

## **The Presence (or the Lack Thereof) of a Federal Culture in Canada: The Views of Canadians**

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## Introduction

Canada is a federation. This is a relatively uncontroversial statement. It would be reasonable to expect, therefore, that in Canada there is a strong commitment to federalism. No less that the Supreme Court of Canada, in the Secession Reference, suggested that federalism is among the core shared values of Canadians along with democracy, constitutionalism and the rule of law, and respect for minorities.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Michael Burgess a leading contemporary authority defines federalism as, “the recommendation and (sometimes) the active promotion of support of federation”.<sup>2</sup> This would suggest that in a federation one would find a strong commitment to federalism. Not necessarily. Burgess goes on to observe, the relationship between the federation and federalism is complex and each informs the other.<sup>3</sup> There are countries that are not federations, such as the United Kingdom, Italy and the Philippines, where there is considerable support for federalism (or at least debate about it). Conversely, as federations evolve into more or less unitary states or break up into a series of smaller independent states, it is quite likely that federalism weakens to the point that it no longer informs political debate and deliberation.

Thus, to say that Canada is a federation is, strictly speaking, to say relatively little about the strength of federalism. Burgess and a host of other students of federalism and federation argue that the evolution of each can be and often is quite different. In other words, while Canada may be a federation and a country in which federalism is a core value, the two need not (and indeed have not) evolved in quite the same way. Thus, in this paper we begin with the basic observation that Canada remains, formally speaking, a federation. Federation is a continuing Canadian reality even if the institutions of the federation are in need of reform.<sup>4</sup> However, our core argument is that federalism in Canada is not nearly as strong. Specifically this paper argues that in contemporary Canada a “culture of federalism” is quite weak. When juxtaposed with other *desiderata* (e.g., efficient delivery of government services), critical aspects of federalism are all too readily set to one side. This paper also argues that this weakness is uneven across the country such that, for example, a culture of federalism is somewhat stronger in Quebec, or at least among Quebec elites, than in the rest of Canada.

The structure of this paper is as follows. The first substantive section introduces the notion of a culture of federalism or, following Ivo Duchacek, a political culture of federalism.<sup>5</sup> In order to begin to assess the presence and strength of a culture of

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<sup>1</sup> Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217

<sup>2</sup> Michael Burgess, *Comparative Federalism: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Simeon and Amy Nugent, "Parliamentary Canada and Intergovernmental Canada: Exploring the Tensions", in Herman Bakvis and Grace Skogstad (eds.), *Canadian Federalism - Performance, Effectiveness, and Legitimacy* (London: Oxford University Press, Second Edition, 2007). See also Éric Montpetit, *Le fédéralisme d'ouverture. La recherche d'une légitimité canadienne au Québec* (Québec: Septentrion, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Ivo D. Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics* (New York: University Press of America, 1987). The terms “culture of federalism” and “political culture of federalism” will be used interchangeably in this paper.

federalism in Canada the second part of the paper considers how individual Canadians understand the basics of the Canadian federation and to what extent they demonstrate support for a political culture of federalism. This section is based on a pan Canadian public opinion poll conducted by the authors in the fall of 2007. To further evaluate the strength of a culture of federalism in Canada the third section of the paper reports on a series of roundtable discussions with provincial public servants responsible for intergovernmental relations and service delivery. Simply put, both the individual Canadians we polled as well as the public servants we met with demonstrated, to different degrees, a relatively weak commitment to a culture of federalism.

### **What is a federal political culture?**

A culture of federalism is rooted in the fact that federalism is used to describe both a set of institutional arrangements as well as a set of ideas. This is not surprising given that a combination of both power and norms are at the root of all political institutions. Institutions usually embody both the power relations prevailing at the time of their creation as well as the values that their creators wanted to imbed in the political system. Subsequent institutional changes can thus be understood as resulting from changes in the balance between power and the dominant values and standards. Thus, a federal state, which involves a set of political institutions that structure the territorial division of power and political decision, can only be understood by taking into account both its political and normative foundations. Moreover, consideration of the role of norms and the values is particularly important when analyzing a multi-national federation (i.e., its ability to manage if not promote cultural diversity while preserving territorial unity).

In fact, there are few studies of federalism which do not insist on the fact that it is a mode of political organization which aims to reconcile the principles of unity and diversity within a shared geographic space. Thus, in order to promote both social cohesion as well as the respect for differences, a federation must ensure both the autonomy of federated entities as well as their interdependence in the quest for solutions to common problems. As a way of managing diversity, federalism recognizes the need for compromise *and* consensus. Federations must emphasize both balance and countervailing or offsetting centres of power. In sum, federalism has the task of reconciling principles that are, *prima facie*, contradictory. Moreover, federal states can and perhaps must be constituted to focus not only on federation – the institutional dimensions (constitution, power-sharing, coordination mechanisms, etc.) – but also on federalism – the principles, values and standards it tries to embody (autonomy, diversity, interdependence, solidarity, etc.).

In point of fact, however, the dominant trend in federalism and federation studies is to emphasize the latter and not the former. Many studies of federalism and, in particular, those that are written from a comparative perspective, have emphasized either the institutional mechanisms of different federations or the interplay of federalism and

public policy, notably social policy.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the dominant trend in the academic studies of federalism is to spend little or no effort to address the normative dimensions that sustain federations.

However, Bruno Thérêt reminds us that a federal system should be defined as one in which there is a mechanism to automatically sustain the federal principle which, in turn, will more or less permanently manage the contradiction between unity and diversity. As Thérêt puts it, “if unity prevails over diversity, or, conversely, if it is diversity that triumphs over unity, there can be little talk of federalism.”<sup>7</sup> In so doing he reintroduces a normative dimension to the evaluation of federal practice.<sup>8</sup> Obviously, these general considerations are of little use to evaluate the centralization or decentralization necessary for the proper functioning of political regime. If the desired balance is still subject to discussion and debate between and among social and political forces, it is nonetheless true that if the principle of unity prevails disproportionately and if the central government invaded the powers assigned to federal entities, it would be more accurate to speak of decentralized unitary state (Thérêt uses the term empire) rather than federation.<sup>9</sup>

There are, of course, a number of studies of federalism, both comparative and not, that do seek to balance the importance of federal institutional arrangements, the implications of federalism (for policy, democracy, etc.), as well as the more normative questions that lie at the heart of federalism and federation. As Ron Watts puts it, federalism, “... refers to the advocacy of multi-tiered government combining elements of shared rule and regional self-rule. It is based on the presumed value and validity of combining unity and diversity and of accommodating, preserving, and promoting distinct identities within a larger political union.”<sup>10</sup> In this regard, federalism cannot be analyzed only in terms of organization of power, but requires some consideration of the role of ideas, values and ideals. That is what Daniel Weinstock has called the normative justification of federalism. Quite different from an instrumental justification, it involves making the case for federation by emphasizing the values that can be, or at least should be, privileged in a federation.<sup>11</sup> Or, as Michael Burgess has put it, “Federalism deals

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<sup>6</sup> Keith Banting, “Social Citizenship and Federalism: Is a Federal Welfare State a Contradiction in Terms” *Territory, Democracy, and Justice: Regionalism and Federalism in Western Democracies*. Scott L. Greer, Ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Bruno Thérêt, “Du principe fédéral à une typologie des fédérations: quelques propositions”, in Jean-François Gaudreault-Desbiens and Fabien Gélinas (eds.), *Le fédéralisme dans tous ses États. Gouvernance, identité et méthodologie – The States and Moods of Federalism. Governance, Identity and Methodology*. (Cowansville: Les Éditions Yvon Blais, 2005), p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128

<sup>9</sup> Of course the converse is also true but much less common. If the principle of diversity prevails and the federated entities, the provincial or state governments, invade the powers assigned to the central government, it eventually becomes more accurate to speak of a highly decentralized federation with elements of confederation (e.g., the early experience of both the United States and Switzerland and perhaps contemporary Belgium).

