

The Conservative Party of Canada and Brokerage Politics

By

Joseph Ahorro

A Thesis submitted to

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thesis topic, *The Conservative Party of Canada and Brokerage Politics*, was rooted in my personal interest in political campaigns and fostered by my undergraduate classes in Canadian politics as well as in classical and contemporary political theory. Given their recent emergence in 2003, much has been commented in the media and the general public about the Conservative Party of Canada. Yet little has been written or carefully scrutinized on this new entity. My thesis aims to further our understanding of Canadian political party behaviour and conservative politics by examining how the new Conservative Party organizes and conducts itself. Is the Conservative Party an ideological party like their predecessors Reform/Alliance, or does it resemble a brokerage party like the preceding Progressive Conservatives?

The scope of my research considers behaviour of Canada's major parties that were or are represented in Parliament since 1984. Although worthy of further study, minor parties like the Green Party or the Canadian Action Party were not considered simply because they were beyond the range of my topic. Synthesizing my thesis has been a humbling exercise of extensive research and constructive writing. This endeavor would not have been possible without the aid and encouragement of several people.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the type of party behaviour the Conservative Party of Canada exhibits. To identify whether the recently created Conservative Party resembles an ideological or a brokerage party, the research first surveys the external attributes of the organization – *Agreement-in-Principle*, *Leadership*, *Constitution*, and the 2004 and 2006 Campaign platforms. The thesis finds that the Conservative Party broadened many of its policy positions, a comparison to the ideological party, the Reform/Canadian Alliance. Next, the thesis investigates the Conservative Party's internal attributes in the 2004 and 2006 campaign structure and strategies, candidate profiles, and public perception. The thesis argues that the Conservatives acts entrepreneurially with the intent to capture a large share of the electorate in order to win government. Broad and flexible policies and acting in an enterprising manner to sell itself to the voting public are traits of a brokerage party. This thesis concludes that the new Conservative Party is a brokerage party.

INTRODUCTION

On December 5, 2003 in an effort to unite Canadian conservatives, the membership of the Canadian Alliance gave leader Steven Harper the mandate to proceed with a proposal to form a new political entity to be known as the Conservative Party of Canada.¹ The next day, Progressive Conservative (PC) Party delegates voted in favour of the same proposition by a majority of 90.4 %.² Once fierce competitors, the Alliance and PC Party sought dissolution and merger into a new entity, the Conservative Party of Canada. Given that the Conservative Party was recently formed, many questions surround the new party and there has been little research to analyze the type of party behaviour it exhibits. Why did the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservatives amalgamate into the Conservative Party despite their internecine electoral war during the 1990s? Is the Conservative Party a brokerage party much like its predecessors, the Progressive Conservatives? Conversely, does the Conservative Party follow the ideological model characterized by the former Reform/Canadian Alliance? This thesis seeks to answer these questions in order to define the new Conservative Party.

Chapter One explores two explanations that concern the behaviour of Canada's major parties, the brokerage and ideological models. By drawing on the existing literature of Canadian political party behavior, the Chapter finds that the brokerage model can best be understood through two perspectives. The organizational approach assumes that winning elections is the primary goal of a brokerage party. Such parties are entrepreneurial in trying to capture sufficient votes in order to gain power in government.

¹ Allison Dunfield, "95.9% of Alliance voters agree to merger," <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20031205.walli1205/BNStory/National/>, accessed 10 August 2004.

² Canadian Broadcast Corporation, "New Conservative Party is Official," <http://www.cbc.ca/story/canada/national/2003/12/08/conervative031208.html>, accessed 10 August 2004.

Furthermore, brokerage parties will not risk incorporating extreme or fringe policies in fear of losing a large share of the vote. Organizing themselves around the leader, as opposed to principles or ideologies, brokerage parties will craft a malleable message that can appeal to enough voters to be electorally successful. In contrast, the sociological approach assumes that there are multiple social cleavages in Canada. As such, brokerage parties must be flexible in their policies in order to accommodate these various segments in society. Acting as agents of cohesion, brokerage parties will utilize various methods to achieve national unity, be it through patronage, promoting broad policies, or brokering public policy. Not without criticism, brokerage politics was met with competition from ideological parties. Although scholars like Christian and Campbell (1983), Clarke et al. (1984), Blake (1988), and Johnston (1988) argued that the traditional parties were in fact more ideological, it was the rise of the Reform/Alliance Party and the Bloc Québécois that directly challenged the practice of brokerage. The work by Cross and Young (2002) found that Reform/Alliance and the Bloc were more ideological than their brokerage counterparts – the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives.³

Chapter Two assesses the type of party behaviour exhibited by the two founding groups of the Conservative Party. By studying their external traits (leadership, platform, voter perception) and internal attributes (attitude structure of partisans), the second Chapter confirms Cross and Young's findings about the role of ideology in parties. This Chapter finds that the Progressive Conservatives acts more as a brokerage party, whereas the Canadian Alliance exhibited greater ideological traits.

³ William Cross and Lisa Young, "Policy Attitudes of Party Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties," *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 (December 2002), 859-880.

Given the divisive history between Reform/Alliance and the Tories, what led them to merger in 2003? As Harmel and Janda implore, party change (merger) does not 'just happen'.⁴ Chapter Three begins with a systems-level analysis of the factors that account for the competitive Canadian party system by looking at a bi-dimensional model of partisan issue cleavages in Canada. Since the 1980s, the economic and regional policy dimensions splintered the party system and created two new ideological parties – the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party. Up to 2003, this bi-dimensional policy space hindered merger between the Reform/ Alliance and the Progressive Conservative because of their dissimilar policies. However, significant short-term factors encouraged merger into the new Conservative Party.⁵

Chapter Four utilizes the same process found in the second Chapter. The analysis begins with a look external attributes of the Conservative Party. Initially finding that the Conservative Party policies and principles have a broader base when comparing to the old Reform/Alliance, the fourth Chapter continues with an assessment of the internal attributes of the Conservatives to better understand their behaviour. Although data sets similar to the Cross and Young 2002 study of partisan attitudes are not available, analyzing campaign structure during the recent 2004 and 2006 elections proves to be valuable in determining whether the Conservative Party resembles the brokerage model.

⁴ Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6(3) 1994, 259-287.

⁵ Jean-François Godbout and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office for Right-Wing Federal Parties in Canada," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Winnipeg, Canada, 3 June to 5 June, 2004, 2.

CHAPTER ONE

Defining the Brokerage and Ideological Models of Party Behaviour

Introduction

When scholars turned their attention to political parties at the beginning of the twentieth century, it became clear that once they understood parties and their behaviour, they could better explain the practical workings of political decision-making, policy-making and citizen-state linkages.¹ Although some democratic theorists, notably Jean-Jacques Rousseau, had opposed the need for political parties, it is now universally accepted that in industrialized, complex, ethnically diverse polities, parties are necessary.²

How parties carry out and fulfill various functions in relation to the citizenry can vary depending on the type of behaviour they exhibit. According to one widely accepted theory about electoral politics, Canada's historic parties, the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, practiced brokerage politics. They were basically "catch-all" parties, which attempted to offer something to almost every group in the electorate. Ideologically, they straddled the middle of the political spectrum and swerved right or left in response to public opinion.³ Serving as an agent of integration and aggregation amongst a diverse citizenry, this type of party behaviour seemed necessary to ensure social cohesion, let alone electoral success.

¹ John Meisel and Matthew Mendelsohn, "Meteor? Phoenix? Chameleon?" *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 163.

² See Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Norberto Bobbio, *The Future of Democracy: A Defense of the Rules of the Game*, (Oxford: Polity, 1987); Walter D. Young, *Democracy and Discontent*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978).

³ H.D. Forbes, "Absent Mandate '88? Parties and Voters in Canada," *Party Politics in Canada, 6th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn, (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall Canada), 255.

Canada's electoral system helps explain to a large degree the promotion of brokerage politics. The system provides for a single member to represent each district, and the winner of each district is determined by winning a plurality of votes (not a majority of the votes), otherwise known as single-member plurality or 'first-past-the-post'.⁴ Votes are amassed on a riding-by-riding basis, with the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes earning the right to represent the constituency in the House of Commons. The party winning the most seats therefore holds the mandate to form government. While campaigns and media attention tend to organize on national and regional/ provincial bases, strictly speaking, a federal election is an amalgam of each separate constituency election held simultaneously. Aggregating the results of these riding elections to the national level can, and often does, involve a considerable discrepancy between the popular vote won by a party and its share of seats in the House of Commons.⁵ For example, the 1997 election saw the Liberal Party achieve a majority in the Commons with 155 seats (51.4 %) despite only having support of 38.5 percent of the voting electorate.⁶ As such, a party whose primary goal is to win government need only to ensure it achieves a plurality of seats and not a majority of votes in order to govern. Consequently, a party whose aim is to win will shape its behaviour in order to gain more seats than its competitors, be it through presenting marketable policies, offering patronage to elites who can deliver votes, finding a leader who can attract votes, or co-opting regions which carry electoral weight. Thus Canada's electoral system

⁴ Munroe Eagles, "Elections," *Canadian Politics, 3rd Edition*, edited by James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1999), 359.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 361.

⁶ Elections Canada, "Thirty-sixth General Election 1997: Official Voting Results," <http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=synopsis06&dir=rep/dec3097&lang=e&textonly=false>, accessed 02 February 2005.

inherently favours a party who practices brokerage politics by allowing it to win “manufactured majorities” en route to forming government.⁷

Although the brokerage model has been used to attribute behaviour for the major parties in Canada, its numerous variants have attracted its fair share of criticisms. Some scholars have reasons to believe that parties are actually more ideologically structured. These arguments suggest that Canadian parties have proved to be vehicles of ideology.⁸ For example, the rise of the Reform/Canadian Alliance Parties and the Bloc Québécois provides evidence that citizens and parties are increasingly dissatisfied with the practice of brokerage. In response, such parties have become more ideologically coherent than their traditional counterparts.⁹ Ironically, Canada’s electoral system also rewards those parties whose support tends to cluster geographically in particular ridings. In 1997, the Reform Party gained only 57,000 more votes than the Progressive Conservatives but ended up with three times as many seats in the Commons.¹⁰ Since Reform had strong regional support in the West, the party was rewarded with 60 seats in Parliament. Reform’s presence in the House enabled it to strongly express public disenchantment with brokerage politics and promote a more ideological program. Likewise, the Bloc Québécois had only 10.67 percent of the national vote. Yet, due to its electoral success in the province of Québec, the Bloc Québécois was well represented in the House with 44 seats, allowing it to voice its *raison-d’être*, Québec separatism. It would appear that Canada’s electoral system rewards brokerage parties to win government, yet recompenses

⁷ Eagles, 362.

⁸ See Donald Blake, “Division and Cohesion,” *Party Democracy in Canada*, edited by George Perlin, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1988); William Christian and Colin Campbell, *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada, 2nd Edition*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1983).

⁹ William Cross, “Introduction,” *Political Parties, Representation and Electoral Democracy in Canada*, edited by William Cross, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), pg. 1-11; and Elisabeth Gidengil, et al., “Changes in the Party System and Anti-Party Sentiment,” *Ibid.*, 68-86.

¹⁰ Eagles, 362.

regional parties with inflated representation. Thus, the single member plurality system fostered major parties that exhibited both brokerage and ideological behaviours.

With the recent merger of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance to form the Conservative Party of Canada, what type of behaviour does this new entity exhibit? This Chapter examines the theoretical models that the existing literature concerning use to explain party behaviour. To begin, this Chapter will review the organizational and sociological explanations of brokerage politics, and the subsequent criticisms to this type of behaviour. In response to brokerage practice, the ensuing section will look at the ideological model and its shortcomings by covering its growing literature, which has assessed party platforms, leaders, party activists, and membership. By evaluating these two theoretical approaches, which encompass both the attitudes and behaviours of Canadian parties, the thesis will determine how the Conservative Party of Canada behaves.

The Brokerage Model

The most widely accepted theory that concerns the major parties in Canada is the idea that parties practice brokerage politics. Brokerage theory begins from an observation of Canada's major parties – the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives. These two parties are not wholly divided by clear differences of principle, nor do they speak on behalf of distinct social groups. They are unlike the socialist or other doctrinaire parties of the past with detailed programmes for complete social change rooted in ideology.¹¹ Likewise, they are not like the farmers' parties or the Catholic parties that continue to exist in other countries that consequently limit their appeal to the

¹¹ André Siegfried, *The Race Question in Canada*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1966 [1907]), 113.

electorate. The major Canadian parties are basically “catch-all” parties that try to offer something to most groups in society. Brokerage parties opt to cover the center of the ideological spectrum and will swerve to the left or right in accordance to public opinion. This approach towards understanding party behaviour has a relatively long history. Published in 1907, *The Race Question in Canada*, André Siegfried emphasized the lack of principled differences between the Liberals and Conservatives, which at the time were competing for power. Siegfried observed that Canada’s two major political parties were chiefly machines for the acquisition of power. The Liberal and the Conservatives, he argued, had vaguely defined programs, if they had programs at all. Neither of the two organizations hesitated to steal ideas from their competitor’s platforms. Both parties often made the same promises to the voters, each loudly proclaiming that it was the best team to implement a common objective. Moreover, the Liberals and Conservatives tended to behave in much the same way once they were in government. Siegfried concludes, “even the most naïve can hardly help but see that it is not the party which is at the service of the idea, but the idea at the service of the party.”¹²

The Organizational Approach

There are two understandings to help explain the brokerage approach. The first approach is an organizational understanding, which assumes that electoral success is the primary goal of parties. Utilizing the market analogy, this model portrays parties vying for votes similar to the way companies compete for consumers.¹³ As its name suggests,

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson, “Piercing the Smokescreen: Brokerage Politics and Class Politics,” *Canadian Parties in Transition: Discourse, Organization and Representation*, edited by Alain-G. Gagnon and A. Brian Tanguay, (Scarborough: Nelson, 1996), 59.

the market analogy explains political party behaviour as similar to department stores whose viability depends upon customer demands, or in the case of parties – voter expectations. Parties are viewed as entrepreneurial profit-seekers who try to maximize their share of votes in order to gain power. Like suppliers who offer goods and services in the marketplace to earn a profit, parties offer various public policies to gain votes. Analogous to shareholders of a company, political elites and partisans jockey for control of the party's leadership positions in order to manage the organization as they see fit. J.A. Corry made the classic statement of the brokerage ideal:

In the aptest phrase yet applied to them, parties are brokers of ideas. They are the middlemen who select from all the ideas pressing for recognition as public policy those they think can be shaped to have the widest appeal and through their party organization, they try to sell a carefully sifted and edited selection of these ideas (their programme) to enough members of the electorate to produce a majority in a legislature.¹⁴

Politicians can be motivated by such factors as the public interest, a desire for fame or compassion for the poor. Whatever is their determining motivation, parties can only pursue and achieve their objectives if they can win elections. The competition between parties is a strong enough incentive for parties to attach enormous importance to the implications of their platforms at election time. Parties, which refuse to adopt policies that maximize votes since they believe the policies to be harmful from a moral or economic viewpoint, risk being defeated by those who pay attention to maximizing votes. Thus the concern over alienating large segments of the popular vote as a result of

¹⁴ See J.A. Corry, *Democratic Government and Politics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952).

embracing fringe or extreme policies accounts for the similarity and generality of positions taken by parties.¹⁵

Voters can be seen as self-interested consumers who vote for the party and their candidates whose policies are most likely to benefit them individually.¹⁶ Party platforms, similar to retail outlets, will change season to season. Rather than a systemic or structured relationship to society, party behaviour is demonstrated through purely partisan calculations of short-term benefits and electoral support.¹⁷ In the private sector, consumers reveal their choices through buying products from various producers. Willingness to pay the asking price is an indicator of consumer preference. As such, consumers could therefore be said to indicate their demand for various products in the private market by voting by means of their dollars. Likewise, voters can demonstrate their preferences for policy options offered in the marketplace of politics through several institutions: the franchise, political parties, lobbying, opinion polls, petitions, public hearings, demonstrations, legal challenges, as well as civil disobedience and violence. With respect to this thesis, the vote in favour of a politician and their respective party is one of the main methods of expressing voter demand for a particular public policy. Like consumers who choose to purchase products or services that return the highest net benefit, the electors vote for candidates and parties whose platforms promise the greatest benefit at the lowest personal cost.¹⁸

¹⁵ Rejean Landry, "Incentives Created by the Institutions of Representative Democracy," *Political Parties, Representation and Electoral Democracy in Canada*, edited by William Cross, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), 420-421.

¹⁶ Paul G. Thomas, "Parties and Regional Representation," *Representation, Integration, and Political Parties in Canada*, edited by Herman Bakvis, (Toronto: Dundurn, 1991), 192-192.

¹⁷ David Elkins, "Parties as National Institutions: A Comparative Study," *Representation, Integration, and Political Parties in Canada*, edited by Herman Bakvis, (Toronto: Dundurn, 1991), 47-52.

¹⁸ Landry, 420-421.

Although there are similarities between the activities of consumers and voters, there are differences in the choices offered between the two. In the private marketplace, consumers enjoy the benefit of purchasing goods from various producers in quantities that give them the maximum benefit. Students are able to buy a music player made by Apple Computers, yet still use it with a Dell-manufactured Personal Computer. Restaurant owners can purchase bread from a discount grocer such as Costco, and also buy pastries from a local bakery. Consumers are able to acquire products from a variety of competing suppliers in order to suit their particular needs. However, collective choices in the political marketplace are a different matter. While voters can buy a music player from one producer, another for bread and a third for its pastries, they cannot choose one party for lower taxes, another for social security reform, and a third for trade policy. In reality, electors have to choose between whole platforms of candidates. Voters do not have the ability to select particular policies; rather a single vote serves to express preference for a number of policies but not necessarily for all. Usually, voters do not approve of every single aspect of the party platform of the candidate whom they are electing. This “all-or-nothing” situation presented to voters proves to be problematic for brokerage parties who are presenting a broad based platform.¹⁹

In general, the twentieth century has found the Liberal and Conservative parties to resemble each other behaviorally. Both combine mass and elite business support and offer policies and sentiments calculated to maximize electoral support, and will change stances as the mood of Canada shifts over time. Most of the parties’ original positions, such as free trade, have long been abandoned. Indeed, the 1988 Federal election saw them reversed when the Progressive Conservatives were the championing free trade with

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 421.

the United States and the Liberals its opponents.²⁰ However after the 1993 election, the Liberals later adopted North American free trade since the election issues of the day were focused on unemployment and job creation. This kind of about-face suggests that brokerage parties are opportunistic in their attempts to craft an appealing image and develop desirable policies to win over a larger swath of votes.²¹

The fact that some of the issues in recent elections stem from efforts to implement a new economic agenda does not reflect an alteration in the familiar “patchwork approach” to problem solving long characteristic of brokerage parties. Instead, these patterns manifest previous tendencies. Parties rarely present issues in ways derived from more general analyses of the country’s economic difficulties.²² Rather, they display a marked predilection for the quick-fix approach. Free trade, for example, assumed some of these characteristics during the 1988 election campaign despite its long-term effects and importance.²³ In their scramble for immediate electoral advantage, parties try to assess the state of the public mind at the moment and tailor their platform agendas accordingly.²⁴

Another indicator of this quick-fix approach is the idea that brokerage parties organize themselves around leaders as opposed to fixed principles or ideologies. Parties expect the leader to work out the multitude of compromises required for such a party to enjoy electoral victory. Canadian political history has therefore often been depicted as a

²⁰ Hugh Thorburn, “Perspectives on the Structure and Dynamics of the Canadian Party System,” *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 150.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Harold Clarke et al., “Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring,” *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 403.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 404.

story of long-lived leaderships such as the Macdonald, Laurier, King, Trudeau, Mulroney and Chrétien eras, rather than party programs. As leaders change, so do parties. Moreover, as the leader's popularity declines, so does that of the party. Thus, a party that is unable to win elections most often blames the leader, and not the program. Consequently, the party will instill its hopes on a new leader who can deliver victory and out of the political wilderness.²⁵

The Sociological Model

The second approach helping to explain brokerage party behaviour is a sociological understanding. Unlike the organizational method, the sociological approach emphasizes the social divisions in Canada as well as the role of elites who act as brokers for different interests in order to preserve social integration. Proponents of the sociological approach to brokerage politics portray Canada as a nation divided by social cleavages.²⁶ These cleavages include race, ethnicity, religion, language, and region. Emphasizing this pattern of complex cleavages, adherents of this approach claim that it is the role of political parties to accommodate these social divisions in order to encourage social harmony. Parties are institutions in which diverse interests are identified, articulated, aggregated and taken into consideration when public policy is formed. Coalitions of minorities ensure that many interests are heard. No systemic elite tyranny develops, creating a situation where some identifiable groups are permanently on the losing sides of decisions. Some argue that if it were not for brokerage parties, the regional, religious, and linguistic cleavages would have long torn Canada apart. This

²⁵ Clarke et al., 398.

²⁶ Hugh Thorburn, "The Functional Party System," *Party Politics in Canada, 6th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1991), 120.

particular interpretation is more commonly known as the “complex cleavage” explanation.²⁷

The electoral competition among brokerage parties can provide an important means for bridging cleavages within the political community. Such parties must aggregate a wide range of interests into a voting coalition. By doing so, parties perform an integrative function for the political system. David Smith explains how this integrative function can be carried out:

At different times and under different leaders, national integration has proceeded by various means: the incorporation of people and territory through local patronage supervised personally by leaders like Macdonald and Laurier; the accommodation of multiple interests and communities by Mackenzie King and St. Laurent; and the nationalization of individual Canadians into a single community (though of two languages and many cultures) through policies enunciated first by John Diefenbaker and by Pierre Trudeau.²⁸

From this perspective, the principal function of political parties is the aggregation and accommodation of diverse interests. To do this, the primary concern of party leaders is to keep the party unified. There is value in making parties pluralistic institutions by being reflective of the main interests of society.

The brokerage theory is both descriptive – a possible explanation of how parties behave; and prescriptive – an ideal held up for the parties to model themselves upon. André Siegfried observed the early 20th century party system. He argued that the primary task of leaders was to conciliate the various social groups that made up the fragmented electorate. French and English, rural and urban, and labour and management, are just a

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ David Smith, “Party Government, Representation and National Integration in Canada,” *Party Government and Regional Representation in Canada*, edited by Peter Aucoin, Volume 36 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 52.

few examples of groups who make up Canada's heterogeneous electorate. Because of the diverse nature of their supporters, Siegfried asserted, each of the major parties were virtually compelled to cloud their position on major issues. To do otherwise would risk losing voter support or worse, ignite social tensions in the country.²⁹ Paul Thomas concurs with Siegfried's examination of the multiparty party system. Thomas argues that the principle function of brokerage parties is to aggregate and accommodate diverse interests.³⁰ For this to happen, the chief concern of party leaders is to keep the party united by not explicitly articulating policy positions that could fragment a party, which is diverse in its member's views. It is ideal that the parties are pluralistic institutions that internally reflect the main interests of society. As such, party elites need "political room" for maneuvering, bargaining, compromise, and accommodation without the excessive pressures from outside.³¹

For brokerage parties, patronage appointments served as a mechanism to bridge social schisms. After Confederation, the predominant social cleavage was religion and language, which divided Protestant English-speakers and Roman Catholic francophones. However, including both groups in the governing Conservative coalition accommodated this potentially destructive cleavage. This was achieved through heavy patronage appointments to loyal party workers in both communities.

More recently, the emergence of the feminist movement required adjustment by parties. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, women's participation was channeled through ladies' auxiliaries, which provided party organizational support but little influence on

²⁹ See André Siegfried, "Party Politics in Canada," *Canadian Political Party Systems*, edited by R. Kenneth Carty, (Toronto: Broadview Press, 1992).

³⁰ Thomas, 193.

³¹ *Ibid.*

policy. Of the three parties, the New Democrats were quick to embrace the feminist movement and females are a major constituency in the party. During the 1970s and early 1980s, women active in the Liberal party modified party structure and policy in order to create women's commissions to focus on their issues and appeal to the female vote. In the early 1990s, the Liberals made a concerted effort to increase the number of women in its caucus. For the Progressive Conservatives, the party's Women's Bureau organized women's caucuses that emphasized networking and access to power. With the 1983 leadership election of Brian Mulroney, he appointed the first female to serve as the national director of the party. It was part of a broad strategy to bridge this social cleavage by returning to the traditional practice patronage to respond to representational demands made by the electorate.³²

Criticism of the Brokerage Model

Both variants of the brokerage model have attracted their fair share of skepticism. With respect to the market analogy, party competition is said to make the political parties more responsive and to facilitate accountability. Critics are quick to reject notion of "consumer sovereignty" in the electoral market based on the assumption that voters have identifiable and stable policy preferences. Moreover, voters can be poorly informed on political issues. Mass political beliefs are not static, but are highly uncertain and prone to manipulation by political elites. Competition for support involves more than just mass preferences, but also includes the shaping of public opinion and the mobilization of

³² R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young, "A New Canadian Political Party System," in *Political Parties, Representation, and Electoral Democracy*, edited by William Cross, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 18-19.

political support.³³ Another criticism of the market analogy includes the issue of whether political parties offer voters any real choice. There is disagreement among scholars over whether the two parties that have contended for national power offer voters clear policy alternatives. The majority opinion appears to be that the main parties have avoided principled stances and as a result most elections have settled little in policy terms.³⁴ Policy reversals after an election are common. Most notable in recent history is the Liberal Party's change of heart in favour of United States-Canada free trade after the 1993 federal election, regardless of their vehement opposition beforehand. Before the Liberals, Mulroney's Conservatives rejected free trade in 1983 when a Senate Committee recommended it. Issues during an election are vaguely defined and are changeable in their meaning. Although issues would catch the attention of voters during a campaign, they can fall into oblivion in the next election without solving the problem it represented. Nor are specific issues inserted into or are linked to a more general framework of party principles. The 'quick-fix' approach discourages long-term position taking, which does not allow fertile ground to plant long-term support bases. The seemingly-solid Liberal support base in Québec melted away with the arrival of Brian Mulroney, and in turn PC supporters in Québec peeled away towards the Bloc Québécois.³⁵

Others argue that the organizational approach is also based upon conventional assumptions underlying the behaviour of companies under conditions of perfect competition.³⁶ However, the benign nature of brokerage politics is challenged when conditions are not under perfect competition but under an oligopoly. Examining

³³ See Murray Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action: Mass Arousal and Quiescence*, (Chicago: Markham, 1971).

³⁴ Thomas, 193.

³⁵ Clarke et al., 399.

³⁶ Grant McConnell, *Private Power and American Democracy*, (New York: Knopf, 1967), 243.

monopolies under such market conditions, firms can to one degree or another influence total supply through their own output decisions. In changing market supply, they can also affect product price. Instead of being “price takers” as pure competitors, monopolistic firms are “price makers”. Thus, in deciding on what volume of output to produce, the monopolist is determining the price it will charge.³⁷ Likewise, political parties are just as capable of creating political preferences and restricting the range of choices available to the electorate as they are to responding automatically to the changing tastes of the voter. Such was the case in the 2000 election, in which the Liberal Party presented itself as the party who would defend the public health care system against the neo-conservative Canadian Alliance. Still, the market analogy is consistent with the idea that parties construct a definition of politics, which then shapes the representation process. Despite this, critics have been quick to point out that this particular model is both too abstract and too ahistorical to explain the true complexities and changing traits of federal parties in Canada. The market model alone lacks support in the existing literature because of its inadequate incorporation of Canada’s historical context and does not fully account for the social cleavages evident in our society.³⁸

The sociological understanding of brokerage politics did operate successfully during the earlier decades of Canada’s history when the underlying social cleavages and the issues of the day were more amenable by elite accommodation and consensus building. However, since the 1960s, the rise of interest groups who express new values has further fragmented the political culture. New avenues for citizen participation, such as involvement with interest groups, were available as a result of decreasing satisfaction

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Brodie and Jenson, “Piercing the Smokescreen,” 60.

among groups who felt their demands were not fully met by political parties. With a slowdown of economic growth in the 1970s, some groups questioned the role of government and created the impression that all public policy decisions involved clear winners and losers. With a change in political culture and expectations, a decline in public confidence, deference and trust towards political elites emerged. Consequently, political parties have not fully been able to achieve a national consensus that brokerage practices would traditionally ascribe them.³⁹

There have been many times when brokerage practices generated accusations of being undemocratic. A number of critics have claimed that the electoral competition between the major parties is a fraud. According to Frank Underhill writing in the 1960s, the true function of the two-party system since the Laurier era has been to provide a screen for the controlling business interests whom in fact manipulate the major parties. Both the Liberals and Conservatives have taken for granted that their first duty in office is to assist the progress of big business in the exploitation of the country's resources.⁴⁰ Established parties are accused of avoiding major issues concerning class, property, and power. Politics, therefore, revolves obsessively around national unity and the need to accommodate different ethnic and linguistic groups in the country.⁴¹

Criticism of brokerage behaviour is also concerned with political recruitment and participation. Detractors argue that brokerage parties under represent new groups and those who do not enjoy the advantage of social prestige. Furthermore, the function of political education is not performed during or between elections, while the function of

³⁹ McConnell, 194.

⁴⁰ Frank Underhill, *In Search of Canadian Liberalism*, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1975), 168.

⁴¹ Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson, *Crisis, Challenge and Change: Party and Class in Canada Revisited*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), 11.

encouraging participation only occurs during campaigns.⁴² Under such circumstances, the changes in modern society that have worked to undermine the role of parties have been hardest on those with weak organizations, and are inadequately tied to the electorate. The dominance of party leaders has been reinforced as a result of the growing influence of media. Participation has also been reduced to a mere spectator sport. Without the constraints of ideological positions or even policy direction, the brokerage style of politics leaves parties open to criticism before the demands of interest groups. Finally, the failure of parties to establish firm ties with the electorate leaves the electoral landscape vulnerable to incursions by new, sectional based parties.⁴³

All of these criticisms lead to central question of the Canadian party system. Is there another way to address social stability in a country divided by religion, language, and region, and the implications of federalism for all spheres of influence? Is there a different method to understand how social and economic relations, as well as the institutional context in which parties exist shape their behaviour?

The Ideological Model

While the practice of brokerage has prevailed as the conventional wisdom to describe the behaviour of Canada's major political parties, there has been reason to suspect that other parties have increasingly been displaying ideological characteristics. In the brokerage model, the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives were seen as behaviorally similar. Ideologies did not play an instrumental role in their decision-

⁴² Maureen Covell, "Parties as Institutions of National Governance," *Representation, Integration and Political Parties in Canada*, edited by Herman Bakvis (Toronto: Dundurn, 1991), 69.

⁴³ See A.G. Gagnon, "Minor Parties of Protest in Canada: Origins, Impact, and Prospects," *Canadian Parties in Transition: Discourse, Organization and Representation*, edited by A.G. Gagnon and A.B. Tanguay, (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1989).

making; electoral success and nation building were the primary function of these parties. Others theorists, however, believe that Canadian parties are embodiments of ideas in action, albeit imperfect. William Christian and Colin Campbell found ideological underpinnings to Canadian political parties, and discern that parties have been influenced by ideology.⁴⁴ Likewise, Richard Johnston and Donald Blake both found modest evidence of party ideology, "The parties have proved to be ideological vehicles more than we might have expected them to be."⁴⁵

Changes in party competition also challenge the brokerage model. From Confederation to 1993, party competition was by the Conservatives and the Liberals. Together, these two parties routinely collected three quarters or more of the popular vote. This trend ceased in the 1993 election, with a type of party competition suggesting that ideological politics was emerging.⁴⁶ One of the important post-1993 changes is the emergence of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform/Canadian Alliance parties, both of whom sprung out of the old Mulroney Progressive Conservative fold. Both Reform and the Bloc rejected the brokerage model and existed to represent the interests of their regions. These two parties finished second or third in the federal elections of 1993, 1997, and 2000, and have come to play a significant role in the new party system. R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross and Lisa Young have argued that the parties that constituted the third Canadian party system were characterized by ideological flexibility and an

⁴⁴ William Christian and Colin Campbell. *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada, 2nd Edition*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1983), 3.

⁴⁵ Richard Johnston, "The Ideological Structure of Opinion on Policy," *Party Democracy in Canada*, edited by George Perlin, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada, 1988), 54; Donald Blake, "Division and Cohesion: The Major Parties," *Ibid*, 32-53.

