

selections which now grace government buildings throughout the province, including the Middlesex County Court House in London, the Ontario Police College in Aylmer and the Land Registry office in Kitchener. Although the Macdonald block project was a national competition, the current policy of the "art-in-architecture" program is to support the work of Ontario artists. The scope of purchasing has also been broadened to include original prints, other works on paper and other smaller works of art.

The catalogue portion of the book is divided into four sections as well, each supporting the text areas described above. The 1100 works that comprise the Ontario Collection are described in detail – medium, size, method of acquisition, catalogue number, and brief information on the artist. More detailed discussion is provided for some works, especially in the portrait section where there are extensive notes on the sitters. Many of the considerable illustrations are in colour. There are a series of useful appendices, a detailed bibliography arranged by chapter and an index covering both artists and subjects. Fern Bayer's scholarly and handsome book will be appreciated by professionals and amateurs alike.

Merle Fabian
Librarian
Canadian Embassy
Washington D.C.

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**INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS
FOR REPRESENTATIVE
GOVERNMENT, Peter Aucoin,
Research Coordinator, University
of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1986,
159 pages.**

This is a difficult book to assess. It has many of the ingredients of success. It is an outgrowth of the fruitful and generally successful research and publications programme of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union. The title of the volume pinpoints two

vital issues, institutional reform and representativeness. The research coordinator is a respected public administration specialist at Dalhousie University. Three of the four contributors are major scholars – John Courtney (Saskatchewan), William Irvine (Queen's), and Vincent Lemieux (Laval). The fourth contributor, Peter Dobell, is a longtime observer and participant in parliamentary affairs. Judged individually, each of the four chapters is good to very, very good. However, the value of the book as a whole seems to be a little less than the value of the sum of its parts.

Professor Courtney, a known advocate of a large House of Commons, provides a broad, systematic overview of the issue of the "Size of Canada's Parliament." He discusses the question of Parliamentary size from the vantage of Canada's obligations to underpopulated regions of the country, British political experience, representativeness, the autonomy of individual MPs, the size of the Commons chamber, the style of Parliamentary debate, and the actual financial cost of a larger Commons.

In a chapter entitled "Some Comments on Parliamentary Reform," Peter Dobell offers a personal view on selected aspects of free votes in the Commons, private members' bills, the role of the Opposition in Commons' committees of inquiry, and the benefits of horizontal committees.

Professor Irvine, a longtime known advocate of proportional representation, offers a clear sighted encyclopedic overview of the many proposals for electoral system reform in Canada. This will be a useful source for many years to come. But, Irvine can be faulted for downplaying the powerful cross-national literature critical of the impact of PR on the renewal of party elites and the effectiveness of government. Even if Irvine is in the end right, it might have been helpful to show why his opponents (mainly non Canadian) are wrong.

Professor Lemieux provides an elegantly written and well organized overview of referenda both abroad and among the Canadian provinces. This too will remain a useful source of

baseline information and thought for some time to come. If Lemieux can be faulted, it can be for not enough attention given to the process by which referendum questions are worded. He does note the similarity between polls and referenda, but misses the opportunity to explore their interplay.

It is difficult to know to what extent the authors and research coordinator should be commended or faulted because it is unclear under what constraints they laboured. The book would have benefitted from a strong introductory chapter explaining why these four themes were selected from among the myriad of potential issues in institutional reform. The mandate of institutional reform and representativeness could lead to many studies of Parliament alone, not to mention studies of public service appointments and accountability, the powers of regulatory agencies, the mass media, freedom of information, lobbying, citizen-government relations, and so forth.

A strong introductory chapter might also have explained why the authors were chosen for their particular tasks. Three of the contributors were already *parti pris* on at least some of the issues which they explored. Would the book have been more useful to readers if it had contained structured rebuttals?

A strong introductory chapter might also have shed light on the mode of analysis which contributors were expected to adopt. Were the chapters to be written for an audience of specialists or a lay audience? At least two of the chapters were suitable for specialists while one of the chapters had some of the character of an undergraduate primer. Were the chapters to be rigorously structured around specific reform issues or were they to be discursive essays? Were the chapters to be systematically cross-national or essentially Canadian with occasional British or American anecdotes? Answers to these questions might have made a good book still better.

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