MASTER'S THESIS

M-797

BELL, Ruth Marion. CONSERVATIVE PARTY
NATIONAL CONVENTIONS 1927-1956:
ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE.

Carleton University, M.A., 1965
Political Science, general

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1966

CONSERVATIVE PARTY NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

1927 - 1956

Organization and Procedure

by Ruth M. Bell

A thesis submitted to Carleton University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts in Political Science

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Ottawa, Canada
April, 1965

PREFACE

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This thesis is based principally on primary sources in the records of the Progressive Conservative Party Headquarters. The obvious gaps which appear in the material have made it virtually impossible to present a completely detailed description of every leadership convention held by the Party. A description of the efforts to locate and assemble the available material will account for some lack of conclusions and may also be of general interest.

The writer was fortunate in being given confidential access to the files at the National Headquarters of the Progressive Conservative Party, and the helpful co-operation of the National Director, Mr. Richard D. Thrasher, Q.C., his Executive Assistant, Miss Flora MacDonald, and Mrs. Mabel MacMillan, long-time head of the records and duplicating room.

The interests of future scholars were not foremost in the minds of any of the party workers while they were preparing the voluminous material required in the organization of a national convention. The work of discovering and sorting these papers, which span a 40-year period, into some kind of order was formidable, to say the least. The papers were assembled under two major categories -- proceedings and documents.

Convention documents were located in various boxes, files, envelopes and parcels, some in unexpected and mislabelled places. For example, the scanty 1927 documents, including one valuable letter from the general organizer, a sample of delegate credentials, badges, buttons and ribbons, were found in a tattered brown envelope inside a 1938 convention file folder, together with^{the}/agenda for the 1942 convention. The 1938 convention papers extant were located in a transfer file, the list of contents for which numbers four pages. The file labels did not necessarily describe the contents.

The 1942 documents were in a scrapbook in the possession of R. A. Bell, Secretary of the Convention, and thought to be complete except for a list of constituency delegates. The confidential minutes of the 1941 'conference' were among the same papers.

The 1948 and 1956 documents were in good order, pasted into large scrapbooks -- two for each convention -- roughly in the order in which they were sent out from headquarters. The lists of documents in these books include over 100 separate items each, many of them more than 3 pages in length. In addition, minutes, memoranda and press releases were located in "dead files" in the duplicating room.

Credentials, brochures, convention hall plans, programmes, buttons and badges for most of the conventions

were found in nooks and crannies. Lists of delegates were located for the 1927, 1948 and 1956 conventions. The list for the last convention is assembled into four looseleaf notebooks. A partial list of ex-officio delegates for the 1942 convention was located.

The Party offices were moved twice during the course of research. This not only led to further confusion; it also turned up additional useful material. For example, recently the 1956 nominations were found in an old box dated 1949, which also contained a few of the looseleaf binders protecting the original delegate credentials for the 1948 convention. The 1927 proceedings, which probably have not before been used by a student, were found in a box filled with papers dealing with annual meetings.

Most of this material is in mimeographed form. No separate or private correspondence has been located; indeed, it is doubtful if it is still in existence. This precluded examination of the convention from the constituency viewpoint.

The original suggestion for this essay was made by my supervisor, Professor K. Z. Paltiel, who spurred me on by pointing out that I was in a very special position to undertake the task.

My husband has not only fulfilled the expected obligation of the student's spouse in offering encourage-

ment; he has also maintained an objective and perceptive view of party affairs. He has a gift most rare in practising politicians -- an understanding of the requirements of the political scientist. For the record, he was private secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, 1938-1943; Secretary of the 1942 convention; National Director of the Party, 1943-49; Chairman of the Campaign Committee in 1953; and Chairman of the 1956 convention. This may explain his frequent appearance in footnotes.

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THE CONVENTION

The national convention, held by a political party primarily to select its new leader, is a political institution which has been developed in North America. The first such convention was organized by the Americans, those great political innovators, in 1832, and has been used regularly every four years by both major parties. The leadership convention was first introduced into Canada at the national level in 1919 by the Liberal Party. (A convention was held in 1893, but did not choose a new leader.)¹

Canadians, also political innovators of note, had already imposed federalism upon the parliamentary system, with some success. In 1919, the national convention, originally designed to fill a void in the American constitution which failed to provide a means of selecting candidates for the presidency, was adopted by the Liberal Party. The Conservative Party, in 1927, continued the grafting of the convention to a political system in which parties were more centralized in organization and in which

1. See John W. Lederle, "The Liberal Convention of 1893," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Feb., 1950, pp. 42-52
-----"The Liberal Convention of 1919 and the Selection of Mackenzie King," Dalhousie Review, April 1, 1947, pp. 85-92.

the selection of prime minister is made indirectly. This graft has contributed to the distinctive character of the Canadian political system. However, despite the interest created by the Canadian national party convention, it has not yet been studied and analyzed as a separate aspect of our political system.

The national convention in the United States has survived decades of vituperation and attack from foreign observers and political scientists and has been regarded with cynicism by the layman. Ostrogorski described it in 1902 as "a colossal travesty of popular institutions".² Bryce records his astonishment "to see nearly one thousand men prepare to transact the two most difficult pieces of business an assembly can undertake...in the sight and hearing of twelve or fourteen thousand other men and women."³ Even among the few brief descriptions of the Canadian conventions, a somewhat derogatory note may be detected.⁴

However, some modern scholars, both foreign and native, regard the convention as an institution which

2. M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, Vol. II, (New York, 1964), p. 143.

3. James Bryce, The American Commonwealth, Vol. II, (New York, 1913), p. 194.

4. See: J.R. Williams, The Conservative Party of Canada: 1920-1949, (Durham, 1956), pp. 79-109.

N. Ward, "The Liberals in Convention", in H.G. Thorburn, ed., Party Politics in Canada, (Toronto, 1963), pp. 41-48.

is here to stay, at least until something better is devised. Laski and Brogan, English visitors, think that the convention's advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. And Rossiter regards criticism of the convention as, in fact, criticism of the American way of life. The Canadian convention has even been recommended to the Americans in Lederle's article.⁵

What is a convention? Why did it appear? Why should it be analyzed? To answer these questions is to indicate the terms of reference of this thesis.

A convention, in the sense used in the Canadian Conservative Party⁶ is not an annual meeting, nor is it a conference.

An annual meeting is a gathering of representatives of the various parts of the Progressive Conservative Association -- the constituencies, the women's, youth, university associations, party supporters in the eleven legislatures -- selected in accordance with the requirements of the constitution of the Progressive Conservative Party. The constitution further requires that there be an annual meeting

5. Harold J. Laski, The American Presidency, (New York, 1940), pp. 41-53.
 D.W. Brogan, Politics in America, (New York, 1960), pp. 165-200.
 Clinton Rossiter, The American Presidency, (New York, 1960), pp. 190-194.
 J.W. Lederle, "National Party Conventions: Canada Shows the Way,"
Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 25, 1944, pp. 118-33.

6. The term "Conservative" is used, since, during the period of time included in this thesis, the party changed its name several times: Liberal-Conservative, 1920-1938; National Conservative, 1938-1942; since 1942, Progressive Conservative.

each year, unless there may be a general election or a leadership convention. There have been about fifteen annual meetings since the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada was organized and its inaugural meeting held in March, 1943.

The purposes of the annual meeting are to elect the officers of the association, to pass resolutions as a guide for the parliamentary leaders, to appraise the condition of party organization, and any other business.⁷

A different type of gathering is the party conference. There have been three in the modern history of the Conservative Party. The Newmarket Conference, held in 1934, was designed to be educational and inspirational, and was directed primarily toward young people in the Party.⁸

The Port Hope Conference in 1942 was attended by approximately 200 Conservative laymen (politicians were not invited), who met to study and discuss the principles and policies of the Party, particularly with post-war reconstruction, and the need for social legislation, in mind. The Port Hope Manifesto, drawn up at this Conference, had considerable influence on the policies formulated two months later at the party's leadership convention

7. Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, January, 1963.

8. Interview, R.A. Bell, a delegate.

in Winnipeg, and is still considered a turning point in the party's history.⁹

The third conference held by the party was in September, 1964, at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton. About 200 people were invited by the National Association and the Conference Committee, with emphasis placed on occupational, economic, cultural and social representation, regardless of political persuasion, rather than on party supporters and legislators. The purpose of this conference was to study in depth "Canadian Problems and Conservative Principles"; it was not intended as a policy-making conference but a policy-studying conference.¹⁰

A convention is called for different purposes, and on a different basis of representation. In the words of Sir Thomas White:¹¹

This convention is met for the declared purpose of formulating a National Conservative policy, selecting a leader charged with the duty of carrying that policy into effect and of discussing the important problem of party organization throughout the dominion.

9. This Conference was organized under the inspiration and guidance of J.M. Macdonnell of Toronto. The Chairman was H.R. Milner of Edmonton. Neither was a practising politician at the time. In 'Who's Who in Canada', 1961-63, H.R. Milner is described as Chairman; this is confirmed by R.A. Bell and R.K. Finlayson, who were present.

In The Conservative Party, (Toronto, 1965), p. 121, Macquarrie indicates it was under the chairmanship of Macdonnell.

10. Private papers of author, who was a delegate.

11. Proceedings of the National Conservative Party of Canada, July 5, 6 and 7, 1938, (Hereinafter referred to as Proceedings, 1938), p. 28.

In summary, the annual meeting is a gathering of members of the Party Association, selected under constitutional rules, which is held at regular intervals, to pass resolutions and to elect its officers. The Party Conference is a gathering of people who are assumed to be interested in political policies, sometimes those of the Conservative Party, and such conferences have been held infrequently. The National Convention is a gathering of party supporters, selected under rules laid down by the convention committee, for the purpose of formulating party policy, considering national party organization, and electing a new leader. It is this last type of assembly which will be considered in this thesis.

Why a convention in Canada?

Canada shared with other nations the introduction of universal adult suffrage in the first quarter of the twentieth century. This was accompanied by the rising level of education of the electorate, and its growing interest in political affairs. The caucus method for choosing a party leader, borrowed from England, was used in Canada much longer than in the United States, where such a device was found unsuitable to its electoral system. However, the growth in the size and sophistication of the electorate created a demand from the rank and file for the right to participate in party affairs. In addition, the development

of political parties in Canada was influenced by federalism, a concept foreign to the British political system. Further, the transfer of some political power from the parliamentary party to the "grass roots", combined with party federalism, led to a need for some means of creating party cohesion at least for the purpose of winning elections. No doubt the American experience with conventions, as well as its experience with the agrarian radical movement of the first 25 years of this century, influenced the Canadian political leaders.

In 1919, the death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which occurred when the Liberal Party had been in opposition for eight years, forced the party to try the convention method. Their choice of Mackenzie King resulted in success at the polls two years later.

By 1927, the Conservative Party found itself in a similar position. No doubt the influence of the agrarian movement, the rise of third parties in western Canada, attributed to the inadequacies of the old parties, and the electoral success which followed the Liberal convention, led the Conservative Party to undertake the

same experiment.¹²

The party convention has established at least a foothold in Canada as a party institution. As early as 1942, The Gazette thought "that only a National Convention can now clarify and authoritatively define the Conservative party's attitude on national questions."¹³ As recently as February, 1965, some members of the Conservative parliamentary party wanted a national convention called to consider the matter of leadership.¹⁴ These incidents would support the view that the political convention is a viable and lively party institution.

There has been little published on conventions in Canada, and a good deal of basic information -- more than has hitherto been available -- is required. This thesis proposes to describe as precisely as sources permit how a convention is organized, what is the nature of its structure, what its assigned functions are, and how adequately it is equipped to perform these functions.

12. Mr. D.S. Stephens, a student who attended the 1927 convention, attributes its origins to the "grass roots movement in opposition to the method of choice of Meighen in 1920 by Borden." Interview with Mr. Stephens, September 10, 1964.

Mr. A.W. Merriam, Secretary of the National Convention Committee, 1927, suggested that the Liberal convention aroused public interest in leadership, and that fact, together with the grass roots movement, led to the calling of a Conservative convention, although he recalls no precise reference in discussions at the meetings. Interview with Mr. Merriam, January 22, 1965.

13. The Gazette, Montreal, 8 Sept. 1942, quoted in Lederle, "National Party Conventions," *op. cit.*, p. 127.

14. Toronto Telegram; Globe and Mail, Toronto; The Ottawa Citizen; The Gazette, Montreal, February 4-8, 1965.

The terms of reference of this first treatment of the organization of national conventions of the Conservative Party of Canada include a description and analysis of the 'convention institutions' -- the call for convention, pre-convention arrangements, the delegates, convention committees, the nominations and election machinery, and the candidates. The basic and primary source of information has been the papers and documents directly connected with the Conservative conventions, ranging from 1927 to 1956, supplemented where possible by interviews and correspondence with a few of the people who took part in the conventions, by secondary published sources, and by personal knowledge. A descriptive analysis of this basic convention material may provide the springboard from which future research into the field of leadership conventions in Canada may be launched.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CONVENTION

A backward look at the method of choice of Canadian Conservative Party leaders reminds us of the expansion of the franchise, the influence of the direct democracy advocated by the agrarian revolt and of the progressive movement which was so prominent during the first quarter of this century.

During the past hundred years, the leaders of the Conservative Party have been selected by several means which reflect the development of popular democratic government. In the nineteenth century, the ordinary method was a choice of government leader made by the Governor-General, and the confirmation by the parliamentary party of his appointee, as party leader. As described below, there were several variations on this theme, although, of course, for the long period 1867-1891, the need to choose or confirm was seldom required.

In the present century, the party has adopted, apparently permanently, the convention method. This has been used five times in the past forty years -- in 1927, 1938, 1942, 1948, and 1956. On two other occasions, special devices were used: in 1920, a preferential ballot used by cabinet and private Members of Parliament; in 1941, a modified convention-caucus combination.

The long-term trend, over the past century,

TABLE I

LEADERS OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

<u>Leader</u>	<u>Prime Minister</u>	<u>Leader of Opposition</u>
Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald	1867-1873 1878-1891	1873-1878
Hon. Sir John J. C. Abbott	1891-1892	
Rt. Hon. Sir John Thompson	1892-1894	
Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell	1894-1896	
Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Tupper	1896-1896	1896-1900
Rt. Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden	1911-1920	1901-1911
Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen	1920-1921 1926-1926	1921-1926
Hon. Hugh Guthrie ^(a)		1926-1927
Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett	1930-1935	1927-1930 1935-1938
Hon. Dr. R. J. Manion		1938-1940
Hon. R. B. Hanson ^(a) ^(c)		1940-1943
Mr. Gordon Graydon ^(a)		1943-1945
Hon. John Bracken ^(b)		1945-1948
Hon. George Drew		1948-1956
Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker	1957-1963	1956-1957 1963-

^(a)Leader in House of Commons only.

^(b)Bracken was elected National Leader in 1942, but did not enter House of Commons until general election of 1945.

^(c)Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen was National Leader from December, 1941 to December, 1942, but was defeated in February, 1942, in his attempt to enter House of Commons and become Leader of the Opposition.

has been a devolution of authority to make the choice -- from the person of the Governor-General, to the cabinet and parliamentary caucus, to the convention, based on popular representation.

The Choice -- 1867-1920

The Conservatives' great chieftain, Sir John A. Macdonald, achieved the role of leadership by his pre-eminence as a politician and parliamentarian rather than by formal election. The heir-apparent from the outset of the coalition of the first Liberal-Conservative leader, Sir Allan MacNab, he indeed had to fend off, from time to time, well-meaning friends who sought to displace Sir Allan to elect him leader. The retirement of Sir Allan in 1856 gave Sir John A. his opportunity and on the formation of the Tache-Macdonald administration, he became "the accepted leader of the Conservatives of Canada West".¹

That pre-eminence he held until his death in 1891. His choice by Lord Monck in 1867 as the first Prime Minister of Canada confirmed his leadership. There is no evidence of confirmation of leadership by a parliamentary caucus or otherwise until after the resignation of the Government on November 6, 1873. Then, he sought to lay down the responsibilities of leadership. In caucus, "he faced the long, silent rows of listening Conservatives

1. Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald The Young Politician, (Toronto, 1952), p. 237.

earnestly. He begged them, for the sake of the country and the party, to choose a younger man. The caucus refused. With an earnestness equal to his own, the assembled Conservatives insisted they preferred to fight under his leadership".²

Macdonald's death in 1891 produced a leadership crisis. Not for 35 years had the Conservative Party faced a problem of leadership. They were in office and the Governor-General was jealous of the prerogative of the Crown to choose the First Minister. It is in that light that the choice of the four leaders in the succeeding five years must be viewed. The first responsibility was to choose a Prime Minister; the party leadership was secondary.

There was no obvious successor to Macdonald. The principal candidates for the Prime Ministry were Sir John Thompson and Mackenzie Bowell. Thompson, a Roman Catholic convert from Protestantism, was then highly unacceptable to the Orange Lodge in Ontario. Bowell was the Orange Grand Master and therefore unacceptable to the Roman Catholic Bleus. In these circumstances, Sir John Abbott, acceptable to both wings of the party despite

2. Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald The Old Chieftain, (Toronto, 1955), p. 181.

advanced years, was thrust into the gap as a compromise.³ The choice of Abbott was that of the Governor-General, Lord Stanley, exercising the prerogative of the Crown.

After only 18 months, Abbott resigned and Thompson, having achieved better standing with the militant Protestants, succeeded to the office of Prime Minister without opposition.⁴ Hutchison says: "As it should have done in the first place, the Conservative caucus chose Thompson as the successor".⁵ His authority is not cited. Thompson had the unanimous support of caucus but it is doubtful if Lord Stanley felt it was either necessary or proper to consult with a caucus or to seek its recommendation.

The sudden death of Thompson on December 12, 1894, plunged the Party into further disaster. Sir Joseph Pope, then assistant clerk of the Privy Council, says in his memoirs that on Thompson's death, Tupper as the logical man "should have been summoned without delay",

3. Encyclopedia Canadiana, Vol. 8, p. 232.

W. S. Wallace, "Political History".

4. W. S. Wallace, ed., Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography, (Toronto, 1963), p. 746.

5. Bruce Hutchison, Mr. Prime Minister 1867-1964, (Don Mills, 1964), p. 101.

but "for some inexplicable reason was passed over by Lord Aberdeen (the new Governor-General) in favour of Mr. Mackenzie Bowell, a worthy, loyal man, but one as little qualified to be Prime Minister as Lord Aberdeen was to be Governor-General".⁶ Again, the prerogative of the Crown and not the will of the parliamentary party was the decisive factor.

Bowell was totally unable to compose the warring factions within the administration and in 1896, seven ministers (styled by Bowell as "a nest of traitors") bolted the Cabinet.

Only the "logical" Tupper could be entrusted now with the First Ministry. Lord Aberdeen again took the initiative as he had in 1894.

Thus Lord Aberdeen in 1894 called in Sir Frank Smith (then a minister without portfolio) to advise informally on a successor to Sir John Thompson, and in 1896 after first sounding out Sir Donald Smith, he asked Sir Charles Tupper to succeed Sir Mackenzie Bowell.⁷

In each instance, the initiative and the final decision was that of the Governor-General in choosing a Prime Minister and the acquiescence by the Party conferred the party leadership. The non-acceptance of

6. Hutchison, *ibid.*, p. 104, quoted from the memoirs of Sir Joseph Pope.

7. R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Government of Canada*, rev. N. Ward (Toronto, 1963), p. 166.

Bowell is a deviation from what was then the normal acceptance of the prerogative of the Crown to choose a Prime Minister, who ipso facto became the party leader.

The Governor-General has not been called upon since then to use his own judgment in selecting a Prime Minister, but there is no reason whatever to assume that the power has vanished in the interval.⁸

Tupper's valiant efforts could not save the Conservative Party and its regime came to an end in only three months. Shortly after the election, Tupper's leadership of the Party in opposition was confirmed by the Conservative caucus and he continued to head the Party until after his personal defeat in the election of November 7, 1900.

His resignation was conveyed to caucus on February 5, 1901.⁹

At this election, Sir George Foster was also defeated in his own riding and the discussion at the February 5 caucus centred on whether to choose Sir George and find a seat for him or to choose Mr. R. L. Borden. "Finally, under great pressure (Sir Robert wrote later) I agreed to accept the task for one year and coupled my acceptance with the stipulation that in the meantime a

8. Dawson, idem.

9. Henry Borden, ed. Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs, (New York, 1938), Vol. I, p. 70.

committee should be appointed to select a permanent leader of greater ability, experience and aptitude, one who would, perhaps, desire the position from which I shrank."¹⁰

Borden's one year stretched out to nearly 20. Not until 1920 was the Party again confronted with the need to choose a new leader.

But Borden's leadership was confirmed on different occasions by caucus. In 1904, he suffered personal defeat in his own riding and on January 7, 1905, he submitted his resignation to caucus. Unanimously, the Conservative caucus refused to accept it and he sought election to the House in Carleton.¹¹ After the unsuccessful election of 1908, Borden followed the same course, and while his resignation was declined, he was subjected to much intrigue in caucus and in the party generally over the next three years, until he led his party into office in 1911. Thereafter his leadership was never challenged.

The Choice - 1920

When Sir Robert Borden felt compelled by poor health to resign on July 1, 1920, he did so to a party caucus of senators and members. The method employed on

10. Borden, ibid., p. 73.

11. Borden, ibid., pp. 136-7.

TABLE II

Leaders of Conservative Party, 1920-1965

Date	Position		Method of Choice
	National Party Leader	Leader in House	
July 10 1920	Meighen	Meighen	Preferential Ballot in Caucus
Sept. 25 1926	Vacant		
Oct. 11 1926		Guthrie	Conference of Members and Candidates
Oct. 12 1927	Bennett	Bennett	Convention
July 7 1938	Manion		Convention
By-election Nov. 14 1938		Manion	
May 16 1940	Vacant	Hanson	Commons Caucus accepted Manion's resignation and chose Hanson
Nov. 13 1941	Meighen		Joint Meeting of Dom. Cons. Assn. Exec., H. of C. members and def. candidates
Dec. 11 1942	Bracken		Convention
Jan. 1943		Graydon	Commons Caucus
G.E. June 11 1945	Drew	Bracken	Convention
Oct. 2 1948			
By-election Dec. 20 1948	Drew		
Dec. 14 1956	Diefenbaker	Diefenbaker	Convention

this occasion to choose a new Prime Minister and party leader was rather curious, and unique in party annals. The reports of this method vary sufficiently to obscure the possibility of determining whether or not the major influence on the selection of leader was switched from cabinet to caucus.

A semi-official correspondent from Ottawa for the Mail and Empire of July 2, 1920, is quoted in the Canadian Annual Review:¹²

Each supporter of the Government in the two houses of Parliament would forward in writing to the Prime Minister his views on the subject of leadership and propose three names (*italics mine, R.M.B.*) in order of preference. Upon the expression of opinion thus secured, Sir Robert Borden would base his selection of the man whom he would recommend to the Governor-General as his successor.

A slightly different description is given in the diary of Sir George Foster, who had been Acting Prime Minister during Borden's absence:¹³

An unique method to select the new leader, suggested by myself, was adopted. The selection ultimately to be made by Sir Robert. Each member of Parliament supporting the late government is to indicate by letter his first and other choices, and his reasons therefor. Sir Robert is to sift these out - ascertain the possibilities of each carrying the confidence and support of his colleagues, and using his long experience and knowledge of conditions, evolve the best from the number suggested...Now the great desideratum is the Leader.

12. Canadian Annual Review, 1920, p. 398.

John R. Williams, op. cit., p. 46.

13. W.S. Wallace, The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir George Foster, (Toronto, 1933), p. 205.

In his memoirs and diary, Sir Robert Borden enlarges upon the differences of opinion in the cabinet and in the caucus:¹⁴

(On July 1st) "after prorogation the Governor-General received me in the room of the Speaker of the Senate and I reported the result of caucus. In Council we considered once more caucus arrangements. At 4:30 Sir George Foster addressed the caucus and the proposal which he presented was adopted, namely, that they should make known to me by ballot their choice of a successor.

Mr. H. H. Stevens, a private member at that time, who became a minister in Mr. Bennett's cabinet in 1930, recalls a different version of the incident:¹⁵

In fact, the Cabinet members urged caucus to choose Sir Thos. White and were quite surprised when I suggested that each member of caucus should write personally to Sir Robt. Borden giving his view. This was done and the vast majority chose Arthur Meighen.

...

Re the claim that Sir George Foster proposed the members of caucus write Sir Robt. re a leader -- this is not so -- it was proposed by me and seconded by Pro. Boys (Mr. W.A. Boys, M.P.). Our claim was that the wish of caucus should decide, not the cabinet.

Sir Robert writes again of the conflicts within the parliamentary party:¹⁶

14. Borden, op. cit., p. 1032.

15. Memorandum from Hon. H.H. Stevens to the author, March 15, 1965.

16. Borden, op. cit., p. 1039.

On July 3rd. . . I examined and counted the votes of Members; a considerable number advocated White. There was a prevailing belief that he would not accept the Premiership. A substantial majority were in favour of Meighen . . . In Council on July 5th, after discussion with several of my colleagues I discovered that all favoured the selection of White, except Sifton who approved Meighen. (italics mine R.M.B.)

Professor Graham, who has had access to the original Borden diaries, writes in his biography of Arthur Meighen:¹⁷

Borden reports in his memoirs that Arthur Sifton had on July the fifth expressed himself as favouring Meighen, but in his diary for the same date Sir Robert lists Sifton among those who voted for White.

In summary, there is apparently no doubt that most of the members of the Cabinet were opposed to the selection of Meighen as leader. On the other hand, Meighen was the choice of "nine out of ten of the private members of Parliament. But the views of the ministers, whose support for the new leader would be necessary... did not coincide with those of the back-benchers."¹⁸

Sir Robert called Sir Thomas White to Ottawa, and the latter refused to assume the leadership for reasons of health and business demands. It was only then that Sir

17. Roger Graham, Arthur Meighen: The Door of Opportunity, Vol. I, (Toronto, 1960), p. 288

18. Idem.

Robert turned to Meighen and explained the situation. Sir Robert spent considerable effort in persuading the more obdurate members of Cabinet to support Meighen. Finally, in the evening of July 7, 1920, the two men went to Rideau Hall where Meighen accepted the Governor-General's request to form a government. There followed six years of political turbulence, including three general elections.

On September 27, 1926, after the defeat of the Liberal-Conservative Party at the polls, Mr. Meighen relinquished the position of Prime Minister. Two weeks later, on October 11, 1926, he resigned his party leadership to a caucus of Conservative Senators, members and defeated candidates. At this meeting, Hon. Hugh Guthrie was selected temporary leader in the House, and a committee was appointed to make arrangements for a national convention of the party to select a permanent leader. This was the first clear indication that the party recognized that the party supporters outside Parliament should have a voice in the choice of leader.¹⁹

In order to set the stage for the detailed examination of the organization and structure of the leadership

19. Canadian Annual Review, 1926-27, pp. 98-9.
Williams, op. cit., p. 53.

convention of the Conservative Party of Canada, which is the subject of this thesis, a brief review of the highlights of the conventions of 1927, of 1938, the conference of 1941, and the conventions of 1942, 1948 and 1956, may provide background and perspective.

The First Leadership Convention - 1927

A year after the resignation of Mr. Meighen, the Liberal-Conservative Party National Convention was held on October 10, 11, and 12, 1927, in the Amphitheatre Rink in Winnipeg. This Manitoba city was probably chosen as the site because it is in the centre of the country, and "it might be a good thing for the morale of the prairies which was in a bad way."²⁰

Nearly 1600 delegates and guests gathered in the old rink, which has been described in the following rosy terms:²¹

The spacious Amphitheatre Rink had been skillfully decorated with flags, bunting and various decorative effects, and transformed into a great expanse of light and beauty.

Possibly the enthusiasm of the participants coloured their impression of this shabby old hall.

20. Interview on March 1, 1965, with R.K. Finlayson, Delegate-at-Large, 1927.

21. John R. MacNicol, National Liberal-Conservative Convention, Winnipeg, 1927, (Toronto, 1930), p. 17.

Not only was this the first Conservative leadership convention, it was also the first Canadian political convention which was covered by radio, and at which women were delegates. About 15 per cent of the 2500 delegates and alternates were women. The large number of distinguished participants included Sir Hugh John Macdonald, son of Canada's first Prime Minister. The platform at the opening session was dominated by Sir Robert Borden, who later delivered a brief but delightful speech. Three provincial premiers, a large number of Privy Councillors and a few former Lieutenant-Governors were included among the distinguished platform guests.

The convention was opened by the Hon. Hugh Guthrie, Temporary Leader in the House, and a candidate for the permanent leadership.²² He is reported to have proclaimed in sonorous tones: "Ladies and gentlemen, the honour devolves upon me of opening the great National Liberal Convention of Canada." Amidst roars of laughter, he corrected himself.

There is some difference of opinion as to the

22. Hon. H.H. Stevens, in a memorandum to author of March 15, 1965, wrote: "Guthrie was never a very popular choice...it was generally assumed that he was not to be a candidate when he was chosen as 'temporary' leader."

significance of this slip of the tongue. Arthur Ford expressed the view that "it is doubtful whether Guthrie would have been elected leader, but this slip sealed his fate. He immediately corrected himself by adding the word Conservative, but it drew attention to the fact that he was a 1917 convert from Liberalism."²³

On the other hand, three men who attended the convention thought it amusing but not significant. One, who was a student delegate from Ontario, added that the papers played it up more than it was worth.²⁴

From all accounts, the opening session gave every indication of a dull and listless meeting, albeit harmonious as Sir Robert described it. However, the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen chose to speak at length in defence of his 1925 Hamilton speech, in which he had advocated that a government should go to the country in a general election before sending troops to an overseas war. After this stirring address which raked up past history, the delegates cheered him wildly. When Premier Howard Ferguson rose to criticize Mr. Meighen, he was literally howled down by angry delegates, who stood on chairs and screamed,

23. A.R. Ford, *As the World Wags On*, (Toronto, 1950), p. 108.

24. Interviews with A.W. Merriam (Secretary of National Convention Committee), R.K. Finlayson, and D.S. Stephens, (student guest).

"Sit Down!", until the rather startled chairman, N. K. Boyd, was able to restore order.²⁵

It has been widely believed that this open disagreement between Meighen and Ferguson, which was not new, ruined any chances of Meighen's return to the leadership. Professor Graham comments on these speculations that he might return to politics, but reports that there is no foundation for the stories. Whatever the significance of the contretemps, it attracted wide publicity, stirred up the delegates, and made for a lively convention.

Premier Ferguson very quietly and behind the scenes, supported Bennett for the leadership. He apparently considered that Bennett had the highest qualifications of the many aspirants; there might also have been the thought that a national leader from another province would leave him free and powerful in his own Ontario.²⁶

Guthrie and Bennett were the outstanding candidates and the balloting would support this view. As one delegate put it, "Bennett's choice was not cut and dried until the first train arrived from the East."²⁷ Both were considered first-rate orators and capable men. It is

25. Graham, *op. cit.*, II, p. 496.

26. Stephens Interview; Merriam Interview.

Graham, *op. cit.*, II, p. 491.

Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

27. Merriam Interview.

generally held that Guthrie was the choice of the caucus, of which he had been leader since Meighen's election defeat the previous year. However, Bennett had some support from every province, and from some of the convention executive. He was elected on the second ballot. If one may arbitrarily separate the caucus from the convention, it might be said that the convention won the first round.

