behind Liberal, Lawrence O'Brien.<sup>20</sup>

The Canadian Alliance established a presence in New Brunswick by winning 16% of the popular vote and having close races in two ridings, Moncton- Riverview-Dieppe and Tobique-Mactaquac. However the party lost votes in Nova Scotia and is a marginal presence in Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

### **The Territories**

The Canadian Alliance earned 5,932 total votes in the Territories or 18% of the region's overall vote. This was an increase of 26 total votes or a 1% increase in percentage of the vote. However it is important to note that the party fielded candidates in two of the region's three ridings in 2000, whereas in 1997 it fielded candidates in all three ridings. In the ridings where the party fielded candidates the Alliance earned 23% of the vote a 6% increase from 1997. Both of its candidates finished in third place in their respective ridings.

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<sup>19</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table7_e.html).> (October 20, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/37g/table8_e.html).> (October 20, 2001).

<sup>20</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>.> (October 24, 2001).

Of the two, Jim Kenyon who ran in the Yukon riding was the more successful earning 3,659 votes, finishing only 634 votes behind the winner Liberal, Larry Bagnell.<sup>21</sup>

### **Vote Splitting Between the Canadian Alliance and Tories**

In the 2000 Federal General Election, the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party continued to split the vote in several ridings. In total, the problem cost the two parties thirty-six electoral seats. The vote-splitting was most prevalent in Ontario, where vote-splitting occurred in twenty-six ridings. It also occurred in six ridings in Western Canada, three in Atlantic Canada and one in the Yukon. Most of this vote-splitting was also repetitive; two-thirds of the ridings that the two parties split in 2000 were also split in 1997.<sup>22</sup> If the Canadian Alliance had been able to win some or all of the support given the Tories, it would have been able to capture a number of these seats. This would have allowed the party to move closer to national party status.

### **The Tories**

Before the election many political commentators wrote the Progressive Conservatives off, predicting that the 2000 election would bring annihilation. Entering the election, the party owned a mounting financial debt. At the time of Parliament's dissolution, the Tories held only fifteen seats.

Early in the campaign, party leader, Joe Clark admitted that he was trailing in his own riding: "We're trailing in the country and there is no doubt that we are trailing in

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<sup>21</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7_e.html)> (October 24, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table8\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table8_e.html)> (October 24, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres>> (October 25, 2001).

Calgary Centre for the moment.” Early electoral polls had the Tories at 8% in the polls.<sup>23</sup>

The Tories earned 12% of the national vote in 2000 and twelve seats in the House of Commons, enough to retain official party status.<sup>24</sup> In order for a party to receive official status in the House of Commons, they must have a minimum of twelve seats.

Official party status brings three main benefits. These are:

- 1) Time to ask questions in question period. The percentage of time a party gets is proportionate to the number of seats it holds.
- 2) Monetary resources for research and staff. The amount of money a party receives is also consistent with the number of seats it holds.
- 3) Increased viability.

The Progressive Conservative’s support was strongest in Atlantic Canada. The party earned 31% of the vote in the region and won nine of its twelve seats (two in Newfoundland, three in New Brunswick and four in Nova Scotia). However the party also earned enough support in Ontario (14% of the vote) to cause a vote-split in twenty-six ridings. In Western Canada, the Tories earned 10% of the vote enough to cost the Alliance two seats (one each in Alberta and Manitoba).<sup>25</sup> In addition, party leader, Joe Clark (a staunch opponent of any unity talks between the two parties) was victorious in the riding of Calgary Centre, defeating Canadian Alliance incumbent, Eric Lowther. Clark defeated

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<sup>23</sup> David Kuxhaus, Paul Samyn, “Day tops Clark on home turf,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 28 October 2000, Sec A, p.16.

<sup>24</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7_e.html)> (October 25, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9_e.html)> (October 25, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

Lowther by 4,304 votes (26,358 votes to 22,054 votes).<sup>26</sup>

The Progressive Conservative Party did not meet its demise in the 2000 Federal Election. Instead the party survived, winning just enough seats to retain official party status. Similarly Joe Clark survived. Instead of losing the race in his riding, he prevailed, despite the predictions of many commentators. Both of these results were detrimental to the Canadian Alliance's cause. If the party had failed to earn official party status, some perhaps all of these M.Ps might have chosen to defect to the Canadian Alliance. A loss in the riding of Calgary Centre probably would have signalled the end of Joe Clark's second tenure as leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. Potentially the party's new leader might have been an individual more open to cooperation or merger with the Canadian Alliance.

### **The Liberals**

The Liberals won their third consecutive majority government, capturing one hundred and seventy-two seats, an increase of eleven from the one hundred and sixty-one they held at Parliament's dissolution. They maintained their stronghold over Ontario winning one hundred of the province's one hundred and three seats, a decrease of one.<sup>27</sup> They became the first party to do so since the Liberals won consecutive majority governments between 1935 and 1953.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres.>> (October 23, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> <[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7_e.html)> (October 26, 2001).  
<[http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9\\_e.html](http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table9_e.html)> (October 26, 2001).

<sup>28</sup> Robert Fife, "Chretien Gamble Makes History," National Post, 28 November 2000, Sec A, p.3.

