



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

This report provides an overview of the programs and activities of the Canadian Study of Parliament Group for the period between January 2006 and February 2007.

2006 HIGHLIGHTS

There are many highlights in what proved to be another productive year for the CSPG. These include holding our annual conference in Winnipeg, organizing three successful Parliamentary Business Seminars, publishing the results of our first James R. Mallory Research Grant award, and launching a new series of research studies on provincial and territorial legislatures.

The Group also worked hard to streamline many of our administrative and financial practices, from enhancing Web site interactivity to modernizing accounting systems.

The CSPG is thankful for the strong support it receives from its members and partners, whose contributions we note below.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Support from the House of Commons

The House of Commons, through the Table Research Branch, continues to play a critical role in supporting the work of the Group through the provision of an annual financial contribution, in kind-support and – most importantly – staff assistance. For most of 2006, we relied heavily on Sophie Descary, our Administrative Assistant, who ably kept our various projects on schedule. We also welcomed Nancy Hall, a Procedural Clerk with 15 years of experience with the House of Commons, as Executive Secretary to the Group.

An imminent priority for the Group is to finalize a formal contract with the House of Commons providing further predictability in our long-standing relationship.

Finances

An important accomplishment this past year was the automation of our financial accounting process. We also took the opportunity to move from a cash basis to an accrual basis accounting system. With these changes, the Group decided to perform a financial audit to confirm that the transfer was completed successfully and that the books were in order. The Chartered Accountants firm, Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP, completed the audit. Our financial situation remains healthy and all of our financial controls are in place and performing to our expectations.

In addition to the leadership of our Treasurer, Lyne Jutras, we sincerely thank JoAnne Cartwright for her help with the accounting transition, her professionalism and her rigor. We also recognize Gilles Larocque's contribution through the process. His accounting expertise

and knowledge to proceed with the automation of our accounting process proved key to moving forward with the implementation of the new system.

Membership and Communications

Our membership is presently at 566, as of March 2007.

The CSPG Web site remains our most crucial platform for broadly marketing the Group's activities and publications. It also serves as a communications gateway to our membership. As such, efforts of the Communications committee in 2006 were largely focused on designing and streamlining an e-mail event notification program.

In connection with that program, a privacy statement for our Web site was drafted by the committee and approved by the Board. Additionally, in the event that the Group decides to move to online fee payments for events and memberships down the road, the capacity for a credit card payment system was also programmed into our system.

The committee tied up a few loose ends this year with respect to our updated communications materials, such as a redesigned cover for our *Parliamentary Perspectives* papers.

The *Events Promotion Handbook* which was compiled by a Communications sub-committee (headed by former board member Christine Trauttsmandorff, with Peggy Morgan, Till Heyde, Sophie Descary and Kerry Rodier) was completed. The aim of the handbook is to streamline events organization, and it has already proved to be an invaluable time-saving tool. Once it is updated this spring, it will be available on a more general basis for all Board members.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

CPSG will shortly be publishing, as part of the *Parliamentary Perspectives* series, an original paper by Bruce Hicks on bilingualism in the House of Commons. Coming on the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the landmark Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, this is a timely look at the progress of bilingualism in Parliament. The paper combines a review of changes in French language and translation services in the Commons and reports the results of a recent survey of MPs and parliamentary candidates on questions of language use in the House.

The CPSG has also launched a major new project on provincial and territorial legislatures. The premise is that little up-to-date, authoritative yet non-technical literature is available on many of Canada's parliamentary institutions for students, journalists or the public. This project aims to fill that gap. Eventually we hope to make available papers on all 13 provincial and territorial legislatures, which will provide basic information on legislative structures and operations plus analysis - including, where appropriate, criticism - of the key features of each House. Following a widely circulated call for proposals, the Board has commissioned the first two papers in the series, on the Nova Scotia House of Assembly and Manitoba Legislative Assembly. These papers will be presented at the special session organized by CPSG at the May-June meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association in Saskatoon.