⁴⁶ William Cross and Lisa Young, "Policy Attitudes of Part Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties," *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 (December 2002), 861.

overarching desire to maintain national unity by fostering accommodation.⁴⁷ Furthermore, Carty, Cross, and Young assert that the practise of brokerage has been a perennial feature of Canadian party politics since Confederation. Yet unlike their predecessors, the Bloc and Reform are essentially ideological parties.⁴⁸ These authors suggest that the Bloc and Reform are more ideologically coherent than their traditional counterparts in the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives. The Bloc may be flexible on many issues, but Québec sovereignty is its *raison d'être* and it is uncompromising in this regard.⁴⁹

Further evidence suggesting that ideological characteristics are emerging is the decline in satisfaction with parties by Canadians. This, at least in part, results from a rejection of brokerage behaviour by a growing number of voters. As it was described earlier, implicit in the brokerage model is voter deference to political elites who are supposed to broker accommodations. Neil Nevitte's study of voter attitude towards elite accommodation has shown that the electorate has increasingly expressed their dissatisfaction with this type of behaviour.⁵⁰ The emergence of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party and their relative success in the 1993 election is a reaction to the distrust of brokerage parties who were unable to oblige all interests.⁵¹

Since Anthony Downs' work on rational choice and democracy, its tradition has generated three models of competitive political party behaviour, including the policy

⁴⁷ R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 36.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 862.

⁵⁰ See Neil Nevitte, *The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective*, (Petersborough: Broadview, 1996).

⁵¹ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 859-880.

seeking /ideological party.⁵² The primary aim of such a party is not to maximize its votes, but rather to maximize its effect on public policy. Budge and Keman make a case for the primacy of group interests or policy issues when explaining the behaviour of parties in entering coalitions, obtaining ministries, and in the context of Canada, influencing policy.⁵³ In parties whose dominant group considers ideological purity to be more important than winning votes or gaining access to office, electoral failures and even loss of participation in government will be of little consequence.⁵⁴ The Bloc Québécois, for example, hold no ambition to win the seat of government. Party members have wide-ranging views on policy questions, but on the sole issue of Québec sovereignty, it is strongly ideological and willing to broker no compromise.⁵⁵

Examining the External Face of Parties

The ideological analysis presented by William Christian and Colin Campbell is gleaned from party platforms, pronouncements of party leaders during election campaigns, the selection of policies, and a review of political memoirs. They believe that Canada and its parties have indeed been influenced by ideologies, and that acknowledging these ideological differences, it will help resolve the questions surrounding the kind of social life citizens wish to follow.⁵⁶ Similar to Gad Horowitz, Christian and Campbell begin with the identification of conservative, liberal, and socialist

⁵² See Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957).

⁵³ Kris Deschouwer, "The Survival of the Fittest: Measuring and Explaining Adaptation and Change of Political Parties," paper presented to the Workshop on 'Democracies and the Organization of Political Parties,' European Consortium for Political Research, Limerick, Ireland, 30 March to 4 April, 1992.

⁵⁴ Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *the Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6(3), 1994, 271-272.

⁵⁵ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 862.

⁵⁶ Christian and Campbell, 3.

approaches to politics. They then proceed to examine the extent to which the Conservatives, Liberals, and the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) – New Democratic Party (NDP) act as carriers of these ideological customs. Recognizing that liberalism is the dominant ideological perspective in Canada, it is believed that all three parties are suffused by it. Furthermore, they suggest that liberalism contains two variants labeled “business liberalism” and “welfare liberalism.”⁵⁷ What may look like inconsistencies is attributed to the balance of perspectives within a party at any given time, and to changes in what liberalism means.⁵⁸

Though no party is ideologically pure, Christian and Campbell found that the Liberal Party comes closest to partnership between the two interpretations of liberalism. Business liberalism is intolerant of restraints imposed on individual freedom, especially in matters of the economy.⁵⁹ This variant is often associated with suspicion of “big government” and opposition to government regulation. Welfare liberalism, on the other hand, is more open to government regulation, either for purposes of preserving the market economy or “to give substance to the formal liberty of all by ensuring an acceptable minimum standard of social resources by redistribution of wealth through taxation system and social welfare programs.”⁶⁰ Looking at party leadership, they argue that, under Pierre Elliot Trudeau, welfare liberalism dominated the party. Likewise, the competition between Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin was a struggle between the two variants of liberalism.

⁵⁷ Blake, 32.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Christian and Campbell, 7.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Within the Conservatives, the two leading beliefs are those of business liberalism and toryism. Other strains of liberalism such as progressivism and welfare liberalism have been espoused by relatively small but important figures in the party. Liberal individualism was a major idea in 19th century Canada, and it is not surprising to find political Conservatism, which also took root in the same period, shares this feature of with Liberalism. Toryism, on the other hand, was a commitment to the values of community and an enduring belief of hierarchy as an element of social life. Toryism was a major component of Canadian Conservatism before the Port Hope Conference of 1942 and the selection of John Bracken as the leader of the newly named Progressive Conservative Party.⁶¹ Although toryism is a recessive strain, its beliefs about placing social order and community values before individual rights still permeated the Progressive Conservatives.⁶² George Grant felt that although this tradition has decayed in Canada as a result of the effects of capitalism and liberalism, it was an important part of our history.⁶³ Prophetically, Christian and Campbell suggested that impatience with the demands of ideological compromise threatened the PC Party's Tory tradition.

Although a review of platforms, leader statements during elections, policy documents, and political memoirs provides a start in determining the extent and influence of ideology in a party, these factors can easily shift as a result of leadership change. As noted by R. Kenneth Carty, the third Canadian party system places greater emphasis on the leader who has greater control over the party machinery and electoral vehicles. Thus,

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ See George Grant, *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism*, (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2000 [1965]).

platforms and central issues are more subject to change as leaders are replaced.⁶⁴ A look at the internal structure of a party is needed to better determine party behaviour.

Examining the Internal Attributes of Parties

As a means to further measure the degree of similarity and the nature of the differences between the viewpoints of parties, others examined the opinion structures of party activists. By surveying delegates at national party meetings, scholars such as Donald Blake, Richard Johnston, Keith Archer, and Faron Ellis examined the role of party activists who, in recent decades, have assumed more power over party decision-making. In their studies, it is assumed that policy preferences of party delegates have played an important role in organizing and restraining party ideology.⁶⁵

The debate over the ideological character of parties requires two analytical tasks. To claim that parties are ideologically distinct and that intra-party debate over policy reflects each party's unique synthesis of its historical ideological sources assumes that there are crucial policy differences between parties.⁶⁶ Donald Blake took this "linear" approach by comparing parties along a continuum of potential policy responses to different issues. He found that there were intra-party differences between party activists. However, the degree of difference depends on the issue.⁶⁷ The central opinions between Liberal and Progressive Conservative activists were far apart on most of the key issues of the day, including the form of economic ties Canada should have with the United States,

⁶⁴ R. Kenneth Carty, "Three Canadian Party Systems: An Interpretation of the Development of National Politics," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 26-29.

⁶⁵ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 863.

⁶⁶ Richard Johnston, "The Ideological Structure," *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 (December 2002), 54.

⁶⁷ See Blake, 1988.

Canada's stance on Cold War issues, the appropriate role of government in the economy, levels of social spending, and English/French relations. It appeared that none of these policies domains stood out as a greater source of division than another. Small variants existed between the parties on matters related to curbs on the power of corporations, but virtually no differences existed on moral issues.⁶⁸ However, even on the issues that divided them, there was considerable overlap between parties. Yet when Blake considers the patterns of internal cohesion and division within the major parties, he finds numerous interparty differences. Activists from the Progressive Conservative Party were much less united on social welfare and language issues than they were on attitudes towards government ownership, foreign trade and investment, and foreign policy. Liberals, on the other hand, were more united on language issues, somewhat divided on foreign policy and social security, and all together split on North American policy, and privatisation of government services. These findings seemingly support Christian and Campbell's assertion of the existence of business liberalism, welfare liberalism, and toryism between the two major parties.

However, to establish that differences existed is not to prove that those differences were necessarily ideological. Richard Johnston employed a structural analysis of the extent to which opinion on each policy question is related to opinion on other questions.⁶⁹ Beyond the establishment of links between policies lies the question of the exact character of those links. Johnston asks which policies go together and which ones are not related to each other, which ideas organize policy response, and how much of the total response do these ideas actually explain? From his analysis, he finds that

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ See Johnston, "The Ideological Structure," 54-70.

ideological predispositions do structure an important part of policy response, yet the major parties do differ in the degree to which this is so, and that opinion in each party is organized by variants of liberalism. Some patterns that are usually represented as common to Liberals and Conservatives actually diverged between the parties in detail. For Conservatives, feelings about foreign policy went along with other feelings about the United States, or continentalism. For Liberals, sentiments regarding foreign policy were reflected in postmaterialist feelings and were not pointed directly at America. Attitudes towards "quality of life" regulation lay on the "anti-trust" factor for Conservatives. The more a Tory disliked big business, the more he or she was willing to see it regulated, irrespective of his or her feelings concerning the size and scope of government. For Liberals, support for regulation was part of government intervention and did not turn on feelings specifically about big business. Positions on other types of regulation were factorially complex in both parties but in a unique way to each. Among Liberals, general regulatory sentiment spanned both the size of government factor and the continentalist factor. Arguably, feelings about size of government also underpin general regulatory sentiment with the Conservatives, but so do feelings about the likely object of regulation, big business.⁷⁰

Acknowledging that party members have increasingly become more central in party decision-making, instead of convention delegates, Cross and Young consider whether party policy is an important incentive to join a party, whether there is a coherent structure to members' views, whether there is substantial intra-party issue agreement and significant inter-party divergence. By doing so, Cross and Young were able to examine the attitudes of members, who were increasingly influencing and constraining party

⁷⁰ See Blake, 1988.

behaviour, during and in between elections.⁷¹ With an inspection of the attitudes of party members, they concluded that Canadian parties do manifest some of the characteristics of the ideological model, most particular with the Reform/Canadian Alliance, the NDP and the Bloc Québécois. People do join parties at least partially on the basis of policy, and policy agreement with the party is an important incentive to activism.

Cross and Young also felt that there was a clear structure to attitudes among party members, and that membership is coherent on some dimensions of this structure. The four factors relating to social tolerance, laissez-faire economics, provincial powers and populism helped explain a significant proportion of the structure of party members' attitudes. The research by Cross and Young seems to support Blake's previous structural analysis in determining if there are overarching ideas that guide policy decisions. Furthermore, there were substantial differences between the parties on each of these factors. While the policy attitudes of members of Reform/Canadian Alliance, NDP, and the Bloc Québécois were more coherent, members of the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives were not all that different. The Cross and Young investigation led them to believe that the newer parties were more ideological than the two larger ones.⁷² The second Chapter, will provide a deeper investigation into the differences between the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives – the founding parties of the new Conservative Party of Canada.

⁷¹ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 859 – 880.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 864-865.

Problems with Ideology and the Ideological Model

There can be little doubt about the usefulness of ideology, since it can simplify the world, foreclose options, and point the way to a restricted range of solutions. Indeed, ideological parties are consistent with the changing norms of democracy found among the electorate. There is evidence that Canadians are dissatisfied with elite-dominated brokerage politics, and prefer parties to stake out clear and discrete policy positions.⁷³ On the surface, ideological parties increase voters' options.

Nonetheless, as useful as ideologies may appear to be in political life, they do have their weaknesses. An ideology can isolate a political group from many urgent problems that it either ignores, or for which it cannot provide what is on its own terms, an acceptable solution. For example, Christian and Campbell identified the problems that Québec nationalism poses for Canadian liberalism. Lacking the conceptual category of a cultural nation, Liberal leaders like Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau took the view that the grievances felt by francophones arose because individual francophones had been denied certain rights in the courts, education, armed forces, and civil service. From their perspective, the provision of translation services, bilingual documents, and the promotion of francophones to prominent positions in the civil service and crown corporations were ways to address these concerns.⁷⁴ To the francophone community, however, these do not even begin to address concerns raised by nationalists. For them, the preservation of the French language and the culture of Québec is a moral right of the French-Canadian nation that had made its home in Québec for over three centuries.⁷⁵

⁷³ See Nevitte, 1996.

⁷⁴ Christian and Campbell, 17.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

The moral fundamentalism of Preston Manning's Reform and Stockwell Day's Alliance reveals a comparable shortcoming. With large group of supporters who were largely Christian fundamentalist and broadly anti-secular in orientation, the Reform and Alliance leaders faced enormous pressure to advocate social conservative positions, which ran contrary to the views of the majority of Canadians, notably in urban Canada. Their firmness on such issues reflected a moral fundamentalism that had been reinforced by a modified version of negative liberty advocated by the libertarian right. Thus social conservatives tended to believe that anti-family, pro-abortion, secular humanist views in public life were aided and abetted by state subsidies and mutually beneficial connections with government bureaucrats. In their minds, the power and benefits accruing to the 'new class' of welfare-state officials, and the 'special interest' advocates associated with them, are contrary to the natural mechanisms of civil society, perhaps even to the natural order of patriarchic nuclear families.⁷⁶ By retreating to such uncompromising positions, the Reform/Alliance limited themselves from being able to build linkages to the majority of Canadians who did not feel as strong or opposed these positions, such as those who support same-sex marriage. Rather than bridging the social cleavages in Canada's fragmented society, the moral fundamentalism espoused by Reform/Alliance instead widened the gap between social groups.

If one were to accept the idea that parties are becoming more ideological, what then are the implications for Canadian politics? On the one hand, the move towards ideologically-driven parties conforms to the desire of the electorate for meaningful policy choices between parties and for allowing these institutions to have greater capacity for

⁷⁶ David Laycock, *The New Right and Democracy in Canada: Understanding Reform and the Canadian Alliance*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002), 24.

policy innovation. On the other hand, increasingly – ideological parties mean less space for brokerage politics. If parties are staking out specific policy positions and attempting to distinguish themselves from their competitors by expanding the distance between parties and policies, and if party members are playing a larger role in party decision making, then the brokerage tradition is at risk. For example, on the provincial rights issue, there is both substantial coherence within the parties, and yet considerable disagreement among them.⁷⁷ Members of each party largely agree with one another on the issue, and there is substantial disagreement among members of different parties. In this instance, the importance of this national issue was something brokerage politics would be able to moderate by accommodating different viewpoints within each party, thus pushing them to the centre of the issue and weakening its political salience. In a country with regional and linguistic divides as coherent as those found in Canada, a move away from behaving in a brokerage manner may be a cause for concern. An ideological party may sharpen partisan differences over fundamental issues, rather than accommodating interests.⁷⁸

As outlined by Christian and Campbell, Blake, Johnston, and Cross and Young, a good measure of the parties have been gleaned by examining the relative position of leaders, conventions delegates, and general members of the Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, New Democrats, and more recently the Bloc Québécois and Reform/Alliance.⁷⁹ When looking at the two parties that have traditionally competed for the seat of government, the Liberals place themselves in the ideological centre, while the

⁷⁷ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 878-879.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ See Christian and Campbell, 1993.; Blake, "Division and Cohesion,"; Johnston, "The Ideological Structure,"; and Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes."

Progressive Conservatives are seen right on the spectrum, as is the Canadian Alliance. Hugh Thorburn, however, warns that we should be careful in interpreting these self-proclaimed ideological positions. In fact, there was much continuity in the fiscal policies of the Mulroney PCs and the Chrétien Liberals, especially on ideological questions such as social welfare spending, competition policy, or taxation policy. Although convention delegates and, recently, party members have been gaining influence over party decision-making, they have little influence on the party's policy when in government. It does indicate the views of the activists and the deviation from these at least by the Liberal Party when facing the realities of office.⁸⁰ Moreover, Cross and Young's analysis does not take into account the manner in which parties conduct their electoral campaigns, an important and relevant mechanism to communicate a party's message to citizens. Chapter Four will pay particular attention to how the Conservative Party of Canada conducts its electoral campaign and examines evidence to suggest that they are displaying brokerage characteristics.

⁸⁰ Thorburn, "Perspectives," 152.

CHAPTER TWO

A Further Look at the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to assess the type of party behaviour exhibited by the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance Party (Alliance) and the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party – the two predecessors of the Conservative Party of Canada. This Chapter will argue that the Progressive Conservatives acted more like a brokerage party, whereas the Canadian Alliance displayed more ideological characteristics.

Defining a party behavioural model involves two approaches. First, study a party's external face primarily through its electoral approaches. Two, examine a party's internal attributes by weighing its attitudes and behaviours of party members. This Chapter will first look at the performance of the PC Party and the Canadian Alliance during the 2000 elections by comparing their respective leaders, platforms, and voter perception. This was the last election where the two parties competed. Additionally, the constitutions of the Alliance and the PCs will be scrutinized to find differences in their guiding principles. The second part of this Chapter will compare the opinion structure of party members. How much does ideology play a role in these two parties? Adding to the research conducted by William Cross and Lisa Young, this Chapter will consider the opinion structure of party activists to determine any ideological characteristics found with the Canadian Alliance and the PCs. Such differences between the two parties made merger appear an unlikely event.¹

¹ See David Laycock, *The New Right and Democracy in Canada: Understanding Reform and the Canadian Alliance*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002), 182; and Peter Woolstencroft, "Staying Alive: The Progressive Conservative Party Fights for Survival," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 240-241.

The 2000 Election

On November 27, 2000 Jean Chrétien's Liberals became the first party since Wilfrid Laurier's Liberals to win a majority Parliament in three successive elections. Some may argue that the Liberal achievement was a victory by default. After all, the political right was unable to unite and the opposition remained fragmented, as it had been for the 1993 and 1997 elections.² Since the breakdown of the Mulroney Progressive Conservative majority in 1993, the Liberals stood amidst a divided opposition.

As they entered the federal election of 2000, the Progressive Conservatives did not feign ambitions to form either a minority or majority government. Nor was becoming the Opposition a plausible objective. For the PCs, survival was the primary goal.³ After two devastating election results in 1993 and 1997, heavy indebtedness, political marginality, and three leaders in six years, political commentators routinely speculated that the Tories faced elimination as a viable force.⁴ Hampering the PCs were the Québec-based Bloc Québécois and the Western born Reform Party which later transformed into the Canadian Alliance. At the end of the campaign, the PCs minimized their losses and endured.

The Canadian Alliance, on the other hand faced other challenges. No party went through more internal machinations and public turmoil between 1997 and 2000 than the Reform Party as it changed itself into the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance Party. During that time, the party held four major conventions, two party-wide referenda, and a leadership contest. These transformative events took place in the year preceding the 2000

² André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*, (Peterborough: Broadview, 2002), 9.

³ Peter Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won, War Lost: The Campaign of the Progressive Conservative Party," *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2001), 91.

⁴ Woolstencroft, "Staying Alive," 248.

election. Despite all of that, the Alliance made only modest gains from the Reform results in 1997. Although the Alliance's goal was to make a breakthrough into Ontario, it failed to realize this goal.⁵

An Examination of the Leaders

An election is more than choosing which party will form the government, or which candidate will represent a particular riding. It is also about who is going to be Prime Minister. There is evidence to suggest that voters, in part, make up their minds on the basis of how they feel about the leaders.⁶ Typically, there are two reasons for this pattern. First, there has been the expanding influence of television with its emphasis upon the leaders and their personalities.⁷ Second, there has been a decline in partisan attachment, which makes citizens more open to switching parties from each election.⁸ Recognizing these factors, parties place a lot of emphasis on their leader during campaigns in order to gather support.

The personalization of parties was widely recognized during the third party system in Canada beginning in 1957 to 1963 with the "Diefenbaker revolution". The country had developed an urban, industrialized, educated, and plural society that stretched across five distinct political regions. In order to develop a consistent national appeal, party leaders took personal control of the campaign machinery across the country. Out of the Leader's Office, all critical party positions were made. This system of appointments allowed for a more centralized approach for electoral strategy.

⁵ Faron Ellis, "The More Things Change... The Alliance Campaign," *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, Edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2001), 59.

⁶ See Bean and Mughan, 1989; Wattenberg, 1991; and McAllistair, 1997:3).

⁷ Mendehison, 1993.

⁸ Wattenberg, 1994; Dalton, 2000.

Additionally, it made the party an extension of the leader. Unlike the previous party systems, independent regional bosses no longer played a significant role. Position and influence are no longer derived of being representative as they had becoming now a gift of the leader. The personalization of party has an inherent propensity to stimulate growth of national factions and to transform policy disputes into leadership conflicts.⁹

An examination of the leaders of the Alliance and the PCs is one method examining party behaviour. Clark had become leader of the Progressive Conservatives once again in the fall of 1998. He did so after leaving electoral politics in 1993 following twenty years in Parliament, including seven years as leader and brief stint as Prime Minister. Clark's leadership campaign centered itself on the premise that he was the best candidate because of his long service and national recognition. The first-ballot results showed that he, unlike his opponents, had support across Canada. Like his predecessors, Clark promoted the idea that the PC Party was a national party. In reality, a number of resource and organizational deficits faced the party as it prepared to challenge the Liberals while at the same time being flanked on the right by the Reform Party and the idea of a United Alternative that would ultimately lead to the creation of the Canadian Alliance.¹⁰

Clark refused overtures from the United Alternative movement and insisted the PCs would field a full slate of candidates, a position that the Tories at their 1999 National Meeting overwhelmingly supported. Advocates of the United Alternative failed to consider the rationale behind Clark and his party. First, those Tories who wanted to leave

⁹ R.K. Carty, "Three Canadian Party Systems: An Interpretation of the Development of National Politics," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 26-30.

¹⁰ Woolstencroft, "Staying Alive," 258.

had ten years to do so, but did not make that decision. Second, Tories perceived that they and Reform had opposing views on Canada's bilingual and multicultural character, as well as differing perspectives on moral issues. Third, PC partisans were proud of their history and sensed they had potential to grow as opposed to Reform who were unable to take root anywhere east of Manitoba.¹¹

Stockwell Day's entrance to federal politics followed a different path compared to Clark. On March 24, 2000, the Reform Party announced that through a referendum, members voted overwhelmingly in favour (91.9%) of folding their party into the Canadian Alliance.¹² Reform leader Preston Manning clearly had a head-start and substantial support from Reform's base. However, many believed that because Manning was already well known to many voters, the Canadian Alliance would not do much better than Reform did if he continued as leader.¹³ Stockwell Day announced his candidacy the week following the referendum by emphasizing his fourteen years in the Alberta Legislature and prominent role as its Finance Minister. Most observers agreed that Day's greatest asset was simply that he was not Preston Manning. Day's "Next Step" leadership campaign demonstrated both his personal political journey and the "logic of a new party." His supporters argued that the logic behind starting a new party was based on shedding the Reform image and that a new leader was the best way to accomplish this goal. The paradox lay in the fact that despite Day being a fresh face to the federal scene, Day was an Albertan and who also held deep social conservative values like Manning.¹⁴

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 260.

¹² Approximately 75,000 ballots were issued and 48,838 were cast (65 percent of the membership).

¹³ Tom Flanagan, "From Reform to the Canadian Alliance," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 290.

¹⁴ Ellis, 70.

Day's successful campaign for the Alliance leadership owed much to his team's recruitment of religious evangelicals, especially in "pro-life" organizations. Day's earlier careers in Alberta, as a lay preacher and a politician, along with campaign endorsements of his leadership by numerous Christian organizations, sent voters a clear message in this regard. In his supporters' minds, the Alliance could become a more outspoken partisan flag-bearer of the evangelical campaign against secular society.¹⁵ Although Day's conservative values helped propel him to the leadership, they would in the end prove to create problems for him during the 2000 federal election.

In the weeks leading up to the election call, the Alliance tried to play down its social conservative elements, fearing that it would repel moderate voters. Despite party efforts, Day made an appearance on "100 Huntley Street" one of Canada's most popular Christian television broadcasts. Day also refused to deviate from his long-standing habit of not working on Sundays. Consequently, this left him unavailable for media events, including the day the Prime Minister made the election call, one-seventh of the total campaign, and the final day of the campaign.¹⁶

The two parties selected these leaders for specific reasons. The Alliance wanted a fresh face to present to voters outside of the West. Because of Stockwell Day's first-ballot success in Ontario during the leadership race, the party was hoping for an electoral breakthrough in the country's most populous province. This was an elusive goal the old Reform Party was unable to achieve. The Progressive Conservatives, on the other hand, were looking for a leader who could rebuild the party after Jean Charest's departure for the Québec provincial Liberals. They found in Joe Clark a national figure and a leader

¹⁵ Laycock, 19.

¹⁶ Ellis, 77.

who did not adhere to the social conservative creed of Reform or the United Alternative movement. These were the selections and hopefuls of partisans, but how did the public receive them?

Public Perception of Leaders

The most striking feature of the leadership evaluations in the 2000 campaign was how small the differences were in leaders' overall popularity (see Table 2.1). The average rankings were based on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 meant that the respondent completely disliked the leader and 100 meant that the leader was wholly liked. In the last week of the campaign, Clark was evaluated at 47 and Day closely behind at 45. Spanning the regions, Day was most popular in the West but was far behind in all other regions. Clark, on the other hand, varied the least amongst the leaders across the regions.¹⁷

Table 2.1: Leader Evaluations (Last Seven Days of 2000 Campaign)

	Chrétien	Day	Clark	McDonough	Duceppe
Canada	48 (45)	45 (46)	47 (49)	46 (46)	48 (50)
Atlantic	50 (49)	37 (37)	49 (48)	50 (53)	-
Québec	42 (39)	41 (44)	44 (47)	42 (46)	48 (50)
Ontario	55 (51)	44 (46)	49 (50)	49 (47)	-
West	46 (43)	52 (51)	49 (48)	47 (45)	-
Outside PQ	51 (48)	46 (47)	49 (49)	48 (47)	-

Note: Entries are mean evaluations on a 0 to 100 scale. Entries in parentheses refer to mean evaluations among those with no party identification.

Source: André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte, *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory: Making Sense of the Vote in the 2000 Election*, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), 167.

There were movements in leadership evaluations throughout the campaign (see Figure 2a). Day was initially popular at the start of the campaign, but saw that decline during the course of the election. The opposite was true for Clark, who saw his ratings

¹⁷ Blais et al., 166.

improve somewhat. The Tory leader witnessed his evaluation escalate after the English television debate, where he was clearly perceived as the winner. Some 44 percent of those interviewed after the debate thought Clark won the debate, whereas 17 percent thought Day was the winner.¹⁸

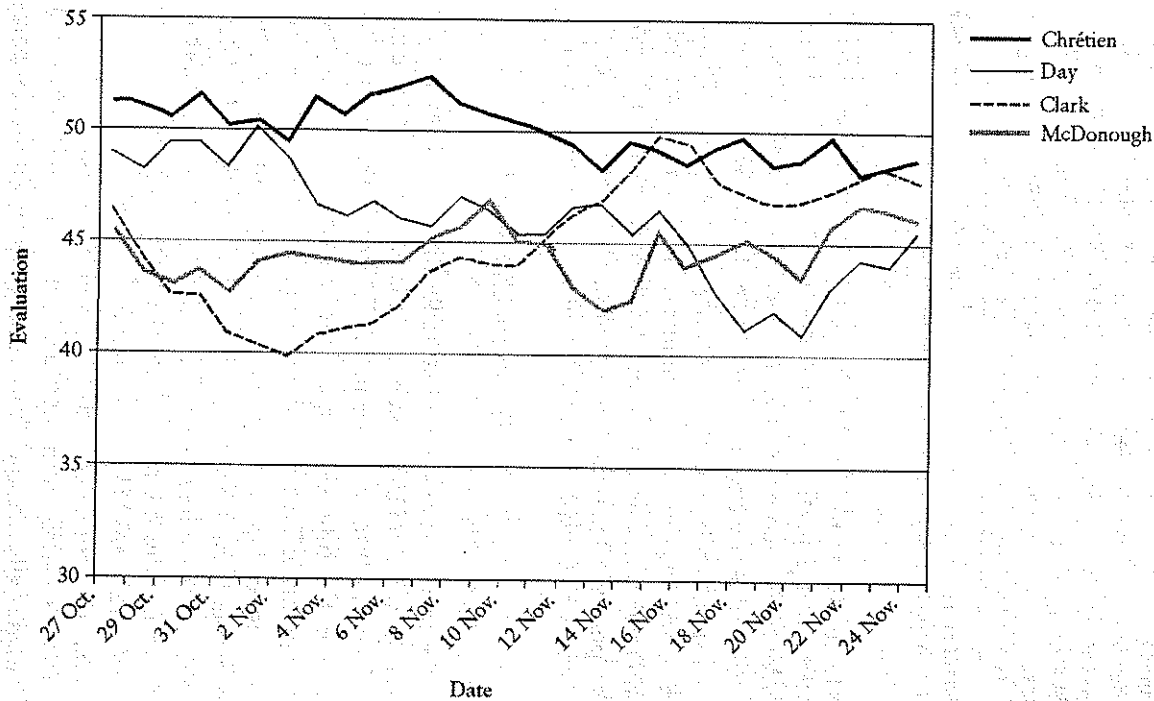
The reasons behind Day's decline are less clear. His daily score remained stable from November 3 to November 15, so the debates were not the issue. It appears that his ratings dropped in the very first days of November, immediately after the October 31 headlines, which read that his party was in favour of two-tier health care. However, the ratings were stable from that point until November 15.¹⁹ It is possible to explain this pattern as a matter of natural decay from the temporary boost received at the beginning of the campaign. The next significant drop in Day's ratings occurred just after November 15, which followed allegations of racism against some of his supporters and CBC's report on "Fundamental Day." Although the effects seemed to have been temporary, the Alliance leader's ratings did rebound in the last days of the campaign. Indeed, Day's evaluations only declined by three points and no specific event appears to have been wholly responsible for this downturn.²⁰

¹⁸ 36 percent of the respondents of the Canada Election Study of 2000 said they watched the debate. 18 percent in Québec and 43 percent outside of Québec.

¹⁹ Blais et al., 169.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Figure 2a Evaluations of Leaders (5-Day Moving Average)



Source: André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*, 168.

The analysis needs to look further to comprehend what shaped these evaluations of the leaders. One school of thought emphasizes the various traits of leaders.²¹ Kinder et al. have argued that the electorate assesses leaders on two fundamental dimensions: competence and trustworthiness. Competence can be sub-divided into intellectual ability and leadership ability. Trustworthiness can be subdivided into integrity and empathy. Looking at the 2000 election, the question arises as to which traits matter most to voters' overall evaluations of the leaders. It also questions how people came to perceive a leader as having a specific trait. One alternative is that these perceptions are merely projections. For example, Alliance members may naturally see their own leader in a positive light on all dimensions. Conversely, perceptions could also be influenced by voters' own social

²¹ Kinder et al., "Presidential Prototypes," in *Political Behaviour* 2: 1980, 315-237.

background and by their fundamental beliefs and values. Lastly, we need to bear in mind the images that the leaders themselves project to the public.²²

In the post-election survey of the 2000 Canada Election Study, respondents were asked to indicate which leader they would best describe as: arrogant, trustworthy, having new ideas, compassionate, dishonest, intelligent, extreme, and weak. Table 2.2 shows the percentage of voters who associated a specific leader with a given trait. Outside of Québec, Day was perceived (50%) as having new ideas, but also as being extreme (45%). Clark's was not as sharply defined. Outside of Québec, Clark was the most likely to be seen as trustworthy (24%) but also seen as the weakest leader (28%).

Table 2.2: Perceptions of Leaders' Personal Traits

		Chrétien	Day	Clark	McDonough	Duceppe
Arrogant	Canada	44	22	3	1	3
	Québec	48	11	3	1	11
	Outside Québec	42	26	4	1	1
Trustworthy	Canada	17	12	22	11	4
	Québec	18	9	17	5	16
	Outside Québec	17	12	24	12	0
New Ideas	Canada	6	6	4	7	2
	Québec	5	32	4	4	9
	Outside Québec	7	50	4	8	0
Compassionate	Canada	13	9	12	27	4
	Québec	9	6	11	16	15
	Outside Québec	15	11	12	31	0
Dishonest	Canada	25	16	3	1	2
	Québec	28	8	1	1	6
	Outside Québec	24	19	3	1	1
Intelligent	Canada	24	11	16	4	4
	Québec	16	7	12	3	14
	Outside Québec	26	12	18	5	0
Extreme	Canada	11	43	3	7	5
	Québec	11	35	2	1	12
	Outside Québec	11	45	3	9	2
Weak	Canada	6	6	25	25	4
	Québec	10	6	18	22	13
	Outside Québec	4	7	28	26	1

Note: Cell entries represent the percentage of respondents saying they would describe the leader as having such a trait.

Source: André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*, 171.

²² Blais et al., 170.

