

NEWSLETTER

CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

V O L U M E I I N u m b e r 2 . - N O V E M B E R 1 9 7 2

Hopefully, we have by now worked out some of the technical problems of producing the NEWSLETTER and you will really receive this copy in November. This means that the Newsletter is back on schedule and will next be appearing in early January. We would like to have suggestions for topics to be discussed in the January number so please send in ideas or, better still, articles !

This number deals basically with two subjects, the decisions reached at the October meeting of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Political Science Association and the beginning of a listing of political science data holdings in Canada. These two areas cover the kind of material we hope to continue presenting in the Newsletter, both material related to the CPSA and material related more generally to political science in Canada. We hope this is the role the membership of the CPSA sees for the Newsletter.

A final reminder: the Newsletter will appear in early January, March and May of 1973. The deadline for material for these issues is two weeks before publication; that is, mid-December, mid-February and mid-April.

*All correspondence
relating to the newsletter
should be directed to the editor:*

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P A R L I A M E N T A R Y I N T E R N S H I P S P R O G R A M M E

On Friday, October 13th, 1972 the Board of Directors of the Canadian Political Science Association agreed to a new financing formula for the Parliamentary Internship Programme. Under this formula, a group of Canadian Life Insurance Companies including, Canada Life, Confederation Life, Crown Life, Great-West Life, Imperial Life, London Life, Manufacturers Life, Mutual Life and North American Life will supply \$75,000 per year to pay for the Parliamentary Interns' stipends for a three-year period 1973-76, subject to annual review. It was agreed that public statements concerning the programme should be subject to mutual agreement. The Speaker of the House of Commons has been asked to supply the administrative budget. This formula ensures the continued independence of the programme. Accordingly a new programme has been announced for 1973-74. The deadline for receipt of applications is January 15th, 1973.

James Ross Hurley.

From the Minutes of the CPSA Board of Directors Meeting
Ottawa, October 13, 14, 15, 1972.

F E D E R A L E L E C T I O N S U R V E Y

John Wilson, Chairman of the Interim Committee on Federal Election Survey Research, presented a written report to the Board listing the members of his committee and their planned operations. Of immediate concern is the refusal of the Canada Council to make a grant to any one of the three individual proposals to do a survey of the 1972 Federal Election. When informed of this on September the 20th, Wilson and Laponce, given the general responsibilities of the Canadian Political Science Association's Election Survey Committee, circularized departments of political science to establish their degree of interest in a survey of this election and whether or not the departments could find funds in their budgets over the next four years to purchase the data from a possible survey. Up to the moment of the Board meeting, twenty departments had replied. All were very anxious that the survey be carried out, and \$17,000 had been promised. However, the meeting agreed that although the offer of money was an excellent indicator of interest, it would be impossible for the Association to compromise the principle of general and immediate availability of the data by restricting it to those departments which at the present moment could find some money in their budget. To try and overcome the lack of a 1972 survey the following motion was proposed:

" . . .that the Association make an application to the Canada Council for funds to study the 1972 Federal Election by administering the Canadian Political Science Association core questionnaire, with the addition of such questions as seem appropriate to the circumstances; that the Association appoint its president and the chairman of its Interim Committee on Federal Election Survey Research to prepare an application to the Canada Council in the name of the Association for this purpose; and that the above persons supervise the collection of the data and that as soon as the data is in machine readable form, it be made public."

Wilson, Ouellet, 14 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions.

During the debate on this motion, Wilson said the intention was to use the Canadian Political Science Association core questionnaire in conjunction with questions representing particular theoretical concerns proposed by members of the Canadian Political Science Association Interim Committee and

the teams which had made the original proposals for surveys of the 1972 Federal Election. In addition, a small number of questions would be added concerning the particular nature of the 1972 Election. The Board gave Wilson and Laponce the authority to make the necessary selection among those questions which would be proposed. Wilson had already made preliminary contacts on the administration of a possible survey and it was his opinion the survey could be in the field by the end of November if the Canada Council gave its approval by the end of October.

