

THE SELECTION OF PARTY LEADERS IN BRITAIN AND CANADA

THE SELECTION OF LEADERS IN THE
MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES OF
BRITAIN AND CANADA SINCE 1945

by

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: A description of the leadership
selection methods employed by the Conservative and Labour
Parties in Britain and the Progressive Conservative and
Liberal Parties in Canada since 1945. The methods of
selection are illustrated by reference to case studies.
The examination of the processes of leadership selection is
especially related to Robert Michels' theories concerning
oligarchy and the leadership of political parties.

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INTRODUCTION

The years since 1945 have witnessed a series of changes in the process by which party leaders are selected in both Britain and Canada.

Apparently there has been an effort to make the selection of party leaders more democratic in the sense that a larger number of party members are allowed to participate.

In Britain this extension of the leadership electorate in the Conservative Party to the total number of M.P.'s is a significant change.

In Canada the number of delegates of both parties who participate in conventions has been substantially increased. Yet despite this apparent democratisation there remains a suspicion on the part of many people that the oligarchy who determined the selection in the past continue to do so today under a democratic facade. In short the "iron law of Oligarchy"¹ frequently still prevails within the parliamentary party.

Michels, who wrote in 1913, was particularly concerned with the mass party and its rise in Europe although he extended his attention briefly to the United States. He stated the problem in these terms: "the political party is founded in most cases on the principle of the majority, and is founded

¹R. Michels, Political Parties 1915, translated by E. and C. Paul (New York: Dover Books, 1939).

always on the principle of the mass".²

Despite these principles the political party remains in the hands of an oligarchy and party democracy is merely according to Michels, "a specious democratic mask".³ As conclusive evidence for this view Michels refers to the socialist parties of Europe:

The appearance of oligarchical phenomenon in the very bosom of the revolutionary parties is a conclusive proof of the immanent oligarchical tendencies in every kind of human organisation which strives for the attainment of definite ends.⁴

We shall see that this is partly the case even on occasion within the British Labour Party although the "iron law" is less rigid here than in the other parties under consideration.

Michels considered that, "Democracy is inconceivable without organisation",⁵ and the organisation is always rooted in an oligarchy.

The free election of leaders by the rank and file presupposes that the latter possess the competence requisite for the recognition and appreciation of the competence of the leaders.⁶

²R. Michels, op. cit., p. 3.

³Michels, Political Parties 1915, p. 7.

⁴Ibid., p. 11.

⁵Ibid., p. 21.

⁶Ibid., p. 87.

Michels adheres to a theory in which the oligarchy proposes and disposes with the leadership, the mass lacking the necessary skill to do so. There is one particularly interesting feature of Michels' theory which is of relevance to the field under study. This is what certain writers have designated the "accordion theory" of Michels.⁷ This is the process by which the oligarchy absorbs an aspiring leader from the rank and file and through a metamorphosis makes him one of their own so completely that he accepts their values. What Michels calls a "réunion des élites" takes place.

Each leadership process which takes place on outwardly democratic principles is in reality according to Michels a spectacle of the leadership either united in its choice of leader or more often divided into its own sections. These oligarchical sections try to recruit the party rank and file to their respective sides in an effort to win control of the party.

"It is not the masses which have devoured the leaders, the chiefs have devoured one another with the aid of the masses."⁸

⁷Michels, Political Parties 1915, p. 177.

⁸Ibid., p. 165.

Michels sees the struggle for party leadership in terms of the "Détenteurs d'emploi et les chercheurs d'emploi".⁹ In following the course of party leadership struggles we shall see that this is often the case.

There are certain instances where Michels' theory is less adequate to account for the leadership selection process and its results. In the British Conservative Party and in the Liberal Party of Canada the outgoing leader has, with certain exceptions, virtually appointed his successor. This has prevented party strife but at the same time seems to have caused, until recently, relatively little opposition from the rest of the oligarchy.

The selection of Edward Heath in Britain and Pierre Trudeau in Canada, men to whom the oligarchy were rather opposed at first, is also difficult to explain according to the Michels' theory. It has been suggested that in its desire for the fruits of office an oligarchy will accept an "outsider" who will win the election, and try to absorb him later, rather than lose altogether.

Michels' theory of democracy and leadership rejects the representative idea of leadership and sees any division between leaders and led as proof of the impossibility of

⁹Michels, Political Parties (1915), p. 169.

democracy as such. Although many political scientists owe a considerable debt to Michels; Maurice Duverger, Robert McKenzie, Sigmund Neuman and Seymour Lipset have all seen his theory as over-deterministic in the light of modern research. Lipset expresses the matter succinctly when he says:

Michels is over deterministic for seeing only the restrictive side of bureaucracy and failing to see it also as a means through which groups may achieve desired objectives.¹⁰

Elsewhere Lipset has written, "The sheer problem of numbers makes any form of politics, not rooted in organisation, utopian".¹¹

Basically the lot of the leadership of a political party may be defined as: "improving the standards of the members and not to provide self government".¹²

Leadership must be responsive in some measure to the rank and file party members or the members will desert the leaders. Michels assumed a gulf between the leaders and the led, the latter being an amorphous, ignorant and unstructured mass. In reality there are of necessity many links between the leadership and the followers, and increasingly so in the parties under consideration. The idea of a stratararchy developed by Eldersveld has some relevance here

¹⁰S. Lipset, Introduction to R. Michels Political Parties (Chicago: Anchor Books, 1924), p. 27.

¹¹S. Lipset, Introduction to M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties (Chicago: Anchor Books, 1964), I, xxi.

although the greater degree of party centralism in Britain and Canada makes the idea less applicable than in the United States.

At this point a justification for the countries chosen for study is apposite. Each of these countries practices a similar form of party and parliamentary government. However in the methods of leadership selection is probably found one of the most marked differences. Canada has been influenced in her leadership selection methods by the United States. Britain appears to be moving closer in some respects to the United States political system, notably in the growth of prime ministerial government which is drawing even closer to presidential government.¹³ Are there therefore indications that Britain's leadership selection process is doing the same?

The four parties considered here represent a spectrum which varies from extreme oligarchy in the case of the Conservative Party in Britain until 1964, to the Canadian Convention in which rank and file participate actively in the leadership selection process.

¹²Introduction to M. Ostrogorski, op. cit., p. xxi.

¹³This is the theme of F. W. G. Benemy, The Elected Monarch (London: Harrap, 1965).

Neither the Liberal Party in Britain nor the New Democratic Party in Canada expect to obtain the position of governing party in the immediate future. The leaders of these parties function more in the nature of spokesman for the parliamentary group rather than as chiefs of a powerful party with prospects of the premiership. Accordingly these parties in the selection of their leaders are not yet subject to the problems encountered by the major parties.

The dilemma which Michels indicated in 1913 of the apparently democratic but in reality oligarchic selection of leaders had previously been observed and recorded by Ostrogorski who describes in detail the convention method which permits the rank and file of the party to select a leader in the era of mass party.

