

Liberty, Loyalty, and Identity in the Canadian Founding

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“It is not desirable that any constitution should be the work of a party; in so important an undertaking, all party spirit should be laid aside ... because men of all parties are interested in the formation of a constitution” (David Christie, Canadian Legislative Council, February 17, 1865; CFD: 433).¹

It is often said that the liberalism of Canada’s founders was modified by a crucial “Tory touch,” a bent toward collectivism and hierarchy that still lingers in the Canadian political culture. Some scholars suggest that the collectivist teaching survives in the Conservative Party of Canada (Christian, 1996). Others associate it with Canadian socialism (Horowitz, 1987). Whether Tory or socialist, it is said to support social programs like medicare that distinguish Canada from the United

States, and for this reason it is an essential feature of the Canadian political identity. Canadians are supposedly more compassionate than Americans, more “caring,” with a greater sense of social justice (Taras 1997: 1,2).

The argument of this paper can be stated simply. The Fathers of Confederation did not enshrine a bent toward collectivism. They did not have an ideological agenda. They designed a procedural constitution to allow and encourage the play of political opinion and party programs on a footing of equality. Moreover they did not expect the new nation to have a homogeneous social character. Canadians would be attached to the Dominion insofar as they were satisfied with its political institutions.

The paper argues further that the attempt to describe Canada in substantive terms (Canada as compassionate society, for example) violates the principle of equal citizenship underlying liberal democracy and thus hampers effective deliberation on public affairs. Insofar as Canadians adhere to a substantive definition of identity we are less democratic.

Part 1: Scholars today

I am a Canadian.

I’m not a lumberjack, or fur trader,

I don’t live in an igloo, eat blubber, or own a dog sled ...

I have a Prime Minister, not a President.

I speak English and French, not American ...

I believe in peace keeping, not policing; diversity, not assimilation;
and that the beaver is a proud and noble animal (Kingston, 2003)

Does the famous beer commercial capture the Canadian identity? (We can ignore lumberjacks, and dog-sled owners, and the Canadians who enjoy a snack of blubber on the side – not to mention Canadians from the United States who are still handicapped in matters of English pronunciation and spelling.) Consider the idea that Canadians believe in “peace keeping, not policing; diversity, not assimilation.” We are supposedly more peaceable than Americans. Many Canadians believe it. Our national leaders use this rhetoric; Allan Rock argues that the current federal program to register hunting rifles reinforces Canadian values by distinguishing Canada from the United States on gun control. The compassionate society, the peaceable kingdom, the cultural mosaic: the picture is familiar. Everyone knows about it. Nevertheless it is not Canada’s original identity. Though scholars profess to find its roots in Confederation, it dates, in fact, from the 1960s.

Michael Bliss (2003) describes Canada’s original identity as “anglophilism.” In the decades after Confederation, “British influence gave Canada much of its un-American character ... The country’s political institutions, its economic orientation, its flow of immigrants and its dominant culture were all shaped by the Mother Country.” Bliss believes that Canadians retained their anglophilism well into the 1950s. They had by then acquired most of the trappings of independent nationhood but they were still proud to think of their country an arbiter between the United Kingdom and the United States. Anglophilism enters its decline in the 1960s.

Bliss continues: Canada's "cultural and economic axes ... [shifted] inexorably from a trans-Atlantic to a continental orientation ... The Anglo-American middle power of the North Atlantic that aspired to blend Britannic culture with American energy, was passing into history." New definitions were advanced. John Diefenbaker attempted to convince Canadians that they were a quintessentially northern nation. Socialists defined us as collectivists. Pierre Trudeau declared that we were a bilingual and bicultural nation or, correcting himself, a bilingual and multicultural one. But Bliss concludes that, "We are not [now] significantly British, not significantly northern, not significantly socialist, not significantly bicultural to be significantly different from the United States."

It is impossible to do justice to Bliss's loving yet acerbic account of what he calls our "failed identity experiments." He ends by describing the impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It seems to him that since 1982 Canadians have given up the search for a distinctive identity and are attempting to become a second "pluralistic human-rights based North American democracy." Our highest ambition now is to be "a suburb of the American megalopolis."