## **Conclusion**

At the outset of this chapter, five goals that the Canadian Alliance Party needed to accomplish in the 2000 Federal General Election in order to realize its ultimate goal of securing national party status were outlined. In the end, the Canadian Alliance achieved only one of these goals. The Alliance was successful in solidifying its base of support in Western Canada, winning sixty-four seats and earning over half of the region's votes. However the Alliance failed to achieve any of the four other goals. The party did not achieve an electoral breakthrough in the province of Ontario. The Alliance did earn roughly a quarter of the votes cast in Ontario but it won only two of the province's one hundred and three ridings. If the Canadian Alliance had won twenty ridings and earned a quarter of the vote in Ontario, then it could have claimed an electoral breakthrough. Although two seats is the most it has ever won in the province it hardly signifies a breakthrough. The party also was unsuccessful in its bid to produce a respectable showing in Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. The Alliance did earn its highest levels of support in both Quebec and all four of the Atlantic Provinces. However not only did it fail to win a single seat in these provinces, it ran a distant third in all but one riding (Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe in New Brunswick) where it finished second. If the party had won a handful of seats in these provinces and had several close contests, it could be said that it had achieved the goal of a respectable showing. Its performance indicates it failed in this goal as well. The party did not eliminate the vote-splitting between itself and the Tories which had occurred in the previous two Federal Elections. While the numbers of ridings split was reduced to thirty-six, the problem still remained.

The Canadian Alliance also did not eliminate the Progressive Conservative Party in the 2000 Federal Election. In fact, the Tories retained Official Party Status in 2000. The Canadian Alliance achieved only one of the five goals it needed to accomplish in order to secure national party status. As a result, it failed to achieve its major objective for the 2000 Federal Election, transforming itself into a national party. Instead as it had in the previous two Federal Elections, it remained a regional political party.

APPENDIX 1

TABLE 1

VOTE SPLITTING IN THE 2000 FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION

PROVINCE	RIDING	CA/PC VOTE	WINNER'S VOTE	DIFFERENTIAL
Alberta	Edmonton West	24,254	21,978	2,276
B.C.	Burnaby-Douglas	17,534	17,018	516
B.C.	Vancouver Quadra	22,725	22,253	472
B.C.	Vancouver South-Burnaby	18,003	17,705	298
Manitoba	Charleswood St. James-Assiniboia	21,560	13,901	7,659
New Brunswick	Fredericton	19,733	14,175	5,558
New Brunswick	Tobique-Mactaquac	20,320	10,900	9,420
Nova Scotia	West Nova	18,661	12,783	5,878
P.E.I.	Cardigan	8,769	8,545	224
Ontario	Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot	24,723	19,921	4,802
Ontario	Bruce Grey-Owen Sound	22,832	19,822	3,010
Ontario	Burlington	22,740	22,175	565
Ontario	Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	23,054	21,678	1,365
Ontario	Durham	22,110	20,602	1,508
Ontario	Elgin-Middlesex-London	21,576	17,202	4,374
Ontario	Erie-Lincoln	20,166	17,054	3,112
Ontario	Essex	22,450	20,524	1,926
Ontario	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	21,117	20,867	250
Ontario	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	30,009	16,710	13,299
Ontario	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox-Addington	23,458	16,996	6,462
Ontario	Leeds-Grenville	26,479	18,594	7,885
Ontario	Nepean-Careleton	31,846	24,570	7,276
Ontario	Niagra Falls	18,076	17,907	169
Ontario	Northumberland	20,178	20,109	69
Ontario	Oakville	23,118	23,073	45
Ontario	Oshawa	16,358	16,179	179
Ontario	Ottawa West-Nepean	25,259	22,607	2,652
Ontario	Oxford	24,505	15,181	9,324
Ontario	Perth-Middlesex	21,330	16,988	4,342
Ontario	Simcoe-Grey	24,768	22,224	2,544
Ontario	St. Catherines	22,393	20,992	1,401
Ontario	Stormont-Dundas-Charloteburgh	19,786	19,113	673
Ontario	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	12,719	11,449	1,270
Ontario	Waterloo-Wellington	22,796	19,619	3,177
Ontario	York North	23,875	22,665	1,210
Saskatchewan	Palliser	13,175	12,136	1,039
Yukon	Yukon	4,650	4,293	357

NOTE: THE TERM CA/PC REFERS TO THE COMBINED NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED BY THE ALLIANCE AND PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN THE RESPECTIVE RIDINGS

Source: Elections Canada

## **CHAPTER SIX: CHAOS AND FACTIONALISM**

In the 2000 Federal General Election, the Canadian Alliance Party failed to establish itself as a national party within the Canadian party system. Instead it remained trapped like its predecessor, the Reform Party as a regional party. In spite of this fact, as 2000 turned into 2001, the Canadian Alliance Party was in a solid position. They held sixty-six seats in the House of Commons and were the nation's Official Opposition. They were the second choice among Canadians according to public opinion polls, retaining virtually all their support from the 2000 Federal Election. While at the time the party had failed to achieve its goal of becoming a national party, it still had a solid base from which to continue its quest. However all of this would soon change. What began with a series of resignations in April would ultimately culminate in a Caucus rebellion, a dissident faction which would align itself with the Progressive Conservative Party, a leadership race and a free fall in the public opinion polls. All of these events had an impact upon the Canadian Alliance Party's future prospects of establishing itself as a national political party. However these events also raised the question would the party be able to maintain its position as a regional party or were these events the beginning of a shift for the Canadian Alliance Party from being a regional party to one which was in decline and in danger of disappearing.

This chapter will examine the events surrounding this implosion and attempt to explain its potential impacts and consequences, particularly on the ability of the Canadian Alliance to establish itself as a national political party.

