

The Canadian Scene

New Speaker in Newfoundland and Labrador

On November 17, 2014, Lewisporte MHA **Wade Verge** was acclaimed as Speaker of Newfoundland and Labrador's House of Assembly.

Having served as acting Speaker since the resignation of former Speaker **Ross Wiseman** in September, Verge said he was very happy to assume the role and there would be no need for his colleagues to follow the tradition of dragging him into the Speaker's Chair as he "would have been willing to run to the chair." First elected in 2007 and re-elected in 2011 as a member of the Progressive Conservative Party, Verge previously worked as a teacher and school principal for 22 years.



Wade Verge

New Speaker of the Senate

Pierre Claude Nolin was appointed Speaker of the Senate by Governor General **David Johnston** on the advice of Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** on November 26, 2014. Nolin, who had served as Speaker *pro tempore* for a year, replaced former Speaker **Noël Kinsella** who resigned from the Chamber two days before mandatory retirement provisions were set to take effect.



Pierre Claude Nolin

A lawyer by training, Nolin was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister **Brian Mulroney** in 1993 for senatorial division of De Salaberry, Québec. He chairs the Senate committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration and is a member of the committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament.

32nd Annual Presiding Officers' Conference

From January 29 to February 1, 2015, Winnipeg, Manitoba hosted more than 50 delegates and accompanying persons at the 32nd Annual Presiding Officers' Conference.

The first day's business sessions focused around the theme of parliamentary privilege. In a session chaired by Prince Edward Island Speaker **Carolyn Bertram**, **Rob Reynolds**, a law clerk and Director of Interparliamentary Relations at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, spoke about the essentials of parliamentary privilege in a modern context. In addition to defining privilege, Reynolds outlined its categories, internal controls and external recognition of parliament's jurisdiction and the concept of contempt of parliament before concluding with a review of debates about whether or not to codify parliamentary privilege.

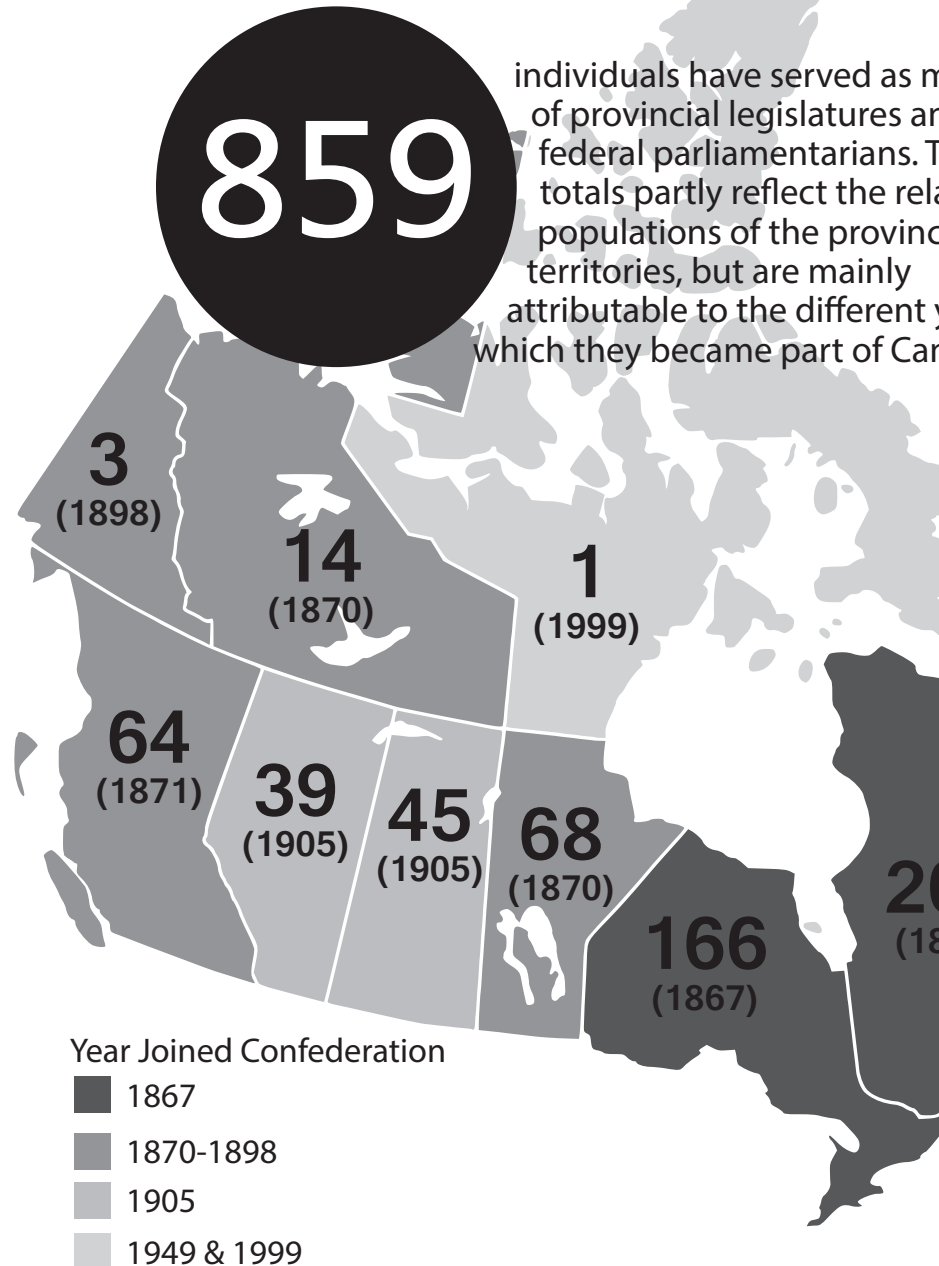
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One House Leads to Another: By the Numbers