Traits clearly had an independent impact on the overall evaluation of the leaders, notably outside of Québec. Table 2.3 shows how additional variance in leader evaluations was accounted for when voters' prior dispositions and their perceptions of leader traits were sequentially added. Personal traits were particularly important for feelings towards Stockwell Day, suggesting that evaluations of the Alliance leader had a strong personal component. In Québec, opinion concerning sovereignty was the decisive factor in explaining how voters felt about Chrétien and Duceppe. Personal traits were only consequential for both Day and Clark who were minor players in Québec.²³

Table 2.3: The Relative Impact of Socio-Economic Characteristics, Values and Beliefs, Party Identification, and Personal Traits on Leader Evaluations

	Additional Variance Explained			
	Socio-Economic Characteristics	Values and Beliefs	Party Identification	Personal Traits
<i>Outside Québec</i>				
Chrétien	.08	.18	.13	.14
Day	.07	.13	.14	.20
Clark	.03	.06	.07	.14
McDonough	.05	.12	.06	.13
<i>Québec</i>				
Chrétien	.07	.25	.06	.08
Duceppe	.03	.27	.07	.08
Day	.01	.04	.06	.22
Clark	.00	.09	.01	.20

Source: André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*, 172.

Each of the eight traits also appeared to have had an independent effect on leader evaluations. Different voters may well have attached different weights to the numerous dimensions, but the three traits that were consistently important in leadership evaluations were “trustworthy,” “dishonest,” and “arrogant.” There is no support for the idea that negative traits would count more than positive ones. The Alliance leader lost three points

²³ Blais et al., 172.

outside of Québec because he was perceived as being too extreme, but that was made up for by a five-point gain from being seen as a leader with new ideas. Clark's perceived trustworthiness gave him a three-point boost, but this was reduced by two points for appearing to be a weak leader.²⁴

There remains the issue of Stockwell Day's personal religious views as an evangelical Christian. One way to measure this is to determine whether voters' personal religious convictions played an increased role in 2000 compared to previous elections. Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement that "the Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally word for word." Many more people who answered the question disagreed (74%) than those who agreed (19%) with the statement. This is an indication that relatively few Canadians adhere to the primary principle of fundamentalist Christianity. Yet one in five Canadians did believe that the Bible should be taken literally. Although that percentage varies slightly between regions, those who believed in this tenet tended to like Stockwell Day more than those who did not. Outside of Québec, Day's average rating was 55 percent among fundamentalist Christians, but only 39 percent among other respondents. Considering the latter group was much larger in numbers, this implies a negative net effect.²⁵

It can be argued that this difference could simply be a reflection of Christian fundamentalists supporting a socially conservative party. More specifically, perhaps it was not Day's personal convictions that people were interested in but rather the party he was leading. However, views about the Bible were only weakly related to evaluations of Preston Manning as leader of the Reform Party in 1993. Manning's average rating

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 173.

outside of Québec was 52 percent among those who believed that the Bible should be taken at face value and 49 percent among those who disagreed. Day was more disliked (39%) than Manning among those who did not agree that the Bible should be taken word for word. It can be inferred that Day's ratings were negatively impacted by the fact that a clear majority of Canadians reject his Christian fundamentalist beliefs. Day's religious views were particularly important for the widespread perception that he was "extreme." Outside of Québec, 45 percent of respondents attributed this trait to the Alliance leader. The percentage reached 67 percent among those who disagreed strongly with the view that the Bible is the literal word of God.²⁶

The evaluations of leaders did have an impact on how voters determined their vote. Typically, the probability of voting for a party increased by 25 to 30 points when a voter gave its leader a rating of 100. The effect was notably stronger for Stockwell Day. Feelings about the Alliance leader had twice as much impact compared to the other leaders. The observations from these evaluations of leadership reinforce the conventional notion that the election was in good part about Stockwell Day.²⁷

A similar pattern was found with Joe Clark. Prior to the leadership debates, only 15 percent of those who had positive feelings (50%) towards the Tory leader were intending to vote PC. After the debates, that number rose to 27 percent, suggesting that Clark was able to transform positive evaluations of his own performance into party support.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 175.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 177.

Overview of Party Platforms

The PC party program was entitled *Change You Can Trust: The Progressive Conservative Plan for Canada's Future*. Implicit in this message was the idea of change from the old Liberal guard who has been in power too long. Also implied was the notion that the Canadian Alliance was not a party Canadians can trust because of their hidden social conservative agenda. The PCs were hoping to capture the vote from Canadians who were no longer supportive of the Liberal Party, yet skeptical that the Canadian Alliance had truly shed its Reform baggage of social conservatism.

A Time for Change: An Agenda of Respect for All Canadians was the title of the Alliance program. There several messages that could be identified in this slogan. One, it served as a nod to the old western Reform base who have felt overlooked by the traditional eastern power bloc of Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto. Second, it secured the social conservative base of the Alliance who needed to be reassured that their concerns would not be forgotten when Reform folded into the Alliance. More specifically, it implied respecting traditional social conservative values such as the family, rights of the unborn, the elderly, victim rights, and children's rights. Third, the Alliance slogan can be read as a blanket statement for all voters who felt disengaged by the Liberal government. Instead, the Alliance would treat them with fairness be it through taxation or democratic representation through increased referendums or freer votes in Parliament.

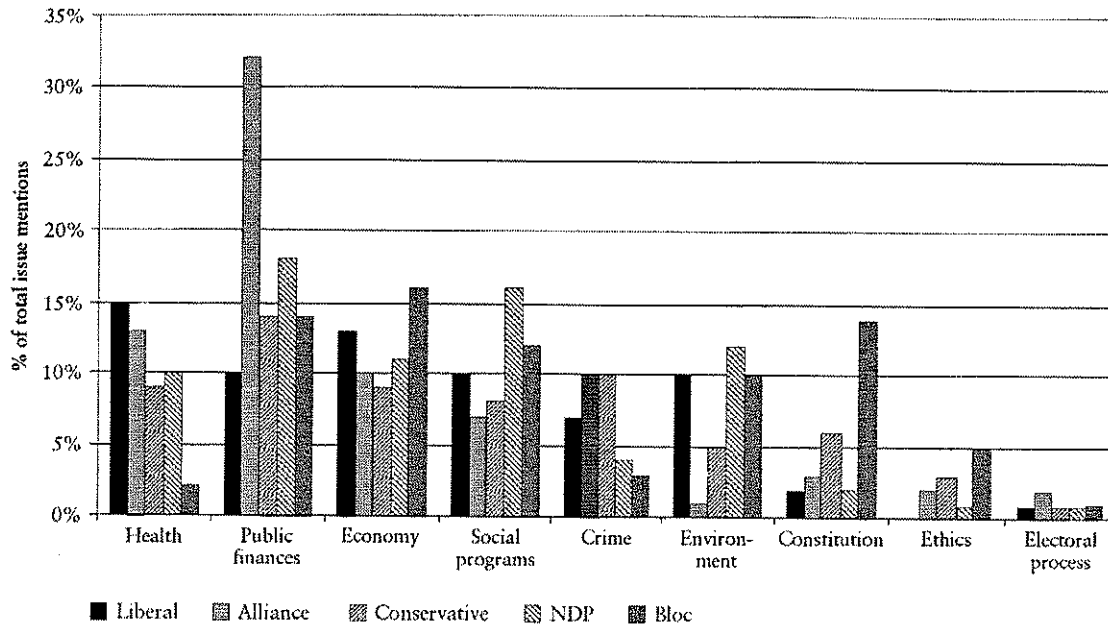
Prioritization of Issues

In a study conducted by André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte, party platforms were coded to determine the relative importance of various issues.²⁸ Each paragraph of the party programs was coded, with the coders indicating which issue(s) the paragraph dealt with. If more than one issue was mentioned in a paragraph, each issue was registered. Figure 2b presents the relative importance of various issues for each party. The percentage corresponds to the percentage of total references to each issue. They do not add up to 100 percent because several issues with few mentions were omitted.²⁹ Some of these issues did reflect the ideological positioning of the parties. The PCs focused more attention on social programs, ethics, the environment, and constitutional affairs. Farther to the right, the Alliance gave priority to public finances, the economy, and the electoral process. Crime was the only issue that was given relatively equal attention between the two parties. On the surface, this supports the view that income redistribution and social issues belong to the centre-left, and income creation and security fit on the right.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Figure 2b Issues by Party



Source: André Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*, 140.

An interesting exception to the above pattern is the issue of health care. At the time of the election, this was a large concern for Canadians. As much as 84 percent of the respondents to the 2000 Canadian Election Study indicated that improving health care was very important to them personally.³⁰ No other issue was nearly as dominant as this one. The political parties were probably all aware of these public sentiments at the time platforms were being drafted, and felt compelled to demonstrate responsiveness to this issue. Consequently, even the Alliance and PCs gave as much attention to health care as the New Democrats, if not more. Figure 2b tells us which issues were discussed, although it does not comment on what the parties were saying.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

Platform Details

On the primary issue of health care, both parties blame federal cuts in transfer payments by the Liberal government as the source of the health crisis. The two also reiterated their support for the five principles of the Canada Health Care Act and recognize the primary role of the provinces as deliverers of this service. The PCs however would add a sixth principle to the Health Act: Stable Funding. As far as funding for the program is concerned, the Alliance promised to “replace federal-provincial confrontations with a more co-operative approach,” and called for five-year agreements with the provinces that would make it impossible for Ottawa to unilaterally cut transfers.³¹ The Alliance did not indicate how much more money it was willing to give to the provinces. The PCs promised to restore funding to the Canada Health and Social Transfer to at least the 1993-1994 levels. Like the Alliance, the PCs would also work in coordination with the Provinces to develop performance targets and health care standards.³² Given the primary importance of this issue to the electorate, it is not surprising that the Alliance and PC health platforms were roughly similar to each other.

Concerning public finances, the Alliance proposed the most significant tax cuts (\$134 billion in five years) as well as substantial modification to the tax regime, namely the proposal to implement a 17 percent flat tax to those earning less than \$100,000. On the other hand, the PCs had more modest tax cuts at \$56 billion and also indicated they would eliminate the capital gains tax. As far as debt repayment goes, the PCs promised to eliminate the national debt within 25 years, whereas the Alliance pledged to devote 75 percent of any budgetary surplus to debt repayment. It appears that both parties share a

³¹ *A Time for Change*, 15.

³² *Change You Can Trust*, 19.

concern in tax relief and debt reduction, hallmarks of neo-conservative economics, although the Alliance places greater emphasis in this area than the PCs.

With regards to economic policy, it appeared that the Alliance took a more fiscal conservative position than Clark's party. The Alliance promised to eliminate regional development agencies, while seeking private investors for Crown Corporations such as Petro-Canada, CBC, Via-Rail, and an end to Air Canada's monopoly. This is consistent with the neo-conservative position of less government involvement with the economy. On the other hand, the PCs supported government initiatives to enhance research and encourage regional development by promising to establish a "Canadian Institute for Learning and Technology."³³ Unlike their 1997 platform, which was very much inspired by Mike Harris's Ontario PC program of cutting government spending and taxes, the 2000 economic program had a much more centrist tone.³⁴

Comparing social policies, the PCs had a more comprehensive program, notably in the area of education. As with health care, the Tories would restore funding to the Canada Health and Social Transfer to at least 1993-94 levels. Although both parties would propose reforms to the Canada Student Loans Programs (CSLP), the PCs would introduce a tax credit based on the repayment of the CSLP principal to a maximum of 10 percent of the principal per year, for the first ten years after graduation.³⁵ Comparatively, the Alliance would replace the CSLP with a new income contingent repayment loan program.

In addition to education, the two parties also differed on reforms to the Canada Pension Plan. The PCs would have doubled the tax credit to \$800 given to Canadians

³³ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁴ Woolstencroft, "Staying Alive," 98.

³⁵ *Change You Can Trust*, 23.

who care for a low-income elderly parent, grandparent, or infirm relative in their home.³⁶ The Alliance, on the other hand, stated that retirement security was, “too important to be left to politicians alone, so a Canadian Alliance government will appoint a non-partisan commission on Retirement Security and Generational Fairness.” The duty of this commission would be to develop a new plan for the future of old age security and pensions. As with education, it appeared that the PCs were more committed to developing long-term strategies to deal with the Canada Pension Plan. Moreover, the PCs were committed to a Canadian Social Audit that would measure the effectiveness of federal social programs. This audit would “help Canadians and their governments determine how well their social programs are working as a tool in developing workable solutions to the immense problem of poverty in Canada.”³⁷ There was no equivalent of such a proclamation in the Alliance program. However, the Alliance did state that they would place the family at the heart of their social and economic policy. Reflecting the Alliance’s support for social conservatism, they promised to protect the institution of marriage as the exclusive union between a man and a woman. They also proposed counseling in any uncontested divorce where there were children involved.³⁸

The parties differed slightly on the issue of crime. Fighting crime constituted an important part of the Alliance platform. They proposed, among several things, the tightening of the parole system, the lifetime surveillance of sex offenders and repeat violent offenders, and the possibility of trying young offenders (age 14 to 18 for more serious crimes) as adults.³⁹ On top of increased funding to the RCMP, the PCs would

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁸ *A Time for Change*, 19.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

replace the Young Offenders Act with a more effective legislation that encompassed the protection of the public, deterrence and denunciation balanced with rehabilitation, and greater discretionary use of restorative justice.⁴⁰

On the environment, the Tories had a more comprehensive program. They outlined several measures to clean the air and water including the introduction of a Safe Water Act to ensure safe drinking water standards. They also presented a Safe Air Act that legislated acceptable air quality standards for Canadians that would be harmonized with the provinces and territories.⁴¹ The Alliance preferred to encourage business and industry to develop conservation solutions, and in turn their government “would recognize those who deliver improvements in environmentally efficient production.”⁴² It appears that the Progressive Conservatives were more accepting of government regulation for the sake of public health safety, whereas the Alliance preferred government incentives for environmental protection.

Concerning democratic reform, both the PCs and the Alliance wanted to establish a Parliamentary ethics bureau. Also, they both advocated for more free votes in the House of Commons. However, the Alliance were in favour of having all votes by Members of Parliament to be free with the exception of the budget and votes of non-confidence. The Alliance also wanted the election of senators and asserted that citizens should have the right to institute referendums “to put their priorities on the national agenda through a Canada-wide vote.”⁴³ This position is reminiscent of old Reform and is a reflection of their members’ preference for plebiscitarianism.

⁴⁰ *Change You Can Trust*, 31.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴² *A Time for Change*, 20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 20.

Analysis of the External Face of the Parties

Considering the central role of the leader as a manifestation of the party, how do Stockwell Day and Joe Clark measure up? In the selection of Day, the Canadian Alliance was hoping for a new face in order to shed the old Reform image that proved to be unsuccessful in winning electoral success beyond the West. However, Day's performance during the election shed some light on his ideological preferences. On the campaign trail, Day often departed from his script and drew attention to his traditionalist Manichean moralism and social conservatism, neither of which had any appeal in urban centres. In response to post election critics within his party, Day claimed that they "put selfishness ahead of more nobler [*sic*] values" and lacked a "longer-term vision that the Canadian Alliance is the government in waiting."⁴⁴ His actions may have demonstrated his inability to stake out a long-term vision for the party as well as contributed to his status as a flawed politician.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, Day's social conservative views were considerably important for the widespread perception that he was extreme, and by extension so was the party.

Clark's selection as the leader of the Progressive Conservatives meant that the party opted for a trusting, moderate, and experienced voice in order to be viable in Parliament. At the May 2000 Policy Convention in Québec City, Clark deliberately distanced the party from the competing Alliance. Clark proclaimed that for the Tories, unlike the Alliance, "There are no second-class Canadians." The PC leader stressed that equality of all citizens was a fundamental commitment of the party.⁴⁶ Hoping that the

⁴⁴ Brian Laghi, "Rift grows between Klein, Day," in *The Globe and Mail*, 28 February 2001, A1 and A6.

⁴⁵ Laycock, 178.

⁴⁶ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won, War Lost," 95.

leadership debates would be a turning point, Clark had to rise above the rest by making his points cogently and establishing credentials as the Tory leader and Prime Minister.⁴⁷ PC organizers had concerns stemming from their previous leader's performance in 1997. Although Jean Charest, by all accounts, won the leaders' debates, there had been little positive spillover on Tory fortunes.⁴⁸ Of all the leaders, Clark was seen as most trustworthy and least extreme. Moreover, after the leaders' debates party support did increase by 12 points by those who already had positive feelings for Clark.

The platforms of the Progressive Conservatives and the Canadian Alliance, revealed differences in which issues are given priority and the sundry of actions to be taken should either form government. At first glance, it appears that the Alliance spent more time on neo-conservative issues such as reform to public finances and the liberalization of the economy compared to the PCs. Compared to the Alliance, the Tories paid more attention to centrist and "left-wing" issues that pertained to social programs and the environment. Understanding that health care weighed heavily on the minds of Canadians, both parties ensured they paid adequate attention to this issue. Neglecting such an important topic would have painted either party as out of touch with the immediate concerns of the majority of Canadians.

Notwithstanding health care, the differences between the Alliance and the PCs were somewhat more pronounced in their platforms. On the issue most enunciated by the Alliance, their proposed tax cuts and debt elimination plan were far more drastic compared to the Tories. Concerning policies on the economy, the Alliance was in favour

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁴⁸ Peter Woolstencroft, "On the Ropes Again: The Campaign of the Progressive Conservative Party in the 1997 Federal Election," *The Canadian General Election of 1997*, edited by A. Frizzell and J.H. Pammett, (Toronto: Dundurn, 1997), 71-91.

of a more decentralized approach, with less government involvement in the economy. Although the PCs wanted to decrease unnecessary regulation on the economy, they were not adverse to regional economic agencies to foster new industries.

Comparing social policy, the Tory platform was far more comprehensive than the Alliance program. Restoring the Canada Health and Social Transfer to their original levels before they were drastically cut in 1993 was central to the Progressive Conservative social policy. The Alliance did not offer parallel commitments. More striking is that the Alliance would place the family unit as a cornerstone of their social policy. There were slight differences when crime and justice policies were compared. The Alliance tended to be tougher on criminal penalties, whereas the Tories did note the importance of deterrence and rehabilitation. On the environment, the PCs were more in favour of regulatory mechanisms. The Alliance preferred market incentives to curb environmental degradation. There were also differences when it came to democratic reform. The Alliance had a more populist tone, as evidenced by being open to more free votes in Parliament and citizen-initiated referenda.

Is there any evidence to suggest either party was acting in a brokerage or ideological manner? Using Christian and Campbell's methodology by examining the external face of the two parties, it appears that there were ideological elements to both parties. The Alliance exhibited a tremendous amount of business liberalism, as well as Western-populism, and social conservatism. The Tories displayed elements of welfare liberalism and business liberalism, though not as extreme as the Alliance. Stockwell Day's social conservative values limited his party's appeal during the election. Because social conservatives primarily supported Day during his leadership election, and of his

comments made during the election, the public perceived Day to be too extreme. Likewise, the Canadian Alliance staked out positions that were farther to the right when compared to the Progressive Conservatives.

In Joe Clark, the PCs presented elements of welfare liberalism or red toryism. Perceived as more trustworthy and less extreme by the electorate, Clark met the goal of parliamentary viability set out by his party. The Tory platform did exhibit variants of business and welfare liberalism. However, using Forbes' determinants of the brokerage model, such a party straddles the middle of the political spectrum and swerves right or left in response to public opinion.⁴⁹ Utilizing this explanation, it would appear that the Tories fit the brokerage model. Because Joe Clark represented and was perceived as a moderate, as well as having a platform that was centrist for the most part, the Tories can at least be on the surface be considered a brokerage party in terms of language and rhetoric to say the least. Conversely, the Alliance fails the Forbes' brokerage test because of its propensity to be farther to the right on the majority of issues as outlines in their platform. Because of its limited appeal to one area of the political spectrum, it could be considered an ideological party.

Policy Attitudes of Party Members

An examination of the external face of a party does not fully consider the increasing role of partisan membership. A further look at member views is necessary to illustrate a more detailed picture of party behaviour. There is considerable evidence to suggest that Canadians' satisfaction with political parties declined dramatically in recent

⁴⁹ H.D. Forbes, "Absent Mandate '88? Parties and Voters in Canada," *Party Politics in Canada*, 6th Edition, edited by Hugh Thorburn, (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall Canada), 255.

decades. This trend is in part characterized by the rejection of brokerage politics by a growing number of voters.⁵⁰ In *The Decline of Deference*, Neil Nevitte employs the World Values survey data from 1981 and 1990 to demonstrate that the level of confidence Canadians show towards government institutions have declined significantly throughout the 1980s. Additionally, he finds that “Canadians have become more assertive, less compliant, and ... often appear to be less confident in government institutions.”⁵¹ In 1990, Canadians who responded to the World Values Survey were among the most enthusiastic supporters of the notion that “government should be more open to the public.”⁵²

Consequently, Canadian parties have responded to this change in voter sentiment, lead by the Reform Party and the Canadian Alliance. Having based a large part of its electoral appeal through the condemnation of brokerage politics, Reform empowered their members with greater influence. This is evident with the party continually referring to members as “owners” and “stakeholders.”⁵³ Furthermore, Reform was the first federal party to offer direct membership to voters and a constitutional provision that members in convention approve all party policy. After their 1993 electoral defeat to just two seats in the House of Commons, the Progressive Conservatives followed Reform’s lead by implementing their first-ever national membership programme in 1995. Likewise, the Conservatives took steps to increase the role of grass-roots supporters in the development

⁵⁰ For more on changing voter sentiment, see William Cross, “Introduction,” *Political Parties, Representation and Electoral Democracy in Canada*, edited by William Cross, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), pg. 1-11; and Elizabeth Gidengil et al., “Changes in the Party System and Anti-Party Sentiment,” in *Ibid.*, 68-86.

⁵¹ Neil Nevitte, *The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective*, (Peterborough: Broadview, 1996), 56-57, 104.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 307-308.

⁵³ William Cross and Lisa Young, “Policy Attitudes of Party Members,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 (December 2002), 863-864.

of party policy.⁵⁴ The Bloc Québécois was the first party to select its leader through a direct vote of the entire membership rather than through the traditional practice of delegate-led conventions. The Canadian Alliance, Progressive Conservatives, Liberals, and New Democrats followed suit.⁵⁵

Given their increasingly consequential role in party decision-making, the attitudes of party members are a good indicator of the degree of attitudinal cohesion within each party and, more importantly, to map the patterns of cleavages between the parties. If party members play a key role in selecting party leaders, determining policy platforms and nominating candidates, then their attitudes are an important role in framing the policies of a party.⁵⁶

Following the study of William Cross and Lisa Young (2002) study of the role of ideology in the Canadian party system, this part of the Chapter will examine the membership of the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservatives by similarly asking four questions: Are members attracted to parties on the basis of their policy positions? Is there an identifiable structure to public policy attitudes amongst party members? Is there substantial cohesion within the parties on the identified attitudinal measures? There will be evidence of an ideological party if we find that members are strongly motivated by policy, structured views among party members, and substantial issue coherence among members of the same party. Confirming the differences between the Alliance and PC Party will be assessing if there are significant issue spaces between the two.

⁵⁴ For more changes in this nature of the Progressive Conservatives, see R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 107-129.

⁵⁵ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 864.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 864.

Methodology

This analysis utilizes the Study of Canadian Political Party Members, a mail-back survey of randomly selected members of the five major Canadian political parties conducted between March and May 2000, just prior to the November 2000 federal election.⁵⁷ The survey was mailed to a regionally stratified, random sample drawn from the membership lists of each political party. A total of 10,928 surveys were mailed to partisans, with 3,872 completed surveys returned, yielding an overall response rate of 36 percent. In this analysis, the views of members belonging to the Canadian Alliance (1052 respondents) and the Progressive Conservatives (889 respondents) will be investigated. Since the survey was conducted at a time when no election was anticipated and no leadership contests underway, it can be expected that the members questioned were longer-term and were more active members. Had there been a leadership race or election at the time of survey, the type of members sampled may well have been different.

Are Members Motivated by Policy?

Members were asked their reasons for originally joining their political party. Offered eight possibilities and asked to rank them as “not at all important,” somewhat important,” or “very important,” the majority of respondents for both parties felt strongly about policies. While many of these members also listed other factors as being important, particularly support for a local candidate for a riding nomination or for party leadership, no other option was ranked “very important” by a majority of respondents.

⁵⁷ For more information about the Study can be found at <http://mta.ca/faculty/socsci/polisci/index.html>

However, to draw a contrast between the Alliance and the PCs, as seen in Table 2.4, we find significant variance between the two on this question.

Table 2.4: Importance for joining either the Canadian Alliance (CA) or Progressive Conservatives (PC) (in percentages)

	Not at all		Somewhat		Very	
	CA	PC	CA	PC	CA	PC
To support a candidate for the local nomination	34.4	22.7	29.7	25.9	35.9	51.4
To support a candidate for party leader	41.1	28.1	21.9	26.8	37.0	45.0
I believe in the party's policies	1.5	2.9	5.3	20.6	93.2	76.5
I thought it would help my career	95.5	86.4	3.4	9.1	1.1	4.5
A friend asked me	87.6	82.5	9.6	11.8	2.7	5.7
A family member asked me to	90.4	77.0	6.3	14.6	3.3	8.4
I thought it would help me get a government job	98.7	96.1	0.5	2.6	0.8	1.3
I wanted to influence party policy on an issue	42.4	42.7	38.0	39.5	19.7	17.9
To participate in the process that led to the creation of the Canadian Alliance	39.1	N/A	24.4	N/A	36.5	N/A
CA (N = 1052)						
PC (N = 889)						

Question: We are interested in knowing your reasons for originally joining the ____ party. Please indicate whether each of the following reasons was not at all important, somewhat important, or very important to you.

Source: 2000 Canadian Political Party Member Survey, <http://www.mta.ca/faculty/socsci/polisci/scppm>, accessed 07 February 2006.

Judging from the data, it appears that Alliance members felt much stronger in believing in the party's policies as a reason for joining (93.2%) compared to PC partisans (76.5%). Similarly, when respondents were asked what was the one best thing about belonging to their party, party policies were overwhelmingly mentioned for each (see Table 2.5). While supporting policies/ideologies was the most common answer for both the Alliance and PCs, Tory members were significantly less likely to list this as the best thing about party membership compared to their counterparts.

**Table 2.5: The "Best Thing" About Being a Party Member (in percentages)
- Only top 7 common answers listed**

	Alliance %	PC %
It's a way to support the party's policies/ideology	43.3	32.7
Gives me a way to contribute to internal democracy of party	9.3	7.3
Gives me a way to be involved with the democratic process	5.4	9.3
It's an alternative to the Liberals	22.1	6.7
It's a way to influence public policy	3.2	5.6
Helping party/candidate get	2.6	3.2
The leader/leadership	2.2	2.3
N = 1941		

Question: What in your opinion is the one best thing about being a member of the ___ party? (Open-ended).

Source: 2000 Canadian Political Party Member Survey, <http://www.mta.ca/faculty/socsci/polisci/scppm>, accessed 07 February 2006.

While the data suggest that general support for a party's policies is an important incentive for being a member, it is worth noting that partisans were not equally attracted towards membership out of a desire to influence party policy. On average, only 4.4 percent of respondents to both parties said the best thing about membership was an ability to influence public policy. This may reflect members' views regarding the likelihood of their participation actually affecting either public policy or their party's position on a public issue.

Is There a Structure to Members' Views?

As Johnston has written, "When individuals think ideologically, their response to one question should predict their response to other questions."⁵⁸ Is there a predictable structure to the attitudinal preferences of members to the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives? The object then is to determine whether the attitudes of

⁵⁸ Johnston, "The Ideological Structure," 58.

partisans for either group are structured around a core set of beliefs. Herein, we will find the influence of ideology in both parties.

Factor analysis considers the relationships between respondents' views on particular issues and identifies groups of issues on which the views of respondents are predicted on a single underlying belief. If there are no significant relationships between respondents' views on the various questions, signifying that they see issues as being independent of each other, then no major factor will underlie their views. An analysis of responses to 22 questions pertaining to attitudinal preferences shows that opinions by members of the Canadian Alliance are more structured than those of the Progressive Conservatives (see Table 2.6 and Appendix Two). These opinions are built around four underlying factors, each of which are independent of each other. Based on a common principle uniting the variables associated with each factor, these factors capture partisan views on social tolerance, a laissez-fair economic approach, provincial powers and populism. While four are significant and explain a substantial proportion of the variance in partisan views, the first two factors are substantially more important than the others.

The first factor includes eight variables, all of which concern attitudes pertaining to social tolerance. The coefficients in Table 2.6 indicate a stronger relationship among Canadian Alliance members than Progressive Conservatives on whether Canada has gone too far in pushing equal rights and whether newer lifestyles contribute to societal breakdown. Those who agree with one of these prepositions are likely to agree with the other, and this trend is more strongly pronounced among Alliance members. Similarly, Alliance members are more likely to agree with the statement that we have gone too far in pushing equal rights and disagree with the statement that feminism encourages women

to stand up for themselves rather than to be selfish. It can be concluded that these findings mean that members' attitudes towards social tolerance underlie and structure the views of Alliance members more so than PC members.

The second factor includes ten variables, all of which concern attitudes towards government intervention in the economy. These range from social spending levels and job creation projects, attitudes towards trade liberalization, to limits on health care expenditures and university tuition transfer payments. Alliance members who responded strongly that private medical clinics should exist also strongly feel that health care user fees should be implemented. The opposite trend was evident among Tories. This contrast suggests that PC members preferred the public management and funding of the health system. Similarly, the data reveals that Alliance members are more likely to disagree that spending on social programmes should be increased, compared to Tories who believe in the opposite. The findings suggest that both Alliance and PC members' attitudes on laissez-faire economy underlie their views on these questions. Furthermore, it appears that the partisan Alliance views are more neo-conservative in their outlook, compared to the Red-Tory leanings of PC Party members.

The third and fourth factor each include only two variables. The third factor relates to provincial powers. The findings suggest that Tories disagree with the statement that Québec has the right to separate unilaterally, but do agree that provinces should have more powers. This contradiction supports the view that the PC Party is a federalist party, advocating a united country despite the linguistic and cultural divide. Conversely, Alliance members were consistently in favour of provincial rights, showing a positive relationship between the two questions pertaining to provincial rights. Canadian Alliance

respondents agreed that provinces should have greater powers, and that Québec has the right to separate unilaterally. The fourth factor conveys attitudes towards populism. Alliance respondents who feel that parliamentarians should be representative of the views of their constituents also feel strongly that problems could be better solved at the grassroots levels. However, this positive relationship is not as strong among Tory members. The analysis for this factor suggests that the Alliance have stronger populist attitudes, whereas PC members do not feel as strong in leaving problems to be solved by the grassroots.

Table 2.6: Factor Analyses of Responses to Questions on Attitudinal Preferences

	Social Tolerance		Laissez-faire economics		Provincial Powers		Populism	
	CA	PC	CA	PC	CA	PC	CA	PC
We have gone too far in pushing equal rights	-.40	.24	.23	-.08	-.03	.54	.25	-.40
Newer life styles contribute to societal breakdown	-.53	.27	.02	.22	-.16	.31	.17	-.39
We have gone too far in pushing bilingualism	-.23	.16	.15	.02	-.04	.66	.51	-.09
Feminism encourages women to be independent rather than selfish	.69	-.10	-.08	.09	-.01	-.35	-.04	.31
Immigrants contribute to Canada	.08	-.07	.00	-.29	.47	-.38	-.13	.08
Minority groups need special rights	.25	.01	-.18	.20	.04	-.56	-.25	.05
Québec should not be recognized as a distinct society	-.15	.03	-.02	.17	-.03	.60	.32	.03
Courts should be able to overrule Parliament	.27	-.01	-.01	.05	-.06	-.11	-.11	.43
Free trade with US has been good for Canada	.05	.28	.32	-.69	.58	-.02	-.08	.11
International trade creates jobs in Canada	.00	.15	.10	-.60	.72	-.12	.06	.07
Government must reduce gap between rich and poor	.10	-.20	-.52	.53	-.26	-.14	.08	.13
Need stronger protection for domestic businesses from foreign competition	-.04	-.07	-.40	.65	-.48	.02	.00	.12
Should allow private medical clinics	-.09	.63	.51	-.28	.27	.12	-.01	.03
Should leave it to private sector to create jobs	-.05	.34	.45	-.40	.23	.11	.30	-.15
Should increase spending on social programs	.12	-.30	-.27	.43	-.17	-.23	.07	.11
Should institute health care user fees	-.04	.66	.52	-.21	.18	.05	-.01	-.10
Universities should raise tuition	-.14	.40	.45	-.19	.07	.12	.06	-.21
Make employment insurance harder to collect	-.06	.42	-.27	-.18	.06	.14	.15	-.15
Québec has the right to separate unilaterally	.12	.03	.52	-.06	.09	-.32	.11	-.06
Provinces should have more powers	-.19	.23	.16	-.02	.20	.14	.23	.00
MPs should represent constituents' views	.11	-.09	-.06	.13	-.02	.38	.27	.21
Could solve more problems if left to grass roots	-.15	.04	.13	.44	-.03	.29	.43	.11

Note: Canadian Alliance: KMO = 0.80, Progressive Conservative: KMO = 0.84, Varimax rotation used
Source: The Study of Canadian Political Party Members, The University of Calgary and Mount Allison University, Departments of Political Science, 2000.

