

Editorial

Each year the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* publishes one or more articles on the parliamentary tradition of the province or territory hosting the Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. In 1982 the Conference takes place, for the first time, in the Northwest Territories. Parliamentary government in the north may not be as developed as in the south, but northern legislators are necessarily close to certain basic tenets of parliamentary democracy. One such feature is the representation of minorities.

The article by Donna Laing describes the establishment of the Northwest Territories Interpretation Corps. The advent of simultaneous English-Inuktitut interpretation in the Legislative Assembly is a significant political and cultural achievement for the Inuit. Not only can unilingual members now listen to and participate in debate in their own language, but the infrastructure and expertise required to establish the service will serve as a catalyst to stimulate interest in Inuit culture and language among the population at large. Parliamentary democracy can be judged by how well it organizes reasoned debate among the various cultures and economic interests which make up a society. Translation and special support services help to foster such debate.

Interest in reform is another measure of parliamentary democracy. A recent study of this subject was prepared by a member of the Quebec National Assembly, Denis Vaugeois. In this issue we are publishing both an extract from his report as well as a summary of the report itself.

Serious parliamentary debate cannot take place without an official written record of the proceedings. Over the years the reporting of debates has undergone many technical and philosophical changes. The article by Peter Brannan on the development of Ontario's Hansard illustrates some of the issues involved. For future issues we hope to publish similar articles on the way other provinces report their debates.

Finally the story of the restoration of Province House, Prince Edward Island, illustrates the importance of tradition. Without certain traditions, such as respect for the rules (both written and unwritten) and the concept of fair play, Parliament either ceases to function or loses much of its legitimacy. What better way to remind members, as well as the general public, of the importance of tradition than through restoration of some of the fine old parliamentary buildings in Canada.

Regular readers of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* will note a number of changes in our format including a new cover. These do not reflect any change in the basic aims and objectives of the magazine but rather an attempt to make it more attractive, not only to specialists in parliamentary matters but to the general public as well.



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