<sup>10</sup> Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems in the 1990s*, (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen’s University, 1996, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel M. Weinstock, “Vers une théorie normative du fédéralisme”, *Revue internationale des sciences sociales*, 1:67, 2001, p. 79.

simultaneously with fundamental moral questions as well as with amoral matter-of-fact issues.”<sup>12</sup>

Using such a normative perspective the focus shifts. What is sought is less a common identity than a shared identity. To achieve this, the emphasis must be placed less on social and political cohesion and much more on the need to establish a relationship of mutual trust between the various entities in the political federal space. As noted by Daniel Weinstock, "trust simply assumes that members of various groups do not perceive citizens, members of different groups, as representing a threat to the interests that distinguish them as members of particular groups." <sup>13</sup> Even if the minimal level of trust, as it is the case here, can develop to the point of generating a common political identity which acts as a counterweight to the community identities (ethnic or national), a common identity is not a prerequisite nor an objective set by the federation or at least is not a shared objective by all who live in the federation. Thus, it is important to emphasize this dissociation between mutual trust and common political identity. For many, confidence in the regime will be strongest when the federal government allows the federated entities to exercise their constitutionally based autonomy. Confidence in the legitimacy of the federation will rise, at least in some quarters, when the central government sets for itself the goal of respecting the interests of the minority or minorities that are meant to be protected by the federation.

The elements above all refer to a dimension that is perhaps insufficiently emphasized namely the need for the presence of what we might call a federal culture or attitude. In the mid 1950s, Henri Brugmans, a Dutch federalist and a supporter of a union of European peoples, pointed out that the starting point of the federal act should be that different communities recognize both their diversity and their common solidarity of interests. In his view, it was neither desirable nor possible to seek administrative and legal assimilation.<sup>14</sup> Later on he added that the federalists can only find it normal that communities are different in both temperament, lifestyle, language and philosophy and that full recognition provides a measure of intercommunity justice<sup>15</sup> Thus, the attitude or federal culture, according to Brugmans, can be defined, perhaps some inadequately, by four concerns: efficiency, solidarity, civic responsibility, and diversity.<sup>16</sup>

In practice, this normative dimension manifests itself in a number of ways (e.g. the design characteristics of federal institutions; the decisions of the courts; the design and structure of political parties and interest organizations). However, for the purposes of this paper, we are most interested in the ways in which the normative dimensions of federalism manifest themselves in the nature and strength of a culture of federalism.

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<sup>12</sup> Burgess, *Op. Cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Weinstock, *Op. Cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>14</sup> Henri Brugmans, *Panorama de la pensée fédéraliste* (Paris : La Colombe, 1956), p. 135.

<sup>15</sup> Henri Brugmans, *La pensée politique du fédéralisme* (Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff-Leyde), p. 31-32.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30. Note that in this formulation, efficiency is but one of four dimensions of a federalism culture (more on this below).

While a focus on federalism or, if you will, the normative basis of federation requires a focus on the attitudes of society itself,<sup>17</sup> the linked phenomenon of a culture of federalism is not well understood.<sup>18</sup> As Ivo Duchacek puts it, not only is the presence or, more importantly, the strength of a culture of federalism difficult to measure and otherwise evaluate, it is “an unexplored area, a blank that we have tentatively called a *federal political culture*.”<sup>19</sup> Richard Cole, John Kincaid and Alejandro Rodriguez explain the fact that the study of a federal political culture is a “blank” by emphasizing the fact that various authors operationalize the term in quite different ways.<sup>20</sup> Some like Duchacek himself and Daniel Elazar define the concept in terms of how citizens view and value (and we would add, simply understand) governmental arrangements, including their own – federation. Others, reflecting the link between federalism and pluralism, define a political culture of federalism in psychological and sociological terms, emphasizing the extent to which citizens in a federation accept (or not) diversity, be it of language, ethnicity or religion.<sup>21</sup> Still others suggest that a federal political culture is one which values involving the widest variety of groups and the widest range of opinions in the decision-making process including and perhaps especially, the role of federated entities in decision-making by the central government. Daniel Elazar, for one, saw this as an integral characteristic of a truly federal culture.<sup>22</sup>

In seeking to measure the strength of a federal political culture, Cole, Kincaid and Rodriguez emphasized the contrast between federations and other kinds of government, between countries with extensive linguistic, religious and cultural diversity and those that are more homogenous, between inclusion in decision-making and strong, bold leadership by individuals. In effect, they were interested in the views of respondents about the presence or absence of different dimensions of a federal political culture. In this paper, our interest in a culture of federalism takes us in a somewhat different direction. We are interested in “getting inside the box” of the concept and lived reality of federation. Thus, we are looking to establish the presence and strength of a federal political culture or a culture of federalism by considering the views of both citizens as well as elites. On this account, in a federation, one would expect that citizens and their political and bureaucratic elites would understand and value the fact that the power of the state is divided between provincial governments and a national government and that each order of government has a core set of responsibilities. Furthermore, we would expect that, in a federation, citizens and elites would understand and value the fact that citizen preferences

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<sup>17</sup> William A. Livingston, “A Note on the Nature of Federalism,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol 67, March 1952), p. 94.

<sup>18</sup> The following discussion of the roots of the notion of a federal political culture draws from Richard L. Cole, John Kincaid and Alejandro Rodriguez, “Public Opinion on Federalism and Federal Political Culture in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.” *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 34:3 (Summer 2004), pp. 214-216.

<sup>19</sup> Ivo Duchacek, *Op. Cit.*, p. 346, emphasis added.

<sup>20</sup> Cole, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>21</sup> See for example, Aaron Wildavsky, “Federalism Means Inequality” and “A Double Security: Federalism as Competition,” *Federalism and Political Culture*, eds., David Schleicher, and Brendon Swedlow, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers), pp. 41, 66, as cited by Cole, et al., *Op. Cit.* p. 215.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Elazar, Daniel J. Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1991) as cited by Cole, et al., *Op. Cit.* p. 216.

vary and that federalism is about giving expression to this variation and protecting minority views.

### *Citizenship and a Culture of Federalism*

There are numerous definitions of citizenship and a wide variety of ways of understanding citizenship in a globalized, interconnected world. Suffice to say that the nature of the relationship between citizens and the state is changing and, to some extent, contested. However, without getting into these debates it is possible to sketch some considerations for the nature of citizenship in federal states. In effect, in a federation the concept of citizenship must recognize the complexity of the state and the diversity of relationships that are endemic to a federation.