Is There Substantial Attitudinal Coherence Within the Parties?

A critical trait of ideological parties is the considerable agreement on key policy questions exhibited by their members.⁵⁹ Comparatively, brokerage parties are characterized by competing views on the primary issues. According to Blake, “We would expect [brokerage] parties to contain activists with a variety of positions on policy issues, whose loyalty is secured by leaders skilled in the art of compromise. Many activists may not view a party as a policy vehicle at all.”⁶⁰ In contrast, if Canadian parties fit the ideological model, there should be substantial coherence within the group, particularly on the first two factors, which are the most important in structuring members’ views.

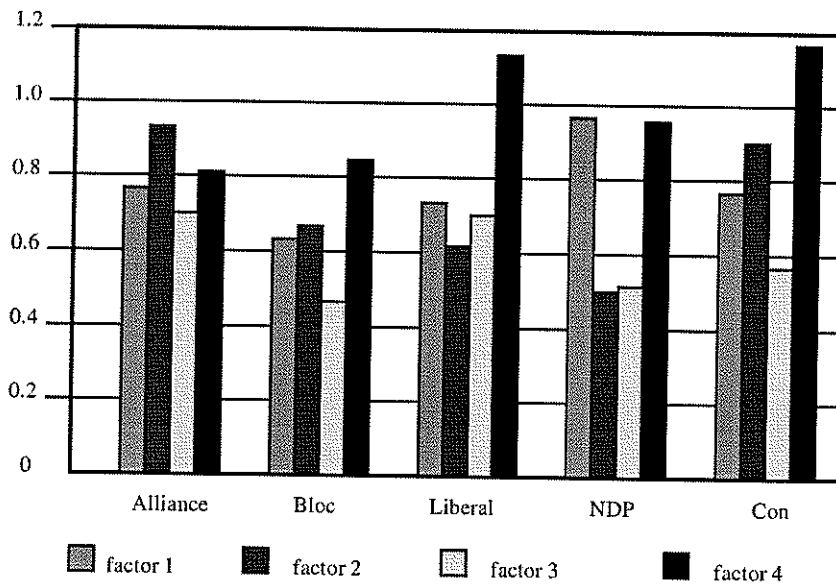
The data in Figure 2c leads to several conclusions. Comparing all the parties, the most coherent on social tolerance and provincial rights (factors 1 and 3, respectively) is the Bloc Québécois, the NDP on economic factors (factor 2), and the Alliance on populism (factor 4). The Tories most resemble a brokerage party, since they are on the high end of internal variance on the tolerance, economic, and populist measures. Only on provincial rights do the PCs fall in the middle in comparison to the other parties.

Probing the data separately for the Alliance and the PCs, we see that the Alliance is most coherent on the provincial powers and tolerance factors and least so on the populism and economic measures. Conversely, the Progressive Conservatives are most coherent on the provincial powers issue and dramatically least so on populism. Looking at Figure 2c, it seems that neither of the parties are strongly coherent on all four factors, but do demonstrate coherence on at least one of the issues.

⁵⁹ Cross and Young, “Policy Attitudes,” 876.

⁶⁰ Blake, “Division and Cohesion,” 33.

Figure 2c Variance within Parties



Note: factor 1: social tolerance, factor 2: laissez-faire economic approach, factor 3: provincial powers, factor 4: populism

Source: William Cross and Lisa Young, "Policy Attitudes of Part Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties," in *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 December 2002, 877.

Is There Substantial Issue Space Between the Two Parties?

Judging from the study conducted by Cross and Young, it would appear that notwithstanding their shared economic approaches, there were issue spaces between the parties they had surveyed.⁶¹ Furthermore, the data also supports the previous examination of the external faces of the parties. Despite sharing business liberal views, there were differences between the Alliance and PCs in terms of views on social conservatism, populism, and welfare liberalism.

Cross and Young had determined the basic structure of party-member opinion in Canada. The factor score means (the index values created using the results of their factor analysis) were compared to determine whether there was substantial issue divergence across the party members. Respondents received a score for each of the four factors,

⁶¹ Cross and Young, "Policy Attitudes," 859 – 880.

composed of their response to the variables within each. The relative weight attributed to each variable is determined by the strength of its relationship with the primary factor. Subsequently, the mean score was calculated for each factor separated by party.

On social tolerance, there is significant difference amongst the parties (see Table 2.7). The Canadian Alliance was the only party that fell on the less tolerant side of the overall mean in comparison to the other parties. The PC Party scored on the overall mean, being more socially tolerant than the Alliance. This would appear to confirm the conventional understanding that there were more welfare liberals in the PC Party and more social conservatives in the Alliance. Concerning party approach towards the economy, it appeared that there was not a large difference between the PCs and the Alliance. Member beliefs in business liberalism or economic conservatism were found in both parties. On provincial powers, there was a slight difference between the two parties. The Alliance was more supportive of giving more power to the provinces. Lastly, although the variance amongst the parties was the smallest with the populist factor, the Alliance was most in favour of devolving more power to citizens compared to the PCs. This seems to support the notion that the Alliance inherited its Western-populist roots from its Reform Party predecessor.

While it is true that a large number of the ideological members of the Alliance formerly belonged to the PC Party, their views were in the minority and more moderate Conservatives outnumbered them. Indeed, it was the most ideological members who left the PCs and joined with others to form the Reform Party, which later morphed into the Canadian Alliance. It was in the Alliance that these ideological Conservatives were no

longer in the minority; rather they were with a group that shared their concerns and provided a voice to their ideological issues.⁶²

Table 2.7: Factor scores by Party on social tolerance, laissez-faire economic approach, provincial powers, and populism

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
A. Factor One: Social Tolerance: Mean factor scores by party (higher scores means greater tolerance)			
Bloc Québécois	.53	.82	410
NDP	.48	.99	616
Liberals	.38	.85	905
PC	.00	.88	889
Overall	.00	1.00	3872
Alliance	-.80	.76	1052
B. Factor Two: Laissez-faire Economic Approach: Mean scores by party (lower scores indicate greater support for laissez-faire)			
NDP	1.04	.71	616
Bloc Québécois	.16	.82	410
Liberal	.13	.79	905
Overall	.00	1.00	889
Canadian Alliance	-.41	.92	1052
PC	-.45	.94	889
C. Factor Three: Provincial Powers: Mean factor scores by party (lower scores indicate greater support for provincial powers)			
Liberal	.42	.85	905
NDP	.32	.72	616
PC	.13	.75	889
Canadian Alliance	.01	.69	1052
Overall	.00	1.00	3872
Bloc Québécois	-1.88	.69	889
D. Factor Four: Populism: Mean factor scores by party (lower scores indicate greater support for populism)			
NDP	.16	1.0	616
PC	.16	1.1	889
Bloc Québécois	.14	.9	410
Liberal	.01	1.1	905
Overall	.00	1.0	3872
Canadian Alliance	-.34	.8	1052

Source: William Cross and Lisa Young, "Policy Attitudes of Part Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties," in *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 December 2002, 873.

⁶² *IBID.*, 875.

Analysis of Party Members

By examining the internal attributes of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party by surveying their party membership, this Chapter found that the former were more ideologically structured than the latter who appeared more as a brokerage party. When asked about their reasons for originally joining their respective party, Alliance respondents to the Study of Canadian Political Party Members indicated a strong belief in the party policies (93.2%). Although a majority of PC members also joined the party because they strongly believed in the policies, the percentage was lower (76.5%). Comparatively, Alliance members were more driven by policy/ideology positions to join their party. A brokerage party is able to recruit members on several levels, and not substantially on ideology. As such, Tory members were more motivated to join the PC Party based on other factors, be it through influencing public policy, leadership consideration, or helping a candidate.

Using factorial analysis, this chapter identified greater ideological structure among Alliance partisans than their PC counterparts. The data indicated that Alliance members had narrower views on social tolerance than PC members. Alliance respondents who felt that equal rights has been pushed too far also disagree that feminism encourages women to be independent. The Progressive Conservatives reacted in the opposite direction. They felt that equal rights have not been pushed enough, and that the feminism is not a selfish position. Concerning the economy, it was not surprising to find Tory members indicating great support for free trade, since it was their party that implemented the Free Trade Agreement. The factorial analysis also found that Alliance members were strongly in favour of an increased role for the private sector in health care.

On provincial matters, although PC members felt provinces should have more powers, they did not feel that Québec has the right to separate unilaterally from Canada. This is consistent with a brokerage party that espouses federalism. The Alliance did not share the same perspective. Alliance respondents who felt that the provinces should have powers also agreed with the statement that Québec has the right to secede. On the measure of populism, Canadian Alliance members had stronger feelings towards MPs representing constituent views and that the grassroots have a role to play in solving problems. Tory members agreed with this relationship, but not as strongly. Elites in a brokerage party require political maneuverability in order to broker deals with different groups or policies. Populist measures, such as referenda, can constrict the latitude needed to accommodate the various fragments of society.

A characteristic of an ideological party is the considerable agreement among partisans on key policy questions. The Alliance seemed most coherent on populism, as well as on social tolerance and provincial powers. This implies that on these specific issues, Alliance members are more likely to be uncompromising in areas of populist measures, traditional and moral values, and the ability of provinces to govern within the scope of their constitutional jurisdiction. The Tories displayed greater variance among its members. This variety in opinion, particularly issues of social policy, the economy, and populism, is a trait a brokerage party. Such parties are able to recruit and attract a broader spectrum of people who may not necessarily share uniform views. Consequently, the leadership must accommodate and broker these varying views to keep the party unified, and to also appeal to a larger share of the electorate.

To determine the differences between Alliance and PC members, the Chapter examined for the issue space between the two parties. Apart from the economic issue, there was considerable space on populism, social tolerance, and provincial rights. The differences in opinion between the two seem to confirm the external analysis presented earlier. These findings help explain the inability of Alliance and PC partisans to see eye to eye on several key issues. This policy divide is further investigated in the first part of Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

Merger of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party

Introduction

In the second Chapter, the differences between the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party were analyzed. It was found that the Alliance exhibited more ideological characteristics, whereas the Tories acted more as a brokerage party. Although the latter failed as a conciliator because of its inability to congeal a large enough coalition of interested voters, their behaviour nonetheless exhibited accommodative patterns. The differences in policies, leadership, and history lead some scholars to voice their skepticism of whether the Alliance and the Tories would ever amalgamate. Laycock was quite skeptical of Stephen Harper's ability to lead a fractured party, "Stephen Harper has announced his resignation from the leadership of the National Citizens Coalition and suggested he is interested in leading the Alliance. By comparison to Stockwell Day, the articulate and policy savvy Harper must look good to many Alliance supporters. Harper is less ideally suited to lead a party that, to succeed electorally, requires principle-bending compromise from all its supporters. In fact, Harper appears less interested in 'uniting the right', whether within the Alliance or beyond it, than in delivering high-profile pro-market policy advice to the Canadian public."¹ Wollstencroft was more hopeful that the Progressive Conservatives would outlast the Alliance, "With time, perhaps in the next election, perhaps much later, the Tories might be able to convert enough second-choice preferences into a sufficient number of votes that they would form government again. Two conditions are necessary.

¹ David Laycock, *The New Right and Democracy in Canada: Understanding Reform and the Canadian Alliance*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002), 182.

The PCs must federally regain their Ontario heartland. And they must survive while their PQ and Alliance spawn die – quickly or otherwise.”²

How and why did the merger between the Alliance and Tories happen? Party merger constitutes the most radical of organizational changes and, as Godbout and Bélanger point out, is one of the least studied kind of party change. This Chapter will examine the factors that first hindered and then facilitated the merger of the two parties into the Conservative Party of Canada. Adding to Godbout and Bélanger’s usage of party change theory and partisan realignment theory in their study of party merger, this Chapter will find that both approaches offer complimentary explanations for party merger, a radical form of party organizational change.

This Chapter will begin with a systems-level analysis of the factors that account for the competitive Canadian party system by looking at a bi-dimensional model of partisan issue cleavages in Canada. Since the 1980s, federal party competition revolved around two policy dimensions, economic (left/right) and regional (centralization/decentralization). This important feature of contemporary Canadian party politics had two effects. First, it splintered the party system by spawning two new ideological parties – the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party. Second, this bi-dimensional policy space hindered merger from taking place between the Reform/Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative because of their policy differences. However, significant short-

² Peter Woolstencroft, “Staying Alive: The Progressive Conservative Party Fights for Survival,” *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 240-241.

term forces later acted to allow the vote-seeking goal of both parties to take prominence and facilitated merger.³

A later section of this Chapter will delve into these short-term factors by applying the Harmel and Janda theoretical model of party change to the Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance. This application will investigate the inter-play between the vote seeking and the policy seeking goals, which helps explain the elite decision to merge. The Chapter will find that vote maximization and ultimately winning government was the prime motivator behind the merger and creation of the Conservative Party of Canada. Since the aim of winning government, through building coalitions and accommodating interests, is a primary goal that is characteristic of brokerage parties, the next Chapter will then explore if this trait is being manifested in the new Conservative Party.

Long-Term Factors: A Bi-Dimensional Model of Partisan Issue Cleavages

Prior to the 1984 federal election, the Canadian party system was dominated by the competition between the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals, who competed largely in a traditional left/right policy dimension. A smaller third party competed on the left – the New Democratic Party (NDP).⁴ Since the NDP had never won a federal election and generally attracted sparse and dispersed support across Canada, the party system was characterized as “two-party-plus.”⁵ Competition between the PCs and

³ Jean-François Godbout and Éric Bélanger, “Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office for Right-Wing Federal Parties in Canada,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Winnipeg, Canada, 3 June to 5 June, 2004, 2.

⁴ Godbout and Bélanger, 7.

⁵ Leon Epstein, “A Comparative Study of Canadian Parties,” in *American Political Science Review* 58, 1964, 46-60; R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross, and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000).

Liberals dictated the party system ever since Confederation. Between the two parties, they routinely collected three-quarters or more of the popular vote.⁶ Although the Conservatives formed majority governments in the past, the Liberals continued to win for most of the 20th century because of their successful employment of brokerage politics. Such electoral success distinguished the Liberals as the “natural governing party.”⁷

However, this pattern of competition changed in the early 1980s. The 1982 repatriation of the Canadian Constitution and the two subsequent (but unsuccessful) attempts to amend it so as to recognize Québec with special status had altered the political landscape. Policy space had been modified to include a new dimension – the issue of Québec’s constitutional rights.⁸ This question first became salient when PC leader Brian Mulroney raised Québec’s role in the federation in the 1984 election in a strategic attempt to electorally flank the Liberals in this predominantly French-speaking province. Consequently, partisan issue cleavages in Canada multiplied from a one-dimensional (economic) to a two-dimensional (economic and regional) policy space.⁹

If the ruling party were deemed to be responsible for severe lapses, such as political corruption or fiscal mismanagement, voters would punish the incumbent and look for a viable alternative. According to Key, in order to remove a ‘natural governing party’ from power, the competing party has two options to defeat their opponents. One route an opposing party can pursue is waiting until the traditional ruling party is held to account for major governing failures such as corruption or domestic crises.¹⁰ Although

⁶ William Cross and Lisa Young, “Policy Attitudes of Party Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35(4), 2002, 861.

⁷ See Reginald Whitaker, *The Governing Party*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).

⁸ Neil Nevitte, et al., “Electoral Discontinuity: The 1993 Canadian Federal Election,” *International Social Science Journal* 146, (1995), 583-599.

⁹ Godbout and Bélanger, 8.

¹⁰ See V.O. Key Jr., *The Responsible Electorate*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966).

employing such a strategy would gain entry to the halls of power, it does not guarantee the opposition party to become a permanent fixture in government. Rather, their rise to power should be seen as a temporary disruption of the electoral equilibrium. Given the particular voter preferences, the distribution of party identification and policy choices, the natural governing party should return to power after a short period on the opposition benches. Furthermore, pressure from ideological party activists would pressure the party who is newly governing away from the median voter.¹¹ The traditional governing party may be at an advantage since a majority of the electorate may prefer a reversion to less extreme government policies.¹²

Alternatively, the rival party can campaign on an underlying salient issue that can divide the electorate into polarized groups.¹³ If there is a larger degree of polarization and size between the factions amongst the voters, then there is a greater likelihood of weakening the ruling party's grip on power. Along this new policy dimension, it is important that these split factions hold more extreme views than the median voter. As this new policy space increases in importance in comparison to the traditional economic dimension, the schism between the voters rises.¹⁴ In the United States, race relations or moral conservatism are its dividing issues. Likewise, Canada has regional grievances, which includes French/English relations and Western alienation. Although such divisive questions have existed throughout Canadian history, the re-introduction of regional

¹¹ John H. Aldrich, "A Downsian Spatial Model with Party Activism," *American Political Science Review* 77, 1983, 974-990.

¹² See Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, (New York: Harper, 1957).

¹³ See Walter Dean Burham, *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970); James L. Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States*, (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1983); Norman Schofield et al., "Critical Elections and Political Realignment in the USA: 1860-2000," *Political Studies* 51, 217-240.

¹⁴ Gary Miller and Norman Schofield, "Activists and Partisan Realignment in the United States," *American Political Science Review* 97, 245-260.

disaffection was considered more salient than the traditional economic cleavages by an important segment of the populace. Given the new policy space and prevalence, the opposition party could significantly improve its electoral chances. The succeeding party may face obstacles towards long-term success if it attempts to bridge the polarized groups together. If this party succeeds in bringing the factions together, it could very well become the new natural governing party.¹⁵

Historically, the Liberal Party of Canada has occupied the centre, or the centre-left, of the ideological spectrum in Canada. Having such a flexible position has given the party an electoral advantage in terms of voter support because a majority of Canadians have a preference for liberal economic policies.¹⁶ According to the Canada Election Studies between 1993 and 2000, this left/centre/right economic cleavage was identified as an important determinant in the outcome of the elections.¹⁷ In the early 1980s, the Progressive Conservatives looked to destabilize the centre in order to regain power. By priming the issues of western alienation and constitutional affairs with Québec, two large regional segments were greatly polarized. Furthermore, the PCs promoted neo-liberal economic policies that aimed to gain the support of financial and pro-business activists. Employing such a strategy allowed the Tories to carry much of the vote in the West and Québec in the 1984 election, while at the same time being able to implement its economic agenda.¹⁸ However, when two polarized groups emerge and find themselves on opposing sides of policy cleavages through the introduction of a new significant political issue to

¹⁵ See William H. Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

¹⁶ See Andre Blais et al., *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory: Making Sense of the Vote in the 2000 Election*, (Peterborough: Broadview, 2002).

¹⁷ Blais et al., 2002.

¹⁸ See James Bickerton, "Crime et châtime: le Parti progressiste-conservateur du Canada entre 1984 et 1993," *Politique et sociétés* 16: 117-142.

the electorate, a party realignment is likely to occur.¹⁹ The extent of this realignment will vary according to a number of factors such as, “if the centrists are able to resolve the new issue before the polar groups have achieved significant growth, both major parties will survive and the realignment will be minor.”²⁰ Evident in the 1984 and 1988 federal elections, the Progressive Conservatives raised the salience of the issue on constitutional reform in order to draw in voters from Québec, but ultimately were unable to modify the status quo and accommodate the province. The PCs also tried to cater the West through the abolishment of the National Energy Program, only to place a higher priority in Québec over the West in both the negotiation of a new constitutional agreement and the rewarding of a major federal defense maintenance contract. As Sundquist points out, “if the issue remains unsolved and public concern continues to grow, the polar forces will increase,” and “if neither polar group can gain control of a major party [...] then some elements of one or both polar groups may create a new party or parties.”²¹ Relating to Canada, the realignment spawned the Reform Party and the Bloc Québécois, both of whom splintered from the Progressive Conservatives.

So far, the general theory on partisan realignment appears to explicate the dynamics of the Canadian party system in 1993.²² However, it does not fully account for the Tories’ electoral strategy in 1984. To compete against the Liberal Party’s monopoly of the political center on economic issues, the PCs relied on Western Canada’s feelings of regional alienation and Québec’s sentiments of constitutional inattention. Years after their watershed victory, the PCs positioned themselves in favour of Québec rights by

¹⁹ Sundquist, 1983.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

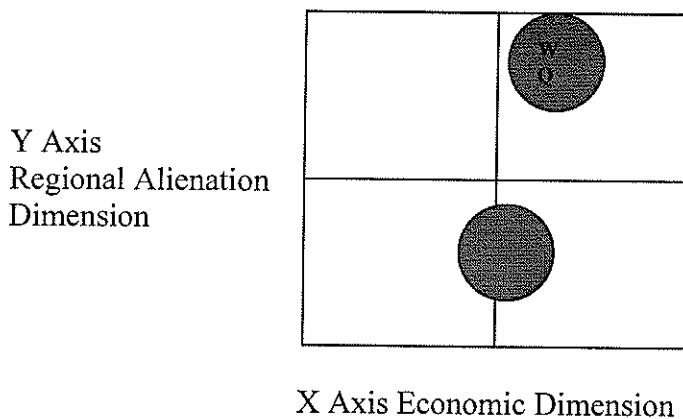
²¹ *Ibid.*, 36.

²² See Miller and Schofield, “Activists and Partisan Realignment.”

openly endorsing constitutional reforms. In a sense, the Tories moved in the pro-French direction on a vertical issue continuum (opposing a traditional left/right economic issue horizontal continuum). The Liberals, however, remained at the centre on both issues.²³

Illustrating a hypothetical spatial model with two issue dimensions, Figure 3a finds perception of regional alienation on the y-axis, and the left/right economic division on the x-axis. It appears that both Québec and the West have high levels of regional alienation. On the other hand, Figure 3b expresses a second dimension that represents the general feeling towards Québec and French-Canadians. Here, we find an important cleavage between the West and Québec. The increasing opposition on the vertical issue dimension space between the pro- Québec, pro-French, and the pro-English sentiment in the West increases the propensity for tension. In the late 1980s, this severing division manifested itself in the creation of the Bloc Québécois and Reform.²⁴

Figure 3a: Bi-Dimensional Policy Space in Canada, with Regional Alienation Dimension

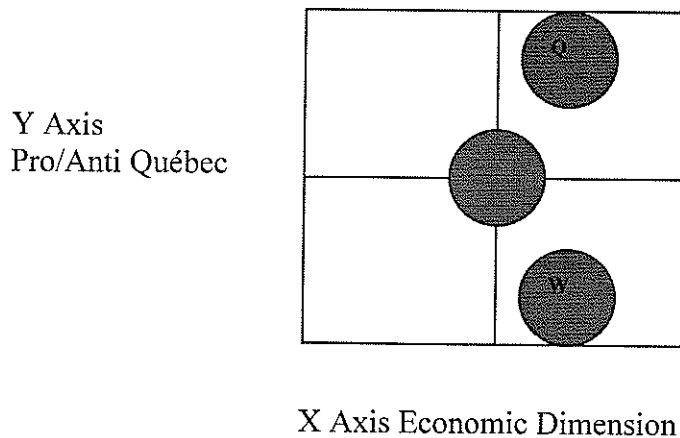


Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger. “Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office for Right-Wing Federal Parties in Canada.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, June 3 to June 5, 2004, 32.

²³ Godbout and Bélanger, 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

Figure 3b: Bi-Dimensional Policy Space in Canada, with Pro/Anti- Québec Dimension



Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office," 32.

The literature surrounding partisan realignment does not necessarily assume that the party introduces a new salient issue to the voting public will polarize their own supporters on the same dimension. Essentially, Mulroney's Tories were successful in dislodging Québec from the Liberal coalition in 1984. However, regional concerns coalesced into a visceral debate between the opponents of greater French rights and Québec nationalists.

Western regional grievances were not only aimed towards Ontario, but also in relation to Québec. By making regional alienation a salient issue in the 1984 campaign, the Tories wrongly assumed that the Westerners and the Québécois would find enough commonalities to address the asymmetrical distribution of political power in Canada.²⁵ Nor did the nascent Tory government foresee the Québec National Assembly asking for the inclusion of a "distinct society" clause in the 1987 Meech Lake Accord as a *sine qua*

²⁵ See Shawn Henry, "Revisiting Western Alienation: Toward a Better Understanding of Political Alienation and Political Behaviour in Western Canada," *Regionalism and Party Politics in Canada*, edited by Lisa Young and Keith Archer, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1992).

non condition for Québec's acceptance of a repatriated Canadian constitution.²⁶ Perceiving such demands, many Westerners saw Meech Lake as further evidence that Québec's unfair requests were part of the national unity problem. Since the breakdown on the Mulroney governing coalition in 1993, the Reform Party and Bloc Québécois capitalized on regional grievances. Consequently, the Progressive Conservatives lost a large segment of their support in both the West and Québec. Having moved slightly to the right on economic issues, and by maintaining the status quo on constitutional matters, the Liberals were able to further weaken the Tories' competitiveness. By 1993, the Liberal Party needed to capture the centrist position on regional issues, without having to move to the extremes on the issue of the constitution.²⁷

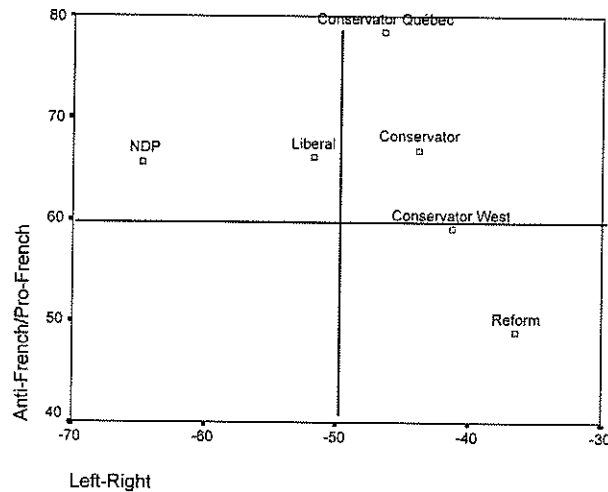
By examining the Canadian Election Studies from 1988 to 2000, there is empirical evidence of this party dynamic in four spatial models represented in Figures 3c, 3d, 3e, and 3f. The x-axis in the models represents the traditional left/right economic issue continuum. The y-axis draws out a pro-French/pro-English spectrum. The data results shown in the plots are the average responses to a set of questions with respect to the economy, and on the attitude towards Québec. Respondents were grouped in each federal election by the party they acknowledged supporting. The positions of supporters on the pro-French/pro-English and on the left/right views on the economy were then summed and averaged across party vote.²⁸

²⁶ Robert Young, "Quebec's Constitutional Futures," *Canadian Politics, 3rd Edition*, edited by James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon, (Peterborough: Broadview, 1999), 304-306.

²⁷ Godbout and Bélanger, 13.

²⁸ This method for modeling issue positions according to party support is employed by both Johnston et al. (1992; 1996) and Flanagan (1998).

Figure 3c: The 1998 Election Spatial Model

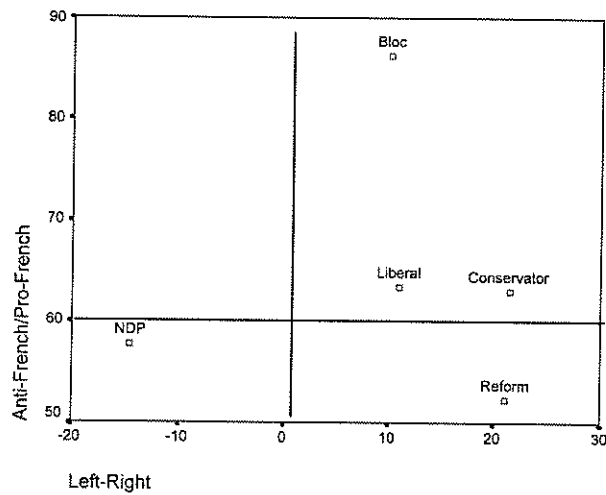


Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office," 33.

By examining the 1988 election in Figure 3c, a traditional left/right economic cleavage can be identified. On the outer left, we find the New Democratic Party, towards the left-centre are the Liberals. To the right of the Grits are the Progressive Conservatives, and to the outer right is the Reform Party. On the French question, we find greater stability across the three main Canadian parties. Notwithstanding Reform voters, a majority of Canadians had a positive view towards Québec. Interestingly, we find a gap between Tory supporters in Québec and in the West with respect to the French question. However, since constitutional reform was not the main issue of the 1988 election, this regional divide did not largely influence with the outcome of the results.²⁹

²⁹ Godbout and Bélanger, 13.

Figure 3d: The 1993 Election Spatial Model

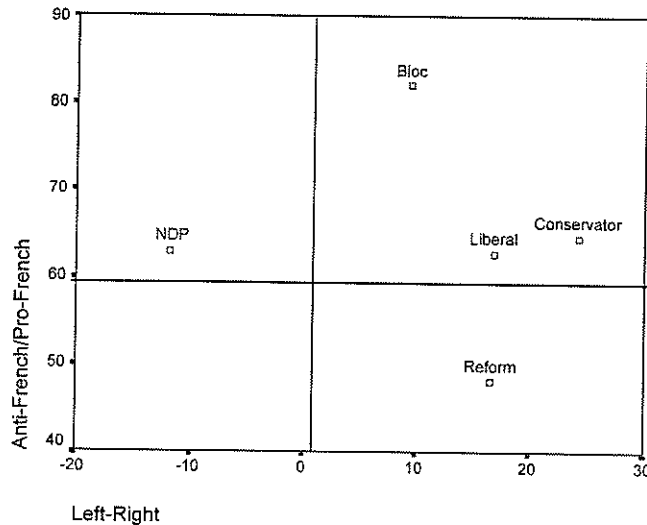


Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office," 33.

Looking onward in the 1993 election (see Figure 3d), we see a significant shift in the relative equilibrium from what was seen in the election five years prior. Tory voters from the West and Québec shifted their support to the Reform Party and the Bloc Québécois, respectively. On the new crosscutting dimension of constitutional reform, disillusioned Tories voted in accordance to their policy preferences. Those disenchanted with the PC Party's position of the Québec question flocked to the Reform Party. Conversely, supporting the Bloc was a way to defend Québec's interests against the perceived hostility of English Canada. Interestingly, upon looking at left/right economic continuum, Reform and the Tories occupy almost the same position as they did in 1998.³⁰

³⁰ *Ibid*, 14.

Figure 3e: The 1997 Election Spatial Model



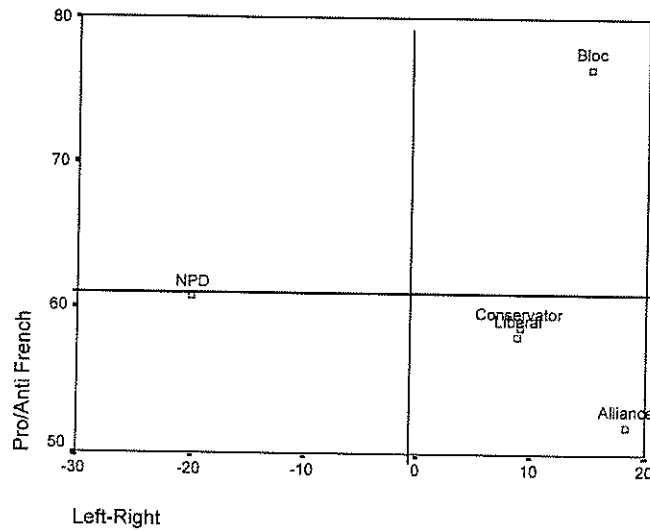
Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office," 34.

Four years later, the 1997 election reproduced similar results amongst the previous party's positions (see Figure 3e). However, Liberals did move on average to the right from their previous centrist position.³¹ If the economy was the only major issue the electorate had to use as a measurement of selecting a party to vote for, the Progressive Conservatives would have expected a large share of support because the centre-right vote would have been split between the Liberals and the Reform Party.³² However, since the electorate was divided over the salient issue of French/English relations, the Liberals were able to attract enough support to win government.