The humble voter appeared none the less to remain absolute master of the situation, since it was from him that the members of the convention had their mandate. They were his envoys, his clerks.¹⁴

The convention method has become the chosen method of Canadian political parties in leadership selection. Yet even as Ostrogorski describes the first United States Convention which selected Clay, he is led to write, "The

¹⁴M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties, trans. J. Clark (London: Macmillan, 1922), II, p. 56.

candidate was marked out beforehand".¹⁵ Yet Ostrogorski, as Austin Ranney has pointed out, could not conceive of democracy save as a society of isolated individuals all prepared to devote their time and energy to the national discussion of public affairs. We shall see that has almost invariably been the situation in Canadian Liberal Party conventions.

Duverger, a more recent writer, duplicates Michels in many of his observations. He also agrees that "the leadership of political parties is democratic in appearance and oligarchic in reality".¹⁶

In 1956, when Duverger's work appeared, the democratic aspect of parties in Britain and Canada was certainly more apparent yet the oligarchic essence prevailed.

Parties [to gain mass support] must in consequence take the greatest care to provide themselves with leadership that is democratic in appearance. Practical efficiency however drives them hard in other directions.¹⁷

Michels is partly supported by Duverger in his qualification regarding socialist parties, although he sees the need to modify some of Michels' over-simplistic

¹⁵Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties, p. 71.

¹⁶M. Duverger, Political Parties, trans. B. and R. North (2nd ed.; New York: Wiley, 1965), p. 133.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 134.

assumptions.

In recruitment of leaders [socialist parties] are far more democratic than others yet find correspondingly greater difficulty in finding new leaders. They, in order to safeguard their existence, must follow the pattern of others.¹⁸

In regarding the leadership struggle and convention of the post-war period Duverger writes, "Splitting does not take place at the level of the masses but at the level of the leaders".¹⁹ This follows Michels' idea that the oligarchy attempts to recruit the support of the masses to its various factions when waging an internal leadership struggle, yet it also implies that the mass gain influence thereby in the selection of the leader and are less ignorant than Michels' supposed.

One of the most recent attacks upon Michels' theory has been that of Eldersveld. He sees the party system not in terms of oligarchy but rather in terms of a "stratarchy". (A phrase borrowed from Kaplan). In the "stratarchy" different groups beginning from the grass roots and proceeding to the state and national level influence the party according to their size and importance within it. Basically however, every party member has some place and therefore some degree

¹⁸M. Duverger, op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁹Duverger, Political Parties, p. 174.

of influence upon party policy and the selection of leaders.

The pluralist theory of democracy removes much of the pessimism which Michels brought to political science.

Parsons has written:

The political system provides generalised leadership for the larger social system in setting and attaining collective goals, and that is acknowledged by interested organisations who supply generalised support to different leadership groups in the expectation of the approval of their special interest measures.²⁰

Thus although the fundamental truth of Michels that, "the division of labour within organisation results in the delegation of effective power to a small group of leaders who are able under most conditions to remain in power"²¹ remains valid, the lessons to be derived from it may be not basically of a pessimistic nature in the light of pluralist democratic theory.

Eldersveld is especially critical of the "accordion theory" of Michels. He agrees however that basically a political party is a conflict system within the élites modified by a "reciprocal deference structure".²² Basically Eldersveld is a behavioral pluralist and therefore cannot

²⁰S. Lipset, op. cit., p. 33.

²¹Ibid., p. 32.

²²S. J. Eldersveld, Political Parties: A Behavioral Analysis (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964), p. 11.

accept Michels' thesis. He calls Michels, "unimaginative and empirically barren".²³ Despite these criticisms Eldersveld has rendered the Michels' thesis into readily comprehensible form and for that he is to be accorded credit. Michels may be defined as seeing:

1. Single élite class.
2. A high rate of interpersonal communication within that class.
3. A careful control of entry of individuals into the élite.
4. A social congruent élite unrepresentative of members.
5. A highly congruent class in terms of élite class goals.²⁴

It should be noted that Eldersveld fails to stress the splitting of the élite which is so vital a part of Michels' theory.

Guttsman in his work, The British Political Elite gives further relevant comments on the inevitability of élitist leadership in a democratic party system. He stresses, however, a real extension of the group from which the leadership is selected although not necessarily an extension of the group carrying out that selection. "A democratic political system cannot make élites superfluous, though it may

²³Ibid., p. 48.

²⁴Ibid., p. 121.

ensure their rapid and regular circulation".²⁵ Unfortunately, perhaps, that circulation lacks regularity and rapidity within the party system. Basically Guttsman sees one very significant change in that:

The contemporary political élite, unlike its predecessor a century or two ago, is no longer anchored so firmly in a particular stratum of British society, and its members can more justly be called the natural leaders of their society than at any time before.²⁶

One of the major points arising from the period since the war will be the extent to which these changes are reflected in the leadership selection process. The leaders are more representative today than ever before.

Epstein also regards recent trends as betokening a change in the leadership selection process towards a slightly more democratic system. Yet there is still a tendency for the oligarchy to reassert itself. Epstein sees that, "the class distinctiveness of a given party's leadership becomes an index of the class consciousness of the nation in which the party functions".²⁷

²⁵W. H. Guttsman, The British Political Elite (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1963), p. 15.

²⁶Guttsman, The British Political Elite, p. 25.

²⁷L. D. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 25.

Michels' theory of political parties and the influence exerted by the oligarchy is generally considered to be rather too simplistic an explanation today. As we have already seen, Eldersveld in particular takes Michels' to task for his rigid application of the "iron law".

Michels' theory, which was a reaction to the growing influence of Marx in Western Europe, was based upon the radical view of democracy. It posited the view that representation would be on a fairly equal basis permitting each individual an equal share in the selection of the government of the party leader. It is a situation in which the will of the majority prevails irrespective of the political skill or position of the members composing that group.

However it is axiomatic that certain members of a mass party, particularly those who are representatives of the party in the legislature, will possess more power and experience than the ordinary rank and file party member. If the party is in power, the members of the cabinet will possess greater power than the backbencher. This almost inevitably means that an élite group will have far greater influence in the selection of a party leader than the mass or majority of the party consisting of the rank and file. However this does not mean that the oligarchy will be as anti-democratic as Michels supposed.

It is necessary to consider the nature of democracy

within the parliamentary system before the anti-democratic nature of Michels' theory and the reality as it exists today may be fully appreciated.

