

Alberta and British Columbia—each for its own reasons, opposed and refused to negotiate. The other three—Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec—expressed reserved willingness to negotiate, using the report as the basis of discussion.

Any attempt to evaluate the report and the different points of view is rendered difficult by the dual purpose which is implicit in the proposals. The short run problem of war financing was combined by those favorable to the implementation with the long-run question of dominion-provincial finances. Much that has been said can be explained as opportunistic short-run politics. Little is to be gained in remorseful regrets that politicians have played their usual game. Yet the problems with which the commission attempted to deal remain, and careful reading of the report and of the controversy serves to bring to light some fundamental issues upon which the Canadian cleavage may grow. The elements of national unification provided by trans-continental railways and tariffs may not be a lasting guarantee that the dis-integrating influences of geography will not assert themselves. Behind the

controversy over the report looms the spectre of the Siegfried thesis of east-west versus north-south axes. It is a paradox of large modern federations that they operate efficiently, although not necessarily with equity, when they are built around a dominating nucleus interested in exploiting the economic possibilities of the remaining hinterlands. A Canadian federation has been associated with the expansion of the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes economy into the west with railways, wheat and financial institutions, and into the maritimes in search of markets for the growing industrialism of Ontario and Quebec. The difficulties of wheat and the growth of alternative hinterlands in the mining, power, and paper of the pre-Cambrian shield have reduced the importance of the national government and enhanced the position of certain provincial governments as developmental agencies. British Columbia finds it difficult to integrate her economic life with the distant economy of the east, and Alberta is true to the frontier in seeking a monetary solution. The dominating region of the St. Lawrence may be losing interest in domination.

Official Costs of Canadian Elections

By JAMES R. POLLOCK

THE administration of popular elections continues to be an important part of the democratic process. Occasional consultations with the people are necessary to determine the scope and direction of public policy. It follows, therefore, that the management of public elections must be honestly and efficiently conducted if the popular will is to be accurately

and promptly translated into government action.

Unfortunately, however, election administration has been one of the most neglected fields of public administration. Few studies of the problem have been made, and little public or official attention has been given to improving the machinery through which the voters record their decisions.¹

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. James R. Pollock is Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan. He is author of various books and many articles on the administrative problems involved in elections, and of several books on Nazi Germany.

The drawing on the cover illustrating some features of Table 2 is by Professor A. S. Mowat of Dalhousie University.

(1: See Joseph P. Harris, *Election Administration in the United States* (Washington, 1934); James K. Pollock, *German Election Administration* (New York, 1934); and James K. Pollock, *Election Administration in Michigan*, Supplement to the *National Municipal Review*, Vol. 23, No. 6, June, 1934.

Canada is no exception to the above statements, although as we shall see, the Dominion has gone farther in providing an orderly and well-directed official management of elections than her neighbor to the south. Through adequate records, both statistical and financial, the investigator is supplied with the materials necessary for an evaluation.²

Large sums of money are required to stage a national election. Not only must the candidates and the political parties raise considerable funds for electoral expenditures, but the government of the Dominion must provide a thoroughgoing and complete system for recording the popular will in the most accurate manner. It is the official cost of Dominion elections which will be treated in this article.³ Using the official figures for the two Dominion elections of 1930 and 1935, including the preparation of the register of 1934 and the revision of 1935, we are able to obtain an adequate picture of the outlays necessary for public elections, and to make some comments regarding them.

THE ORGANIZATION OF CANADIAN ELECTIONS

The Dominion Parliament has provided for a centralized control of Dominion elections.⁴ Members are returned from the nine provinces and the Yukon territory under the provisions of Dominion legislation covering registration of voters, ballots, election officers, and all the other details of election administration. To insure the faithful execution of this legislation, Parliament has created the position of Chief Electoral Officer. Elected by resolution of the House of Commons, the Chief Electoral Officer exercises "general direction and supervision over the administrative conduct of elections." He is removable only for cause "and in the same manner as, and upon the same con-

ditions as a judge of the Supreme Court of Canada."

Under the Chief Electoral Officer the Governor-in-Council appoints the returning officers for all of the electoral districts. In 1935 there were 243 of these officers. The returning officers in turn appoint their own election clerks and also one deputy returning officer for each polling station in their respective districts. The deputy returning officers appoint the poll clerks. In 1935 there were 32,464 deputy returning officers and 32,464 poll clerks.

Formerly, revisions of the electoral lists were made each year, but under the act of 1938, new voters' lists are to be prepared only before a general election. Each returning officer appoints two enumerators for each urban polling division, and one enumerator for each rural division. The preliminary voters' lists are prepared by these officials in house-to-house visitations, and are revised in urban areas by a designated judge, and in rural areas by the enumerator himself.

LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR OFFICIAL ELECTION EXPENSES

Unlike the practice in the United States, Canadian election laws are careful to provide for a uniform tariff of fees for election officers, and to require uniform accounting and control features for all election expenses.⁵ In this way both the Chief Electoral Officer and the Auditor-General may keep complete control over election expenditures.