³¹ See Neil Nevitte et al., *Unsteady State: The 1997 Canadian Federal Election*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press), 2000.

³² See Downs (1957).

Figure 3f: The 2000 Election Spatial Model



Source: Godbout, Jean-François and Éric Bélanger, "Merger as a Means to (Re-) Gain Office," 34.

As seen above in the 2000 election (Figure 3f), a cleavage is found between the Canadian Alliance (formerly the Reform Party) and the Bloc Québécois on the issue of French/English relations. However, Alliance supporters appeared to have moved more to the right on economic issues in comparison to their Progressive Conservative counterparts. In Figure 3f, the Tories are positioned closer to the Liberals on economic issues. Although Joe Clark's PCs distinguished themselves from the other parties on both issues, they were "burdened by debt, troubled fundraising, organizational deficiencies, and leadership controversies."³³ Consequently, Clark's party was unable to make significant gains during this election.

In summary, the elections between 1988 and 2000 exhibited three important characteristics of the federal party system. First, it seems that the majority of people who

³³ Peter Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won, War Lost: The Campaign of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada," *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Chris Dorman, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2001), 91-112.

voted were situated around the centre with respect to French/English relations, as well as the economy. The Liberals were successful in capturing the plurality of the vote in the 1993, 1997, and 2000 elections by securing the political centre. Second, it appears that the Reform/Alliance Party vote was highly influenced by an “anti-French” sentiment that was sparked by the Mulroney era, originating from Western Canada. More specifically, Reform gathered support from those who had “anti-French” sentiments. Third, these elections leave the impression that the English/French relations issue was largely responsible for the federal vote in Québec.³⁴

In terms of party competitiveness, the Reform/Alliance Party was not able to absorb all the Conservative voters from the Progressive Conservatives. By distinguishing themselves away from the Reform/Alliance through their identification on the French/English issue continuum, as well as the economic spectrum, the PCs were still able to capture 15 to 20 percent of the popular vote between the 1993 and 2000 federal elections. Although their vote share was not enough to capture government, or to be as competitive as the Reform/Alliance, it still enabled the Tories to be a part of the party system. Numerically, these Tory votes combined with Reform/Alliance would have been enough to displace the Liberals from Government. Reform/Alliance views on Québec did secure support in the West, but it also alienated a significant amount of voters on the right who preferred the more conciliatory Progressive Conservatives. Both parties’ inability to win government in 1993, 1997, and 2000 proved to the party elites that it would be impossible to beat the Liberals without considering merger. With the merger having taken place, does this suggest that electoral goals triumphed over policy

³⁴ Godbout and Bélanger, 16.

differences?³⁵ By looking at the long-term factors at a systemic level, we were able to find the dynamics behind Mulroney's success and failure as a broker, which eventually led to the competition between Reform and the PCs throughout the 1990s. A look at short-term factors will help illustrate the pressures faced by PC and Alliance party elites to finally pursue merger in the formation of the Conservative Party.

Short-Term Factors: Goal-Oriented Party Decisions

Underneath the party system level, a series of factors unfolded between 2000 and 2003, which pressured the Progressive Conservatives and the Canadian Alliance to merge and form the new Conservative Party of Canada. Relying upon the "discrete change" approach, we will now analyse the short-term factors, which contributed to the drastic measure of party change – merger.³⁶ The analysis will largely draw from the theoretical framework proposed by Harmel and Janda, who proposed an integrated theory of party goals and party change, which examined leadership change, change in dominant faction, and effects of external stimuli.

Party 'goals; and party 'change' have figured prominently in recent research on political parties. Concern with party goals is reflected in work by Strom (1990), Laver and Schofield (1990), Budge and Keman (1990) and Schlesinger (1991), who analyse the strategies of vote seeking, office seeking, and ideology/policy seeking parties. Most studies on party change, as represented by Wolinetz (1988), Mair (1989) and Mair and

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁶ See Angelo Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6(3) 1994, 259-287.; Lars Bille, "Leadership Change and Party Change: The Case of the Danish Social Democratic Party, 1960-95," *Party Politics* 3 1997, 379-390.; and Robert Harmel, "Party Organizational Change: Competing Explanations?" *Political Parties in the New Europe: Political and Analytical Challenges*, edited by Kurt Richard Luther and Ferdinand Müller-Rommel, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 119-142.

Smith (1990), have dealt with changes in party systems. The focus of Harmel and Janda's model was on the party itself. Compared to previous studies, which viewed parties as responding to socioeconomic change, Harmel and Janda present party change as a discontinuous outcome of specific decisions linked to their goals. Their model's major premise is that party change does not 'just happen'. On the contrary, the theory suggests that party change is normally the result of leadership change, a change in the dominant faction within the party in question, and/or an external stimulus for change. Moreover, this theory bridges the gap between the two bodies of literature on party activity – one that offers theories on party change, and another that provides theories on party goals. The ensuing and integrated theory helps explain the varying impacts of different external stimuli, based on the fit of a party's 'primary goal'.³⁷ As a first step in our analysis, the primary goals of Reform/Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party will be identified. Next there will be an investigation into the parties' decision to merge in the context of Harmel and Janda's model. We will find that vote maximization was the prime motivator behind the decision to create the new Conservative Party of Canada.

Application of the Harmel and Janda Theory

In order to apply the Harmel and Janda integrated theory of party change and party goals, the primary objectives of the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservatives must first be identified in order to determine how internal and external stimuli influenced their decision to merge. Similar to Godbout and Bélanger's account for the merger of the PCs and Alliance, both goals of vote maximizing and policy-

³⁷ Harmel and Janda, 260-262.

seeking were important to the two parties. However, the asymmetry of importance between those two goals helps explain their reluctance to merge.³⁸

As noted in Chapter Two, the Progressive Conservative Party was considered one of the two major federal parties until 1993. Do to its brokerage nature and competitiveness in the Canadian party system, its primary objective had been vote maximizing. After the 1993 election, the party system changed with the emergence of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party, both of whom were strongly ideological. In order to differentiate itself from these two parties during the 1990s, especially against Reform, the Tories changed its primary goal of vote maximization to policy advocacy. However, with little room to move on the policy dimensions, as well as the continued electoral losses in 1997 and 2000, these shocks were enough to convince a growing number of PC elites to seek merger as a means to maximize votes and therefore win government.

In comparison, Reform started as a policy advocate in an attempt to change the status quo of federal politics. Reform's success in pushing Jean Chrétien's Liberal government in directions that would have seemed unthinkable a decade earlier did not wholly root from its strong regional representation. Rather, it was primarily due to the ideologically distinct trait of Reform's new-right populism, which for numerous reasons appealed more to those in the West than to other Canadians.³⁹ As Reform grew in influence and competitiveness, manifested in its transformation into the Canadian Alliance, it shifted its primary goal of policy-advocacy to vote maximizing at the end of

³⁸ Godbout and Bélanger, 17.

³⁹ See Larry Pratt and John Richards, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), and Hans-Georg Betz, *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe*, (London: Macmillan, 1994).

the 1990s.⁴⁰ However, the attempts to change party organization and party platforms proved insufficient to outset the competing Progressive Conservatives. The continued presence of the PCs in the 1993, 1997, and 2000 elections, as well as its incremental successes left the Alliance and its new leader, Stephen Harper, with one viable option – to seek a merger with the PC Party. Facing this alternative, the Alliance’s vote-seeking goal required it to sacrifice parts of its ideological platform in order to become more successful electorally.

Effects of External and Internal Stimuli on Primary Goals of Reform/Canadian Alliance

Beginning with a look at the Reform Party, we will uncover how external and internal factors influenced party change in relation to its primary goal. At Reform’s inception in 1987, its primary goal was policy advocacy. Their primary objective was largely driven by Western alienation, as well as anti-party sentiment. After the 1993 federal election that saw the implosion of the Progressive Conservatives, Reform began to develop slowly its primary goal from ideological advocacy towards vote maximization throughout the 1990s as a result of growing policy influence, increased fundraising, and leadership decisions. It was not until the shock of disappointing losses in the 1997 and 2000 elections, coupled with leadership change, which caused Reform to drastically change twice in the form of the Canadian Alliance and then to the Conservative Party of Canada. Because Reform was a relatively young political party, they were more willing to drastically change in comparison to the PCs who were more institutionalized.

The roots of Reform were grounded in the feelings of western alienation and anti-party sentiment. Influenced by these external factors, Reform’s principal goal was to

⁴⁰ Godbout and Bélanger, pg. 18.

redress these citizens concerns. The primary impetus for Reform's origins and early growth were mostly regionalist in character. Their appeal to historic grievances against Central Canada's advantage and bias in the federal system was easy for Reform to make and for Westerners to hear. The flashpoint of western discontent became the PC government's decision to award the billion dollar CF-18 fighter maintenance contract to Canadair in Montreal over Winnipeg's Bristol Aerospace. Despite the latter bid being less expensive, yet technically superior, this was more evidence to suggest to Westerners that the PC government was more preoccupied with pleasing Québec than meeting Western demands.

In the CF-18 affair, the Western outcry against the federal government's abandonment of its own tendering process, in favour of perceived political advantage among Québec voters, echoed from regional businesses to farmhouses to provincial legislatures. Momentum quickly gathered with the PC's 1988 introduction of the Goods and Services Tax, ignoring the objections of a vast majority of Canadians, including the West who had voted overwhelmingly for them ever since the John Diefenbaker era of the late 1950s.⁴¹ On top of its regional character, Reform also served as the anti-party vehicle. Using data from the Canada Elections Study from 1965 to 1997, Gidengil et al. revealed that Canadians had been increasingly skeptical and even hostile towards the role, function, and performance of political parties.⁴² This system-level stimulus affected all political parties in the party system; and none more positively than Reform.

⁴¹ Laycock, 11.

⁴² Elisabeth Gidengil et al., "Changes in the Party System and Anti-Party Sentiment," *Political Parties, Representation and Electoral Democracy in Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), 68-86.

As illustrated in the second Chapter, Reform was more populist minded. It rejected the traditional top-down party model. Sensing the voters' growing displeasure with elite-dominated politics and the traditional brokerage-type party, Reform embraced this anti-party sentiment. Their advocacy for citizen-initiated referenda, rejecting anything with 'special status', and free votes in the House of Commons demonstrated their projection as a more populist party. Party members and activists were enthusiastic about their potential as mechanisms of citizen empowerment. Moreover, Reform elites saw political advantages in both the advocacy and the use of plebiscitarian mechanisms. With a climate of declining deference to authority, there was much promotional and recruitment mileage to be gained by suggesting alternatives to the rule of discredited elites.⁴³

One event that caused party members to reconsider their primary goal was the 1993 federal election. Reform's unexpected success led to greater policy influence and improved finances. As a result, the leadership was compelled to slowly shift the party goal from policy-advocacy to vote maximizing. The nascent party in the previous election contested 72 western ridings. Winning none, Reform took two percent of the national vote and 15 percent in Alberta. Starting as a fringe party, by 1993 Reform was becoming a stronger political force. With a poorly-run campaign, not helped by Mulroney's negative legacy, Kim Campbell's Tories imploded. As will be shown later, former PC supporters in rural Ontario and the West defected to Reform while Québec nationalists flocked to the Bloc Québécois.

⁴³ Laycock, 94.

Reform improved its showing with 53 seats in the House of Commons with 19 percent of the national vote.⁴⁴ With a greater presence in Parliament, Reform was able to pursue its primary goal of policy advocacy. One area where Reform obviously led the way was economic and fiscal policy. Balanced budgets, tax cuts, privatization of Canadian National Railways, reduction of the generosity of unemployment insurance, and increased provincial control over social welfare were all Reform policies before the Liberal government implemented them. Just as the New Democrats contributed to the expansion of the welfare state in the 1960s without ever being in government, so too was the Reform Party able to contract the expansive state in the 1990s while in opposition.⁴⁵

Reform had less success in influencing change to political institutions. The House of Commons still operated the same, and the Senate did not reform. The government continued to appoint the judiciary without public consultations and no measures of direct democracy had been implemented at the national level, except for the possibility of convening an advisory referendum on constitutional amendments. Reform also failed to compel change in the area of social policy. They advocated slight reductions in the number of immigrants and but placed greater emphasis on immigrants who can greatly contribute economically rather than on reuniting families. However, their desire to roll back Aboriginal self-government, limit gay rights, and overturn unemployment equity and pay equity were not met.⁴⁶ The lack of ability to implement their full program was frustrating, and such negative factors led the party's leadership to rethink its goals to include electoral expansion in the east.

⁴⁴ Tom Flanagan, "From Reform to the Canadian Alliance," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 282.

⁴⁵ *IBID.*, 288.

⁴⁶ Flanagan, 288.

Despite its lack of success in changing the mechanisms of government and influencing social policy, Reform did find their finances to be growing, convincing them that they were becoming a more viable and competitive entity. The Reform Party's total revenues (in nominal dollars) grew from \$799,000 in 1988 to \$2.75 million in 1990 to \$8.6 million in 1992. Reform's revenues in 1991 and 1992 combined slightly exceeded that of the Liberals who raised \$7.2 million in 1991 and \$7.6 million in 1992. In the 1993 election year, Reform raised \$8.7 million, but then revenues fell by about one-third to \$5.7 million in 1994 and \$5.3 million in 1995. Funds incrementally increased to \$7.3 million in 1996 and then to \$10.2 million in 1997 (an election year). In the post-election year of 1998, revenues expectedly decreased to \$5.8 million.⁴⁷ In Table 3.1, the pattern of revenues increased more or less across the board, except for union donations.

Table 3.1 Summary Data for the Reform Party, 1994 to 1998

Category	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
1. Amount from individuals (\$000)	3407	3407	4935 ^a	5538 ^a	4423
2. Number of individual donors	28970	32982	66982	75587	55405
3. Amount from corporations (\$000)	570	815	908	1911	1291
4. Number of corporate donors	629	925	951	1259	820
5. Amount from unions	0	0	0	0	0
6. Number of union donors	0	0	0	0	0
7. Amount of constituencies (\$000)	798	Na	320	1350	58
8. Number of constituency donors	798	Na	113	168	92
9. Sale of memberships (\$000)	818	820	na	na	0
10. Total Revenues	6575	5287	7296 ^b	10180 ^d	5817
11. Total operating expenses	2921	3600	4597	4446	3938
12. Transfer to candidates (\$000)	0	68	59	0	24
13. Transfer to constituency associations	2235	1847	2416	1681	2111
14. Total expenditures (\$000)	5263	5601	7220	6216	6156
15. Surplus (deficit) (\$000)	412	(314)	79	3964	(339)
16. Average contributions from individuals	118	103	74	73	80
17. Average contribution from corporations	906	881	955	1518	1574

a – Includes contributions and sale of memberships

b – Includes a donation from the Estate of Arthur Child, \$1 million

c – Includes other revenues (i.e. interest)

d – Includes election expenses reimbursement of \$1 107 390.

Source: Derived from party annual filings with Elections Canada.

⁴⁷ W.T. Stanbury, "Regulating Federal Party and Candidate Finances in a Dynamic Environment," *Party Politics in Canada 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 187.

The 1997 election was another marker that cued the Reform Party to change. Their objective was to displace the Bloc Québécois as the official Opposition and to gain seats in Ontario. The decision by the leadership to focus on Ontario by showcasing their economic platform suggests Reform's desire to win a greater number of seats and truly challenge the Ottawa establishment. In the 1996 Assembly, Campaign Chairman Cliff Fryers and Campaign Director Rick Anderson unveiled Reform's 'go for broke' election strategy. The leadership told delegates to 'do whatever it takes to win 153 seats.' They made it clear that Ontario would be the focus and that Reform would target seats in rural Ontario, as well as the suburbs surrounding Toronto.⁴⁸ By employing a professional campaign strategy, unlike 1993, Reform made great strides to integrate the national campaign's media efforts with the local campaigns. With more money, Reform focused their campaign strategy on the *Fresh Start* literature distribution, television advertising, and the leader's tour. Testing the 'Now You Have a Real Alternative' campaign theme with focus groups across the country, Reform held high expectations of a real breakthrough in order to fully implement their vision of a 'New Canada'.⁴⁹

After conducting a campaign that was largely successful in setting the election agenda for all parties, Reform achieved some of its goals by displacing the Bloc as the official Opposition with 60 seats. It also succeeded in solidifying its Western base despite pundits dismissing Reform as a one-election phenomenon. However, much to their disappointment, Reform failed to breakthrough to Ontario as it had originally set

⁴⁸ Faron Ellis and Keith Archer, "Reform at a Crossroads," *The Canadian General Election of 1997*, edited by Alan Frizzell and Jon H. Pammett, (Toronto: Dundurn, 1997), pg. 117.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

out, as well as being unable to supplant the Tories as the voice of all conservatives in Canada.⁵⁰

Neil Nevitte et al. found that the policy strategy employed by Reform worked well to secure the Western base, but concurrently backfired in Ontario. The Western voters who Reform tapped into were more likely to be fiscally conservative, less willing to accommodate Québec, and more socially conservative than their Ontario counterparts. As an ideological party, Reform was less willing to bend their core principles, as evidenced in the Reform Assembly of 1994 that saw the membership take control:

Although MPs did have the effect of moderating some of the party's policy stands, the positions eventually adopted still reflect a party that is far more radically conservative than any other political grouping in Canada... Even of some of their MPs might appear susceptible; the delegates were determined to show they were no in danger of catching the Ottawa disease.⁵¹

The leadership falsely assumed that the fiscal policies would harmonize their targeted voters in the West and in Ontario. In fact, the fiscal aspect did not resonate with Ontario, as much as other issues like national unity, government involvement in job creation, social moderation. Recognizing the disharmony between the West and Ontario Conservatives in the disappointing loss of 1997 led some partisans in Reform to seek greater party change in the form of a United Alternative.

Contrary to the rank-and-file, Preston Manning always felt that the Reform Party's goal was not to exert influence on the agenda of other parties, but to possibly win

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁵¹ Hugh Winsor, "Reform's ideological purity diluted: The party's parliamentary wing argued for policies that would be more salable in mainstream politics," *The Globe and Mail*, Monday, 17 October 1994, A4.

an election and form a government.⁵² Although winning government is a trait of a brokerage party, Reform remained strong advocates of policy change in areas that were not necessarily accommodating to the majority of Canadians. As we found in the previous Chapter, Reform's policies, platforms, and members were very much programmatic rather than pragmatic. Nonetheless, Manning still felt that winning government was the best position to revolutionize Canada's politics. It became apparent with the 1993 election, and even more so with the 1997 loss that Reform fell short of that goal. While it became a major force in the West, Reform was unable to win seats *en masse* elsewhere. The United Alternative (UA) project called for non-Liberal forces to find ways to cooperate to unseat the current government who won easily because of a fragmented conservative opposition. Initially conceived as the Ontario United Alternative, it was proposed as a means to stop the 'vote-splitting' that appeared to be handing the Liberals almost all of the province's 103 seats.⁵³ Preston Manning put together a planning committee consisting half of Reformers and half of representatives from other parties. The first UA assembly was convened in February 1999 that was represented by 1500 delegates, about two-thirds Reformers and one-third from other parties. At the second UA assembly held in January 2000, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to found a new party entitled the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance. They modified Reform's constitution and policies slightly to remove positions, such as opposition to official bilingualism, which seemed unpalatable to voters outside of the West.⁵⁴

⁵² Faron Ellis, "The More Things Change... The Alliance Campaign," *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2001), 60.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Flanagan, 289.

The time invested in Reform's the United Alternate project to 'unite the right', and subsequent transformation into the Canadian Alliance demonstrates Reform's shift in primary objective as a vote-seeker. When the Canadian Alliance started the 2000 election campaign, there were high expectations amongst partisans that the party would have a significant breakthrough, especially in the key electoral battleground of Ontario who held 103 out of 301 (34.2%) seats in Parliament.⁵⁵ Launching the campaign ahead of the Liberals, Alliance leader Stockwell Day confidently predicted that his party would make its Ontario breakthrough by winning 20 to 40 seats. More realistically, the Alliance was targeting about a dozen ridings, focusing on the Simcoe county region north of Toronto, the Niagra region, and a few eastern Ontario ridings.⁵⁶ Although the Alliance improved on Reform's 1997 results by capturing 25.5 percent of the vote and winning sixty-six seats, it failed to unite the conservative vote in Ontario, where it managed to only win two seats.

As in the previous election, 2000 saw the Tories and Alliance split the vote in English Canada. More than anything else, aside from the effects of Canada's first-past-the-post system', it was this fragmentation between the two parties, especially in Ontario, that had handed the Liberals three successive majorities. The results of this vote-split in Canada's most populace province confirmed what Harper and Flanagan described as a "benign Liberal dictatorship."⁵⁷ Compounded with their inability to make little headway east of Ontario in Québec or Atlantic Canada, the Canadian Alliance rendered its

⁵⁵ Elections Canada, "Thirty-seventh general election 2000: Official Voting Results," http://www.elections.ca/gen/rep/37g/table7_e.html, accessed 12 April 2006.

⁵⁶ Ellis, 77.

⁵⁷ Stephen Harper and Tom Flanagan, "Our Benign Dictatorship," *Next City* (Winter), 1996-1997, 34-40, 54-57.

parliamentary caucus almost exclusively western.⁵⁸ Some had been left with an uneasy sense that all of the efforts were wasted and the party's potential squandered by an inexperienced campaign team and possibly the wrong leader. Other members have begun a complete rethinking of the UA/Alliance project and were beginning to make overtures to the federal Conservatives. Some other partisans simply withdrew from federal politics, while some of the more radical Westerners had begun to take up new, more radical movements.⁵⁹ The external shock of losing the 2000 election to the Liberals proved to be a catalyst of dramatic change to members within the Alliance. In the ensuing months, leader Stockwell Day would be unable to effectively manage divisions within the party, setting off a series of events that would eventually see them merge with the Progressive Conservatives.

Within the party, Alliance members began to question Stockwell Day's effectiveness to lead after the election loss in 2000. Beginning with a defamation suit and ending with a caucus revolt in the course of one year, Day's leadership performance prompted leadership change.⁶⁰ In August 2001, former Reform MP Stephen Harper announced that he would be leaving his job as President of the National Citizens' Coalition to seek the Alliance leadership. Harper had been organizing since June 2001, and in a series of speeches and essays, he would outline his assessment of the current state of Canadian conservative politics. Harper felt that Canada was in need of a principled, small-c conservative party that would not retreat from taking a more

⁵⁸ Faron Ellis and Peter Woolstencroft, "New Conservatives, Old Realities: The 2004 Election Campaign," *The Canadian General Election of 2004*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2004), 68-69.

⁵⁹ Howard May, "Western Separatist parties emerge from infancy," *Calgary Herald*, Thursday, 4 January 2001, A6.

⁶⁰ See Ellis and Woolstencroft, 69-73.

ideological stance on policy issues, would not curry favour with Québécois nationalists, and most importantly, present voters with a professional political organization capable of earning enough credibility to govern in order to reach their primary goal of winning.⁶¹

Harper was clear that he was suspicious of the current quest for insignificant strategic alliances with other conservatives, and was particularly critical of PC leader Joe Clark and his Red-Tory pragmatism. Stating that he would never negotiate a merger with the Tories so long as Clark remained, Harper would reconsider if there was a change in leader. He accused Clark of not being a true conservative and being more interested in luring Alliance members into the Tory fold instead of sincere negotiations for unity on the right. In the leadership race, Harper turned his attention on defeating Day who he accused of allowing the religious right and special interests to hijack the party. Indeed, this was the initial reason for Harper's falling out with Preston Manning as a former Reform MP. He further committed that a Harper-led Alliance would not initiate legislation on moral areas, an effort to distance himself from Day. On March 20, 2002, Harper had won a clear first ballot victory, including a majority of the provinces.⁶² This change in leadership was a necessary condition for extensive party change – dissolution and merger with the Progressive Conservative Party.

Effects of External and Internal Stimuli on the Primary Goals of the Progressive Conservative Party

At first, the Progressive Conservatives were not interested in merger mainly because of the establishment's desire to preserve the party's history and existence. The Alliance's external stimulus to propose a merger was met with fierce resistance by long-

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 76-78.

time Tory members. As Harmel and Janda suggest, the age of a party (as an indicator of institutionalization), is believed to impact/minimize the effects of external events. The Progressive Conservative Party prided itself as the historic party of Confederation. Its origins date back to the mid-19th century, before Canada became an independent colony of the United Kingdom. A wall of opposition amongst the Tory establishment would be expected to stand, despite the torrents of dramatic change. However, when a massive external shock is coupled with a change in leadership and dominant factions, extreme change is plausible, namely merger.

The first external shock occurred after the 1993 electoral defeat. The new PC leader, Kim Campbell, enjoyed a political honeymoon in the summer, and polls suggested another win (albeit with a minority government). Under these circumstances, the Tories entered the 1993 federal election with renewed optimism. However, once the race commenced, PC support began to slide and then plummeted to 16 percent and down to two seats in the House of Commons.⁶³ Moreover, the Tories lost large segments of their traditional constituencies who carried them to victories in 1984 and 1988 to the Reform Party and Bloc Québécois. This negative external factor deeply affected the Progressive Conservative vote-seeking goal, but was not yet enough to cause dramatic change.⁶⁴

After losing its status as a party in the House of Commons in 1993, the goal of the Tories was to rebuild the party as an electoral force. To some party stalwarts, the significant cause behind the PC collapse was the unpopularity of the preceding Mulroney

⁶³ Peter Woolstencroft, "Staying Alive: The Progressive Conservative Party Fights for Survival," *Party Politics in Canada 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 248.

⁶⁴ Godbout and Bélanger, 19.

government. They hoped that the passage of time might be able to subdue the irritated public. Partisans were also hopeful those voters who had defected from the party in droves in the 1993 election might conclude that the Tories were punished enough and that it was time to return to the fold.⁶⁵

In electing a new leader, the PCs pinned their hopes in Jean Charest. First, Charest was the best-liked leader in Québec, and his popularity in the rest of Canada was equal to that of Jean Chrétien. Through him, the PCs were hoping to attract new voters while keeping long-time partisans attached to the party. Despite Charest being widely viewed to have 'won' the television debates, it did little to help the party on Election Day.

Though the Tories increased their share of the popular vote by 3 percent to draw almost even with Reform, the results of the 1997 election was hardly the comeback they wished for. Their minute gains were concentrated in Québec and Atlantic Canada. Outside of Québec, the PCs were decisively outpolled by Reform. Given the plurality electoral system, the Tories ended up last in the House of Commons with their seat count at 20.⁶⁶ The second consecutive loss was another negative external factor affecting their vote maximization goal, but was still not enough to effect major change.

The 2000 election proved to be another shock to the Progressive Conservatives. The PCs were able to attract 12.2 percent of the popular vote. This percentage translated into 12 seats in the Commons for the PCs, just barely enough to retain official party status, for purposes of parliamentary procedure and financial support for their parliamentary operations. Yet upon a closer look, the 2000 election shed light on the Tory's weakened organization. In Ontario, only 42 out of 103 constituencies (compared

⁶⁵ Neil Nevitte, et al., *Unsteady State: The 1997 Canadian Federal Election*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

to 72 in 1997) did PC candidates receive 15 percent of the vote, the level required to be eligible for funding rebates and return of deposits.⁶⁷ By this time, the full extent of organizational and financial loss was exposed.

Another external factor, as suggested by Harmel and Janda, is the presence of other parties. To meet its goal of vote maximization, the Tories could have increased its support by strategically moving on one or both of the salient policy spectrums. Yet as we found earlier, the presence of the Liberals on the centre-left and the Reform on the right, there was not much room for movement on the economic dimension. Also, the PCs were not able to change their position on the Québec question either because it had just alienated Western and Québec voters with the failures of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords for constitutional renewal.⁶⁸ In effect, the party of Confederation had lost regional credibility, which by this time was dominated by the Reform Party in the West, the Liberals in Ontario, and the Bloc in Québec.⁶⁹ Despite the continued electoral losses and limited movement on the policy dimensions, there were reasons behind the renewed optimism amongst Tory partisans after the losses in 1993 and 1997.⁷⁰ Although being outpolled by Reform in English Canada, the Tories retained a clear advantage over them in terms of party identifiers. First, Reform was vulnerable to an erosion of support because they had very few long-term partisans. Second, the PCs were the most popular second choice for Liberal voters, just as the Liberals were the most popular choice for Tories. Third, Progressive Conservative voters are much closer to Liberal voters than they were to Reform voters on issues like law and order, moral

⁶⁷ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won," 108.

⁶⁸ R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 41-42.

⁶⁹ Godbout and Bélanger, 19.

⁷⁰ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won," 93-94.

traditionalism, and accommodating diversity.⁷¹ If continued losses were not enough to convince the Tory establishment to dramatically change, which factors can be considered large enough to inspire wholesale change? For Harmel and Janda, the most persuasive external stimuli are those that cause a party to re-evaluate its ability to achieve their primary goal.

The emergence of Reform and the Bloc Québécois not only occupied policy space, but they also hollowed out the core supporters of the Tories. In the 1993 election, Reform bled support away from the PCs.⁷² Voters who had supported the PCs in the 1988 election were twice as likely to defect to Reform in the subsequent election. In the 1993 election, half of Reform's voters had been Tory votes in 1988. Similarly, one-third of Bloc Québécois' votes in 1993 were previously Progressive Conservative votes in 1988.⁷³ A critical ingredient for success as a brokerage party was evaporating, namely a core of loyal supporters. Brokerage parties must be able to count on what Smith terms the 'passive' support of core social groups. More specifically, these voters can be relied upon to continue supporting the party despite its shifting appeals. For the Liberals, Catholics, Canadians of non-European ancestry and non-francophone Québécois are their traditional core support. Comparatively, the Tories had modest support from the more affluent, Protestants, and francophones.⁷⁴ With these groups retreating to the other parties in the 1990s, such a shock can be seen as significant because it is not only a loss of key support, but also a loss of finances.

⁷¹ Nevitte et al., *Unsteady State*, 79-89.

⁷² Richard Johnston et al., "The 1993 Canadian Election: Realignment, Dealignment, or Something Else?" paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, St. Catharines, 1996.

⁷³ Nevitte et al., 80.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

For a party accustomed to the regular flow of money in the Mulroney years, the 1993 election was more than a defeat; it was a financial trauma that hampered the party's rebuilding efforts for the remainder of the decade.⁷⁵ The 1993 election left the party with a deficit of \$5.6 million, which over the next three years was paid down to \$2.1 million. The subsequent 1997 election also created financial problems, as the party's business plan had assumed a fall election and eight months of pre-election fundraising. A spring election not only cut into the business plan, but as the party failed to move significantly in the polls, contributions fell well below projections, creating a deficit of \$10.2 million. In addition, the leadership contest in 1998 hampered the Tory's fundraising efforts as the candidates tapped the usual donors and its timing undercut traditional fall fundraising drives since there was barely a month to reintroduce Joe Clark as their leader. In 1999, the party's tight financial situation resulted in the retention of constituency receipts in order to not breach the cap on the party's credit line. Total monies owing to constituency associations totaled approximately \$474,000.⁷⁶

By the 2000 election, the fundamental planning restraint facing the organization was money. Because of debt outstanding at approximately \$8 million, the PC Management Committee, following the lead of its National Council, had limited the national party's election budget to merely \$5 million – significantly less than the Alliance who had raised \$20 million in 2000, \$9.5 million alone spent for the election. In 2000, media speculation that corporate dollars were flowing to the Alliance, instead of the

⁷⁵ Stanbury, 183-184.

⁷⁶ Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, *Finance Committee Report*, August, 1999.

Tories, proved to be correct. Only being able to raise \$2.5 million, this led to the contraction of the Tory election budget and expansion of the party's line of credit.⁷⁷

The United Alternative (UA) initiative also proved to be influential in effecting the behavior of the Tories. Preston Manning invited Joe Clark to join him in the movement, but the Tory leader refused to discuss cooperation or any accommodation. The 'unite-the-right' issue was to nag Clark and the PCs for the next two years. It was during this period that the primary goal of the Progressive Conservatives changed from vote maximization to policy advocacy as a matter of distinguishing itself from other Reform, and more importantly for the matter of relevancy and survival. As the Tories were attempting to rebuild, with a different leader who did not carry the same gravitas as Jean Charest, a rising competitor sought to eliminate it either through domination or absorption.⁷⁸

The eventual creation of the Canadian Alliance out of the UA talks in early 2000 was a fusion of Reform with political activists from the provincial Liberal Party of British Columbia, the Saskatchewan Party, and several provincial PC parties, above all the Ontario PC Party. Virtually all of Ontario Premier Mike Harris's election team was visible at the inception of the Alliance. Several prominent Ontario Provincial Conservatives were also participating in the UA process. The inclusion of high profile Harris organizers, such as Tom Long who eventually became a leadership candidate for the Alliance, gave Reformers hope that they may be able to finally breakthrough in vote-rich Ontario.⁷⁹ The rise of the Alliance posed serious problems for the Tories who were

⁷⁷ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won," 96-97.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 93.

