

THE CANADIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP

2000 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2000 Annual Report marks both the start of a new millennium and a period of transition for the CSPG. In 2000, the CSPG said farewell to Mr. Robert Marleau, who retired in July from his position as Clerk of the House of Commons, and to long standing members, Ms. Carmen DePape, CSPG Secretary and Mr. Mark Hill, CSPG Treasurer. In his capacity as Clerk, Mr. Marleau was a strong supporter of the CSPG and its activities. Ms. Carmen DePape and Mr. Mark Hill were both highly active members of CSPG. Their numerous hours of volunteer work contributed much to the Group's successful operation and growth. We wish each of them all the best as they take on new roles and new challenges.

Correspondingly, we welcome and look forward to working with Mr. William Corbett, who was appointed Clerk of the House of Commons on July 3, 2000. Similarly, we welcome our new Executive Secretary, Ms. JoAnne Cartwright and Ms. Antonine Campbell, our newly appointed Treasurer. We trust that CSPG will benefit tremendously from their insights and experience, and that they too will make significant contributions to fulfilling our mandate to foster knowledge, understanding and improvement of our parliamentary institutions.

This report provides highlights and an overview of the CSPG's programs and activities for 1999-2000. Thank you to all the Members of the Executive Committee for their many hours of work, and to the CSPG membership for their continued support of our organization.

1999 FALL CONFERENCE

The Eclipse of Parliament? The Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics

The CSPG's fall conference took place November 26-27, 1999. Drawing inspiration from Professor Donald Savoie's highly-acclaimed book, *Governing from the Centre*, the event sought to assess the relevance of Parliament in an era that some claim is marked by a concentration of executive power.

The CSPG wishes to thank conference Co-Chairs, Jeffrey Heynen and Jennifer Smith, in addition to all who took part in the conference, including: the Hon. Serge Joyal, Senator; the Hon. Mitchell Sharp, Personal Advisor to the Prime Minister; the Hon. Gordon Robertson, Former Clerk of the Privy Council; Arthur Kroeger, Former Senior Public Servant; Gordon Gibson, Vancouver Bureau of the Globe and Mail; Manon Tremblay, Professor at the University of Ottawa; Paul Adams of the Globe and Mail; and Jim Mitchell, Sussex Circle.

PUBLICATION

Taking Stock of 150 Years of Responsible Government

At the 1999 Conference, the Group launched a book entitled: *Taking Stock of 150 Years of Responsible Government in Canada*. The publication, based on a collection of papers presented at the 1998 Fall Conference, was part of the Group's 20th anniversary celebrations and a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the achievement of responsible government in British North America in 1848.

To date, 384 copies of the book, co-edited by Executive Committee members Leslie Seidle and Louis Massicotte, have been distributed. Copies of the book are still available for \$20. Information is available at: www.studyparliament.ca.

THE MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE

Parliamentary Government At The Millennium: Continuity And Change In Westminster Systems

A highlight of our activities for Year 2000 was the Millennium conference, which took place June 10-11. This event was made possible thanks to a generous grant from Mr. Robert Marleau, Clerk of the House of Commons.

Entitled: "Parliamentary Government at the Millennium: Continuity and Change in Westminster Systems", this event provided CSPG with a rare opportunity to exchange knowledge, ideas and experiences with parliamentary scholars and practitioners from several other countries that share the Westminster model of government. The CSPG Executive Committee hopes to publish the event's proceedings.

The Group wishes to thank Executive Committee Members Leslie Seidle, Vice-President and David Docherty, CSPG Counsellor, for their work in organizing and co-chairing the conference. Indeed, this event was made possible by the outstanding efforts of many CSPG members. The Group wishes to thank all participants: David Butler, Chair, Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government, United Kingdom; Jonathan Boston, Public Policy Group, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand; Cheryl Saunders, Director of the Centre for Comparative Constitutional Studies, University of Melbourne, Australia; Louis Massicotte, Department of Political Science, Université de Montréal; Paul Chartrand, Consultant and Former Member of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples; Mason Durie, School of Maori Studies, Massey University, New Zealand; Frances Abele, Director of the School of Public Administration, Carleton University; the Hon. Pius Msekwa, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania; the Tanzanian High Commission to Canada; the Rt. Hon. Lord Wakeham, Chair, Royal Commission on House of Lords Reform, United Kingdom; Christina Murray, Faculty of Law, University of Cape Town, South Africa; Jennifer Smith, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University; the Hon. Robert K. Rae, Former Premier of Ontario; the Hon. Stéphane Dion, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Canada; Robert Hazell, Director, Constitution Unit, University College London, United Kingdom; and Richard Simeon, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto.