It should be noted that this convention was, from all accounts, organized superlatively. General A.D. McRae, M.P., of Vancouver, was Chairman of the Organization Sub-Committee of the National Convention Committee. He has been described as 'unequalled as an organizer', 'ruthless', 'full of ideas and a good detail man'. To illustrate his point, one member of the executive reported that, in a meeting with advertising and publicity men to devise signs and slogans for the convention hall, it was General McRae who thought of every slogan accepted by the Committee.²⁸

The only pre-convention organization document which has as yet been located is an eight-page letter, dated 21st September, 1927, which General McRae sent apparently to all delegates.^{28a} He outlined the proposed convention procedures, the proposed committees, nomination and election procedures, and other details which

28. Merriam and Finlayson Interviews.

28a. See copy of letter in Appendix.

will be discussed below in the appropriate sections. This letter is of singular significance, for it contains the description of the 'convention institutions' -- the delegates, the rules to govern their choice, and the choice of leader, committees, nominating and election machinery -- the basic organization and structure followed by all subsequent Conservative conventions.

"The Dullest Convention" - 1938

Eleven years passed before the party supporters assembled again. On July 5, 1938, the second Conservative Convention was opened by the retiring leader, the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, in Ottawa. The pattern of convention officers from both French and English Canada, established in 1927, was followed. A rather uninspired keynote address was delivered by the Chairman of the Local Committee. The tradition of lengthy speeches was carried on by Senator Meighen and Mr. Bennett.

From the accounts of delegates and newsmen at this convention, one of the highlights was the speech of the last candidate nominated, M. A. MacPherson of Regina.

MacPherson entered the race when Bennett stood down. He delivered a speech before the convention which was described later as swinging more votes than any other speech in the history of party conventions.²⁹

29. Canadian Annual Review, 1937-38, p. 56.

One delegate remarked, "The MacPherson whirlwind campaign almost took the convention by storm. Although I'd never heard of MacPherson before, he attracted me right away, so I voted for him."³⁰

However, Dr. Manion, first elected to Parliament as a Liberal-Unionist from northern Ontario, a Roman Catholic with a French wife, was a likeable man, and the leading candidate from the outset, particularly in Quebec. There was apparently a movement aimed at inducing Mr. Bennett to stay, but the opposition to Manion never consolidated its position,³¹ and he was elected on the second ballot.

Arthur Ford wrote, "Perhaps the dullest and least inspiring of the conventions was that held at Ottawa in 1938."³²

It was also the least well organized of the Conservative conventions. The Credentials Committee did not submit a final report prior to balloting. From an examination of the ballot book records, it can be surmised that there was confusion at the registration desks. There is no list of delegates available. The agenda was not very well constructed, nor was it followed. After the 1930

30. Interview with Stephens, constituency delegate.

31. Canadian Annual Review, 1937-38, p. 55.

32. Ford, op. cit., p. 110.

election, the new Prime Minister and his chief organizer, General McRae, had a serious disagreement,^{32a} and the party organization fell into disarray. There is some indication in the existing convention files that there was considerable difficulty in getting financial support for the convention.

There is reason to believe that it was extremely difficult to persuade potential delegates to travel to Ottawa. It may be recalled that many people still suffered from the depression, and the expenses of attending a convention, even when a room at the Chateau Laurier was \$2.50, were considerable. Many constituencies, particularly in the western provinces, were not sufficiently well organized to provide four delegates, so the executive at one level or another endeavoured to complete the roster by "ringing in" or accrediting people from other locations as delegates for constituencies which could not supply their own. This was done in order to populate the convention rather than to support a particular aspirant for the leadership.³³ The constituency lists of Members, Defeated Candidates and Presidents contain many gaps, particularly in the Prairie Provinces' lists.

32a. Apparently there was a misunderstanding about a diplomatic appointment which General McRae keenly desired but did not receive.

33. For contemporary accounts, see Maclean's Magazine, Aug. 15, 1938, pp. 8-35; 9-36; and "The Conservative Convention", Round Table, 1938, pp. 816-19.

The Meighen Interlude

After the party's defeat in the General Election of 1940, the Hon. Dr. R. J. Manion resigned to a parliamentary caucus in May, 1940, and the Hon. R. B. Hanson was chosen temporary house leader of the Conservative Party. It was widely thought that it would be unpatriotic and not in keeping with the war effort to call a leadership convention, and Mr. Hanson carried on as Leader of the Opposition. However, by the autumn of 1941, he felt that he could not longer continue, and so advised caucus. Within a short time two calls were sent out to consider the situation. John R. MacNicol, president of the dormant Dominion Conservative Association, called the members of its National Executive, and the parliamentary caucus passed a resolution "that on the first Saturday following the re-assembling of Parliament this fall a general meeting of the Association should be called together."³⁴

Prior to this meeting, Senator Meighen went to Winnipeg to see Premier John Bracken. Arthur Ford, then editor of the London Free Press, gives this account:³⁵

Meighen's eye (in 1941) turned to Bracken, successful for 20 years. A Conservative

34. Minutes of the Proceedings at the Meeting of Conservative Representatives, 7th and 8th November, 1941, (Hereinafter referred to as Minutes, 1941) p. 5.

35. Ford, op. cit., p. 112

gathering of the leaders of the party had been called for late in the fall of 1941 to consider the leadership. Mr. Meighen, on his own volition and without consulting anyone, before the meeting was held, took a trip in November to Winnipeg to consult Mr. Bracken. Bracken was astonished.

Meighen returned to the Conservative gathering and proposed the name of Bracken as leader. (italics mine, R.M.B.)

A little more detail is provided by Williams, who writes that Meighen failed to get Bracken's consent because the Premier felt that the Conservative party was not a suitable vehicle for Progressive principles. However, continues Williams, "Meighen carried on a campaign for Bracken at the 1941 Ottawa meeting".³⁶ (italics mine, R.M.B.)

The Hon. John Bracken recalls that Senator Meighen, probably accompanied by Mr. George McCullagh, then publisher of the Globe and Mail, visited him in 1941, and made a suggestion along the lines of assuming the leadership. But "I didn't take it seriously."³⁷

In a private letter to her sons, who were then overseas, Mrs. Bracken referred to the above-mentioned visit:³⁸

. . . you may recall that about a year ago Mr.

36. Williams, op. cit., p. 67.

37. Interview with Hon. John Bracken, March 1, 1965.

38. Mrs. John Bracken, in private letter to her sons, dated December 17, 1942, page 1, loaned to writer for confidential perusal.

Arthur Meighen, then Senator Meighen, came out west to Winnipeg to offer your father the leadership of the Conservative party, and that he would serve under Dad. It was, your father is convinced, a sincere offer to bring about a strong opposition party. Mr. Meighen believed Dad was a better politician (in the broad sense of the word) than he, and because of Dad's long experience in heading the government of Manitoba for over twenty years, that he was a better leader.

There is no evidence nor inference in the verbatim report of the 1941 meeting to support the statements that Meighen proposed Bracken as leader, or that he 'carried on a campaign for Bracken'.³⁹ Mr. R. A. Bell, then secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, and Mr. R. K. Finlayson, then vice president of the Manitoba Conservative Association, and leader of its delegation to the meeting, were both present, and they have stated that Mr. Meighen made no mention of Mr. Bracken in particular, nor of having his own candidate for leadership.

Mr. Finlayson, however, has suggested how the story of Mr. Meighen's trip reached public notice. Apparently, Mr. Meighen met Charles Bishop, correspondent of The Ottawa Citizen, on the street just before the meeting, and told him he had just returned from seeing Bracken in Winnipeg. With Meighen's knowledge and consent this

39. Minutes, 1941, 145 pp.

story was published. Thus the members of the meeting were aware of Meighen's position.⁴⁰

It might well have been disastrous for the future of the party if a former national leader, now party leader in the Senate, had blatantly attempted to impose his wishes upon the meeting. This meeting was already sufficiently in disagreement as to its purpose: whether it was empowered to select a new leader, or whether it could set the time and place for a convention.

Those in attendance at the meeting included members of Parliament, Senators, Privy Councillors, and members of the national executive of the association. Every province and the Yukon were represented. The major debate dealt with the question of the authority of a meeting so constituted to appoint a party leader. One main argument was that the present national war crisis would not permit the expenditure of effort and funds upon a political convention, and that the Canadian nation needed strong leadership in the opposition. It was also argued that the meeting was constituted along the lines of a convention, although somewhat smaller, and was representative in character.

The opposing group expressed the view that the

40. Interview with R. K. Finlayson, Q.C., March 5, 1965.

meeting was called to arrange a convention, and had no authority to select a leader; indeed it was not a representation of Conservatives across the country. Believing strongly in the more democratic method of the convention, rather than in the non-representative method of party caucus, they argued that "there is a danger lest people have their minds too much concentrated on the House of Commons...we must also keep in mind the importance of what goes on up and down the country."⁴¹

A committee of over 50 was appointed to consider three motions which recommended: 1) a convention, 2) choice by caucus of temporary leader, and 3) Senator Meighen be invited to become leader. The first two were defeated in committee, and the third was carried by a vote of 37 to 13. Senator Meighen addressed the conference for the second time, and declined the offer, apparently because the thirteen dissenters included a number of men of influence in the party. He then left the meeting and returned to Toronto. Later he wrote:⁴²

On leaving the hall, my intense desire to avoid return to political leadership was as firm and resolute as ever. I dreaded the very thought of being asked. However, by

41. Minutes, 1941, passim; J.M. Macdonnell of Toronto expressed this view and was its chief spokesman, although most of his supporters were from the western provinces.

42. Memorandum from Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen to Professor Roger Graham, n.d., quoted in letter from Professor Graham to author, March 9, 1965.

this time I had made up my mind that it would be quite impossible to propose the name of Mr. Bracken at this Conference with any hope of success, and called Mr. Bracken on long-distance so to advise him. I felt that he received the news with a sense of relief, and (he) told me on no account to permit his name to be proposed.

After a lengthy, discursive, and sometimes heated argument, the group supporting the convention gradually gave way, and the final vote was 129 to 4 in favour of approaching Mr. Meighen. A small committee of three was appointed to call upon Mr. Meighen in Toronto, where he was convinced that his acceptance would enable him to arouse the government and the nation to a more concerted war effort. Mr. Hanson agreed to continue as Leader of the Opposition for the balance of the parliamentary session. Within three months Mr. Meighen was defeated in the by-election of York South and the Conservative Party was again without an effective leader. The fiasco of November, 1941, strengthened the case for the convention.

From the records available of this remarkable meeting, it is reasonable to conclude that the decision against a convention at that particular time was based on the political urgency of the situation rather than on any desire to establish the authority of a small group of party elite. As in other areas of the Canadian political system,

the pragmatic approach is more usual and more influential than the decision based on principle.

The Turning Point - the 1942 Convention

The third Conservative Convention was held December 9, 10, 11, 1942, in wartime Winnipeg. This convention developed into the most dramatic one in Canadian history; it also proved to be the most critical of the Conservative conventions. It left its imprint not only on future conventions, but on party organization, and on party policy.

Once more the retiring leader, the Rt. Hon. Mr. Meighen, opened the convention. The customary pairs of convention officers were selected. The keynote address was delivered by the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. R. B. Hanson. The order of speakers on nomination evening was changed as a result of the MacPherson whirlwind of four years previous. Formerly, each candidate in turn was nominated, seconded, and then addressed the convention. Now all the nominating and seconding speeches were made first, followed by all the candidates, in order to avoid the dramatic oratorical climax built up by the two Messrs. Smith and their candidate. (However, Mr. MacPherson was again the last candidate to speak, and again he placed second in balloting.)

The policies presented by the Resolutions Committee were a refinement of the Port Hope Manifesto, a progressive plan for post-war reconstruction and social welfare produced at the Port Hope Conference of 1942, which had been attended the previous September by about 200 of the more progressive Conservative laymen. (Parliamentarians and party organizers were not invited.) The policies developed at Port Hope exerted a marked influence on the 1942 convention. After exhaustive debate and amendments from the floor, resolutions were adopted and later published under the title, "Freedom - Security - Opportunity and The British Partnership".⁴³

The more immediately felt drama, however, centred upon the selection of a new leader. Mr. Meighen and several other party leaders still considered that the Premier of Manitoba was the man for the job. Mr. Bracken was still reluctant, although he regarded Port Hope as a fresh start, an indication of forward-looking policies. He told the author that he was assured beforehand that the party's name would be changed to Progressive (a risky assurance, knowing the temper of the convention), and he was promised the aid of an experienced lieutenant in the House of Commons to guide him through the parlia-

43. Freedom - Security - Opportunity and the British Partnership, (Progressive Conservative Party, 1942).

mentary procedure with which he knew he was all too unfamiliar. In the event, such aid did not materialize.⁴⁴

Early on the first afternoon, the Chairman of the Convention, H. R. Milner of Edmonton, said to be a supporter of the draft-Bracken movement, read a letter from Mr. Bracken in which he set out his conditions for acceptance of the leadership, including adoption of the Port Hope Manifesto and a change in party name. Immediately a delegate from Nova Scotia took the floor and pointed out that there had yet been no nominations, and acceptance of such proposals, indeed even accepting such a communication, would be tantamount to pre-acceptance of a particular candidate. The Chairman had to retreat, and from then on the delegates controlled the convention.⁴⁵

There were several qualified and "available" candidates who had declared themselves, all westerners, and all with legislative experience. In addition, Dr. Sidney Smith, then President of the University of Manitoba, was ready to stand, provided his Premier did not choose to do so. In her letter to her sons, Mrs. Bracken conveys the excitement and tension of those days of decision, and the climax of the last few moments. After Mr. Bracken had left for the meeting, she writes:

44. Hon. Mr. Bracken, Interview.

45. Official Report, National Conservative Convention (1942), (Typescript), (Hereinafter referred to as Official Report, 1942), pp. 58-60 and passim.

At four minutes to eight Mr. Smith of Calgary (Arthur L. Smith) called and wanted to know where Jack was. Up until that time no one knew what Dad was going to do for he had acquainted no one with his decision. Mr. Smith asked frantically, "Mrs. Bracken, do you know what your husband is going to do. There are only four minutes to go and if he is not here soon, it will be too late." His nomination papers had to be signed by eight o'clock.

For a moment I hesitated - here was an opportunity to "scuttle" the whole thing by saying that I did not know where he was, which would have been correct, for by this time he most certainly should have been at the Auditorium, but that would not have been fair, and so I told him that Dad had gone to the Auditorium to speak and to be a candidate for leadership.

He thanked me hurriedly...he was in a panic and that with only four minutes to go and Dad not on the spot, everyone was tense with excitement.

Douglas (ason, R.M.B.) phoned me later on to say that everything had conspired to hold them up that night. Every traffic signal was against them, they got into a traffic jam, and arrived at one of the doors five minutes to eight, but it was not at the right entrance and had a reporter that knew Jack not been there it is doubtful if the committee would have gotten him in time to sign his nomination papers. As it was, he had just one minute to spare when the signatures were attached, that is of his seconder and mover.⁴⁶

46. Mrs. Bracken's letter, pp. 12-13

A further footnote to this dramatic incident is that the original nomination paper, examined by the writer, bears Mr. Bracken's name, incorrectly spelled, and in handwriting very similar to that of one of his sponsors.

According to contemporary accounts, Mr. Bracken's approach to the platform was marked by the tumultuous applause of a convention on its feet. The next afternoon, after two exciting ballots were taken, he was elected leader, and was greeted enthusiastically by the crowd. It is widely believed that he won the support of the delegates of the convention in spite of his promotion by the party brass.⁴⁷

The First Association Convention - 1948

The fourth Conservative leadership convention was called at the request of the retiring leader, Mr. Bracken, and opened in the Ottawa Coliseum on September 30, 1948. For the first time, it was opened by the President of the Progressive Conservative Association, Mr. J. M. Macdonnell. The keynote address was delivered by Grattan O'Leary, editor of The Ottawa Journal, and the traditional choice of French speaking and English speaking convention officers was made.

At this convention, there was an almost maximum permissible attendance of delegates. The committees, both before and during the meeting, performed

47. Lederle, "National Party Conventions: Canada Shows the Way",
op. cit., p. 129.

Film, "John Bracken, Canadian", produced by Associated Screen News for
Progressive Conservative Headquarters, private files of R. A. Bell.

their duties with efficiency and despatch. All of the proposed resolutions were considered on the floor of the convention, clause by clause, and decisions were reached. The Convention started on time, and within a leeway of 15 minutes, so did every session. Indeed the opening procession started so promptly that Mr. Drew, eventually the successful candidate, had to pay for his tardiness by running after the platform guests.

The film made of the convention shows noisy and cheering crowds, a general atmosphere of gaiety, with some serious periods. The candidates numbered only three, and Mr. George A. Drew, the winner, had a majority of 516 votes on the first ballot.⁴⁸

Since the Liberal Party had held a leadership convention in the summer of the same year, comparisons were inevitable. Prior to the opening of the Conservative gathering, there was a spirited controversy in the press, particularly the correspondence between the Liberal Winnipeg Free Press and the National Director of the Conservative Party, R. A. Bell, about the allegedly undemocratic way of choosing delegates. This question

48. Film, "Statesman in the Making", produced by McKim Advertising Limited, in private files of R.A. Bell.

Progressive Conservative Association of Canada National Convention, September 30, October 1 and 2, 1948, (hereinafter referred to as Convention, 1948) passim; tally sheets, ballots and related papers.

is examined more fully in Chapter V below.

It was considered by several qualified observers that this convention was far better organized than the Liberal convention of the summer of 1948, when Mr. St. Laurent was chosen by the retiring Prime Minister. By contrast, the Liberal rally attempted to consider unfinished business after the selection of the new leader, and failed to hold the delegates. The floor was so crowded with unauthorized persons that it was extremely difficult to carry on the convention's business.⁴⁹

"From the standpoint of excitement and enthusiasm the Conservative Convention which selected Mr. Drew surpassed the Liberal gathering...it was more of a delegates' convention than the Liberal meeting."⁵⁰

Convention with Visions of Victory - 1956

After the resignation of Mr. Drew, due to ill health, the fifth Conservative Convention was called for December 12, 1956, again in the Ottawa Coliseum, in order to choose a leader; to consider policy; and to discuss organization. The convention was opened on time by Leon Balcer, M.P., President of the Association, and

49. Ford, op. cit., p. 110-11

For a discussion of the Liberal Convention of 1948, see H.F. Quinn, "The Third National Convention of the Liberal Party", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, May, 1951, pp. 228-33.

50. Ford, op. cit., p. 111.

the keynote address was delivered by Hon. Robert L. Stanfield, newly elected Premier of Nova Scotia. The usual pattern of platform officers was followed.

This convention, the first in Canada to have nation-wide television coverage, together with copious press and radio coverage, provided an excellent jumping-off point for what has been called the 'Diefenbaker Revolution'. Since a general election came some six months later, the new leader, Mr. John Diefenbaker, and the party were able to take full advantage of the publicity thus obtained.⁵¹

Contrary to the political gossip of the time, Mr. Balcer, the co-chairman of the convention, did not walk out with some of the Quebec delegation when the new leader rose to speak. However, for a good part of the convention, he had acute laryngitis, and the Quebec vice chairman, Mr. Frederic Dorion, (later Chief Justice of Quebec) spoke for him on the platform.

The 1956 convention was regarded by partisan and non-partisan alike as a well organized, fairly run, and highly successful meeting, and served well most of the purposes attributed to political conventions. It significantly supported the survival of the convention method in Canada.

51. Convention publicity is discussed on pages 79-84 and 202-205 below.

CALL FOR CONVENTION

The convention method of choosing a leader has become the expected and the accepted method to be used by Canadian political parties. However, there are a number of aspects of the convention which are not yet fixed as a permanent part of the pattern. One of the most controversial, and one of the most important aspects is the "Call for Convention".

Where does the power to "call" rest? Who sends out the "call"? These seemingly simple questions cannot be answered as easily as might be expected. A brief summary of the facts related to the calls for the five Conservative conventions will lay the groundwork for a more detailed discussion, and will also indicate that the power to call has, in reality, shifted several times and has not yet come to rest. It also suggests, particularly in light of recent events, that there is a marked difference between the constitutional right to call a convention and the political feasibility of exercising that right.

There are three elements -- the resignation of the outgoing leader, the issuance of the call for convention, and the acceptance of the leader. One might reasonably expect that the resignation should be

tendered to the authority which bestowed the office. To illustrate, if a man were chosen by convention, or by an executive, or by a parliamentary group, he would resign to that particular body which would then arrange the means for selecting a new leader. If such procedure were followed, the answer to the location of the power to call would be straightforward. But the Conservative Party has not yet regularized its procedures sufficiently to ensure a clear answer.

The first convention, in 1927, was called by a caucus summoned by the retiring leader, Mr. Meighen. This caucus chose a temporary leader, Mr. Guthrie, and called a convention.

Mr. Bennett, who had been chosen at this convention, expressed his intention to resign in 1938, first to his colleagues in the House of Commons, and secondly to a national party conference summoned by him, which in turn called a convention.

In the spring of 1940 Dr. Manion, who was chosen at the 1938 convention, returned to the earliest procedure of resigning to caucus. Mr. Meighen was chosen leader in 1941 by a special meeting described in pages 29 to 35 above. In 1942, he indicated his intention to resign to the two party leaders of the House and the Senate. A few days later he announced to the press that

the party should have a convention, and that he had appointed an interim convention committee. Mr. Meighen himself called the convention which chose Mr. Bracken as leader.

In 1948, Mr. Bracken sent a letter of resignation to the President of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, who called a meeting of the National Executive of the Association who, in turn, called a convention.

This procedure was repeated when Mr. Drew resigned in 1956.

This brief outline of the facts concerning each of the conventions suggests the variety of ways in which the conventions have been called. A more detailed description of the steps taken to call the conventions may be of value in defining more precisely the possible sources of power to call a convention.

The call for convention in 1927 has a special significance, for it was the first time in the history of the party that the caucus relinquished to another body its authority and responsibility to choose a leader. On September 25, 1926, Mr. Meighen resigned as Prime Minister. "In announcing his retirement as leader, Mr. Meighen summoned Conservative Senators, members of

the Commons, and defeated candidates, to meet on October 11, 1926, to choose a successor."¹

At this conference, held on October 11, 1926, it was decided to hold the convention which had been discussed for several years, and a committee of six Members and four Senators was appointed to select a National Convention Committee. At the same meeting Hon. Hugh Guthrie was made temporary leader of the party in the House for the approaching parliamentary session.²

Mr. Guthrie opened the convention on October 10, 1927, and said:³

This convention as you know is the result of a resolution passed a year ago by the elected members and the defeated candidates who offered themselves during the general election of 1926. The unanimous resolution of that meeting was that a national convention of the party should be held at the earliest possible date.

This 1927 call might then be described as a delegation or transfer of the power to choose a leader from the caucus to the convention.

In August, 1937, Mr. Bennett advised his "confreres in the House of Commons that...I was unable to

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1. Canadian Annual Review, 1926-27, p. 98.
Graham, op. cit., II, pp. 478-79.
 2. Memorandum regarding The Organization Structure of the Winnipeg Convention, October 10-12, 1927. (Carbon copy, no date, probably prepared by Miss Jane Denison of Headquarters staff.)
 3. Verbatim Report: National Liberal-Conservative Convention, Oct. 10, 11, and 12, 1927, (typescript) (Hereinafter referred to as Verbatim Report, 1927).

continue as leader, but in view of the pending Ontario elections and the practical difficulties of holding a convention last year I agreed to remain until appropriate action could be taken."⁴

At a caucus meeting in January, 1938, it was agreed to notify the provincial organizations to send delegates to a conference in Ottawa in March.⁵ The conference, which was attended by 140 people, including members of both Houses of Parliament, Privy Councillors, and delegates from each province and the Yukon, was held on March 4 and 5, 1938. After reading a statement on his resignation, Mr. Bennett agreed to continue as leader during the remainder of the session of the House and until a successor was chosen at a general convention. The Conference then proceeded to make preliminary arrangements for a convention.⁶

Mr. Bennett, however, evidently felt that it was his personal responsibility to call the convention, and in his opening remarks to the convention on July 5, 1938, he said:

Ladies and Gentlemen, the duty now devolves upon me as federal leader of the Conservative party to call to order those who are present as

4. Minutes of Dominion Conservative Conference, March 4 and 5, 1938, p. 12.

5. Proceedings, 1938, p. 1.

6. Minutes of Dominion Conservative Conference, p. 12.

delegates and alternates to the National Conservative Convention, and to declare the convention duly called.

This call for convention was issued by the retiring leader in consultation with caucus and party organization.⁷

After his defeat in a by-election in February, 1942, Mr. Meighen felt that he should resign and that a convention should be called. However, by this time plans were well under way for the Port Hope Conference, held in September, 1942, and he was persuaded to delay a convention. It is possible that he and others thought that the Conference would inject new life into the party, and that both a convention and the choice of leader might be benefitted by the Conference.

He thereupon called a meeting for September 25, 1942, of an Interim Convention Committee, which consisted of nine parliamentarians. At that meeting Mr. Meighen related that the previous week he had met with the Leader of the Opposition in the House, Hon. R. B. Hanson, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Hon. C. C. Ballantyne, and they had agreed upon a convention and the appointment of the Interim Committee.

He repeated some of the remarks he had made to the press on September 23rd, when he had expressed the

7. Proceedings, 1938, p. 1.

view that a Convention of the Conservative Party should be held at an early date. He also mentioned to the press the membership of the Interim Convention Committee, which was to meet two days later.⁸ This Interim Committee, under Mr. Meighen's guidance, made plans for the establishment of a National Convention Committee to organize a convention as soon as possible.

When the convention met on December 9, 1942, Mr. Meighen was the first speaker, and he said: "Ladies and gentlemen, in my capacity as Leader of the Conservative Party and with the authority which thereto belongs, I have called this convention."⁹ It is evident that the third convention was called by the retiring leader.

In its report at the Convention, the Committee on Party Organization and Public Relations made strong arguments for party organization and included the recommendation that the "Dominion Conservative Association be the authority in which is vested the power to call all Dominion Conservative Conventions." Mr. E. F. Willis, Chairman of the Committee, explained that "the reason why this was inserted is that at times there has been need for a Dominion Conservative Convention such as this and

8. Minutes of Interim Convention Committee, Ottawa, Sept. 25, 1942, in R.A. Bell private papers.

Text of Statement Issued to the Press by Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, Sept. 23, 1942.

9. Official Report, 1942, p. 1.

there has been no body with authority to handle that convention."¹⁰

This recommendation was carried, and it appeared as if a complete change were to take place. The power to call a convention to determine policy and to consider leadership was to be vested in the nation-wide party association.

When Mr. Bracken felt compelled to resign from the leadership in 1948, he wrote to the President of the National Association, Mr. J. M. Macdonnell, on July 17, 1948.¹¹ Less than ten days later the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association met, accepted Mr. Bracken's resignation, and issued a call for convention.

In view of future developments, the procedure used at this executive meeting should be noted. "The President...quoted the relevant sections of the Constitution authorizing the Association to call conventions, and quoted the resolution passed at the last Annual Meeting of the Association authorizing the Executive Officers to exercise all the functions and authority of the Association between Annual Meetings." A resolution was then passed to hold a

10. Ibid., pp. 315, 321.

11. Letter from Mr. Bracken to Mr. Macdonnell July 17, 1948.

National Convention at the earliest possible date.¹²

When the convention met on September 30, 1948, the Chairman, Mr. Macdonnell, announced that:¹³

This great national assembly of the Progressive Conservative Party has been called by the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada under the provisions of Article IX of the Constitution, and pursuant to a request made by our leader, Hon. John Bracken in a letter to me as national president..."

When ill health forced Mr. Drew to resign the leadership in 1956, a similar procedure was followed. He sent his resignation to the President of the National Association; at a meeting of the Executive Officers a resolution was passed to hold a convention; the chairman opened the convention by citing the authority to call it.¹⁴

12. Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association, held July 26, 1948, p. 2.

NOTE: The Constitution mentioned here could not be located. However, the Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, as amended at the Seventh Annual Meeting April 17, 18 and 19, 1950, is said to be the same with reference to the relevant sections mentioned above. No major revisions of the Constitution were undertaken until 1961. (Source: Miss F. MacDonald, Headquarters Staff, and personal knowledge.) The relevant Sections, Article IX of the 1950 Constitution, and Article XI of the 1963 Constitution, are quoted below on page 52.

13. Convention, 1948, p. 3.

14. Letter from Hon. George Drew to Mr. Leon Balcer, President of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, Sept. 20, 1956.

Minutes of Meeting of Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, October 2, 1956.

NOTE: The Minutes of this meeting record the President's remarks concerning the authorization to call conventions in the same wording as that used in 1948 (see above) and continues: "He read the letter of resignation of the Leader of the Party in which Mr. Drew expressed the suggestion that at the earliest possible date a meeting of the National Executive should take place for the purpose of calling a convention to name a new Leader."

Proceedings of National Convention, December 12, 13, 14, 1956, (Type-script) (Hereinafter referred to as Proceedings, 1956), p. 2.

Thus it would appear that the fourth and fifth conventions set a pattern for the call for convention. The Association received the resignation and then issued the call for convention, and was responsible for the organization and conduct of the convention. It would be reasonable to assume that the power to call had been vested in the Association.

The Constitutions of the Party Association have provided for such an arrangement. Article IX of the 1950 Constitution stated:¹⁵

The Association shall be the authority in which is vested the power to call all Dominion Progressive Conservative Conventions, and settle all questions of representation, procedure and all other matters pertaining thereto.

In Article XI of the present Constitution, this authority has been stated in more detail:¹⁶

The National Association shall be the authority in which is vested the power to elect the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and shall call any Convention for that purpose. Subject to ratification by the delegates, the Executive Committee of the Executive Officers of the National Association shall have the authority to settle all questions of representation, procedure and all other matters pertaining thereto which are not provided for in this Constitution.

There is no doubt that the Association has the authority to call a convention when a vacancy in the

15. Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, as amended Seventh Annual Meeting, 1950.

16. Constitution of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, as amended January 18, 1963.

leadership exists. There is no doubt that caucus has relinquished its traditional right to choose its leader. However, all members of caucus are members of the Association, and it elects 22 Members of Parliament and 10 Senators to the National Executive. The Leader of the party is an Executive Officer of the Association. These constitutional provisions would seem to ensure that a convention may be called by the association, with the support and cooperation of the caucus, the executive officers and the leader.

However, no provision has been made, in precise terms, for the call for convention in case of no vacancy, nor has a definite tenure of office been stated for the Leader of the Party.¹⁷ Although the Executive Officers have on two occasions called a leadership convention -- in 1948 and in 1956 -- it is not clear whether this authority is sufficiently well established to be termed a convention in the constitutional sense.

A recent legal opinion has answered these doubts in part:¹⁸

The leader of the Progressive Conservative Party under the terms of the Constitution is to be appointed by the National Convention duly called. His appointment is for no fixed period of time and therefore is solely at the pleasure of the National Convention.

17. 1963 Constitution, Article VI(a) and (b).

18. Copy of a private and confidential letter by a distinguished Canadian Counsel loaned to writer for perusal and dated Feb. 4, 1965.

If the National Convention of the Progressive Conservative Party was properly convened, it could decide to terminate the appointment of the present leader if it saw fit to do so. No other person or group has that power.

It would seem definite that the authority to elect a leader is vested in a national convention and that such a convention would have the power to declare the office of leader vacant, even over the protests of the incumbent and then proceed to elect a new leader.