⁷⁹ Flanagan, pg. 290.

aware that their competitors now had a real chance to win by capturing the PC vote in Ontario with the help of the Harris electoral machinery.

According to the Harmel and Janda model, when shocks (especially significant ones) are aggregated with leadership and factional change, circumstances arise to allow for broad sweeping change. For the Tories, their leader Jean Charest was a political asset who was equally comfortable in French as he was in English. He projected an image of freshness and relative youthfulness in comparison to the other federal leaders. Charest also proved to be popular with voters, tying with Jean Chrétien as the most popular leader outside Québec and far outpacing Chrétien and Giles Duceppe in popularity in his home province.⁸⁰ By establishing himself in Ottawa in 1997, and concentrating his efforts in rebuilding the party, it appeared that Charest was committing himself for the long haul. The Tory establishment also favored his rhetoric of refusing to form an alliance with Reform because of the two party's fundamental differences. However, the unexpected resignation of Québec Premier Daniel Johnson in March 1998 impacted on the rebuilding efforts of the PCs. Bowing to enormous pressure, Charest left federal politics to become leader of the Québec Liberals in order to provide a strong federalist voice in the province. The effect was almost immediate, with polls indicating a significant drop in Tory support following the wake of Charest's departure.⁸¹

Despite the overtures of cooperation from Reform and later the United Alternative project, such external pressure only strengthened the resolve of the Tory establishment to remain viable and distinct from the other parties. As Panebianco articulates, "The competitor in laying claim to another party's hunting ground, threatens the latter's

⁸⁰ Nevitte, pg. 85.

⁸¹ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won," 92.

identity and destabilizes it; its dominant coalition's only defense is to be hostile. It must deny the competitor's claim to the hunting ground in order to preserve its identity."⁸² The selection of Joe Clark as leader in 1998, who previously served as leader from 1976 to 1983, suggests the dominant factions desire to resist major change (in the form of cooperation or merger). Prior to the 2000 election, partisans assumed that the United Alternative project would fail, resulting in the fracture of Reform hardliners and new members, or a complete rejection of the idea itself. If the UA was to carry through, the PCs assumed Preston Manning would be its new leader. Such an outcome would result in no improvement in their prospects in Ontario or out east. Since the Tories were rated during the 1997 election as the most popular second choice of voters after the Liberals, and that the latter being painted as a tired government, then the PCs could pose as a substantial challenge to the governing party.⁸³ However, the electoral and financial outcome of the 2000 election proved the Tory establishment otherwise.

Stephen Harper was moving the Alliance ahead in the public polls in 2002.⁸⁴ At the same time, the Progressive Conservative-Democratic Representative Coalition was collapsing. Sensing an opportunity for co-operation with the Tories, Harper directly appealed to disaffected conservatives in the PC Party, and subsequently offered a unity package to Clark.⁸⁵ Having placed an end-of-summer deadline to accept the unity package, Clark rejected the offer believing that the PC Party was the institution within which to unite the conservative movement. However, the continued losses, poor

⁸² Panebianco, 217.

⁸³ Woolstencroft, "Some Battles Won," 93-94.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ The Democratic Representative Caucus was a group of MPs who left the Canadian Alliance in 2001 in protest against the leadership of Stockwell Day. Two weeks later, on 24 September 2001, the DRC entered into a coalition with the Tories, which was intended to be Joe Clark's framework for proving that the two parties could be united on his terms rather than Day's. Clark, as PC leader, remained leader of the "PC-DRC Coalition" caucus, and Chuck Strahl, as leader of the DRC, was named deputy leader.

financial situation, and an offer of unity through the new leader of the dominant Canadian Alliance Party, such external stimuli was enough to demonstrate to some within the PC Party that major change was necessary to reach their traditional primary goal – to maximize votes. After a series of senior Progressive Conservatives called for his resignation, Clark decided to avoid the mandatory leadership review in August 2002 and announced that he would not stay on to fight the next election. Harper reminded PC delegates that his offer for unity was still valid through the end of summer.

Despite pleas from influential members of the Tory party to end the war amongst conservative minded partisans, only one leadership candidate was open to merger with the Alliance, Jim Prentice. The eventual winner, Peter MacKay, offered a more modest approach while maintaining the ‘301 rule’ (no joint candidates with the Alliance). To secure delegate support for his win, MacKay accepted David Orchard’s condition of not merging with the Alliance in exchange for Orchard’s endorsement. During the race, Orchard characterized himself as a Red-Tory by running on a nationalist, anti-free trade platform, and anti-merger platform. Orchard presented MacKay with his greatest challenge as delegate selection meetings geared up across the country. Prior to the convention, Orchard had locked up approximately one-quarter of the constituency delegates to MacKay’s approximately 40 percent.⁸⁶ As delegates assembled for the convention, it became clear that MacKay would need a significant amount of ex-officio delegates to put his leadership bid over the top. When that scenario did not occur, a traditional convention atmosphere developed. After four ballots, Peter MacKay emerged on top, but not before making a deal with David Orchard after the third ballot to secure the victory. The deal, which neither candidate made public, included assurances that

⁸⁶ Ellis and Woolstencroft, “New Conservatives, Old Realities,” 80.

there would be no merger, no joint candidates, a review of the party's position on free trade, a policy emphasis on the environment, and some consideration for Orchard supporters in PC staffing decisions.⁸⁷ Although this deal may have appeared to close the door on any possible cooperation with the Alliance, one characteristic of a brokerage party is its openness towards deal making in its effort to be more competitive in the market-like party system. In fact, this leadership change from the old to the new generation was a critical element in creating an atmosphere of great change.

Regardless of having signed the 'Orchard deal,' MacKay proposed to at least meet with Harper, who at that time was aggressively promoting a single slate of conservative candidates for the next election. MacKay reacted to Harper's "common cause campaign" with subdued enthusiasm. Yet there was enough cooperative sentiment between the two leaders to appoint a team of negotiators in order to try to find some common ground. Former Deputy Prime Minister Don Mazankowski, former Ontario premier William Davis, and Tory MP Loyola Hearn represented the PCs. Former Reform MP Ray Speaker, Ontario MP Scott Reid and Senator Gerry St. Germain led the Alliance negotiation team. Although there was a parliamentary truce between the Alliance and the PCs, institutional merger still appeared unreachable as negotiations became bogged down several times.

The Alliance wanted to continue its tradition of one-member-one vote leadership selection. MacKay was not receptive to this proposal. The Tory leader referred to the Alliance's huge membership base, mostly from the West, and felt that any merger agreement should not allow the new party's fate to be determined by one region. When merger talks appeared to have broken down for the final time, Harper authorized the

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

Alliance representatives to accept the Tory leadership selection process of regional delegates to vote in convention.⁸⁸ On October 16, 2003, Harper and MacKay announced that they had reached an Agreement in Principle that would see the merger of the two parties in the new Conservative Party of Canada.⁸⁹

To summarize, the decision of the Reform/Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party to merge is best understood when goals and constraints are taken into account. This radical type of party change, dissolution and merger, was ultimately based on the primary goal of vote maximizing. At its inception in the late 1980s, Reform was policy-driven to serve as a harbour of regional discontent and frustration of 'politics as usual'. When it grew in influence and popularity, Reform sensed an opportunity to win more seats and perhaps government. Having established its positions on the policy axis, Reform then changed its primary goal to vote maximizing. Through the shock of losing elections, it sought radical change by converting to the Canadian Alliance and then the eventual merger with the Tories. For the Tories, who endured shock through much travail, two factors withstood the temptation of radical change. The first factor is the maturity or the degree of institutionalization of a party. The second factor involves the dominance of the old Tory elite who wished to preserve the history and legacy of the Progressive Conservatives. As the party survived the political wilderness throughout the 1990s, the primary goal of vote maximizing evolved into policy-advocacy as a result of a barrage of external stimuli in the form of election losses, financial bleeding, and the dispersion of core support. Leadership change was necessary to inspire great change in

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁸⁹ See Stephen Harper and Peter MacKay, "Agreement-in-principle on the establishment of the Conservative Party of Canada," 15 October 2003.

reaction to the increase of external pressure, with the primary goal of vote maximization in mind.

Conclusion

The merger of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives appears to be a successful venture. It has been over three years since the inception of the Conservative Party; as well it successfully formed a minority government in January 2006. Nevertheless, this marriage has only put the new Conservative Party right back where the old Progressive Conservatives stood prior to the 1984 election. The Conservatives still sit to the right of the Liberals on the economic axis. Additionally, the Conservatives have a solid grip on western support. Québec, on the other hand, is no longer central to the Liberal equation as it was before and around the time of constitutional repatriation in 1982. It is the Bloc Québécois who absorbs the votes of perceived regional grievances in that province. Notwithstanding the presence of the Bloc, the 2004 and 2006 Canadian federal party system resembles that of 1984.⁹⁰

As it was argued, to unseat a natural governing coalition, an opposition party has two options. The opposition can wait for the incumbent to stumble and fall on an important policy dimension, or the it can exploit a cleavage issue like religion, race, region, or gender in an attempt to polarize the electorate and splinter the support of the governing party. It remains important to understand why parties opt for the riskier strategy of priming new issues. This leads us to the Harmel and Janda use of vote maximizing and policy-seeking goals. The Tories found it almost impossible to overtake the Liberals by simply relying on the economic issue alone who occupied the political

⁹⁰ Godbout and Bélanger, 22.

centre. To meet their vote maximizing primary goal, they changed their approach by priming the regional issue with the hope of weakening the support of the Liberals. As the 1984 and 1988 election outcomes demonstrate, this particular strategy met with great success. It realigned the party system by tying a large swath of Québec voters and a large segment of Western voters by fanning regional grievances.⁹¹ However, the Tory leadership's inability to bridge the two in the long term proved fatal, as the PCs could not meet the high expectations of the two polarized groups. Consequently, this led to the formation of two new regional parties who stripped support and finances away from the Tories, rendering them to last place in seat count within the House of Commons.

With regards to salient issues, the question concerning regional differences remains important today.⁹² With the Bloc Québécois still in existence, the Conservative Government must court the federalist vote in Québec, while at the same time disqualifying the separatist argument that the federal government does not meet the needs of the Québec people, through cooperating with Jean Charest's Québec government. If Harper can succeed where Mulroney failed, by bridging two polarized groups in the West and in Québec, then the Conservatives can transform itself from a mere opposition party, to a naturally governing party.

This Chapter also highlighted the partial endogenous nature of Harmel and Janda's theoretical model. First, electoral shocks such as the ones the PCs faced in 1993 are not always entirely external per se, since it can sometimes result from the party's own strategic behaviour. Mulroney had primed regional grievances to court Western and Québec voters to the Tory fold. However, the PCs inability to fully accommodate these

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 22.

regions and consequent creation of Reform and the Bloc could not have been foreseen. Second, this Chapter also demonstrates the evolving relationship between policy seeking and vote maximizing goals. Such a phenomenon was evident with both the Reform/Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives. In the end, the aggregation of internal and external factors, coupled with leadership renewal, subsequently induced an extreme change in the form of party merger. This extreme measure of party change was ultimately pursued to meet the primary objective of vote maximization in order to win government. Knowing vote maximization was the prime motivator in the creation of the Conservative Party of Canada, did this trait of brokerage politics manifest itself in the new party? The last Chapter will look at the behaviour and performance of the Conservative Party since the merger up until the 2006 federal election in order to determine if it exhibits ideological or brokerage tendencies.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Conservative Party and Brokerage Politics

Introduction

Is the Conservative Party behaving more ideologically as their Reform and Alliance predecessors were, or do they act more as a brokerage party as the Progressive Conservative Party once displayed? Following the similar process in examining its predecessors, this Chapter will first study the external attributes of the Conservatives between 2004 and 2006 by exploring its *Agreement-In-Principle*, Leadership, *Constitution*, party policies, and the campaign platforms. The second part of this Chapter will look at the internal traits of the party. Although Chapter Two utilized the opinion structures of party members to determine if a party was ideological or brokerage, such data does not currently exist for members of the new Conservative Party. Acknowledging that campaigns play a large role in how a party manifests and conveys its message to the electorate, an internal inspection of the Conservatives will instead involve an analysis of the party's organizational structure, strategy, and candidate profiles of the 2004 and 2006 campaigns. Campaigns are an important time for parties since it is the primary interface between all facets of the organization and the electorate. By looking at how partisans and the leader manage themselves within the organization, this Chapter will find that the Conservatives exhibit brokerage patterns, with vote-maximization as its primary goal.

An Examination of External Attributes

As mentioned in Chapter Two, defining a party behavioural model involves two approaches – an external and internal assessment. By examining the external attributes of

a party, we uncover how it presents itself to the electorate. Consequently, we can determine if a party is merely advocating ideological positions, with no intent of winning government, or if a party is broadening its positions to appeal to a wider mass. Since it is a new party and recently won a minority government in January of 2006, we will investigate the Conservative Party's exterior beginning shortly after the 2003 merger and end at its performance during the 2006 election.

Agreement-In-Principle

The leaders of the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservative Party signed the Conservative Party of Canada *Agreement-In-Principle* on October 15, 2003.¹ It served as the initial constitution of the new party, and remained in force until it was replaced by a permanent constitution that had been drafted by a committee of the Conservative's Interim Joint Council. In it, we find examples of accommodation by both parties with the intent of making them more appealing to the mainstream voter.

The *Agreement-In-Principle* contained fourteen articles, each of which dealt with important areas of compromise between the two parties. Article 2 emphasized the need to establish respect for all participants in the merger. The second article, in a sense, called for a truce from the internecine electoral war between the Progressive Conservative Party and Reform/Alliance.

Article 3 defined the nineteen founding policy principles of the new party. Given that 16 out of 19 founding principles were largely taken from the old Tory Constitution, including the recognition of equal status between French and English in federal

¹ Conservative Party of Canada, "A Brief History of the Conservative Party of Canada," <http://www.conservative.ca/EN/1131/>, accessed 04 March 2006.

institutions, and support for universal health care, indicates the ideological compromise once unimaginable when Reform was advocating for social policies outside the mainstream.

Articles 4 and 5, which outline the skeleton for the leadership race, also show that regional balance was given greater consideration than the one-member-one vote procedure.² The latter mechanism would have favoured the West who, at the time, had more members than anywhere else in Canada. However, this particular selection process was not necessarily guaranteed for future leadership races as outlined in Article 6. Regional parity was also emphasized in Article 13, to ease any concern from the growing membership in Central and Eastern Canada that the new Party was not going to be dominated by the West. In comparison to what Reform and Alliance offered as their founding principles, the Agreement-in-Principle demonstrates several compromises in order to merge with the Progressive Conservatives.

An Examination of Leadership Selection

Recalling from Chapter Two, there is evidence to suggest that amongst several factors, voters do consider leadership when making up their minds in supporting a party. As such, parties are conscious of supporter and voter preferences and consequently put a lot of emphasis on the leader during an election campaign. Which factors led to the eventual election of Stephen Harper as the first leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, and how does his profile shape the image of the party?

² A preferential ballot was to be used, with all votes added up and allocated within each of Canada's 301 federal ridings. The candidate who wins the largest number of points would be the winner of the leadership contest. Strictly speaking, it would be possible for a candidate to win the leadership race with fewer popular votes than their opponents, if the opponent's votes had been concentrated in ridings where large numbers of ballots had been cast.

Stephen Harper was quick to signal his intention to run for the leadership of the new party. Former PC leader, Peter MacKay declined to enter the race. Instead, Harper faced conservative activist and former Magna International President Belinda Stronach. Harper also competed against former Ontario PC Cabinet Minister Tony Clement. In his campaign, Harper would cite his record as leader as his greatest asset. In a course of just over two years, Harper defeated Stockwell Day on a first ballot decision, gathered together a successful group of professionals, put in place some order and discipline on an often ill-tempered Alliance caucus, resolved the Democratic-Reform Caucus dissident situation, and helped broker a merger with the PC Party.³

After an overall polite and agreeable campaign that left few deep wounds, Harper soundly defeated his opponents on the first ballot. As seen in Table 4.1, Harper swept the West and won a convincing majority in Ontario. However, he did lose to Stronach in Québec and all of Atlantic Canada. Not winning in the East proved to be a sign of weakness the Liberals would exploit in the upcoming general election. Nevertheless, Harper's win was convincing and would set out to establish the new party as a moderate and professional alternative to the long time governing Liberals who were beginning to be embroiled in the sponsorship scandal that saw federal taxpayers' money flow to the Liberal Québec-wing. Ontario would be the focus of the campaign, and if the Conservatives could prove competency in that vote-rich province, it was expected that other seats would follow, including a win or two in Québec.⁴

³ Faron Ellis and Peter Woolstencroft, "New Conservatives, Old Realities: The 2004 Election Campaign," *The Canadian General Election of 2004*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2004), 84.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

Table 4.1: 2004 Conservative Leadership Contest Results by Province

	% of total points			Constituency Wins		
	Harper	Stronach	Clement	Harper	Stronach	Clement
BC	79.9	13.7	6.4	36	0	0
AB	85.5	12.3	2.8	28	0	0
SK	81.5	14.9	3.6	14	0	0
MB	73.5	21.4	5.1	14	0	0
ON	56.9	27.3	15.8	96	6	4
PQ	33.4	60.5	6.0	16*	56*	3
NB	46.1	49.2	5.1	6	4	0
NS	37.2	52.9	10.0	4	7	0
PEI	21.3	68.0	10.3	0	4	0
Nfld	33.0	52.7	14.6	0**	6**	0
YT	62.0	32.0	6.0	1	0	0
NWT	53.0	39.0	9.0	1	0	0
NU	28.0	56.0	17.0	0	1	0
Total	55.5	35.0	9.5	216	84	4

Provincial totals may not add up to 100 points due to rounding at the riding level.

* Harper and Stronach tied in three Québec ridings.

** Harper and Stronach tied in one Newfoundland riding.

Source: Conservative Party of Canada, 2004.

While the *Agreement-in-Principle* articulated several of the new Conservatives' founding beliefs, including a "Balance between fiscal responsibility, progressive social policy and individual rights and responsibilities." As well as a "belief that it is the responsibility of individuals to provide for themselves, their families and their dependents, while recognizing that governments must respond to those who require assistance and compassion."⁵ Despite the moderate tone of the *Agreement-in-Principle*, it did little to indicate just how those beliefs would translate into practical policies or direct action. The subsequent election of Harper over former-PC members Tony Clement and Belinda Stronach led to further uncertainty about how different the party was going to be from the former Alliance.⁶ In his previous job as head of the National Citizens'

⁵ Conservative Party of Canada, *Agreement-In-Principle*, 2003, 2-3.

⁶ Laura B. Stephenson, "The Conservative Party and the 2004 Election," paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, University of Western Ontario, London,

Coalition, Harper co-authored a manifesto calling on the Alberta government to take unilateral action to radically expand the province's powers within the federal framework.⁷ Having won on the first ballot, it appeared that the Conservatives were going to be led by an ideologue, given Harper's background as a former Reform MP and as the former President of the right-wing think tank National Citizens' Coalition. As the new leader of the Conservatives, Harper needed to come across as a moderate figure to attract broader support, particularly former PC voters and the Ontario electorate. A later look at Harper's conduct during the election campaigns will demonstrate the party's move towards brokerage politics.

Constitution

The *Agreement-In-Principle* had served as an intra-party governing document until a constitution was developed. On March 19, 2005, the Conservative Party of Canada's *Constitution* was consolidated by the Executive Director and reviewed by the National Director. Much like the *Agreement-In-Principle*, we find that the *Constitution* reflects broad-based principles and objectives with the intent of being more marketable to the Canadian mainstream electorate.

There are nineteen cornerstone points under Principles, which attempt to paint the Conservative Party as moderate but not wholly abandoning its partisan roots of fiscal conservatism, tempered by Tory societal responsibility. Appendix One includes the Principles of the *Constitution*. It demonstrates a straddling between the beliefs of the neo-conservative Canadian Alliance and the traditional Tory Progressive Conservatives.

Ontario, June 2-4, 2005.

⁷ Stephen Harper et al., "Open Letter to Ralph Klein," *National Post*, 26 January 2001, A14.

2.1.1 accounts for an equilibrium between fiscal accountability, progressive social policy, and the importance of the individual. 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 considers the needs and diversity of each Canadian region. 2.1.5 suggests that the Conservatives are a federal party, acknowledging the importance of parliament and the rule of law. 2.1.6 and 2.1.7 outlines the classic liberal belief of equality of opportunity, noting the, “freedom of the individual, including freedom of speech, worship, and assembly.”⁸ 2.1.8 reflects the Tory tradition of appreciating the role of the monarchy, parliament, and democracy. To support the notion of a more decentralized federal government, section 2.1.9 recognizes the equal importance of provincial and territorial jurisdictions. In order to shed the anti-French stigma of old Reform, 2.1.10 stresses the equality of status between French and English within federal institutions. Not to abandon supporters of the free market, 2.1.11, 2.1.12, 2.1.14, and 2.1.19 contains precepts of individual freedom in the context of a competitive economy, in that initiative should be rewarded as prosperity. To placate those with concerns of extreme neo-conservative economic policies, 2.1.13 assures that government must compassionately help those in greatest need within society. Incorporating those with concerns over the environment, 2.1.15 supports the quality of the environment as being a part of Canadian heritage to be protected for future generations. 2.1.16 briefly mentions Canada’s need to live up to its international obligations. To pin itself as the ethical party, in comparison to the Liberals who were becoming tarred with government misconduct, 2.1.17 and 2.1.4 discusses how a government must honest and accountable to Canadians. This would later prove to be a central theme for the Conservatives in the 2004 and 2006 elections. 2.1.18 attempts to stem or counter any concern of being

⁸ Conservative Party of Canada, *Constitution*, 2005, 3.

perceived as advocates of two-tiered health-care, which once hampered the Canadian Alliance in the 2000 election.

2004 Campaign Platform

Soon after the merger, one of the challenges facing the Conservatives was to piece together a coherent platform in the limited amount of time they had between the merger and a possible election call. Another test the Conservatives faced was similar to what the Alliance endured – constructing a platform that would simultaneously present Ontario, Québec, and Atlantic Canada with a moderate and competent image while not alienating its Western supporters. Not having enough time for a policy convention that would normally set the tone for platform direction, the Conservatives relied on policy advisor Ken Boessenkool and senior strategists such as Deputy Conservative Leader Peter MacKay to build the party platform. Referring to the ‘founding principles’ in the *Agreement-in-Principle* and the Interim Council’s ‘areas of agreement’, the platform program entitled *Demanding Better* was introduced. Its major themes were accountability and a cleaner government, a stronger economy primarily through lower taxes, better health care, improved communities, and a secure Canada.⁹ From this slogan, we can derive its key message of accountability for government. In response to the recent mishandling of government programs such as the recently introduced federal gun registry, the HRDC overspending, and the emerging sponsorship scandal in Québec, the Conservatives wanted to make accountability the campaign’s central issue. According to the Canadian Election Study of 2004, the sponsorship scandal trumped all other issues in

⁹ *Ibid.*, 89-90.

terms of effect on voter choice.¹⁰ Its significance on the minds of the electorate partly accounts for the unexpected success of the Conservatives.

Platform Details

Government accountability was the centerpiece of the platform under 'Better Accountability'. By placing it front and centre, it allowed the Conservatives the opportunity to attack the Liberals for its record of "waste, mismanagement, and corruption."¹¹ More than any other, this particular plank was designed to define the election question as a matter of public trust, accountability, and the need for change in government. The party committed itself to expanding the authority of the Auditor General, appointing an independent ethics commissioner to act as a watchdog over the actions of MPs and Senators, reforming election financing by banning corporate and union donations, and eliminating the public subsidization of parties.¹² The Conservatives were correct to identify government accountability, in the wake of the sponsorship scandal, as a primary election issue. The majority of respondents to the 2004 Canada Election Study were either very angry about the scandal (39%) or at least somewhat angry (38%). Over a third (36%) thought that there had been a lot of corruption when Jean Chrétien was Prime Minister and close to half (46%) thought that there was some corruption. 75% of those surveyed thought that Paul Martin knew about the scandal before becoming Prime Minister, and of those who thought he did not know, two-thirds of them (67%) felt he should have known. Few thought he managed the sponsorship

¹⁰ Elisabeth Gidengil et al., "Back to the Future? Making Sense of the 2004 Canadian Election Outside Quebec," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 39:1 (March 2006): 14.

¹¹ Conservative Party of Canada, *Demanding Better*, 2004, 8.

¹² Ellis and Woolstencroft, 90.

scandal well, 5% feeling he had done a very good job, and only 25% thought he had done quite a good job. Consequently, over half (52%) lacked the confidence that Martin would prevent something like the scandal from happening reoccurring in the future.¹³

To placate economic conservatives, the party proposed several tax-cutting initiatives for a 'Better Economy'.¹⁴ Stemming from the argument that Canada is one of the highest taxed countries amongst the G-7, the Conservatives central feature was the cutting of taxes for all individuals and families. In particular, they planned to eliminate the 22 percent tax bracket, leaving all incomes under \$70,000 to be simply taxed at the 16 percent rate. Combining the annual indexing of the remaining brackets, the Conservatives calculated a 25 percent tax savings for middle-income Canadians. Other promises included a \$2,000 per child deduction, a decrease in Employment Insurance premiums, transferring three cents of the federal gas tax to the provinces for infrastructure renewal, initiating a Registered Lifetime Savings Plan to allow tax-free withdrawals, investing in research and development, and placing stricter controls on government spending.¹⁵

It appeared, however, that the fiscal conservative agenda hurt support for Harper's party. According to respondents of the 2004 Canada Election Study, support for increased social spending outweighed any desire for further tax cuts. Only 37 percent said that income taxes should be reduced. Meanwhile, 80 percent wanted to see more public money spent on health care. 71 percent wanted increased spending on education

¹³ Gidengil et al., "Back to the Future," 14-15.

¹⁴ Conservative Party, *Demanding Better*, 16.

¹⁵ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 90.

and 44 percent favoured more money for social housing. On the other hand, only 22 percent felt that welfare spending should go up.¹⁶

To inoculate themselves from similar attacks as the previous Canadian Alliance endured over of health care, the Conservatives tried to appear more like the Liberals. For example, they committed to honouring the 2003 Health Accord that was signed between the federal government and the provinces. The party dedicated itself to working with the provinces to secure a long-term plan for healthcare financing. Also, upon forming government, the Conservatives offered to directly fund catastrophic drug costs. This policy is contradictory to the Conservative policy of respecting the autonomy of provincial jurisdictions. Such inconsistency for the matter of stretching policy space is a trait of a brokerage party. Here, the Conservatives have billed themselves as the party which respects the boundaries of provincial/federal jurisdictions, but is willing to blur those lines if it means easing the concerns of particular voters who do not want the federal government retreating aid from those most vulnerable.¹⁷ For voters, the issue of private versus public health care mattered. Just over half (54%) of the respondents to the Canada Election Study opposed a two-tier health care system. 41 percent strongly disagreed and another 16 percent somewhat disagreed with the statement that, “people who are willing to pay should be allowed to get medical treatment sooner.”¹⁸ The Liberal attack of the Conservative Party’s perceived antipathy towards public medicine had some effect. Compared to the other federal parties, this issue cost Harper votes.¹⁹

¹⁶ Gidengil et al., “Back to the Future,” 17.

¹⁷ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 90-91.

¹⁸ Gidengil et al., “Back to the Future,” 18.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

With respect to the Conservative promise of “Better Security”, the party included several broad planks. Domestically, the Conservatives strove to maintain a reputation for being tough on crime. Carrying over from the Alliance platform, the Conservatives advocated truth-in-sentencing and tougher penalties for violent crimes. They also proposed to close the loopholes, which child pornographers exploited, and advocated the scraping of the firearms registry to redirect the funds to increase law enforcement.²⁰ In the 2004 Canada Election Study, 60 percent of respondents supported the idea of repealing the registry.²¹

Internationally, the Conservatives reflected elements of neo-conservative and traditional conservative policies. In response to the increased propensity of a terrorist attack in the post-911 period, Harper wished to address the backlog of outstanding deportation orders by placing priority towards individuals with criminal records or connections with terrorist organizations.²² Openly supporting free trade, the Conservatives continued to support the PC and Alliance stances of, “a strong North American trading partnership with both the United States and Mexico.”²³ Reflecting Peter MacKay’s PC leadership deal with David Orchard, a revision of NAFTA was also included: “In addition to promoting free-trade, we should examine deepening the NAFTA relationship to harmonize tariffs and eliminate rules of origin, enhance environmental and labour standards, and cooperate on common security issues.”²⁴ Further to continental issues, the Conservatives wanted to implement a “made in Canada foreign policy,” involving a more prominent role in international affairs. They

²⁰ Conservative Party, *Demanding Better*, 35.

²¹ Gidengil et al., “Back to the Future,” 15

²² Conservative Party, *Demanding Better*, 38.

²³ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

emphasized the values of democracy, rule of law, individual freedom and human rights, free markets and free trade, and compassion for the less fortunate. They balanced their approach by promising to work with Canada's traditional allies of the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, as well as international organizations as the United Nations and NATO.²⁵

Militarily, the Conservatives wanted to increase funding for Defence by injecting an immediate \$1.2 billion per year for equipment replacement. There were also calls for gradually increasing Forces strength to at least 80,000 soldiers, along with a rise in the numbers of reservists. The Conservatives wanted to upgrade the Air Force CF-18 fleet, acquire new tactical and heavy-lift aircraft, and purchase new maritime helicopters with enhanced multi-mission capabilities.²⁶ It appeared that the issue of defence spending benefited the Conservatives. Over half of the respondents (53%) from the 2004 Canada Election Study were in favour of increased military spending, whereas only 14 percent wanted cuts.²⁷

Under "Better Communities" in the Conservative platform, a coterie of social issues was highlighted. Borrowing largely from the former Tory platform, the Conservatives wanted to address the funding problems associated with post-secondary education. They planned to "increase the maximum student loan limits, broaden the definition of eligible expenses, and increase family income thresholds." The Conservatives also advocated for a provision of, "first-year tuition grants for students from low-income families," and encouraged, "families to save for their children's education, through such measures as the Canada Learning Bond, increased Canada

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁷ Gidengil et al., "Back to the Future," 15.

Education Savings Grants, and the Registered Lifetime Savings Program.”²⁸ Here, we find an attempted balance to share the responsibility between individuals and government for post-secondary education funding, between those who can and cannot afford tuition fees.

In addition to university and college education, the Conservatives wanted to respond to the concerns of low- and fixed-income Canadians by offering relief to the rising costs of gasoline, insurance, and utilities. More specifically, they pushed for an increase in the GST tax credit by 25 percent, cutting GST from the federal excise tax on gasoline, and eliminating the GST portion of gas prices above 85 percent.²⁹

With respect to the elderly, sick, and disabled, Harper offered to double the size of the caregiver’s tax credit to cover \$7,000 in allowable expenses.³⁰ Preferring a family oriented approach, this particular remedy was offered to encourage and reward those who take care of this vulnerable group at home rather than a retirement facility.

As far as immigrants were concerned, all that was proposed was a speedier recognition of foreign credentials and prior work experience. Although the party recognized that immigrants help build Canadian society, little else was offered other than helping economically viable immigrants.

Concerning First Nations, the Conservatives stated they would work towards improving aboriginal economic and social conditions. Specifically, they proposed, “a property regime on reserves to allow individual property ownership that will encourage lending for private housing and business.”³¹

²⁸ Conservative Party, *Demanding Better*, 31.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

Finally regarding the environment, the Conservative offered a more detailed program. They would implement Harper's February 2004 paper, "Towards a Cleaner Canada," which included several proposals. The Conservatives would legislate caps on smog causing pollutants, increase fines for first occurrences of ocean spills, begin a federal audit of contaminated waste sites, work with the provinces to develop a national strategy for alternative energy, and develop more effective programs than an "irrelevant Kyoto Protocol."³² For their social issues plank, the Conservatives offered a myriad of policy proposals, which included interventionist and market-oriented solutions, as a means to court the centre of the policy spectrum, while at the same time trying not to abandon their western base.