In urban areas, electors cannot vote unless their names are on the voters' list. Rural citizens, however, may vote, after swearing to their qualifications, even though they were not previously registered.

It is the duty of the Returning Officer of each electoral district to provide sufficient ballots for each polling station in his area. The list of urban polling divisions being closed, it is necessary to provide only a small margin of ballots over and above the number of names on

2. I am indebted to the Auditor-General of Canada and to the Chief Electoral Officer for making the necessary records available for this study.

3. Further studies in the field are needed in order to observe the practical application of election regulations in the constituencies.

4. *Statutes of Canada*, 1938, 2 Geo. VI, Chapter 36.

5. See the *Tariff of Fees for Election Officers* made in pursuance of section 60 of the *Dominion Elections Act*, 1938.

the list, since only the spoiling of ballots needs to be provided for. But in rural polling divisions a large margin must be allowed, since the lists are not closed and the supply of ballots must be such as to permit voting by voters whose names do not appear upon them. The election instructions sent to all Returning Officers recommends that five per cent more ballots than registered voters is sufficient in urban areas, but at least twenty per cent more should be printed for rural districts.

All ballot papers are furnished and numbered by the Dominion government. Every sheet must be returned from the printer, even though several may have been spoiled in the printing.

The election law requires the printing expenses to be actually and reasonably incurred, subject if considered advisable, to the approval of the King's Printer. Each claim must be certified by a voucher and also by a sample of the work done.

Broad provisions for absent voting have not existed in Canada. But persons employed on railways, vessels, air-planes, or other modes of transportation, and certain other persons such as commercial travellers and members of the naval, military, air and mounted police forces of Canada, are permitted to vote at advance polls held in their election districts on three days of the week before polling day. If such a voter is obliged to be absent on election day from his home precinct because of the nature of his employment, he may obtain from the proper election official a certificate which entitles him to take part in any advance poll in the electoral district.

Voters' lists are obtainable by citizens at cost. Candidates may secure as many as twenty copies free of charge. One additional free copy for each polling division in the electoral district is also furnished to each candidate.

It is possible to analyse in detail the cost structure of Canadian elections from the Auditor-General's reports.

Tables I and II are prepared to show the cost of elections per inhabitant, per registered voter, and per vote cast in

the two elections of 1930 and 1935. The figures are arranged by areas so that comparisons may be made.

With such adequate figures before us, it is only necessary to point out a few facts of general significance. First of all, it should be clear that parliamentary elections are conducted most economically in the eastern provinces. In the larger, more sparsely settled western provinces, especially in the Yukon Territory, average election costs are considerably higher. The variations in costs are obviously due to a number of factors. Registration costs are different in different areas. House-to-house visitations are only made in urban areas. We find therefore that the percentage of registered electors and the percentage of votes cast is much smaller in the provinces where the costs are relatively highest. We find also from the report of the Chief Electoral Officer that in the 1935 election there were in Canada 561 polling divisions in which less than 20 votes were cast. In many of these precincts fewer than five ballots were cast and in a dozen or so polling stations the election officials must have been the only voters since but one or two votes are recorded.

Compared to registration and election costs in the United States, the average Canadian figures are small. But the wide variations among provinces and among items of expenditure should be the basis for a scrutiny by the appropriate officials. For the average citizen it is interesting to note that a general election is not a cheap pastime. It costs millions of dollars, sometimes as much as 54 cents a vote. The whole paraphernalia of registration and voting which must be carefully set up and administered is costly, and election machinery should be watched for economies, as well as for irregularities.

It is also interesting to note that registration costs are not excessive. Even though it does cost nearly a million and a half dollars to prepare a new list of voters in Canada, the average cost per registered voter compares favorably even with the most efficient and econ-

omical systems to be found in a few cities in the United States. The Dominion average of performance, in other words, is high when compared to other registration systems. This is true despite the fact that a careful enumeration is made each time new lists are prepared, and despite considerably more printing

waste and extravagance which occur in jurisdictions where local election officers print their own ballots and pay their own prices for election workers without regard to any national scale.

Another fact which explains why Canadian election costs are below those in the United States is the continuity of Cana-

TABLE I
AVERAGE ELECTION COST 1930 GENERAL ELECTION

	Population 1931	Registered 1930	Votes Cast 1930	Election Cost 1930*	Average Cost Per		
					Inhabitant	Reg. Voter	Vote Cast
Ontario.....	3,431,683	1,894,624	1,364,960	\$ 735,866	\$.214	.388	.54
Quebec.....	2,874,255	1,351,585	1,029,480	534,041	.186	.395	.52
Nova Scotia.....	512,846	275,762	268,727	98,058	.19	.355	.36
New Brunswick.....	408,219	207,006	186,277	68,251	.167	.329	.36
Prince Edward Island	88,038	59,519	46,985	15,410	.175	.327	.26
Manitoba.....	700,139	328,089	235,192	135,888	.194	.414	.58
Saskatchewan.....	921,785	410,400	331,652	202,222	.219	.49	.61
Alberta.....	731,605	304,475	201,635	163,072	.223	.535	.81
British Columbia....	694,263	333,326	243,631	170,391	.245	.51	.70
Yukon.....	4,230	1,719	1,408	4,689	1.11	2.73	3.33
Canada—Total.....	10,367,063	5,153,971	3,922,481	\$2,127,893	\$.205	.41	.54

*Includes registration cost figures.