For the purposes of this paper we are interested in exploring, if only in a very limited way, the nature of citizenship in a federation. Not only is this critical for understanding the contours of a culture of federalism, one of the intellectual roots of this paper is the concept of “citizen-centred federalism” a notion introduced by Donald Lenihan and the Crossing Boundaries National Council.<sup>23</sup>

For our purposes, the work of Alan Cairns is particularly useful, especially his suggestion that citizenship implies a relationship that is simultaneously vertical and horizontal. The vertical axis is one that links individuals to the state by reinforcing their sense that it is “their” state, one that accords them full and ongoing membership for themselves and their children. The corollary of this, as Cairns puts it, is that for citizens: “Their relation to the state is, accordingly, not narrowly instrumental, but supported by a reservoir of loyalty and patriotism that gives legitimacy to the state”.<sup>24</sup> This suggests that it is critical to distinguish citizens from clients or customers. Sometimes, we enter into the relationship as simple clients of the state or customers seeking goods and services from the state.<sup>25</sup> This thin conception of citizenship<sup>26</sup> and the relationship between citizens and the state is, arguably at the heart of the concept of the concept of a “citizen-centred federalism” as articulated by Lenihan and his colleagues. However this somewhat narrow conception is insufficient for analyzing citizenship in a federation.

First, as Cairns suggests, as citizens we share a sense of loyalty to what we understand to be “our” state. Second, in a federal state, that loyalty may be

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<sup>23</sup> Donald G. Lenihan, "Citizen-centred Federalism: The implications for Executive Federalism", in Rona Ambrose, Donald G. Lenihan and John Milloy, (eds.), *Managing the Federation: A Citizen-Centered Approach* (Ottawa: Crossing Boundaries National Council, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Alan C. Cairns, 1999. "Introduction". In Alan C. Cairns, John C. Courtney, Peter MacKinnon, Hans J. Michelmann and David E. Smith, (eds.), *Citizenship, Diversity, and Pluralism. Canadian and Comparative perspectives* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press), p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Joel D. Aberbach and Tom Christensen, "Citizens and Consumers: A NPM dilemma," *Public Management Review*, 7:2, 2005, p. 225 – 246. See also Janet M. Kelly, "The Dilemma of the Unsatisfied Customer in a Market Model of Public Administration" *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 65, No. 1, January/February 2005, pp. 76-84.

<sup>26</sup> Keith Faulks, *Citizenship*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 11.

shared, at least for some citizens, who see themselves as being simultaneously members of more than one political and social community. Third, Cairns' conception of citizenship includes a horizontal axis which refers to "the positive identification of citizens with each other as valued members of the same civic community. Here, citizenship reinforces empathy and sustains solidarity by means of official statements of who is "one of us". Citizenship, therefore, is a linking mechanism, which in its most perfect expression binds the citizenry to the state and to each other".<sup>27</sup> This horizontal dimension of citizenship speaks to the reality that we are linked to the state both as individuals and as members of communities, of groups, and of nations. As citizens we ask the state to respond to our collective interests (e.g., for clean water, for safe infrastructure, for general social welfare). In other words, while we may have a more or less intensive individual (some might say client-like), relationships with the state, this co-exists with a more collective relationship. Finally, in a federation, competing and overlapping conceptions of community belonging make the horizontal dimension of citizenship all the more complex. Federalism, insofar as it means the union of two or more distinct communities, makes it that much more difficult to define the ties of solidarity and "who is us". Thus, when it comes time to make tradeoffs between individual and collective goods, between my personal interest and the interest of my community, how I define that community will not be a trivial matter.

### **Looking for a federal political culture in Canada – the views of Canadians**

In order to begin to try to ascertain the strength of a federal political culture in Canada in this paper we are interested in both the views of citizens as well as the views of their governments (or at least parts thereof). In this part of the paper we draw on the results of a national opinion poll that was designed to shed light on the extent to which Canadian understand federalism and the kinds of tradeoffs they are willing to make between federalism values and other desirable ends, notably integrated and one assumes more efficient delivery of government services. In the next part of the paper we extend our analysis by considering the views of provincial public servants as revealed by a series of roundtables held during the first part of 2008.

The views of Canadians are drawn from the results of a poll of a total of total of 1,000 nationally representative Canadian adults. Interviews were conducted by TNS Canada Facts between September 20<sup>th</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup> 2007. The survey results for all of Canada are considered accurate to 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Alan Cairns, *Loc. Cit.*

<sup>28</sup> In contrast, regional and provincial results need to be interpreted with caution since the small sample size means that the confidence interval is larger than 5.0. Only a small number of respondents chose "Do not know", and these have been excluded from the tables as have the small number of respondents from the three northern territories.

## *Do Canadians Understand Federalism?*

We should not assume that people know how the federation works and are able to make an informed judgment about the behaviour and the choices of different orders of government. For many Canadians, what matters is that “the government” does something to solve a given problem or that “government” is remote and unresponsive. Most citizens are only vaguely aware of the fact that Canada is a federation where authority to act is constitutionally divided between the federal and provincial governments and further divided by statute between provincial governments and local governments. On this account, the strength of the political culture of federalism is tied to understanding. Federalism literacy is thus a critical part of a political culture of federalism.

In our survey we were first interested to know whether and to what extent Canadians understood the basics of Canadian federalism.<sup>29</sup> To begin, we asked respondents whether they understood who is responsible for what. As described in Table 1, just over 70 percent of respondents agreed that “it is often difficult to know which level of government is responsible for what”.<sup>30</sup> We were then interested to know more about the extent to which Canadians can attribute certain high profile areas of government activity to the correct order of government. We deliberately chose areas that are generally thought to be clear (e.g., defense and the post office for the federal government; education for provincial governments). In fact, as described in Table 2, we discovered that while, on average, 75 per cent of Canadian were able to identify defense as a responsibility of the federal government, a further 24 per cent thought that this was an area of shared or provincial responsibility. This pattern was true both nationally and regionally. This is all the more remarkable given the high profile of the military over the past few years as a result of the war in Afghanistan.

In much the same vein, as described in Table 2, while 71 per cent of respondents were able to correctly attribute to the Government of Canada responsibility for the Post Office, this means that 29% thought that this was a provincial or shared responsibility.<sup>31</sup> The overall national trend was replicated and the regional and provincial level although residents of Atlantic Canada and Manitoba/Saskatchewan were somewhat more likely to describe the post office as an area of provincial or at least shared jurisdiction.

When we turn to elementary and secondary education, an area generally understood to be an area of exclusive provincial jurisdiction, on average, 40% of respondents thought it was an area of shared if not federal jurisdiction. Even in Quebec where the provincial government and other voices from civil society repeatedly

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<sup>29</sup> For an earlier somewhat different analysis based on detailed analysis of public opinion in two provinces see Matthew Mendelsohn, “What Kind of Federalism do Canadians (Outside of Quebec) Want?” *Policy Options Politiques*, October 2001, 23-29.

<sup>30</sup> All Tables are reproduced in Appendix One at the end of the paper.

