



THE CANADIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP

2004 ANNUAL REPORT

This report provides an overview of the CSPG's programs and activities for the period between January 2004 and February 2005.

MOVING THE ORGANIZATION AHEAD

2004 was an active 26th year for the Canadian Study of Parliament Group. Key initiatives included holding a major conference in February, delivering three Parliamentary Business Seminars, producing and launching a CD-Rom of the Group's complete publications, establishing the J.R. Mallory Research Grant for the Study of Parliament, organizing the second annual Student Essay Award, and revitalizing the Speaking Tour program.

We also welcomed five new members to our Board of Directors, all of whom have brought fresh perspectives and energy to our activities. Given that the CSPG relies overwhelmingly on volunteers, the accomplishments of the Group are noteworthy.

An updated constitution (revised in 2002), defined responsibilities for individual Board members, enhanced support from the House of Commons, and a mid-year strategic planning session have all led to improved planning and implementation of the Group's activities. As we look ahead, the CSPG will continue to seek ways of marshalling our resources as effectively as possible, both individually and in partnership with complementary organizations.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Support from the House of Commons

The CSPG is grateful for the continued support of the House of Commons, both in terms of financial and human resources. Without it, we could not continue. Since 2003, the House has assigned the following part-time support: a program officer's time to continue managing logistics, administrative and financial activities; an administrative assistant's time to help with events and mail-outs; and a smaller proportion of a procedural clerk's time to assist on specific projects.

Given the increased activities of the Group over the past two years, along with its positive financial status, the Group decided to contribute one-half of the salary of our administrative assistant, Sophie Descary, who is employed by the Table Research Branch of the House of Commons. This arrangement commenced during the final quarter of 2004. Sophie has provided invaluable support to the CSPG. The Group will re-evaluate these support requirements during 2005.

Finances

Financial statements for the Group are presented with this report. As with previous years, the Group continues to operate within budget. The annual grant from the House of Commons, coupled with revenue derived from the Parliamentary Business Seminars, has allowed the Group to support additional initiatives. This includes both programming (e.g., Student Essay

Award, Mallory Research Grant) and corporate investments (e.g., part-time salary support to a House of Commons employee, increased advertising in the *Hill Times*, Web site investments).

Membership and Communications

Our membership, presently at 421 as of February 2005, remains healthy.

Communications activities this year focused on updating the logo and other communications materials, in order to present a more professional and polished public image for the CSPG. To date, a new logo design by Alterego Communications has been approved by the Board. Ultimately, the new design will be incorporated into the CSPG brochure, Web site and other material such as advertisements and letterhead.

In 2003, the CSPG redesigned its Web site, which continues to be one of its primary communications devices. Statistics provided by the Group's internet service provider indicate that there are approximately 140 daily visits to the CSPG Web site.

Communications to participants registered in the Parliamentary Business Seminars are now carried principally by email. Efforts are underway to have email as the principal means of communicating with our membership.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

CD-Rom of CSPG Publications

In November of 2004, the CSPG formally launched a CD-Rom entitled *Parliaments in Practice*, consolidating all of the Group's available research studies, conference reports and speeches since its establishment in 1978. These approximately 50 publications represent a significant wealth of knowledge on parliamentary government, most of which remained unavailable to the public. The BMO Financial Group generously supported the project. 5000 copies of the CD-Rom were produced, and have thus far been distributed to Parliamentarians and their staff, legislative officials, academics and teachers, as well as university and depository libraries across Canada.

Parliamentary Perspectives

In May, the Group published an essay by André Blais entitled "Electoral System Reform: What are the options?" in its occasional paper series. Dr. Blais presented this paper at the CSPG's 2004 conference on "Electoral Reform and its Parliamentary Consequences" (as described below). A separate document was published summarizing the proceedings of the conference.

National Student Essay Competition

Following the successful launch in 2003 of the essay competition for undergraduate and graduate students across Canada, a second competition was organized for 2004. Students were once again invited to submit an essay addressing parliament, legislatures or legislators in either English or French. For the 2004 competition, the selection committee received a total of 27 entries by the deadline of December 10, 2004. As before, the winner is selected the following February.