## Rebellion

On April 24, 2001, Deborah Grey, Chuck Strahl and Grant McNally all resigned from their party positions saying that they could not fully support Stockwell Day's leadership of the party. Strahl was the party's House Leader, McNally was Deputy House Leader and Grey was the party's Deputy Leader and Caucus Chairperson. At the time, the three all remained Canadian Alliance M.P.s. At the same time, three Alliance M.P.s Art Hanger, Val Meredith and Bob Mills stated that Day should resign. Meredith stated, "The membership is quite frankly not willing to support an organization that doesn't seem to have its act together." Hanger proclaimed, "Its certainly going to be a confrontation. I think its high time." Hanger was removed from his position of Defence Critic the next day.

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Art Hanger, who had repeatedly called for Stockwell Day's resignation as party leader was suspended from the Canadian Alliance's caucus on May 3, 2001 for violating party procedure and breaching confidentiality. Prophetically, Hanger hinted that other M.P.'s might soon go public with similar concerns. Four days later, Gary Lunn became the second M.P. to be suspended from caucus for calling for Stockwell Day's resignation.<sup>2</sup>

On May 15, 2001, eight Canadian Alliance M.P.'s called on party leader, Stockwell Day to resign. The eight M.P.'s were: Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley), Jay Hill (Prince George-Peace River), Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast), Gary Lunn (Saanich and Gulf Islands), Val Meredith (South Surrey-White Rock-Langley) Grant McNally (Dewdney-

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<sup>1</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Mutiny in the Alliance," National Post, 25 April 2001, Sec A, p.1,10.

<sup>2</sup> Jane Taber, "MP Devises Scheme To Oust Day," National Post, 8 May 2001, Sec A, p.6.

Alouette), Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon-Humboldt) and Jim Gouk (Kootenay-Boundary-Okanagan). Of the eight, five had been elected in 1993. These were: Strahl, Hill, Meredith, Gouk and Hanger. The other three (Lunn, Pankiw and McNally) were elected in 1997.<sup>3</sup>

Day's critics accused him of running a poor campaign in the 2000 Federal Election and mishandling a series of controversies, including a \$800,000 defamation lawsuit and attempts by two Canadian Alliance M.P.'s to hire an undercover agent. The critics were also upset over the party's declining numbers in public opinion polls. At the time, the dissidents stated they were not forming a new political party nor were they going to join the Progressive Conservative Party. On May 16, 2001, the eight dissidents were suspended from active duties within the Canadian Alliance's Parliamentary caucus, although the suspensions were not permanent.<sup>4</sup> M.P. Chuck Strahl who emerged as the group's leader stated: "But we are convinced that over the past few months the current leadership has exercised consistently bad judgement, dishonest communications and a lack of fidelity to our party's policies. Since we do not wish to be associated with such practices, we have chosen to speak out today in an effort to bring about change."<sup>5</sup>

The next M.P. to join the defection was Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat). Andy Burton (Skeena) became the 10<sup>th</sup> M.P. to defect on June 24, 2001. On June 26, 2001, Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert) became the eleventh M.P. to call for Day's resignation. On July 3, 2001, the party's longest serving M.P., Deborah Grey (Edmonton-North)

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<sup>3</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Leadership has exercised consistently bad judgement," National Post, 16 May 2001, Sec A, p.1,6.

<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> ibid

resigned from caucus becoming the 12th M.P. to defect. On the following day, Inky Mark (Dauphin-Swan River) became the thirteenth and final M.P. to resign from caucus. Chuck Strahl immediately emerged as the rebel's leader.

On July 5, 2001 eight of the nine members of the Alliance Executive Council approved a draft letter asking Stockwell Day to resign as party leader. However the letter was never sent. The next day, the thirteen Alliance dissidents rejected a conditional offer from Stockwell Day to step aside in favour of Deputy Leader, Grant Hill. The dissidents wanted Day to resign by October 31, 2001. Under Day's plan, he would take a leave of absence until April 2, 2002 and then resign as party leader. He did not want to resign in July because such action would trigger an immediate leadership race and he felt the party needed a cooling off period first. Day's offer was as follows

- 1) All of the members of the CA Caucus, who are currently suspended will be asked to rejoin caucus and to re-sign the candidate's pledge from the last election and the caucus protocol as a condition of return.
- 2) The Caucus shall elect from among its members a new Leader of the Opposition.
- 3) The current leader, Stockwell Day and the former Deputy Leader, Deborah Grey will nominate Grant Hill to fill the position of acting leader prior to a Caucus election.
- 4) Party co-president Ken Kalopis shall resign immediately.
- 5) The work of the Unity Committee shall continue.
- 6) A process shall be initiated by the new acting leader to facilitate

reconciliation among Caucus members. <sup>6</sup>

On July 8, 2001, Day rejected a counter proposal from the dissidents, which simply called for Day to offer his outright resignation immediately.

On July 17, 2001, Stockwell Day called for a leadership race and announced he would step down as party leader ninety days before the race. He stated, "I will set aside any personal aspirations for the good of the party." Day also stated, "I've therefore decided to put the decision on leadership of the Canadian Alliance back into the hands of the members of our great party from coast to coast." Under the Canadian Alliance's constitution, it must be held by July 17, 2002. The date of the race would be set by the party's National Council. After Day's announcement, Brian Fitzpatrick rejoined the Alliance Caucus. <sup>7</sup>

In mid November 2001, DRC member, Gary Lunn asked to rejoin the Alliance Caucus in the hope that it would engage in serious unity talks with the Progressive Conservative Party. Grant Hill, the Alliance's deputy leader announced Lunn's request at a meeting of the party's governing council on November 15. Lunn and the other dissidents were facing permanent expulsion from the Canadian Alliance Party, but this threat was deferred in the hopes more members of the DRC might follow Lunn's lead. Lunn was officially welcomed back into the Canadian Alliance Caucus in

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<sup>6</sup> <<http://www.canadianalliance.ca>> (November 14, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Sheldon Alberts, Robert Remington, "Day plan: step down, force new election," National Post, 18 July 2001, Sec A, p. 1,6.