<sup>31</sup> One of the roundtable participants did observe, perceptively, that the Post Office may no longer be the iconic federal government service it once was because Canada Post contracts out delivery in rural areas and has closed freestanding and highly visible post offices in favour of kiosks in retail stores.

emphasize both the importance of education but also provincial jurisdiction, fully one third of respondents believed that elementary and secondary education was an area of federal or shared jurisdiction. This figure rises to 52% in Atlantic Canada and, surprisingly, to 51% in Alberta. Our polling results do not include questions that might explain this result but one possible explanation may lie in the profile of the Government of Canada when it comes to financial support for post-secondary education and university research as well as for minority-language education.

In order to further test the degree of federalism literacy of Canadians, we also asked the respondents to our poll to correctly identify the government responsible for the environment. In this case, the fact that there is no formal constitutional assignment environment to either order of government and both orders of government are somewhat active with respect to environmental regulation, we fully expected respondents to assign this area of government activity to both orders of government. On average, over two third of respondents did so although in Ontario and Manitoba/Saskatchewan over 25% of respondents thought the environment was an area of exclusive federal responsibility.

In general, between 25 and 30 per cent of Canadians, depending on the area of government activity, are not able to correctly identify “who does what” or at least, “who is responsible for what” even in areas where the answer is generally understood to be clear and unambiguous. Thus, if one measure of a culture of federalism is understanding, specifically understanding of which order of government is responsible for which areas of government activity, than we have some reason to believe that the political culture of federalism in Canada is quite weak.

The weakness of a culture of federalism in Canada is also underlined by the unwillingness of Canadians to follow through on the implications of what it means to divide the powers of the state between two orders of government as a way, *inter alia*, of accommodating and reflecting diversity. We began by probing the extent to which Canadians understand that (following Watts, Théret and others) federalism is about protecting and promoting distinct identities. Specifically we asked respondents to signal their agreement or disagreement with the statement that, “In Canada, federalism aims, among other things, to accommodate diversity, for example Quebec and aboriginal people.” As indicated by the results summarized in Table 3, fully 75% of Canadians agreed with this characterization of federalism and support was consistently close to 80% in most parts of the country.<sup>32</sup> However, it would appear that there are conceptual and practical limits to the extent to which Canadians are willing to translate the accommodation of diversity into concrete institutional and political arrangements. So, for example, as described in Table 4, Canadians continue to be opposed to an asymmetrical distribution of power or at least one which would see the government of Quebec being more autonomous than other provinces – 61% of Canadians disagreed with such an arrangement while in Quebec fully 73% of respondents expressed support. When

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<sup>32</sup> Curiously, agreement with the statement fell to 62% in Quebec. One possible interpretation of this result is that Quebec respondents were not comfortable with the equivalency between Quebec and Aboriginal peoples suggested by the question and/or that the strong support from respondents outside of Quebec was based on the need to accommodate the reality, not so much of Quebec, but of Aboriginal peoples.

we moved from a question about diversity and asymmetry in general to a specific manifestation of same, the trend remained the same although opposition weakened. In response to a statement that asked about the merits of asymmetrical agreements on health care and immigration between the federal and Quebec governments, respondents outside of Quebec were generally split more or less 50:50 although opposition rose to 70% in Alberta (Table 5). Not surprisingly, 82% of Quebec respondents supported such asymmetrical arrangements.

Another dimension of a culture of federalism is, as described earlier, the extent to which citizens value the fact that the power of the state is divided between provincial governments and a central government and that each order of government has a core set of responsibilities. In Canada, our poll results suggest that this aspect of a culture of federalism is quite weak. Rather than prefer a clear demarcation of what each order of government does (important, among other things, to maximize accountability), as outlined in Table 6, Canadians appear to prefer a sharing of power and responsibility. Thus, when asked about a diverse range of government activities citizens consistently expressed a preference for a role for both orders of government whether this be the negotiation of international trade agreements (52%), protection of the environment (84%), the integration and settlement of immigrants (60%), and promotion of the arts (57%). If a federation is, following K.C. Wheare, characterized by a clear division of powers, Canadians are not particularly strong federalists. It would appear instead, that Canadians prefer their governments to cooperate. However, shared jurisdiction can also mean more or less equal ability act. Calling for shared jurisdiction might also be interpreted as wanting governments to act as watchdogs one on the other<sup>33</sup> or a preference for governments to compete. Intergovernmental competition has been, after all, endorsed by both Albert Breton and William Riker before him.<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, when asked how governments should respond to new challenges, while some Canadians who responded to our poll preferred federal-provincial cooperation (on average 58% chose this option), fully 24% preferred that each province establish its own objectives or that provinces consult one another without reference to the Government of Canada (Table 7). Another 16% suggested that the Government of Canada should establish objectives after consulting with provinces while only 2% felt it appropriate for the federal government to act alone. So, while two-thirds of respondents captured what some might describe as the essence of federalism – collaboration or at least

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<sup>33</sup>As Mendelsohn and Cutler put it, “Canadians do not appear to be anywhere near ready to abandon the advantage of having each government act as a watchdog on the other.” Mendelsohn and Cutler, *Op. Cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>34</sup>Albert Breton, *Competitive Governments: an economic theory of politics and public finance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964). For an extended discussion of the weakness of a dichotomy between cooperation and conflict and the many meanings of citizen calls for governments to work together see Kathryn Harrison, “Conflict, Cooperation, Or Something Else Again,” in P. Fafard and K. Harrison (eds.), *Managing the Environmental Union* (Kingston: Queen’s School of Policy Studies, 2000), pp. 3-21.

pluralism in decision-making<sup>35</sup> -- fully one-third preferred federal or provincial leadership, with or without consultation.

The weak understanding of Canadians for the nature of federalism is also demonstrated by the results of Tables 8-11 which suggest that the respondents to our poll support provincial autonomy (81%) and the ability to act without interference (63%). Yet at the same time, over half our respondents agreed with the notion that the federal government should have the ability to supervise and control the activities of provincial governments in certain areas like elementary and secondary education or auto insurance and fully 91% of respondents supported the Charter-like (or at least Charter-inspired) notion that the federal government should be capable of defining national standards so that all people are treated the same regardless of which province they live in.

### *Is Federalism an End in of Itself or a Means to an End?*

Earlier we suggested that there is something of a tension between federation and federalism that is between the institutional aspects of a federation and its normative underpinnings. On this argument, a political culture of federalism requires that citizens value federalism *per se*, a division of powers, and respect for jurisdiction. These are valued because they reflect the underlying political bargain of a federation, one that systematically respects the interests of the minority or minorities that are meant to be protected by the federation. In fact, the strength of a culture of federalism is linked to the willingness of citizens to balance the federal principle with other things they want from their governments. More specifically, as suggested by Brugmans, a strong political culture of federalism is one where citizens and their governments are willing and able to balance efficiency against other concerns: solidarity, civic responsibility, and diversity.<sup>36</sup>

To begin to assess this dimension of a culture of federalism in Canada we asked respondents in our poll to entertain quite dramatic shifts in the allocation of responsibilities between governments in the interest of increasing efficiency. We first took what we thought to be a classic, quintessential responsibility of the Government of Canada – passports.<sup>37</sup> We asked respondents if, assuming it would be quicker and more efficient, they would agree that their passport be issued by their provincial government. In this case, we hypothesize that respondents will see themselves as clients of government, looking to the state for a service. As indicated in Table 12, just over half of Canadians would be willing to support this rather dramatic change. However, support for this proposal varied significantly from a low of 25% in Atlantic Canada to a high of 67%

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<sup>35</sup> Daniel Elazar defined a federal political culture as ‘the cultivation of balance, of collegiality, of the involvement of the widest variety of groups in consultations surrounding decisions if not in actual decision making.’ See Daniel J. Elazar, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 192-193.