But the question still remains -- By what authority and procedure is a national convention convened? Certainly the Association itself in annual meeting has unrestricted authority to convene a convention. Can the Executive Officers of the Association on their own initiative call a Convention? Clearly, they could do so when the immediately preceding annual meeting of the Association had authorized them "to exercise all the functions and authority of the Association" (see 1948 and 1956 calls above) as was the practice before 1959. Since that date no such authorization has been given to the Executive Officers in specific terms, the Executive Officers apparently relying upon the belief that an executive even without it may exercise between annual meetings all the "functions and authority" of an association. But is this necessarily so? Might it be that legally and constitutionally only the Association itself, in the absence

of a valid delegation of its authority, could call a convention? These questions are not susceptible of dogmatic answers.

If the Executive Officers without some specific delegation from the Association did act to call a Convention, when the leader had resigned, it seems clear that no issue would be raised. But if they did so over the protest of an incumbent leader there are three possibilities. First, the leader or someone on his behalf might apply to the courts for an injunction. It does seem most unlikely that the courts would interfere in such a controversy, when there is no specific legal authority one way or another. Secondly, the convention so convened could determine it was irregularly called and could dissolve itself and restore the status quo ante. Thirdly, and much more likely, the convention so convened would declare itself regularly convened and assert its mastery over its own procedures. It could then proceed either to confirm the incumbent leader to office or to declare the office vacant and to elect a new leader.¹⁹

However, within the realm of the art of the possible, reconciliation of these problems would likely be

19. The subject was discussed in conversation with several barristers, including Hon. R.A. Bell, Q.C., Hon. D.M. Fleming, Q.C., as well as other members of the Party and of Headquarters staff.

achieved before the extreme position finally occurred.

Any conflict among the leader, the caucus, the executive officers and the association, or any combination of these, could be even more critical than a party constitutional crisis. Should the association attempt to force a convention without the support of the others; should the executive officers insist that a convention be called over the wishes of the caucus, which is represented on the executive; these and other possibilities could result in "a bloodbath". Although the caucus has ostensibly relinquished its powers to the convention, it still wields considerable authority, since it must have confidence in its leader, and it must support the leader in whom it has confidence.

During the recent controversy in February, 1965, one writer dealt succinctly with the other problem mentioned above: "...short of the national association as a whole being called into session, the decision on whether or not to call a leadership convention rests in the hands of the leader."²⁰

20. George Bain in Globe and Mail, February 8, 1965. Constitutionally and legally, this may not be completely accurate. Practically, it probably represents the truth. Although the meetings of party caucus and of the Party Association Executive Officers which were held on February 5 and 6, 1965, were widely reported in the press, most of the reports were inaccurate in factual detail and are not referred to here.

In the procedure followed in 1948 and 1956, the leader took the initiative when he wrote to the association president. Although constitutional interpretation would suggest that, in the absence of specific provisions for the removal of the limitation of term for a leader, the convention could declare the office vacant, political feasibility indicates that perhaps the initiative actually still rests with the leader.

PRE CONVENTION COMMITTEES AND ARRANGEMENTS

The work of organizing a large, nation-wide gathering such as a political convention is broad in scope and embraces a staggering burden of detail. The first Conservative convention required nearly 12 months of organization. However, the patterns which that Convention Organization Committee worked out have been followed fairly closely. This chapter deals with these arrangements undertaken in preparation for the convention. The two types of committees - the convention executive committee and the arrangements committee - will be considered, with particular attention to their development throughout the pre-convention organization period of each of the five conventions. In addition, some mention will be made, so far as available material permits, of the choice of time and place, of convention finance and publicity.

However, no attempt is made in this chapter to provide a handbook for the organization of political conventions, for the very practical reasons that the file of papers dealing with procedures, minutes, and memoranda is incomplete; and that a number of decisions and instructions seem to have been discussed on the telephone or in meetings without benefit of written reports. Nonetheless, it may be of value to attempt a limited analysis of the

pre-convention organization and to note the changes which have taken place over thirty years. Since a large part of the pre-convention work deals with the selection and documentation of delegates, this important aspect will be discussed separately in Chapter V below.

In this preliminary phase of convention activities two types of committee may be considered. The first type is the convention organization or executive committee, whose function is to initiate, supervise and coordinate the plans for the convention. The second type includes the arrangements committees, which take care of transportation, housing, reception, decorations, and, in the earlier years, finance. With few exceptions, over the years these committees have, in their personnel and functions, subordinated political considerations to efficiency; they have a specialized job to do. The names of the chairmen of these committees, together with an estimate of their size, are set out in Table III.

Pre-Convention Organization - 1927

At a meeting held on October 11, 1926, of the parliamentary caucus and defeated candidates, a committee consisting of six Members and three Senators was appointed to name a National Convention Committee. This committee was set up on the basis of nine representatives each from Ontario and Quebec, and three each from the other provinces,

TABLE III

CHAIRMEN
PRE CONVENTION ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEES

	<u>1927</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1956</u>
National Convention or Association Executive	H. Guthrie, P.C., K.C., M.P. 39	J.R. MacNicol, M.P. M. Dupré, P.C., K.C. 39	H.R. Milner, K.C. 46	J.M. Macdonnell, K.C., M.P. 37	Leon Balcer, Q.C., M.P. 39
Organization or Executive	Maj. Gen. A.D. McRae, M.P. (Organization and Finance) 12	J.R. MacNicol, M.P. M. Dupré, P.C., K.C. (Organization and Publicity) 5 plus**	H.R. Milner, K.C. 6	J.M. Macdonnell, K.C., M.P. 5	Leon Balcer, Q.C., M.P. R.A. Bell, Q.C. 5
Transportation	J.R. MacNicol 12	A.J. Brooks, M.P. 9	J. T. Hackett, K.C., M.P. 9	G.R. Boucher, K.C., M.P. 9	D.H. Morrow M.L.A. 10
Local Arrangements	J.A. Banfield (Local Winnipeg Committee) 6 sub-committees n.a.	H.P. Hill, K.C. (Local Ottawa C'ttee) 6 sub-committees plus	L.D.M. Baxter 5 sub-committees plus	M.G. O'Leary 6 sub-committees 21	A.E. Honeywell, Q.C. 5 sub-c'ttees n.a.
Publicity	J.S. Douglas 12	Included in Organization			
Finance	Included in Organization	H.A. Stewart, P.C., K.C., M.P. J.C.H. Dussault, K.C. 2 plus	H.R. Milner, K.C. A.C. Casselman, K.C., M.P. 2 plus	Assumed by National Headquarters	

** "Plus" indicates 'power to add'.

Sources: Memoranda and Minutes for each convention.

except Prince Edward Island, which contributed two members. The Chairman was Hon. Hugh Guthrie, Temporary House Leader, and the Secretary was A. W. Merriam.

Four sub-committees were appointed as follows:

1. Organization and Finance, with one representative from each province, in addition to the Chairman, Secretary, and the Chairman of the National Convention Committee.
2. Publicity, with the same type of membership.
3. Transportation, with the same type of membership.
4. Local Winnipeg Committee, with a Chairman appointed with power to add. This sub-committee had six additional sub-committees: Convention Hall, Housing, Decorating, Reception, and Women's Reception Committees.

The National Convention Committee had the power to add to its numbers, and reached about 40 members, in addition to a provision for alternates to members who could not attend the meetings.¹

At its several meetings, the National Convention Committee determined the appointment of delegates, the financial requirements for the convention, as well as the time and place of meeting. There was considerable

1. Memorandum regarding Organization Structure of the Winnipeg Convention, October 10-12, 1927.

discussion as to the location; finally Winnipeg was chosen because it had superior hotel accommodation, and the choice of the prairie city might encourage "the future success in the party in winning seats west of Ottawa."²

Further information on the preliminary organization of the 1927 convention is scanty. There is mention in the proceedings that the provincial organizations worked independently to achieve the success indicated by the large attendance. Reference is also made to the fact that the Macdonald-Cartier Club of Winnipeg had complete charge of the convention housing arrangements.³

Although there is little documentation relating to this first convention, reference made to it at the 1938 convention suggests the influence which the organization set up in 1927 had on subsequent conventions:

(Mr. MacNicol, Chairman of 1938 Convention):
I could not have done it (organize the 1938 Convention) had it not been for the work that General McRae did to organize the great Winnipeg Convention in 1927. This convention is a success because we have followed almost totally the splendid plan laid out in 1927 by General A.D. McRae. All he did we have copied.⁴

National Conservative Convention Committee - 1938

The method followed in appointing the organizing committee for the 1938 convention seems to have been

2. John W. Lederle, National Organization of the Liberal and Conservative Parties in Canada, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Michigan, May, 1942, p. 78.

3. Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 57, 260..

4. Proceedings, 1938, p. 67.

unnecessarily complicated. The Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett called a Dominion Conservative Conference consisting of Privy Councillors, Senators, Members, "unelected candidates", and representatives of Provincial Associations, at Ottawa on March 4 and 5, 1938. At the meeting he announced what everyone knew, that he intended to resign from the leadership, and wished to have a convention called.

A Nominating Committee consisting of two members from each of the provinces, was selected by the delegates present. This Nominating Committee reported back the personnel of three ad hoc committees - to exist only for the conference itself - Organization, Finance and Policy and Convention. The membership of these committees was chosen on the ratio of three from Ontario, two from Quebec, and one from each of the other seven provinces.

The Policy and Convention committee, numbering 36 members, brought in a report the next day which recommended, among other points, that the conference should set up a National Convention Committee. Much discussion followed, and a motion was carried which provided -

That the appointment of the members to such committee be referred to the various provincial organizations with instructions to return names of such members within two weeks from date hereof.

Another motion provided that the basis for representation be: nine each from Ontario and Quebec; three each from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, two from Prince Edward Island and one from the Yukon, totalling 39 members.⁵

An additional provision that alternate members for the committee could be appointed by the various provincial organizations "in order to reduce travelling expenses" possibly reflects the financial difficulties encountered in preparing for this convention.⁶

The first meeting of the National Conservative Convention Committee for 1938 was held in Ottawa on April 9th. Its authority seemed to be derived from the caucus and from the provincial associations. The reports of the decisions (or lack of decisions) reached by the circuitous committee route reflect this divided authority and the confusion which was to prevail throughout the period of this convention. (See above, page 27).

However, one of the first items of business was the appointment of two joint chairmen and two joint secretaries, French and English. The Chairmen of the Local Arrangements and the Transportation sub-committees were appointed; personnel on the Resolutions and the

5. Minutes of Dominion Conservative Conference, March 4 and 5, 1938,
pp. 4, 6, 11, 12, 13.

6. Ibid., p. 13.

Publicity Committees were to be selected later. There seemed to be little difficulty in deciding to hold the convention in Ottawa, but there was considerable discussion as to the most suitable date. The probability of provincial elections in Saskatchewan and in Manitoba were the determining factors in deciding on July dates.⁷

The National Convention Committee decided to leave any unfinished business in the hands of the Convention Organization Committee, with power to act, and to make committee appointments after consultation with party provincial executives.

In its final form the structure of the pre-convention committees placed the organization committee on the same level as the other committees:

National Convention Sub-committees

1. Organization (Publicity added)
Joint Chairmen, Joint Secretaries, Assistant Secretary, with power to add.
2. Transportation
Chairman and one representative from each province.
3. Finance Committee
Two joint treasurers appointed.
4. Local Ottawa Committee
Chairman appointed with power to add,

7. Ibid. passim.

Sub-committees:

- a) Convention Hall
- b) Decorations
- c) Housing
- d) Local Finance
- e) Advertising and Publicity
- f) Reception, local transportation and entertainment

For the first time, a pre-convention Resolutions Committee was appointed well in advance of the opening of the convention, with J. H. Harris, M.P. as Chairman, to consider and correlate the resolutions submitted from Conservative organizations and constituencies. It was understood that this committee was to prepare the material to be used for the convention Resolutions Committee in order to facilitate discussion at the convention. Its membership was made up exclusively of Members and Senators, "since the House was in session and it was easy to secure cooperation."⁸

There may have been a number of meetings of these sub-committees, but no records are available to verify this possibility. The Transportation Committee conducted a lengthy correspondence which was successful in gaining cooperation between the railway agents and the provincial chairmen of the Convention Committee, thus establishing reduced rates for large numbers of delegates who travelled together from distant centres. A questionnaire was sent to all delegates to determine their

8. Memorandum re Organization Structure of the Ottawa Convention, July 5-7, 1938, (carbon typescript).

accommodation requirements, and it can be imagined that there were many problems in finding suitable housing for some two or three thousand people who came to Ottawa.

At the second meeting of the National Conservative Convention Committee, held on June 11th, it was decided, after lengthy discussion, to extend invitations to the Mayor of Ottawa and to the retiring leader, Mr. Bennett, to address the convention. The selection of permanent chairmen of the convention and the composition of the convention committees were agreed upon, but specific details were omitted from the minutes.⁹

Although the structure of the pre-convention committee indicates that all of the committees were on an equal footing, in fact the Organization Committee acted as a coordinating committee making most of the final decisions. An Ottawa office was established in order to centralize activities, and most of the letters and memoranda in the existing files are signed by Mr. John R. MacNicol, for the National Convention Committee. Since the material which has been available for this convention is obviously incomplete, it may be unfair to pass judgment. The party organization in 1938 was almost nonexistent in many parts of Canada, a fact which probably made it difficult to obtain the needed assistance in the provinces and in the

9. Minutes, Second Meeting, National Conservative Convention Committee, June 11, 1938.

constituencies. Whatever the reasons, the 1938 convention was the least well organized of the Conservative conventions.^{9a}

Pre-Convention Organization - 1942

When the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen announced on September 23, 1942, that the Conservative Party would hold a convention, he also announced the appointment of an Interim Convention Committee, which met two days later.

At this initial meeting, the Interim Committee, consisting of Mr. Meighen, nine Members and Senators and the Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, determined the basis for the National Convention Committee. The Provincial Conservative Associations were to select representatives on the base of three each from Ontario and Quebec and one each from the other provinces. Convention organization in the province of Quebec was to be the responsibility of Gustave Monette, K.C.

The National Convention Committee was given wide powers of discretion and decision. It was authorized to add to its numbers. It was given power to decide on the organization, composition, place and date of the national convention, to appoint sub-committees, and to supervise all the arrangements for the convention.

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. H. R. Milner, was also appointed to act as Treasurer, and Mr.

9a. Proceedings, 1938, passim; 1938 Convention papers.

R. A. Bell was appointed Secretary. The suggested date for the convention was the end of November, 1942, and the most likely site was Winnipeg, but the final decision rested with the Convention Committee.

With the addition of women and youth representatives, the final membership of the Convention Committee numbered forty-six. Its first meeting was held on October 6, 1942, in Ottawa.¹⁰

The major decisions concerning the rules and categories for the selection of delegates were reached. Mr. Meighen's "Open Door" policy, by which he hoped to attract dissident members of other political parties, was carefully considered and a resolution passed to implement his views. (See page 103 for discussion.) The place and date of the convention were decided. The executive and the arrangements committees, with personnel, were appointed as follows:

1. Executive Committee
Chairman, Secretary and 4 members, with power to add.
2. Transportation Committee
Chairman and 8 members, appointed by the provincial delegations.
3. Finance Committee
Two joint treasurers appointed, with power to appoint.

10. Minutes of Interim Convention Committee, Sept. 25, 1942.

4. Winnipeg Local Arrangements Committee
Chairman and Secretary, with power to add.
In addition the following sub-committees
each to have chairman and secretary:

- a) Convention Hall and Decorations
- b) Housing
- c) Advertising and Publicity
- d) Local Finance
- e) Reception, Transportation and
Entertainment

Two additional committees were appointed in order to make advance preparations for the work of the convention committees. A Resolutions and Policy Committee, including a Chairman and Secretary, one representative to be designated by the delegations from each of the provinces, and four women, was appointed to consider party policy and to correlate resolutions submitted by constituencies and associations. A Committee on Party Organization composed of nine provincial representatives and five women was appointed to study "all questions relating to Party organization".

The Executive Committee was authorized to deal with any unfinished business, and the meeting was adjourned.¹¹

An office was opened on Wellington Street in Ottawa, and the staff, under the direction of the Secretary of the National Convention Committee, carried out the

11. Minutes, First Meeting National Conservative Convention Committee,
October 6, 1942.

procedures for selection of delegates, described below. In addition, the members of the National Convention Committee, the Members of Parliament and Senators were kept informed of the arrangements made for the convention. The major portion of the work of the Housing and Transportation Committees was conducted from the central office, as well as arrangements for publicity, radio coverage, and other details in connection with the convention.

It is not known how many meetings of the Executive Committee were held during this period. The agenda for a proposed meeting to be held on November 4th contains eighteen items of business, which included receiving a number of reports on the progress of convention committees, and of the agenda.

The difficulties of arranging travel for a large gathering such as this during wartime are underlined by an incident mentioned in Mackenzie King's diary. Evidently Mr. John Hackett, Chairman of the Transportation Committee (later appointed by the Liberal government to the Senate) and Mr. R. A. Bell found it necessary to go to the highest source in order to facilitate travel arrangements.

(October 24) John Hackett, a prominent Conservative from Montreal, and R. A. Bell, Hanson's secretary, came to see Mackenzie King 'with a letter to ask for reduced rates for those attending the Winnipeg convention...I suggested giving them the same rates as those in existence when the C.C.F. held their convention'.¹²

The delegates were provided with detailed information regarding group rates for travel to Winnipeg, which could be arranged through the provincial representative of the Transportation Committee.¹³

The second of the two meetings of the National Convention Committee was held in Winnipeg on December 8, 1942. Reports were given on the issuance of credentials to some 1,061 delegates and 392 alternates, and on the arrangements made by the Winnipeg Local Committee. Proposed nominations for permanent officers of the convention, and for Chairmen of the Convention Committees were discussed and agreed upon. The rules of procedure were approved, and the agenda was discussed, item by item, and approved. All was in readiness for the opening of the convention on the following day.

It may be recalled that the original committees were appointed by the retiring leader, Mr. Meighen, to carry on the work of organizing this 1942 convention.

12. J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, Vol. I, 1939-1944, (Toronto, 1960), p. 455.

13. Memorandum regarding Transportation to National Conservative Convention at Winnipeg, December 9, 10 and 11, 1942.

Although such a procedure cannot be described as democratic, it was very efficient. The authority to make and carry out decisions was concentrated in the Executive Committee, to which the arrangements committee reported. Mr. Meighen considered that he, as leader, had the power to call a convention, and he delegated the administrative part of that power to his committees. It is of interest to record that, although the convention was organized by autocratic means, the delegates at the convention itself refused to accept direction from the platform, and insisted upon exercising their rights and performing the vital function of selecting their own leader.

Pre-Convention Organization - 1948

By the time the fourth Conservative Convention was called, the party had been successful in establishing a nation-wide organization which worked very well. Every province and almost every constituency had an association which was effective. Immediately following Mr. Bracken's resignation as leader to the president of the national association, the machinery for organizing the convention was set up. Authority was delegated from the national association, through its executive officers, to an executive committee, which supervised most of the administrative details in connection with the convention.

The first meeting of the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association for the purpose of calling a convention was held in Ottawa on July 26, 1948. After the resolution was passed to call a convention, reports on the classes of delegates and the rules for their choice were accepted.

Consideration was then given to the appointment of committees, and the pattern established in 1927 was continued, with minor variations. Of course, the authority was bestowed, not by the caucus, but by the National Association. As indicated in Table III, Mr. J. M. Macdonnell, President of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, became Chairman of the Convention Executive Committee.

The following sub-committees were appointed:

- 1) Convention Executive Committee
Chairman: President of the National Association.
Members: National Director of the Party, two Members of Parliament and one member of the Association Executive
- 2) Transportation Committee
Chairman and nine provincial representatives
- 3) Local Committee in Ottawa with sub-committees:
 - a) Convention Hall and Decorations
 - b) Housing Accommodation
 - c) Reception
 - d) Entertainment
 - e) Advertising and Publicity
 - f) Local Finance

This meeting, at which the executive officers of the national association became the National Convention Committee, also considered a number of other matters and reached decisions almost immediately. The rules of procedure and the rules for the conduct of the election of the leader were adopted. A draft agenda for the convention was fully considered, and approved. The Chairmen of the Resolutions and the Organization and Public Relations Committees were appointed. The Convention Executive Committee was authorized to act on behalf of the Executive Officers.¹⁴

Most of the administrative work in connection with the certification of delegates, arrangements for speakers, cooperation with the news media, preparation for the balloting, and all the other numerous details was done in the national headquarters office, with the staff working in double shifts.¹⁵

The Convention Executive Committee met on August 23rd to receive reports on the progress made in the arrangements for the convention, and to discuss other details such as the choice of temporary chairmen, the appointment of a Returning Officer for the leadership election, an invitation to Newfoundland to participate

14. Minutes of Meeting of Executive Officers, July 26, 1948.

15. Williams, op. cit., p. 90.

in the convention. Another meeting of the Executive was announced for September 13th, but it is not clear whether this refers to the Convention Executive Committee, or to the Executive Officers of the Association. In either case, there is no record of such a meeting. It would appear that most of the decisions and their execution were carried out at the national headquarters, with the executive committee providing over-all policy supervision.¹⁶

Pre-Convention Organization - 1956

The resignation of Mr. Drew was sent to the President of the Association on September 20, 1956. At the meeting of the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association, which was held on October 2nd, most of the policy decisions were made; within one week the executive committee and the arrangements committees were in operation. Ten weeks later, on December 12th, the convention was opened.

The National Association Executive Officers met only on this one occasion to plan the convention. The now familiar decisions were reached with reference to classes of delegates, rules for their choice, rules for procedure and for election of the leader; the draft agenda; issuance of contracts for services. A Convention Executive

¹⁶. Agenda and Minutes, Convention Executive Committee Meeting, Aug. 23, 1948.

Committee was appointed and given wide powers to act. The appointment of all required sub-committees, the negotiations with the C.B.C., supervision of local arrangements, certification of delegates -- all these matters were delegated to the Executive Committee. The members included the President of the National Association, the National Director, the National President of the Women's Association, a former National Director and a member of the 1948 Convention Executive Committee -- five persons. The time and place for the convention, which matters will be discussed below, were also determined.¹⁷

The Convention Executive Committee held four formal meetings, two in October and two in November. Since four of the five members lived within a short distance of Ottawa, they no doubt conferred informally when occasion required.

As reported in the minutes available of these meetings, the preparations for the convention were conducted with a minimum of problems. Two incidents are of interest, although they have little bearing upon the actual organization work. At an early meeting it was decided to invite Grattan O'Leary, prominent journalist

17. Minutes of Meeting of Executive Officers of Progressive Conservative Association, October 2, 1956.

and lively speaker to deliver the keynote address. However, the Nova Scotia provincial general election on October 30th made Hon. Robert Stanfield the new premier, and he was immediately asked to make the address. Possibly it was considered that the sight of a newly victorious leader would be more beneficial for the morale of the delegates than the sound of a distinguished orator.¹⁸

During the pre-convention period, the President of the National Association, M. Leon Balcer, announced his intention to become a candidate for the leadership. He resigned as Chairman of the Convention Executive Committee, and at its meeting of November 27th Mr. R. A. Bell assumed the Chairmanship. The ballot books, which had already been printed with the signatures of the national association president and the national director, had to be destroyed and a new supply ordered, since "it was felt that he (M. Balcer) would be caused embarrassment by the appearance of his signature on this official document."¹⁹

Two weeks before the convention opened, the National Director, as Secretary of the Convention Executive Committee, sent a long, detailed report on the plans and

18. As a comment upon the growing efficiency of the party in organizing a large convention it may be recalled that, in 1938, the dates for the convention were set in consideration of possible provincial elections. (See page 64 above.) In 1956, some of the headquarters staff were sent to Nova Scotia to work in the provincial campaign for six weeks, but the convention work was carried on.

19. His signature was also on all the credentials already issued to delegates, but it was virtually impossible to recall them on that date.

decisions for the convention to the Executive Officers of the Association, on the understanding that they could call a meeting should they be dissatisfied with any details. The meeting was not called. It may be suggested that, by 1956, the small convention executive committee had proven its ability to organize with efficiency and despatch a national party leadership convention.²⁰

The local arrangements for the 1956 Ottawa convention were made by the Local Arrangements Committee and its five sub-committees -- Convention Hall and Decorations, Local Finance, Reception, Housing and Entertainment. Their work required a great deal of technical skill as well as ability to secure cooperation. The general chairman and secretary coordinated the work of the various committees in order to ensure a smooth operation. Among the papers dealing with these matters for the last convention is a four-page memorandum outlining the duties of these sub-committees. The diverse items which were to be provided include catering facilities for 4,000 people for two meals a day at the Coliseum; allotment of all accommodation; arrangements with local transportation company for

20. Minutes of Meeting of Executive Officers of Progressive Conservative Association, October 2, 1956.

Minutes of Meetings of Convention Executive Committee, October 9, October 20, November 27, 1956.

Agenda for Convention Executive Committee Meeting, November 7, 1956.

Memorandum to Executive Officers of Progressive Conservative Association, from National Director, November 29, 1956.

bus service from all hotels and motels to the Convention Hall; provision for loudspeakers, special lighting and signs for many purposes.²¹ The special facilities required for the mass media will be discussed in detail below.

In addition to the pre-convention committees and their work, some other aspects of the preparations for the convention deserve consideration. The arrangements for publicity -- the provision of space and services for the news media; the sources of funds to pay the convention costs, and the selection of time and place are discussed briefly.

Publicity

The importance of publicity for a political party need not be underlined here. Favourable dissemination of information on a leadership convention is of benefit to the party, to the new leader, and may even provide some educational value for the general public. The long-term significance of publicity for a national convention, and the role which it might play in the political contest are discussed below in the concluding chapter. However, at this point it may be of interest to describe briefly the organization of publicity -- the facilities required, the services performed, the cooperation between the party and

21. Minutes of Meeting of Local Arrangements Committee, October 4, 1956.
Local Arrangements Committee -- Outline of Duties, n.d.

the press, radio and television personnel.

The Conservative Party in Canada was the first party to make extensive use of radio in the coverage of its 1927 convention. As reported in MacNicol's book, "The words of the speakers were broadcast by general "hook-up" to the remotest parts of the country, reaching an audience of hundreds of thousands of people."²²

However, the wartime convention of 1942, was not covered very extensively because it was the policy of the C.B.C., or the government, not to give radio time to political events of a partisan nature. In his address to the convention, Mr. Meighen attacked the C.B.C. for this policy, and indicated that no coverage was given. However, in the film of the convention, two microphones were visible. Perhaps one was for the public address system and the other for a local radio station.²³

The convention in 1948 was thoroughly covered by radio and press. Interview booths were built for on-the-spot interviews. Press conferences were held before and during the convention, at which leadership prospects, party policy and similar matters were discussed.

Coverage of the 1956 convention included for the first time in Canadian political history the use of

22. MacNicol, op. cit., p. 21.

23. Official Report, 1942, pp. 34-42.
Film, "John Bracken Canadian".

television for a political gathering. In a memorandum to the Executive Officers of the Association, it was stated:²⁴

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is making available ten hours of television time on the National Network. This will include two hours on each of the three afternoons of the Convention proceedings, one hour on the first evening of the Convention and three hours on the second evening of the Convention, at which time the nominators and seconders of the candidates for leadership, and the candidates themselves, will be heard.

It should be observed that the convention executive committee made no major change in its agenda to accommodate the television cameras. The opening ceremonies were moved from morning to afternoon, to take advantage of television, but the rest of the agenda was followed as in past conventions. Six of its allotted ten hours were in the less than prime afternoon time. The remaining four hours were divided -- one hour for the keynote address of Premier Stanfield, and three hours for the nomination speeches on the second evening.²⁵

The organization of the facilities and services to be rendered the press (meaning all of the mass media - daily and weekly newspapers, periodicals, radio and television) began as soon as the convention was called.

24. Memorandum from W. L. Rowe, National Director, November 29, 1956.

25. For a description of the handling of television time by the Liberal convention in 1958, as well as a detailed description of the entire convention, see Norman Ward, "The Liberals in Convention", in Thorburn, Political Parties in Canada, p. 42.

The director of public relations and his staff participated in discussions of planning with the convention committees, and worked closely with the Local Arrangements Committee. (See Table III).

Two members of headquarters staff, one French-speaking and one English-speaking, were designated press relations officers. A communications coordinator was appointed to see that the various media were provided with the services they required -- complicated cable installations, soundproof rooms, telephone and wire service installations, office space.

Newspapers, magazines, and radio stations across Canada, as well as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, were invited to send representatives. All members of the press who wished to come were registered and provided with the identification necessary to give them access to the convention. A large area of the Coliseum was set aside for the use of the press, with every facility, including a snack bar and a lounge.

On the convention floor, between the platform and the delegates' seats was a very long press table for the "working press" -- those reporters who had a daily deadline. To one side, just off the floor, was space reserved for the weekly and periodical press. Special stands were built for the television cameras to be used on the convention floor.

Radio interview booths were constructed at the edge of the floor. The baffles installed in the ceiling, which were a Tory blue, were used by the Liberal convention in 1958, and are still in use at the Coliseum.

Two rooms were allocated for the use of a battery of secretaries and translators who worked closely with the headquarters duplicating service, moved to the Coliseum for the occasion, to produce press copies of all major speeches, in both languages.

In addition, the press was supplied with biographical sketches of dozens of delegates, ordinary and distinguished, who might be suitable for interviews. The speeches of the nominators, seconders and candidates were prepared in these rooms for the early but restricted use of the press. (They could not be put on the news wires until after the commencement of delivery.) Members of headquarters staff were available at all times to supply written and verbal information on party matters for the press, radio and television personnel.

Not only did the parliamentary press gallery move into the Coliseum; the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association sent a large representation. Private and public radio also sent staff. The exact number of press representatives who attended is not known, but there was accommodation for over 150 at the press table on the convention

floor. The C.B.C. sent a very large staff to look after its first political convention telecast.

The public relations staff of the party took care to see that the much publicized new medium did not encroach upon the "working" press, which still was of vital importance. The party was well aware that the printed word and the radio played just as influential a role as the television.²⁶

Publicity, good or bad, is essential to the modern political party. In 1956, the Conservative Party organized its services rendered the press in a way which earned it praise. There is no doubt that the party and the new leader benefitted from the publicity of its convention, and made full use of it six months later in the general election of June, 1957.

Financing the Convention

Reference should be made to the sources of funds and costs of conventions, although such information is fragmentary.

There is no record of sources of funds of the 1927 convention.

During the course of the 1938 convention, one of the chairmen, Mr. MacNicol, remarked, "I am not for-

26. Source: Interview with R.B. Coates, Public Relations Officer, 1956 convention.

Author's personal experience and observations.

getting, too, those who have dug down deep into their pockets to help make this Convention a success." It can only be guessed that the major portion of contributions for the convention came from twelve men, who were offered the opportunity to be delegates, but such an incident did not occur in subsequent conventions.²⁷ (See below, Chapter V, page 98.)

In an entry in his diary some time in March, 1944, Mackenzie King made a reference to party finances: "...knowing how the C.P.R. has been lobbying against the government, supplying funds for Conservative conventions, Bracken's campaigns..."²⁸

Apart from the brief mention made of the contributions to the 1938 convention, mentioned above, there is no other information available for the earlier conventions. However, in 1948 and 1956, most of the money for the conventions came from the general party funds. Although no special drive for funds was made for these conventions, it has been suggested that the contributors to the party were asked to increase their donations in view of the approaching convention. It has been remarked that the big contributors would probably have made their donations because they were keenly interested in the outcome of the convention, but

27. Proceedings, 1938, p. 56; Memorandum of May 18, 1938, to National Convention Committee.

28. J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, Vol. I, 1939-1944 (Toronto, 1960), p. 649.

they would not appear at the convention as delegates or in any other capacity. Apparently large contributors, such as banks, corporations and industries, prefer to remain anonymous.