Today in an age of mass party there appears to be a movement towards increasing representation of party groups in the leadership selection process, in which a relationship between leaders and followers is developed. Within certain limits it is possible to use the degree of representation of M.P.'s and rank and file party members as an index of the democratic nature of the party. This statement obviously needs to be qualified by relating it to the national political context and the amount of good faith with which the system operates. According to Henry Mayo, oligarchy, as described by Michels, is: "only devastating to a primitive or direct type of democratic system and scarcely affects a representative system".²⁸

As we have already seen it is the extent and freedom of that representation which is so important a factor in the democratic nature of the political party. Gouldner in Studies in Leadership provides a sound basis on which to approach the problems of democracy and oligarchy. He places

²⁸H. B. Mayo, An Introduction to Democratic Theory (New York: O. U. P., 1960), p. 220.

representation in a primary position when describing the necessary qualities of democratic leadership linking this with popular control of policy making. Leadership must also adhere to the "political freedoms",²⁹ permitting freedom of speech and of expression. As we shall see, instances of these freedoms being violated have occurred in Britain and Canada since 1945. Gouldner concludes: "in short a political system is democratic to the extent that the decision makers are under effective control".³⁰

The measure of this control may be apportioned in a variety of ways. Basically Michels' theory may be qualified according to the pluralist view of democracy. Within a party equal participation and representation is clearly impossible. In a sense it is more difficult than in a political system to introduce democracy. Within the leadership selection process representation should be accorded to the various groups in some measure equal to their importance to the party. The British Conservative party has been especially reluctant to do this, the Canadian parties less reluctant to do so. Open participation amongst the groups contending for the leadership should be

²⁹L. Gouldner (Editor), Studies in Leadership (New York: Harper Bros., 1950).

³⁰Ibid., p. 60.

permitted, a quality not always present. We shall see the oligarchy on occasions adhering very closely to the "iron law" but at other times a remarkably democratic leadership contest may occur especially when there exists fairly equal divisions within the party.

A healthy political party requires open élites and a circulation of groups leading the party to provide for implementation of party members wishes. In both Britain and Canada there has been a failure to pursue this path at certain periods since 1945 with disastrous results for the parties concerned. There is also the aspect of leadership related to the group as a whole. Kutner expresses the problem in this fashion:

Democratic leaders, to be really democratic, should homologously reflect the group they serve and must set aside personal interests and those of some other sub-groups.³¹

Obviously this is a difficult standard to meet but it does reflect the need for all groups in the party to be permitted to compete openly in the leadership selection process. It demands that the leaders who emerge shall be as non-partisan as possible in their conduct of inter-party matters.

³¹B. Kutner, "Elements and Problems of Democratic Leadership" in L. Gouldner, op. cit., p. 459.

The source material for this survey inevitably relies heavily upon accounts given in the Press. Much of the material under study is too recent to have received detailed examination by political scientists. It is noteworthy that even during the course of collecting material for this thesis a Liberal Convention took place in Canada which appeared to differ from the previous trends.

There is today no definite indication that Trudeau received the active support of Pearson or was in the nature of his nominee as the previous Liberal leaders had been.

A heavy reliance has been placed upon biographies and autobiographies of figures involved in the leadership contests. These inevitably are heavily biased. Material for British selection processes as well as analysis was more prolific than its Canadian counterpart. The existence of a national press in Britain and a larger number of political journals meant this was the case.

It is perhaps important to mention the significance of selecting a leader when the party is in office as opposed to its role when in opposition. Clearly the selection of a Prime Minister by the party rank and file in Canada or the M.P.'s in Britain is in some measure alien to the nature of democracy with the few party members rather than the mass of the electorate selecting a national leader. A party leader who is synonymous with the national leader possesses a vast

patronage which he would not command as a mere party head.

Michels' "iron law" has been qualified since the beginning of the twentieth century. His pessimistic conclusions do not appear to have been totally borne out by subsequent events. Political parties in Britain and Canada have in part responded to the pressures of mass society. The mass have a greater influence than in the past in the selection of party leaders. Yet once again the political scientist must acknowledge the basic truth of Michels' theory that organisation is vital to Western democracy and that effective power is delegated to a small group of leaders. Sometimes these leadership groups develop aims and operate in a fashion at variance with the professed ideals of the party and its membership. Pluralist democratic theory has accepted much of Michels' work but has extended upon it. The fetters of the "iron law" have yielded considerably today.

*Did the
conclusion?*

CHAPTER II

BRITAIN

The Selection of Leaders in Britain

In Britain the two major political parties have until recently (1965) used widely different methods in selecting their party leaders. The Labour Party saw its leader originally merely in terms of a spokesman for the parliamentary group. This concept was changed first by Ramsey MacDonald and later by Clement Attlee. However, after examining the selection process of the party it will be possible to estimate to what extent power has resulted in the development of an oligarchy within it. From the very first a ballot of M.P.'s has been used to select the leader but the votes of these men, although less easily swayed than those of Canadian Convention delegates, are still subject to the influence of an élite group.

The Conservative Party, until the new selection method of 1965, has openly displayed the influence of an oligarchy in selecting the leader. In effect the outgoing leader in the period under consideration merely recommended his successor to the monarch after prior consultation with certain members of the party hierarchy. The fact that the Conservative Party has remained in power over most of the period now under review made such a process possible.

Liggett summarises the distinguishing features of the

two parties prior to 1965 when he says, "It has been normal, when speaking of the Labour Party to emphasise democracy and when speaking of the Conservative Party to emphasise leadership."¹

Benemy describes the process by which a leader is theoretically appointed when the party is in power:

Strictly the Prime Minister (although a different complexion is placed on the selection when the party is out of office) is chosen by royal prerogative. In fact the Queen must choose the man who is the undoubted selection of the party.²

In Britain the leadership of a party whether Labour or Conservative, has been regarded as a matter concerning the M.P.'s rather than the rank and file. This has curtailed the adoption of anything approaching a convention system. Certainly in theory (and perhaps remarkably) the Conservative Party have permitted the representatives of the rank and file a part in the selection process. In reality the case is very different.

Blondel says that in the development of mass parties:

According to elitist critics, leaders are not really 'chosen' by the rank and file, but tend to be selected by a narrow group and often perpetuate themselves in office. Politics are not the result of the concensus of opinion of the local militants but the fruit of the personal whims of the oligarchs.³

Yet in the same way that the Labour Party has tended

¹E. Liggett, British Political Issues (New York: Pergamen Press, 1967), p. 108.

²F. W. G. Benemy, op. cit., p. 22.

³J. Blondel, Voters, Parties and Leaders (London: Penguin, 1963), p. 84.

towards oligarchy. "The Conservatives have had to accept the demands of the rank and file to a moderate extent."⁴ The idea of hierarchy and deference has for long muted and retarded such demands but they are perhaps slowly being conceded to today.

The table clearly indicates that Cabinet Ministers are drawn from a predominantly middle class or aristocratic background. Within the Labour Party the large number of middle class Cabinet Ministers is significant in the period. Since the party became more than a mere Parliamentary pressure group.

DIAGRAM 1

BACKGROUND AND OCCUPATION OF CABINET MINISTERS, 1916-55:

Class Background	Conservative	Labour	Total ⁵
Aristocracy	31	4	38
Middle Class	64	25	108
Working Class	3	36	4+
Education: School			
Elementary	4	33	38
Grammar	18	12	37
Eton	32	3	37
Harrow	13	2	15
Rugby	6	-	6
Winchester	3	4	8
Other Major Public Schools	11	4	9
Other Public Schools	6	4	21
Other	7	3	15
Education: University			
None	30	36	76
Oxford	44	11	59
Cambridge	18	7	28
Other	8	11	23

⁴J. Blondel, op. cit., p. 247.

⁵W. H. Guttsman, op. cit., p. 106.