January 2002.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Democratic Representative Caucus**

The dissidents formed the Democratic Representative Caucus after Canadian Alliance leader, Stockwell Day called a leadership race. The twelve rebels held meetings with the Progressive Conservative Party at Mont-Tremblant, Quebec on August 17-18, 2001. At the time of the meeting all of the rebels retained their Canadian Alliance Party memberships. However no members of the Alliance caucus attended the meetings and they were denounced by party leader, Stockwell Day.<sup>9</sup>

A total of sixty delegates were involved with the meetings, thirty from each side. The proposal before the delegates included: pooling research funds, sharing question period time, dividing the critic portfolios amongst the two groups and identifying policies the two groups had in common and agreeing upon means to advance these policies once the fall session of the House of Commons began on September 17, 2001. There was division among the two groups as the meetings began.<sup>10</sup>

Tory M.P. Elsie Wayne stated, "They have to come to the PC Party and that's it. Their supporters are going to convince them [to join us] in the next election". She also called the Canadian Alliance a western based separatist party.<sup>11</sup> DRC member, Deborah

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<sup>8</sup> Sheldon Alberts, "Rebel MP to return to CA caucus," National Post, 16 November 2001, Sec A, p.6.

<sup>9</sup> Joel Denis Bellavance, "They Have To Come To The PC Party," National Post, 18 August 2001, Sec A, p.6.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

Grey stated, "We are not here to say let's have a marriage this weekend' Not at all. You know that I am happily married." <sup>12</sup>

The result was a parliamentary coalition. The coalition took the name Progressive Conservative Democratic Representative Caucus. At the time the DRC was seeking full party status in the House of Commons. The proponents of the PC/DRC union called it a historic coalition. However only eight of these M.P.s would form a coalition with the Progressive Conservative Party. The eight were: Chuck Strahl, Jay Hill, Gary Lunn, Val Meredith, Grant McNally, Deborah Grey, Jim Pankiw and Inky Mark. The coalition would be led by Joe Clark, while the deputy leader would be Chuck Strahl. The defectors took the name Democratic Representative Caucus. Eventually the DRC's numbers would drop to seven as Gary Lunn rejoined the Canadian Alliance.

The details of the arrangement were formally announced on September 10, 2001. The coalition meets every Wednesday. Deborah Grey is the Coalition Caucus Chair, Peter McKay is the House Leader and Jay Hill is the PC/DR Whip. The seven members of the DRC also hold the following critic duties: Jay Hill (Solicitor General), Inky Mark (Citizenship and Immigration), Val Meredith (Transport), Grant McNally (Canadian Heritage), Jim Pankiw (Public Works and Government Services), Deborah Grey (Indian Affairs and Northern Development) and Chuck Strahl (Industry). Gary Lunn, former member of the DRC served as International Trade critic. Each Caucus remained an independent entity. However the two groups sit in the House of Commons as members of the PC/DR Coalition. The coalition had three main goals. These are:

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<sup>12</sup>     ibid

- 1) To build a more effective Opposition to hold the government accountable.
- 2) To present voters with a sustainable and principled alternative that has the potential to attract support from people of different walks of life and all regions of the country.
- 3) To include and involve members and supporters of the PC Party, the CA and others who share their goals. <sup>13</sup>

On September 24, 2001 the PC/DR Coalition won a partial victory when Peter Milliken, the Speaker of the House of Commons granted their request for special parliamentary recognition. The coalition was granted the right to sit together in the House of Commons, elect their own caucus officers and be represented on committee. However Milliken did rule that the group was a coalition and not a political party. Therefore the group was unable to claim official party recognition and would remain in fifth place in the House of Commons. The decision was unprecedented. The coalition's recognition was opposed by the other four parties in the House of Commons. They had argued that since the coalition was not an official party, it should be regarded as a small party of one dozen Tory M.P.'s supplemented by eight independents. <sup>14</sup>

On October 17, 2001, the DRC announced the launch of its grassroots organization christened the Democratic Representative Association (DRA). The DRA will provide organizational support to the DRC. It is a national volunteer based organization.

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<sup>13</sup> <<http://www.draonline.ca/whoarewe.html>> (November 18, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> Norm Ovenden, "Speaker grants Tory-rebel coalition special recognition," National Post, 25 September 2001, Sec A, p.6.

The goals of the DRA are as follows:

- 1) To encourage Canadians to join and support the DRA.
- 2) To support Alliance leadership candidates who support genuine cooperation.
- 3) To encourage boards of local Alliance and PC associations to pass a motion advocating a single democratic conservative candidate in every riding.
- 4) To encourage grassroots activists to organize the grassroots members of their ridings to adopt a resolution advocating a single democratic conservative candidate.

The DRA is not a registered political party nor is it a registered charity. Thus while it accepts donations, any donation made to it is not tax deductible. The DRA also takes members. The cost to join is ten dollars. The DRA states that by pursuing grassroots discussion on shared principles and policies and collaborating with political activists, it is working to unite competing opposition parties to select, support, and elect a single, democratic, conservative candidate in ridings across Canada to end the vote-splitting.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Canadian Alliance**

On September 5, 2001, the Canadian Alliance announced that the twelve dissident M.P.'s would be suspended from caucus at noon EDT on September 10, 2001, if they did not abandon independent efforts to form a coalition with the Tories and rejoin the Canadian Alliance. The dissidents would be welcomed back to the party if they agreed to the following five conditions:

- 1) Re-affirm their belief in and support of Canadian Alliance principles and policies and the democratic process by which those principles and policies

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<sup>15</sup> <<http://www.draonline.ca/news/171001.html>> (November 18, 2001).

are formed and amended.