The Local Finance Committee of the convention sought contributions from merchants and restaurateurs who would benefit from the influx of visitors to the convention city. This committee might, in each convention city, have raised some \$2,000 to \$3,000, which probably was put into the convention local expense fund.

The records do provide the total cost of the conventions, although details are not available. The cost of decorations, printing of pamphlets and credentials and rent of the Winnipeg auditorium for the 1927 convention, was approximately \$20,000.²⁹ The 1938 convention encountered financial problems, and costs were held to a minimum. The audited statement indicated disbursements, excluding the cost of the Coliseum, were \$10,167.67.³⁰ The 1942 Winnipeg convention is estimated to have cost between \$14,000 and \$16,000, less than the allotted budget of \$20,000.³¹ The increased cost of labour and building materials is reflected in the very high cost of the 1948 convention - \$52,000, including \$13,000 for the Coliseum.³²

29. Williams, op. cit., p. 103.

30. Auditor's Report, Nov. 23, 1938.

31. R.A. Bell, Secretary of 1942 Convention.

32. Williams, op. cit., p. 103.

Extensive alterations were made in the Ottawa Coliseum for the 1956 convention, including committee rooms, a sturdy platform, and the complicated installations for television. It was estimated that the party spent approximately \$76,000.³³

Since national conventions are held at irregular intervals, the means of financing them have not as yet taken on any significance of note.

Time and Place

The matter of time and place for a convention deserves a special word, for decisions on these matters could have political implications. The dates set are usually dependent upon the availability of facilities in the city selected, or, as mentioned in discussion of the 1938 convention, upon other important events such as provincial elections. The site for a large convention to be held in Canada has been limited to the major cities which have the accommodation and large auditorium or meeting place required. These cities could be Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Ottawa, and Vancouver. The last is usually ruled out because of its extreme geographical location. Montreal and Toronto have been eliminated because of their rivalry. Almost all Canadian political

33. Interview with member of Headquarters staff.

conventions have been held in Ottawa, the national capital, or Winnipeg, the centrally located city. The Liberal Party has had its four conventions in Ottawa, and the Conservatives have met twice in Winnipeg and three times in Ottawa. The Conservative Party chose Winnipeg in 1927, apparently because it was central, had the facilities, and its selection might encourage the western party workers. Ottawa was chosen in 1938, probably because it was the national capital. In 1942, it may be recalled, Mr. Meighen was most anxious to persuade Mr. Bracken to enter the race, and perhaps he thought that the location of the convention in Mr. Bracken's own capital might be convenient. In addition, the Coliseum at Ottawa was occupied by troops, and accommodation in the capital was very scarce in war time.³⁴

The discussion about location for the 1948 convention took some time at the first meeting of the Executive. After further information was requested and provided as to accommodation in Ottawa, Montreal and Winnipeg, a ballot was taken and the decision was in favour of Ottawa. The motion to hold the gathering in the national capital was moved by a Member from Winnipeg

34. Interview, R.K. Finlayson.
Interview, R.A. Bell.
Williams, op. cit., p. 85.

and seconded by a Member from Quebec. Once the city was settled upon, it was moved by John G. Diefenbaker, M.P., (to be one of the candidates) and seconded by George C. Nowlan, K.C., that "the Convention be held in Ottawa on Thursday, Friday and Saturday -- September 30th, October 1st and October 2nd."³⁵

Ottawa was selected as the location for the 1956 convention for a rather special reason. One memorandum contained in the 1956 files has some interesting comments on the matter of location.

...Ottawa as the capital city, is important from the point of view that it is neutral in so far as advantage to aspirants to the leadership is concerned.

What I am endeavouring to emphasize is the suggestion that for the peace and order of the meeting the decision as to time and place, after survey, should have been reached so that members of the Executive will be convinced that it is the right place.

At this particular Convention, it is believed that the greatest hay will be made through the media of television...the best mass market for television is in Eastern Canada.³⁶

At the first meeting of the Executive Officers, the National Director reported that a survey had been made

35. Minutes, July 26, 1948, of Meeting of Executive Officers, Progressive Conservative Association.

36. Memorandum, Private, Confidential and Anonymous, to W.L. Rowe, (National Director), September, 1956.

in Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal and Ottawa of the facilities for meeting and accommodation. The meeting was then asked to consider three localities -- Winnipeg, Montreal and Ottawa. Mention was made of the facilities available in Montreal and Ottawa for bilingual television coverage. After a ballot was taken, Ottawa was the choice made.³⁷

There is no evidence, with the 1942 exception, that a place or time was chosen for the benefit of a particular aspirant. In a country of large areas and small population, the practical considerations of travel, and available facilities probably prevail over any political influences in such a decision.

Comment

The committees which carry out the pre-convention organization tasks are essentially working committees; they have a highly specialized job to do, and non-political skills are just as important qualifications for their chairmen as political ability.

A general observation which may be made about the development of these committees since the first convention in 1927 is that the trend seems in this particular, to be away from political party federalism. The

37. Minutes, Meeting of Executive Officers of Progressive Conservative Association, Oct. 2, 1956.

earlier committees had personnel representative of the provinces, in varying numbers, according to population, or in a fixed ratio. The last two pre-convention committees have, in fact, ignored the federal aspects in favour of a highly centralized small executive committee. The only vestige of federal representation is on the Transportation Committee, and that remains because regional representation is useful in making travel arrangements from various centres. The federal aspects of these pre-convention arrangements may be found in the provincial and constituency associations, which also work for the convention; they are also found in the convention committees, discussed in Chapter VII.

One may speculate as to whether this concentration of power and control over the convention machinery has been used for the advantage of a particular candidate. The impression formed from discussing this matter with a few people who have been on executive committees is that such committees, or their members, may privately favour an aspirant, but they have not let it be known in public, nor have they permitted their preference to influence decisions on convention matters.

In his account of the 1956 convention,
Professor Meisel writes:³⁸

A careful scrutiny of the way in which the machinery of the convention was set up reveals no evidence of the established leadership trying to take unfair advantage of their entrenched position.

It is true that the convention Executive Committee was composed entirely of members of the "old guard". The personnel of the national office did much of the fact-finding and preliminary drafting on the basis of which the association executive officers and the convention Executive Committee made their decisions...but they did not seem to take advantage of their respective strategic positions to give the convention and its work any particular orientation.

Perhaps professional politicians in Canada are either too naive or too sophisticated to use this concentration of party power!

38. John Meisel, The Canadian General Election of 1957, (Toronto, 1962), p. 21.

THE DELEGATES

In any analysis of a national political convention, special attention is required for the delegates -- the raison d'etre of the convention. It was as a result of the demands of the "grass roots" that conventions were introduced to give the party supporters an opportunity to take part in the selection of party leader and in the formulation of party policy.

This chapter deals with the delegates to Conservative conventions, the categories under which they were selected, the rules to govern their choice, the paper work necessary to ensure their proper accreditation, and the procedures used in the field to elect or select the constituency delegates and the delegates-at-large.

The classes or categories of delegates drawn up by the Conservative Party in 1927, and continued in principle through 1956, were designed to provide local constituency representation (Constituency Delegates); to provide a place for party workers elected, appointed and organizational (Delegates Ex-Officio); and to provide for a variety of economic and occupational representation from the provinces (Delegates-at-Large). As indicated in Table V, "Allotment and Actual Attendance", the Constituency Delegates constituted about 59 per cent of the

delegates of the last convention; the party leaders, Delegates Ex-Officio, about 16 per cent, and the representational Delegates-at-Large, nearly 24 per cent. The delegates in each of the classes are selected by different methods, which are discussed here.

The Constituency or Riding Delegates were usually chosen by a constituency meeting or convention called by the party riding association. A specified number of delegates was selected to represent each of the constituencies in the House of Commons.

In addition to these voting delegates, an equal number of alternate delegates, or alternates, was also chosen from each constituency by the same means and at the same time. The alternate had no vote unless the delegate for whom he or she was chosen as an alternate was not registered at the convention. In 1927, as described in Note 1, Table V, "Delegate Allotment and Actual Attendance", alternates could vote if delegates were not in the hall. In 1942, the rules to govern choice and seating of delegates (see below) provided that an alternate could not vote unless the delegate for whom he substituted were not registered at the convention.

As may be seen in Table IV, "Classes of Delegates", the number of Constituency Delegates declined from five in 1927 to four in 1938. This was done simply

by transferring the Member of Parliament, the Member of the Legislature and Defeated Candidates from the Riding category to the Ex-Officio category. When it was found necessary, in 1942, to hold a leadership convention in the midst of a world war, the difficulties and expense of travel for a large group of delegates influenced the decision of the convention committee to reduce the number of delegates to three from each constituency. (See Chapter IV, page 70 above). In the two subsequent conventions, three constituency delegates were also selected. This reduction in numbers, and consequent reduction in popular representation, due to need for efficiency and for economic consideration, was somewhat ameliorated by the greater use of constituency meetings to select delegates by popular choice. This, in turn, has been made feasible by the extension of party organization at the constituency level since 1942, when the basis of present party organization was set out at the convention. (See Chapter VII, page 154 below). It is in the method of choice of this category of delegate that efforts to reach the "grass" have been made.

In Table V, "Delegates Allotment and Actual Attendance", it may be observed that the total number of riding delegates has declined; however, it is also noted that the proportion of riding delegates in attendance to

TABLE IV

CLASSES OF DELEGATES ACCREDITED TO CONSERVATIVE
PARTY NATIONAL CONVENTIONS¹

RIDING DELEGATES (and Alternate Delegates in equal numbers)	1927	1938	1942	1948	1956
Five delegates from each constituency	✓				
Four delegates		✓			
Three delegates			✓	✓	✓
DELEGATES EX OFFICIO					
Former Lieutenant-Governors	✓	✓			
Privy Councillors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Senators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Members House of Commons ^a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Defeated Candidates at last general election ^a	✓	✓			
Members Prov. Legislature & Legislative Council ^a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provincial Party Leaders	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provincial Ex-Cabinet Ministers	✓	✓			
Newspaper Representatives and others	✓	✓			
National Convention C'ttee & Chairmen Sub-C'ttees	✓	✓	✓		
Executive Officers of Assn. & Chairmen Sub-C'ttees				✓	✓
DELEGATES-AT-LARGE					
<u>Provincial</u> - As many Delegates-at-Large from each province as it has federal electoral represen- tation, to be selected not by ridings but province- wide to represent leading activities: education, press, finance, labour, agriculture, professions, business, etc., to be selected by provincial associations or executive bodies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Special Youth Delegates-at-Large:</u>					
Ont. & Que.: each 9 young men & 9 young women		✓			
Other provinces: each 3 young men & 3 young women					
Ont. & Que.: each 9, of whom 4 young women			✓	✓	✓
Other provinces: each 3, of whom 1 young woman					
<u>University Delegates-at-Large:</u>					
4 members Nat'l Student Federation plus 1 delegate from each University Conservative Club	b			✓	
9 general delegates, including Federation Exec. plus 2 delegates from each recognized Student Club					✓
<u>Dominion Delegates-at-Large</u>	✓	✓	✓		
<u>Special Delegates-at-Large</u>			✓		

a) Included, in most instances, as leaders of constituency delegations.

b) Macdonald-Cartier University Clubs represented; details not available.

- 1) Sources: 1927 Convention Lists of Delegates
 1938, 1948, 1956, "Delegates Eligible to Vote at National
 Conservative Conventions"
 1942 Minutes of First Meeting of National Conservative
 Convention Committee, Oct. 6, 1942
 1956 Minutes of Meeting of Executive Officers of P. C.
 Assn., Oct. 2, 1956.

TABLE V

DELEGATES

ALLOTMENT AND ACTUAL ATTENDANCE

Year	Constituency Delegates			Ex-Officio Delegates			Delegates-at-Large		Total
	No.	%	(2)	No.	%	(2)	No.	%	No.
1927 Maximum	1230	75.9	(60.8)	134	8.3	(23.4)	256	15.8	1620
Actual	936	72.4		113	8.8		243	18.8	1292 (1)
1938 Maximum	980	54.0		449	27.5	(16) ⁽³⁾	335	18.5	1814
Actual			not available						
1942 Maximum	735	58.4		213	16.9		310	24.7	1258
Actual	571	61.3		148	15.9		212	22.8	931
1948 Maximum	765	58.3		237	18.0		310	23.7	1312
Actual	763	60.2		196	15.4		309	24.4	1268
1956 Maximum	795	54.0		301	20.5		376	25.5	1472
Actual	786	59.5		221	16.6		317	23.9	1324

NOTES:

General:

Attendance figures for alternates not available.

These figures are approximate, since they are extrapolated from several sources. They are accurate enough to suggest the pattern of distribution among the three major categories of delegates.

The number of allotted constituency delegates changed by

- a) Change in apportionment by convention executive.
- b) Change in apportionment of seats in House of Commons.

The number of ex-officio delegates changed by

- a) Classification (see 1927 and 1938 notes below).
- b) Number of federal and provincial seats held by the Party.
- c) Number of Privy Councillors, federal and provincial cabinet ministers.

The number of delegates-at-large changed by

- a) Change in number of youth, student or special delegates-at-large as determined by convention executive.
- b) Change in apportionment of seats in House of Commons.

1927

- (1) A suggested explanation of the discrepancy between the 1292 delegates present at the convention and the 1589 ballots issued:

The rule regarding alternates:

"...every constituency is entitled to give five votes in addition to the delegates-at-large and delegates ex officio. If there is a delegate missing-absent-and no alternate present to take his or her place,

TABLE V

NOTES...2

then the delegates present are at liberty to poll the number of votes allotted to the constituency as they may agree."

The final report of the Credential Committee (Verbatim Report, 1927), p. 147, stated: (Delegates credited - 1207; alternates credited - 514). Thus there were enough alternates to complete the constituency delegations to the maximum of 1230

At-Large 243

Ex-officio 113

1586

1589 ballots were issued, and 1564 cast the first ballot.

- (2) In 1927, the distinction between ex-officio and constituency delegates was not clear. The inclusion of M.P.s, M.L.A.s and defeated candidates in the Constituency category permitted the use of up to 5 delegates if required. It also lowered the number in the ex-officio category, and thus makes comparison with later conventions difficult. The percentages in brackets are derived from a transfer of estimated number of Members & Candidates from the constituency to the ex-officio category, a procedure used in subsequent conventions.

1938

- (3) Defeated Candidates were included in Ex-officio category in 1938 as well as in 1927. It is estimated that the following procedure may result in a percentage figure which would be more in line with the similar figure for ex-officio delegates in subsequent conventions.

232 constituencies contested in 1935	499 ex-officio delegates
-40 " won in 1935	-192 defeated candidates
192 " with defeated candidates	307 ex-officio delegates

SOURCES:

H. A. Scarrow, Canada Votes, passim.
Papers in Convention files, scrapbooks and boxes:

1927

Delegates National Convention (1927).

List of delegates at Convention.

Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 147, 250.

1938

Instructions to Registrars.

"Record of Ballot Books Issued" (incomplete).

1942

List of Ex-Officio Delegates.

Official Report, 1942, p. 345.

1948

Structure of Convention.

Convention, 1948, p. 334.

1956

Structure of Convention.

Proceedings, 1956, p. 291.

the total number of delegates in attendance has remained at about 60 per cent in recent conventions. As explained in the Notes accompanying the Table, the high percentage indicated for the 1927 convention is due in large part to the method of counting heads. Also, the ratio of riding delegates to the other two categories may alter as the other categories change, due to reasons explained below. Although the maximum number of Constituency delegates has increased since 1942, due to the increase in the number of seats in the House of Commons, the proportion of this maximum to the total number of delegates has declined from 58 per cent to 54 per cent, while the proportion of Delegates-at-Large, also keyed to the House of Commons, has risen slightly. However, the nearly perfect attendance record of the Constituency Delegates, probably due in part to the efforts of convention organizers "to get out the vote", and in part to the delegates' desire to participate, has contributed to the maintenance of their lead over the other categories.

Since Canadian leadership conventions, and their delegates, have not been the subject of the close scrutiny made by political scientists of delegates to American conventions, it is impossible to comment with certainty on the representative quality of the Constituency Delegates, or on their qualifications. Some American

studies conducted along these lines are of interest. Bain, for instance, wrote:¹

Several studies have attempted to identify the convention delegates in terms of such factors as income level, age, religion, and party position...(they) indicate that the delegates are a broadly representative cross-out of America, but with considerable weighting toward the upper levels of the socio-economic scale...there is much evidence that this is the kind of representation the American public wants.

Without similar information on delegates to Conservative conventions, reliance can be placed only on those who have observed or participated in the conventions. Several delegates interviewed by the writer have expressed the view that the delegates were a fair representation of the Party. However, since a convention is expected to be democratic, this may be wishful thinking.

No doubt most of the constituency delegates were party workers, probably at the local or provincial level. To what degree they were influential, or influenced, in the long term, cannot be determined. However, it should be kept in mind that they constituted some 60 per cent of the voting strength of the last three conventions.

In the two earliest conventions the distinction between Ex-Officio Delegates and Delegates-at-Large is

1. R.C. Bain, Convention Decisions and Voting Records (Washington, 1960), pp. 3-4.

not clear. A careful examination of the lists of delegates in attendance at the 1927 meeting indicates that these two categories were inexplicably mixed. Some members of legislatures and defeated candidates were in one category and some in the other.²

Another illustration of this confusion in category is taken from the 1938 convention papers. The Chairman of the Convention Committee, J. R. MacNicol, wrote to a party official in Quebec regarding financial matters, and adds: "as intimated to you on the phone, if the subscribers wish to be made Delegates Ex-Officio to the convention we shall be glad to issue certificates for them." However, in a memorandum written the same day, permission was requested of the National Convention Committee to approve the invitation of 12 subscribers to be delegates-at-large; it is not known whether they accepted or declined the appointment. This is the only mention in the papers examined of such an arrangement for any of the conventions.³ (See above, *Financing the Convention*, page 85).

By 1942, however, this matter was apparently clarified, and clear distinction has since been made between *Delegates Ex-Officio* and *Delegates-at-Large*.

2. MacNicol, *op. cit.*, passim. List of Delegates, 1927 Convention, no title, no date, mimeo.

3. Letter to G.B. Foster from J.R. MacNicol, May 18, 1938. (Italics mine, R.M.B.)
Memorandum from J.R. MacNicol to National Convention Committee, May 18, 1938.

Delegates Ex-Officio

Delegates Ex-Officio were appointed on the basis of their position in the party structure. The sub-categories under this main category included, in 1956, Privy Councillors, Senators, Members of the House of Commons, Members of Provincial Legislatures, Provincial Party Leaders, the Executive Officers of the Conservative Association, and Chairmen of the Convention Arrangements Committees. Each Delegate Ex-Officio had one vote, but since the right to be a delegate appertained to an office or position held no alternate delegate was provided for this category.

The sub-categories of the Ex-Officio Delegate group have changed between 1927 and 1956. Such groups as former lieutenant-governors, defeated candidates, provincial ex-cabinet ministers and newspaper representatives have been dropped. The most numerous of these sub-categories was the defeated candidate group, eliminated in 1942. The Liberal Party retained this category at its last convention in 1958.⁴ The convention executive of 1942 decided to do away with this sub-category, partially in an effort to reduce numbers in war time. But, more significantly, the decision was made because it was felt that defeated candidates would find their place™ as a

4. The cynic might remark that they don't have so many of them.

delegate in another category if they had made a contribution to party development; if not, then they might not warrant inclusion in party policy-making conclaves, and such inclusion would strengthen the position of an undesirable candidate in the riding.

It may also be observed from "Classes of Delegates" that one of the changes which took place in 1948 was due to the change in party organization. The plans approved at the 1942 convention for party organization were implemented in the years to follow, and the 1948 convention was conducted by the party association. Thus, the sub-category, Executive Officers of the Conservative Association, was substituted for the National Convention Committee. The exact number of delegates in this sub-category in earlier conventions is not known, but it amounted to 52 in 1956.

The proportion of delegates included in the Ex-Officio category changed with the fortunes of political wars. For example, in 1935 the Federal Party had 40 seats in the House of Commons, and did not control a single provincial government. In 1960 they had over 200 federal seats and controlled four provinces. If conventions had been called at these times, the numbers of Ex-Officio delegates would have differed considerably. A similar difference would be noted in the sub-categories of

Senators and Privy Councillors. An increase of seats in both provincial and federal legislatures would also, potentially, increase the possible number of delegates in this group.

The influence exercised by the Ex-Officio Delegate is probably considerable. The very nature of his position -- an elected representative, or a member of the party hierarchy -- indicates that he is accustomed to lead and to influence the voter. It is, then, expected that he would wield more influence in the convention than his fair share, which is some 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the total number of delegates.

However, there is one factor which may deter his influence, and which also makes it difficult to measure the influence of any block of delegates -- the secret ballot. For example, a provincial premier, or a member of parliament, may feel reasonably confident that he can "deliver" the vote of his delegates; but the secret ballot may undermine this confidence sufficiently to permit a more direct relationship between the delegate and the candidate for leadership.

Delegates-at-Large

The largest number of delegates included in the Delegates-at-Large category were to provide representation from the provinces equal in number to the number of federal

seats in each province. Thus 20 delegates have been added to this group since 1927, in accordance with the increase in the number of seats in the House of Commons. At the 1956 convention there were a maximum of 265 Delegates-at-Large chosen by the provincial executives.

The provincial party association, or provincial executive body, appointed for its province the delegates in this sub-category. These delegates had to be resident in the province and were selected to represent sections of society such as education, finance, labour, agriculture, and other occupational groups. (See Table IV). These delegates had one vote each, but no alternate delegate was provided. This particular category was designed to give balanced provincial representation, and to provide a broader functional or occupational base than might ordinarily be expected from the riding delegates.

Within this category of Delegates-at-Large, several other sub-categories have been used at various conventions. Since 1938, Special Youth Delegates-at-Large have been chosen by the Young Progressive Conservative Association within each province. These young people were in addition to the recommended one young person per constituency delegation where possible.

In 1948, University Delegates-at-Large were added, and increased in number from 16 in 1948 to 63

in 1956. This sub-category was selected by the Progressive Conservative National Student Federation to represent campus student clubs. It is likely that this number might increase at future conventions, as a reflection of the growing number of universities in Canada.⁵

Two other small sub-categories might be mentioned. Dominion Delegates-at-Large were appointed to the first three conventions, numbering about 10 at each. This provided a means of appointing a few delegates who might not qualify for the other categories. In 1927 one of the delegates in the group based his claim to fame on the fact that "he was with the twenty-four horse team from Windham Township which greeted Sir John A. Macdonald on his memorable visit to Simcoe in 1877."⁶ In 1942, at the request of Mr. Meighen, another sub-category was introduced, Special Delegates-at-Large, in compliance with his "Open Door" policy. At a Convention Committee meeting, the Executive Committee was empowered "to issue voting credentials as delegates-at-large to individuals and representatives of organizations not previously associated with the Conservative Party who indicate their desire to attend or to be represented." This policy was intended to attract dissentient members of other parties (notably Liberals) who

5. Structure of Convention, 1948, 1956, in Party files. (Mimeo).

6. MacNicol, op. cit., p. 433,

were dissatisfied with the war effort. Eight people attended under this classification. The policy failed.⁷

Criticism

The category of Delegate-at-Large was publicly attacked once -- in 1948. In a heated exchange between the National Director of the Party and the Editor of the Winnipeg Free Press during late August and early September, 1948, the latter attacked the method of choice as being undemocratic, permitting "bossism" and "packing" the convention.

"A large proportion of the convention delegates", wrote the Free Press on August 31st of that year, "will not be elected by any meeting of local Conservative supporters, but will be chosen by the bosses of the party." (In fact, a maximum number of 255 Delegates-at-Large, based on the number of federal seats determined by the 1947 redistribution, made up less than 20 per cent of the total voting delegates.) If, as the Free Press continued, "the delegates thus chosen were numerous enough to elect the new leader," then one of the chief purposes -- the appeal to the local supporters -- of the convention would have been lost. The Free Press suggested rather pointedly that there probably

7. Minutes of First Meeting of National Conservative Convention Committee, October 6, 1942, p. 8.

Interview with R.A. Bell, Secretary of the Convention.

would not be a change in the rules, "for Mr. Drew, for one has made no complaint."⁸ A few weeks later the Globe and Mail joined in the fray, and wrote, "There is no foundation for these insinuations. It is significant that Mr. Diefenbaker himself...has given no credence or support to the complaints voiced by some of his supporters on this score. He has made a point of dissociating himself from the charges."⁹

The National Director defended the category of Delegates-at-Large by pointing out that this category had been used since 1927, when the convention was held in Winnipeg, with no criticism from the press, public or party. He explained as follows:¹⁰

Were all delegates to the Convention elected by individual riding associations, it is quite possible that a full cross-section of party support in each province might not be seated at the Convention. Delegates-at-Large are chosen on a functional basis..."

Several delegates, who supported different aspirants for the leadership at the 1948 convention, were questioned by the writer on this point. Mr. D.S. Stephens, an alternate delegate, said that "Drew was well known to Ontario delegates. After all, he had been successful in

8. Winnipeg Free Press, Aug. 31, 1948.

9. Globe and Mail, Sept. 25, 1948.

10. Winnipeg Free Press, Sept. 14, 1948.

Ontario in three elections." Another delegate from Ontario, who prefers to be unidentified, said that he journeyed the country on behalf of his candidate, prior to the convention, and was quite unsuccessful in either convincing chosen delegates, or in influencing the choice of delegates in favour of his candidate.

In discussing the 1956 convention Meisel wrote:¹¹

There was only one place where it was possible to do some substantial "rigging" of the conventions: whoever controlled a provincial association had a strong voice in choosing the provincial delegates-at-large and also delegates from constituencies where the party organization had decayed. Mr. Leon Balcer...was extremely influential in selecting the Quebec delegation...There is every reason to believe that he made sure that there would be only a minimum of Diefenbaker supporters in the Quebec delegation...Influential members of some western provincial associations (who supported Mr. Diefenbaker) were probably also able to assure that persons of their choice were included in their provincial delegations.

It is possible that an aspirant could influence the provincial association executives to support him. However, a cursory inspection of the list of delegates-at-large suggests that the names of people who were known supporters of all the candidates were included. The delegates-at-large were selected by the provincial associations, and it is understandable that most of these delegates may have been supporters of the men who came from their home province.

11. Meisel, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

Rules to Govern Choice and Seating of Delegates

It may be reasonable to assume that delegates to the two earliest conventions were chosen by election, by selection or by appointment. In 1927, the idea of a convention was fairly new, and no doubt people had to be convinced of its merits sufficiently to attend the convention. In 1938, the economic depression, the poor state of party organization, and the political misfortunes of the party combined to make attendance at a convention less than attractive. However, in 1942, the convention committee set up the principles of the rules which were, with few exceptions, used in 1948 and in 1956 to govern the choice of delegates. These rules were adopted at the first meeting of the convention committee for the guidance of riding presidents and provincial presidents.¹²

The rules regarding residence requirements for youth and university Delegates-at-Large reflect the enlargement of representation for young people. Emphasis is placed on residence in the province. Since 1948, the rules advocate election of delegates and alternates at meetings of the Association in each riding.

The most significant change in rules which was introduced in 1948, and approved by the Association

12. Minutes of First Meeting of National Conservative Convention Committee, October 6, 1942, pp. 3-4.

Executive Officers, altered the direction of authority as to choice of local delegates.¹³

In 1942, the rules provided that, where no Association exists in ridings the Provincial Executive was empowered, under certain restrictions, to name delegates and alternates. Further, where no provincial association existed, "the members of the National Convention Committee from such a province" could act as a provincial executive in naming delegates, alternates and delegates-at-large.

In 1948, in places where no riding association existed, the Provincial Executive, upon authorization from the Convention Executive Committee, was empowered to name delegates and alternates to represent that riding, under the same restrictions. The credentials of delegates so chosen were subject to the final scrutiny of the Credentials Committee at the convention.

At first glance this Rule 3, set out on page 110 would suggest an increase in the concentration of power in the provincial executive and the convention executive committee. However, until the files of correspondence or records of telephone conversations, between the provincial executives and the convention executive committee become available, it would be difficult to estimate how often and

13. Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada, July 26, 1948.

to what extent this power was actually used. A second possibility is that the rule was designed to apply to the province of Quebec, where party organization, and thus machinery for selecting riding delegates, is different from that in other provinces. (This point is discussed below.) Nonetheless, this rule provides a potential threat to the democratic principle of local selection of delegates; indeed, to the whole idea of a leadership convention. Possibly the employment of this rule may be in inverse relation to the vitality of the party, particularly at the constituency level.

These changes in the rules reflect the development of party organization at the provincial level and at the riding level. In summary, the rules provide for selection of delegates at the local level wherever feasible, and for the selection of delegates-at-large at the provincial level. Set out below are the Rules to Govern Choice and Seating of Delegates at the Progressive Conservative National Convention, 1956, together with an indication of the year in which the rules were first used.

1. Delegates or alternate delegates wherever practicable shall be elected at Meetings of the Progressive Conservative Association in each riding, called for such purpose. 1948
2. Delegates or alternate delegates representing each riding shall be permanently resident in such riding or closely identified with the organization and work of the Progressive 1942

Conservative Party in such riding, and in the latter circumstance, must be permanently resident in the Province in which the riding is situated.

3. In any case where no Progressive Conservative Association or similar organization exists in any riding, steps shall be taken to call a meeting of the party supporters to elect delegates and alternate delegates. If, in any case, the Provincial executive certifies to the Convention Executive Committee that such a course is not feasible, the Convention Executive Committee may authorize the Provincial Executive to name the delegates and alternate delegates to represent such riding, provided however: 1948
 - a) Wherever possible, such delegates and alternate delegates shall be resident of such riding; or closely identified with the organization and work of the Progressive Conservative Party in such riding; 1948
 - b) In any event, such delegates and alternate delegates shall be permanent residents of the Province in which the riding is situated;
 - c) That a full list of delegates so chosen, together with all relevant documents is submitted to the Credentials Committee at the Convention, which Committee shall have full power, when it considers any abuse has occurred, to refuse for that reason to approve the credentials of any person so chosen.
4. Delegates-at-Large and Youth delegates-at-large must be permanently resident in the Province which they are selected to represent. 1942
5. University delegates-at-large must be enrolled at the University which they are selected to represent. 1948
6. An alternate delegate will not be seated at the Convention if the delegate for whom he is entitled to substitute is registered at the Convention. 1942

SOURCES:

Rules to Govern Choice of Delegates, 1942.

Rules to Govern Choice and Seating of Delegates at Progressive Conservative National Convention, Ottawa, Sept. 30, Oct. 1 and 2, 1948.

Rules to Govern Choice and Seating of Delegates, P.C. National Convention, 1956.

Certification of Delegates

The procedure to certify delegates in the three categories has been followed in all conventions since 1938, and is probably similar to that used in 1927. An examination of the documents available indicates the following pattern.