Shall we accept this sour conclusion? Look at the pattern. According to Bliss, we cast off our Britishness in, let us suppose, 1960, and then thrashed around for a way to describe our independence. Were we "northern"? Socialist? And so on. We then came to our senses, or fell on our knees, and recognizing the inherent servility of the Canadian soul, signed on with the new imperial power, the United States. George Grant offers a similar picture in *Lament for a Nation* (1965). Indeed many observers

are of the opinion that Canada retained the impress of British influence until the early 1960s and not a few argue that we are now in thrall to the United States.

There are two dubious features of Bliss on Canada's failed identities. In the first place, he does not mention the Canadian constitution - Canadian federalism or the parliamentary system - as influences on our sense of ourselves. He notes that Canada inherited its political institutions from Britain but says little about them (and neglects the American precedent for our federalism). He says nothing about democracy. He convincingly shows that the search for a *social* identity has failed, but does not entertain the idea that *political* institutions have an impact. His mistake is to suppose that admiration for the British constitution and British history can be equated with the desire to be or become Englishmen. The Fathers of Confederation did not prescribe the habits and manners of British society. They argued for parliamentary institutions and liberty under the rule of law.

Bliss is right to suggest that "northernness," socialism, and biculturalism were bound to fail. These definitions of could never have commanded broad assent as central features of the Canadian character. Yet he continues to think that the Canadian identity, if there is one, will be discovered in social and economic influences. Marx and the sociologists rule.

David Taras favours the collectivist definition of Canada. The socialist identity that Bliss dismisses so casually, Taras cherishes. In his view it lies at the heart of the Canadian character. He notes that recent economic developments – the rise of neo-liberalism, for example – are threatening the welfare state and concludes that the Canadian identity is endangered. As late as the 1980s, he argues, "The country ...

was held together ... by a compassionate system of social caring, sweeping economic patterns, the prominent role played by the state, and well-understood and agreed-upon habits of political compromise” (1997:1).² Like Bliss, Taras says little about institutions. He focuses on educational and cultural factors. Note, for example, that though he believes Canadians have, or had, “agreed-upon habits of political compromise,” he does not attribute these habits to the influence of the parliamentary system.

Peter Russell defines identity as a shared outlook; in his view, the sense of identity requires a “coming together,” a common vision. (Taras and Bliss would agree.) Russell writes: “while the Fathers of Confederation thought of themselves as nation-builders, they did not share a common vision of the essential nature of the nation they were building” (1992: 33). They lacked a sense of “collective identity” (5). In Russell’s opinion, moreover, Canadians *still* lack the necessary sense of identity. Our beginnings were flawed and our nation today is flawed.

Taras calls the sense of identity, a “passion.” He is surely right. “Identity” is first cousin to patriotism or nationalism. Bliss may be cool and ironic about our supposedly waning sense of identity; Taras is saddened. The social safety net is fraying. We are losing our “sense of place” and a deep anxiety hangs over the country (Taras, 1997:1). Bliss, Taras, and Russell present a picture of a country that is failing.

I have not yet described the second dubious feature of Bliss on “failed identities.” He equates identity with “distinctiveness.” His series of articles begins with a question, “How is Canada distinct? How does this country’s existence make a difference in the

world?”³ He suggests in other words that a national identity encapsulates a sense of difference. A country with a strong identity will differ markedly from other countries. The *society* will be different. I could trace this notion of social difference in Taras and others. It is a common theme for the scholars who write about identity: national identity is said to require social distinctiveness.

George Grant (1965) offers a similar argument. He believes that most people can love only what he calls “their own,” their own families, kind, and country. Saints and philosophers may love “the good,” but most people are not saints. If Canadians are to love Canada – and Grant believed they had once loved it – they will have to perceive it as their own, and in Grant’s opinion, that perception requires belief that it is unique, different, above all different from the United States. Much of Canada’s current anti-Americanism originates with Grant and his disciples in the school of economic and cultural nationalism. Before I turn to Confederation let me sum up what I believe to be the important features of the current debate.