- 2) Agree to abide by the Canadian Alliance's Constitution.
- 3) Agree to join all members of the Canadian Alliance Caucus in abiding by the Canadian Alliance Caucus protocol.
- 4) Agree to accept the results of the Canadian Alliance leadership race in March 2002.
- 5) Agree to engage in unity discussions with other political parties only as approved by and under the auspices of the Canadian Alliance Caucus.

If a suspended member indicated by the deadline that he or she could not accept the conditions or no response was received then the member would be expelled from the Canadian Alliance Caucus.<sup>16</sup> Four of the dissidents (Deborah Grey, Val Meredith, Inky Mark and Jim Pankiw) flatly refused to rejoin the party under the conditions set out by Day. All stated that they could not return to a party led by Stockwell Day.

Four of the rebels chose to rejoin the Canadian Alliance. Jim Gouk rejoined the party on September 9, 2001. On September 10, 2001, Andy Burton and Art Hanger both rejoined the Canadian Alliance Party's caucus. All three claimed victory citing Day's decision to put his leadership to a vote in March 2002 and stated that they would support and work for leadership candidates other than Day, although new specific names were mentioned. Monte Solberg was the fifth and last rebel to rejoin the party. Solberg returned on September 11, 2001, one day after Day's deadline. However he had been granted an extension because he had just returned from attending a friend's funeral.

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<sup>16</sup> <<http://www.canadianalliance.ca>> (November 15, 2001).

On October 24, 2001, the party released the results of a “unity” survey conducted among its membership. 58% of respondents agreed that the party should pursue a formal agreement with the PC Party to present a single democratic conservative candidate in every constituency in the next federal election. Support for the concept was highest in Ontario and Quebec. However respondents were divided on what form this cooperation should take. 51% of respondents believe that the Canadian Alliance and the Tories should merge together into a new party, 17% feel that the two parties should remain separate but select three hundred and one common candidates for the next federal election through joint nomination meetings held by local Alliance and Tory constituency offices and 32% believe that the two parties should remain separate but feel that only one of the two parties should nominate a candidate in each of the three hundred and one ridings with the constituencies divided equitably on the basis of past electoral performance whether on a riding by riding or province by province basis.<sup>17</sup>

On October 12, 2001, the Canadian Alliance announced that it would hold a leadership vote in March of 2002. The vote will be conducted by mail in ballots and will begin March 8, 2002. The results of the first ballot will be announced on March 20, 2002. If a second ballot is required, voting will start on March 21, 2002 with the results being announced on April 4, 2002 at the party’s national convention in Edmonton.<sup>18</sup>

In early November the party announced that its leadership convention might be postponed until the fall of 2002. The reasons given for the possible delay are questions about the party’s

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<sup>17</sup>     ibid

<sup>18</sup>     ibid

direction, the difficulty of fundraising in a sluggish economy and the Ontario Progressive Conservative's March 2002 leadership convention. There is a fear that the Tory campaign could take precedence over and over shadow the Alliance campaign. It could also deplete the Alliance ranks because many activists support both parties. It would also make it harder for the party to attract any serious Ontario candidates. The motion to delay the race was dealt with in a November 15, 2001 telephone conference. The Ontario Tory leadership race is set for March 23, 2002. However party leader Stockwell Day did not want the leadership vote to be delayed. Constitutionally the vote must take place before July 17<sup>th</sup> 2002. Proponents of the delay say that additional time is needed to allow for progress in discussions between the Alliance and the Tories on how best to cooperate. Party officials will have to consider a number of factors around the date issue including how much time they should give to potential contenders to organize a campaign, whether there is any hope of holding a joint race with the Tories down the line and whether the party will have a chance to recuperate from its in fighting. However in the end the Alliance decided to move forward as previously planned.

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In early November the Alliance put forward a four point proposal on the issue of joint candidates with the Progressive Conservative Party. The points were:

- 1) Holding joint nomination meetings.
- 2) Leaders from both parties would endorse nominations.
- 3) Candidates must declare in advance what party banner they would run under and, if elected what caucus they would sit in.

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Sean Fitz-Gerald, "Alliance proposal would delay vote," National Post, 8 November 2001, Sec A, p.6.

4) Voting for nominations would be a one member, one vote system.

Chuck Strahl, leader of the DRC welcomed the proposals.<sup>20</sup>

## **Leadership Candidates**

Fulfilling an agreement he made with his Caucus in July of 2001, Canadian Alliance leader, Stockwell Day resigned his position on December 12, 2001. However less than one month later, on January 7, 2002, Day announced his intentions to run as a candidate in the party's upcoming leadership race. At the Montreal press conference announcing his decision, Day lashed out at media and "political elites", while also stating his support among the "common people" as well as the grassroots of the Canadian Alliance Party. He also blamed disgruntled political activists for the turmoil and infighting which plagued the Canadian Alliance Party for most of 2001. Day has also compared himself and his situation to former Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker. While his attacks on perceived societal elites and attempts to link himself with the "common people" are reminiscent of Diefenbaker, Day has neither Diefenbaker's charisma nor his record of electoral success.