TABLE II
AVERAGE ELECTION COST 1935 GENERAL ELECTION

	Population 1931	Registered 1935	Votes Cast 1935	Election Cost 1935	Average Cost Per		
					Inhabitant	Reg. Voter	Vote Cast
Ontario.....	3,431,683	2,174,188	1,608,244	\$ 357,644	\$.104	.164	.22
Quebec.....	2,874,255	1,575,159	1,162,862	265,350	.092	.168	.23
Nova Scotia.....	512,846	304,313	275,523	48,414	.094	.159	.18
New Brunswick.....	408,219	229,266	177,485	34,288	.084	.149	.19
Prince Edward Island	88,038	61,641	53,248	8,808	.10	.165	.14
Manitoba.....	700,139	377,733	284,589	68,736	.098	.182	.24
Saskatchewan.....	921,785	451,386	347,536	107,897	.114	.239	.31
Alberta.....	731,605	368,956	241,107	90,424	.117	.245	.37
British Columbia....	694,263	382,117	292,423	79,361	.123	.207	.27
Yukon.....	4,230	1,805	1,265	2,755	.65	1.53	2.18
Canada—Total.....	10,367,063	5,918,207	4,452,675	\$1,063,681	\$.10	.18	.24

than is required in the United States. One significant item in the relatively low Canadian registration and election costs is the item for printing—an item which, because of its size, still brings joy to the hearts of political printers in the United States. The centralized control over such matters in Canada accounts for the absence of much of the

dian election personnel. Not only are the top administrative posts out of politics and on a basis of permanent tenure, but the same is true with the returning officers. With permanent, experienced officials, it is natural to find lower costs than under a system where patronage appointments are made to election posts.

In conclusion, one should repeat that

the merit of the Canadian administration of elections, especially in the matter of costs, is due principally to two factors: one is the centralized and uniform control over registration and election matters in the hands of the Chief Electoral Officer; and the other is the emphasis which is placed on a regular, uniform

schedule of fees and expenses administered under the control of the Chief Electoral Officer and the Auditor-General. The combination of centralized control, economical standards, and experienced personnel has given Canada a relatively economical and satisfactory election administration.

Highway Costs and Motor Taxation

By GILBERT WALKER

I

COMPETITION between highway carriers and railroads has become a universal condition—certainly it is found in all developed communities. Everywhere there have arisen the same awkward problems, among them the question of highway finance. A highway is an expensive piece of equipment, and costs a great deal to construct and maintain. In many Provinces of the Dominion, and States of the Union, debt incurred to finance highway construction accounts for the larger part of public liabilities, and annual expenditure upon upkeep is the heaviest charge upon the public revenues.

The highway is owned by a public authority, and it is used by many classes of people, and for many purposes; by the general public going about their ordinary affairs, by government, by the private motorist and the business man, and by the commercial motor operator. It is furnished originally for all, and primarily for none, though the elaborate construction of the modern highway has been undertaken mainly for motor traffic. All citizens, and all vehicles, have equal rights upon the highway, and none have a prior claim. Out of this there arises

the problem, what share of the common costs of the highway shall be assigned to each party?

The case of a railway raises the same problem though in a different form. A great proportion of the expenditure of a railway, costs of constructing and maintaining track, road-bed, and so on, is overhead, incurred in common for all traffic carried. These charges are parallel to the costs of building and keeping up highways. Unlike the highway user, the railway both owns the track and carries the traffic. Railway managements can be, and often are, expected to undertake the whole outlay involved in working the service. It is their usual practice to distribute the common overhead costs of the railway between the different classes of traffic carried, rather than between the several types of vehicles in which it is conveyed, the plan upon which highway authorities are proceeding.

II

As political and economic circumstances dictate, the highway authority may consider, as in Great Britain, that motor traffic is a proper object of sumptuary taxation, and raise each year a much greater revenue from the motor user than is being spent upon the road; or in sparsely settled areas, the government may deem it desirable to encourage the growth of highway communications by levying in taxation very much less than what is being spent. There is no com-

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gilbert Walker is Lecturer in Economics, Faculty of Commerce, University of Birmingham. He has specialized in the economic problems of transportation and has made a thorough study of the subject in Europe as well as in the United States where he held a Rockefeller Fellowship at Harvard University. In 1939 he was invited by the provincial government of Nova Scotia to make a survey of the highways situation in this province.