More interesting than what the Conservatives outlined in their platform was what was not mentioned. There was no reference to abortion, euthanasia, stem-cell research, family values, or hostility towards multiculturalism, all of which were lightning rods for criticism with the old Reform/Canadian Alliance campaigns. The discussion over same-sex marriage was included as a jurisdictional matter between the courts and Parliament. The Conservatives preferred a free-vote amongst MPs to address this issue. Without abandoning their populist roots and Western/rural supporters, the free-vote represented an opportunity for Parliamentarians to vote their constituents and their own consciences in the lower house over this divisive social issue. Harper would remain consistent with his positions over social issues and parliamentary reform throughout the campaign. The central message of not introducing any legislation in one particular social area over another during the next mandate, but would not stand in the way if there were to be a private member's bill introducing a free vote did not deflect the party against accusations

³² *Ibid.*, 34.

of harbouring a hidden moral conservative agenda. When a few Conservative candidates, mostly those with Reform/Alliance roots, provided the Liberals with examples of which private members' bills and free votes might include, many of the doubts the Conservatives were attempting to bury away from the electorate's minds were instead being re-cropped.³³ When Ontario MP Cheryl Gallant likened abortion to the recent terrorist beheadings on an American captive, the 2004 Conservative campaign suffered from a familiar Reform dilemma: the difficulty of herding 308 candidates, many of whom believe in their right to carry contrary views, for the entirety of the thirty-six day campaign.³⁴ Although these candidates were local representatives of their party, they were not centrally directed by the campaign. Their unscripted remarks proved to reinforce misgivings about the party among voters. As we shall see, in the 2006 election, the central campaign kept a closer tab on the communication activities of their candidates, to ensure that none of the missteps encountered in the 2004 effort happened again.

Conservative Party Policies

The *Agreement-on-Principle* and the 2004 Platform were documents that initially shaped the policy dimension of the Conservatives. Despite the Conservative Party's efforts to appear more moderate than the Alliance were, the Liberals did not let up on their offence on Harper's party. As James Evans notes, "The attack on the Conservatives became ferocious. It painted Stephen Harper as the Prince of Darkness and alleged that the Conservatives had a hidden agenda and spoke in code. Behind their mask, they were

³³ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 91.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

a coven of religious, right-wing extremists.”³⁵ Likewise, according to the 2004 Canada Election Study, close to half (47%) of those interviewed agreed with the statement that Stephen Harper was “just too extreme.”³⁶ The party needed to better define themselves in the wake of the 2004 election. In March 2005, the Conservative Party held its first policy convention in Montreal. The convention provided the public the opportunity to see the Conservatives in a different light. Gathering partisans from former Tory and Alliance roots, there is evidence to suggest that the party wanted to reduce the focus on its controversial social conservative elements, and show that they were a moderate party. The extensive policy document ranges on several issues spanning across the political spectrum. In comparison to what the old Reform/Alliance party proposed that were perceived as outside the mainstream voter opinion, the Conservative policies were broader reaching. In areas where there were great differences between the two parties include political representation, the welfare state, and Canadian federalism.

The ‘New Canada’ that Manning’s Reform and the Canadian Alliance had promoted would not have allowed a province, organized interest, or linguistic community to set the agenda for constitutional bargaining, or to benefit from the largesse of a financially overburdened state.³⁷ For Reform and Alliance, continuation of the traditional ‘asymmetrical federalism’ would create an “unbalanced federation of racial and ethnic groups distinguished by constitutional wrangling and deadlock, regional imbalance.”³⁸

³⁵ James Allan Evans, “From Greens to Red Tories, and all the Colours in Between – Reflections on the 2004 Election,” *Policy Options*, (September 2004): 39.

³⁶ Gidengil et al., “Back to the Future,” 18.

³⁷ David Daycock, *The New Right and Democracy in Canada*, (Don Mills, Oxford University Press, 2002), 69.

³⁸ See Canadian Alliance, *Policy Declaration*, 2000, Preamble and Articles 42, 52, 62, and 66.

The rejection of any hint of 'special status' was codified in Article 62 of Alliance's

Declaration of Policy:

All Canadian provinces should be equal before and under the law, possessing equal powers to govern within their areas of constitutional authority. We recognize that provinces differ in culture, tradition, population, natural resources, economic structure, and legal systems. Each diverse in its own way, and each should have equal freedom to build the society most appropriate to its citizens.³⁹

The position of the new Conservative Party was in reverse of the Reform/Alliance position by acknowledging the traditional 'compact theory' of confederation and Canadian federalism, reflective of Québec's claim for 'special status'. In their Policy Declaration, the Conservative Party not only considered Québec in its approach to federalism, but also accounted the West and the First Nations. Such regional play is reflective of brokerage politics that attempts to accommodate the various social cleavages:

A Conservative Government will consider reforming Canadian federalism, taking into account: (a) the need to consolidate Québec's position within the Canadian federation due to the province not signing the *Constitution Act*, 1982, (b) the need to alleviate the alienation felt by citizens of the West, and (c) the importance of building a long term partnership with aboriginal people.⁴⁰

Adding to this contrast between the Reform policies and the Conservative Party position is the issue of official languages. "The Reform Party supports a language policy based on freedom of speech. We reject comprehensive language legislation, whether in the nature of enforced bilingualism or unilingualism, regardless of the level of

³⁹ Canadian Alliance, *Policy Declaration*, Article 62.

⁴⁰ Conservative Party of Canada, *Policy Declaration*, 2005, Article 15.

government. The Reform Party supports personal bilingualism.”⁴¹ The Conservative Party had changed course, and instead embraces official bilingualism:

The Conservative Party believes that Canada’s official languages constitute a unique and significant social and economic advantage that benefits all Canadians.

i) A Conservative Government will support the Official Languages Act ensuring that English and French have equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada.

ii) The Conservative Party will work with the provinces and territories to enhance opportunities for Canadians to learn both official languages.⁴²

The Reform/Alliance position on equality of rights was very consistent. Unlike Trudeau, who accepted the idea that ‘special rights’ might be necessary in order of women and minority groups to enjoy equal opportunity in the labour market, Reformers consistently rejected the idea of any group-targeted special rights.⁴³ Concerning Aboriginal rights, according to Reform’s *Blue Sheet*, the party’s ultimate goal was “that all aboriginal people be full and equal participants in Canadian citizenship, indistinguishable in law and treatment from other Canadians.”⁴⁴ In Reform/Alliance minds, it was understood that the granting of ‘special status’ to any ethnic group, including Aboriginals, would negative the equality of every individual.⁴⁵ Comparatively, the Conservatives withdrew from that position and instead supported aboriginal self-governance within the Canadian federal state. In Article 72 of their *Policy Declaration*, the Conservatives felt that, “The Indian Act (and related legislation) should be replaced by a modern legislative framework which provides for the devolution of full legal and

⁴¹ Reform Party of Canada, *Blue Sheet*, 1996-1997, 24.

⁴² Conservative Party, *Policy Declaration*, Article 91.

⁴³ Laycock, 81.

⁴⁴ Reform Party, *Blue Sheet*, 18.

⁴⁵ Laycock, 80.

democratic responsibility to First Nations, including the Inuit, for their own affairs within the overall constitutional framework of our federal state.”⁴⁶

Another interpretation by Reform/Alliance on equality among citizens was evident in May 1996, in its response to government proposals to amend the Canada Human Rights Act, and again at the June Reform Assembly. Manning argued that changes to the Act, that would include sexual orientation among the ‘prohibited grounds of discrimination,’ would have a grave impact on ‘the family.’⁴⁷ Unlike the previous policy positions, the Conservatives did follow a similar vein in its promotion of family values, “The Conservative Party believes that the family unit is essential to the well-being of individuals and society, because that is where children learn values and develop a sense of responsibility. Therefore government legislation and programs should support and respect the role of the Canadian family.”⁴⁸ Like Alliance before it, the Conservatives felt that the party would be in favour of the traditional definition of marriage, “A Conservative Government will support legislation defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman.”⁴⁹

With respect to multiculturalism, Reform and the Alliance appeared to consider ‘multicultural’, like being gay, a matter of personal choice, and therefore not a condition that deserves taxpayer-funded support.⁵⁰ They had opposed the concept of multiculturalism and hyphenated Canadianism, as well as “funding of the multiculturalism program,” insisted on the “abolition of the Department of Multiculturalism,” and endorsed the principle that “individuals or groups are free to

⁴⁶ Conservative Party, *Policy Declaration*, Article 72.

⁴⁷ Laycock, 82.

⁴⁸ Conservative Party, *Policy Declaration*, Article 63.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Laycock, 71.

preserve their cultural heritage using their own resources.”⁵¹ Though ambiguous on how it would preserve multiculturalism, the Conservatives recognized its importance and did not appear hostile to its existence in Canadian society. The non-specificity of how they would promote this issue does give the Conservatives policy flexibility if it were to govern:

The Conservative Party believes that Canada’s multicultural society is a valued reality and accepts the need to foster understanding and equality of opportunity while promoting common values across Canada.⁵²

The Conservative Party recognizes the rich, diverse make-up of the Canadian population and the contribution of these communities to our history and the Canadian way of life. The government must ensure that each community is able to enhance and contribute to Canada without discrimination barriers.⁵³

On provincial/federal jurisdiction, the Reform Party position was not as decentralist as one might pre-suppose.⁵⁴ The party committed itself merely to “a re-examination and re-establishment of a clear division of powers between the constitutional levels of government.”⁵⁵ Reform opposed the use of federal spending powers in “areas of provincial jurisdiction, such as Medicare, education and the like.”⁵⁶ By 1996, Reform was even contending that the tenets of the Canada Health Act were consistent with their position on the provincialization of Medicare, and would go so far as to restore the \$4 billion of funding cut by the Liberals between 1993 and 1997.⁵⁷ Similarly, the Conservative Party stated that, “all Canadians should have reasonable access to timely,

⁵¹ See Reform Party of Canada, *Blue Sheet*, 1996-1997, “Multiculturalism.”

⁵² Conservative Party, *Policy Declaration*, Article 89.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Article 90.

⁵⁴ Laycock, 71.

⁵⁵ Reform Party of Canada, *Principles and Policies: The Blue Book*, (Calgary, 1991), 6.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁷ Preston Manning, “A Fresh Start for Canadians,” (London, Ontario, October 1996).

quality health care services, regardless of their ability to pay.”⁵⁸ They were also explicit in supporting a universal, public health care system, as well as adding a sixth principle of stable and transparent federal funding. What differs between the Reform/Alliance and the Conservatives is the blurring of federal/provincial jurisdiction. As in the case of Medicare, the Conservatives were more willing to intervene in this provincial area of responsibility, “We will work with the provinces and territories in the development of national quality indicators and objectives.”⁵⁹ Furthermore the Party “supports the creation of a Canada Public Health Agency and the Appointment of a Chief Public Health Officer of Canada.”⁶⁰ Facing greater pressure by the electorate, and understanding the primacy of healthcare as an issue, the Conservatives relaxed the constrictive borders of provincial and federal responsibilities. This quick-fix approach, despite the intrusion of federal powers into provincial matters, was a response to the immediate needs of the electorate.

The Reform-Alliance push for ‘equal citizenship,’ without ‘special rights’ for distinct groups of citizens, is closely related to its more general campaign to devalue politicians and public life.⁶¹ In its Policy Declaration, the Conservatives were not as hesitant to acknowledge the societal fragments in Canadian society. At times they offered specific remedies, and left others open to interpretation to allow them latitude for movement on the policy dimension. In response to the unmet expectation of the 2004 campaign, the Conservatives set out to define their policy realm, in preparation for its package and selling to the electorate in the subsequent election of 2006.

⁵⁸ Conservative Party, *Policy Declaration*, Article 51.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Article 51.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Article 53.

⁶¹ Laycock, 92.

2006 Campaign Platform

By the time the opposition parties prompted an election through a vote of non-confidence on November 28, 2005, the sponsorship scandal had reached its zenith. This affair revealed that taxpayers' money was being funneled to Liberal-friendly ad agencies which then donated the funds to the Québec wing of the Liberal party. The 2006 campaign platform document was entitled *Stand Up For Canada*. Similar to 2004, government accountability was again central to the campaign. Using the byline of Stand Up for – Accountability, Opportunity, Security, Families, Communities, and Canada, such emphasis on these themes invokes a stronger sense of urgency to change parties to those who can govern responsibly. As surveys reveal in the 2006 Canada Election Study, government corruption as a result of the sponsorship scandal was the most salient issue on the minds of voters.⁶² Knowing the saliency of this issue and the marketability of government reform, the Conservatives focused in on the Liberals' mishandling of public funds. At the same time, they attempted to present themselves as a moderate and capable government in waiting.

Platform Details

Beginning with the 'Stand Up for Accountability,' the Conservatives presented a more detailed plan than the 2004 platform on how to clean up government. The party wanted to reform financing of campaigns and elections, as well as banning politicians and

⁶² André Blais et al., "Election 2006: How Big Were the Changes... Really?" <http://www.ces-ec.umontreal.ca/documents/Globe.300106.pdf>, accessed 01 February 2006.

civil servants from lobbying government for five years.⁶³ Other accountability measures were proposed as a response to the Liberal mismanagement of public funds. Amongst several proposals, the Conservatives wanted to reform the way government contracts are procured, provide protection to whistleblowers that would sound off any warnings of government misconduct, strengthen the power of the Auditor General and Ethics Commissioner, as well as the creation of a Director of Public Prosecutions.

The issue of government accountability does not have strong ideological roots in comparison to social policy or public finances. Cleaning up government conduct does not present a way of life based on certain assumptions, such as welfare assistance as a means to making quality of life more equal or cutting taxes in order to stimulate the economy. Rather, the issue of government transparency was a response to the mismanagement of government. It can be argued that cleaning up government is a right-wing code word for anti-statist sentiments or resentments towards big government. Throughout the 1990s, Reform campaigned on dismantling the interventionist federal state. Manning's party presented itself as a party that would conduct government differently from 'old line' parties and would not do 'politics as usual'.⁶⁴ Although Reform benefited at a time when anti-party and anti-government feelings were increasing in English Canada, it was not able to fully capitalize on these resentments because they were still perceived as extreme on social policy.⁶⁵ On the other hand, the issue of government clean up has been used by parties in past elections as a means of capitalizing on the public mood of change. In the 1896 federal election, Liberal Leader Wilfrid

⁶³ Individual donations to parties were to be limited to a maximum \$1,000. Corporate, union, and organization donations were to be banned. Secret donations would also be banned, forcing elected MPs to fully disclose their sources of campaign funds.

⁶⁴ Laycock, 11-13.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 176.

Laurier campaigned on cleaning up government after a long stay in office by the Conservatives. In the wake of allegations of cronyism and corruption surrounding the Canadian Pacific Railway, Laurier offered great reform in the conduct of government.⁶⁶

Given its primacy in the Conservative platform, the party wanted to address a salient topic that appeared to be a growing concern for voters. According to the 2004 and 2006 Canada Election Study, the sponsorship scandal and corruption were at the forefront of both campaigns. In 2004, however, health care had trumped corruption as a prime issue. Although health care was still a priority for many voters in 2006, corruption came a closer second. In the final days of the campaign, almost a third of the respondents to the Canada Election Study chose corruption when asked to name their most important issue. Among a list of five issues, the others were health, taxation, environment, and social welfare. Corruption garnered a ten-point increase over the 2004 campaign.⁶⁷

Under ‘Stand Up For Opportunity’, the Conservative platform outlined their economic plan primarily aimed at the working family middle-class – a target group of voters. Compared to the Canadian Alliance campaign of 2000, large-scale tax reduction and the curbing government spending were given little attention. Instead, targeted tax proposals were focused on, such as the immediate reduction in the Good and Services Tax (GST) from seven to six to five percent. For the Conservatives, “The GST affects everyone – families, seniors, and young people just getting started in life. Cutting the GST will help everyone deal with the rising cost of living, put money in people’s

⁶⁶ See Peter B. Waite, *Arduous Destiny: Canada, 1874-1896*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971); R. C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, *A Nation Transformed: Canada, 1896-1921*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974).

⁶⁷ André Blais et al., “Corruption Was the Tipping Point,” *The Globe and Mail*, 02 February, 2006, A15.

pockets, and spur the economy immediately.”⁶⁸ They also offered tax relief to skilled workers in the form of a \$1,000 grant to new apprentices covering the cost of tools, as well as proposing a \$500 Tools Tax Deduction for existing tradespeople. Not to ignore their fiscal conservative base, the party wanted to limit the growth of spending on federal grants and contribution programs and by federal departments and agencies, with the exception of National Defence and Indian Affairs. As far as regional development was concerned, the Conservatives were in favour of supporting regional development agencies with the aim of maintaining their current funding levels. Its approach was quite different to the former Alliance proposal of eliminating such development agencies, who at the time felt that the federal government should not be in the business of providing subsidies to the regions in need of support.

Security issues were also prominent in the Conservative campaign. Reflecting the attention the former PC and Alliance parties gave to crime and punishment, the Conservatives advocated “serious crime must mean serious time.”⁶⁹ Among several proposals, the party advocated for minimum prison sentences for repeating serious offenders, impose consecutive sentences as opposed to concurrent sentences, increase the number of officers on the streets, repeal the Bill C-68 gun registry, and the creation of sex offender registry. The Conservatives also wanted to strengthen the Youth Criminal Justice Act that would see to it that anyone 14 years or older who is charged with a serious or repeat offence is automatically subject to adult sentencing.⁷⁰ Conventional wisdom would suggest that such positions are to the right of the political spectrum, however they are not outside of mainstream opinion. According to the 2006 Canada

⁶⁸ Conservative Party of Canada, *Stand Up For Canada*, 2006, 10.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

Election Study, the majority of Canadians (outside of Québec) were in favour of scrapping the gun registry entirely (Men 70 % and Women 57%).⁷¹

‘Stand Up For Families’ was a platform plank that enshrined different policy issues ranging from health care to child-care to marriage. On health care, the Conservatives centered this issue by ensuring that “all Canadians receive essential medical treatment within clinically acceptable waiting times.”⁷² Like the previous campaigns of the PC and Alliance, the Conservatives were committed to the universal access of the public health care system by respecting the five principles of the Canada Health Act. Like 2004, any deviation outside of this tenet would have betrayed the stance of the majority of Canadians who are against a two-tier health care system.⁷³ On the issue of child-care, the Conservatives wanted to slightly distinguish themselves from the other parties who advocated for an expansive federal child-care program. Rather, Harper’s party wanted to support all parents by allowing them option of sending their children to daycare or raising them at home, through a \$1,200 Choice in Child Care Allowance.⁷⁴ One area that proved to be problematic for the Conservatives during the campaign was their stance on the traditional definition of marriage. Although given very little detail and attention relative to other issues in the platform, the Conservatives wanted a free vote in the House of Commons whether to introduce legislation to restore the traditional definition of marriage. Does this position suggest that the Conservatives are ideological because such a stance is not popular in the electoral districts where they need votes, such as Québec or urban Canada? For Harper to successfully build a coalition

⁷¹ Elisabeth Gidengil et al., “Women to the Left, Men to the Right,” *The Globe and Mail*, 15 February 2006, A18.

⁷² Conservative Party, *Stand Up For Canada*, 22.

⁷³ Gidengil et al., “Back to the Future,” 17.

⁷⁴ Conservative Party, *Stand Up For Canada*, 22.

amongst conservatives from the former PC Party and Canadian Alliance, he had to ensure that none of the groups from either party were wholly alienated. As mentioned previously, religious groups on the whole, supported the Conservative Party. A concession needed to be made to count on their votes. A free vote by MPs to determine if legislation should be proposed provides the possibility, but not guarantee that the traditional definition of marriage can be protected. This mechanism also allows Conservative MPs who have personal or constituency ambivalence towards social conservatism to vote against the majority of their caucus. The free vote caveat accommodates all MPs who may or may not support the traditional definition of marriage.

Under 'Stand Up For Our Communities', the Conservatives included several social policy measures such as a commitment to renewing public infrastructure in cities and communities. To accommodate the poorer segments of society, the party wanted to provide incentives to private sector builders for the construction and refurbishment of affordable housing. Concerning the environment, the party committed to a 'made in Canada' plan for, "Clean air, clean water, clean land, and clean energy."⁷⁵ On immigration, the Conservatives proposed to cut the \$975 Right of Landing Fee in half, a significant reduction to those families coming from developing countries. As well, they promised to expedite foreign recognition of credentials for an easier transition for skilled and professional workers. With matters regarding the First Nations people, on top of several measures, Harper accepted the targets agreed upon at the Meeting of First Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders, as well as the development of property ownership in reserves. Lastly, on Arts, Culture, and Sport, the Conservatives wanted to

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

protect the role of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Radio-Canada, as well as the role of other federal cultural agencies such as the National Film Board, and the Canada Council.⁷⁶ This particular section of the platform would have been unimaginable with the 1993 Reform Party. The accommodation the Conservatives had made to try to include several groups in their platform was evidence to suggest that their program was an attempt to be national in scope.

Federalism, official languages, democratic reform, foreign policy and trade were included under 'Stand Up For Canada.' To attract Ontario voters, the Conservatives needed to outline a national unity plan. Suggesting an open federalist approach, Harper's party proposed several intergovernmental mechanisms to facilitate provincial participation in areas of federal jurisdiction, namely inviting Québec to play a role at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with respect to the involvement in la Francophonie. Additionally, the Conservatives offered to work with permanent provincial international trade offices to develop and promote trade opportunities. Such approaches seem to run counter to the strict doctrine of separating provincial and federal responsibilities, but do support the brokerage behaviour of accommodation. The Conservatives also campaigned on supporting the Official Languages Act that sought English and French equality of status in all Government of Canada institutions. As far as democratic reform was concerned, the party was more ambiguous in their plans to reform Parliament. The party wanted to begin the reformation of the Senate by creating a national process for choosing elected Senators, as well as proposing further reforms to make this body an effective, independent, and democratic institution. This is not as clear as Reform's old policy of wanting a Triple E

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 26-31.

Senate – elected, effective, and equal. Such ambiguity on reform again supports the brokerage behaviour of parties that allow them policy flexibility. Concerning foreign policy and international trade, the Conservatives maintained the position of favouring freedom, democracy, rule of law, free markets, and free trade. To complement these tenets, they also were in favour of increasing spending on foreign aid and development. Regarding the Canadian Forces, the Conservatives promised to increase recruitment of personnel, increase spending for the acquisition of new equipment to support a multi-role function. Furthermore, the party committed to strengthening Canada's economic union through international treaties as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Such stances were not dissimilar to the 2004 campaign.

Analysis of the External Face of the Party

Through an assessment of what the Conservative Party presented to the public, primarily the *Agreement-In-Principle*, its new leader, Constitution, party policies, and campaign platforms, we find evidence of a party demonstrating brokerage behaviour. The *Agreement-In-Principle* held several compromises by the founding parties, mostly at the expense of the former Canadian Alliance, in order to present the new party as more moderate and reflective of mainstream Canada. What is strikingly characteristic of brokerage politics is the selection process of the leader. Instead of one-member, one-vote selection that is reflective of populist tendencies and would have disproportionately favoured the West, the party elite opted for regional parity. Such a mechanism gave equal voice for all parts of Canada, be it from Québec or Alberta.

Judging the selection of Stephen Harper as the Conservative leader, it appeared as though the efforts to moderate the party were in vain because of his right-wing ideological past as a former Reform MP and president of the market-oriented think-tank National Citizens' Coalition. Although the majority of his support came from the West and Ontario, Harper lacked similar success in Québec and Atlantic Canada. A further investigation into his tenure as leader during the campaigns will later show his shift in opinion and behaviour.

The *Constitution* of the party reveals broader based principles aimed to market the party to the Canadian mainstream. Although the document held fiscally conservative values, the governing document was tempered by Tory ideals of social responsibility. It took note of a variety of issues that span the political spectrum, including the environment, fiscal responsibility, progressive social policy, role of parliament, and French-English relations. This patchwork process is a trait of brokerage parties, and is even more evident in the policies of the party.

In response to the Liberal attack ads during the 2004 campaign, which painted the Conservatives as a party harbouring extreme right-wing views, the organization needed to better define itself in the face of opposition. The 2005 Policy Convention in Montreal was an opportunity to fine-tune the Party's image. In the document itself, like the Constitution included various points that were broad-based, patched together involving a wide range of issues, and inconsistent ideological positions on the political spectrum. Notwithstanding family values, the socially conservative policies of the old Reform/Alliance that proved to be problematic in terms of popular support, were softened if not reversed under the Conservative Party. In policy areas as Canadian federalism, we

found the Conservatives to be accommodating to the various social and regional cleavages, including French Canada and the First Nations. There did not appear to be great differences between Reform and Conservative stances on the traditional family, but the latter was flexible in its approach towards provincial/federal areas of responsibilities. Having better defined themselves on the policy spectrum, the party sought to effectively sell itself to the electorate.

In the 2004 and 2006 Conservative party platforms, we find more signs of the brokerage patchwork approach. Identifying the sponsorship scandal as a salient issue amongst the electorate, the party featured this non-ideological issue front and centre. Other planks were also promoted to respond to the concerns of the majority of voters, such as support for universal healthcare, tax cuts for workers, being tough on crime, financing student support, and supporting the role of the Canadian Forces. What remained silent were unpopular social conservative issues such as abortion or euthanasia. Although the first platform policy announcement by the Conservatives in the 2006 campaign regarded the issue of redefining the traditional definition marriage, Harper insisted that the Conservatives would allow a free vote on whether or not to reopen the debate, and not a free vote on the issue itself. This non-definitive and ambiguous stance placated some the social conservatives in their party, while at the same time allow MPs who support gay-marriage the opportunity to freely vote otherwise.

Since the merger of the PC Party and the Canadian Alliance and up to the 2006 election, the Conservatives have demonstrated brokerage behaviour by exemplifying a patchwork approach through their public documents and ambiguity on divisive issues like same-sex marriage. Although an investigation of what the Conservatives presented to the

public is an initial step in determining their party behaviour, an internal look at organization, structure, and strategy during the campaigns will shed further light on the question of brokerage politics.

An Examination of Internal Attributes

Although the second Chapter looked at the opinion structures of party members to determine whether the party was ideological or brokerage, such surveys do not exist for members of the Conservative Party. Rather, this analysis will involve an investigation into the how the party organized itself during the 2004 and 2006 elections. By delving into the party's structure, strategy, and candidate profiles during these elections reveals that the Conservatives' party behaviour resembles that of brokerage politics. Following the organizational approach of understanding party behaviour, we will find evidence of market-driven actions in order to gain a greater share of the vote. Brokerage parties act like corporations in their efforts to sell their message and image to the electoral market. In preparation for elections, brokerage parties scramble for immediate electoral advantage by trying to assess the state of the public mind at the moment and tailor their platform agendas accordingly, also known as the quick-fix approach.⁷⁷ As well, framing brokerage behaviour through the sociological approach, we will find that the party also strove to incorporate several segments of society in order to build a stronger base of

⁷⁷ Harold Clarke et al., "Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 403.

support. Brokerage parties attempt to aggregate a wide range of interests into a voting coalition to not only win but to promote national unity amongst a fragmented society.⁷⁸

The 2004 Campaign

After the merger process and subsequent leadership race, by 2004 the Conservative campaign would be the best financed and most professional effort delivered by any Conservative campaign since Mulroney in 1988.⁷⁹ If the new Conservatives were to establish themselves as a pragmatic centre-right party, rather than an ideological party of the right, they needed to compete as a brokerage party with heavy emphasis on valence issues and credible leadership. The challenge of the Conservatives and for leader Stephen Harper in playing brokerage politics was the risk of alienating the Western support base of small 'c' economic and social conservatives.⁸⁰ Were the Conservatives able to pragmatically stitch together a program and organization to draw in support from the West and central Canada in order to make them competitive with the Liberals?

Campaign Structure and Strategy

An overview of campaign structure finds that the Conservatives were setting out to maximize their vote getting ability, with the intent of winning the federal election. Tom Flanagan managed the campaign out of the Ottawa 'war room' with a core staff he had been assembling since the Alliance leadership contest. The war room utilized a dozen

⁷⁸ Hugh Thorburn, "The Functional Party System," *Party Politics in Canada, 6th Edition*, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1991), 120.

⁷⁹ From a combination of the new party financing regulations, the Conservatives started 2004 with an \$8.4 million grant. In additions to contributions throughout the year, the party expected to spend \$17.6 million legal limit on the campaign and the end the year with no deficit.

⁸⁰ Clarke et al., 252.

people to manage and operate their extensive computerized voter identification system. The Conservatives also contracted Responsive Marketing Group Inc. of Toronto to conduct its telemarketing and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) strategies, while Praxicus Public Strategies provided baseline polling and nightly tracking polls throughout the election. Much of the GOTV efforts involved what the party called its Blue List – a compilation of ridings deemed winnable by the Conservatives. Begun as a Canadian Alliance initiative, ridings (primarily though not exclusively in Ontario) were targeted based on numerous factors. Criteria included historical voting patterns, strength of the Conservative candidate and opponents, and the potential for opposition to split the constituent vote. Incumbents were not entirely excluded from the Blue List, but were expected to win on their own – as it was the case for many Western Canadian candidates who presumably had sophisticated GOTV strategies themselves.⁸¹ Like a corporation trying to identify and maximize its market share, the Conservatives utilized their market research to be as efficient and effective in their ability to capture their vote.

Since the St. Laurent and Diefenbaker era, regional bosses have declined in their centrality to a federal campaign, and 2004 was no different.⁸² There were no formal provincial organizational structures, although each province was assigned one or two campaign co-chairs who primarily served as media-spokespersons and fundraisers but were not involved in strategy development or organization. On the other hand, two national campaign co-chairs were appointed, former Alliance MP John Reynolds and

⁸¹ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 86.

⁸² R. Kenneth Carty, "Three Canadian Party Systems: An Interpretation of the Development of National Politics," *Party Politics in Canada 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh G. Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 26.

former Tory strategist Michael Fortier. Their presence assured partisans of both former parties that there would be an equal say in the development of the campaign.⁸³

Overall, the Liberal and Conservative leadership tours resembled each other. The tour was designed as national in scope, although Ontario was greatly targeted. Table 4.2 compares Harper's publicly reported tour events with those of Liberal leader Paul Martin throughout the course of the campaign.

Table 4.2: Number of Harper and Martin Campaign Events by Region and Campaign Period

Campaign Total					
	West	Ontario	Québec	Atlantic	Total
Martin	20	32	10	14	75
Harper	17	44	9	9	79
Pre-Debate Events					
	West	Ontario	Québec	Atlantic	Total
Martin	12	10	6	7	35
Harper	6	31	2	5	44
Post-Debate Events					
	West	Ontario	Québec	Atlantic	Total
Martin	8	21	4	7	40
Harper	11	13	7	4	35

Source: Faron Ellis and Peter Woolstencroft, "New Conservatives, Old Realities: The 2004 Election Campaign," *The Canadian General Election of 2004*, edited by Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: Dundurn, 2004), 88.

Both tours were structured by the strategic importance of Ontario, which drew 41 percent of the Liberal Leader's visits compared to 56 percent of the Conservative leader's attendance. Knowing their limited electoral chances in Québec, the Conservatives spent little time in that province. Looking at the patterns time spent in the pre- and post-debates proves to be less salient. The Liberals spent more time in the West in the pre-debate period than anywhere else, whereas the Conservatives invested more time in Ontario during this period. It seemed that both parties, planned their campaigns not on

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 86.

the idea of consolidating their support, but rather on expanding support elsewhere. After the debates, the pattern reversed. While the Liberals narrowed in on Ontario, the Conservatives shifted Harper's attention to the West. On the last day of campaigning, Harper traveled from Edmonton to the conservative heartland of central Alberta. His closing rhetoric appeared to have undermined the national strategy and policy documents of branding the party as new. Harper's revival of the Reform's banner, 'The West Wants In,' undercut the party message found in the policy platform and advertisements.⁸⁴

Candidate Profiles

Candidate selection proceeded immediately after the legal registration of the new party. Insisting on professionalism, Harper required all candidates to sign a pledge to not criticize other Conservative candidates, the leader, or party policy.⁸⁵ In all, the Conservatives ran a full national slate of 308 candidates. 36 candidates were female, 20 were age thirty or younger, and several were visible minorities, including the first husband and wife team ever elected in the House of Commons. It appeared that the Conservative team of candidates looked national in scope. Yet the fundamental question amongst partisans was whether the merger was the marriage of two equal entities or merely a takeover of the PCs by the Alliance.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

⁸⁵ Harper had previously dealt a heavy hand in denying controversial dissenter Jim Pankiw's request to re-enter the Conservative caucus. Pankiw instead ran as an independent, winning 20 percent of the vote in comparison to the Conservative's 26.7 percent. In addition, Harper dismissed Saskatchewan MP Larry Spencer out of caucus in 2004 for advocating the criminalization of homosexual acts. This dismissal meant that Spencer could no longer run as a Conservative. As such, Spencer ran as an independent and garnered 4.9 percent of the vote, nearly costing the Conservatives a seat they had only won by a margin of 0.4 percent.