Based on public polling about both the Canadian Alliance and Stockwell Day, it is fair to presume that if Day is re-elected as party leader, the Canadian Alliance Party is likely to continue to falter. The re-election of Day would likely cause many in the public and the party to wonder what the point of all the dissension and the leadership race was. It could serve as a sign to Canadians that the party is not a worthwhile vehicle of political change. All of this could lead to the party being reduced to a small block of seats in Alberta and B.C. In other words, the re-election of Stockwell Day as party leader is likely to trigger the slow demise of

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<sup>20</sup> <<http://www.cbc.ca>> (November 19,2001).

the party.

Dr. Grant Hill, a Reform/Canadian Alliance M.P. since 1993 announced his candidacy on December 17, 2001. Hill has positioned himself as a "unity" candidate. First, he strives to unify all elements and factions of the Canadian Alliance Party. Second, Hill aims to unify his party and the Tories. As he announced his bid, he stated: "The truth must be told. The Canadian Alliance will never be a credible national alternative to the Liberals without our friends in the Progressive Conservative Party, just as the Progressive Conservative Party will never be a credible alternative without us in the Canadian Alliance."

Dianne Ablonczy, a long time Canadian Alliance M.P. announced her candidacy in December. She is running on a unity/reconciliation platform which is very similar to that of Dr. Grant Hill. In fact, there is concern among some party members that the two candidacies may split the unity vote.

Ablonczy and Hill are running similar campaigns. Both want to unify their party and more importantly, both would like to see their party unify with the Progressive Conservative Party. The future direction of the party, under either leadership is likely to be very similar so they will be considered together. Both Ablonczy and Hill would likely lead the party towards a merger with the Progressive Conservative Party. However it is unclear at this time whether such a merger would take place before the next election.

The first leadership contender to announce his candidacy was Steven Harper, who made public his bid in early December 2001. Harper served as a Reform Party M.P. between 1993 and 1997. He is the former president of the National Citizens Coalition, a post he resigned from at the end of December 2001. Harper had held the position since 1998. Harper

has stated he will not negotiate a political deal with the Progressive Conservative Party as long as Joe Clark is its leader.

The election of Steven Harper as leader of the Canadian Alliance Party will likely mean that the Canadian Alliance, like the Reform Party before it will remain a regional party. At this moment, Harper seems to have the ability to appeal to those who have voted Reform/Canadian Alliance in the past. However given some of his past comments including his statements about Alberta building a "firewall" around the province after the last Federal Election and the fact that like Manning and Day he is from Alberta, Harper is likely to be portrayed in the media and seen in Central Canada as just another "western political leader". It appears unlikely at this point that he would be any more successful than Manning and Day at attracting votes east of Manitoba.

At the moment no potential leadership candidate from Ontario has stepped forward. Tom Long, the Ontario standard bearer in 2000 has declined to run again. Moreover several potential candidates from the Ontario government including Tony Clement, Jim Flaherty and Ernie Eves are all currently vying to replace Mike Harris as leader of the Ontario provincial Conservatives and Premier.

## **Public Opinion**

The controversy and turmoil surrounding the Canadian Alliance has had a direct impact on how Canadians view it. As events have progressed and the situation has become more and more muddled and problematic the party's polling numbers have steadily plummeted. The Canadian Alliance's support has dropped by over fifty percent. At the beginning of the year, they held the support of 23% of Canadians, in October this number had

slipped to 11%. Moreover some polls have had the party as low as 6%. In addition, fewer and fewer Canadians considered Stockwell Day the best choice for Prime Minister.

In January 2001, an Environics poll found that the Canadian Alliance had the support of 23% of Canadians, while the Liberals had the support of 45% of Canadians. The Alliance's rivals on the political right, the Tories had the support of only 11% of Canadians.<sup>21</sup>

An Environic survey released on April 25, 2001 revealed that the Canadian Alliance had the support of 19% of Canadians, a four percent drop from January 2001. Conversely the Tories had risen four percent from 11% to 15%. As well the Liberals were still the dominant party with the support of 43% of Canadians. The poll also revealed that only 25% of Canadians approved of leader Stockwell Day's performance. In October of 2000, it had been 52%.<sup>22</sup>

A Compass poll released on June 3, 2001 revealed that only 10% of Canadians would vote for the Canadian Alliance, while 15% supported the Progressive Conservatives. The Liberals received more support than all the other opposition parties combined. They were the choice of 53% of Canadians.<sup>23</sup>

An Environics poll conducted in July of 2001 found that the Liberals were the most popular party among the electorate with the support of 46% of Canadians. The PC Party was second with the support of 20% of the population, while the Canadian Alliance was third with

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<sup>21</sup> <<http://www.environics.net>> (November 20, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> <<http://www.compass.ca>> (November 21, 2001).

the support of 13% of those surveyed.<sup>24</sup>

A poll released by former Canadian Alliance pollster, Andre Turcotte revealed that 67% of Canadians would never consider voting for the Canadian Alliance. It also found that an equal number of Canadians believed that not having a strong opposition party in Ottawa was a problem. Finally he discovered that 40% of Canadians would be ready to support a party that could demonstrate that it was a strong opposition party, even if it wasn't their own party. He also had the Alliance at 9% in the polls.<sup>25</sup>

An opinion poll conducted between September 17 and 24<sup>th</sup> and released in early October 2001 revealed only 9% of voters supported the Canadian Alliance. In comparison 16% favoured the Tories. However the Liberals continued to dominate holding the support of 60% of the population.<sup>26</sup>

An Environics poll conducted in October of 2001 found that the Liberals had the greatest support among Canadians at 47%. In second were the Progressive Conservatives with the support of 19% of those surveyed. The Canadian Alliance was tied for third with the NDP with 11%.<sup>27</sup>

An Environics poll conducted in September and October 2001 found that Liberal leader, Jean Chretien was considered the best choice for Prime Minister among Canadians. 39% of voters surveyed chose him, while 22% favoured PC leader, Joe Clark. Only 6% of

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<sup>24</sup> <<http://www.environics.net>.> (November 22, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> Jane Taber, "Canadians' rejection of the Alliance at a stunning 67%, pollster says," National Post, 17 August 2001, Sec A, p.6.

