

# Editorial

**T**his year the Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will be held in Winnipeg from August 7-12. As was the case for the last three conferences in British Columbia, Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories we are publishing an article on the parliamentary tradition in the host province or territory. These articles are intended to show the diversity of parliamentary experience in this country and the article by Gordon Mackintosh certainly contributes to that objective.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is composed of some 100 branches in five Regions. With its thirteen legislatures Canada is the only country to constitute a Region and Canadian legislators are among the most active in the Association. This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of regional activities; the first conference was organized in Halifax in 1958 to mark the 200th anniversary of representative government in Nova Scotia. The conference, chaired by Premier Robert Stanfield, was such a success that the assembled parliamentarians set up a provisional council headed by Roland Michener, Speaker of the House of Commons, to draft recommendations for the organization of similar conferences in the future. The report by Speaker Michener established the framework for regional conferences which have been held annually except 1966 and 1977 when Canada hosted international CPA conferences.

Space does not permit a complete list of all other activities organized or sponsored by the Canadian Region over the past quarter century but some important events of the last ten years include: establishment, in 1973, of an annual seminar on parliamentary practice and procedure; the adoption in 1976 of a cost-sharing formula by federal, provincial and territorial branches to cover expenses of the Region; joint sponsorship, with the Quebec National Assembly, of a special seminar on the British parliamentary system in 1977; creation of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* in 1978; organizational assistance to the Commonwealth study group on Parliament and the Scrutiny of Science Policy in 1980, the Commonwealth Speakers' Conference in 1981 and the Second Commonwealth Conference on Delegated Legislation in 1983. Some initiatives have come directly from the provinces including establishment, in 1978, of an annual parliamentary conference for the four Atlantic branches; a parliamentary visit in 1980 hosted by the Alberta and Saskatchewan branches to help celebrate their seventy-fifth anniversary as provinces, and the sponsorship of an essay contest on the future of Parliamentary democracy by the Nova Scotia branch in 1982.

Development of the Canadian Region of CPA has coincided with, indeed some would say it has been a catalyst for, a reawakening of interest in parliamentary institutions in this country. There are now so many other groups organizing parliamentary conferences and seminars that in 1982 a special CPA task force was established to look into the future of the Association and its relationship with other organizations. The conclusions of the Task Force will be reported in a future issue.



**Front Cover: A missile is fired by Premier Douglas Campbell in defence of his colleagues in a 1950's "paper fight". (Courtesy of Douglas Campbell)**

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