<sup>36</sup> P. Brugmans, *La pensée politique du fédéralisme*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>37</sup> Passports or, more accurately, the documentation required to cross the border between Canada and the United States is, it turns out, an area where the Government of Canada is willing to collaborate with provincial governments. Thus, instead of being a quintessential area of federal government jurisdiction it is increasingly becoming an area of intergovernmental collaboration where provincial and state governments in Canada and the United States are authorized to issue “enhanced” driver’s licenses which can serve as acceptable proof of citizenship for crossing the border.

in Quebec. In order to test for the strength of conviction on this point, we then divided our respondents into two groups: those that supported the change and those that did not. We then asked a follow-up question to the supporters of change. We reminded them that a passport is evidence of citizenship and controls access to Canada's borders and asked, whether, knowing this, they still supported having passports issue by their provincial government. In other words, we were asking respondents to balance a private good, a passport, against some of the public goods associated with the passport system, most importantly, control of our borders. Interestingly enough, as described in Table 13, support held suggesting that supporters of a stronger provincial role in passports remains so even when broader, societal considerations are brought to bear.

Having explored an area of traditionally exclusive federal jurisdiction we then moved on to explore some of the tradeoffs with respect to health care an area traditionally understood to be an area of provincial jurisdiction. Specifically, we asked respondents, again in the name of efficiency, whether they would be willing to see the Government of Canada issue health cards required for access to the publicly funded health care system (Table 14). There was generally support for this idea in most parts of the country and was as high as 64% in Ontario and 61% in Atlantic Canada. However, 61% of Quebec respondents rejected the scenario. As we did with the case of passports we were interested in testing the strength of the support for the change. So, in a follow up question to those who supported the change, we reminded respondents that a health card serves to control access to the provincial health care system and to manage the growth of costs. Once again we were looking to ask respondents to balance a private good, quick access to a health card, against a public good, cost control. And once again, among those who supported the idea, support did not waver – support remained above 80% (Table 15).

In summary then, with the limited exception of Quebec respondents, the participants in our poll seemed to attach a great importance to the efficiency by which services are delivered even at the expense of a more federalist reading of the Canadian political reality. Thus, the balance between efficiency and other objectives is apparently tilted in favour of the former suggesting in turn, the weakness of a culture of federalism in Canada or at least Canada outside of Quebec.

### **Looking for a federal political culture in Canada – the views of public servants**

That Canadians, with some exceptions, have a weak grasp of the institutions of federalism and ascribe only limited importance to the maintenance of a culture of federalism is perhaps not a surprise. It is consistent with, and perhaps a reflection of, a more general decline in civic literacy.<sup>38</sup> The weakness of a culture of federalism may also be the result of the power of the rights-based culture that has arisen in Canada with the advent of the Charter. As has been observed many times before, the Charter has the effect of focussing definitions of political life on how individuals relate to the state and

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<sup>38</sup> Henry Milner, *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work*. (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2002).

weakening the collective, pluralistic and communitarian notions that underlie the older tradition of federalism.<sup>39</sup>

In effect, a culture of federalism co-exists with other definitions of political life in Canada. Insofar that federalism is a normative statement of what should be, one that emphasizes the balanced co-existence of communities, there are of course other normative statements of the good life that emphasize other things be it democracy, social equality, or environmental protection to name but three. At the same time, following Brugmans, a culture of federalism itself encapsulates a diversity of concerns – diversity yes, but also efficiency, solidarity, and civic responsibility.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, in a federation, one would expect to see a balance between various definitions of the good as well as between various collective goals and the overarching normative case for federalism. In the balance of this paper we wish to explore the shifting balance between the collective citizenship values that arise from federalism and the more individualistic values that arise from a focus on the state as service provider. The latter concern leads to efforts to, wherever possible, integrate service delivery with a view to making it more efficient, effective and easier for citizen-clients or citizen-customers. As a client or customer of government we want our government or governments to be fast and efficient and, as required, work together to achieve this goal. Yet as citizens in a federal state we may be somewhat more willing to trade off efficiency for protection of minorities and the reflection of local tastes, preferences and priorities. Which is not to say that federalism does not include a concern for efficiency, only that there are other definitions of the polity that place a far greater emphasis on efficiency to the point that this may challenge some of the core notions of federalism.

To explore the relationships between federalism and integrated service delivery we convened a series of four roundtables across Canada with provincial public servants. Thus we met jointly with public officials drawn from departments and agencies responsible for both service delivery and intergovernmental relations for the governments of British Columbia, Ontario, Québec, and New Brunswick. Each roundtable lasted approximately three hours, involved from 5-8 public servants, and was anchored by a presentation of some of the polling results discussed above.

At the outset our expectation was that there would be at least some difference of views between those public servants drawn from the intergovernmental relations (IGR) side of a given provincial government and those drawn from the service delivery (SD) side. We expected that, at least outside of Quebec, the differences between IGR and SD views within a government would be as, if not more significant than the differences between provincial governments. This expectation is derived from both the personal

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<sup>39</sup> Kenneth McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle For National Unity* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997) and Alan C. Cairns, *Charter versus Federalism: The Dilemmas Of Constitutional Reform* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

<sup>40</sup> Henri Brugmans, *La pensée politique du fédéralisme. Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

experience of the authors<sup>41</sup> as well as the scholarly literature on intergovernmental relations. For example, previous studies of “intergovernmental specialists”<sup>42</sup> have concluded that the primary focus of such officials is to strengthen or at least defend the jurisdictional autonomy of their government.<sup>43</sup> Conversely, other studies suggest that those public servants who share a more functional interest in some area of public administration or public policy are less likely to emphasize issues of jurisdiction preferring to do what is required to advance the priorities in their area of functional expertise and interest. If this means greater intergovernmental collaboration or the actual shifting of responsibility from one order of government to another, so be it.<sup>44</sup> Our initial expectations were not borne out by what we found when we met with provincial officials. Rather we found strong evidence of convergence with the notable exception of Quebec.

### *Convergence across Three Provinces*

In all provinces, there were few differences of opinion between officials responsible for service delivery and their counterparts in intergovernmental affairs. While the basis for this agreement was different in Quebec (see below), in all four provinces we found little tension between a jurisdictional view of the federation and a more functional one. In three of four provinces efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery were deemed to be of paramount importance and that it would be inappropriate for the provincial government to seek to emphasize jurisdiction and “turf protection”. As one official in Ontario put it, “This is an area where you strip out all of the political stuff.”

On the one hand, there was consensus between officials in all jurisdictions on the importance of ensuring high levels of service delivery. In three of four provinces, Quebec again being the exception, there was a recognition that this often requires a degree of integration with the Government of Canada given the linked if not overlapping responsibilities and activities of both orders of government.

There was also a consensus that intergovernmental conflict was to be avoided particularly if it proved to be an obstacle to more effective service delivery. As officials

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<sup>41</sup> Patrick Fafard has served in the Governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario where he was, as the scholarly literature would describe it, an intergovernmental relations specialist. He has also served as Director General, Strategic Policy and Research in the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat, Privy Council Office, Government of Canada.