J.R. Mallory Research Grant

The James R. Mallory Research Grant for the Study of Parliament was established, and named in honour of the late distinguished scholar of Canadian political institutions. Professor Mallory was a member of the Department of Political Science at McGill University as well as a founder, former president and long-time member of the CSPG. His text, *The Structure of Canadian Government*, is still consulted by students of Canadian government.

The grant is worth \$10,000, of which \$4000 is paid upon selection, \$3500 upon completion of the proposed project, and \$2500 made available for travel and research expenses. The selection committee – which includes Charles Mallory, son of Professor J.R. Mallory – received 20 applications by the deadline of February 1, 2005. The winner is selected by March.

Publication of French Version of Millennium Conference Proceedings

Réforme de la démocratie parlementaire, edited by Board members F. Leslie Seidle and David C. Docherty, was published in 2004. It originated in the conference sponsored by the CSPG in June 2000 and provides analyses of reforms to parliamentary institutions and governance in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The authors demonstrate how parliamentary governments have combined stability with the capacity to adapt to change. The chapters are grouped under the themes of representation, responsiveness and multi-level governance.

The chapter authors are: Jonathan Boston (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), Paul Chartrand (consultant, Victoria, British Columbia), Stéphane Dion (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Canada), David Docherty (Wilfrid Laurier University), Mason Durie (Massey University), Robert Hazell (University College London), Christina Murray (University of Cape Town), Cheryl Saunders (University of Melbourne), Leslie Seidle (Elections Canada), Jennifer Smith (Dalhousie University), and Lord Wakeham (former Chairman of the Royal Commission on House of Lords Reform).

The book is sold by the CSPG at \$22.95.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

2004 Annual Conference

On February 27, 2004, the Group held a major conference in Ottawa on the subject of “Electoral Reform and its Parliamentary Consequences”. It focused on the electoral-system reform efforts now underway in some of the provinces, and the impact that reform can be expected to have on the parliamentary system.

Professor André Blais, Department of Political Science, Université de Montréal, delivered the opening address on “Electoral System Reform: What are the options?” Next was a panel on electoral reform in the provinces, chaired by Bernard Colas, Vice-President of the Law Commission of Canada. Panelists included Hon. Norman Carruthers, Commissioner, Prince Edward Island Commission on Electoral Reform; Professor R. Kenneth Carty, Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia and research director of B.C.s People’s Electoral Commission; Professor William Cross, Department of Political Science and Centre for Canadian Studies, Mount Allison University, and research director of New Brunswick’s Electoral Commission; André Fortier, Secrétaire adjoint, Secrétariat à la réforme des institutions démocratiques, Gouvernement du Québec; and Professor Matthew Mendelsohn, Deputy Minister, Democratic Renewal Office, Government of Ontario. The panel participants updated the conference on the electoral reform efforts in British Columbia, New Brunswick, PEI, and Ontario.

The Hon. Bernard Lord, Premier of New Brunswick, served as the keynote speaker during lunch. Premier Lord outlined his concerns about the democratic deficit and the need to re-examine some foundations of the political system, in particular, the electoral system.

The panel in the afternoon addressed the topic of the “Consequences of Electoral Reform and Minority Government”. Chaired by Professor Louis Massicotte, Department of Political Science, Université de Montréal, the panel included the following participants: Professor Peter Aucoin, Eric Denis Memorial Professor of Government, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie

University; Professor Cristine de Clercy, Department of Political Studies, University of Saskatchewan; Professor Ailsa Henderson, Department of Political Science, Wilfrid Laurier University, and Professor Jennifer Smith, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University. The panelists talked about minority and coalition governments in Canada; the likelihood of either one or both in the wake of the adoption of a system of proportional representation; and the possibility of an increased role for the head of state, should minority and/or coalition governments become more common.