CHAPTER III
THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

The Conservative Party Leadership Selection Process

The Conservative Party leadership selection process has outwardly at least, in practice if not in theory, undergone a revolutionary change in the period under review. In 1963 the words spoken by Captain Pretyman M.P. in 1911 still described the machinery of leadership selection in the Conservative Party.

Great leaders of parties are not elected, they are evolved. . . .I think it will be a bad day when we. . .have solemnly to meet to elect a leader. The leader is there, and we all know it when he is there.¹

A failure in this unique evolutionary process half a century later was needed to convince the party that this was wrong.

Nominally since 1937 the leader has been elected by Conservative and Unionist members of the House of Commons and House of Lords, all prospective Conservative Parliamentary candidates and the Executive Committee of the National Union.²

However since all but one of the Conservative leadership selection processes to be considered here took place whilst the party was in office in effect the outgoing leader has, after initial consultation, recommended his

¹R. T. McKenzie, British Political Parties (2nd ed.; London: Mercury Books, 1963), p. 52.

²Ibid., p. 22.

successor to the monarch.

The advice of Bagehot has long been the practice of the Conservative Party: "Certain persons are by common consent agreed to be wiser than other, and their opinion is, by consent, to rank for much more than its numerical value."³

In the Conservative Party leadership selection process these "certain persons" were a highly select group, not always easy to define. Basically the oligarchy is centred on the Cabinet or Shadow-cabinet with special prominence given to the leader. The party chairman, chief whip and certain prominent backbenchers, such as the chairman of the 1922 Committee,⁴ as well as selected peers are also included. The power of the different members of this group varies according to each situation. Anthony Eden's words in 1928 until the advent of Edward Heath under the new leadership selection system were a proud boast:

We have not got democratic government today. We have never had it and I venture to suggest to Honourable Members opposite that we shall never have it. What we have done in all progress of reform and evolution is to broaden the basis of oligarchy.⁵

³W. Bagehot, The English Constitution (London: World's Classics, 1955), p. 185.

⁴Guttsman, op. cit., p. 18.

⁵Ibid., p. 368.

Basically the Conservative Party is a hierarchy with the leader having the greatest voice:

The policy of the Conservative Party descends from on high through the mouth of the leader himself and the Annual Conference (unlike the theoretical powers of the Labour equivalent) can do no more than comment on it. This may be centralism carried too far but it works.⁶

Since 1945 efforts to change the party image, although not the essence of the party machine, in the shape of the Maxwell Fyfe Report (1948) and the Selwyn Lloyd Inquiry have taken place. In October 1963 Humphrey Berkeley, M.P. for Lancaster, suggested that the leader should be selected by, "a ballot of M.P.'s, representatives of the National Union and some Peers."⁷ If adopted this would have made the party more "democratic" than its Labour rival and the old oligarchy reacted violently.

Lord Poole, of a more moderate opinion said,

We have got to find a method by which we can bring the Conservative Party into tune with the second half of the Twentieth Century without slavishly following the Constitutional Organisation⁸ of the Labour Party, which does not suit us.

After much heart searching the M.P.'s, as in the Labour Party, were permitted to select their leader.

⁶ Editorial, Political Quarterly (July, 1960).

⁷ Liggett, op. cit., p. 120.

⁸ Manchester Guardian (July 10, 1963).

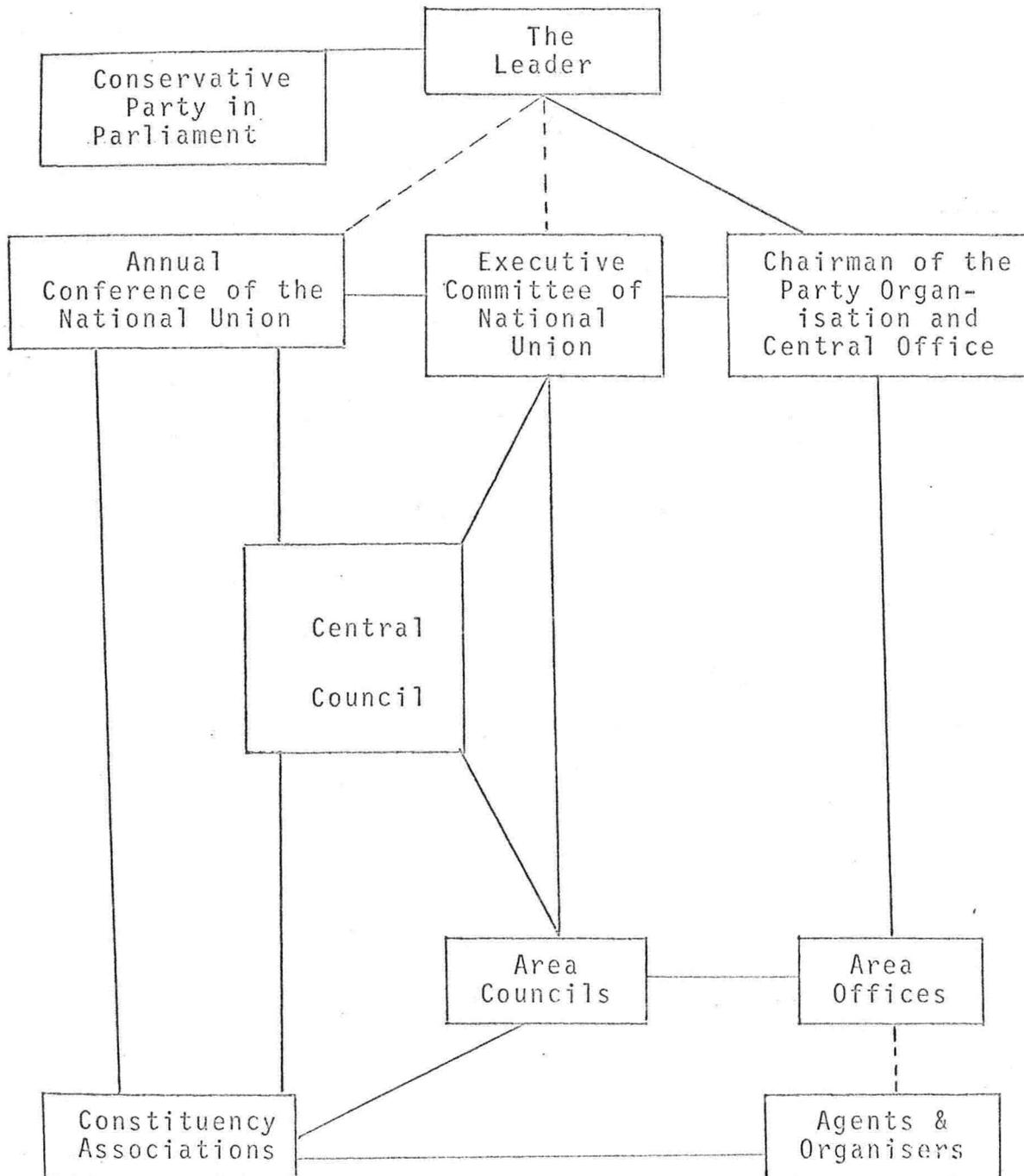
Gerald Kaufman described this revolution in the Conservative Party in terms which reflected the nature of the past and the hopes of the future:

Slowly, rather reluctantly, but with a stately inevitability, the Conservative Party is preparing itself to adopt a system whereby the next leader of the party will be democratically elected--the transference of the Conservative Party from an absurd oligarchy. . .into a fully contemporary political organisation.⁹

It is the purpose of the next chapter to illustrate the extent to which this "absurd oligarchy" controlled the leadership selection process in the past and the changes which have been implemented to serve the party in the future.