<sup>26</sup> <<http://www.compass.ca>.> (November 23, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> <<http://www.environics.net>.> (November 24, 2001).

those surveyed chose Canadian Alliance leader, Stockwell Day. As similar poll conducted in April of 2001 found that Chretien was favoured by 33% of respondents, Clark by 20% and Day by 12%.<sup>28</sup>

## **Conclusion**

At the beginning of 2001, the Canadian Alliance Party was still a regional party within the Canadian party system. Nevertheless the Canadian Alliance began the year 2001 in fairly solid shape. They were coming off their most successful election, all be it one in which they had not performed as well as they hoped. Their numbers were solid and steady in the polls and they were positioned as the Official Opposition for another four years. However all this would soon change. Divisions would appear in the party over the leadership of Stockwell Day. At first it was only verbal criticism but it soon turned into something more serious, defection. Consequently as the year 2001 closed the Canadian Alliance was in a precarious position. Seven of its former M.P.'s formed their own parliamentary grouping named the Democratic Representative Caucus and have formed a coalition with the Progressive Conservative Party. The party has called a leadership race for 2002 but so far none of the candidates appear capable of ending the disunion within the Canadian right or seriously challenging the Liberal Party. As well the party is falling in the public opinion polls. Consequently as the year 2001 ended the Canadian Alliance's dream of establishing itself seemed extremely unlikely. In addition, even its status as a regional party appeared in danger.

## CONCLUSION OF THESIS

At the beginning of the thesis, three possible paths for the future of the Reform Party, expounded by Peter McCormick were outlined. These were:

- 1) It would be a one time wonder that would gradually but surely fade from its highwater mark to a vote threshold too low to win any seats. This was the fate of the Progressives, who after winning sixty-five seats in the 1921 Federal Election elected only 24 members in the 1925 Federal Election and one year later were essentially dead. "The Progressive party came to an end with the election of 1926."
- 2) Its rise would be contained rather than reversed. The party would be limited to the role of a regional or ideological protest party (or both). In this scenario, Reform would maintain a solid block of seats in Alberta and B.C. and modest strength elsewhere. In other words, it would be a right-wing counterpart to the CCF/NDP's longstanding role as a left-wing conscience and generator of ideas.
- 3) Reform would consolidate its position in Western Canada and build upon its localized strengths in Ontario, the goal being for the party to emerge as a national force, particularly as the single alternative voice for English Canada. In this scenario, Reform would assume a role similar to that of the Progressive Conservatives from 1867 to 1993.

The creation of the Canadian Alliance Party by certain members of the political right can be seen as an attempt to shift the Reform Party from McCormick's second scenario to his third. This thesis has sought to serve as a case study of this attempt.

The founders of Reform Party in a period of ten years were successful in forming a political party and establishing it as a strong regional party within the Canadian party system. Reform dominated Western Canada in the 1990's. It also achieved a greater level of success than any other third party which preceded it. However its inability to win seats east of the Manitoba/Ontario border and the problem of vote-splitting between itself and the Progressive Conservative Party meant that the party would remain a regional party and never become a national party.

In the late 1990's, its leadership decided that a new medium was needed in order to transform Reform from a regional into a national party. This decision led to the United Alternative Experience. The United Alternative Experience was a two year process which began at Reform's 1998 Biannual convention in London, Ontario in May of 1998. It would include two conventions, two referendums of the party membership on whether to proceed with the experiment and culminate in a leadership race. The end result would be a new political party, the Canadian Alliance and a new party leader, Stockwell Day.

The success of the Canadian Alliance in achieving national party status can be measured by evaluating it in three areas: policy, finances and electoral success.

In order for the Canadian Alliance to break out of its regional party status and achieve national party status, it would have to develop a platform which would allow the party to retain the Reform Party's traditional base of support while at the same time attracting the support of those who traditionally voted for one of the other parties. While supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party would serve as the Alliance's primary target, it would also need to attract individuals who in the past had voted Liberal or NDP as well as swing

voters.

The platform adopted by the Canadian Alliance Party for the 2000 Federal Election successfully blended policies previously espoused by the Reform and Progressive Conservative Parties, while at the same time reflecting contemporary public opinion.

The Alliance's policies in the areas of economics were essentially continuations of policies held by Reform and the Tories. They also reflected the Canadian public's concern with issues such as lower taxes, balanced budgets and debt reduction. This is particularly true in the case of male voters who traditionally form the backbone of support for parties on the ideological right.

Their policies on healthcare were reflective of previous Reform policies. However in this area, the policies adopted by the Alliance were much closer to policies previously endorsed by the Tories. In fact, in many ways the Canadian Alliance's healthcare policies can be seen as an outright adoption of the healthcare policies advocated by the Progressive Conservative Party in 1997. In addition, the Alliance's platform included a greater focus on the area of healthcare, which demonstrates an awareness of the concerns of Canadians, who listed healthcare as their first priority in surveys conducted during the election. This was particularly true of female voters and the Alliance's increased focus on healthcare can be viewed as an attempt to raise its support among this demographic.