I have said enough about Bliss and Taras to show that they are looking for a factor, a belief, an attitude, habits – some one *thing* - that all Canadians have in common. We will find the Canadian identity when we discover the thing we share. It is easy for Bliss to show the inadequacies of “anglophilism,” “northernness,” socialism, and biculturalism as the thing we share. We do not all like the (insufferable!) British. We all endure winter, but only some of us like it. We are not all socialists; for that matter we are not all conservatives. And as Bliss says with telling effect, only a few of us understand more than a dozen words of French. Canada is not a bilingual nation. Is

there anything we all have in common? We do not all celebrate Christmas. We do not all like hockey.

Let me suggest that the social scientists can search the length and breadth of Canadian society without finding the philosopher's stone; there is nothing at the level of society that Canadians have in common. Bliss is closest to his goal when he says that all Canadians regard the Charter as the symbol of their identity. Russell is closest when he argues that all, or perhaps it would be better to say many, Canadians felt aggrieved at the decision to amend the constitution at the time of Meech Lake without consulting the people in a referendum.

The commonalities are found in the political sphere, to be more precise, in our public law and in the institutions of democracy. We are all, equally, subject to the law; we have an equal obligation to obey. We are equally obliged to appear in court if charged with a crime. We all expect to pay taxes on income. We do not all vote in national elections, but on election night almost all of us keep the TV or radio tuned and we check the station or the newspapers in the morning. We are all entitled to life and liberty. We are all entitled to peace, order, and good government.

There is nothing distinctive about these commonalities. The obligations and benefits of Canadian citizenship are very like the obligations and benefits of citizenship in other liberal democracies. Our rights and freedoms are similar. Many of our institutions are similar, and many of our policies. But though *not* distinctive, our national institutions and rights nevertheless support a sense of nationhood. They keep the country together. They promote "identity." They are a source of satisfaction – or they could be, if the Canadian-identity scholars were not devoted to telling us that

our country is failing. They were once a source of national pride. They could be again.

The Canadian founders expected the population of the new nation to take pride in their new identity not because it was “distinctive,” but because it was based on good laws. They expected the new general government described in the British North America Act (a form of government copied from Britain) and federalism (copied with some changes from the United States) to unite the new country. These institutions were something to be proud of because they would allow the national and provincial governments to do well the things that all governments should do: promote civil peace and freedom, secure equality under law, and protect democracy. (I am not arguing that the Canadian record on civil peace, freedom, and democracy is perfect. I do say that it is almost unequalled in the records of the nations. I am not suggesting there is no room for reform.)

Part 2: What the founders said

Recall Peter Russell: “the Fathers of Confederation ... lacked a sense of “collective identity” (1992: 5). If by collective identity, Russell means a common *social* vision, he is right. Canada’s founders did not all say that the new nation will be or should be British in character, or that it should resemble the United States, or should have such and such virtues. Some hoped it would be British, some wanted to see it gravitate to the United States, and a few upheld republican virtues. In the debates of the period

we see acrimonious quarrels between French and English, and between Catholics and Protestants. Canada East and Canada West quarrelled over trade, the budget, and representation in the united legislature. The colonies of the periphery resented the Canadas.

We sometimes forget today how divisive those early quarrels were. We forget how independent the separate provinces were. British North America was a collection of quasi-independent small countries – they called themselves “countries” - each with its own history, its own relations with Britain, its institutions, and economy. It is surprising that they were able to put aside differences long enough to debate political union. For the fact is that though there was no common social vision, there was a common *political* one, that is, a legal - an institutional - vision. Canada’s founders believed they had found a way to pursue common political objectives without demeaning or overriding social differences.

Here is H.-L. Langevin on the Confederation proposal, in the Legislative Assembly of the united province of Canada. He is describing means to protect ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities. “We are told: ‘You wish to form a new nationality.’ Let us come to an understanding on this word, Mr. Speaker. What we desire and wish is to defend the general interests of a great country and of a powerful nation, by means of a central power. On the other hand, we do not wish to do away with our different customs, manner, and laws; on the contrary those are precisely what we are desirous of protecting in the most complete manner by means of Confederation. Under the new system there will be no more reason than at present to lose our character as French or English, under the pretext that we should all have the same general

interests; and our interests in relation to race, religion, and nationality will remain as they are at the present time. But they will be better protected under the proposed system, and that again is one of the strongest reasons in favour of Confederation” (CFD: 235).

