

The Canadian Political Science Association/Association canadienne de Science politique

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

'Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and cauldron bubble.'

Amidst the blahs of wintry blasts, 'tis the traditional fate of CPSA presidents to burble on about their busyness blues. Whatever your expectations of the present officeholder defiance of tradition is not among them and so the appropriate opening from Macbeth. This report from your president will cover a good many topics, among them the IPSA world congress, CPSA finances ('crisis as usual'), life with and without the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the chairmen's meeting, housing concerns, and past-presidential glories and triumphal recovery.

ANNUAL MEETING

We meet this year at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. For a change, the gods at Air Canada and CP Air are smiling on us. At the time of writing, the airlines are offering very cheap return weekend flights to and from Vancouver (\$250 or so from eastern Canada and about \$200 from central Canada). Ken Carty and the programme committee are promising a few new touches in arrangements and a first rate programme overall. Do get your seats now before the gods of flight change their minds or sell them all. (End of first commercial.)

PRESIDENTS PAST

There's particularly happy news to report about two of our past presidents, Walter Young of the University of Victoria and Alan Cairns of the University of British Columbia.

Hard on the heels of escape from the fierce demands of three presidentialist years on the CPSA executive, Walter Young took off last summer for a holiday in Britain. Just as he got there he was struck down by a particularly nasty bit of illness and had to be rushed home. Stubbornly optimistic despite gloomy medical diagnoses last autumn, Walter fought back valiantly. Now back at work after playing hooky during the autumn term, WDY is back to work in full humour and promising to plague us all -- as usual -- with his jokes at the annual meetings. We're delighted at his marvellous recovery, even if he is a little shinier on top than he used to be.

Alan Cairns, who is this year's visiting scholar in Canadian studies at Harvard University, has added even more lustre

to his career. Last fall he was one of three Canadians to whom the Canada Council awarded the Molson Prize for distinguished contribution to Canadian life. He is the first political scientist so honoured and one of the very few social scientists. Perhaps the simplest thing we can say is 'congratulations' and 'thank you' for drawing such laudatory attention to our discipline and the contribution that our very best people make to it and the country. Now, if only the Canada Council citation hadn't talked about Alan's contribution in demystifying the study of politics in Canada, we might have been able to persuade the feds to give us more money for research instead of less.

ADMINISTRATION CENTRAL

For some years now the Canadian Political Science Association has been especially fortunate in having its head office located in Ottawa. This has been entirely due to the generosity of Carleton University which made the space available to us at virtually no charge. One result of this Ottawa location has been the accumulated wisdom and expert services that our Administrator Joan Pond and her staff have

provided to hundreds of political scientists throughout the country. Those services and the Ottawa location have been especially valuable to many of us in trying to deal with the twists, turns, and the other assorted forms of deviousness with which our central government confronts us. It's fair to say that our Ottawa arrangements have been an important factor in making the CPSA by far the most active learned society of our size and type. The question now is whether we will be able to keep up those activities.

Like other universities, Carleton is feeling very pressed for space. We were asked to find other quarters during the summer of 1982. We have not. The efforts of Vince Wilson and others allowed us to stave off the eviction temporarily. One of the prices was accepting rooms in different building and separating our staff, creating considerable inconvenience and difficulty for them. Vince Wilson and others in Ottawa such as Caroline Andrew, president-elect, and two past presidents, Ken McRae and Don Rowat, have been working hard to keep the Association off the streets. That's not easy when you're running an accumulated deficit AND there's nothing for rent money in the kitty.

The question of new quarters is a thorny one. The Executive Committee is very keen to keep the services of Joan Pond and her staff together with all the advantages of being in Ottawa. On the other hand, other associations survive on lower fees and budgets by rotating their administrative offices from university to university, moving on before their welcome wears out. The price for them is what amounts to a rather feeble 'association memory', little expertise on the support staff side, and no ready access to the lore and personnel of the Ottawa funding agencies. Board members will have to wrestle with these questions at their February meeting. Those of you with views on the appropriate tradeoffs among Ottawa lobby location, membership fee levels, and association enterprises and services should speak or write to a Board member within the next few days.

FINANCE

Few of you will be surprised to learn that the CPSA has been no more immune to financial troubles than most other organisations. Faced with a hefty deficit from 1981, we gambled last year that cost-

cutting and higher membership revenues might combine with a significantly lower inflation rate to get us over a temporary rough spot. You will not be surprised to learn that it didn't work. We did cut costs considerably. Among other things, the Board meeting which should have been held in late 1982 was postponed to early this year, and we passed by several issues of the Bulletin. The latter was probably a mistake. Continued cuts in SSHRC support for the Journal-Review and zooming production costs mean we must pay more and more ourselves for this service to the country, to the world of scholarship, and, of course, to our own academic development. How much of the cost of these services CPSA members should finance from their own pockets is forever debatable. What is not debatable is that if we want to continue the annual meetings, the Journal-Review, and all CPSA services to the membership then the Board will have to decide where to get the money.