Parliamentary Business Seminars

The CSPG has organized seminars on topical issues relating to the Canadian Parliament and parliamentary process for parliamentary relations officers and others since January 1997. In 2002, a more systemic approach was adopted, with the development of a series of three sessions per year entitled "Parliamentary Business Seminars." 2003-2004 marked the second series of Parliamentary Business Seminars, and a third series was offered in 2004-2005.

The seminars, held on Parliament Hill, consist of half-day sessions divided into two seminars, each with two or three presentations followed by a question period. In addition, there is a section at the end of the seminar for an update and report on recent parliamentary developments. The fees are \$150 per seminar, or \$450 for the series of three seminars (with a free CSPG membership). A continental-style breakfast and buffet lunch are included.

Attendance at the Parliamentary Business Seminars has remained reasonably consistent – approximately 75 to 100 persons attend each of the sessions. For the 2004-2005 series, 60 people subscribed to the entire series.

The 2003-2004 series began on November 12, 2003, with a first session on "Parliamentary Returns: Written Questions, Petitions etc."; the second session addressed the "House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates."

The second seminar of the 2003-2004 series was held on January 20, 2004. The first session was on "Cabinet Directives." Jean-Mark Keyes of the Department of Justice was the presenter, and discussed generally the legal nature of cabinet directives, and specifically the Cabinet Directive on Law Making. The second session was on "Public Servants before Parliamentary Committees"; the panel for this session consisted of Miriam Burke (House of Commons committee clerk), Dan Charbonneau (Senate committee clerk), Ron Wall (PCO, Government House Leader's Office), and Lawanda Willar (Health Canada).

The third seminar was held on April 7, 2004, and addressed "Parliament: Theory and Practice." The first session (on theory) consisted of three panelists: Luc Juillet, Assistant Professor, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa; Jonathan Malloy, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Carleton University; and Jack Stilborn, Research Officer, Political and Social Affairs Division, Library of Parliament. The second session (on practice) involved three presenters: Thomas Hall, Committee Clerk, Committees Directorate, House of Commons; Till Heyde, Committee Clerk, Committees Directorate, The Senate of Canada; and Matthew Lynch, Privy Council Officer, Legislation and House Planning/Counsel, Privy Council Office.

The 2004-2005 series of Parliamentary Business Seminars began on Wednesday, November 10, 2004 and was entitled "Looking Ahead to a Minority Parliament." The first session – on "The Constitutional Framework in a Minority Government – Accountability and Responsibility" – consisted of presentations by James Ross Hurley, former Constitutional Advisor in the Privy Council Office, 1975 – 2001, and Heather MacIvor, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Windsor. The second session – on "The House of Commons and its Committees in a Minority Government – Possibilities and Probabilities" – consisted of Peter

Dobell, Founding Director of the Parliamentary Centre, and David Gussow, former Deputy Principal Clerk of the House of Commons.

The second and third offerings of the 2004-2005 Parliamentary Business Seminars were scheduled for January 19, 2005 on "Officers of Parliament," and April 27, 2005 (re-scheduled from May 11, 2005) on "Who Does What: Organizing the Work of the Two Chambers and their Committees."

The Parliamentary Business Seminars continue to fill a need that is not otherwise met. They help fulfill the mandate of the CSPG to explain and inform about Parliament, and assist in raising the profile of the organization. They continue to be a successful initiative of the CSPG, and are an important source of revenue for the Group.

PARTNERSHIPS AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Speaking Tour

The Speaking Tour program, established in 1988, is a joint initiative of the CSPG and the Canadian Clerks-at-the-Table Association. The CSPG plays a liaison role in arranging for federal and provincial Clerks to speak to students at Canadian universities about the role of Parliament and the Westminster model of government.

In June 2004, the President of the CSPG sent a letter to the President of the Clerks-at-the-Table Association, recommending two changes to the traditional *modus operendi*: first, that the annual letter to universities be sent earlier in the year (May instead of the fall) to give professors more time to incorporate speakers in their course outlines; and second, that the CSPG secretariat assume responsibility for identifying an appropriate speaker for each request. Both recommendations were accepted by the Clerks at their annual general meeting in August 2004.