National Student Essay Competition

The essay competition, for undergraduate and graduate students across Canada, entered its fourth annual competition in 2006. Students were once again invited to submit an essay addressing parliament, legislatures or legislators in either English or French. For the 2006 competition, the selection committee received a total of 24 entries. As before, the winners were selected in February. This year's selection committee was composed of Lisa Young (University

of Calgary), Jonathan Malloy (Carleton University), David Docherty, (Wilfrid Laurier University) and Luc Fortin (House of Commons).

Chris Berube of the University of Toronto was selected for the undergraduate award for his paper "Legislative Accountability". Our graduate prize winner was Wendy Hepburn of Carleton University for her paper "A Question of Confidence: Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Estimates of the Government of Canada in Theory and Practice". The winners, each receive a prize of \$1000, and will be honoured at the luncheon coinciding with our Annual General Meeting. Their work will also appear on our Web site.

James R. Mallory Research Grant

The CSPG was pleased to publish the research of Professor Don Desserud (University of New Brunswick, Saint John campus), the first Mallory Grant recipient. His work was entitled "The Confidence Convention under the Canadian Parliamentary System" and provides a fascinating glimpse into the travails of the minority government under former Prime Minister Paul Martin.

The Group also launched the second iteration of the James R. Mallory Research Grant for the Study of Parliament. The award, consisting of a \$10,000 grant, is named in honour of James R. Mallory, a distinguished member of the Department of Political Science at McGill University as well as a founder, former president and long-time member of the CSPG.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

2006 December Conference in Winnipeg

In December, the Group held a one day conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the topic of Independent Officers of the Legislature. In a first for CSPG, the Group was granted permission to use the beautiful and historic Manitoba Legislative Assembly Chamber as the setting for the business sessions.

The conference – under the spirited leadership of Patricia Chaychuk – explored the growing relationship between independent Legislative Assembly Officers and citizens, and the resulting implications for parliamentary government and democracy.

Panel I dealt with the topic of keeping public officials accountable and included observations from panelists Elwin Hermanson, Chair of the Saskatchewan Public Accounts Committee; Carol Bellringer, Auditor General of Manitoba; and Dr. David Smith, Professor Emeritus, University of Saskatchewan.

Protecting citizens was the theme explored in Panel II. Panellists included Dr. Ken Gibbons, University of Winnipeg; Irene A. Hamilton, Manitoba Ombudsman, and Dr. Lori Turnbull, Dalhousie University.

The final panel delved into the subject of furthering democratic rights. Panellists included Dr. Louis Massicotte from the Université de Montréal / American University; and Dr. John C. Courtney, University of Saskatchewan.

The keynote address was delivered by Professor Paul G. Thomas, Duff Roblin Professor of Government, University of Manitoba, on the subject of the emerging world of accountability and ethics: parliamentary scrutiny and redress of grievances.

Conference participants included academics, practitioners, politicians and students, with representation from every province across the country. Seventy-two percent of participants were first time attendees to a CSPG event, demonstrating that regional conferences can be an effective way of reaching out to a wider audience.

Parliamentary Business Seminars

Each year, the CSPG organizes three seminars on topical issues relating to the Canadian Parliament for parliamentary relations officers and others. These half-day seminars are held on Parliament Hill, and are usually structured as two separate discussion panels related to the business of Parliament. In addition, there is a section at the end of the seminar for an update and report on recent parliamentary developments.

Feedback from attendees is systematically collected at each seminar, and continues to be extremely positive. This feedback is also a source of valuable suggestions for future seminar topics which are used for seminar planning. Attendance at the seminars continues to steadily rise, averaging just over 130 participants per seminar in 2006. Panel topics and the presenters who made the 2006 seminar program possible are listed below:

APRIL 19, 2006 SEMINAR

Panel I - Legislating: From Ideas to Acts - I

Hon. Joe Jordan, Senior Consultant, Capital Hill Group;
Edgar Schmidt, Senior Counsel, Headquarters Legislation Section, Justice Canada; and
Ron Wall, Director, Parliamentary Operations, Parliamentary Affairs, Privy Council Office.