The Alliance's justice policies also reflect a mix of Reform and Tory policies. The party's support of a tougher Young Offenders Act and the repeal of Bill C-68 and Section 745 of the Criminal Code were simply a continuation of policies adopted by Reform and the Tories in 1997. Survey data from the election campaign revealed that many Canadians

approved of tougher measures in this field and the Alliance's stance can be viewed as an attempt to capture support among this group.

The Canadian Alliance also took a much softer approach to national unity than its predecessor. While Reform repeatedly attacked Quebec and Quebec born politicians during the 1997 campaign, the Alliance campaign was largely silent on this issue. This shift can be seen as an attempt by the Alliance to portray itself as a national party, not a regional one which needs to resort to attacks on one section of the country in order to win support in another.

Overall, the Canadian Alliance was able to create a platform which retained Reform Party policies, adopted Progressive Conservative policies and reflected Canadian public opinion. This is particularly evident in the three cornerstones of its 2000 platform, economic, justice and healthcare policy.

The Canadian Alliance Party needed to develop a stronger financial base in order to establish itself as a national party. A truly national campaign would require a level of campaign spending significantly greater than the amounts the party had spent on previous campaigns. Increased campaign spending meant that the Alliance would need to raise the number and the value of donations it received. Specifically the party would require increased corporate support.

The Canadian Alliance was successful in improving its financial circumstances. The Canadian Alliance was able to spend more on its 2000 campaign than its predecessor could have ever hoped to spend. It was able to spend twice as much money in 2000 than it had been able to in 1997. In fact, the Canadian Alliance spent more money on its 2000

campaign than the Reform Party spent on its three campaigns between 1988 and 1997. The party also went from spending the least of all major parties in 1993 to spending the second largest amount, trailing only the Liberals.

The party's increased financial prowess can be directly linked to its success in increasing the level of donations to the party. The Alliance greatly increased its overall, individual and corporate levels of donations. Its level of corporate support increased significantly. The absence of sustainers in 2000 and 2001, which were once a backbone of party revenue is a sign of this increased success. While the average contribution to the Canadian Alliance was still less than that of the Liberals, the two parties raised almost identical amounts in 2000. Overall party finances can be viewed as an area of success for the Canadian Alliance.

The ultimate indicator of the Canadian Alliance's success in achieving its goal of converting from a regional to a national party would be its ability to win seats in a general election. Specifically would the party be able to win seats east of the Manitoba/Ontario border or would it remain a success in only one region of the country, Western Canada.

At the onset of chapter five, five goals that the Canadian Alliance Party needed to accomplish in the 2000 Federal General Election in order to realize its ultimate goal of securing national party status were outlined. In the end, the Canadian Alliance achieved only one of these goals. The Alliance was successful in solidifying its base of support in Western Canada, winning sixty-four seats and earning over half of the region's votes. However the Alliance failed to achieve any of the four other goals. The party did not achieve an electoral breakthrough in the province of Ontario. The party also was

unsuccessful in its bid to produce a respectable showing in Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. The party did not eliminate the vote-splitting between itself and the Tories which had occurred in the previous two Federal Elections. The Canadian Alliance also did not eliminate the Progressive Conservative Party in the 2000 Federal Election. As a result, it failed to achieve its major objective for the 2000 Federal Election, transforming itself into a national party. Instead as it had in the previous two Federal Elections, it remained a regional (in this case Western) political party.

While the Canadian Alliance was successful in developing two of the key tools required for the conversion from a regional to a national party, it failed the ultimate test, electoral success. Consequently the Canadian Alliance remained a regional party in the year 2000. Nevertheless while the party did not achieve its goal in the short term, at the beginning of 2001, it had positioned itself for a second attempt in 2004 (or whenever the next election was called).

Yet what began with a series of resignations in April would ultimately culminate in a Caucus rebellion which would produce a dissident faction which would align itself with the Progressive Conservative Party, a leadership race and a free fall in the public opinion polls. All of these events had an impact upon the Canadian Alliance Party's future prospects of establishing itself as a national political party. However these events also raised the question would the party be able to maintain its position as a regional party or were these events the beginning of a shift for the Canadian Alliance Party from being a regional party to one which was in decline and in danger of disappearing.

The events of the past year have had a definite impact on the Canadian Alliance Party

and its prospects for establishing itself as a national party. Its numbers in public opinion polls have plummeted and at times have reached record lows. Former leader Stockwell Day has emerged as one of the front runners to win the leadership and some reports indicate he could win. Day's re-election as party leader could potentially trigger more Caucus defections which would further weaken the party. As well, polling data has indicated he is extremely unpopular with Canadians. A victory in the leadership race could lead to further plummeting in the polls.

The election of the other front runner, Steven Harper could also have negative repercussions. Harper's election is not likely to lead to additional Caucus defections. However he has publicly refused to even consider negotiating some form of truce with the Tories as long as Joe Clark is party leader. Recently Clark has stated, he is considering staying on as party leader into the next election. Therefore Harper's election would close one potential avenue for the party to rebuild itself and achieve its goal of national party status. Additionally, comments made by Harper in the past such as those made after the 2000 Federal Election, when he stated Alberta should be a "firewall" around the province are likely to lead to negative media coverage and to negatively impact the party's prospects East of Manitoba.

The transformation of the Reform Party to the Canadian Alliance failed in the short term to convert the party from a regional party into a national party. However it did create a solid base for the party to attempt the transformation again at the next Federal election. Regardless the events of the past year have severely damaged the Alliance's chances to do so and have also impacted its ability to retain its regional party status.

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