⁸⁶ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 92.

In the West, the dominance of the Reform/Alliance was noticeable by assessing the western candidates. More than half of all Conservative candidates from the four Western Provinces were incumbent Alliance members, many of who were initially elected as Reformers in 1993 or 1997. The reverse trend followed, though less pronounced, in the Atlantic provinces where 6 of the 36 Conservative candidates were incumbent Progressive Conservatives. In Ontario and Québec, examining incumbency and partisan history is not a good measure of partisan history in central Canada, since there was only two Alliance MPs elected in Ontario and one PC member from Québec in the 2000 election. Rather, by looking at whether or not candidates had previously run in a federal election for either party provides a more meaningful measure. In Table 4.3 finds that slightly more candidates had PC backgrounds than those identified with Reform/Alliance. In Table 4.4, seven of the former PCs in Québec had been candidates in both the 1997 and 2000 elections, whereas four past Reform/Alliance candidates ran in 2004 for the Conservatives. In terms of candidate recruitment, the Conservatives drew from its founding pools in Central Canada.⁸⁷

Table 4.3: Alliance Incumbents as a Percentage of Conservative Candidates in Western Canada

	# of Alliance Incumbents	# of Conservative Candidates	Percent of Total
British Columbia	20	36	55.6
Alberta	21	28	75.0
Saskatchewan	7	14	50.0
Manitoba	3	14	21.4
Totals	51	92	55.4

Source: Centre for Election Studies, Department of Political Science, University of Waterloo

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

Table 4.4: 2004 Conservative Candidates with Previous Federal Progressive Conservative or Reform/Alliance Candidacies (1997 and 2000) in Ontario and Québec

	PC	Reform/Alliance	Total	Total Seats	% of Total
Ontario	15	13	28	106	26.4
Québec	7	4	11	75	14.7

Note: Numbers do not include the four Conservative candidates who were previously members of the Ontario PC government.

Source: Centre for Election Studies, Department of Political Science, University of Waterloo

Following a pattern over the past decade of performances by Reform, Alliance, and the PCs, the 2004 election produced failures and successes for the new Conservative Party. Although they were unable to win government, the Conservatives did win more seats at ninety-nine than the combined total of seventy-eight from their predecessors.⁸⁸ They were also able to hold the Liberals to a minority government, which only six months earlier seemed an unlikely if not impossible feat. Despite the recent merger, and two months being leader, Harper was fighting an election with a generally well-prepared campaign and coherent policy platform. Although the Liberals faced the devastating issue of the sponsorship scandal, an unsteady campaign, and Paul Martin's inability to show Prime Ministerial leadership, the Conservatives were not able to take advantage of this perfect storm. In particular, they did not respond effectively to the severity of the Liberals' attacks or their own candidates' embarrassing corroborations.⁸⁹ Learning from these pitfalls, Harper needed to temper the party further to meet its goal to win government. A look at the Conservative Party's performance in the 2006 election sheds greater light at how they acted as a brokerage party to finally win government.

⁸⁸ Clarke et al., 249.

⁸⁹ Ellis and Woolstencroft, 97-98.

The 2006 Campaign

With a Conservative minority government win, the election results suggested that Canadians were in the mood for change. The Conservatives grew to 124 seats from 99 in 2004. The Liberals fell to 103 from 135, and the New Democratic Party improved their standing to 29 from 19.⁹⁰ In comparison to the last election, the 2006 Conservative campaign demonstrated even greater brokerage behaviour by structuring and organizing their team to maximize their vote with the aim to win government.

Campaign Structure and Strategy

After the 2004 loss, an immediate assessment of the election took place to determine what worked and what failed. Over the summer of 2005, Stephen Harper met with advisors for the post-mortem report. Assembled close to Harper for these sessions were Tom Flanagan, Doug Finley, Ian Brodie, and Patrick Muttart.⁹¹ Flanagan was a political science professor at the University of Calgary, one of the early policy analysts for Preston Manning's Reform party, and also served as Harper's campaign manager for his Alliance leadership race. Flanagan's role was providing advice in the area of political theory and policy, namely game theory and Canadian politics. Finley was a senior organizer in 2004, providing expertise in fieldwork and organization. He would identify local strengths and weaknesses, recruit talented candidates, and mark problematic candidates.⁹² Brodie was another political scientist, but from the University of Western

⁹⁰ Elections Canada, "Thirty-ninth General Election 2006: Official Voting Results," <http://www.elections.ca/scripts/OVR2006/25/table12.html>, accessed 15 April 2006.

⁹¹ Paul Wells, "The Untold Story: Inside an Epic Battle," *Maclean's*, 06 February 2006, 16.

⁹² F. Abbas Rana, "War Room: Conservative War Room Still A 'Work In Progress'," http://www.thehilltimes.ca/html/index.php?display=story&full_path=/2005/april/25/war_room/&c=1, accessed 19 March 2006.

Ontario. He would first serve as the Conservatives' executive director before becoming Harper's Chief of Staff.⁹³ At the meetings, his contributions included knowledge of campaign finances, election rules, and party behaviour. Lastly, Muttart had worked at Navigators, a Toronto public relations firm. To the group, he offered his understanding of winning elections in English speaking countries.⁹⁴

What developed out of the meetings was a series of strategies that controlled the Conservative campaign in a professional and effective manner. In 2004, the entire platform was released on a Saturday. Since there was no national newspaper published on Sunday, and that usually no network deployed their star anchor on a Saturday evening, a Saturday announcement guaranteed that the party message would not be widely publicized. In 2006, the entire platform was released half way through the campaign, but with policy announcements made daily to ensure that there was local and national coverage of the Conservative plan. Each day of the campaign was preplanned, with the first and second day's announcement made exclusively on government clean up. Although the Conservatives introduced the divisive issue of same-sex marriage early, it was an attempt to define their position before their competition had the chance to do so, in a sense jumping ahead of the issue before the Liberals were able to paint the Conservatives of harbouring a hidden social conservative agenda. Even still, the particulars of the Conservative position were to have a free vote in the House of Commons to determine a reopening of the debate on the definition of marriage. Another remedy proposed by the central campaign was limiting any musings of a majority

⁹³ Ian Brodie, "University of Western Ontario Personal Website," <http://publish.uwo.ca/~irbrodie/>, accessed 16 March 2006.

⁹⁴ Brian Laghi, "How Harper Fashioned His Lead," <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20060107.wxharper07/BNStory/specialNewTory2006/>, accessed 17 March 2006.

government. Two weeks prior to the 2004 election, Harper was buoyed with positive poll numbers that showed a possible victory.⁹⁵ After speculating a majority win, Conservative support dropped thereafter. In 2006, there were no such gaffes that could have potentially harmed a Conservative win.

Another important observation that was discussed was comparing strategies used in other countries that closely resembled the circumstances facing the Conservatives. Muttart identified four campaigns over the past half-century where conservative parties, once viewed as organizations of elites who benefited only themselves, had moved aggressively to capture the middle class and through them, power. Case studies used were Richard Nixon's 1968 American election, Margaret Thatcher's 1979 victory in Britain, the 1994 breakthrough of Newt Gingrich's Contract with America, and John Howard's 1996 sweep in Australia.⁹⁶

The latter was the most closely identifiable study for the Conservatives. Canada and Australia are large former British colonies with small populations, a steady influx of immigrants, and disconcerted Aboriginal communities. A decade ago, Australia had a strong economy that was lead by former Labour Party Finance Minister Paul Keating. Keating had won the leadership through a feud with his predecessor. Opponent John Howard was viewed as a right-wing mediocrity who presided over a crippled party who endured a decade of disarray and political disunity. Party pollsters had found that there were a growing number of disenchanted middle-class voters. Preparing for the campaign, Howard had cast away the ideological rhetoric. Having once favoured privatization of medical care, had transformed himself into the champion of Medicare. During the

⁹⁵ Ekos Research Associates, "Federal Election Poll #4 Final Countdown," <http://www.ekos.com/admin/articles/26June2004BackgroundDoc.pdf>, accessed 13 February 2006.

⁹⁶ *IBID.*, 16.

campaign, Howard pitched his ideas to middle-class voters by revealing the platform not all at once, but by one plank a day for the duration of the campaign.⁹⁷ Like Nixon, Thatcher, and Gingrich in three different races before him, Howard owed his victory to a large shift of working-class and middle-class voters. Additionally, Roman Catholic voters had migrated from liberal parties that had become their home toward conservative parties that had struggled to appeal to anyone except Protestants.

Also learning from their drawbacks in 2004, the Conservatives changed their advertising agencies that proved to be ineffective in developing the party's message to their targeted vote. Their first campaign featured witty but unresponsive television advertising, unable to flexibly respond to the Liberal attack ads. The Calgary firm, Watermark Advertising, was dismissed. Like the Liberals, the Conservatives decided to build a strong English-language advertising team out of Toronto, and a French-language team of agencies out of Montreal. Tested on focus groups, the new ads appeared bland but effective in delivering the central messages of the campaign.

Like a corporation that utilizes marketing data to identify its consumer base, the Conservatives in 2004 and 2006 extensively used polling data to target particular groups to maximize their vote share. The party found that a couple with one or two children was 50 percent more likely to vote Conservative, and that their chances increased with every child after three. As a corollary, survey data from the Canada Election Studies in 2004 did find that the Conservatives did particularly well amongst married couples.⁹⁸ The party shaped their message to the voting middle and working class, evidenced by promises of tax breaks for tools for tradespeople or lowering the Goods and Services

⁹⁷ Katharine Betts, "Patriotism, Immigration and the 1996 Australian Election," <http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/free/pnpv4n4/bettsit3.htm>, accessed 15 March 2006.

⁹⁸ Gidengil et al., "Back to the Future," 8.

Tax.⁹⁹ For the Conservatives, the new audiences they were trying to reach were to those couples that lived in suburban Canada, had young children, and owed a mortgage. They were also attempting to grasp the attention of voters who were tradespeople who were in their early thirties, who may not have voted before, but could be enticed by assurances of targeted tax relief for their work. Such utility of polling data created an efficient campaign and message, pitched to certain voting markets in exchange for their support.

In anticipation of Liberal attack advertisements on Conservative policy or possible accidental remarks by Conservative candidates, the campaign had devised a mechanism to ensure that what happened in 2004 did not occur again. In their campaign headquarters in Ottawa, the Conservatives had a separate telephone number for 'candidate support'. Nearly a dozen campaign staffers were assigned to advise candidates from early morning to late evening. Candidates were told to call the office whenever a news outlet requested an interview. A pre-interview conference call would then ensue, with candidates being coached over the telephone by campaign staff on matters of policy and media relations. This coaching device used by the party demonstrates the highly centralized nature of the campaign.

Further evidence of the Conservatives' management and business practices was the use of game theory, as purported by Flanagan.¹⁰⁰ He suggested that on any given issue, the Conservatives would stake out a position just a fraction to the right of the Liberals. Far enough to be distinct yet close enough to not be seen as extreme.¹⁰¹ Support for this can be found on several issues upon comparing Conservative and

⁹⁹ Conservative Party, *Stand Up For Canada*, 11-12.

¹⁰⁰ See Tom Flanagan, *Game Theory and Canadian Politics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

¹⁰¹ Jon Ivison, "Is Conservatism Dead?" *The National Post*, 24 September 2005, A22.

Liberals platform policies such as childcare. The Liberals were in favour of \$5 billion over five years to create regulated childcare space for children under the age of six. It was an initiative that was to follow the QUAD principle – Quality, Universally inclusive, Accessible, and Developmental.¹⁰² The Conservatives did not reject the notion of the state providing childcare. However, they proposed that all families be given a \$1,200 per year ‘Choice in Childcare Allowance’ for each child under six years old.¹⁰³ This income supplement gave parents the option of spending it on daycare or for parents and relatives who raise their children at home. Both support early childhood learning, but the Conservative option was slightly different by providing a choice to those who do not wish to raise their children by the state. It is slightly to the right of the Liberals because of the reference to choice away from the state, but close enough to the Liberals because it supports a program that could go towards state care of children.

Impacts of the 2004 and 2006 Campaigns on Perception

Having achieved its goal to win government, albeit a minority, what can account for the Conservative success? Did their success in part as a result of the change in their behaviour to become more of a brokerage party? Data from the 2004 and 2006 Canada Election Studies, as seen in Table 4.5, help reveal how opinions changed over this 19 month period and during the course of the campaign.

¹⁰² Liberal Party of Canada, *Securing Canada's Future*, 2006, 29.

¹⁰³ Conservative Party, *Stand Up For Canada*, 23.

**Table 4.5: Comparing Canadians' Views Across the 2004 and 2006 Campaigns
(Outside of Québec)**

	Late '04	Early '05	Late '05-'06
Harper positive rating	48.8 %	43.1%	46.7%
Martin positive rating	48.5	47.4	45.1
Layton positive rating	45.3	47.2	52.3
Conservative positive rating	47.3	46.5	47.3
Liberal positive rating	46.2	45.7	44.9
NDP positive rating	44.0	42.7	47.0
Harper is honest	56.1	53.5	54.1
Harper is competent	57.8	52.4	58.2
Martin is honest	48.6	46.0	44.7
Martin is competent	57.1	55.5	54.7
Conservatives are threat to social programs	44.3	41.3	42.4
Harper is just too extreme	49.1	53.5	48.3
Saliency of corruption	19.7	26.5	30.4
Corruption during Chrétien era	79.8	82.6	83.2
Angry about the scandal	76.7	78.8	80.5

Source: 2004 Canada Election Study and 2006 Campaign Surveys

Harper and the Conservatives did run a very well crafted campaign, and the survey data indicated that voters did re-evaluate both the party and the leader. This was clear when public perceptions during the final ten days of the campaign are compared to the first ten days. Harper's average rating increased almost four points (on a 0 to 100 scale), while Martin's rating dropped by two points. Upon comparing the last ten days of 2006 with the last ten days of 2004 campaign, a different picture presents itself. The Conservative leader ratings in the final days of the 2006 campaign were lower than they were in the closing days of 2004. On the other hand, leadership competence is different. Harper registered a net gain of six points in his perception of competence during the course of the 2006 campaign, but ended up being rated no better on average than he had been at the close of the 2004 campaign. In their first campaign, Harper and Martin were tied in popularity, but in 2006 Harper managed to pull slightly ahead of the Liberal leader. In terms of party ratings, the Conservatives registered no net improvement

compared to 2004. In fact, their ratings at the end of the 2006 campaign were exactly the same as they were at the end of 2004 campaign. We find here how little public sentiments towards leaders and parties shifted between the elections.¹⁰⁴

Did the Conservatives win have anything to do with their shift towards the centre? According to the Canada Election Studies data, this is only partly true. The number of Canadians who agreed with the statement that Harper is “just too extreme” declined by five points during the 2006 campaign. That modest shift may well have contributed to the party’s fortune, and if anything tells of the little impact of the Liberal attack ads had on public opinion. However, one in two Canadians remained concerned about Harper’s views at the end of the campaign. Moreover, the proportion of people rating Harper as ‘extreme’ at the end of the 2006 campaign was one point lower than it was in 2004. The number of people who felt that the Conservatives were a “threat to social programs” barely changed either. Over the duration of the campaign, it actually increased by one point. Additionally, the figure was two points higher in 2004. Here we find that the majority of Canadians remained unconvinced that Harper and his party were moderates.¹⁰⁵

Does the evidence suggest that the party failed to be a brokerage party? Although they did not convince the majority of Canadians of being a moderate party in either campaign, it does not mean that their behaviour was not shaped in a brokerage fashion. According to the survey data, the sponsorship scandal was the most salient issue that impacted voter choice.¹⁰⁶ Having identified this particular non-ideological issue, and

¹⁰⁴ André Blais et al., “Corruption Was the Tipping Point,” *The Globe and Mail*, 01 February 2006, A15.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

giving government clean up priority over all other issues demonstrates the quick-fix approach normally attributed to brokerage parties, who assess the state of the public mind at the moment and tailor their platform in response. Additionally, Harper's perception of competence did improve over the course of the campaign, which suggests that voters were not too afraid of his ability to take over government, away from the Liberals who were perceived as the most corrupt parties in comparison to the others. This was certainly this case in Québec, where Harper's image improved during the 2006 campaign amongst federalist voters.¹⁰⁷

An Analysis of the Internal Attributes of the Party

Through an investigation of the structure, strategy, and candidate profiles during the most active time for a party, we found that the Conservatives acted in a brokerage manner, particularly in its market-oriented behaviour, as well as its incorporation of various segments of society in order to develop a diverse voting base. In its market approach for both elections, the party used professional services often employed by corporations such as market/public opinion research firms and advertising agencies. In response to the poor reception of their ads in the 2004 campaign, the Conservatives were not hesitant to drop their Calgary based advertising firm, in favour of having firms operating out of Toronto for the English campaign, and working out of Montreal for ads in French Canada. Polling data and focus groups were regularly utilized to maximize the effectiveness of the party message. Additionally, similar to companies who use market research to identify potential markets for their products, the Conservatives employed

¹⁰⁷ André Blais et al., "Harper Can Thank Federalist Voters," *The Globe and Mail*, 08 February 2006, A17.

similar methods to reveal their target audiences to maximize their electoral support. Comparative research was also employed in order to determine winning conditions for parties who resemble the Conservatives and Canada. By using the electoral victories for America's Nixon and Gingrich, Britain's Thatcher, and Australia's Howard, the Conservatives quickly patched together an organizational and campaign framework to capture a larger swath of the electorate, namely families with children, and the working and middle-class. Whether this voting coalition, that transcends regions, be long lasting requires longitudinal research. Nonetheless, survey from the Canada Election Studies in 2004 and 2006 reveal that the Conservatives were successful in capturing the majority of this voting block.

As it was throughout the twentieth century, the Conservatives behaved similarly to the Liberals.¹⁰⁸ In the 2004 campaign, the leadership tours closely resembled each other by targeting Ontario voters almost exclusively because of the vast amount of votes that could swing and support either party. As well, the utility of game theory in the Conservative strategy further shows the narrowing of the behavioural gap between them and the Liberals. Here, the Conservatives would stake out a position just a fraction to the right of the Liberals, but be positioned far enough to be distinct yet close enough to not be seen as extreme.

As far as candidates were concerned, the Conservative team appeared national in scope for both elections. A deeper look at previous partisan affiliations reveals that the party drew mostly former Alliance members for its Western slate of candidates. The converse was evident in Atlantic Canada, where most Conservative candidates held Tory

¹⁰⁸ Hugh Thorburn, "Perspectives on the Structure and Dynamics of the Canadian Party System," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 150.

roots. As for vote-rich Ontario and Québec, slightly more candidates had previously run for the brokerage PC Party. In fear of appearing extreme as a result of rogue candidates who may speak contrary to the moderate image the Conservatives were trying to present, the central campaign office in Ottawa developed the 'candidate support' mechanism to ensure that there was a constant message, primarily driven by the leader.

An ideological party would not have cared greatly on numbers achieved in an election, but rather their primary aim is to advocate their policy positions. Brokerage parties, on the other hand, though not totally dismissive of platform issues, are largely concerned with winning the election to gain power. Similar to corporations who try to maximize their profits in a competitive market, brokerage parties will behave in manners that will maximize their votes to win an election. Since the merger in 2003, and culminating in the 2006 election, the Conservatives broadened its principles and policies to make it more appealing to a larger voting audience, namely the middle and working class. Building on its previous support by families, social conservatives, fiscal conservatives, and rural voters, the Conservatives hoped to win a large enough share of the vote to capture government. Moreover, the Harper's Conservatives were also positioning itself to fully capitalize on the degenerating Liberal Party who was marred with scandal. Seizing this political opportunity to present itself as a moderate and capable government in waiting, the Party's highly centralized, leader oriented campaign drove a professional campaign vehicle to present its broadened platform. The act of promoting government accountability to the top of its agenda, in response to the salient sponsorship scandal issue, while downplaying or neglecting divisive issues demonstrates a flexible approach evident in brokerage parties. Although survey results of the 2006

Canada Election Study found that voters were not fully convinced that the Conservatives were not an extreme party, the saliency of the sponsorship scandal was enough for voters to give a competent looking party an opportunity to govern. How Harper's Conservatives govern in the post-2006 election will largely shape the opinion of voters of whether they perceive the new government as a moderate and mainstream party that is able to bridge the many societal cleavages in a fragmented Canada.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, Canada's major political parties have been associated with the brokerage model. These accommodating parties have long been considered essential to representative and responsible government. The party with the greatest number of Members of Parliament elected to the House of Commons forms the government and is expected to provide policy leadership in the form of legislation. In order to gain power for the opportunity to exercise this leadership function, brokerage parties act as profit-seeking entrepreneurs who try to maximize their vote.¹ It is this desire to maximize support that shapes the behaviour of brokerage parties to seek policies that cater to the majority of the voting public.

If parties embrace policy positions that fall outside of that mainstream, they risk losing large numbers of support, and therefore power. Does this mean that brokerage parties operate without principle, which exist to simply capture power from the competition? Although they may be driven to win elections, brokerage parties can also be agents of reconciliation in a country where national unity is fragile. In order to accommodate and aggregate the diversity of interests, brokerage parties need the latitude and flexibility to perform this function. Although the importance of brokerage parties seems necessary in a political society such as Canada, there is a growing unease about their capacity to successfully perform the various integrative functions.

Evidence does suggest that a growing number of Canadian voters are dissatisfied with brokerage party behaviour. Critics are quick to point out that the 'quick-fix'

¹ Paul G. Thomas, "Parties and Regional Representation," *Representation, Integration, and Political Parties in Canada*, edited by Herman Bakvis, (Toronto: Dundurn, 1991), 192-192.

approach discourages long term planning.² Another criticism of brokerage politics includes the issue of whether political parties offer voters any real choice. It is argued that the main parties have avoided principled stances, and as a result most elections have settled little in terms of policy terms.³ Furthermore, critics note the influence of interest groups has risen since the 1960s. These new avenues for citizen participation grew as a result of decreasing satisfaction among groups who felt their demands were not fully met by political parties. With a change in political culture and expectations, public confidence, deference and trust towards political elites have declined.⁴ Consequently, brokerage parties were not fully able to achieve a national consensus that would normally be expected of them.

The emergence of Reform/Alliance and the Bloc Québécois presented a direct challenge to the brokerage tradition.⁵ Disenchanted with 'politics as usual', Reform/Alliance sought political change through populist measures, advocated moral traditionalism, and argued for a dramatic reduction in the role of government intervention in the lives of individuals.⁶ Although the Bloc was flexible in some areas of public policy, it remains uncompromising on the issue of Québec. The Bloc's *raison d'être* is advocating Québec interests and the province's right to secede from the Canadian federation.⁷ These ideological parties made it difficult for brokerage politics to function

² Harold Clarke et al., "Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring," *Party Politics in Canada, 8th Edition*, edited by Hugh Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn, (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2001), 399.

³ Thomas, 193.

⁴ See Neil Nevitte, *The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective*, (Petersborough: Broadview, 1996).

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ See David Laycock, *The New Right and Democracy in Canada: Understanding Reform and the Canadian Alliance*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁷ William Cross and Lisa Young, "Policy Attitudes of Part Members in Canada: Evidence of Ideological Parties," *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35:4 (December 2002), 862.

as unifying and accommodating agents. In the case of the Progressive Conservative Party, the existence of Reform/Alliance and the Bloc rendered the Tories immobile on the economic and regional policy dimensions. The PCs were no longer able to be a viable alternative to the Liberals, since a large number of their traditional support and financial base were stripped away by Reform/Alliance and the Bloc.

The limitation of ideological parties is their weakness in accommodating the multitude of interests in a country as large and diverse as Canada. For example, the salient issue of provincial rights is a case that a brokerage party could accommodate. Brokerage parties would normally have members or partisans who held diverse opinions over provincial rights. As a result, the leadership would broker or accommodate these divergent points of views. The party's pressure to move to the centre on this issue would therefore weaken its saliency. Ideological parties, on the other hand, would not be able to easily manage the issue of provincial rights. If an ideological party is regional in character and exists to advocate primarily for its territory, such as Reform or the Bloc, then accommodating a regional interest for the sake of national unity becomes problematic.

In a country divided along linguistic, ethnic, religious, region and gender lines, moving away from the brokerage tradition can be a cause for concern.⁸ Although brokerage politics has its fair share of criticism, when practised creatively, the search for accommodation can produce harmony and progress in a diverse society. By studying the transformation of Reform, into the Alliance, and its eventual merger with the PCs, the thesis found that many of Reform's fringe and unpopular policies were dropped incrementally, or at least curbed, in favour of broader-based principles. Even though the

⁸ *Ibid.*, 879.

PC Party represented few voters and held fewer seats in Parliament, it was an agency of change and moderator which helped to bring the Alliance closer to the political centre. As Chapter Four found, the negotiations between the PC and Alliance elites revealed the type of deal making normally found in a brokerage party. Likewise, the majority of the Conservative Party's principles were based on the old Tory Constitution. Looking at the Conservative Party internal campaign structure and conduct, their message was professional and market driven. More importantly, the Conservative's behaviour during the 2004 and 2006 elections was shaped with the intention of attracting a larger share of voters. Because of this motivation to win, the Conservative platform and message was constructed in a way to accommodate several segments of society. Ideological parties, on the other hand, are not as concerned of numbers, but of policy advocacy. By limiting themselves to single issues, with no intention for flexibility, ideological parties fail to consider the complexity of the Canadian electorate who are divided on many issues. With the evidence and data available, this thesis found that the new Conservative Party, a marriage between the Tories and Reform/Alliance, exhibits the brokerage model of practicing politics.

Limitations of the Research

It would be naïve to claim that the study was whole and complete. This thesis is essentially a snapshot of the conservative movement between the meltdown of the Progressive Conservative Party in 1993 through to the recent Conservative Party's win in the 2006 election. Following the Reform/Alliance and the Tories throughout the 1990s, the thesis finds the policy divide between these two parties as too great to consider co-operation between the two parties. However, leadership change and the desire to seek a

greater number of votes pressured the Reform/Alliance and PCs to merge into the Conservative Party of Canada. By examining the external and internal attributes during and between the 2004 and 2006 elections, the thesis finds that the Conservatives now behave as a brokerage party. However, the analysis of the Conservative Party does not have an equivalent data set that investigates the opinions of their partisans. Party members still play an important role in parties. As such, it would be valuable to consider the motivation to become a Conservative member, attitudinal structure of partisans, and determine the issue coherence amongst partisans. By looking at the attitudes of party members, such an analysis would complement the research conducted in this thesis, which considered the external behaviour and campaign structure of the Conservatives.

It would also be worthwhile contrast the Liberal Party with the new Conservative Party in a similar comparative method. The Liberals have traditionally been known as a brokerage party. How do the external attributes measure between the Grits and Conservatives? How were the two major parties internally organized during the 2006 campaign? For greater analytical depth, if recent data was available similar to the Cross and Young (2002) study of party member attitudes, how do the Liberals and Conservatives compare? Answering these questions would add depth to the research.

Moreover, studying the Conservatives longitudinally during and in between elections would be valuable to determine if they remain a brokerage party or if this type of behaviour was merely short term. Will Stephen Harper be successful in bridging the divide between the various segments of society? It will be the role of the leader of the Conservatives to keep the new party united. At the same time Harper will have to govern

a diverse country through brokerage means, if he wants to win a majority government in the next federal election.

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APPENDIX ONE
Conservative Party of Canada Constitution

2. Principles

- 2.1 The Conservative Party of Canada is founded on and will be guided in its policy formation by the following principles.
- 2.1.1 A belief in a balance between fiscal responsibility, progressive social policy and individual rights and responsibilities.
- 2.1.2 The goals of building a national coalition of people who share these beliefs and who reflect the regional, cultural and socio-economic diversity of Canada.
- 2.1.3 The goal of developing this coalition, embracing our differences and respecting our traditions, yet honouring a concept of Canada as the greater sum of strong parts.
- 2.1.4 The Conservative Party of Canada will operate in a manner accountable and responsive to its members.
- 2.1.5 A belief in loyalty to a sovereign and united Canada in accordance with the Constitution of Canada, the supremacy of democratic parliamentary institutions and the rule of law.
- 2.1.6 A belief in the equality of all Canadians.
- 2.1.7 A belief in the freedom of the individual, including freedom of speech, worship and assembly.
- 2.1.8 A belief in our constitutional monarchy, the institutions of Parliament and the democratic process.

- 2.1.9 A belief in the federal system of government as the best expression of the diversity of our country, and in the desirability of strong and territorial governments.
- 2.1.10 A belief that English and French have equality of status, and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada.
- 2.1.11 A belief that the best guarantors of the prosperity and well-being of the People of Canada are:
- 2.1.11.1 The freedom of individual Canadians to pursue their enlightened and legitimate self-interest within a competitive economy;
 - 2.1.11.2 The freedom of individual Canadians to enjoy the fruits of their labour to the greatest possible extent;
 - 2.1.11.3 The right to own property.
- 2.1.12 A belief that a responsible government must be fiscally prudent and should limited to those responsibilities which cannot be discharged reasonably by the individual or others.
- 2.1.13 A belief that it is the responsibility of individuals to provide for themselves, their families and their dependants, while recognizing that government must respond to those who require assistance and compassion.
- 2.1.14 A belief that the purpose of Canada as a nation state and its government, guided by reflective and prudent leadership, is to create a climate wherein individual initiative is rewarded, excellence is pursued, security and privacy of the individual is provided and prosperity is guaranteed by a free competitive market economy.

- 2.1.15 A belief that the quality of the environment is a vital part of our heritage to be protected by each generation for the next.
- 2.1.16 A belief that Canada should accept its obligations among the nations of the world.
- 2.1.17 A belief that good and responsible government is attentive to the people it represents and has representatives who at times conduct themselves in an ethical manner and display integrity, honesty, and concern for the best interest for all.
- 2.1.18 A belief that all Canadians should have reasonable access to quality health care regardless of their ability to pay.
- 2.1.19 A belief that the greatest potential for achieving social and economic objectives is under a global trading regime that is free and fair.

APPENDIX TWO
Questions Used in Factorial Analysis

Which ONE of the following best reflects your view?

1. Members of parliament should reflect the views of their constituents.
2. MPs should reflect the views of local party members.
3. MPs should reflect the views of party policy conventions.
4. MPs should reflect the direction established by the party leader.
5. MPs should vote as their conscience dictates.

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following:

1. The government must do more to reduce the income gap between rich and poor Canadians.
2. We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country.
3. Overall, free trade with the United States has been good for Canada.
4. Health care user fees should be instituted as a cost-control measure.
5. Minority groups need special rights.
6. More should be done to protect Canadian business from foreign competition.
7. Québec has the right to separate no matter what the rest of Canada says.
8. Employment insurance should be harder to collect than it is.
9. The government should leave it entirely to the private sector to create jobs.
10. Newer lifestyles are contributing to the breakdown of our society.
11. Universities should make up revenue shortfalls by raising tuition fees.
12. Provincial governments should have more power than they do.
13. If people are willing to pay the price, they should be allowed to use private medical clinics.

14. Immigrants make an important contribution to this country.
15. International trade creates more jobs in Canada than it destroys.
16. We have gone too far in pushing bilingualism in this country.
17. We could probably solve most of our big national problems if decisions could be brought back to people at the grassroots.

We are interested in knowing your views about how the federal government should allocate its budgetary surplus. Please rank the following alternative in order of priority from the highest priority (1) to the lowest priority (3):

Increase spending on social programmes.

Please indicate which of the following statements comes closest to your own opinion:

1. All provinces should be treated equally, with none receiving special powers OR Québec should be recognized as a distinct society.
2. If the courts say that a law conflicts with the Canadian Charter of Rights, who should have the final say - the courts, because they are in the best position to protect individual rights OR the government because they are the representatives of the people?
3. The feminist movement encourages women to be independent and stand up for themselves OR to be selfish and think only of themselves?