⁹ New Statesman (November 20, 1963).

DIAGRAM 2
THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY¹⁰



¹⁰Robert McKenzie, *British Political Parties* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 186. McKenzie's table provides ample evidence of the power and dominance of the Conservative Leader.

DIAGRAM 3

BACKGROUND OF CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP GROUPS 1951-61¹¹

<u>Educational Background</u>	<u>Ministers 1951 (%)</u>	<u>1922* Committee (%)</u>	<u>Ministers 1961 (%)</u>
Eton and Harrow	36	22	35
Other Top 20 Public Schools	34	22	35
Other Public Schools	12	15	9
Other Schools	15	34	24
Women (not classified)	3	7	--
TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	34	27	36

The predominance of aristocratic public school elements today within the Conservative Party remains a major factor in Leadership.

*Officers and 12 Commons Members, Total No. 18. 1957-1959.

¹¹W. H. Guttsman, op. cit., p. 313.

The Selection of Sir Anthony Eden 6-4-55

The selection of Eden was the model selection in the eyes of the traditional Conservative Party both in terms of the personality selected and the method by which the leader evolved. For many years Eden had been regarded as the heir apparent to the Churchill throne. Certainly he was more of an aristocrat than Bonar Law or Neville Chamberlain but the party wishes to forget the image these men have created. In 1955 the choice of Eden by Churchill became reality and rank and file and oligarchy acclaimed that decision. The manner in which Chamberlain had assumed the leadership of the party equally well applied to Eden nearly twenty years later: "It (the leadership) had come to me without my raising a finger to obtain it, because there is no one else."¹² McKenzie characterises the selection of Eden "as uneventful as any in party history".¹³ The events which characterised this "normal" process of selection by the oligarchy were these. Churchill decided that the time had arrived for him to relinquish the leadership and accordingly made it widely known that he would advise the Queen that Eden should succeed him.

¹²R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 45.

¹³Ibid., p. 579.

Shortly before his resignation Churchill sent a letter "to the Chairman of his Constituency association at Woodford recommending Sir Anthony Eden as his successor."¹⁴ The rank and file were thus informed from the summit of the party oligarchy of the decision that had been made.

On April 6th, one day after Churchill resigned, Eden kissed hands and became Prime Minister. At a meeting of the party on April 21st he was unanimously acclaimed as party leader. The Guardian described the membership of that meeting presided over by Lord Salisbury, Conservative leader in the Lords, in these terms:

The 320 Conservative members of the House of Commons, about 280 Peers who had taken the Conservative Whip, the 250 officially adopted Parliamentary Candidates and the 150 members of the Executive of the Conservative and Unionist Association.¹⁵

The key to the process of selection was its imposition from the top upon a party that was wholly willing to accept Eden as leader.

A short time later when the Suez Crisis had occurred and Eden's popularity had declined from 70% in the Autumn of 1955 to 40% in the Spring of 1956¹⁶ the party began to wonder if its choice had been correct. Illness gave Eden the

¹⁴ The Times (April 7, 1955).

¹⁵ E. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 583.

¹⁶ The Times (April 7, 1955).

opportunity to resign on January 9th 1957. The machinery for selecting a leader ground into action again and the oligarchy prepared for a fresh triumph.

The Selection of Harold Macmillan 10-1-57

The succession to Eden was achieved with far less unity than the Conservative Party had accomplished in 1955. Rifts appeared in the oligarchy which were to help to discredit the selection process.

R. A. Butler, was seen as the inevitable successor by the Economist, Mail, Express, Herald, Mirror and Chronicle, although the Times, Telegraph and Guardian, perhaps sensing the power of the Tory establishment, made no firm predictions.¹⁷ Butler was not one of the party "establishment", the aristocratic faction of the party.

Lord Salisbury, in what appears to be a unique act in the Tory leadership selection process and Lord Kilmuir, invited each member of the Cabinet to express a preference for a new leader. Thus in an age when the Lords had sunk to insignificance, the Tory leader in the Lords and the Lord Chancellor became final arbiters in the selection of a party leader. Butler, who had earned the enmity of the party right wing, was doomed. McKenzie describes how he was finally

¹⁷R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 587.

defeated:

There is no doubt that Butler's bitterest opponents organised a campaign by word of mouth and by telephone urging those opposed to his succession to notify the party whips immediately.¹⁸

There is little doubt therefore that when the Queen saw Salisbury and Churchill, who advised her to send for Harold Macmillan, that the oligarchy had scored a notable triumph. The majority of the M.P.'s and certainly the rank and file hoped for Butler but the oligarchy in which the right wing aristocrats predominated had chosen otherwise. The Times reflected the confused situation in which the Tories found themselves. It said:

Sir Anthony Eden was elected leader of the Conservative Party in 1955, after he had succeeded Sir Winston Churchill as Prime Minister and this customary procedure is likely to be followed when his successor at 10 Downing Street is chosen. . . .The choice of who shall lead the government rests with the Queen. . . .Practically the choice is Butler or Macmillan.¹⁹

The emphasis placed upon the Queen making the choice is some indication that no clear successor had in fact emerged. Sir Ivor Jennings goes even further than the Times when he says, "The party was prepared to follow wither Mr. Butler or Mr. Macmillan and was ready to accept the Queen's choice."²⁰

On January 10th 1957 Macmillan became Prime Minister

¹⁸R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 590.

¹⁹The Times (January 10, 1957).

²⁰I. Jennings, Party Politics (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), I, 28.

amidst the outcry of certain M.P.'s and rank and file members.²¹ Thomas Iremonger, elected as an M.P. in 1954, wrote to the editor of the Telegraph on January 12th:

You sir, say that soundings were taken among Conservative back-benchers. If you are right and some backbenchers were sounded out and others ignored, then here is an intolerable oligarchy and I protest against it.²²

Dame Irene Ward in a letter to the Telegraph three days later replied, "Mr. Iremonger has been singularly out of touch with his colleagues if he has been unaware of the 'Empire-building' during the weeks after the Suez intervention."²³ The revolt, small as yet, had begun against the "absurd oligarchy" controlling the party.

Macmillan's Cabinet was a further reflection of the oligarchical forces which had helped him into office. It was calculated that of the 85 members of the government 35 were related to him by marriage including 7 of the 19 in the Cabinet.²⁴ Hollis states, "there had been nothing like it since the Duke of Newcastle!" Certainly the government did not represent the members of the rank and file and in

²¹R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 589.

²²Daily Telegraph (January 12, 1957).

²³Daily Telegraph (January 15, 1957).

²⁴C. Hollis, Why Conservative? (London: Penguin, 1964), p. 220.

any case many spurned such representation.