For the selection of Riding Delegates, the first step is notification sent by the national office to the riding presidents that a convention has been called, and that their responsibility is to arrange for the election of delegates and alternate delegates. They are provided with information as to rules for selection and classes of delegates determined by the national association executive, as well as the form of certification. It is of some significance that in 1938 this form was entitled "Delegates and alternates nominated by the Federal Riding of...", and in 1942 and subsequent years, it was entitled "Certificate of Election of Delegates and Alternates..." and that the signatures of the Riding President and Secretary were required. One copy of this completed form was to be sent to the Provincial President and the second copy sent directly to the Ottawa office. This latter also included an invitation to the Riding Association to submit resolutions or other suggestions for the consideration of the Resolutions Committee.

When headquarters was in receipt of the names and addresses of the Riding Delegates, material was assembled and sent to the Delegates through the appropriate Provincial President who approved and signed the credentials and forwarded the following to each delegate:

Credential to be signed by the Provincial President, and by the individual delegate and returned to headquarters, to be used as certification and verification of signature at the registration desk at the convention.

Certificate of Identification, to be brought by delegate to the convention.

Transportation Voucher for reduced fare, accompanied by information on trains railway agents, and in latter years, air travel.

A Questionnaire regarding housing requirements, to be completed and sent to the accommodation committee at Headquarters.

A Convention button or ribbon.

The covering letter to the delegate also provided details as to registration, a request for suggestions for the Resolutions Committee, and a sales talk about the convention, its purposes, and the beauties of Ottawa or Winnipeg, as the case may be.

A second letter to delegates was sent, usually two or three weeks prior to the convention, reminding them to return their signed credentials, and providing them with more details concerning local arrangements, entertainment, and an agenda of the convention.

Ex-Officio Delegates were sent a letter, usually at the same time as the Riding Presidents, advising them of the sub-category under which they are appointed. They were reminded that they have a special responsibility to attend the convention and to encourage others to do so as well. A second letter was sent to this group somewhat later which included their credential to be signed by themselves and returned to the central office. Those Ex-Officio delegates, such as federal Members who required the information given to Riding Presidents were sent it and encouraged to see that the latter perform their duties promptly. It often seems to require two or more letters to persuade delegates in this category to return their credentials to Headquarters.

At an early date the Provincial Presidents were sent a letter outlining their duties in connection with the selection of Delegates-at-Large from their province. They were advised of the names of Ex-Officio delegates from their province in order to avoid duplication. When the list of Delegates-at-Large was received at Headquarters,

this group was also sent its credentials, through the appropriate Provincial President, who signed them.

In 1948, "Each Provincial President (was) asked to call a meeting of his Executive for the purpose of selecting the Delegates-at-Large from his Province... It is important that these Delegates-at-Large be truly representative members of the Party, and not merely disappointed persons who have failed to secure election as riding delegates."¹⁴

A similar letter was sent, presumably, to Provincial Presidents, in 1956, but a different point was stressed, probably as a result of the controversy in the press over this category of delegate in 1948, which will be discussed below. The relevant portion reads:¹⁵

The responsibility for the appointment of these delegates lies with your Provincial Association... these Delegates-at-Large are to be selected on a province-wide basis to represent the leading activities... May we point out that it is of the greatest importance that a most representative group of Delegates-at-Large should be chosen. It is equally important that the choice should be made with the full knowledge and approval of the whole Provincial Executive, so that no criticism may arise at the Convention as to the method of choice.

Credentials for Identification of Delegates

All of this material is prepared at Headquarters,

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14. Mimeo Memorandum for: Provincial Presidents, Secretaries and Organizers from R.A. Bell, National Director (probable date: Aug. 6, 1948).
 15. Mimeo. Letter, without salutation, from W.L. Rowe, National Director, October 12, 1956.

in both the French and English languages. It is of minor interest to note the difference in the credentials used in 1927 and those used in subsequent years. At the first convention, the credentials were printed in French on one side and in English on the reverse. Each credential required the individual signature of the Secretary and the Chairman of the Local Convention, and the individual signatures of the Secretary and the President of the Provincial Association. No doubt the task of signing all these forms led to alteration in later years, when the credentials were separately printed in the two languages. Facsimile signatures of the Chairman and Secretary of the convention committee were printed onto the credential, which required the individual signature of only the Provincial President. It is surprising that the routine papers have changed very little in language since 1938. This would suggest that the first draftsman did a satisfactory piece of work; it would also offer one reason why the last two conventions were organized in less than two months, while the first one took a year, and the second one about five months.¹⁶

Procedure in the Constituencies

The only evidence available on the operation of

16. Sources: A compilation by the writer of some 87 pieces, including letters, Memoranda, forms, information sheets, credentials, mimeographed and printed, located in boxes, scrapbooks and files at Progressive Conservative Headquarters, Ottawa.

these rules in the field relates to the 1948 convention. It may be recalled that, after the introduction of a plan for party organization on a formal basis at the 1942 convention, this plan was implemented with the encouragement of the Leader, and under the supervision of the newly appointed National Director. As a result, by 1948, there was a permanent headquarters staff in its own building, a working organization in every province and in almost every riding in the country. A party newspaper, Public Opinion, was published at regular intervals, and it is in this paper that a description of the field operation in the selection of delegates is found.¹⁷ In evaluating this evidence, its source should be borne in mind.

In an article headed "From Sea to Sea", six of the provinces report on their activities in preparation for the forthcoming convention. Manitoba reported that meetings were held in all rural constituencies, and all have elected three delegates and alternates. At these meetings there was considerable discussion about the aspirants for leadership, but the rural delegates from Manitoba are "going with an open mind and are bound in no way by their constituency associations or anyone else."

Nova Scotia reported that the difficulty was, not in finding delegates, but in selecting 125 from the many who wish to attend. Meetings were held in all 18

17. "Public Opinion", September, 1948, (Progressive Conservative Party paper.)

constituencies in British Columbia. In addition the Young Progressive Conservatives (Y.P.C.s) and the Women's Association held meetings to choose their delegates-at-large. Alberta held meetings in every riding except Peace River and Battle River, and reports from these two were to come. In Saskatchewan, not only were public meetings held to make up the slate of delegates, but several constituencies took up collections to assist their delegates with travel expenses. There was no report from Ontario and New Brunswick.^{17a}

Procedure in Quebec

Traditionally, and until very recently, the organization of all political parties in Quebec, federal and provincial, has been authoritarian rather than democratic. One writer has stated that:¹⁸

Party organization in Canada is no longer the virgin field for study and research that it was until recently; but any general description, to say nothing of analysis and comparison, is still restricted by the limited facts available...it must be admitted that little is known of party organization in some areas, particularly in Quebec.

It has been pointed out above that Rule 3 may have been designed to provide for the special case of the province of Quebec. With reference to the 1948 convention,

17a. Ibid.

18. Dawson, op. cit., pp. 472-3, 477.

it was reported in the Globe and Mail:¹⁹

In Quebec, where riding organization is almost unknown, another method is being used. Next Sunday and the following two Sundays small groups of Progressive Conservatives will meet after church in hundreds of parishes.

They will appoint three or four members each to attend central meetings for the constituency and these meetings will in the main send Quebec's quota of delegates to Ottawa.

Apparently, leaders and organizers were chosen by a process of "anointment" rather than of election. The 'recognized' leader (a term difficult to interpret, and implying acceptance) designated the riding organizer and his role approximated that of the riding association in the rest of Canada. In turn, the riding organizer designated the parish organizers. Thus, a chain of command was established down to the smallest unit.²⁰

The nature of party organization in Quebec, highly centralized within the province, is illustrated by the following reference from the Ottawa Journal of September 7, 1948:

Mr. Sabourin, leader of the party in the province of Quebec, though not actually a member of the Executive Committee is organizing the bringing of over 500 delegates and alternates to Ottawa from his province.

19. Globe and Mail, Aug. 10, 1948.

20. Interview with R. A. Bell.

Since Mr. Sabourin was a 'recognized' leader in the province, it may be assumed that the delegates were chosen under his general supervision.

It was suggested by several delegates who were interviewed by the writer that Mr. Sabourin supported Mr. Drew for the leadership; there may be good reason to believe that, in this instance, the vote could be 'delivered'.

Again, in 1956, Quebec was accorded special treatment, when the Executive Committee decided that the lists of Delegates-at-Large from Quebec should have the approval of the appropriate "District President".²¹ Meisel has suggested (see above, page 106) that Mr. Balcer, "the most prominent among the small number of Quebec Conservatives," had a strong voice in the selection of delegates sent from Quebec to the last convention.

This procedure does not fit into the pattern of delegate selection followed in other parts of Canada; it might even be called undemocratic. However, it could be regarded as an illustration of the flexibility of the convention as it is used in a political system which is not only federal and parliamentary in character, but which serves a bicultural nation.

Conclusions

In a political system where the convention is used, the maintenance of the democratic principle requires

21. Minutes of Convention Executive Committee Meeting, November 27, 1956.

that the ultimate power of a political convention rest with the delegates. Despite the criticisms of the methods of choosing delegates to the Conservative conventions mentioned above, several of the participants have expressed their opinions that the delegates do exercise their power of choice of leader. In a recent letter, Mr. M. A. MacPherson, twice a candidate for leadership, wrote;²²

I do not think there can be any criticism of the make-up of a convention and in my experience the cream of the party was represented in the delegation. I do not think that there was any "fixing" and I think that delegates were free to vote as they saw fit. Organizers may have had their choice but individual delegates would vote as they pleased...Delegates represented all groups in the community. There were business and professional men, farmers, trade unionists and others. And certainly from our province (Saskatchewan) there was sought the very best representation possible.

In his memorandum to the author, the Hon. H. H. Stevens wrote of the delegates;²³

Groups of delegates were committed before the convention but the voting was free... Many groups were committed to vote for a specific candidate on their first ballot, but were free after that...I think the conventions of 1948-56 were fair representation of the wishes of the rank and file of the Party. It is not a simple matter to get accurate representation of public wishes -- even a plebiscite is faulty. However, these conventions were fairly accurate.

22. Letter from M.A. MacPherson, candidate in 1938 and 1942 conventions, to author, March 3, 1965.

23. Memorandum from H.H. Stevens to writer, March 15, 1965. (*Italics his.*)

Another candidate, E. D. Fulton, remarked:²⁴

Delegates do not have their palms crossed with gold. However, when the party organization is weak in the ridings, and when party fortunes are at low ebb, it is possible to pay the way of delegates to the convention in order to ensure adequate representation. There is nothing improper in this, and it is made clear that the approach is made on behalf of Mr. X. This is not so easily done in times when party organization is strong and times are good.

The view was also expressed that the category of delegates-at-large could be packed, in theory, by the organization work and the funds of a nimble and wealthy aspirant for the leadership. A prospective candidate would be well advised to make friends of as many association provincial executives as possible.

Such a programme of wooing delegates could be carried out. However, the wooer should be prepared to encounter competition from other possible candidates who might achieve success with delegates from other provinces.

One influence upon the delegates, which has more potential power than any candidates' efforts is the bandwagon effect. There is little reason to believe that delegates can be influenced in large numbers by the personal attentions of a candidate, but there is every reason to believe that the attractiveness of a candidate

24. Interview with E.D. Fulton, P.C., Q.C., February 9, 1965.

who appears to have the support of delegates, and the public across the country, will increase and influence the voting delegate at ballot time. Although the delegate may exercise his right to vote as he sees fit, he may not be fully aware of the effect which the prospect of a winner may have on his decision.

With this powerful influence in mind, it is almost impossible to justify any firm conclusion that the delegates at the conventions under consideration have or have not exercised in full the power rightfully theirs. Furthermore, until it becomes possible to analyze the qualifications, characteristics, functions and selection of all delegates at one or more conventions, in conjunction with the contemporary political climate, the exercise of the democratic principle within the leadership convention cannot be determined.

It can, however, be reasonably concluded that, under the rules and procedures followed in the five Conservative conventions, the centres of power of selection rest with the individual constituency associations, the party provincial executives and with the national association executive. The change in balance of the distribution of this power of selection, is, in turn, determined by such external factors as the state of party organization, the maintenance of the secret ballot,

the relative strength of the personality and integrity of party leaders at every level of the party structure, as well as the degree of interest engendered by the aspirants for leadership.

CONVENTION PROCEDURES

The political convention was designed to provide a means of participation by a large number of people in the decision-making processes of formulation of party policy, consideration of party organization, and the selection of a new leader. Does the structure of the Conservative convention meet this requirement? Does the day-to-day organization of the convention meetings provide an adequate opportunity for the delegates to participate?

With these questions in mind, we shall consider the matters of agenda and order or procedure, the convention officers, the rules of procedure and the effectiveness of these procedures.

Convention organizers have usually acknowledged the democratic ideal of popular participation, and have attempted to provide a suitable atmosphere for it, to the extent, of course, that this would be compatible with the accomplishment of the business at hand.

In a discussion of convention procedure in his letter to the delegates to the 1927 convention, General McRae wrote:¹

1. Letter from General McRae, September 21, 1927.

All committees having anything to do with its organization are automatically dissolved, and the responsibility for the conduct of the convention becomes immediately and completely vested in the delegates. The convention will make its own decisions. There can be no cut and dried programme of action.

When he talked with leading party members in all parts of Canada, this organizer learned that there was some uneasiness that, if no tentative programme were provided, much time would be wasted in getting ready to perform the great tasks for which they were to assemble. With due humility he therefore presented a tentative agenda for the consideration of the delegates; they would take their final decision after discussion, probably early in the meeting. There is no record in the proceedings of a discussion of the proposed agenda, so it may be assumed that it was acceptable; in any case, it has been followed at every subsequent Conservative convention.

Agenda and Order of Procedure

It has been written that "as far as public proceedings go, time wasting is the badge of all Conventions."² Perhaps Professor Brogan has not visited a Canadian political convention; they have packed a great deal of decision-making, candidate-choosing and speech-making into a brief period of time. The Conservative conventions have had, in most instances, strong chairmen who have managed to work through the agenda without stifling debate; able

2. D.W. Brogan, Politics in America, (New York, 1960), p. 199.

committee chairmen who have led discussion of policies with tact and firmness; and delegates who have, on the whole, behaved with a quiet decorum which makes for duller but more orderly conventions than those in the United States.

The agenda, which had been carefully worked out in minutes, was sent to all delegates in advance of the convention.³ The participants had the opportunity to know what to expect with assurance that events would follow in the sequence advertised.

The pattern of the agenda was set at the first convention and has been closely followed at the later meetings. All of the conventions have been three days in duration. With the exception of the 1956 convention, which changed its opening ceremonies to the afternoon to take advantage of allotted television time, they opened at 11 a.m. of the first day.

The formal opening is followed by the selection of temporary officers. A credentials committee is proposed and appointed; it then retires to examine the certification of the delegates. While it performs this task, the usual speeches of welcome, tributes to the retiring leader, and remarks by distinguished party leaders are delivered. The

3. Letter, including detailed agenda, to all delegates from W.L. Rowe, National Director, November 30, 1956.

first item of business in the afternoon is the report of the credential committee to the effect that the convention is duly constituted according to the rules.

The permanent officers, including the two chairmen, two secretaries, and vice chairmen from each of the provinces, are nominated and duly elected. The Nominations, Resolutions, and Organization and Public Relations Committees are appointed and asked to take up their respective duties. (Of course, as discussed in Chapter VII below, the last two named committees have begun their work, as pre-convention committees, before the opening. With minor changes lists of members are submitted to the convention for approval.) The first evening is devoted to social affairs, occasionally with dancing. In 1956, the convention performed the tasks previously attended to in the afternoon, in the first evening.

The second day is devoted to consideration of the reports of the Nominations, Resolutions and Organization Committees. The resolutions are provided in mimeographed form to each delegate, in both the French and English languages. Subject to the restrictions provided in the rules, discussed below, there is opportunity for debate and discussion, for amendment and for introduction of new resolutions from the floor. This is kept to

a minimum since all delegates had been given an opportunity to send in resolutions and suggestions before the opening of the convention.

On the second evening the second report of the Nominations Committee is given, followed by the speeches of the nominators, seconders and candidates for leadership.

On the third morning the work of the committee usually is completed. At some conventions this has not been possible; consideration of reports has continued while the results of the first ballot were awaited. This, of course, ensures a full attendance, but does not guarantee undivided attention to the business at hand. The balloting takes place on the third and final afternoon; following the announcement of the results, the defeated candidates speak briefly, and the new leader then addresses the delegates. The convention is then adjourned.⁴

In addition to the formal agenda other meetings are held. The committees carry on their work off the convention floor in meetings open to all delegates. The women are entertained at lunch, with a distinguished woman as guest speaker - the wife of the retiring leader, a Member of Parliament or a Senator. The young party supporters hold a separate meeting, usually a combination of work

4. McRae Letter, September 21, 1927; Agendas, 1942, 1948, 1956.

and social activity. Early in the proceedings the provincial groups meet to affirm their selection of delegates from among their numbers to serve on the various committees. The delegates find much to keep them occupied during the three-day period.⁵

The keynote address, which is considered of great importance at American conventions, has not yet assumed such significance in Conservative conventions. On three occasions, the retiring leader has spoken to the delegates at such length and with such enthusiasm that their addresses might be labelled 'keynote'. In 1948, a temporary chairman, Grattan O'Leary, gave a rousing keynote speech. And in 1956, the newly elected premier of Nova Scotia, the Hon. R. L. Stanfield, performed this service.

Canadian bilingualism is acknowledged by the platform. Although the English-speaking chairman has played the dominant role, a French-speaking representative is always on hand. Every resolution, every announcement, every presentation of rules - for procedure, for nominations, for election - is made in both languages. It may be expected that the next convention will make use of the newly developed technique of simultaneous translation and every participant may be provided with pocket equipment.

5. Printed Programme for conventions in 1942, 1948, and 1956.

The work done in the pre-convention period, (described above, in Chapter IV) contributes to the smooth operation of the convention. The selection of major speakers, the preparation of the agenda; the preparation of draft material for the various committees to consider; the proposed names of officers and committee members do much to facilitate the decisions to be made by the delegates. As in any other large meeting, the work of the benevolent dictators - in this instance the convention executive committee - does much to ensure the accomplishment of the mission assigned to the political convention.

Convention Officers

Since the officers of the convention, and particularly the chairmen, play an important part in its conduct, a brief sketch of their personal characteristics may be of interest. The accompanying chart, "Convention Officers", sets out the names of the persons who occupied the eight major offices at the Conservative Conventions. It should be noted that in all instances but three, each post had a French-speaking and an English-speaking incumbent.

All of these officers were proposed by the convention executive committee, or in earlier conventions by the national convention committee, and their names were introduced to the delegates for approval.

The arrangement of temporary chairmen and

TABLE VI

CONVENTION OFFICERS

	<u>1927</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1956</u>
Permanent Chairmen	Hon. E.N. Rhodes Hon. C.P. Beaubien	John R. MacNicol, M.P. Hon. Maurice Dupré	H. R. Milner Ivan Sabourin	J.M. Macdonnell, M.P. Léon Méthot	R.A. Bell Léon Balcer, M.P.
Permanent Secretaries	C. V. Lindsay Maurice Dupré	Gordon Graydon, M.P. G. H. Héon, M.P.	R. A. Bell Paul Lafontaine	Mrs. H.C. Smiley Hervé Baribeau	Maurice Johnson Mrs. J.S. Cosgrove
Temporary Chairmen	N. K. Boyd	H. P. Hill Eduard Masson	L.D.M. Baxter	M. Grattan O'Leary Lionel Choquette	Miss E. Janzen Guillaume Piette
Temporary Secretaries	C. V. Lindsay Arthur Lalonde	Miss D. Aitken Frederic Dorton	G.S. Thorvaldson, M.L.A.	D.H. Morrow, M.L.A. Mme. Jean Morin	Peter McDermaid Bernard Corriveau

(NOTE: Titular distinctions given as of date of convention.)

Sources:

Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 2, 5, 49, 50, 53.
Proceedings, 1938, pp. 3, 54, 58.
Official Report, 1942, pp. 2, 52, 53.
Convention, 1948, pp. 5, 56.
Proceedings, 1956, pp. 3, 46.

secretaries was used at the first convention. Further, it was proposed that the two chairmen represent the two nationalities in Canada, and that the provinces not thus represented should each nominate a deputy (now called vice-) chairman. This is now the established pattern. These provincial vice-chairmen did not have onerous duties. Occasionally a chairman was not able to carry on, and a vice-chairman was called upon to fulfill the obligation.

The Chairmen are of vital importance for the maintenance of order and peace. They have all been party leaders, either in a legislature or in the party hierarchy. The English-speaking chairmen, who have taken a more prominent part than their French colleagues, have been most effective.

A personal evaluation, based on a reading of the proceedings of all of the conventions, is that all except one were strong personalities, with efficiency and tact in abundance. (No doubt they had strong voices as well). On the basis of this reading, the 1927 chairmen did an admirable job, considering it was the first convention, and it had to be 'played by ear' on some occasions. The 1938 chairmen appeared to be the weakest, in that they did not seem to know just what to do next. The 1942 chairman was the most arbitrary, almost dictatorial; however, he had to give way to the delegates when he attempted

to bring to a vote the change in party name which one of the aspirants for the leadership requested. Mr. J. M. Macdonnell, the 1948 chairman, was the first party association president to assume this position. He presided with a gentle but firm good humour over a boisterous group of delegates. Mr. Bell, the chairman of the 1956 convention, who had organized two previous conventions, was in full command. It was fortunate that the choice of a chairman with longstanding respect for punctuality coincided with the first televised convention, where timing was so important.⁶

The chairmen for the 1927 convention were Senator Beaubien of Quebec, who had taken a prominent part in the organization of the gathering, and Hon. E. N. Rhodes, Premier of Nova Scotia, former Speaker of the House of Commons, and a skilled chairman. Mr. MacNicol, a party worker and Member of Parliament, and M. Dupré, a well-known French-Canadian, were active in the pre-convention arrangements in 1938. Mr. Milner and M. Sabourin (1942) were prominent in party organization work. Mr. Macdonnell, later a cabinet minister, and M. Methot, later a Senator, were officers of the party association. M. Balcer (1956) was president of the party association; Mr. Bell's party experience and his known skill as a

6. Convention Proceedings, for all years, *passim*.

presiding officer were assets.

All five French-speaking chairmen were Roman Catholics from Quebec. The English-speaking chairmen included two Anglicans, two Presbyterians and one Baptist. Three were from Ontario, one each were from Nova Scotia and Alberta. Only two were over 60 years of age; five were between 50 and 60 years old; the others were between 39 and 43 at the time.⁷

The question of partisanship among the convention officials is often raised. Some of the chairmen were actively partisan, and their opinions were well known. A few attempted to manipulate the convention in favour of their choice. It was well known in party circles at the time that M. Dupré supported Dr. Manion; Messrs. Milner and Sabourin worked for Mr. Bracken. M. Balcer supported Mr. Fleming after he withdrew from the race himself. Mr. Rhodes, Mr. MacNicol and Mr. Bell did not declare themselves and remained neutral.

There have been eight Temporary Chairmen - three French-speaking and five English-speaking. Two conventions appointed only one temporary chairman for no stated reason. Three of the temporary chairmen were head of the Local Arrangements Committee. It was thought that their knowledge of the local situation would be useful. One, Mr. Boyd in 1927, was President of the Association in the host province.

7. Parliamentary Guides; Who's Who in Canada.

Several, but not all had been in a legislative body.

In 1956 Miss Janzen was deliberately chosen as a temporary chairman because of her youth and sex, as well as the facts that she was president of the Women's Association, and that she had skill as a presiding officer. She was also on the Convention Executive Committee.⁸

Geographically, two of the temporary chairmen were from Quebec, two from Manitoba and four were from Ontario. At least four were Roman Catholics; the others were Protestant.

Some of the temporary chairmen were known to support particular candidates. For example, Mr. O'Leary was a personal friend of Mr. Drew; possibly M. Choquette also supported him.

There does not seem to be any marked pattern in the choice of these officers. The temporary chairmen were in charge of the convention for the first few hours, and the assignment could be a difficult one. They had the opportunity to set the tone for the relationship between the delegates and the platform.

There is no pattern to be traced in the pattern of Convention Secretaries either, except that the French-English fact was acknowledged. Most of them came from Ontario, Quebec or a Prairie Province. Most were Roman

8. It is not a coincidence that, in 1956, the first televised convention in Canada, all of the officers were young and pleasing in appearance.

Catholic; the remainder were Protestant of different denominations.

Mr. Lindsay was both temporary and permanent secretary of the 1927 convention. The two permanent secretaries for 1938 were Members of Parliament. Others have become Members.

Of the temporary secretaries, four were from Quebec, the rest from Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Ontario. At least four were Roman Catholics, the remainder were Protestant.

Two were members of a provincial legislature, and later became a Senator and a Speaker of the Ontario Legislature. One was elected to the House of Commons and is now Chief Justice of Quebec. Mme. Morin is the wife of the Canadian Ambassador to Portugal. Mr. McDermaid (1956) was President of the Progressive Conservative Student Federation.

Their preferences for particular leadership candidates are not known.

Ever since the Party established a permanent headquarters in 1943, with a party 'civil service', which assists in the preparations for the convention, the role of convention secretary has not been such a busy one. They are now appointed for political or prestige purposes rather than for their talents as convention officers. In earlier

conventions, however, the secretaries did much useful work.

Except for the chairmen, the officers of the Conservative conventions have not had heavy responsibilities. They were chosen, probably for the position they occupied in the party, but not necessarily on geographical or social grounds, except for the traditional bicultural recognition. The chairmen have heavy responsibilities, and must be on the platform at all times. It is in their hands that the public success of the operation of the convention lies.

Rules of Procedure⁹

The first convention adopted rules to govern the convention which were based on the rules of debate in the House of Commons. With the possible exception of the 1938 convention, whose proceedings contain no reference to such rules, they have been adopted at three of the succeeding conventions.

The mover of a resolution was limited to ten minutes for his argument; following speakers to the motion were restricted to five minutes. Later, in 1948, no person was permitted to speak more than once to a resolution.

Resolutions and amendments were required to be submitted in writing. However, on occasion a speaker sent up his amendment to the platform while he was speaking and the chairman accepted it for consideration.

All questions were decided by show of hands or by standing. The Joint Chairmen had casting votes in case of tie; if they disagreed, the question was lost.

The only occasion recorded of a questioning of these rules was in the 1942 proceedings. After they had been read in both languages, and the motion put, a delegate rose to object. He was reluctant to give his name, even at the request of the chairman. He explained at some length that he had two objections: closure or limitation on debate, and the submission of resolutions in writing. However, the motion was passed and the rules accepted without further question.¹⁰

The rules of procedure have been applied with firmness and flexibility, and thus have contributed to the orderly conduct of the proceedings.

Effectiveness of Procedures

What are the standards by which to measure the effectiveness of the operational structure of a political convention? An evaluation of the convention process as a whole, in relation to the Canadian political system, will be presented at the conclusion of this study, but some consideration should be given here to the actual conduct of the business of the convention under the procedures used at the five Conservative political rallies.

10. Official Report, 1942, pp. 73-75.

An enumeration of standards could include the accomplishment of announced purposes: the consideration of reports and resolutions, and the election of a party leader. The degree of control exercised over the delegates should not be so much that it reduced free discussion, nor so little that confusion prevailed. The agenda should be a flexible plan for the guidance of all participants, and yet firm enough to permit consideration of all of the convention business. The officers should not dominate the proceedings at the expense of delegate participation; nor should delegates dominate at the expense of wasted time and neglected work.

Pre-convention preparation has made it possible for the resolutions to be presented in an organized form to the delegates on the second morning. An insufficient amount of preparation was made in 1927, and there are references in the proceedings to several delays, filled in by "pinch hit" speakers, because the report was not ready. Sir Thomas White, in his opening remarks, in 1927, said, "I understand that there was not sufficient grist to go on with, that there were not enough available from the rank and file, so they thought it advisable to fall back on the reserve."¹¹ However by 1942 this aspect of the work of the convention was well organized, and every resolution was considered in detail -

11. Verbatim Report, 1927, p. 65.

a practice not usually followed in American Conventions.

The election of a party leader is discussed in detail in Chapter VIII below. It is sufficient to note here that, although there is much noise and excitement while the ballot is being taken, the chairman has done his best to keep confusion to a minimum. His task is made easier by the fact that the floor of the convention is kept clear of newsmen, visitors and all other persons who are not accredited delegates. There are efforts, reported in the proceedings, made to see that every vote is cast and in orderly fashion.

The delegates are given opportunity to speak, subject to the rules of procedure agreed upon. In 1927, for example, the chairman who attempted to curtail a loquacious delegate whose amendment had not been in written form, remarked, "Well, I suppose this is a free country and whenever a friend of ours wishes to speak he should be heard." On another occasion he noticed that there was a "long list of delegates who desire to speak. I have to pick them fairly in the order in which they come."¹² In 1942, at the point where the convention was asked to consider a change of name of the party, the chairman had a few rough moments. However, he carried on and asked every speaker to go to one of the four microphones and identify himself. "It is quite hopeless for anyone from the floor of the house to speak and

12. Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 146, 238.

be heard by the audience as a whole."¹³

When the report of the Resolutions Committee was about to be introduced in 1956, the Chairmen announced, in both languages, that "all delegates wishing to address the Convention must go to one of the microphones. The Chairman will endeavour to recognize delegates in rotation from the microphones."¹⁴ It is notable that, although the ordinary person needs courage to speak through a microphone to a large gathering, a number of ordinary delegates did so.

The agenda has, on the whole, served its purpose. The nominations speeches could be too long for comfortable endurance. In 1942, for instance, the speeches of the five candidates and their supporters lasted for well over three hours. There has been consideration of dividing this nomination procedure, but it is not easy to do. As far as can be judged from the proceedings, all of the business set out in the agenda has been considered before the new leader addresses the convention. This is an indication that the format of the agenda is reasonably effective.

As noted above, some of the officers have been perhaps too dictatorial, while others have been too uncertain. It is very difficult to strike the right balance when dealing with a large number of people.

Time wasting has occurred, particularly in the

13. Official Report, 1942, p. 78.

14. Proceedings, 1956, pp. 74,80.

first two conventions. However, in 1927, it was the intention of the organizers to leave as many decisions as possible in the hands of the delegates, with the result that preparation was not completed in the time allotted; this was particularly noticeable in the report of the resolutions committee. In 1938, there were apparently no rules of procedure followed. As reported in the proceedings, there was some confusion in the times for consideration of resolutions and for balloting, with the result that resolutions were being discussed, probably in a desultory fashion, after the results were announced and before the new leader spoke.

A refinement in the definition of standards of convention procedures is required, which can only be attained with additional experience with conventions. However, a tentative conclusion is that the conduct of Conservative party conventions has, on the whole provided adequate means for the delegates to participate in the proceedings. In any assembly as large as a political convention, the conditions under which the delegates must consider the matters presented to them - the policy resolutions, and the nominations of candidates followed by an election - are not favourable. The confusion, the press of time and the technical difficulties, such as faulty public address systems, do not afford an entirely suitable

atmosphere in which to make important decisions. No doubt the pre-convention discussions in the press of prospective candidates for the leadership, and the constituency participation in submission of policy resolutions are of considerable value in helping the delegate to make up his mind on these matters. Should this be the case, then the delegate at the convention has, in effect, endorsed or legitimized decisions made prior to the opening of the convention.

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

An analysis of the structure and function of the four convention committees -- Resolutions, Organization and Public Relations (merged into one committee in 1942), Credentials and Nominations -- is necessary to an understanding of the over-all organization and procedure of the national political convention, as it has developed in the Conservative party. The work of these committees has facilitated consideration of party policies by the convention. But more important, perhaps, is the fact that the committee system has contributed to the convention a means of direct participation by the delegates, particularly those who work on the committees and attend their sessions. In this chapter is a discussion of the organization and operation of these committees, and an evaluation of their work.