Wilson and Laponce stressed that the main objective of the Association is to maintain the time series and to collect the needed data. They are not proposing major research hypotheses nor are they personally planning to work on the data. Trent said his information from the Canada Council was that they were not convinced such sums of money should be spent on data gathering alone. The Canadian Political Science Association's arguments will have to be very strong. The Secretary-Treasurer also suggested that, judging by recent comments by Canada Council personnel, we may be getting to the time when social science associations may have to act as a consultant on areas of strength and weakness in the discipline and resultant needs and priorities. Not only does the Board's decision on election survey establish a precedent for the Association acting on political science research concerns in Canada but the Board should see the seriousness of its action in the light of possibly committing the profession to a research priority. Meekison, while not denying the possible necessity of declaring research priorities in the future, did not feel the present decision constituted a statement of priorities. The Association is in a last minute crisis where no data is going to be produced in this election and as this type of research is abnormally expensive and can only be financed by the Canada Council, the Association must put its weight behind the grant request to make sure the data becomes available. Meisel stressed the arguments that feedback from the profession shows a definite desire for the data; that we are not only collecting political science material but are, in fact, recording Canadian history; that it is mainly elections that provide critical political data; and that all developed countries are now doing this type of research on a regular basis. In the ensuing discussion, as to the degree of the Association's responsibility in this particular case, the argument was made that we are

setting a precedent but the Association must commit itself in order to get the Canada Council to commit itself to election survey and our current decision is only a stop-gap in an emergency situation.

Hodgetts summarized the discussion by proposing that the application to the Canada Council must include:

1. a statement of the need of the data;
2. a recounting of what the Association is trying to do to co-ordinate Federal Election Survey research and to put the discipline's house in order in this regard;
3. that our aim is to make sure in the future, fund granting bodies will not be subjected to scattered competition for survey financing;
4. that there is evidence of interest throughout the profession, but not necessarily of the whole, for obtaining the election data;
5. the Canada Council should be aware that our decision may be indicating a priority for future political science research, but when our Interim Committee on Federal Election Survey research has completed its work, we will have a clear understanding of our priorities and methods for future study of elections;
6. in the meantime, we should not break the time series by letting the 1972 election pass by unanalysed.

It was agreed that Wilson and Laponce will put together the extra questions to be added to the core questionnaire from various sources, that they will warn those submitting questions that not all of them will be accepted and that they will be authorized to make appropriate selections. Wilson stressed that the main objective is to preserve the time series and not to service research interests of members of the Association.

It was also agreed that it will be specified in the application to the Canada Council that Laponce and Wilson are responsible for the study and will oversee the research and collection of data until such time as the data has been made available in machine readable form.

REPORTS FROM C.P.S.A. COMMITTEES

The C.P.S.A. Committee on Canadian Content, composed of Phyllis Clarke, Danny Drache, Harold Kaplan, Donald Smiley, and the chairman Paul Fox, has had several meetings to commence its work. It has set as its target date for submitting its report the annual meeting of the Association this coming August. The Committee has agreed that it will study only facts and figures and not make recommendations on policy. It will attempt to obtain data re nationality and citizenship for staff members and post-graduate students in departments of political science in Canadian universities. Existing studies will be utilized to secure information but the Committee also hopes to send questionnaires to departmental chairmen and C.P.S.A. correspondents to get data about the two groups mentioned above. The Committee is considering also trying to secure relevant information about the curricula in departments to determine the extent of Canadian content in courses, the number of Canadian courses, and the courses taught by Canadians and non-Canadians. Several other possible areas for investigation have been submitted to the Committee but it has not yet had time to discuss and reach a decision on these topics.

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The Board of Directors has established a committee to investigate the desire for, the logistics of and the financing of small meetings of Political Scientists in various areas of the country. The Committee is under the Chairmanship of Susan McCorquodale, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's. Miss McCorquodale is anxious to hear from any member of the Association who has been involved in meetings of this sort, or from members who want to participate in such meetings. The idea is to take advantage of possible Canada Council funds to bring together twenty to twenty-five specialists in a particular field in a University for a 2-3 day meeting. The Committee would like some idea of how many meetings of this sort have taken place in recent years, an assessment of their effectiveness and, secondly, to have some indication of the interest of members of the Association. Perhaps we should be considering changing the format of the Annual General Meeting. Miss McCorquodale urges members to write to her as soon as possible.