The Times commented upon the controversy stirred up amongst the M.P.'s over the processes of consultation in a most remarkable article. On January 11th the editorial carried these words: "Clearly it is almost an impossibility for the youngest members of the dominant party to be consulted." In a sense Sir William Haley, editor of The Times appears to have been a party to, if not a part, of, the Conservative leadership oligarchy. On January 10th The Times said, "No arrangements have been made by the Conservative Party to elect a new leader. The Queen will decide to whom she will entrust the forming of a new government."²⁵

On January 22nd the rifts in the party were papered over and Macmillan officially acclaimed as leader. The Times, again supporting a line which could not but benefit the oligarchy wrote, "the Conservatives can claim their electing body is broadly based." As we have seen it was an electing body without power. The oligarchy was thus triumphant and a slightly more democratic leadership selection process postponed for nearly a decade.

²⁵The Times (January 11, 1957).

The Selection of Lord Home 19-10-63

The selection of Lord Home, Sir Alec as he was later to become, displayed the Conservative oligarchy in public disarray. The events of 1963 finally discredited the system by which Conservative leaders evolved.

There is little doubt that pressure was exerted upon Macmillan following the Profumo Crisis by the party oligarchy. Macmillan was forced to relinquish the leadership before the group of men from whom he was to choose his successor had evolved sufficiently. As early as June 19th 1963, the Evening Standard asked, "How will they choose Macmillan's successor? Democratic Election--or settled in the Clubs around St. James?"²⁶ In the same article the Standard began to predict the outcome and the Mirror forecast "Butler and Maudling will be favourites."²⁷

Perhaps a little ironically illness allowed Macmillan to lay down the reins of office at a time when the pace was becoming excessively hot in the same manner as Eden had done in 1957. The Times aptly remarked: "The reign (of Macmillan) ends in crisis as it began."²⁸

On October 9th 1963 Macmillan's illness, perhaps

²⁶Evening Standard (June 19, 1963).

²⁷Daily Mirror (June, 19, 1963).

²⁸The Times (October 10, 1963).

fortuitously, revealed itself and he decided that the moment had arrived to bow to the pressures which were building up in the party on the leadership question. The situation and timing of his resignation was rendered unique by the fact that it coincided with that orgy of Tory eulogies, the Annual Conference at Blackpool. McKenzie has pointed to the unique nature of this occasion. "The 1963 Conference more closely resembled an American nominating convention than any previous conference of any British Party."²⁹

For the first time a leader had failed to evolve and the choice was further complicated by the new Peerage Bill which permitted peers to renounce their titles according to a decision of a Joint Parliamentary Committee on Lords Reform of April 18th 1962.³⁰ As we have seen peers remain an important part of the Tory oligarchy and 1963 was to confirm them in such a position.

Macmillan had himself wished to see a peer, Lord Hailsham, succeed him. In fact the divisions of the oligarchy forced him to make another choice, also a peer. The Times, in an article which was practically a post mortem on the 1965 leadership struggle, presented this opinion.

Throughout this week it has been clear that Mr. Macmillan has been ready to resign the moment the consensus of party opinion on his successor as leader

²⁹ R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 594 d.

³⁰ R. S. Churchill, The Fight for the Tory Leadership (London: Heinemann, 1964, p. 86).

became clear. Was there a change of plan and if so why? The question has some point since there is a persistent impression in usually well informed quarters that Mr. Macmillan at first wanted to keep the way open for Lord Hailsham.³¹

This is only part of the tale of the great split in the Tory oligarchy much of which has been recorded by the participants themselves. Macleod, writing in the Spectator, saw Macmillan's action in a different light.

From the first day of his Premiership to the last Macmillan was determined that Butler, although incomparably the best qualified of contenders, should not succeed him. He (Macmillan) thought that three members of his Cabinet who were in the House of Commons, apart from Butler were capable and of sufficient seniority to be considered: Maudling, Heath and 'Myself'. None emerged with a decisive lead.³²

This description of the situation by Ian Macleod differs substantially from that given by Randolph Churchill in his book, The Struggle for the Tory Leadership. According to Churchill, Hailsham was regarded by Macmillan as his successor. Never before have such divergent views of a Prime Minister's attitude been written. They are evidence of the rift in the oligarchy. A passage written by Churchill states that Macmillan sent for Hailsham as early as September 30th 1963 and told him to be prepared to accept the leadership. This then was the confused situation which prevailed as the

³¹ The Times (October, 10, 1963).

³² The Spectator (January 17, 1964).

³³ R. S. Churchill, op. cit., p. 70.

delegates assembled at Blackpool.

At Blackpool the "prospective" candidates attempted to recruit support from the delegates. Michels comments were never more applicable. Anthony Howard and Richard West have described that conference in these terms: "The devious ottoman intrigues of the party would be changed into a kind of political beauty contest."³⁴ Hailsham certainly made his mark. "If enthusiasm and ecstasy of the rank and file were the test of a Tory leader Hailsham had made it."³⁵ The popularity of Hailsham amongst the rank and file was even regarded with suspicion by the other members of the oligarchy. In the event perhaps the least beautiful member of the party oligarchy was to win and certainly although Hailsham was "the party darling" it remains a fact that "Conservatives do not elect their candidates by convention".³⁶

All the members of the oligarchy save Hailsham were distressed by the mood of the conference and agreed "the sooner the arena was transferred to the calmer, more rational atmosphere of London the better it would be for everyone".³⁷

Below the horizon lay Home's rise to power but as yet few recognized it as even a possibility. However, as

³⁴A. Howard and R. West, The Making of the Prime Minister (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965), p. 68.

³⁵R. S. Churchill, op. cit., p. 70.

³⁶Ibid., p. 74.

³⁷Ibid., p. 75.

early as December 1962 Anthony Howard had written these most prophetic words:

As a serious contender for the Tory leadership the Foreign Secretary (Home) is probably more dependent than anyone else on Mr. Macmillan: If the Prime Minister wishes to be succeeded by the Earl of Home (to be hailed no doubt as the great commoner of all time) he can be; but to bring it off--and to dish poor Mr. Butler-- he will have to get the timing of his own resignation exactly right.³⁸

Macmillan it appears had all but done this by 1963.

It was left to Home to read the announcement of Macmillan's resignation to the Conference at Blackpool, a carefully conceived plan on the part of Macmillan. This message concluded with these words:

In these circumstances I hope that it will soon be possible for the customary processes of consultation to be carried on within the party about its future leadership.³⁹

From the closing of the conference the leadership struggle amongst the oligarchy became intense. Only one factor clearly emerges, that of Macmillan desperately striving to make amends for his failure to groom a leader by reuniting the warring factions of the oligarchy.

On October 14th Macmillan despatched the following instructions to the unfortunate Butler.

1. Lord Dilhorne (Lord Chancellor) shall poll the Cabinet.
2. The Chief Whip (Redmayne) shall sound the opinion

³⁸ New Statesman (December 14, 1962).

³⁹ R. S. Churchill, op. cit., p. 78.

of Members of the House of Commons including Junior Ministers.