The accompanying Table VII, "Convention Committee Chairmen", provides the numerical membership of the committees, as well as the names of the chairmen, and change in title since 1927. The Credentials Committee for the first convention was not provided for until the convention met, perhaps an oversight. It will be noted that, since 1942, the committees of Organization and Publicity have been amalgamated.

TABLE VII

CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN
and Number of Members

	<u>1927</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1956</u>
Credentials	John T. Haig, M.L.A. 37	Harvey Streight ? 14	Hon. J. E. Lawson 14	Hon. J. E. Lawson 14	L. J. Ladner 16
Nominations	Sen. G.D. Robertson 23	Hon. John T. Haig 10	Léon Méthot 10	J.C.H. Dussault 14	Ross Drouin 16
Resolutions	W. Sanford Evans, M.L.A. 82	Hon. R.B. Hanson 83 10 sub-committees	Cecil G. Frost 167 6 sub-committees	F. G. Gardiner 193 7 sub-committees	J. Sedgwick 162 6 sub-c'itees
*Organization	John R. MacNicol 23	Gordon Graydon, M.P. 49	Hon. E. F. Willis, M.L.A. 74	G. C. Nowlan 73	G. C. Nowlan, M.P. 80
Publicity	name n.a. 23	Walter McInnis 25	-----	-----	-----

*Organization and Public Relations in 1942, 1948, 1956.

Sources: Proceedings of the Convention.Minutes and Memoranda on file.Interviews with R. A. Bell and R. K. Finlayson.

Representation and Selection

One of the most important principles of committee structure was determined during the 1927 pre-convention period, and has, by and large, been adhered to since then. This is the basis of representation on the committees. In his letter to the delegates, the chief organizer, General McRae, wrote:

Several provincial organizations have expressed preference for the right of the delegates from each province to nominate their own representatives on all standing committees.

They are particularly desirous that the size and basis of representation of the principal standing committees of the convention be determined in order that each province can decide - at least in part - what delegates they have best qualified to serve on the respective committees. They proposed to give such delegates a chance to prepare themselves in advance for the committee work they will in all probability be called upon to undertake. This proposal if followed out should make for greater efficiency in committee work.¹

The method of achieving provincial representation on committees has been followed in every convention, with, of course, some refinements and improvements. The details of these changes in selection are discussed below under the individual convention committees. From the outset, the Resolutions Committee has had representation based on provincial population. The other committees, Credentials,

1. McRae Letter, September 21, 1927.

Nominations and Organization, have had at least one representative from every province and territory; Ontario and Quebec had more than one. The accompanying Table VIII, "Composition of Committees", is set out to illustrate the representation by province and by population used at the 1956 convention. Differences in earlier years have been in numbers rather than in principle.

The means of selection of membership for the convention committees has been essentially the same for all of the conventions. The convention executive committee has asked all of the provincial association executives to recommend names of the delegates from their respective provinces and to designate on which committees they were to serve. The delegates thus chosen were advised of the meeting arrangements made for their respective committees.

Early in the proceedings the membership lists of the committees were read to the convention. The temporary chairman then requested the provincial delegations to meet separately, usually under the chairmanship of the president of the provincial association, to confirm, reject or replace as might be necessary, due to absence of delegates previously appointed, these lists of committee members.²

Functions of Committees

The four convention committees have been

2. Sources: Proceedings of the Conventions.

TABLE VIII

CONVENTION COMMITTEES *

NUMERICAL COMPOSITION BY PROVINCE

1956

Province	Credentials	Nominations	Resolutions and Policy	Organization and Public Relations
Nfld.	1	1	5	6
P.E.I.	1	1	3	6
N.S.	1	1	7	6
N.B.	1	1	6	6
Que.	3	3	45	15
Ont.	3	3	52	15
Man.	1	1	9	6
Sask.	1	1	10	6
Alta.	1	1	10	6
B.C.	1	1	13	6
Yukon	1	1	1	1
Mack. R.	1	1	1	1
Total	16	16	162	80

Functions:

The Credentials Committee is to examine all credentials and to verify the eligibility of all delegates.

The Nominations Committee is to formulate the rules under which nomination and election of the leader should take place, and to conduct the election of the leader.

The Resolutions and Policy Committee is to receive, examine and report on all resolutions relating to Party policy.

The Organization and Public Relations Committee is to study organization and public relations generally and to report on technique for the improvement thereof.

* Memorandum Regarding Convention Committees, 1956 (mimeo.).

assigned four specific areas of party activity. Two of the committees function only for the purposes of the convention. The other two committees undertake duties which are related to the party as a whole. During the past forty years this distinction has been increasingly emphasized at each succeeding convention.

The Credentials Committee is appointed early on the first day in order to examine all credentials and to verify the eligibility of all delegates. The Nominations Committee is appointed a little later in the proceedings, and its function is to formulate the rules under which nomination and election of the leader should take place and to conduct the election of leader.

The other two committees, in recent conventions, have met early, from a day to several weeks, before the convention opened in order to prepare the large volume of material for consideration by the delegates. The Resolutions and Policy, and the Organization and Public Relations Committees, as they have recently been named, are now pre-convention committees. Technically, they are appointed in advance on a 'temporary' basis in order to do the preliminary work; the membership is endorsed at the convention. This is a token gesture to the democratic procedure; and it does permit the continuation of the work of the people concerned who are familiar with the operation.

One writer, John Lederle, observed that the pre-convention preparation eliminates "confusion, disagreement, and faulty expression...American parties have seldom given such careful pre-convention consideration to their platforms."

He continues:³

One must not jump to the conclusion that the delegates on arrival found the platform a fait accompli. ..Working within those limitations upon individual participation which are necessarily associated with deliberations of any large body, opportunity was given for a maximum of rank and file influence.

As mentioned in the discussion on The Delegates, they are asked and begged to submit resolutions for consideration of the two working pre-convention committees. The work of these two pre-convention committees has had a growing influence on the convention and on the national party; a description of their method of operation is set out below, prior to a brief discussion of the work of the two smaller committees.

Resolutions Committee

At the opening of the first Conservative convention, Sir Robert Borden, in a brief but witty speech, offered the delegates advice regarding the policy to be discussed:⁴

3. John W. Lederle, "National Party Conventions: Canada Shows the Way," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 25, 1944, pp.126, 128.

4. Verbatim Report National Liberal-Conservative Convention, 1927, pp. 21-24.

...bear in mind that the leader ought to have something to say about the definition of policy.. if you go into details, and define a policy too much in detail, pray bear in mind...that you must not forestall too much a leader who will be responsible to you, to parliament, and to the country for the policy which is put before the people.

The resolutions passed at the five conventions may or may not have influenced the party policy to a marked degree. Possibly their influence has varied from time to time. The Port Hope Manifesto of 1942 certainly had a profound effect upon the policies considered at the convention held a few months later. The amateur politicians who worked out this progressive policy at Port Hope were so enthusiastic about it that one of their members, Mr. R. K. Finlayson, was sent across the country "between Port Hope and Winnipeg". He interviewed people and discussed the programme across Canada.⁵ The commonly held view, however, is that the policies agreed upon at the convention are to be regarded as a guide to the party leader, and do not necessarily bind him. Since members of the parliamentary group sit on the Resolutions Committee, it is likely that they may act as a channel of communication between the delegates and the leader. The leader is chosen on the last afternoon of the convention, after most, if not all, the resolutions have been considered. The policies, then,

5. Interview with Mr. R.K. Finlayson, March 2, 1965.
Official Report, 1942, p. 82.

are determined before the choice of the leader who, presumably, would execute them.

Although the receipt and consideration of resolutions was anticipated by the Convention Committee for the 1927 convention, the confusion which surrounded the administration of this committee indicates that the volume of work was not fully appreciated. In his letter of September 21, 1927, General McRae asked that all resolutions should be submitted in writing and "filed with the Resolutions Committee, on or before the afternoon of the first day." This would not give the committee much time to get organized. The rules provided that a delegate had the right to speak to his resolution if the committee failed to report it out. He also regarded it as desirable that resolutions should come from organizations rather than individuals. This practice was changed in subsequent conventions.

In setting out the proposed membership of the committees, he recommended that this committee have 82 members, and that "each province would be represented on the committee proportionately to its representation in the Federal House."⁶

The committee undertook its enormous task by 8 o'clock on the first evening, meeting in the Manitoba

6. McRae Letter, September 21, 1927.

Parliament Buildings. As might be expected, it was not ready to report by the next morning, and there were a number of references in the proceedings to the difficulties the Committee encountered. Mr. Hanson, M.P. from New Brunswick, remarked that he had been asked to "use my efforts as a draughtsman to arrive at a resolution which would be satisfactory to the extreme, conflicting view" of some unstated matter. There is mention of the appointment of a sub-committee to deal with industrial relations and social legislation which brought down a lengthy resolution on this topic. Despite its problems, the Resolutions Committee piloted twenty-one lengthy and complicated resolutions through the convention.⁷

Resolutions Committee - 1938

The 1938 Resolutions Committee was, perhaps, a pilot which worked out the course for subsequent committees. In addition, the only report of the proceedings of a Resolutions Committee was made in 1938. Apparently it did not occur to the members of later conventions to keep minutes. The details of the operation of this Resolutions Committee will be relevant to the committees for the three following conventions.

Perhaps in view of the difficulties encountered eleven years earlier, the 1938 convention committee set up a

7. Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 94, 240, and passim.
Resolutions Passed at National Liberal-Conservative Convention, 1927.

pre-Convention Resolutions Committee to consider and correlate resolutions submitted.⁸ The members included only Members of Parliament and Senators.

The Resolutions Committee met almost continuously during the convention. The membership had expanded to include party supporters, in addition to the legislators, as listed in the proceedings.⁹ At a first brief meeting, procedure was discussed. Meetings were resumed on July 5, at 8 p.m., and continued until some time during the day of July 7th.

Resolutions Committee - 1956

The pattern established in 1938 was followed in the three subsequent conventions, with the addition of more formalized procedures. By 1956, the sub-committees of the Resolutions Committee had been reduced to six. Representation on these sub-committees for the last convention is indicated below, by provinces:

8. Memorandum regarding the Organization Structure, 1938.

9. Proceedings, 1938, pp. 60-66.

Prov.	External Affairs & Defence	Agri- culture	Labour	Natural Resources	Welfare & Veterans-	Taxation & Trade	Total ¹⁰
Nfld.	1		1	1	1	1	5
P.E.I.	1	1			1	1	4
N.S.	1	1	1	1	1	2	7
N.B.	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Que.	7	8	8	8	7	7	45
Ont.	8	10	9	9	8	8	52
Man.	2	2	1	2	1	1	9
Sask.	2	3	1	2	1	1	10
Alta.	2	3	1	2	1	1	10
B.C.	2	2	2	2	3	2	13
Yukon				1			1
Mack. R.	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
<u>Total</u>	27	31	25	30	25	25	163

A new element was introduced in 1956 -- the experts were called in to advise. At that time the Party had in operation a Research Department. It prepared a compilation of all the resolutions of the party in Parliament, in previous conventions and at annual meetings, for the use of committee members. The services of technical advisers were arranged for the possible assistance of the committee. Supplementary material related to the resolutions was also provided for consideration.¹¹ Although the experts performed useful services for the Resolutions Committee, there is no evidence that decisions were influenced or that the experts imposed their views upon the members.

The methods of operation evolved by the Resolutions

10. Memorandum regarding Convention Committees, 1956.

11. Donald Eldon, "Toward a Well Informed Parliament", Queen's Quarterly, Winter, 1957, p. 522.

Committees, under the jurisdiction of the Convention Committees, seem to be as democratic in principle as any large gathering will permit. The discussion of the resolutions proceeded smoothly, although with some arguments, amendments and controversy, which are commendable. The functions of the Resolutions Committees of the Conservative Party seem to have been carried out with a sensible regard for the balance between efficiency and the democratic process. They have provided a sense of participation for the delegates who were free to attend the sessions. They endeavoured to be a link between the parliamentary group and the rank and file, with respect to party policies. This means of communication operated in both directions. Representation of the parliamentary caucus on the Resolutions Committee provided some safeguard against the party passing resolutions which could embarrass the parliamentary group in the House of Commons. On the other hand, the opportunity to hear the views of delegates from across the country was of value to the parliamentarians in gauging public opinion.

Party Organization and Publicity Committees

At the first convention, a Committee on Party Organization and a Committee on Publicity were set up, based on provincial representation. Ontario and Quebec

were given five members, Prince Edward Island one, and the other provinces two each, for each committee.¹² Each committee brought reports to the convention, which were adopted with a minimum of discussion, and which were then ignored. However, the committees survived in subsequent conventions.

At the 1938 convention, Mr. Gordon Graydon, permanent secretary of the convention and chairman of the Committee on Organization, brought in an excellent report on party organization, which provided for a National Conservative Council, and for joint provincial and federal associations in every province. Unfortunately, this report was presented to the convention while the delegates waited for the return of the second balloting for the leadership. The report was read in both French and English, and adopted without discussion.¹³ Again no action was taken on it.

The Publicity Committee recommended a permanent national committee on publicity, the publication of a regular periodical to discuss public questions, in both languages, and other means of presenting to the public the policies of the party. This report met the same fate.

It was not until 1942 that the Organization Committee made its influence felt. On October 6, 1942, the

12. McRae Letter, September 21, 1927.

13. Proceedings, 1938, pp. 293-295.

National Convention Committee appointed a pre-convention committee, under the guidance of Mr. Graydon, to study all questions relating to Party Organization. It was summoned to meet two days before the convention opened in Winnipeg in December, 1942, and at that time the Committees on Party Organization and on Publicity were merged with an enlarged membership, numbering over 70.¹⁴

On the last morning of the convention, Hon. Errick F. Willis, M.L.A., brought in the report which was to provide the incentive and the structure for the present party organization. He concluded his opening remarks by saying:

This report makes suggestions which we believe to be the basis for organization of the Conservative Party in Canada; and which will go a long way toward rectifying the indifferent attitude of our Party on organization and public relations in the past.

The report provided for a Dominion Conservative Association, with officers, a national executive, a national organizer and permanent party headquarters, in every province and at Ottawa. Six persons were named to see that these recommendations were carried out. "We fix them with that responsibility and hold them responsible to see that your wishes are not disregarded, as sometimes they have been in

14. Minutes of National Convention Committee, October 6, 1942.
Memorandum to National Convention Committee, November 4, 1942.
Minutes of National Convention Committee, December 8, 1942.

the past." The requirement was laid down that the Association be called in session within three months, and annually thereafter. There was some clarification of points in the report, and some discussion, but it was received with favour and adopted.¹⁵

Most of the recommendations of this report were carried out, as party finances permitted, and they have provided the basis for the party organization as it exists today. This committee did its work so well that the Organization and Public Relations Committee of the two later conventions have done little but carry on.

The 1948 Organization and Public Relations Committee, in its report, expressed its views on a regular convention. The Chairman, Mr. George Nowlan, reported that several resolutions had been submitted urging annual conventions, or for a fixed time, such as four or seven years. However, he said that the Committee regarded this type of convention machinery as "necessary for the bureaucratic thinking of the C.C.F. Party, for through these conventions that party controls the policy of its elected representatives." But the Conservative Party does not believe in such control, and prefers a flexible type of organization. He advocated the maintenance of the Dominion Association.¹⁶

15. Official Report, 1942, pp. 312-323.

16. Convention, 1948, p. 148.

At the last convention the usual procedure was followed for the Organization and Public Relations Committee. The report was adopted without discussion.¹⁷

It was quite clear that the National Headquarters, established after the 1942 convention, was carrying on most of the organization work, and the convention committee in 1956 had little work to do.

These two Convention Committees have performed very useful and lasting work for the Party. There is no doubt that they will be appointed should there be another convention.

Credentials Committee

This is one of the two committees classified as 'convention' for its only function is carried out at the convention, with no preliminary work required on the part of its members. The Credentials Committee is the final authority in cases of questioned credentials of a delegate. In the history of Conservative Conventions, it has never had to deal with the delicate political problems which have been raised at American conventions.

The Credentials Committee, whose membership is made up of provincial representatives, is appointed within the first hour or two of the opening of the convention. It is required to go to the registration desks and inspect the

17. Memorandum to National Convention Committee, Nov. 29, 1956, from W.L. Rowe, National Director.
Proceedings, 1956, pp. 64, 64A, 75-79.

credentials books, which contain the records of all the delegates, described in Chapter V. The members of this Committee may challenge any delegate, inspect his identification, see that the registrars carry out their duties in proper fashion. After performing this task, the Committee receives the first report of the registrars as to the number of delegates and alternate delegates registered. This information is conveyed to the temporary chairman, and the convention is declared duly constituted. Unless there is a particular problem which must be submitted to the convention, the Committee again reports on the last day just before the first ballot for the leadership is taken. The Chairman reports on the number and classes of delegates -- constituency, ex-officio and at-large, and on the number of ballot books issued.¹⁸ This last piece of information determines the number of ballots required for election - half plus one of the number of votes cast.

The only reported problem occurred in 1956. In his first report, the Chairman, Mr. Leon J. Ladner, noted that there were "some technical uncertainties" regarding delegates-at-large from the party's Student Federation and from University Progressive Conservative Clubs. Mr. Ladner "recommended to the Credentials Committee and they accepted the proposal that the Committee should not decide it, but

18. Memorandum for Chairman of Credentials Committee, 1956.

refer it to the Convention. The Convention's decision was that both delegates be accepted and that was done."¹⁹

In recent conventions, the Credentials Committee has also announced in its first report the deadline for the transfer of alternates to take the place of unregistered delegates, and the deadline for registration of delegates.

The Credentials Committee provides a check against possible violation of the accreditation procedures, and is the final authority before the convention to which any disputes regarding the registration of delegates may be referred. It has become a firmly established part of the convention ritual.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee was set up in 1927 on the basis of provincial representation, with five representatives each from Ontario and Quebec, one from Prince Edward Island, and two from each of the other provinces. This distribution has been maintained at each of the subsequent conventions.

The Committee also is responsible for drawing up the rules covering nominating procedures. These will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. In 1927 the rules were quite simple and informal. For example, nominations were submitted "on any ordinary blank sheet of

19. Letter from Mr. L.J. Ladner, Q.C., to author, April 5, 1965.
Proceedings, 1956, p. 43.

paper."²⁰ Since that time, the forms have become increasingly formal. In 1948 and 1956, they were elaborately printed, and required the signatures of the nominator and seconder as well as the certification of the candidate that he would support the chosen leader.

At the first convention, the Nominations Committee had to interview each candidate to determine whether or not he was a serious candidate. It also was required to report the names of those nominated who refused to stand as candidates. This procedure was discarded in later conventions.

At the 1927, 1938 and 1942 conventions, the Chairman of the Committee also acted as Chief Returning Officer, and the members of the committee acted as scrutineers during the balloting. In 1948 and 1956, the convention executive committee appointed the Chief Returning Officer. The Committee still supervised the election procedure, and was present in the counting room. However, the candidates were also permitted to appoint their own scrutineers, in addition to the Nominations Committee members.

The Chairman of the Nominations Committee reads out in detail the rules governing the nomination and election of a leader. This is usually done on the morning of the second day. He declares that all nominations must be

20. Verbatim Report, 1927, p. 149.

submitted (in later conventions to the National Director) by a certain time. It has been usually set for 6 p.m., two hours before the candidates and their sponsors address the convention.

One of the most dramatic moments in Conservative convention history was created by this rule. It may be recalled that Mr. Bracken, the leading candidate in 1942, submitted his paper one minute before the deadline. Since that time, the announcement has been made several times in the first two days about the need to obtain nomination forms, and the time for their submission.

In a Memorandum for the Chairman of the Nominations Committee prepared for the guidance of the 1956 convention committee, the members are advised to review with the Chief Returning Officer the plans he has made for the conduct of the election. They should approve the appointment of the Deputy Returning Officers. They are asked to assign each of their members to a ballot box in the counting room to observe that the Deputy Returning Officer performs his duty properly. The Chief Returning Officer hands his written report of each balloting to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, who delivers the report to the convention.²¹

21. Memorandum for Chairman of Nominations Committee, 1956.
Rules to Govern the Conduct of Nomination and Election of a leader, 1942, 1948, 1956.
List of Deputy Returning Officers, 1956.
Draft Report (Second) of Committee, 1956.
Draft Affidavit verifying Nominations, 1956 Convention Scrapbook, Party Headquarters.

The work of the Nominations Committee has been largely standardized. The rules have changed little in recent years, as will be observed below. The National Director receives the written nominations for certification. The Chief Returning Officer really operates the election machinery. However, the Committee exercises its own discretion and is the final authority; like the Credentials Committee, the members of the Nominations Committee stand ready to provide safeguards against possible infringement of the election rules.

These four convention committees have made it possible for the convention to consider a great deal of party business within a short period of time. The Resolutions Committee at the various conventions has contributed a consolidation of party thought across the country on matters of national interest, which could be regarded as a guide in policy-making for the new party leader. The Organization and Public Relations Committee provided the basic structure of the party upon which it operates today.

All of these committees have encouraged delegate participation in party affairs, and have, within their terms of reference, been able to ensure that the business of the convention was conducted in as honest and democratic a way as possible.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURES

The nominations of candidates and the balloting procedures at the five Conservative national conventions have been carried out under the supervision of the Nominations Committee. Although the rules governing these procedures have been refined and formalized during the years, the basic principles have been the same. Several ways of approaching these procedures were considered prior to the 1927 convention, as described below. In subsequent conventions the same pattern was followed. An analysis of these procedures, including the rules for the conduct of the nomination of candidates and the election of a leader, and the balloting procedures is presented in this chapter, together with a consideration of the more significant changes made over the years in these procedures. The role of the nominators and seconders, or sponsors; the positions in order of nomination, drawn from a hat; the significance of the secret ballot and its meaning for party unity, are also considered, together with a brief description of the events of the balloting period of the convention.

The First Convention - Principles of Election Rules

In his letter sent to delegates before the 1927 convention, General McRae raised several points regarding the election process, which he expected to be considered at the meetings. He reported that there was a general

demand from delegates "that a day intervene (sic) between nominations and balloting (sic)...If this plan is adopted by the Convention there can be no balloting Tuesday evening, and delegates who wish to retire for the night can safely do so at any time." (1) At this first convention, the nominating speeches must have taken more than three and a half hours, so it was just as well that the tired delegates were permitted an interval before casting their ballots.

His views on the duties of the Nominations Committee, with particular reference to interviewing the candidates to see if they were serious, were probably directed against the 'favourite son' technique used in the United States. Since the Canadian convention does not choose its delegates by an intermediary provincial convention or primary; since it uses the written nomination rather than the more dramatic state roll call, the 'favourite son technique' has not been used here.

Another point he raised for consideration was the elimination of the lower man. Must a candidate remain in the race until the end, or should every low man on each succeeding ballot be dropped? "Many Conservatives fear that this plan of dropping the low-man might eliminate a candidate who, in the case of deadlock, would be the best compromise candidate. Once eliminated there would be no

way of restoring him to the contest." It has turned out in practice that, in two of the three conventions which have required a second ballot, the low man (or two) has voluntarily dropped out. In 1927, Sir Henry Drayton let his name stand for both ballots, only to see his vote drop from 31 to 3. (See Table X, Ballot Record).

General McRae also considered suggestions as to the percentage of the vote to be required for election. "In order to ensure unanimity and support for the new leader, a successful candidate should be required to poll a sixty per cent vote; some want a two-third vote; others believe a majority vote sufficient."¹ There is no record of discussion of these points at the convention, but the simple majority vote has always been used. (For further discussion, see page 173 below.)

Although much discussion on these points was anticipated at the first convention, none was reported in the proceedings. The rules which governed the 1956 nominations and election procedure were a refinement and an elaboration of most of the rules used in 1927. Before discussing in more detail the changes which have been made, an example of the exercise of its authority by the Nominations

1. Letter from General McRae, September 21, 1927.

Perhaps the lesson was learned from the Democratic Convention of 1924, when 103 ballots were taken.

TABLE IX

CONSERVATIVE PARTY NATIONAL CONVENTIONS
NOMINATIONS
In Order Drawn

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CANDIDATE</u>	<u>NOMINATOR</u>	<u>SECONDER</u>
1927	Hon. H. Guthrie, M.P.	Dr. J.T.M. Anderson, M.L.A.	Sask. C. W. Bell, M.P.
	C. H. Cahan, M.P.	L. G. Bell, M.P.	Que. Hon. G. A. Fauteux
	Hon. Robert Rogers	W. J. Tupper	Man. L. J. Cousineau
	Hon. Sir Henry Drayton, M.P.	C. Duquette	Que. F. W. Turnbull
	Hon. R. B. Bennett, M.P.	Hon. L.P.D. Tilley, M.L.A.	N.B. A.A. McGillivray, M.L.A.
	Hon. Dr. R.J. Manion, M.P.	Dr. J. M. Robb, M.L.A.	Ont. W. S. Haney, M.L.A.
1938	Hon. Dr. R.J. Manion, M.P.	E. F. Willis, M.L.A.	Man. G. H. Héon, M.P.
	Hon. J. E. Lawson, M.P.	Mrs. A. Van Koughnet	Ont. D. J. Ongley
	J. H. Harris, M.P.	V. C. Porteous	Ont. Mrs. G. Gooch
	D. Massey, M.P.	H. C. Green, M.P.	B.C. R. K. Finlayson
	M. A. MacPherson	A. L. Smith	Alta. C. B. Smith
1942	Hon. J. Bracken, M.L.A.	A. L. Smith	Alta. G. Graydon, M.P.
	Hon. H. H. Stevens	G. H. Andrews	B.C. A. L. Burrows
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	D. J. Walker	Ont. R. L. Hanbidge
	H. C. Green, M.P.	C. G. Frost	Ont. A. J. Brooks, M.P.
	M. A. MacPherson	Rev. N. Rawson	Ont. J. Hill
1948	Hon. G. A. Drew	Col. J. A. Ross, M.P.	Man. I. Sabourin
	D. M. Fleming, M.P.	Hon. S. Gobeil	Que. A. F. Lawrence
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	Maj. Gen. G. R. Pearkes, M.P.	B.C. R. Roberge
1956	E. D. Fulton, M.P.	M. A. MacPherson	Alta. J. Méthot
	D. M. Fleming, M.P.	J. A. Maloney, M.L.A.	Ont. H. Courtemanche
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	Hon. H. J. Flemming, M.L.A.	N.B. Maj. Gen. G. R. Pearkes, M.P.
			Que. B.C.

Sources:

- 1927 Verbatim Report: pp. 151-200; p. 260; p. 265.
 1938 Proceedings: pp. 168-217; p. 284; Canadian Annual Review, 1937-38, p. 56.
 1942 Official Report: pp. 236-303; p. 361; p. 409.
 1948 Convention: pp. 218-62; p. 347.
 1956 Proceedings: pp. 173-232; p. 307.

TABLE X

CONSERVATIVE PARTY NATIONAL CONVENTIONS
BALLOT RECORD

In Order of Nomination

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CANDIDATE</u>	<u>BALLOT</u>	
		<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>
1927	Hon. H. Guthrie, M.P.	345	320
	C. H. Cahan, M.P.	310	266
	Hon. Robert Rogers	114	37
	Hon. Sir Henry Drayton, M.P.	31	3
	Hon. R. B. Bennett, M.P.	594	780
	Hon. Dr. R. J. Manion, M.P.	<u>170</u>	<u>148</u>
		1564	1554
1938	Hon. Dr. R. J. Manion	726	830
	Hon. J. E. Lawson, M.P.	105	
	J. H. Harris, M.P.	131	49
	D. Massey, M.P.	128	39
	M. A. MacPherson	<u>475</u>	<u>648</u>
		1565	1566
1942	Hon. J. Bracken, M.L.A.	420	538
	Hon. H. H. Stevens	20	
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	120	79
	H. C. Green, M.P.	88	
	M. A. MacPherson	<u>222</u>	<u>255</u>
		870	872
1948	Hon. G. A. Drew	827	
	D. M. Fleming, M.P.	104	
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	<u>311</u>	
		1242	
1956	E. D. Fulton, M.P.	117	
	D. M. Fleming, M.P.	393	
	J. G. Diefenbaker, M.P.	<u>774</u>	
		1284	

Sources:

- 1927 Verbatim Report: pp. 151-200; p. 260; p. 265.
 1938 Proceedings: pp. 168-217; p. 284;
Canadian Annual Review, 1937-38, p. 56.
 1942 Official Report: pp. 236-303; p. 361; p. 409.
 1948 Convention: pp. 218-62; p. 347.
 1956 Proceedings: pp. 173-232; p. 307.

Committee is illustrated from the 1948 convention, the only one for which such papers were located.

Nominations Committee Exercises Authority

A first proposal for rules was drawn up by the Convention Executive Committee based almost completely on the 1942 rules.² This proposal was apparently then discarded in favour of a more detailed set of rules which combined the nomination and the election procedures. This second draft was given to the members of the Nominations Committee at the Convention. In comparing this proposed set with the rules read aloud at the convention on the morning of the second day, a few alterations may be noted. In the first rule, the Committee inserted the requirement that the nominator and seconder had to be delegates. No reason is given for this; perhaps it merely regularized a requirement which had already existed.

In the second rule, the place of delivery of nominations was changed from the office of the Secretary of the Convention to the office of the National Director. This was the first convention in which the party had had a National Director.

A rule was added to the effect that the written consent of the person nominated had to be received at the office of the National Director, else he would not be

2. The complete list and exact wording of rules are set out on pages 168-176 below.

permitted to be a candidate or to address the convention. Almost certainly this rule was the result of the Bracken incident in 1942.

In Rule 8, the Committee added a provision for the appointment of ad hoc members of the Committee. In the next rule, the written appointment of scrutineers by candidates, with a specified filing time, was required. This would identify scrutineers and prevent unauthorized persons from entering the counting room.³

This incident illustrates that the Nominations Committee exercised its responsibilities with respect to the rules on nominations and elections. These rules have been read out in detail to the convention, usually on the second day, and approval has been sought and granted. Rules for Conduct of Election of Leader -- 1927-1956⁴

As mentioned above, the rules which govern the nomination of candidates and the election of a leader, used in the Conservative Party of Canada, attempt to ensure fair treatment, to provide protection for candidates and delegates against fraud and abuse, and to make possible an honest election. The basic principles have been maintained, although many details have changed. The

3. Proposed Rules for Conduct of Elections of Leader; Memorandum for Members of the Nominations Committee; Convention, 1948, pp. 91-94.

4. Rules for the Conduct of Election of Leader, 1942, 1948, 1956. (Mimeo)

rules used in 1956 for the nomination and election of a leader are set out below, with comments on the changes made, and the reasons for these changes where significant.

1. Each nomination shall be in writing, signed by the mover and seconder who shall be delegates, and the candidate shall consent thereto in writing.

This rule has been changed little since 1927.

The only addition has been the phrase 'who shall be delegates', added in 1948.

2. Nominations and the written consents of the candidates shall be delivered to the office of the National Director addressed to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee by 6 p.m. (on specified date).

At the first convention, it was required that the names of those who had been nominated but who declined, be reported, as well as those who consented to be nominated. This requirement was dropped at later conventions.

In 1927, the nominations were handed to the secretary of the convention, who submitted them to the Committee on Nominations. The Committee interviewed each candidate in order to find out if he were a serious candidate, and then it gave its report to the convention of those who consented and those who declined nomination.