<sup>42</sup> John Warhurst, “Canada’s Intergovernmental Relations Specialists,” *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 42 (4), 459–485;

<sup>43</sup> As Donald Smiley put it, “The implicit and single-minded purpose of intergovernmental affairs managers at the provincial level is to safeguard and if possible to extend the range of jurisdictional autonomy, including of course the revenues that provinces have under their unshared control.” See Donald Smiley, *Canada in Question*, (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson, 1987) p.113. See also, Donald Smiley, “An Outsider’s Observations of Federal-Provincial Relations among Consenting Adults”, in Richard Simeon (ed.), *Confrontation and Collaboration: Intergovernmental Relations in Canada Today*. (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1979), pp. 109-110.

<sup>44</sup> Stefan J. Dupre, “The Workability of Executive Federalism in Canada”, in Herman Bakvis and William M. Chandler (eds.), *Federalism and the Role of the State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), pp. 236-258

from British Columbia put it, their Premier had instructed them to emphasize working closely and cooperatively with the Government of Canada, a trend that has been observed elsewhere.<sup>45</sup> These same officials also emphasized the great strides they had made with the Government of Alberta in developing and implementing the Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA). In Ontario and New Brunswick there was a similar consensus on the importance of intergovernmental service integration.

Officials in Ontario, B.C. and New Brunswick expressed broad agreement with the utility of applying at least some service delivery practices that are common in the private sector. In New Brunswick and Ontario in particular, service delivery officials repeatedly referred to the need to meet the needs of “customers” or “clients”. This description of provincial residents was not challenged by their colleagues from intergovernmental affairs. In effect, there was general agreement with a relatively thin conception of citizenship, one that does not allow for any of the complexities of citizenship in a federation as described earlier.

Similarly, officials in British Columbia, Ontario, and New Brunswick expressed general agreement with the proposition that it was possible if not desirable to separate policy from delivery. On this account of government activity, the process of setting policy is one of articulate clear goals and objectives. This is the purview of elected officials. Once the policy is in place implementation is a distinct process, one that does not, strictly speaking, have to be done by the same organization. Policy implementation can be entrusted to a not-for-profit agency, a private firm or, for that matter, another government. One service agency can deliver on behalf of more than one department or even order of government. It is this conception of government that allows Service New Brunswick to be the delivery agent for federal recreational boating registration. In effect, a basic tenet of what came to be known as the new public management – the distinction between steering and rowing – lives on despite the myriad of critics who express serious reservations about the desirability or even the possibility of making such a strict separation.

Intergovernmental collaboration, while potentially useful, makes it more difficult for citizens and those outside government to give credit or attribute blame.<sup>46</sup> In other words, when thinking about federalism and intergovernmental relations, as John Richards has put it, ‘accountability matters’.<sup>47</sup> When asked about the associated challenges of accountability such an approach implies, there was varying degrees of concern albeit very limited. As one official from New Brunswick put it, “we integrate first and worry about accountability later”. To the extent that accountability was an issue there was general agreement in most of the roundtables that what is required is a well structured intergovernmental agreement that makes it clear which government is responsible for

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<sup>45</sup> Steven Chase, “PM’s sunny relationship with Premier signals change in political landscape,” *Globe and Mail*, May 2, 2008.

<sup>46</sup> John Richards, “Reducing the Muddle in the Middle: Three Propositions for Running the Welfare State” in Harvey Lazar, (ed.), *Canada: The State of the Federation, 1997. Non-Constitutional Renewal*, (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen’s University), pp. 72.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 291.

policy issues and which government is “only” the delivery agent. Alternatively, the agreement will describe, in a fair bit of detail, which is responsible and therefore accountable for what.

Thus, officials in Ontario described their relationship with the Government of Canada as one that has, at least in some cases, moved from intergovernmental agreements to formal contracts with penalties for non-compliance. They also emphasized the importance of the overarching *Canada-Ontario Memorandum of Agreement on Collaboration in the Delivery of Public Service* which was the result of leadership by the then Secretary to the Cabinet and Clerk of Executive Council, Tony Dean.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, in B.C. several participants emphasized the symbolic and substantive importance of the intergovernmental agreement between the governments of Canada and British Columbia and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities which provides for the transfer of over \$600 million for projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provide for cleaner air and water.<sup>49</sup> The agreement is innovative in a number of respects. First, it includes not only the federal and provincial governments but the association representing B.C. municipalities. Second, the agreement is quite complex setting out in considerable detail the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties. Finally, unlike so many intergovernmental agreements which are largely hidden and unknown (in some cases even to central agencies), the tripartite gas tax agreement can be found on a dedicated web site as part of a broader emphasis on transparency and public awareness.

In summary then, in three of the four provinces where we held roundtables, there was little or no discussion of the implications of integrated service delivery for federalism and the inherent nature of the federation. To the extent that more efficient delivery of services to citizens requires service integration between the federal and provincial governments, such integration was deemed to be a good thing. Any associated concerns about accountability were discounted or were deemed to be manageable by means of intergovernmental agreement. More generally then, despite the presence of intergovernmental affairs officials who could be expected to instinctively defend the underlying ideals of federalism, we found little evidence or a robust culture of federalism in three of the four jurisdictions we met with.

### *Divergent View from Québec*

In marked contrast, in Quebec, officials responsible for both intergovernmental relations and service delivery expressed considerable scepticism about the whole notion of intergovernmental service integration in Canada. They did not express opposition to service integration as such but rather raised specific concerns about the manner in which it was done, the motivations of the Government of Canada in pursuing intergovernmental

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<sup>48</sup> Canada, Ontario, *Canada-Ontario Memorandum of Agreement on Collaboration in the Delivery of Public Service*. <http://www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/Product.asp?ProductID=362>. Accessed on May 19, 2008.

<sup>49</sup> Canada, British Columbia, Union of British Columbia Municipalities, *Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenues Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities, 2005-2015*. <http://ubcm.fileprosite.com/content/pdfstorage/8843670969222005105525AM14128.pdf> Accessed May 19, 2008.

service integration, and the accountability challenges that inevitably arise with such integration.

For example, whereas in other provinces there was little if any concern about the compatibility intergovernmental service integration with federalism and federation, in Quebec the officials we met with suggested that there was a rather fundamental tension between the normative underpinnings of each. Thus, they wondered about the extent to which we are witnessing an attempt to substitute an agenda defined around the perceived needs of citizens and clients for the older agenda of governments. In effect, integrated service delivery becomes one of supplanting the concerns of governments (bad) with the concerns of citizens and clients (good).

Similarly, whereas in the other provinces there was only muted concern about the underlying motivation of the federal government in pursuing an agenda of integrated service delivery, in Quebec our interlocutors observed that this agenda was arguably linked to the more general desire on the part of the Government of Canada to be more visible and more present in the lives of individual Canadians. Given the fact that provincial governments deliver a wider range of services that are more relevant to individual Canadians it is perhaps inevitable, on this view, that the federal government will want to partner with provincial (and local) governments to benefit from their comparative advantage, and become more visible and more relevant to individual Canadians.