Due to the timing of the Clerks' conference, the 2004-2005 call letters were sent in September. It elicited fourteen requests, which were relayed to the appropriate legislatures. A total of six presentations have been made to date, while a further four are planned to take place before the end of the academic year in April. The remaining requests could not be filled due to problems of timing or availability.

A call letter for the 2005-2006 academic year is planned for May 2005. It is hoped that the spring timing will increase the take-up on the program and resolve scheduling difficulties.

Involvement in MPs' Orientation

Following the June 2004 election, the House of Commons organized two orientation sessions for newly-elected Members of Parliament. These events are designed to familiarize MPs with the administrative and procedural resources available to help them carry out their new responsibilities.

The CSPG sponsored the luncheon that followed the second orientation session, held on September 29, 2004. The morning's agenda focused on preparing new MPs to participate in the work of the Chamber and committees. CSPG arranged for James Mitchell, of Sussex Circle, to deliver the keynote address at the luncheon that followed the session. Mr. Mitchell's speech, now available on the CSPG's Web site, focused on the relationship between parliament and the political executive, with particular emphasis on the work of MPs in parliamentary committees.

Co-hosted Breakfast Panel Discussion

On February 10, 2005, the Canadian Study of Parliament Group and the Government Relations Institute of Canada co-hosted a breakfast and panel discussion for parliamentarians

entitled "Lobbying and You: The New Reality in Ottawa". The panellists were James Rajotte, M.P, Leo Duguay, Senior Vice-President of Hill and Knowlton Canada (a Tier 1 lobbyist) and Eve Elman, Director of Government Relations for the Canadian Medical Association (a Tier 2 lobbyist). Dianne Brydon moderated the panel. Those Senators and Members of Parliament who attended the breakfast found it an interesting and informative exchange of views.

Teacher's Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

Launched by the Speaker of the House of Commons in 1996, the Teachers' Institute is a professional development program that brings 100 teachers from across Canada to Parliament Hill for a one week "behind the scenes" seminar designed to provide teachers with a sound understanding of Canada's parliamentary system. As in previous years, the Group provided a complimentary one-year membership to all educators attending the Teacher's Institute in 2004. Copies of the Group's CD-Rom were distributed as gifts at the closing dinner of the program and will be mailed to the 600 alumni from past Institutes.

Involvement in Canadian Political Science Association Meetings

The CSPG was pleased to organize and sponsor a roundtable on the contributions of John Courtney and David Smith at the annual Canadian Political Science Association meetings held at the University of Manitoba this past June. Professors Courtney and Smith both retired from long and distinguished careers in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Saskatchewan in 2004. Both scholars have made important contributions to the study of Canadian parliament and politics. Participants in the roundtable included CSPG Board members Bill Cross, David Docherty and Leslie Seidle as well as Professors David Stewart and Paul Thomas from the University of Manitoba. The event drew a standing room only crowd and was followed by a reception.

SPECIAL THANKS

The CSPG relies heavily on the support of staff in the Table Research Branch of the House of Commons. The following individuals have played invaluable roles in supporting the Group's activities over the past year: JoAnne Cartwright (CSPG Executive Secretary), Sophie Descary (Administrative Assistant), Jean-Francois Lafleur (Procedural Clerk), Guillaume LaPerrière (Procedural Clerk) and Maureen Quirouet (Project Officer). Special thanks go to JoAnne, whose indispensable energy and commitment touch upon all aspects of the Group's work.

Thank you to all the members of the Board who, in a volunteer capacity, dedicate considerable time and energy in fulfilling the goals of the CSPG. On behalf of the Group, I would like to sincerely thank both Charles Robert and Tranquillo Marrocco, departing Board members, for their long-time service and unfailing wisdom they have brought to the organization.

Jeff Heynen
President
March 11, 2005