In 1938, the nominations were delivered directly to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee; in 1942, these were addressed to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee

through the office of the Secretary of the Convention. The present form was adopted in 1948 when the nominations were required to be delivered to the office of the National Director addressed to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee.

These changes were made because, at some conventions, the secretaries and chairmen may not have been readily available in a designated spot; the office of National Director which was created in 1943, provided a known permanent location at the convention, which could be used for safe deposit of such important papers.

Usually the report of the Nominations Committee, based on the written nominations received prior to the given time, is made to the convention just before the nominating speeches are delivered. In latter years this report has been accompanied by a sworn statement of the National Director as to what nominations he had received by the time specified.

3. Where a nomination is delivered but the written consent of the person nominated is not received at the office of the National Director before the time provided in the preceding rule then such person shall not be allowed to stand as a candidate or be permitted to address the convention but the Chairman of the Nominations Committee shall nevertheless report the name of any person so nominated.

Prior to 1948, a briefer version of this rule provided that a candidate may not speak unless he intends to stand for election.

There is no indication that this rule has, indeed, been required. No doubt the experience in 1942, when one candidate's papers were filed in the nick of time, and there was some doubt as to the authenticity of his signature on his consent papers, was a strong influence in the insertion of this rule.

4. The order of nomination of candidates shall be according to lot as a result of names being drawn from a hat by chance. After all nominations have been moved and seconded the candidates shall address the convention in the order of their nomination.

The first part of this rule has been the method used for choosing order of speakers at every convention. It was questioned at the 1938 convention, and the Chairman quoted (incorrectly) from Ecclesiastes that "the race was not to the strong...but time and chance happeneth to them all."⁵

The order of speaking at the first two conventions was, according to the names drawn from the hat, nominator, seconder and candidate. When the rules governing nominations were read out for discussion at the 1938 convention, one unidentified delegate expressed the view that "it would be preferable to have the unvarnished speech of the candidate alone in order that we might hear them all together."⁶ Later during the proceedings, Mr. MacPherson, the candidate

5. Proceedings, 1938, p. 165.

6. Proceedings, 1938, p. 113.

who spoke last, together with his two sponsors, built up such an oratorical wave of emotion that he nearly swept the convention. Four years later the speaking order was changed so that all nominating and seconding speeches were completed before the candidates spoke, in the order in which their names were drawn. It was hoped that such a change would preclude the emotional build-up which might impair the judgment of the delegates.⁷

5. The time allotted to the mover shall not exceed 10 minutes and to the seconder 5 minutes. The time allotted to each candidate shall not exceed 20 minutes.

With the exception of the 1942 convention, when the nominator and seconder were each permitted ten minutes, this rule has been unchanged.

Unlike the American conventions, this rule has been rigidly enforced by the Convention Chairman. In 1927, the delegates were advised that if they applauded too long, they would penalize the candidates by limiting the speaking time.⁸ In 1938 the Chairman had a bell which "will interrupt the most eloquent speech."⁹ The 1942 Chairman announced that he would rigidly enforce the time limit.¹⁰ In 1948 the Chairman was provided with a gong which would

7. Official Report, 1942, p. 235.

Interviews with several delegates and party officials.

8. Verbatim Report, 1927, p. 150.

9. Proceedings, 1938, p. 166.

10. Official Report, 1942, p. 235.

be struck if necessary to enforce the regulation.¹¹ At the last convention, the Chairman warned that "time taken up by demonstrations will not be taken off the candidates' time. However, once this gavel is pounded on this desk time will start to run out on everyone."¹² The strict enforcement of this rule has no doubt reduced the planned demonstrations which any candidate's supporters might make. It has also served to maintain some dignity during the tense evening of nominating speeches.

6. No candidate whose consent in writing to his nomination has been delivered shall be permitted to withdraw until after the first ballot has been taken but thereafter any such candidate may withdraw by handing his resignation to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee who shall announce the candidate's withdrawal.

In 1942, when there were five candidates, two withdrew voluntarily after the first ballot -- the Hon. H.H. Stevens and Mr. Green, who received the two lowest votes. Mr. MacPherson, who was second to Mr. Bracken in the first ballot, offered to retire, but his supporters called out, "Stay with it." This left three candidates in the second ballot, and Mr. MacPherson again placed second.

In 1948 this rule was drafted in the more elaborate form stated above, but its meaning has been in effect for every convention. It is included in order to eliminate any but serious candidates.

11. Convention, 1948, p. 217.

12. Proceedings, 1956, pp. 172-73.

7. Balloting shall continue until a candidate receives a majority of the total votes cast and thereupon the Joint Chairmen shall declare him elected. If no choice is made on the third ballot the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes in that ballot shall be eliminated and the lowest candidate on each succeeding ballot shall similarly be eliminated.

The rule as stated was first adopted in 1948; it was a combination of two or more similar rules used in the previous conventions. The matter of a decision being reached by a majority of votes rather than sixty per cent, or some other proportion, of the votes has never been raised at the conventions.

The two conventions to which this rule has been applied have not used more than one ballot. However, the machinery is provided in order to prevent interminable voting.

8. The Chairman of the Nominations Committee shall supervise and direct the conduct of the election. In the event of the absence of any members of the Nominations Committee during the counting of ballots, the Chairman of the Nominations Committee shall have authority to appoint ad hoc members of the Committee.
9. Each candidate may appoint in writing a Scrutineer for each ballot box and the appointments shall be delivered to the Chief Returning Officer at the office of the National Director before (a specified time).
10. The Chief Returning Officer shall be responsible for the collection and the counting of ballots and with the approval of the Nominations Committee he shall appoint such deputy returning officers as may be requested.

These rules provided protection for the candidates against the possibility of stuffing the ballot boxes. There were three sources of protection.

The 16-man Nominating Committee acted as scrutineers to supervise the collection and counting of the ballots.

Secondly, each candidate could appoint a scrutineer for each ballot box, a total of fifteen. (Prior to 1956, each candidate was permitted a total of three scrutineers in 1927, or one each in 1938, 1942, and 1948.) And, thirdly, the Chief Returning Officer, appointed in 1948 and in 1956 by the Convention Executive Committee, had a staff of Deputy Returning Officers (one for each box), who passed the ballot boxes up and down the rows of delegates, under the watchful eyes of the candidates' scrutineers and of the Nominating Committee, acting as scrutineers.

11. Each accredited delegate shall have received and signed for an identification card and badge and an official book of ballots bearing a serial number and containing twelve ballots. These are not transferable.

At every convention the delegates were required to pick up their ballot books after providing identification, in the form of a signature on his credentials. The number of ballots has varied from ten to twelve, but they have always been different colours, so that the proper ballot would be used.

Announcements were made several times during the convention regarding the hours during which ballot books could be collected. The time designated has been the morning of the last day of the convention, just before the balloting was scheduled to take place. For example, at the 1956 convention, the chairman announced that the ballots could be picked up at the registration desk between 9 and 12 a.m. of the last morning. The delegates would be required to produce the signed pass given them at the time of registration. Without the pass, no ballot book would be issued.¹³

12. Delegates shall submit their credentials for inspection whenever requested by the Deputy Returning Officers or Scrutineers, during the taking of a ballot.
13. No ballot shall be marked until specific instructions are given to do so by the Chairman.
14. Only one nominated candidate may be voted for on any ballot. The family name of the candidate in favour of whom a delegate wishes to vote shall be legibly written on the face of the ballot.
15. The delegates will remain in their seats and deposit their ballots in ballot boxes provided for the purpose. The ballot boxes will be in charge of (sic) the Deputy Returning Officers and will be taken by them to a room set aside for the counting of ballots.

Although these rules were first included in the 1948 convention rules, they were in effect at all previous

13. Proceedings, 1956, pp. 157-58.

conventions except in 1942. The chairman instructed the delegates to remain seated while the ballots were collected. Due to the awkward size of the ballot boxes at the Winnipeg convention in 1942, the chairman asked the delegates to "file out a row at a time and deposit their ballots and then return to their seats."¹⁴ The less the large number of delegates is asked to move about, the more likelihood of preserving order at the convention.

16. The Chief Returning Officer shall make a written report of the result of each vote to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee who shall make an announcement of such to the Convention at large.

Introduced in 1948, this rule was the subject of some discussion. It was thought that the publication of the exact results might, in some instances, be injurious to the unity of the party; it might reflect a possible split in the party of support of the winning candidate.

At the 1938 and 1942 conventions, the rule stipulated that the votes cast for each ballot would be announced, provided it was not the final ballot. However, the results became known by other means; as is noted on the accompanying Table X of ballot results, the results of the final ballot in 1938 were reported in the press.¹⁵

14. Official Report, 1942, p. 346.

15. Verbatim Report, 1927; Proceedings, 1938; Official Report, 1942; Convention, 1948; Proceedings, 1956, passim; Scrutineers Sworn statement, 1942 and 1948; Affidavit re Nominations; Report of Nominations Committee, 1956; Chief Returning Officer's Report, 1956.

These rules have been applied with discretion and with the flexibility required when dealing with a large number of people. As a result they have never been seriously challenged and are considered to work well.

Position and Sponsors

In Table IX, "Nominations in Order Drawn", the nominators and seconders for the candidates are indicated, together with their home province. No clear relationship emerges between the position of the names drawn and success in election. It is true that three of the winning candidates drew first place for nomination, but of the other two, one was second from last and the other was in last place for nomination. No firm conclusions may be drawn as to the significance of position in the draw, on such limited evidence.

Some consideration of the balance between French and English-speaking sponsors of candidates may be made from the information in the table. In other areas of the convention, it has been noted, every effort was made to observe a balance. In recent conventions there have been joint chairmen, joint secretaries, both permanent and temporary. But this gesture toward the two cultures has not always been made in the case of nominating procedures. Two of the five winners were seconded by French-speaking party members. In 1942 none of the five candidates, all from western provinces, had any French-speaking sponsors; in 1948, all of the candidates had

one French-speaking and one English-speaking sponsor. There does not seem to be a correlation between an acknowledgment of the two languages and victory.¹⁶

In a wider look at the home province of the sponsors, there is also no clear pattern. Most of the candidates were supported by persons from other provinces than his own, but the west and the east, or the large and small provincial balance was not always achieved.

Anonymity and Party Unity

In any discussion of conventions, one hears that a particular province supported a certain candidate, or failed to support him, as the case may be. In fact, however, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to determine how a province voted. There is no way of proving or disproving such opinions.¹⁷

The only convention in which such opinions might have been supported was in 1927. At that gathering, the delegates were asked in advance to "seat themselves in the provincial seats, by constituencies, in order to facilitate the vote which we shall take this afternoon."¹⁸ It may have

16. In thanking his nominator and seconder in 1956, Mr. Diefenbaker said they were chosen because they came from an Atlantic and a Pacific province.

See John Meisel, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32, for a discussion of Mr. Diefenbaker's failure to choose a French sponsor.

17. Interviews with Hon. R.A. Bell, Hon. D.M. Fleming, and Hon. E.D. Fulton.

18. Verbatim Report, 1927, pp. 56, 211.

been possible at the time to learn how the various provinces voted. In his article on the 1942 convention Lederle observed that "Reserved sections for delegations were appropriately marked for the various provinces."¹⁹ However, neither G. S. Thorvaldson, the temporary secretary, nor R. A. Bell, the permanent secretary, recalls any provincial distinctions.²⁰ In the film, "John Bracken Canadian" which includes some shots of the convention hall packed with delegates, no provincial signs are visible. If such signs were used they may have been removed before the balloting began. Certainly in the last two conventions there was no effort made to segregate the delegates in any way. One delegate, who was a deputy returning officer and collected the ballots, said that she had no way of knowing who the delegates were unless she recognized a friend.²¹ Of course there is the human tendency to want to sit with friends, who are more likely to come from the same province. And, in 1956, it was plain to see that the delegates who left when the leader was announced were French.

However, every effort was made to see that the vote is quite secret. Instructions were given to the Chief Returning Officer that the ballot boxes were to be scrambled in the counting room before they were opened in order to

19. Lederle, "National Party Conventions", p. 125.

20. Interview with Hon. R.A. Bell and Senator G.S. Thorvaldson.

21. Interview, Mrs. Greta Chambers, September, 1964.

ensure that no identification be made of the ballots and their contents.²²

The insistence upon preservation of anonymity in voting does much to support the unity of the party behind the chosen leader. If it were proven that a particular region was opposed to, or supported, a particular candidate, it could cause embarrassment.

Another illustration of the effort to establish party unity is in the custom of making the final vote unanimous. At every convention, the tradition has been maintained. After the leader's name was announced, the candidate in second place jostled with the candidate in third place to reach the podium and declare their loyalty to the new leader. Usually the second place man was given the honour of moving that the nomination be made unanimous.²³ Whether this support, so freely given in a moment of emotional excitement, is strong later on depends to a large extent upon the personalities of the men involved, and upon their regard for their party. However, it strikes a pleasing note on which to conclude a tiring, exciting, and, the party managers hope, an enthusiasm-rousing three days.

After the final vote had been made unanimous,

22. Interview with Hon. R.A. Bell.

23. Official Report, 1942, p. 373.
Convention, 1948, p. 347.
Proceedings, 1956, p. 307.

the joint chairmen declare the new leader elected unanimously, in both French and English. He then addresses the convention at some length. At the conclusion of his remarks, the convention is declared adjourned.

In conclusion, it can be said that the nomination and election procedures which have evolved from the Conservative conventions make a valuable contribution to the conventions and to the delegates. They are designed to maintain order, to attempt to provide a suitable climate for decision-making, and to protect the sanctity of the individual voter. If these aims are not achieved, it is due to factors outside the procedures discussed in this chapter.

THE CANDIDATES

In the above analysis of the convention as adopted by the Conservative Party in Canada, it has been indicated that a number of modifications were required to fit the convention into the parliamentary system. A detailed discussion of those adaptations, although beyond the terms of reference of this thesis, would doubtless be of interest to students of political systems and comparative institutions. As seen in the previous chapter, the manner of nominating candidates and electing a leader has been completely different in the Canadian experience.

However, any analysis of a Canadian convention should make some reference to the candidates selected and to their 'availability', or acceptability for the office of party leader. A Canadian interpretation of this American expression is considered below, together with a brief and unscientific analysis of the candidates in terms of their personal qualifications and their legislative or elective experience.

One of the best known works in the field of convention analysis is The Politics of National Party Conventions, by David, Goldman and Bain, published a few years ago.¹ A chapter in this book is devoted to an analysis of

1. David, Paul T., R.M. Goldman and R.C. Bain, The Politics of National Party Conventions, (Washington, 1960).

the characteristics of the candidates for nomination at the political conventions held in the United States, on a regular basis, every four years since 1832. In this study, the authors undertook to define precisely the term, 'availability', commonly used in American political discussion.

This term has a history in the literature of the field. Ostrogorski wrote in 1902,² "We are already familiar with the expression 'available candidate', i.e., the one who is likely to poll the most votes, and we are aware, from the history of the presidential candidatures, that his principal characteristic consists in having no character; not possessing a strongly marked individuality."

And Lord Bryce described the qualifications of the 'available' candidate as "the man of mediocrity, the man who has made no enemies, the moderate, colourless man who may make a good candidate, if not a good president."³

D. W. Brogan also writes in great detail of 'availability', and several of the elements in his definition may be applied to the candidates of the Conservative party for testing. Brogan states:⁴

Being 'available' means having some assets and lacking some handicaps which, by tradition or in the circumstances of this election year, are thought indispensable in one case, fatal in the other. The Convention's first job is to decide

2. M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, Vol. II, (New York, 1964), p. 130.

3. James Bryce, The American Commonwealth, Vol. I, pp. 77-85 (New York, 1913).

4. D.W. Brogan, Politics in America (New York, 1960), p. 168.

which candidates are available and then decide which of the available candidates is most available. For all serious candidates are available, but some are more available than others.

The emphasis on various aspects of this term will shift in the American convention, depending on the chances of the party at the polls a few months later. Sometimes a successful candidate, who can attract votes, or at least not lose votes, is required. At other times, when it appears that the party may win easily, a good Presidential candidate is in demand. In any case, the test of the convention's decision on the candidate's appeal is soon made. The candidate is selected in the summer, according to the demands of that moment for a particular aspect of 'availability', and by mid-November, everyone knows which of two parties is the better judge of this political attribute.

This is not so in Canada. A man may be chosen, according to the views of the convention regarding the political situation of the time. But their decision may not be put to the test for some time, possibly two or three years. In such an instance, the requirements considered imperative at the time of the convention may have been replaced by other requirements. Of course, if a party is fortunate in its timing, as the Conservative Party was in 1956-57, the convention is followed fairly quickly by a general election in which it has a candidate who has an

appeal for the electorate and is successful in his campaign for office. The American system, in which the convention is always a short time before an election, demands of its conventions only a short-term decision. But the Canadian system, with its irregular election date, requires that its leadership conventions take a long-term view in its choice of leader. In any attempt to work out a definition of 'availability' for Canadian leadership candidates, the effect of the irregular, as opposed to the fixed, election date must be borne in mind.

It is suggested that, at the first opportunity, such an attempt should be made in Canada. For example, Brogan lists the necessary qualities of 'availability' as a male, white, Protestant, Gentile, preferably the Governor of a large and doubtful state.⁵ What would be the possible qualities for a Canadian candidate?

The American study mentioned above was based on many conventions held during a hundred-year period, and included approximately 300 persons defined as serious candidates.⁶ This amount of information was considered insufficient to provide a basis for any definite patterns as to the qualifications for candidates. Perhaps, if a similar analysis is attempted for only seventeen candidates in five conventions, it will not produce any tangible results.

5. Brogan, op. cit., p. 171.

6. David, et al., op. cit., p. 79.

However, it might suggest lines of investigation which could be pursued, or which should be abandoned, and it might encourage students of Canadian politics to prepare for the next leadership convention, whenever it may come, so that further study may be pursued.

Even though no definite pattern may emerge as to the qualifications for Canadian political leadership, it is of interest to note the characteristics of candidates at past conventions, and some suggestions for future guidelines may be derived from a discussion of the personal background and the legislative experience of these candidates.

The accompanying Table XI sets out the personal characteristics and the public service record of the candidates for leadership at the Conservative party conventions.

Personal Qualifications

Of the seventeen candidates for the leadership of the Conservative Party, all were born in Canada except Hon. H. H. Stevens, who was born in England.

Sixteen of the candidates were of British ethnic origin; one -- Mr. Diefenbaker -- was of German background. No French-Canadian candidate has been nominated. Very few of the candidates have been bilingual. An inspection of the speeches delivered by the candidates at the conventions indicates that, in most instances, the use of French has been merely a token gesture. Dr. Manion used no

TABLE XI

CANDIDATES FOR LEADERSHIP
1927 - 1956

Candidates in order ranked on First Ballot	Personal Data				Legislative Experience								
	Province of Residence	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Religion	Federal Ministerial Experience	Provincial Ministerial Experience	Parliamentary Experience	Member House of Commons when Candidate	Provincial Legislative Experience	Municipal Experience	
<u>1927</u>													
Bennett	Alta.	57	Law	S	Barrister	U.C.C.	6 months	Nil	8 years	yes	8 years	Nil	
Guthrie	Ont.	61	Law	M	Barrister	Presbyterian	4 1/2 years	Nil	27 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
Cahan	Que.	66	B.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Presbyterian	Nil	Nil	2 years	yes	4 years	Nil	
Manion	Ont.	46	M.D.	M	Physician	R.C.	6 months	Nil	10 years	yes	Nil	2 years	
Rogers	Man.	63	Secondary	M	Merchant	Anglican	6 years	11 years	7 years	no	12 years	Nil	
Drayton	Ont.	58	Law	M	Barrister	Anglican	2 1/2 years	Nil	8 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
<u>1938</u>													
Manion	Ont.	57	M.D.	M	Physician	R.C.	5 1/2 years	Nil	18 years	no	Nil	2 years	
MacPherson	Sask.	47	B.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Presbyterian	Nil	5 years	Nil	no	9 years	Nil	
Harris	Ont.	49	B.Sc.	M	Businessman	Presbyterian	Nil	Nil	17 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
Massey	Ont.	38	B.Sc.	M	Businessman	U.C.C.	Nil	Nil	3 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
Lawson	Ont.	47	Law	M	Barrister	U.C.C.	2 months	Nil	10 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
<u>1942</u>													
Bracken	Man.	59	B.S.A.	M	Professor	U.C.C.	Nil	20 years	Nil	no	20 years	Nil	
MacPherson	Sask.	51	B.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Presbyterian	Nil	5 years	Nil	no	9 years	Nil	
Diefenbaker	Sask.	47	M.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Baptist	Nil	Nil	2 1/2 years	yes	Nil *	Nil	
Green	B.C.	47	B.A. Law	M	Barrister	U.C.C.	Nil	Nil	7 years	yes	Nil	Nil	
Stevens	B.C.	64	Secondary	M	Businessman	U.C.C.	4 3/4 years	Nil	29 years	no	Nil	Nil	
<u>1948</u>													
Drew	Ont.	54	Law	M	Barrister	Anglican	Nil	5 years	Nil	no	9 years	3 years	
Diefenbaker	Sask.	53	M.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Baptist	Nil	Nil	8 years	yes	Nil *	Nil	
Fleming	Ont.	43	B.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	U.C.C.	Nil	Nil	3 years	yes	Nil	5 years	
<u>1956</u>													
Diefenbaker	Sask.	61	M.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	Baptist	Nil	Nil	16 years	yes	Nil *	Nil	
Fleming	Ont.	51	B.A., LL.B.	M	Barrister	U.C.C.	Nil	Nil	11 years	yes	Nil	5 years	
Fulton	B.C.	40	B.A., Law	M	Barrister	R.C.	Nil	Nil	11 years	yes	Nil	Nil	

*Diefenbaker served 4 years as Provincial Leader.

French in 1927, but addressed the French-Canadians in their own tongue in 1938. Mr. Cahan, the only candidate whose home was in Quebec at the time of nomination, uttered one brief sentence in French. In 1948 Mr. Fleming was the only candidate to use the language, and his speech extended to over two pages of French in the proceedings. However, by 1956, every candidate greeted his French-Canadian friends.

These observations on the use, or failure to use, French probably reflect the difficulties which the Conservative Party has had in relation to Quebec. The increased efforts to use the language in later conventions underlines the attempts of party leaders to recognize the problem, if not to solve it.

Ten of the seventeen candidates were born in Ontario, two were born in Nova Scotia and in British Columbia. Hon. H. H. Stevens was born in England; Hon. Robert Rogers in Quebec; and Hon. R. B. Bennett in New Brunswick.

Seven of the candidates had moved from their place of birth, and all of these had travelled in a westerly direction. Most of the Ontario men and both British Columbia men stayed at home. Mr. Bennett went from New Brunswick to Alberta to make his fortune. Mr. Stevens settled in British Columbia. The other candidates lived in Ontario,

Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia or Quebec at the time of their candidacy. In only one convention, 1942, did all the candidates come from the same major region; in this instance all were from the west. Ontario was the home of two of the successful candidates; the three prairie provinces supplied the other leaders. The prairie provinces were the homes of the two leaders who became prime ministers, although both were born elsewhere.

In contrast with the American tradition, where the ideal candidate would come from a large, doubtful state, so that the electoral votes of that state might support its own son, the successful Conservative candidates -- successful in terms of becoming Prime Minister -- have come from provinces with less than 20 seats in the House of Commons.⁷

In a study made of candidates in American conventions, it was found that the average age of first-time presidential nominees in this century has been 51 years, while the defeated contenders were 57 years of age. If licence is permitted to compare a sample based on 300 candidates during a period of 125 years with a sample based on 22 candidates during a period of not quite 40 years, the reverse is found in Canadian Conservative experience.⁸

7. The Liberal conventions have chosen men only from Ontario and Quebec. This contrast between the two major political parties in Canada would suggest that the size of the home province of the leader is of some, but not crucial, importance. This, of course, is closely related to the electoral system, discussed in the next chapter. For expression of a slightly different viewpoint, see Dawson, rev. by Ward, p. 509.

8. David, et. al., op. cit., p. 84

The average age of successful candidates was 57.5 years, and the average of unsuccessful candidates was 51 years. The median age of all Conservative candidates was 53 years. About half of the candidates come within the 45-55 age bracket, which is similar to the American experience.

All of the Conservative candidates were married at the time of their candidacy, except Mr. Bennett.

As might be expected, half of the candidates were barristers. Only barristers have entered the last two conventions. Five other occupations -- all middle-class professional or businessman types -- were represented. However, of the five successful candidates, one was a physician and the other a professor; the remaining three were, of course, barristers. There were no civil servants, military generals, trade unionists among the candidates.

Although it is sometimes said that Anglicanism and Conservatism are synonymous in Canadian politics, this does not apply to leadership candidates. The accompanying Table XI lists only three candidates as members of the Anglican Church, and only one Anglican became leader -- Mr. Drew.

The most popular church among the candidates has been the United Church, which supplied seven of the seventeen candidates and two of the winners. The four Presbyterians failed of election. Of the two Roman

Catholics, one became leader -- Manion. The only Baptist became leader and prime minister -- Mr. Diefenbaker.

Since over 90 per cent of the Canadian population is Christian in religion, the lack of representation of other religions among the candidates is to be expected; however, the distribution of the adherents of the various Christian churches is not representative of the population as a whole.

Education

Of the 17 candidates, 15 had enjoyed higher education. Three had pursued graduate work -- Manion earned advanced medical degrees at Edinburgh and Glasgow; Fulton was a Rhodes Scholar, with a B.A. Oxford in addition to his degree from British Columbia; and Diefenbaker had an M.A. from the University of Saskatchewan. Five of the candidates attended law school without a university degree -- Bennett, Guthrie, Drayton, Lawson and Drew.

Foreign universities represented among the candidates included Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Massey - a mechanical engineer); Oxford, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The University of Toronto was attended by four of the candidates; Mr. Cahan and Mr. MacPherson attended Dalhousie University. Mr. Bracken attended the Ontario Agricultural College, and later became President of the Manitoba Agricultural College. Mr. Diefenbaker attended

the University of Saskatchewan, and Mr. Fulton, the University of British Columbia. Six of the candidates went to Osgoode Hall Law School, and three attended Dalhousie Law School.

Legislative Experience

What about the elective or legislative experience of Conservative leadership candidates? It has been written that "in parliamentary forms of government, it is usually necessary to be a member of the legislature in order to be appointed to a junior cabinet post. The strong presumption is that such experience has value as training for those who eventually reach the top; but service in office also gives the individual a status from which to compete more effectively for higher posts on the political ladder."⁹

Before the view is tested in the Conservative experience, the political climate in Canada at the time of the five conventions should be reviewed. At the time of the 1927 convention, the party had been out of office for a year, and was in control of three of the nine provinces. At the time of the two conventions in 1938 and in 1942, the party was very much on the outside of the political pale. By 1948, one provincial party - in Ontario, had won three elections, but the federal party and the other eight provincial parties had been quite unsuccessful. At the time

9. David, et al., op. cit., p. 87.

of the 1956 convention, the party was again in control of the same three provinces, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario, and the future looked fairly bright.

The usefulness of legislative service as a means to higher office is supported by the Conservative experience among leadership candidates. Every one of the seventeen candidates had had either federal or provincial legislative experience. Quite often such a position provides a forum for the candidate where he can attract public notice to his abilities and perhaps accomplishments if in an executive capacity.

Of the five successful candidates, two were in the House of Commons at the time, one had been in a cabinet, and two were provincial premiers -- Bracken and Drew -- at the time of their choice. The proven success of the latter candidates at the polls and in an executive position was certainly vital to their 'availability'.¹⁰ At the time of their respective candidacies, the party was in the doldrums, and the thought and sight of a successful political leader was extremely attractive. Mr. Bracken had been premier of Manitoba for 20 years and Mr. Drew had recently won three elections in Ontario.

Only three of the candidates had not had experience in the House of Commons. None were in

10. No provincial premier has stepped directly into the Prime Minister's position.

the Senate. The candidate with the longest experience in the House (at the time of his nomination) was Hon. H. H. Stevens, with 29 years; the one with the shortest experience was Mr. Diefenbaker, when he was a candidate for the first time in 1942, with a little over two years experience.

Only two of the elected leaders had had federal cabinet experience -- Manion with five and a half years on three occasions, and Bennett with six months on two occasions. It is indicative of the 22 years in the wilderness that no candidate at the last two conventions was a Privy Councillor and had ever sat in Cabinet. On the other hand, five of the six candidates at the first convention in 1927 were Privy Councillors.

Four of the candidates had been in provincial cabinets. Bracken and Drew were premiers; Rogers had been provincial Minister of Public Works for 11 years, and MacPherson had been five years as Attorney-General in Saskatchewan. Six candidates had had provincial legislative experience, ranging from Bracken's 20 years, Rogers' 12 years, 9 years each for Bennett, MacPherson and Drew, to 4 years for Cahan. While he never sat in the Saskatchewan legislature, Diefenbaker was provincial party leader for four years.

Municipal experience does not seem to be a stepping stone to higher political realms. Only three

candidates -- Manion, Drew and Fleming -- had any experience in this field.¹¹

What Type Emerges?

The composite Conservative party leadership candidate is a white male, of British background, born and raised in Ontario, married, 53 years of age, member of the United Church. He has a university education, is a barrister, and he has held a seat in the House of Commons for nine years.

However, this composite candidate has not been very successful. The only features which he has shared with the two Conservative Prime Ministers, chosen at party conventions to lead their party to victory, are that they were all barristers, members of a Protestant church, and they had a seat in the House of Commons.

At the 1938 convention, Sir Thomas White gave the delegates some advice as to what to expect from a leader, and what limitations he may have:

11. Sources:

Normandin, G.P., ed., The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, Vols. 1920-1964, Ottawa, Canada, Public Archives. Guide to Canadian Ministries Since Confederation, 1867-1957. Ottawa: 1957.

Wallace, W.S., ed. MacMillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography, (Toronto: 1963).

Do not expect your leader to be a paragon of all excellencies. Grant him the concession of some slight imperfection or infirmity of temperament or disposition identifying him with our common humanity. Permit him to be "a creature not too bright and good for human nature's daily food."¹²

¹². Sir Thomas White, Proceedings, 1938, p. 35.

THE CONVENTION AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

It is not perhaps unnecessary to remind readers here that the descriptions given in this work are provisional and hypothetical in character, often being based on documentation too restricted and cursory to permit of definite conclusions. Frequently we have had to draw imaginary lines to link the few shining points scattered in the dark: the resultant patterns can give only a very approximate idea of reality...Nonetheless some general phenomena seem more or less established, and from them some general conclusions can be drawn.]

This description and analysis of the organization and structure of Conservative Party National Conventions has been subject to the same limitations which M. Duverger encountered. It may, however, be of interest to examine the convention and its various parts to see if any patterns or trends are emerging. It is also of interest to look at the convention and its interrelationships with other political institutions - the party system, the electoral system, the parliamentary system within which it operates. We may ask if the convention has accomplished its stated purpose.

The Conservative convention has performed with reasonable satisfaction the tasks which have been put to it. It has provided a means of selection of a new leader by party supporters rather than by the exclusive parliamentary group. It has given an opportunity for participation in the formulation of party policy. It has supplied a means for the party

1. M. Duverger, Political Parties, (New York, 1963), p. 422.

to obtain wide publicity for its activities.

The convention has been criticized for failing to have true representation; it has been accused of disrupting parties.² It may not be the best place for careful consideration of decisions as to leadership and policy which are vital for the success of the party. Perhaps it has not yet found a secure and unassailable niche in the parliamentary system. But no better means of doing the job has yet been suggested.