Precisely because of their underlying concern about the merits of intergovernmental service integration, notwithstanding the real potential benefits, the Quebec public servants we met with presented a nuanced portrait of the many different kinds of intergovernmental collaboration that fall under the general rubric of service integration. Thus, if more efficient and effective service delivery means that the federal and provincial governments should integrate some of their “back office” functions or collocate service provides that is worth exploring and is, in fact, happening on the ground. However, when the agenda moves from “back office” to “front office”, from collocation of services to the integration of front counter service, in their view the implications change. For example, the integration of back office functions and allowing federal and provincial information management systems to communicate (while ensuring the privacy of personal information) is much less of a challenge than empowering a federal public servant to be the “face” of provincial programs (or vice versa). The latter raises questions of accountability, effectiveness, and language of service (i.e., tension between the principles underlying the Quebec language regime and the federal *Official Languages Act*).

A final example where the views of the participants in the Quebec roundtable diverged from those of the participants in the other roundtables was with respect to accountability. While it was not a major issue in three of the four roundtables, in Quebec City officials raised several concerns including the general inability of many citizens to distinguish between one order of government and the other with the result that citizens are likely to complain first to the provincial government with which they have a stronger

and more direct relationship. In a world of integrated intergovernmental service delivery this puts a provincial government in a position of having to answer for the Government of Canada in the highly likely event that citizens raise concerns with the order of government they feel most connected to – namely their provincial government or local government.

In summary then, while officials in all of the governments we met with clearly understood the importance of Canada as a federation and the challenges associated with managing a federation in three of the four cases their commitment to a political culture of federalism was much weaker. Only in Quebec were concerns raised about the conceptual and practical tensions (if not outright contradictions) between the federal principle and intergovernmental service integration.

## **Conclusion**

Michael Burgess has argued that a federation is not simply the mere end product of federalism and that things do not move in a simple straight line from federalism to federation.<sup>50</sup> Conversely, the mere fact that Canada is a federation is to say relatively little about the strength or depth of the federal idea or, as suggested in this paper, the strength of an overarching culture of federalism. In fact, as we have argued here, in contemporary Canada a “culture of federalism” is quite weak. Core aspects of federalism, including the autonomy of provincial governments to reflect and act upon the distinct aspirations of provincial populations, are quite readily set to one side. In this paper we show that, just as the diversity logic of federalism is in tension with the equality logic of a Charter or Rights and Freedoms, it is also in tension with the efficiency and equality logics of federal-provincial integrated service delivery.

We began this paper by not only recalling the critical distinction between federalism and federation but revisiting the idea that in all federations (and perhaps in some non-federations) there is a political culture of federalism. In looking to better understand a culture of federalism, rather than look for a preference for federal arrangements over other types of institutional arrangements, as was done by Cole and his colleagues, this paper is an attempt to get “inside the box” of the culture of federalism in Canada. Specifically we argue that a culture of federalism implies a particular conception of citizenship that is much more complex than a thin conception of citizen as client or consumer of government services. Rather, a political culture of federalism implies, following Cairns, a complex horizontal and vertical dimension of citizenship that link citizens to the state and to each other and is supported by a reservoir of loyalty and patriotism that gives legitimacy to the state.

To better understand the strength or weakness of a political culture of federalism this paper reports on the results of a national public opinion poll that points to the latter rather than the former. Specifically, the polling results suggest that Canadians have a weak understanding of even the most basic elements of federalism and that Canadians see federation as a way of accommodating diversity but are unwilling to entertain the logical

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<sup>50</sup> Burgess, *Op. Cit.*, p. 2.

extension of this claim to any form of asymmetry between provincial governments. On the assumption that one of the prerequisites of a culture of federalism is an understanding of the basic rudiments of federalism and federation, our polling results suggest that this culture is quite weak in Canada. Finally, our analysis suggests that Canadians attach a great importance to the efficiency by which government services are delivered even at the expense of a more federalist reading of the Canadian political reality.

To further explore the possible tradeoff between a culture of federalism and a culture of service delivery efficiency in this paper we report on a series of four roundtable discussions held with provincial government officials responsible for both intergovernmental relations and service delivery. Contrary to the general characterization of intergovernmental specialists in the scholarly literature, in three of four provinces we found little evidence of a preoccupation with jurisdiction. Officials in Ontario, New Brunswick and British Columbia were generally very supportive of trends to integrate service delivery as between the federal and provincial governments. In their view, intergovernmental cooperation if not integration was desirable as a means to provide better service to the clients and customers of government. In marked contrast, officials in Quebec were much more skeptical of the merits of integration, saw a tension between such integration and core notions of federalism, raised concerns about confused accountability in a regime of integrated services and were keen to draw distinctions between service coordination and service integration and between the integration of “back office” tasks invisible to citizens and “front office” services that connect each order of government to Canadians.

Our general conclusion is that the political culture of federalism is quite weak in Canada. Canadians in general and the provincial government officials who work on their behalf demonstrate little understanding of the basic logic of federalism or, even if they do, are willing to tradeoff federalism values against concerns about efficiency and meeting the needs of clients and consumers. In other words, our survey and roundtables suggest that most Canadians may be quite willing to limit themselves to a thin conception of citizenship, one that emphasizes the direct relationship between individuals and their governments and emphasizes the role of government as a provider of services in exchange for payment in the form of taxes and service charges. This conception of citizenship ignores the idea of a *shared* sense of loyalty to what we understand to be “our” state and any notion of positive identification with the *other* members of our political community. The exception to this general trend may be among Quebec elites who have a much more nuanced conception of federalism, the nature of citizenship in a federation, and the conceptual and practical challenges that arise from a project of intergovernmental service integration.

This being said, there is no single model of federation and no single expression of federalism. Thus, the majority of the public servants we met with as well as the respondents to our survey, and perhaps even Canadian generally, may be articulating an inherent preference for a more integrated and/or competitive federation. In this model citizens look to governments to act as checks on each other. However, if allowed to flourish, this model may also lead to a situation in which citizens leave it to governments

to each other accountable, the linkage between citizen and state is further weakened, and we migrate from a thick conception of citizenship which is essential in a federation to a much more instrumental, exchange-oriented and ultimately thin conception of citizenship. The latter, would effectively empty the reservoir of loyalty and patriotism that citizens have for the state and, this being Canada, the nations that co-exist within the state.

## Appendix One – Public Opinion

**Table 1.** It is often difficult to figure out which level of government is responsible for what.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	76
	Disagree	24
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	69
	Disagree	31
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	74
	Disagree	26
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	71
	Disagree	29
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	68
	Disagree	32
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	64
	Disagree	36
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	72
	Disagree	28
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	71
	Disagree	29
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 2.** Some responsibilities belong to the federal government, others to the provincial government, and sometimes both levels of government share them. For each of the following responsibilities, please tell me whether you believe it belongs to the federal government, to the provincial government, or to both levels of government.