Text by Jacques P. Gagnon, Graphic Design by Julie Anderson

The Parliament of Canada's PARLINFO database provides biographical information on each of the **4,214** MPs elected to the House of Commons and **925** senators appointed to the Senate from 1867 to the time of writing (late September 2014).ⁱ In addition to the politicians' federal political experience, the biographies include their provincial or territorial political experience, if any. This material inspired this research note on their overall parliamentary experience.ⁱⁱ At the individual level, these moves from one chamber to another help explain many parliamentarians' political longevity. At the collective level, this accounting reveals a certain upward, rather than downward, mobility: many more provincial legislators have become MPs and senators than the other way around.

Serving as both federal and provincial parliamentarians



individuals have served as members of provincial legislatures and federal parliamentarians. These totals partly reflect the relative populations of the provinces and territories, but are mainly attributable to the different years in which they became part of Canada.

Footnotes:

ⁱ Sincere thanks to David Tessier, PARLINFO Coordinator, and Nicolas Moncion, who is responsible for the listing necessary for this analysis.

ⁱⁱ Note, however, that these data do not include legislative councillors from New Brunswick (1867–1892), Nova Scotia (1867–1928), Quebec (1867–1968), Manitoba (1870–1876) and Prince Edward Island (1873–1893).

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Hat Trick

provincial legislators have become MPs and then senators. The most unusual case is that of Fabian Manning. A Progressive Conservative member of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly from 1993 to 2005, Manning resigned to be elected as a Conservative MP in 2006. After his defeat in the 2008 election, Manning was appointed as a senator in 2009. He then resigned from the Senate in 2011 to again run federally. But Manning was once more defeated in the May 2 election, only to be reappointed to the Senate 23 days later.

From Provincial Legislator to MP / Senator

27

started their political career before 1867, in the parliaments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia and the United Province of Canada (Quebec portion). Surprisingly, not one was a legislator from the future province of Ontario.

472

MPs were first provincial legislators

15

individuals were simultaneously provincial and federal legislators, a privilege that would end with the 1874 election.

141

senators have been provincial legislators before sitting in the Upper House.

22
(1949)

60
(1873)

85
(1867)

90
(1867)

From MP to Provincial Legislator

167

MPs have successfully switched to provincial politics.