SEMINAR FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS OFFICERS

Since the fall of 1996, CSPG has regularly organized a series of half-day seminars for Parliamentary Relations Officers (PROs) from across the public service. These seminars are designed to provide PROs with opportunities to meet and to share information on a variety of topics related to their work in Parliament.

The fifth seminar in this series, entitled *The Legislative Process: Turning Policy into Law (and everything in between)*, took place on Wednesday, March 8, 2000. The keynote speaker was: Senator John Lynch-Staunton, who discussed “The Role of the Senate in the Legislative Process”.

The program included two panel discussions. The first, entitled “The Legislative Process – From Policy to Introduction”, included panellists: Wanda Thompson, Parliamentary Relations Officer, Legislation and House Planning/Counsel (Privy Council Office), and Claude Bisailon, Senior Counsel, Legislation Section (Department of Justice). The second panel focussed on “The Legislative Process – From Introduction to Royal Assent”. Panellists included: Blair Armitage, Deputy Principal Clerk, Senate Committees and Private Legislation and Eric Janse, Deputy Principal Clerk, Journals Branch, House of Commons.

For the first time, the March 2000 PRO seminar included a luncheon, which gave participants a greater opportunity to meet and mingle. The luncheon speaker was Mr. Paul C. Bélisle, Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments.

SEMINAR FOR DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL

In March 2000, the CSPG participated in the organization and launch of the first annual Seminar for Diplomatic Personnel. CSPG Executive Counsellor Charles Robert was instrumental in developing the seminar program. It is designed to provide members of the foreign diplomatic community with an overview of Canada’s Parliament and the legislative process.

JOINT CONFERENCE OF THE CANADIAN AND QUEBEC POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

The CSPG continues to participate in the Annual meetings of the Canadian Political Science Association. This year’s annual CPSA meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Société québécoise de science politique. The joint meeting took place in Quebec City in late July, and the CSPG organized and sponsored a session titled “The Senate You Thought You Knew”. Approximately 30 attendees took part in what proved to be an interesting and informative re-examination of the Second Chamber’s role in our parliamentary system.

The CSPG wishes to thank Executive Committee Members Charles Robert and Jennifer Smith for organizing the event. In addition, we are most grateful to the panellists who included: Dr. Roger Gibbins, President, Canada West Foundation; Janet Ajzenstat, Department of Political Science, McMaster University; the Hon. Serge Joyal, Senator; Professor David Smith, University of Saskatchewan; and the Hon. Gérald Beaudoin, Senator.

PARTICIPATION IN THE TEACHERS' INSTITUTE ON PARLIAMENT HILL

Launched by the Speaker of the House of Commons in 1996, the Teachers' Institute is a professional development program that is designed to provide teachers with a sound knowledge and understanding of Canada's parliamentary system.

The CSPG shares The Institute's educational goals and has provided it with financial support since 1997. The CSPG sponsored The Institute's 1999 opening night dinner at which Group President Leo B. Doyle gave a keynote speech that invited the teachers to take advantage of their unique opportunity to be Ottawa "insiders". His light-hearted address was well received.

SPEAKING TOUR

The Canadian Study of Parliament Group, in conjunction with the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table in Canada, continues each year to organize speaking tours at Canadian universities on the role of Parliament.

We are also presenting today the 1999-2000 Speaking Tour Report.

PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVES

In May 1998, CSPG launched a new series of papers entitled *Parliamentary Perspectives*. The series examines issues related to Canada's legislative institutions and processes. This publication is intended as a vehicle for distributing both studies prepared by academics and the reflections of others that have an interest in these issues. The papers are offered as an additional benefit of membership in the CSPG.

The third issue in this series was published in November 2000. The paper, by Dr. William Cross, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Centre for Canadian Studies at Mount Allison University, is titled: "Members of Parliament, Voters and Democracy in the Canadian House of Commons".

FINANCES

Financial statements for the Group are presented with this report. Thanks to the generous support of the House of Commons, our strong membership numbers (300), the efforts of the Members of the Executive and the vigilance of our out going Treasurer, Mark Hill, the Group continues to operate within budget.

That said, it is hoped that a slighter lighter calendar of activities in 2000-01 will provide the CSPG an opportunity to reassess its activities and budgeting. This stocktaking exercise was initiated by Mark Hill and will be brought to the attention of Executive Committee.

Leo B. Doyle
President
November 6, 2000