3. Lord St. Aldwyn (Chief Whip of the House of Lords) shall sound opinion in the House of Lords: namely those who regularly take the Whip including Junior Ministers.

4. Lord Poole⁴⁰ and Mrs. Shepherd and Lord Chelmer shall sound the constituency parties as best they can.⁴¹ According to Randolph Churchill when the results came in Home was seen to be ahead marginally on the first choice. This is difficult to believe when reference is made to the poll reproduced here from the Telegraph and when the comments of the newspapers and politicians are considered. Churchill claims,

There was no decision made in a smoke filled room. Everyone in the party had an opportunity to make his or her views felt, and the result of the canvas had been decisive. There was no election, no precise counting of heads. It was Tory democracy in action.⁴²

In fact much of the canvassing of opinion was a hollow sham.

Reginald Bevins,⁴³ a Minister in the Conservative Government but clearly not a member of the inner oligarchy which chose Home, gives a rather different account from that of Churchill.

Like many others I saw the chief whip in Downing Street and gave him my preferences--Maudling and Butler in that order. Long pause. We looked at

⁴⁰ Party Chairman.

⁴¹ R. S. Churchill, op. cit., p. 26.

⁴² Ibid., p. 134.

⁴³ Post Master General.

DIAGRAM 4

Daily Telegraph Poll - October 9, 1963

If Mr. Macmillan were to retire, who would you like to see take his place?

	Conservative %	Labour %	Liberal %	Rest %
Hailsham	18	7	11	1
Butler	15	15	16	5
Maudling	11	8	16	7
Heath	9	4	3	6
Macleod	5	4	5	4
Lloyd	5	4	5	4
Home	3	1	2	1
Don't know	33	53	38	64

each other. "What about the peers--Alec and the other one?" No pause. I said, "Not at any bloody price." That was an unfortunate answer, all carefully recorded on Martin Redmayne's foolscap.⁴⁴

One Junior Minister at least felt that the oligarchy around Macmillan was waging a polite but desperate battle against the more progressive claims of R. A. Butler and Reginald Maudling on the other wing of the oligarchy. On October 17th the various candidates in the race suddenly realised that Macmillan was going to act contrary to the wishes not only of the rank and file but of most M.P.'s. Powell, Macleod, Maudling, Errol and Aldington now tried in a desperate bid to stop Home by giving unqualified support to Butler. The Times, which was not privy to the Macmillan plot, was confused by the issue, as was most of the press. Its headline on the day of Home's election proclaimed, "The Queen may send for Mr. Butler today".⁴⁵ Macmillan had taken advantage of a divided oligarchy to impose his own choice upon the party in the failure of a natural leader to emerge. When Home first went to the Palace his action in asking for a day of grace in which to assess the measure of its support was a clear indication of the rift in the oligarchy. The Times expressed surprise at the choice.

⁴⁴R. Bevins, The Greasy Pole (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), p. 143.

⁴⁵The Times (October 18, 1963).

The Cabinet and much of the party in the Commons look with disfavour on the evolution of a leader through the complicated and electorally dubious procedure of disclaiming a peerage and fighting a by-election.⁴⁶

Lord Curzon had been rejected because of his peerage. Home, because of agitation by the Labour Party for new legislation, was able to take the position which Curzon could not.

Butler, when he knew of Macmillan's choice, agreed to serve under Home. Perhaps his lack of determination to fight was an indication of his unsuitability for the leadership. His action caused those who had thrown their support behind him earlier to accept Home as leader on 19th October.

The oligarchy by its division had discredited what was in any case an archaic and feeble system of leadership selection in the hands of an ailing Prime Minister. Disparities between the feelings of the party as a whole and the opinions of the group that had backed Home were easy to see. Was it pure coincidence that the only man asked to canvas opinion who was not an Etonian was Martin Redmayne, in any case a strong Home supporter?⁴⁷

Much of the comment made by the Labour Party evoked a strong response and agreement from the electorate. Oligarchy

⁴⁶ The Times, (October 18, 1963).

⁴⁷ I. Macleod, The Spectator, (January 11, 1964).

had always been a basis of Tory democracy but the selection of Home seemed unjustifiable even in this most aristocratic party. Mr. Harold Wilson was ready to react publicly when the opportunity came:

This is counter revolution. After half a century of democratic advance, of social revolution, of rising expectation, the whole process has ground to a halt with the Fourteenth Earl.⁴⁸

Home had been a bad compromise candidate in the event of no clear leader evolving Macmillan himself had considerable misgivings. On the day of Home's first visit to the Palace he said, "It will just cause ghastly confusion if we delay."

One definite result emerged from all the confusion. There was an obvious need to remake the image of the party, to make it appear more democratic even whilst the oligarchical rule persisted. Bevens saw the problem in these terms:

The one outstandingly vital thing the Conservative Party must face if it is to regain power is that the enormous gap socially, financially and in every way--that exists between those who lead the party and those who support it in the country must be narrowed.⁴⁹

Effectively Bevens was echoing the advice of Eden thirty years earlier.

Although the assembled party acclaimed Home as

⁴⁸Howard and West, op. cit., p. 147.

⁴⁹R. Bevens, op. cit., p. 157.

leader on 11th November there were many present who felt that the oligarchy had betrayed them. Wilson's comment is most apposite:

The message that has gone out to the world is that in 1963 the Government Party in Britain selects its leader and the country's Prime Minister through the machinery of an aristocratic cabal.⁵⁰

The Selection of Edward Heath 27-7-65

Intrigues to replace Home began almost as soon as he was inaugurated as party leader. He was never regarded as more than a temporary expedient although cynics pointed to the fact that Attlee had been cast in a similar role.

Shortly after Home's accession a new method of leadership selection was decided upon in which justice and democracy would "be seen to be done". It was never contemplated that a convention should be adopted although as we have seen Humphrey Berkley had suggested that the rank and file should have voting representatives in the leadership selection process.⁵¹

By February 1965 the Conservative Party had adopted a new method which operated in a manner in many ways similar to that used by the Labour Party. The Chairman of the 1922 Committee, usually a prominent member of the oligarchy, would conduct a ballot amongst all Conservative M.P.'s. After nominations had been sent in the first ballot would be held.

⁵⁰The Times (October 21, 1963).

⁵¹See page 25.

If no candidate emerged with a 15% lead overall a second ballot would be conducted. On this second ballot new nominations could be made. A clear majority was sufficient on the second ballot to select the leader. If no such candidate emerged a third ballot, in which the first three candidates of the second ballot competed, would be held. In this ballot first and second choices would be marked on the ballot. The man at the bottom of the poll would have his second choices allocated as indicated and thus "Tory Democracy" would select its leader.⁵²

According to the Observer:

The Party was unwilling to commit itself to Labour's straightforward majority system, believing that the method adopted should aim to produce a broad consensus. The alternative vote was ruled out on the ground it did not allow for the nomination of compromise candidates on the first ballot.⁵³

More than a trace of oligarchy was preserved in the system. Bevin's attitude was held by several more radical Conservative M.P.'s. "The new method of selection lends itself to abuse. There should be a single vote of M.P.'s and the candidate who gets the most votes should be party leader."⁵⁴

W. J. M. Mackenzie looking at the new selection process from the stance of an observer rather than a competitor has made his own observation,

⁵²A. Shrimpsley, The First 100 Days of Harold Wilson (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 140.