In brief, Langevin endorsed George-Etienne Cartier’s proposal for a “political nationality.” In the Canadian Legislative Assembly, (February 8, 1865; CFD: 285, and see 229-31) Cartier argued: “Some parties ... pretended that it was impossible to carry out federation, on account of the differences of races and religions. Those who took this view of the question were in error. It was just the reverse. It was precisely on account of the variety of races, local interests, etc., that the federation system ought to be resorted to and would be found to work well.”

Insofar as they speak of preserving differences Langevin and Cartier strike a familiar note. Preserving traditional and distinctive ways of life, rescuing minority languages, celebrating “difference” and diversity – these are preoccupations of the twentieth century, and no doubt, the twenty-first. But in twentieth-century Canada and still today, the argument is that preserving differences enriches society; it has benign consequences for all. It is supposedly better to live in a society of diversity. In previous eras, including Confederation, the argument was that though it may be pleasant to preserve diversity, though it may be necessary, there are associated dangers. Preserving cultural differences can shore up political relations of domination and subordination. Two great dangers to peace and justice are associated with passionate attachment to “one’s own.” The first is autocracy: either a minority advances pretensions of birth, colour, or religion to exploit the majority, or the

majority denies minorities equality under law, enslaving and exploiting them. The second great danger is the disruption of civil peace, in the extreme, civil war.

In the Newfoundland House of Assembly, F.B.T Carter argues: “[A] beneficial result of Confederation would be that the acerbity of feeling which had marked our political contests would be done away with. For a long time past there had been a constant struggle for power between the two religious parties ... and election after election was sought to be carried in certain districts by means which we all deprecated” (February 2, 1865; CFD: 331). Daniel Prowse agrees. “I consider that if Confederation will only put an end to the sectarian and political differences which are such a bane to our community; if it will only put down the small fry of newspapers and petty politicians who help to fan the flames of religious strife, and who fatten like vultures upon our local sectarian differences; if Confederation will only do this, as I trust, in time, it will, I for one will hail it as the greatest boon that could ever be conferred upon this colony” (Newfoundland House of Assembly, February 23, 1869; CFD: 333).⁴

Thus the most common position at Confederation was that though it is desirable to maintain and support particular attachments, it is also necessary to constrain them. The love of “one’s own” should be allowed, but cannot be permitted unchecked aggrandizement. Langevin does not say explicitly that cultural differences must be curtailed as well as preserved, but I believe all listening to him would understand that the formula he was supporting would have the double effect – to maintain cultural differences while setting limits on expression.

The Langevin-Cartier formula derives from Locke. Other political philosophies advocate as means to avert dangers associated with attachment to particular causes, the inculcation of political virtue especially the virtue of moderation. The civic humanism that flourished briefly in British North America at the time of the 1837-38 Rebellions is such a philosophy.⁵ But in the Confederation debates there are few advocates of civic humanism or, as it is also known, civic republicanism. By the 1860s its appeal was waning; Lockean constitutionalism was in the ascendency. Richard Cartwright argues: “ [The British Constitution] ... does not require the possession of those lofty impractical virtues which most republican institutions demand from their votaries” (Canadian Legislative Assembly, March 9 1865; CFD:19). Civic republicanism supremely encourages a coherent national sense of common purpose but is not obviously compatible with pluralism. Langevin’s statement points to one important reason for the decline of civic republicanism. Papineau could embrace the republican remedy because he was thinking primarily of protecting and promoting the rights of the French-speaking majority in Lower Canada. He was prepared to endorse one-party government. Langevin, who is looking for what we might call the multicultural remedy, chooses the Lockean prescription.

It would require a longer paper to show how thoroughly the British North America Act is imbued with the Lockean sense of human equality and pragmatism. Locke argues for exclusion of particular passionate attachments from the public sphere. Candidates for public office do not compete on the basis of race, origin, creed, and language.⁶ To the Lockean formula the founders added the American one: the

division of legislative powers. Canadian federalism would maintain the differences between the general government and the local governments, and the differences between the provinces, thus enabling the provincial legislatures to support and contain local passions.