In an effort to repair the Association's finances, the annual meeting of several years ago approved a fee increase which went into effect for this year. The results are in and they will please no one. Higher fees dramatically reduced the number of paid-up memberships.

While the constant dollar yield from membership fees remains the same, we are worse off overall; decline in the number of members makes us less competitive for a share of the declining pool of public funds. A special Committee to examine our finances has been meeting over this winter to see what, if anything, might be done. Its members are Vince Wilson, Jean-Guy Finn, and Caroline Andrew. There is not the happiest of chores and I am particularly grateful for their help.

CHAIRMEN'S MEETINGS

One of the noteworthy activities sponsored by the CPSA is an annual meeting of the chairmen and heads of political science departments. This year's meeting has joint hosts, Queen's University and Royal Military College. In addition to the work of the hosts, funding for the meeting and other work connected with it takes significant executive and support staff time.

The chairmen's gatherings are properly known as 'State of the Discipline' review sessions, the manifestations of which take different forms from year to year. Above all they permit newly-appointed chairmen to

survey the field in Canada, to exchange notes and experiences on better collegial administration and to see where other Canadian departments are going in terms of staff, curriculum, training, and research needs. A 'State of the Art' project grant secured through the Social Science Federation of Canada helps fund the travel of colleagues from smaller or more remote institutions.

IPSA WORLD CONGRESS

So much acclaim has the prime minister won recently as a result of reports of perambulating about the warmer climes that I pause just a moment before venturing to write about Rio de Janeiro. Carlos Mendes University in that city was the site last summer of the world congress of the International Political Science Association. Canadians make up the second largest active political science community in the world and--despite our universities' straitened circumstances--a good many of us by hook or by crooked thumbs found our way there to present papers and analyse others before the scholars of dozens of other countries. If Canadians are to make any impression against the almost overwhelming tide of U.S. scholarship, the IPSA sessions offer us

one of the few effective ways of making our marks, whether as individuals or as a scholarly community as a whole.

Formally, the CPSA and la Société québécoise de Science politique were represented by Andre Donneur (U. of Montreal), Lloyd Brown-John (Windsor), Daniel Latouche (Mcgill), O. P. Dwivedi (Guelph), and your president. SSHRC changes in the funding arrangements from those prevailing in better times caused considerable difficulties in putting together an official CPSA/ACSP-SqSp delegation of individuals who could actually get there. Queen's University and the IPSA itself were particularly helpful in seeing that at least the president got to Rio. Alas, for those formally named delegates, Rio provided a lot more official business than it did academically stimulating occasions.

One piece of official business --'election' of the executive committee of the IPSA--proved to be more of a stumbling point than an opportunity to demonstrate political prowess. SSHRC funding arrangements this time round meant that the Canadian scholars with considerable international prominence who were 'natural' candidates for election didn't

make it to Rio. Following extensive consultation with those wise in the ways of IPSA politics, a decision was taken to stand aside from the election to make room for another Third World member on the international executive. As it turned out, other constituent associations nominated and placed on the executive candidates who were clearly no better-known internationally than some of our official delegates and alternates who were eligible for nomination. While this means that Canada, a founding member of IPSA, is without an elected executive member for the first time, our interests are still well-represented there by John Meisel, editor of the IPSA journal and by John Trent, director-general. Those among us who feel that a mistake was made nonetheless at Rio now have just over two years to see that Canada has myriad political scientists at the 1985 congress in Paris who are well enough known internationally to win election.

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The other major piece of travelling involved in presidential representation was a slightly less exotic trip than Rio--to Saint John, New Brunswick. There in the middle of the autumn term and under the organising talents of George Betts upwards of four dozen political scientists gathered at the Saint John UNB campus to exchange views, debate research findings, and discuss problems common to the discipline in the Atlantic Provinces. APPSA members certainly have confidence in their own future and in the value of what their organisation is doing. Where else would you find an academic group daring to raise their own membership fees several hundreds of percentage points in one year?

Meetings of regional groups like APPSA are valuable in their own right and promise to become even more so as funds to travel long distances to CPSA annual meetings grow even more difficult to find. The vitality of both regional and field specialist groups must soon provide the spark for re-examination of the CPSA's constituency and organisation.