It would appear that the convention is here to stay. The legitimacy of its decisions has never been questioned, despite the fact that it has no legal or constitutional status in the Canadian political system. Mr. M. A. MacPherson, who was twice a defeated candidate for the leadership of the Conservative Party, recently wrote to the author, "I am very strongly in favour of the convention. I always felt and still do feel very strongly that our party should choose a Leader, not from the caucus but from the convention."³

Emerging Patterns

Several of the procedures which the Conservative convention organizers have developed during the past forty years appear now to be fixed in their patterns. The arrangements for the accomplishment of the business of the convention -

2. Williams, op. cit., p. 108.

3. Letter from M.A. MacPherson to author, March 21, 1965.

its procedures - have remained substantially unaltered. On the whole, the day-to-day business of the assembly is completed, with some opportunity for delegate participation. Any large assembly of some hundreds of people requires some control. The degree and quality of the control exercised in this area seems to be compatible with a modicum of democratic achievement.

The adequate functioning of the daily procedures of the convention has been due in some measure to the work of the convention committees, those which commenced their duties before the convention opened and those which assumed office at the convention. These committees have fulfilled several useful functions. The 'technical' pre-convention committees have operated primarily for the purpose of efficient organization of the convention. In latter conventions, their personnel has been selected for particular abilities and skills rather than for political, prestigious or representational reasons. Combined with the party 'civil service' which was set up after the 1942 convention, these committees have formed a highly centralized bureaucracy whose main task is to get the convention under way. Such a combination may well become another locus of party power; these committees and headquarters are in a position to exercise strong influence upon the delegates, the convention structure, even perhaps the outcome of the balloting. There

is no evidence that they have done so in the past; they could do so in future conventions.

The convention committees are representative in that their membership is made up of delegates who are selected by the provincial associations, with the result that they have a federal character. Two, Resolutions and Organization, are based, roughly, on provincial population; two, Nominations and Credentials, have equal representation from all provinces. This federalization is in keeping with the Canadian party structure. This type of representation affords the delegates an opportunity to participate in the formulation of party policy, in review of party organization, and in the convention functions of nominations and accreditation.

The committee system is well established and would probably be continued at future conventions.

The nomination and election procedures are also firmly established. The simple means of nomination eliminates the emphasis on the provincial delegation, found in the United States conventions. Instead, the candidates have been sponsored by two people selected, usually, because of their cultural or geographical background. This procedure is intended to contribute to party unity rather than to federalization. The election procedure ensures the independence of the delegate in making his choice; unlike his

American counterpart, he votes in private, and is not subject to the public pressure of conformity. Although, of course, it is possible to "stuff" any ballot box, every precaution is taken to protect the privacy and individuality of the voting delegate. The procedures have become increasingly formal at each convention, but the basic principles have been preserved since 1927.

There are two significant areas, however, in which the patterns have not become fixed, and these are vital to the basic purpose of the convention. The call for convention, and the exercise of the power of the delegates may not be assured means of providing for the requirements of the ordinary party supporter, the party voter, of giving him the opportunity to assert his influence.

The conventions of 1948 and 1956 were called by a procedure which seemed at the time to be effective; that is, the call was issued by the executive of the national association after the resignation of the leader. However, the events of February, 1965, in which some members of the parliamentary caucus requested the executive to call a convention when the leadership was not vacant, have led to a questioning of this apparently acceptable procedure. The matter of authority to call has been opened for reconsideration, and the transfer of power from the parliamentary group to the popular party has evidently not been completed.

The second area in which patterns are not yet fixed affects the delegates. The methods of selection -- by local choice, by position in the party, and by provincial representation -- seem to be assured; there may be some adjustment in the ratio between constituency delegates, and delegates-at-large selected by the provincial associations. There is the opportunity here to provide for additional "grass roots" participation. However, the principle seems to be secure.

The ability of the delegates to exercise their influence and assert their opinions is not by any means assured. A minor argument in support of this view is that the controls from the platform necessary to ensure the completion of convention business limit the participation of the delegates; the atmosphere of a crowded, noisy, and tiring assembly is not suitable for consideration of important decisions. A more significant factor in questioning the ability of the delegates to perform their function with independence and freedom is an external one - the development of mass media and rapid communications. It can be suggested, for example, that it is becoming increasingly possible for aspirants for the leadership to organize an intensive campaign to solicit the support of delegates across the country, a technique not used in Conservative conventions until 1956. There is the strong possibility that it will be

further exploited at the next convention. An even subtler infringement upon the privacy of the delegate is publicity and its spread through the press. This long-term influence upon the delegate is discussed below.

Duverger has written that:⁴

Public opinion, electoral system, and party system form three interdependent terms which are not unidirectional in the influence of each upon the other.

It is difficult to make an analysis of each of these terms without some consideration of its relationship with the others. However, a discussion is undertaken of the mass media and their influence upon public opinion, of the electoral system, of the party and parliamentary systems in Canada in conjunction with the national convention and its close interrelationship of these terms in mind.

The Convention and Mass Media

In a separation of these terms for the purpose of analysis, let us consider first publicity, mass media and public opinion, and a few of the ways in which the future of the convention and its delegates might be affected.

The convention seeks publicity; it is one of the purposes for holding a leadership assembly. It is generally accepted that publicity educates the voter, makes the public aware of the contest for leadership. The hope is, of course, that the publicity will be favourable to the party and carry it along to victory.

4. Duverger, op. cit., p. 381.

In this connection it is recalled that of the eight leadership conventions held by the two older Canadian political parties, only one was called by the party in power. In 1948, the Liberal convention selected Mr. St. Laurent, and in the same year, the Conservative party selected Mr. Drew as their new leaders. These were followed within a year by a general election, in which the Liberal party was again returned to office. Four years later, without the benefit of a convention, the same election result was achieved.⁵

The effect which an extensive influence of mass media could have is dramatized in the contrast between the 1942 convention and the last one. At the time of the 1942 convention, there was no opportunity for the build-up of a potential candidate; the full slate of candidates was not

5. An illustration of one of the techniques used in the 1953 election indicates the influence of publicity and has a bearing on the main argument. Mr. St. Laurent, the Liberal leader in 1953, has been described as an austere, autocratic gentleman who did not enjoy political campaigns. When a photograph of him, apparently (but not in fact) in conversation with a small boy, was published in a newspaper, his campaign managers took full advantage of this by providing large numbers of small children with a school holiday and a supply of flags, to line the routes of his processions. "Uncle Louis" appeared. In contrast, Mr. Drew appeared to be stuffy, formal and autocratic, adjectives which could not be applied to him by those who knew him personally. This image of authoritarian George as opposed to democratic Uncle Louis was supported by the press; indeed it has been said that it was used as a technique for flogging Mr. Drew and for building up the public hero image of Mr. Diefenbaker. Thus a wave of opinion was started and encouraged until Mr. Diefenbaker won the convention of 1956 and went on to the greatest victory in Canadian election history.

Sources: Conversations with organizers of the Liberal and Conservative Parties, leadership candidates, delegates, Members of Parliament.

known until the last moment. As a result, the opinion-forming period was confined mostly to the convention days, and the burden of making a decision fell mostly to the delegates.

By contrast, during the 1956 convention period, the party hierarchy was almost unanimously opposed to the popular candidate. But there was no strong enthusiasm for anyone else, and such power as the hierarchy may have had was dissipated in the unsuccessful search for an alternate candidate. It was left in the position of being unable to withstand the strong sentiment, built up over the years, for the successful candidate. Combined with this popular support was the view widely held by party members that Mr. Diefenbaker was the only man who could, at that particular point in Canadian history, lead the Conservative Party to long-desired political power.^{5a} This contrast underlines the role which public opinion, fostered and developed by the mass media, can play in a convention. In addition, the facilities for promoting publicity increased and expanded during the period 1942-1956, when radio coverage was increased and television was developed.

The question may be asked, to what extent is news reported and news created? A flow of stories in the press that Mr. X may be a candidate, that he made a speech here and there, that he is likely to win, contributes to the

5a. Interviews with party members; personal observations.

development of a public sentiment to get on the bandwagon and support Mr. X. This general view is imposed upon delegates even before they become delegates. It affects their ability to make an objective judgment as to the merits of the various candidates.

Further questions may be asked for which no answer is readily available. To what extent will the delegate be a captive of the public opinion environment, created by mass media? To what extent will he be able to exercise his independent judgment? Has the convention become the imprimatur of authority or legitimacy upon public decisions already informally reached?

The Convention and the Electoral System

The second of Duverger's terms has a marked effect upon the Canadian convention and contributed to its individuality, its differences from the American convention. The irregular versus the fixed election date, and the different methods of selecting the respective heads of government in Canada and in the United States suggest two influences which the electoral system has had on the political convention.

The effect of the irregular election date upon the definition of the 'availability' of a candidate is discussed above on page 184. The Canadian leadership convention must consider for leader a man whose political

acceptability might not be tested for three years. In the United States the convention date is tied to the quadrennial election date. In Canada, the convention date is set only according to need. For example, the intervals in the Conservative Party experience have been eleven years, four years, six years and eight years. It might be assumed that this undetermined period of time would influence the choice of a leader in the direction of a man of nondescript personality, who would wear well, and not bore the public with his strong personality -- a man with the endurance of mediocrity. Such would be an erroneous assumption; whatever else one may say of Canadian party leaders, most of them cannot be described as nonentities.

The method of selecting the chief executive is also related to the convention. The American system provides for what is in effect the direct election of the president. However, the distinction between the popular vote and the electoral college vote must be maintained. The simple majority vote of the latter body determines the outcome of the election. The role of the states, -- if you wish -- the federalization of party strength, is illustrated by the fact that, in most of the states, the popular majority vote gives all of the electoral votes of that state to the candidate of the party which wins in that state.

In Canada, there is no popular vote for the prime minister. Every member of Parliament is elected in his own constituency. Then the House of Commons becomes, in a narrow sense, an electoral college, when the party with the largest number of seats in the House, and which has previously selected its leader, has control of the House. Its leader is then invited to form a government.⁶

Thus the American technique underlines the role of the states, which is played in the convention through voting by state delegations. The parliamentary technique emphasizes national unity, which is emphasized in the individual balloting at the Canadian convention.

The role of the candidate and his relation to his party is explored below in connection with the parliamentary system. But the point may be made here that the fixed election date does provide the American convention with an opportunity to "fire" a leader by the simple expedient of ignoring the candidate selected four years earlier. For example, Mr. Nixon was not re-nominated in 1964. On the other hand, the Conservative convention

6. For a discussion of the view that the House of Commons is the true electoral college, while the American Congress cannot bestow the prize of power, see Walter Bagehot, The English Constitution, and introduction by R.H.S. Crossman, (London, Fontana, 1963), p. 23 and 73.

has been called in the past only when there is need to replace a leader and has not been required to accept or reject the existing leader.⁷

Thus the irregular election date fails to provide an opportunity for regular review of leadership and the means for selecting a new leader. The onus of replacement, except in case of death or illness, would seem to fall upon the incumbent.

It has been suggested that the electoral system might contribute another means of selecting delegates, that is, the popular votes cast for a party at the last election should provide a criterion in the apportionment of delegates to the convention. Dawson wrote, "...in Canada, neither party (the Liberal and the Conservative parties) has apparently considered the possibility of apportioning delegates on a basis of party votes cast."⁸

The Conservative Party gave this idea careful

7. The New Democratic Party holds conventions at regular intervals, and the leader is required to present himself for endorsement. In practice, this has become a ritual rather than a real function.

This proposal has been rejected by the Conservative Party. (Convention, 1948, p. 148).

It should be recorded, however, that one of the first items of business at the Conservative Party annual meetings is a vote of confidence in the leader. Although this vote has always been given, it would cause confusion if it were not given. In February, 1964, there was an incipient movement to vote on this motion by ballot rather than by show of hands; such an eventuality was removed by influential party leaders who argued for party unity, and by the stirring address of the leader, Mr. Diefenbaker.

The author attended this meeting.

8. Dawson, op. cit., p. 506.

consideration in 1942, and perhaps on other occasions.⁹

It was thought, however, that the convention should be a means of revitalizing the party -- a possibility made easier when it is held at irregular intervals with all the excitement of the unexpected. Further, it was felt that the party could not afford to penalize those areas which had not supported the party wholeheartedly in the last election, whenever that may have been. On the contrary, the party workers in the less successful areas should be encouraged to continue and to increase their efforts.

Their participation, on equal terms with workers from the more successful areas in the convention would provide them with the incentive to work harder, and would arouse interest in their constituencies.

A bonus of delegates similar to the American bonus¹⁰ might be said to come from the federal and provincial members which the Party elected from each province. These elected representatives, it may be recalled, are assured of a vote as delegates ex-officio. For example, in 1956, a month before the December convention, the Conservative Party won the Nova Scotia election and sent 24 provincial legislators to the convention. At the national

9. Interview with R. A. Bell.

10. The Republican Party, since 1924, and the Democratic Party since 1944, have given bonus votes, awarded by a complicated system to those states which supported the party in the previous election. For detailed description see David, et. al., op. cit., p. 169 and *passim*.

level, had a convention been held in, say, 1960, the Conservatives would have had 208 Members of Parliament as delegates-ex-officio.

The electoral regime in Canada has imparted to the leadership convention some of the individuality which distinguishes it from its American model. It is difficult to separate the electoral system from the party system, but a few points can be delineated.

The Convention and the Party System

The federalized party system in the United States, as mentioned above, is different in nature from that in Canada, and this difference has, in turn, influenced the leadership conventions. The American political party is organized primarily from the state level. As a result, the delegates to the political convention are usually chosen on a state basis and under state laws, with a few states using the district or constituency basis.¹¹

The American aspirants for the candidacy are nominated by a state delegation. The roll call of the states for nomination is one of the dramatic moments of the convention. The next roll call for votes is also by state delegations, which announce their votes in public and thus provides an opportunity to influence the delegations of those states which follow. This emphasis upon the state delegation may

11. For a description of the methods used, see Nomination and Election of the President and Vice President of the United States, including the Manner of Selecting Delegates to National Political Conventions, (Washington, 1960).

be called a federalizing factor.

The major Canadian political parties tend to be more flexible in their organization, and the authority and responsibility may be divided among the national, the provincial, and the constituency levels. There are no statutes, provincial or federal, which govern the parties in Canada; they may be described as extra-legal bodies. Delegates to the convention of the Conservative Party are selected by representatives of the three levels of organization within the party. Significantly, they do not vote in groups (or state delegations); in both the nomination procedure and the balloting, the emphasis is placed on the individual. This may be regarded as a unifying factor in the Conservative convention.

Of course, this difference in convention election methods is a reflection of the difference in party structure - the state-based as opposed to the nationally based structure. This in turn has developed as a result of the separation of powers as distinct from the parliamentary system.

A recent article compared the British and the American means of selecting party leaders, and summed up the difference:¹²

In Britain (we may read 'Canada' here, R.M.B.) the crucial question is likely to be 'Can he unify the party and lead it in the Commons?' In America, the consideration is simply 'Can he win?'

12. E. Janosik, "The American National Nominating Convention", Parliamentary Affairs, (Summer, 1964, pp. 321-339), p. 325.

This may explain, in part, the point which David Truman raised in his article, "Federalism and the Party System", in which he said that 'provincial prime ministers' are not readily trained for national leadership, while American governors are considered potential candidates for the presidency. The latter have demonstrated their ability to win; his Canadian counterpart may not have the required parliamentary skill, nor the ability to overcome regional differences, so necessary for the party's unity.¹³

Perhaps the most significant difference between the two types of convention lies in the candidacy itself. This factor is closely linked with the electoral regime, and the parliamentary or presidential system, as well as to the party system.

The principal and most clearly defined function of the presidential nominating process in each party is to identify the candidate who is entitled to be designated the party's nominee.¹⁴ David goes on to point out that a much less clearly defined function is to designate the candidate also as party leader.

In summary, the man who wins the nomination at the American convention is that party's candidate for the

13. David Truman, "Federalism and the Party System", in A.W. Macmahon, Federalism Mature and Emergent, (Garden City, N.Y., 1955), p. 115.

14. David et. al., op. cit., p. 321.

presidency. The man who is elected at the Canadian convention is the leader of his party. The American candidate, a few months later, decisively succeeds or fails to become president of the nation. The Canadian party leader may or may not become prime minister, but he is never regarded as a defeated candidate, in the same sense,

The Convention and the Parliamentary System.

The grafting of the leadership convention to the parliamentary system has contributed to the strength of the party leader, whether he forms a government or sits in opposition. In either case, he is in the legislative body. The convention has given him a broader mandate in that he has been given the support of a larger number of people than his colleagues in the parliamentary caucus. In writing of the Liberal convention of 1919, Lederle stated:¹⁵

Mr. King as party leader selected at the Liberal convention of 1919, has since placed great stock in the fact that he was selected by a democratic convention and not by the parliamentary caucus...What the parliamentary group did not create it may not destroy, at least not without ratification by party "grass roots". The leader may appeal beyond the caucus to party membership.

The convention has bestowed upon the Canadian party leader the legitimacy of endorsement by his party as a whole; win or lose an election, his party has the benefit of

15. J.W. Lederle, "The Liberal Convention of 1919 and the Selection of Mackenzie King", Dalhousie Review, April, 1947, pp. 85-92.

his guidance in the House of Commons.

On the other hand, the candidate produced by the American convention is lost to his party for at least four years, should he suffer defeat at the hands of the electorate and the electoral college. Should he win, and become the chief executive, he may, and quite often is, engaged in a tug of war with the Congress. The very nature of the parliamentary system precludes this possibility in Canada, since the executive is an integral part of the majority of the legislature.

Although the leader of a party may enjoy the mandate given by the convention, he may also enjoy, when it suits his purposes, the mandate of the caucus. Since this transfer of power is not yet completed, as mentioned above, he may resort to one or the other at his convenience.

Mr. Diefenbaker has made full use of his mandate from the convention of 1956. He also made use of his support in the party's parliamentary group in February, 1965. At that period a former member of the caucus, and a former candidate for the leadership, remarked:¹⁶

...it must be accepted that the caucus, practically speaking, has the effective word. If a man cannot command the support of the caucus, there isn't much use in having him as a leader. Conversely, if he does have the support of caucus, it would be extremely difficult to dislodge him. In the last analysis, it is the caucus and its leader which is the means of implementation of party policy.

16. Interview with E.D. Fulton, Feb. 9, 1965.

It may be concluded, then, that, although the leadership convention has survived for nearly fifty years in Canada, it is not as firmly entrenched as it is in the United States, at least for the purposes of selecting a potential chief executive. The American convention not only selects its presidential candidate, it also selects his replacement, the vice president. The parliamentary system has held in reserve another means of selection -- the caucus. This group may still exercise its power of choice as to its parliamentary leader; it almost certainly would choose his replacement if death or disability required it. The parliamentary system has been hospitable to the convention; it has not, however, let it become indispensable.

NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION

Winnipeg, October 10th, 1927

21st September, 1927.

Dear Sir:-

I am pleased to hand you herewith your certificate as a delegate to the convention. Enclosed you will also find your railway certificate for reduced fare, and a temporary ribbon, which will enable the Winnipeg Reception Committee to identify you on arrival.

The enclosed pamphlet gives you important information with respect to details. Please read it over carefully. Compliance with the suggestions contained therein will go a long way to remove obstacles and make your trip enjoyable. The brief history of the Liberal Conservative party which is enclosed should inspire all Conservatives as to the future.

CONVENTION PROCEDURE

When the National Conservative Convention is called to order at 11.00 A.M. on October 10th, all committees having anything to do with its organization are automatically dissolved, and the responsibility for the conduct of the convention becomes immediately and completely vested in the delegates. The convention will make its own decisions. There can be no cut and dried programme of action.

There are few precedents in Canada to guide the delegates in arranging their programme for the Convention. A general feeling of uneasiness therefore prevails amongst the delegates throughout the Dominion that unless some tentative programme is ready for the consideration of the Convention, much time will undoubtedly be wasted in deciding details - details which can otherwise only be satisfactorily dealt with by appointing a 'Committee on Programme.' Even with such a Committee there would be much delay and the delegates as a whole would have little opportunity to consider the matter. The preparation in advance of a "suggested programme" cannot in any way interfere with the autonomy of the convention, or the presentation of individual suggestions.

Having visited practically all parts of Canada, or at least been in communication with leading Conservatives throughout the country for the past several weeks, the writer fully appreciates that some general outline of the convention work should be prepared in advance, if we are to get on with the serious business of the convention promptly; have continuity in our deliberations; and thoroughness and efficiency in our conclusions. With a tentative programme before the convention there will be something of a definite character to discuss.

Having due regard to the sentiment which I have gathered during the organization of the convention, and having every respect for the rights and wishes of the delegates, I take the liberty and the responsibility of outlining for your consideration such suggestions as I have to offer for the convention programme. At best they are only a basis on which the National Committee may form a tentative programme for discussion by the Convention on the 10th proximo, when it is formally declared open for business.

When first called to order, it is the duty of the delegates to appoint, on the floor of the convention, a temporary Chairman, and a temporary Secretary who will act only until the Credential Committee brings in its report and the accredited delegates are formally seated. Not until this is done, can the election of permanent officers and the business of the convention be proceeded with.

In a general way, the convention programme for the first day might be something as follows:-

MONDAY MORNING SESSION, OCTOBER 10TH, 11 O'CLOCK.

(Owing to the time required for registration, convention should not be opened before 11.00 A.M. on the first day. After that, morning sessions could be at 10.30, if delegates prefer.)

The order of business for the morning session should be,-

1. Convention called to order.
2. Election of a temporary chairman.
3. The Lords Prayer.
4. Election of a temporary secretary.
5. Appointment of a credential committee.

Immediately on appointment this committee should retire to pass on the credentials of all delegates. It should be able to report back to the convention at the opening of the afternoon session.

6. Addresses of welcome and replies.
7. Addresses by prominent Conservatives.

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION: 3.00 O'CLOCK.

(As the morning session will probably carry on until 1.00 P.M., and this being the first recess, and delegates unfamiliar with the city, it is suggested that the afternoon session do not open before 3.00 P.M.)

In the usual course of events, the procedure for the afternoon would be about as follows:-

1. Report of credentials committee.
2. Formal seating of delegates.
3. The election of permanent presiding officers.

It has been suggested that there be two Chairmen representing the two nationalities in Canada, and that the provinces not thus represented should each have the honour of nominating a deputy chairman or chairwoman.

4. The election of permanent secretaries.

It is proposed that in addition to the convention secretary, a recording secretary, charged with compiling and issuing the report of the convention, might be appointed.

5. Adoption of rules and regulations governing the convention.

See explanation of Rules which follows later in this communication.

6. Adoption of a general plan of procedure.

Any tentative programme for submission to the convention could now be considered and either adopted, amended or discarded as the delegates in their wisdom may see fit.

7. Appointment of Standing Committees.

As I find it, the concensus of opinion throughout the country is adverse to the appointment of a "striking committee". Several provincial organizations have expressed preference for the right of the delegates from each province to nominate their own representatives on all standing committees.

They are particularly desirous that the size and basis of representation of the principal standing committees of the convention be determined in order that each province can decide - at least in part - what delegates they have best qualified to serve on the respective committees. They propose to give such delegates a chance to prepare themselves in advance for the committee work they will in all probability be called upon to undertake. This proposal if followed out should make for greater efficiency in committee work.

Among the committees which the convention will probably appoint are those on - Resolutions, Party Organization, Publicity, and Nominations.

In response to the above generally expressed desire it is suggested that the membership of these committees be as follows:-

COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS - 82.

This is one-third of the total House of Commons' membership; each province would be represented on the committee proportionately to its representation in the Federal House.

COMMITTEE ON PARTY ORGANIZATION - 23.

Equitably it should be composed of five members each from Ontario and Quebec; one member from Prince Edward Island; and two members from each of the remaining provinces.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICITY - 23.

Would have the same proportional representation as above.

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS - 23.

Would have the same proportional representation as above.

These committees upon appointment (except Committee on Nominations) should immediately retire and proceed with their deliberations.

8. Handing in of Written Resolutions.

9. An address by a prominent Conservative to conclude the afternoon session.

MONDAY EVENING SESSION - 8 O'CLOCK.

In order to allow the Standing Committees ample time to make a full review of the problems before them and to work out a well rounded complete plan instead of being obliged to submit interim or partial reports to keep the convention busy, it has been suggested that there should be no evening session of the convention on Monday. This will allow the Standing Committees part of Monday afternoon, all evening, and the night, if necessary, to make their reports complete, comprehensive and effective.

The Winnipeg Entertainment Committee is proceeding on this basis, and has arranged (for Monday evening) entertainments, receptions, etc., for delegates not engaged on Standing Committees. This is the only free evening delegates will have during the Convention.

It would seem advisable that after the first day morning sessions begin at 10.30 A.M., afternoon sessions at 2.30 P.M., and evening sessions at 8.00 P.M.

The Tuesday programme could be,-

TUESDAY MORNING SESSION, OCTOBER 11TH. 10.30 O'CLOCK.

Business of the Convention.

Interim reports of standing committees and discussion of same.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION, 2.30 O'CLOCK.

Business of the Convention.

Interim and final reports of committees and discussion of same.

TUESDAY EVENING SESSION, OCTOBER 11TH, 8.00 O'CLOCK.

1. Nominations for Leadership.

It has been suggested that all nominations for Leader be moved, seconded, and referred to the "Committee on Nominations" without discussion; that it be the duty of the Committee on Nominations, when nominations are all in, to retire immediately to obtain the consent of the nominees to stand.

2. Addresses during the interval while the Committee on Nominations is at work.

3. Report of the Committee on Nominations.

This report to give,-

- (a) A list of the names of the candidates who decline to stand for nomination.
- (b) A list of the names of the candidates who agree to stand for nomination.

4. Nominating speeches.

Each mover, seconder, and candidate to speak.

It has been suggested that each nominating speech be limited to ten minutes; seconder, five minutes; and candidate twenty minutes.

Having the night before them, the convention need not adjourn until all candidates have spoken.

There is a very general demand from delegates that a day intervene between nominations and balloting, hence the suggestion that balloting be postponed until the afternoon session of the following day. If this plan is adopted by the Convention there be no balloting Tuesday evening and delegates who wish to retire for the night can safely do so at any time.

WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION, OCTOBER 12TH. 10.30 O'CLOCK.

The logical procedure would be,-

1. Remainder of the reports of the Standing Committees and discussion of same.
2. All other unfinished business of the convention, except the election of a Leader.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION, 3.00 O'CLOCK.

(The opening of the Session is postponed from 2.30 to 3 o'clock in order to allow for an extension of the morning session if found necessary to clean up business).

The only business left for convention in the afternoon should be,-

1. Ballotting for Leadership.
2. Speeches by the defeated Candidates.
3. Speech by the new Leader.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE DECIDED BY THE DELEGATES.

Among the important matters which will come up for decision at the convention will be,-

RESOLUTIONS.

Many resolutions will be submitted to the convention dealing with the same subject. Unless some method of assembling and reviewing them is adopted much time will be wasted in presenting resolutions on the floor of the convention, identical in substance.

It is considered by many advisable that all resolutions should be in writing and filed with the Resolution Committee, on or before the close of the afternoon session on the first day. It will be the task of the committee to consolidate resolutions dealing with the same subject before reporting on them.

Should the Resolutions Committee fail to report on a resolution, the delegate should have the right to speak to his resolution when the report of the Resolutions Committee is before the convention.

It is considered desirable that resolutions should come from recognized Conservative organizations in preference to individuals. It is most desirable that resolutions so far as possible be filed with the Organization Committee at an early date to permit their being grouped with similar resolutions from other sections of the country and properly summarized and tabulated, all with a view to expediting the work of the Resolution Committee at the convention.

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS.

This committee is not for the purpose of depriving the convention of any authority or action in this important work. All nominations will be made from the floor of the convention. The work of the suggested committee is to take charge of such nominations, interview the parties nominated to get their consent or withdrawal, and place before the convention the list of the candidates showing those who are willing to let their names go before the convention for leadership, and those who decline. This suggestion, if adopted, will save many needless speeches and much useless discussion with respect to individuals who are not prepared to accept nomination.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Parliamentary Rules will undoubtedly govern the convention.

Many feel that if the convention is to get through with the work which confronts it, a limitation must be placed on the length of speeches; and that--excepting the speeches of three or four outstanding Conservatives who have been especially invited to address the convention--no speech should exceed twenty minutes; and the speeches nominating candidates for Leadership should be limited to ten minutes and the speeches of seconder to five minutes.

It is not anticipated that there will be more than three or four set speeches, averaging about thirty minutes each. The aggregate time occupied by these during the entire convention will probably not exceed two hours.

BALLOTING.

The convention may be expected to decide that voting will be by show of hands, except on the Leadership which will be by ballot. A suggestion is that any other vote shall be taken by ballot, if one hundred or more delegates so demand.

METHOD OF VOTING.

Attached will be found a copy of Resolution No. 2, of the National Conservative Convention Committee. It prescribes the methods of Voting. This Resolution is the basis on which the delegates have been appointed.

ELIMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR LEADERSHIP.

A very important matter for the decision of the delegates in connection with the balloting for leadership is the elimination of the lower man. The convention must decide whether candidates once entering the race must remain until the final vote, or whether on each ballot, or second ballot, the low-man will be dropped. Many Conservatives fear that this plan of dropping the low-man might eliminate a candidate who, in the case of deadlock, would be the best compromise candidate. Once eliminated there would be no way of restoring him to the contest.

MAJORITY REQUIRED VOTE TO ELECT?

Another suggestion is that in order to ensure unanimity and support for the new leader, a successful candidate should be required to poll a sixty per cent vote; some want a two-third vote; others believe a majority vote sufficient. There will undoubtedly be considerable discussion at the convention on this point.

The discussion of the procedure and regulations which are to govern the balloting for the Leadership, particularly the points raised in the two last preceding paragraphs, might wisely be postponed until Tuesday evening, October 11th. Immediately following the nominations for Leadership--while the Committee on Nominations is proceeding with its work--an opportunity will be afforded, if the convention so desires, to discuss and settle all questions in connection with balloting for the Leader.

CONCLUSION.

I have written you at much length, with some hesitation, and only with the object of placing before you a comprehensive statement of the convention situation; some of the problems which confront you, and which the delegates will have to decide. In so doing I have tried to present to you

(in anticipation) a rough outline of the convention procedure from the beginning to end.

This communication is largely a resume of the situation as I see it after my many weeks on the work of organizing the convention. I pass my observations on to you hoping that they may prepare the way for a more enlightened consideration of the issues when they come up at the convention.

Any suggestions I may have made, any plan I may have outlined, is not to deprive the delegates of authority or responsibility, nor to restrict their activities. I simply desire to show the way to: economy in time, efficiency in endeavour and effectiveness in deliberation.

The National Conservative Convention Committee meets in Winnipeg on October 7th. A copy of this communication will be placed before it, as well as any suggestions, which the letter, sent out to each delegate and alternate, may call forth. I have no doubt that the National Committee will review the entire matter at this meeting, and that an effort will be made to draft a tentative programme (which would give promise of being generally acceptable to the delegates) for submission to the convention.

While the committee may suggest certain procedure for your consideration, may I in conclusion again repeat that the decision and responsibility in this, as in all matters, rests entirely with the delegates in convention.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgnd.) A. D. McRae

Chairman,
Organization Committee.

ADM/MEB.

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