So far the discussion in this section has concerned preservation of minority identities. Our original problem, you will remember, was to explore the Fathers on national identity. Recall Langevin: “What we desire and wish is to defend the general interests of a great country and of a powerful nation, by means of a central power.” How does Langevin’s formula enable the defence of general interests? Does it promote a national identity?

I argued above that the scholars of national identity believe the pursuit of general interests is easier for Tories and socialists. Supposedly, pursuit of the common good requires a measure of social consensus and a Tory or socialist ideology is more likely to reflect such consensus. Indeed scholars sometimes argue that the mere fact of programs in the general interest betrays the presence of a collectivist ideology (Horowitz, 1966). It is said that John A. Macdonald’s National Policy is evidence that his party was at least in part conservative in the collectivist sense. It is said indeed that the National Policy is evidence that the country was conservative. Presumably projects for the common good are unlikely or less likely in countries where classical liberalism is dominant since classical liberalism values individualism and diversity.

A different picture emerges in the Confederation debates. The Fathers and the ratifying legislators expect the common good to arise from the deliberation of parties

with opposing views. In this respect they are students of J.S. Mill. In the legislative debates on Confederation, Mill's *Representative Government* (1861) is cited more often than any other work. Langevin expects Canadian federalism to promote the general interests of a great country insofar as the new constitution does *not* prefer the collectivist ideology. Just as the good constitution impartially encourages the expression of local, particular attachments, so it will impartially encourage the ideologies and ambitions of the parties competing for power in the public sphere. And out of the debates among those competing parties will come programs in the general interest. Langevin's is the classical liberal teaching.

It always surprises me that scholars can wish for a collective "coming together," a collective identity, without a shiver of fear. The idea of collective identity is just a step away from the appeal to Blood, Soil, History, the Future. I think the reason Canadians can flirt with ideas of common national purpose and substantive identity is that we have lived together for a long time with the Lockean formula, the one endorsed by Langevin and Cartier, in which political institutions are designed to promote diversity of opinion, to encourage the competition of political ideologies at the national level of government, and to protect political dissent. It is almost impossible for Canadians to suppose that this country will ever be wracked by the terrible passions that inflicted such damage on European nations in the twentieth century. I hope our short sightedness never catches up with us.

But we do not have to evoke images of the great monist tyrannies of the twentieth century to see that there is something problematic about defining national identity in terms of ideology. To enshrine a substantive identity or an ideology (like Toryism, or

socialism) is antithetical to political liberty. In the extreme it conduces to one-party government. Recall David Christie's statement: "It is not desirable that any constitution should be the work of a party." Christopher Moore notes that the government leaders who met at the Charlottetown and Quebec Conferences of 1864 were at pains to secure invitations for leaders of the opposition parties. Just as a new constitution should not be the work of "a party," so it should not be the work of a committee of governing parties. Charles Tupper refused to go to the conference at Charlottetown unless the opposition leader went with him (Moore, 1997: ix). (Moore explicitly contrasts the Fathers' approach with that of the government-party leaders who drafted the Meech lake accord.) Macdonald and Cartier were accompanied by their one-time foe, the former leader of the Liberals, George Brown. Note this description of PEI's decision to include the opposition. J.H. Gray is speaking in the Prince Edward Island House of Assembly (March 1, 1865 (CFD: 398):

"[Confederation] is a matter calculated to affect the interests and welfare of every subject in British America irrespective of party, race, or faith; and consequently, to divest it as much as possible from a party question, three members of the government, three members of the opposition, and one independent member of this house were appointed to proceed to Quebec as delegates."

In the Canadian Legislative Assembly, Thomas D'Arcy McGee noted: "[This] is a miraculous and wonderful circumstance, that men at the head of the governments in five separate provinces, and men at the head of the parties opposing them all agreed at the same time to sink party differences for the good of all, at the risk of having

their motives misunderstood, from associating together for the purpose of bringing about this result” (February 9, 1865; CFD: 429).