Delegates of the 32nd Annual Presiding Officers' Conference pose at the entrance of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

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Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk of Nova Scotia's House of Assembly, offered a retrospective on an important court case dealing with parliamentary privilege that went before the Supreme Court of Canada. Chaired by Manitoba's Deputy Speaker **Tom Nevakshonoff**, the session explored the legacy of *Donahoe v. the CBC* (or *New Brunswick Broadcasting Co. v. Nova Scotia (Speaker of the House of Assembly)*) which tested a parliament's power to restrict strangers from entering the House.

Yukon Speaker **David Laxton** chaired a panel discussion on privilege and the courts featuring presentations by **André Gagnon**, Acting Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons, **Deborah Deller**, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and **Tim Mercer**, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. The session explored the experiences of these jurisdictions when invoking protection of parliamentary privilege before the courts.

The day's final session, chaired by New Brunswick Speaker **Chris Collins**, provided an opportunity for jurisdictional updates on privilege and other issues.

The second day of the conference began with a presentation by British Columbia Speaker **Linda Reid**

on e-petitions and citizen engagement. The session, chaired by Ontario Speaker **Dave Levac**, explored the use of new technology as a practical and cost-effective method of involving more citizens in the activities of the legislatures. A version of this presentation was previously published in the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* Vol. 37, No. 4.

The sixth conference session, chaired by Newfoundland and Labrador Speaker **Wade Verge**, dealt with presiding over Oral Questions. Saskatchewan Speaker **Dan D'Autremont** reflected on situations and techniques used during Question Periods and the perennial challenge of non-relevant answers to questions. This session prompted a healthy discussion among attendees of the varying lengths of Question Periods among jurisdictions across Canada and their structure and order.

A final session, chaired by Alberta Speaker **Gene Zwozdesky**, featured a presentation by National Assembly President **Jacques Chagnon** which explored how parliamentary privileges relate to safety and security considerations. A subsequent Speakers' meeting continued to explore issues relating to this topic.

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*As of March 31, 2014

Canadian Region
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

Alberta

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Building
801 Legislature Annex
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E4
780 427-2478 (tel)
780 427-5688 (fax)
david.mcneil@assembly.ab.ca

Newfoundland & Labrador

Office of the Clerk
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St John's, NL A1B 4J6
709 729-3405 (tel)
707 729-4820 (fax)
sbarnes@gov.nl.ca

Ontario

Office of the Clerk
Room 104,
Legislative Bldg.
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2
416 325-7341 (tel)
416 325-7344 (fax)
clerks-office@ontla.ola.org

British Columbia

Office of the Clerk
Parliament Buildings
Room 221
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
250 387-3785 (tel)
250 387-0942 (fax)
ClerkHouse@leg.bc.ca

Northwest Territories

Office of the Clerk
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9
867 669-2299 (tel)
867 873-0432 (fax)
tim_mercer@gov.nt.ca

Prince Edward Island

Office of the Clerk
Province House
P.O. Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8
902 368-5970 (tel)
902 368-5175 (fax)
chmackay@assembly.pe.ca

Federal Branch

Executive Secretary
131 Queen Street, 5th Floor
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
613 993-0330 (tel)
613 995-0212 (fax)
cpa@parl.gc.ca



Québec

Direction des relations inter-
parlementaires
Assemblée nationale
Québec, QC G1A 1A3
418 643-7391 (tel)
418 643-1865 (fax)
EBevan@assnat.qc.ca

Manitoba

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Building
Room 237
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8
204 945-3636 (tel)
204 948-2507 (fax)
patricia.chaychuk@leg.gov.mb.ca

Nova Scotia

Office of the Clerk
Province House
P.O. Box 1617
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y3
902 424-5707 (tel)
902 424-0526 (fax)
fergusnr@gov.ns.ca

Saskatchewan

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Building
Room 239
Regina, SK S4S 0B3
306 787-2377 (tel)
306 787-0408 (fax)
cpa@legassembly.sk.ca

New Brunswick

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Building
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1
506 453-2506 (tel)
506 453-7154 (fax)
don.forestell@gnb.ca

Nunavut

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
P.O. Box 1200
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
867 975-5100 (tel)
867 975-5190 (fax)

Yukon

Office of the Clerk
Legislative Building
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6
867 667-5494 (tel)
867 393-6280 (fax)
clerk@gov.yk.ca