<i>Regions</i>		<b>Defence (%)</b>	<b>Post Office(%)</b>	<b>Education (%)</b>	<b>Environment (%)</b>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Federal	64	62	5	19
	Provincial	3	14	48	12
	Both	33	24	47	69
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Quebec</i>	Federal	72	78	5	15
	Provincial	4	9	66	11
	Both	24	13	29	74
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Ontario</i>	Federal	81	68	8	25
	Provincial	1	12	61	7
	Both	18	20	31	68
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Federal	74	65	9	28
	Provincial	0	17	56	5
	Both	26	18	35	67
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Alberta</i>	Federal	78	75	7	13
	Provincial	1	9	49	8
	Both	21	16	44	79
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>British Columbia</i>	Federal	77	77	5	16
	Provincial	2	8	64	7
	Both	21	15	31	77
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>ROC</i>	Federal	78	69	7	22
	Provincial	1	12	58	7
	Both	21	19	35	71
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Canada</i>	Federal	76	71	7	20
	Provincial	2	11	60	8
	Both	22	18	33	72
	<i>N</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

**Table 3.** In Canada, federalism aims, among other things, to accommodate diversity, for example Quebec and aboriginal people.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	81
	Disagree	19
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	62
	Disagree	38
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	76
	Disagree	24
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	75
	Disagree	25
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 4.** In comparison with other provincial governments, the government of Quebec should be more autonomous from the federal government.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	37
	Disagree	63
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	73
	Disagree	27
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	24
	Disagree	76
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	30
	Disagree	70
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	20
	Disagree	80
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	31
	Disagree	69
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	27
	Disagree	73
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	39
	Disagree	61
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 5.** The federal government should continue to reach specific agreements with the Government of Quebec in areas such as immigration and health care that differ from those signed by other provincial governments.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	49
	Disagree	51
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	82
	Disagree	18
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	43
	Disagree	57
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	50
	Disagree	50
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	30
	Disagree	70
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	48
	Disagree	52
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	43
	Disagree	57
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	53
	Disagree	47
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 6.** If you could modify the sharing of responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, which among the following responsibilities, should be exclusively provincial, federal or even shared by both levels of governments?

<i>Regions</i>		<b>Negotiation of trade agreements (%)</b>	<b>Environment (%)</b>	<b>Integration and settlement of immigrants (%)</b>	<b>Promotion of the arts (%)</b>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Exclusively provincial	3	9	6	31
	Exclusively federal	32	4	41	9
	Shared	65	86	53	60
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Exclusively provincial	12	12	24	43
	Exclusively federal	23	9	20	5
	Shared	65	79	56	52
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Exclusively provincial	5	5	4	37
	Exclusively federal	53	11	32	6
	Shared	42	84	64	57
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Exclusively provincial	5	4	9	43
	Exclusively federal	44	13	27	7
	Shared	51	83	64	50
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Exclusively provincial	3	8	4	28
	Exclusively federal	43	8	36	3
	Shared	54	84	60	69
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Exclusively provincial	10	7	5	34
	Exclusively federal	39	7	35	15
	Shared	51	85	60	51
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>ROC</i>	Exclusively provincial	5	6	5	35
	Exclusively federal	46	9	34	7
	Shared	49	85	61	58
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100
<i>Canada</i>	Exclusively provincial	7	7	10	37
	Exclusively federal	41	9	30	6
	Shared	52	84	60	57
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100	100

**Table 7.** Canada faces new challenges. When time comes to develop common objectives to confront these challenges, which of the following five processes, in your opinion, will be more appropriate?

<i>Regions</i>	<b>Federal establishes the objectives (%)</b>	<b>Federal after consulting provinces (%)</b>	<b>Federal &amp; provincial work together (%)</b>	<b>Provinces consult each other (%)</b>	<b>Each province establishes its own objectives (%)</b>	<i>N</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	1	17	60	11	11	<i>100</i>
<i>Quebec</i>	3	10	45	9	33	<i>100</i>
<i>Ontario</i>	3	20	61	6	10	<i>100</i>
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	4	14	66	7	9	<i>100</i>
<i>Alberta</i>	11	0	66	13	10	<i>100</i>
<i>British Columbia</i>	1	23	54	6	16	<i>100</i>
<i>ROC</i>	2	18	61	8	11	<i>100</i>
<i>Canada</i>	2	16	58	8	16	<i>100</i>

**Table 8.** Provincial governments should have full autonomy in those areas that reflect the needs of the province.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	87
	Disagree	13
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	87
	Disagree	13
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	75
	Disagree	25
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	88
	Disagree	12
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	85
	Disagree	15
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	78
	Disagree	22
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	81
	Disagree	19
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 9.** In certain areas like education or health, the provinces should be able to act without interference from the federal government.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	65
	Disagree	35
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	72
	Disagree	28
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	59
	Disagree	41
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	68
	Disagree	32
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	57
	Disagree	43
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	61
	Disagree	39
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	60
	Disagree	40
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	63
	Disagree	37
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 10.** The federal government should have the ability to supervise and control the activities of provincial governments in certain areas like elementary and secondary education or auto insurance.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	58
	Disagree	42
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	52
	Disagree	48
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	68
	Disagree	32
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	52
	Disagree	48
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	71
	Disagree	29
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	48
	Disagree	52
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	63
	Disagree	37
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	60
	Disagree	40
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 11.** The federal government should be capable of defining national standards so that all people are treated the same regardless of which province they live in.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	99
	Disagree	1
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	81
	Disagree	19
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	94
	Disagree	6
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	94
	Disagree	6
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	93
	Disagree	7
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	92
	Disagree	8
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	94
	Disagree	6
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	91
	Disagree	9
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 12.** Assuming that it would be quicker and more efficient; my passport should be issued by the Government of [name of province which the respondent is from].

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	25
	Disagree	75
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	67
	Disagree	33
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	48
	Disagree	52
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	60
	Disagree	40
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	47
	Disagree	53
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	51
	Disagree	49
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	52
	Disagree	48
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	56
	Disagree	44
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 13.** Some people insist that a passport is evidence of citizenship and also helps control access to Canada's borders. Given this, to what extent do you agree that your passport should be issued by the Government of [insert name of province which the respondent is from]?

[Asked only to those who responded 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree' to the question referenced in Table 4.]

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	86
	Disagree	14
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	91
	Disagree	9
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	89
	Disagree	11
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	4
	Disagree	96
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	89
	Disagree	11
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	89
	Disagree	11
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	89
	Disagree	11
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	90
	Disagree	10
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 14.** Assuming that it would be quicker and more efficient; my health card should be issued by the Government of Canada.

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	61
	Disagree	39
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	39
	Disagree	61
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	64
	Disagree	36
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	57
	Disagree	43
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	53
	Disagree	47
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	51
	Disagree	49
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	60
	Disagree	40
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	54
	Disagree	46
	<i>N</i>	100

**Table 15.** Some people insist that a health insurance card serves to control access to the provincial health care system and to manage the growth of costs. Given this, to what extent do you agree that the Government of Canada should issue your health card?

<i>Regions</i>		<i>%</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	Agree	85
	Disagree	15
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Quebec</i>	Agree	90
	Disagree	10
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Ontario</i>	Agree	89
	Disagree	11
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Manitoba &amp; Saskatchewan</i>	Agree	81
	Disagree	19
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Alberta</i>	Agree	87
	Disagree	13
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>British Columbia</i>	Agree	80
	Disagree	20
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>ROC</i>	Agree	87
	Disagree	13
	<i>N</i>	100
<i>Canada</i>	Agree	87
	Disagree	13
	<i>N</i>	100