But consider George Sinclair, in the Prince Edward Island Assembly: “The honourable member for Belfast (Honourable Colonel [J.H.] Gray) took credit to himself for the composition of the island delegation – that it embraced men of opposite opinions, gentlemen selected from each of the political parties in the legislature. That affords to my mind a very strong argument in favour of cautious deliberation, for there is always cause to fear that the prospects of honours and emoluments may be held out to induce unanimity of sentiment between parties who were previously opposed to each other” (March 1, 1865; CFD: 399). Sinclair is saying that allowing government and opposition to cosy up together may have unfortunate consequences. Parties will scratch each others’ backs and forget the interests of the people. In the ordinary way of things, the point of parliamentary government is to ensure that parties do *not* cooperate to their mutual advantage, but compete with each other for the voters’ approval and to secure the *people’s* advantage.

Now we face a dilemma. I have been arguing that a constitution must not favour one party or ideology. I have suggested that the Fathers at Charlottetown and Quebec did what they could to make the drafting process inclusive. There were some notable omissions. There were no representatives of the Rouge party (the radical rump of George Brown’s Liberals). There were no Acadians, as Moore reminds us. There were no aboriginals. But for the sake of the argument let us suppose that the process was sufficiently inclusive, and that the British North America Act is a good

approximation of the neutral constitution required by liberal constitutionalism. The idea of constitutional law as neutral law, as superior law, lies at the heart of Lockean liberalism. But it is not unassailable idea and Sinclair's objection points to a major problem. In whatever fashion a constitution is drafted, despite the best intentions of the drafters it will surely reflect their opinions and interests. Constitutions (though ratified by the people) are the *creation* of politicians. Should we expect neutrality and objectivity? Is liberal constitutionalism possible?

Though Sinclair's objection has substance I do not propose to pursue the problem here. I propose to take Alexander Mackenzie's opinion as conclusive: "The question is not, at the present moment, what is the best possible form of government, according to our particular opinions, but what is the best that can be framed for a community holding different views." He is speaking in the Canadian Legislative Assembly (February 23, 1865; CFD: 94). Not everyone at the drafting conference agreed with all measures; not everyone in the late-joining provinces admired every feature of the British North America Act. But most agreed that they had a constitution that would allow the contestation of parties and that indeed would allow parties and interests *not* represented at the drafting stage access to the legislative process.

Let me now turn to the ratification stage. The rule for ratification was simple. No province could join the union until it passed a legislative resolution requesting admission. In other words, a province could not be forced into Confederation by the British, or brought in by a process of accommodation among provincial elites against

the wishes of the populations. The fact that a legislative measure was required meant that the people's representatives (in each province) had approved.

In the debates on the union resolutions (the ratification debates), there was again the expectation that the participants would rise above party spirit. Joseph Cauchon argues in the Canadian Legislative Assembly: “[In] a debate of such a solemn character, and when such destinies as regards the future of the whole of British North America are at stake within these walls, let us have the courage to rise superior to passions, hatreds, personal enmities, and a miserable spirit of party, in order to allow our minds to soar more freely in the larger sphere of generous sentiments, and of great and noble national aspirations” (March 2, 1865; CFD: 448).

Political scientists have not forgotten Cartier's prescription for a political nationality (Smiley, 1967; LaSelva, 1996), but it is worth considering again. It is a political remedy for the problem of social, historical, and economic diversity. It is also a formula for political liberty. It rests on law rather than an appeal to virtue and relies especially on the pillars of the Canadian constitution, federalism and Parliament. Since the 1960s, as I argue above, Canadians have hankered for a more coherent sense of nationality rooted in *society*. But the *political* nationality Langevin describes has served us for more than 130 years. It has stood the test of time.

¹ For the legislative debates on Confederation, see Janet Ajzenstat, Paul Romney, Ian Gentles, and William D. Gairdner, eds., *Canada's Founding Debates*, second edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003), cited hereafter as CFD. The volume contains excerpts from debates in the seven colonies of British North America from 1864 to 1873.