Panel II - Legislating: From Ideas to Acts - II

Peter Bernhardt, Legal Council, Committees Directorate, The Senate of Canada;
Heather Lank, Principal Clerk, Committees Directorate, The Senate of Canada; and
Michael Lukyniuk, Principal Clerk, Legislative Services, House of Commons.

NOVEMBER 15, 2006 SEMINAR

Panel I - How Parliamentary Committees Really Work

Miriam Burke, Procedural Clerk, Committees Directorate, House of Commons;
Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral, former Parliamentarian; and
Lawanda Willar, A/Director, Cabinet and Parliamentary Affairs, Health Canada

Panel II - Senate Reform: What Difference will it Make?

Gary O'Brien, Retired Deputy Clerk, the Senate of Canada;
F. Leslie Seidle, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Research on Public Policy; and
Jack Stilborn, Principal Analyst, Political and Social Affairs, Library of Parliament

JANUARY 17, 2007 SEMINAR

Panel I - The Thirty-Ninth Parliament: Expectations and Results

Daniel Lessard, Parliamentary Bureau Chief, Radio-Canada
Peter C. Dobell, C.M., Founding Director, Parliamentary Centre
Dr. J. Patrick Boyer, Former Member of Parliament, Etobicoke-Lakeshore

Panel II - Officers of Parliament: Supporting the Democratic Process

Dr. David E. Smith, Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Studies, U of Saskatchewan
John G. Williams, Member of Parliament, Edmonton -- St. Albert
Denis Desautels, Executive Director, Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa

The people listed above made the 2006-07 seminar program a resounding success, and their willingness to contribute their time is greatly appreciated. The Parliamentary Business Seminars continue to provide those who attend with a stimulating and informative experience, helping to fulfill the mandate of the CSPG and broaden its impact.

PARTNERSHIPS AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Speaking Tour Report

The Speaking Tour program, which was established in 1988, is a joint initiative of the CSPG and the Canadian Clerks-at-the-Table Association. The CSPG fulfils the role of arranging for senior Procedural Clerks to speak to classes at Canadian universities about aspects of the Canadian parliamentary system.

Letters to universities were sent in September this year. This year Luc Fortin, Deputy Principal Clerk for the House of Commons, took on the responsibility of identifying appropriate speakers for each request. In all, CSPG received 10 requests for speakers, which were all fulfilled by Table Officers from the Senate and the House of Commons.

This year, an evaluation form was developed and has been circulated to all participating professors. We hope to expand the evaluation component in the coming year.

Teacher's Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

The Teachers' Institute (TI) 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. The TI celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. For the 6th year in a row, the Group announced at the Honours Banquet that it would provide a complimentary one-year membership to all educators attending the Teacher's Institute in 2006. Reminders were sent to alumni from 2005, with copies of the Canadian Parliamentary Review, inviting them to join on their own. The TI recognizes this contribution in their brochures, on their Web site and in participant's manuals.

SPECIAL THANKS

The CSPG continues to owe a debt of gratitude to the outstanding support it receives from 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: Sophie Descary (Administrative Assistant), Nancy Hall (CSPG Executive Secretary), Luc Fortin (Deputy Principal Clerk) and Miriam Burke (formerly CSPG Executive Secretary).

On behalf of the Group, I would sincerely like to thank departing Board members – Lisa Young and Susan Harada - for the unflagging energy and creativity which they have both brought to the organization.

As departing CSPG President, I have been honoured to serve with an outstanding Board, all of whom tirelessly dedicate time and energy to making this organization work. And work it does! The CSPG remains unique in Canada in bridging the worlds of academia, parliamentary procedure and public service. Its mission of promoting understanding and debate about the legislative process remains more relevant than ever.

Jeff Heynen
President