² I would argue that this standard teaching originates in the 1960s. A seminal figure is Seymour Martin Lipset. See his *The First New Nation* (New York: 1963), and "Revolution and Counterrevolution: Canada and the United States," in Thomas Ford ed., *The Revolutionary Theme in Contemporary America* (Lexington, KY 1965). Lipset compared Americans and Canadians using categories made famous by the sociologist Talcott Parsons. He concluded that Canadians were less "achievement-oriented" than Americans, less "universalistic," less egalitarian and less "self-oriented." Importantly, we were more deferential and more likely to put the collectivity ahead of individual interest. He pointed out that the differences were small, but for Canadian commentators ever since those small differences have loomed large. See also Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World 1955), and Hartz et al, *The Founding of New Societies, Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South America, and Australia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World 1964), especially the chapter on Canada by Kenneth McRae. Hartz's argument in brief is that Canada, like the United States, Latin America, etc, has been defined by the political ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and socialism transported by waves of immigrants. The contention is sometimes referred to as the "fragment thesis" since it argues that each ideology represents only a fragment of the complete spectrum developed in Europe. Gad Horowitz maintains that British North Americans learned to value community from conservative immigrants fleeing the American Revolution; Canadians later modified that original collectivism in light of the ideas of political equality deriving from liberal ideology. The result is the typical Canadian preference for programs that serve grand, national objectives and our insistence that these programs not violate citizen equality. Horowitz, "Liberalism, Conservatism, and Socialism: An Interpretation," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 32:3 (1966). Commentaries on Hartz and Horowitz are many. H.D. Forbes offers a guide in "Hartz-Horowitz at Twenty: Nationalism, Toryism and Socialism in Canada and the United States," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 20: 2 (1987); see also the bibliography in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory, or Republican?* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press 1995). Lipset's view and the fragment thesis remain the standard teaching, the backbone of commentary on Canadian identity. See for example, David V.J. Bell, "Political Culture in Canada," in Michael Whittington and Glen Williams, eds., *Canadian Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (Scarborough ON: Nelson 2000) 275-301. And see the editors' introduction to Bell on page 272: Canadian political culture is "an amalgam of the

ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and socialism transported here in different waves of immigration.” David Bell and Lorne Tepperman initiated generations of students to the thesis in *The Roots of Disunity: A Look at Canadian Political Culture* (Toronto; McClelland and Stewart 1979). An equally influential text is William Christian and Colin Campbell, *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson); the fourth edition was published in 1996.

³ It would be churlish to note that Americans spend as much per capita as Canadians on public welfare. It would be churlish to point out that some American states have stringent gun control laws. There is also the awkward fact that survey data on concrete political, social, and legal issues, suggests that the two societies are similar. See Paul M. Sniderman, Joseph F. Fletcher, Peter H. Russell, and Philip E. Tetlock, *The Clash of Rights, Liberty, Equality and Legitimacy in Pluralist Democracy* (New Haven, CON: Princeton University Press, 1996; and Neil Nevitte and Roger Gibbins, *New Elites in Old States, Ideologies in the Anglo-American Democracies* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1990). And see the critiques of Lipset by Edward Grabb, and his associates in the *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 24:4 (1999), 509-31, and the *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 38:1 (2002). If one asks Canadians to compare Canadian and American identities, the standard picture of differences emerges. But if one asks them to think about concrete political, social, and legal issues, like affirmative action programs, equality in its several definitions, the “profit system,” and so on, one turns up a pattern of responses that is similar to the American pattern. (Even anti-Americanism, sometimes thought of as Canada’s most obviously distinguishing feature, has its American parallel. Consider the American bumper sticker that showed up in 2002-2003: “I love Iraq. Bomb Texas.”) It remains that Canadians continue think in confused fashion that our country is disposed by history and culture, to the positive state. Many individual Canadians, many groups, argue against welfarism as I hardly need to say. But over the country as a whole hangs the “cloud of unknowing,” the vague idea that for reasons of history and development we are or should be well disposed to “compassionate” government..

⁴ But see George Hogsett (Newfoundland House of Assembly, February 23, 1869; CFD, 333): “They say that religious feeling is broken down in Canada, and that was the result of Confederation. He (Mr. Hogsett) denied that such was the case; the same elements that influenced the legislatures in the dominion, whilst separately constituted, existed today and would ever continue to exist, whilst differences of faith, differences of interest, and differences of races exist.”

⁵ For civic humanism see the essays in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada’s Origins*.

⁶ M.C. Cameron’s campaign broad sheet for the Canadian election of 1863 reads: “My principles are the same as when I last solicited your suffrages – A Conservative, I have been and will continue to be the advocate of fair and equal justice to all classes of the people, without reference to party, color; race or religion.” See CFD, 305

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