⁵³The Observer (March 25, 1965).

⁵⁴R. Bevin, op. cit., p. 156.

It is quite possible that the office of Conservative leader in Britain will be filled by weaker men now that it is to pass by formal rules of election, not by an informal process of combat and co-operation.⁵⁵

This is perhaps difficult to reconcile with the selection of Eden and Home as leaders, results which had discredited the old system. As we shall see election does not prevent close struggles in the background between competing factions of an oligarchy.

The Tories implemented the new method of selection fairly soon after its adoption. Home, having been blamed for an election defeat which had surprised everyone by its narrow margin, decided to resign as soon as a reasonable opportunity presented itself. In a sense the result of that election had dictated the change in the leadership selection method. Butler and King have observed that,

The extraordinary circumstance of his (Home's) emergence in 1963 had continued to cast doubts on the legitimacy of his position. Perhaps if he had won the election this would not have been so.⁵⁶

Although the new election machinery had been assembled Home wanted a measure of consensus in the party before relinquishing the leadership. Basically he regarded the the election method as a means of legitimising the "emergence" of his own nominee. On March 28th 1965 The Observer wrote,

⁵⁵ W. J. M. Mackenzie, Politics and Social Science (London: Pelican, 1967), p. 211.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 45.

Weighing everything together, he was still at that moment convinced that although in some respects he might be considered to have become a liability, it would be quite wrong from the party's point of view to go until there is a manifest consensus on the successor.⁵⁷

Rapidly waning support for Sir Alec amongst the constituency members where he had once been so popular (amongst the good Tory Ladies) began to give him increasing concern. An article in the Conservative Sunday Times according to Butler and King, finally decided him. When Rees Mogg could write "The Right Moment to Change",⁵⁸ Sir Alec's position was becoming almost untenable. "Whether Sir Alec hoped that Mr. Heath would emerge as his successor must remain a matter for conjecture," wrote Butler and King. "It seems highly probably that he did."⁵⁹

Thus it was that on Tuesday July 27th 1965 the Conservative Party held what The Spectator called "The Party's cautious flutter with formalised democracy in choosing their leaders."⁶⁰

Surprisingly enough all worked with smoothness and

⁵⁷ The Observer (March 28, 1965).

⁵⁸ Sunday Times (July 7, 1965).

⁵⁹ A. Butler and D. King, The British General Election, 1966 (London: Macmillan, 1966), p. 46.

⁶⁰ The Spectator (October 30, 1965). "Editorial"

despatch.⁶¹ The results on the first ballot reflected Sir Alec's wishes.

Heath	150
Maudling	133
Powell	15 ⁶²

Sir Alec's "favourite minister" was elected with an overall majority and the "lunatic fringe" of the party powerfully discredited.

Although democracy was seen to be in action the size of Edward Heath's majority and the falling off in support for Maudling left little doubt that Sir Alec had been working "behind the scenes". Most news reports had anticipated a victory for Reginald Maudling. Only "the voice of the oligarchy", The Times and also The Mail, supported Heath editorially.

Maudling, after the first ballot, withdrew, and Heath in effect became leader. For the first time since 1911, a significant date in Conservative Party history, a leader had been selected when the party was out of office. Before the contest took place the majority oligarchy had decided to support Sir Alec's "favourite minister". In an article entitled "How Heath Pulled it Off",⁶³ published in the

⁶¹The Spectator (October 30, 1965).

⁶²Howard and West, op. cit., p. 120.

⁶³The Spectator (July 30, 1965), p. 142.

Spectator, Alan Watkins identified a "Magic Circle" around Heath consisting of Peter Thorneycroft, Christopher Soames, Quentin Hogg, Heathcoat Amory and Selwyn Lloyd. Ian Macleod also decided to support Heath who was also fortunate in having a group of "Young Turks" working for him. There were Peter Walker (M.P. Worcester), Anthony Kershaw (M.P. Stroud) and Peter Emery (M.P. Reading).⁶⁴

Maudling, in contrast, lacked the backing of a powerful oligarchical group. The fact that Heath had at one time been Chief Whip was probably also valuable. Lord Lambton, William Clark, John Wall, Philip Goodhart, Patrick Wall (who supported Maudling) hardly compared with the strength of Heath's backing.⁶⁵

On August 2nd Edward Heath was acclaimed as leader. In the words of the Spectator, "It is now plain that the process itself, and the result it produced, represent a revolution in the Tory Party".⁶⁶ Certainly the Tories had broadened the oligarchical basis of their party structure. Trappings of democracy still hide the "iron law". Just how much influence it continues to exert time alone can tell.

In twenty years it appears that the Conservative party has undergone a revolution in its leadership selection

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵The Spectator (July 30, 1965), p. 142.

⁶⁶Ibid.

methods. No longer is the whim of the outgoing leader alone sufficient to select a successor. Although the leader still holds a great deal of power in nominating his successor the Parliamentary Party is now the final arbiter. Characteristically the new method of selection still attempts to strive for the emergence of new leaders by party consensus and "gentlemanly" agreement. Already voices are calling for an even wider group of party members to be permitted to take part in the selection process. Probably for the present the Conservative Party will remain, however, a slightly reformed party but still the most oligarchic of those considered in this survey.

CHAPTER IV
THE LABOUR PARTY

The Labour Party Leadership Selection Process

The concept of leadership in the Labour Party is certainly, in appearance at least, far more democratic than its Conservative counterpart. At its inception the Labour Party regarded its leader as merely a spokesman for the Parliamentary group. This idea changed as the Labour Party drew closer to the corridors of power. Officially the Labour Party leader is subject to annual re-election except when he is Prime Minister. The re-election of the leader was in fact regarded as automatic until Harold Wilson challenged Hugh Gaitskell, an event that will be considered later.

The leader of the party is ex-officio a member of the National Executive Committee and is free to attend any sub-committee of the Executive Committee. Since the Margate Conference of 1953 the Deputy Leader (also annually elected) is also an ex-officio member of the National Executive.¹

It is perhaps interesting to note that in the period under consideration the Deputy Leader has not succeeded the Leader although he has always attempted to do so.

There are only two leadership selections to consider in the Labour Party and both of these have taken place in a

¹H. Morrison, Government and Parliament (3rd ed.; London: O.U.P., 1964), p. 140.

period when the party was out of office. The fact that the leader has not been able immediately to confer any special positions upon his supporters, the Shadow Cabinet (Parliamentary Committee) being subject to election, gave him less patronage than his Conservative counterpart.

An oligarchy within the Labour Party exists but is more broadly based than in the Conservative Party. Within the Labour Party intellectual prowess is an accepted qualification for leadership. The Conservative Party in contrast, has until recently balanced intellectual skill with inherited leadership skill, the aristocratic element of the party being so defined. Basically it consists of the Cabinet, or Shadow Cabinet, with special powers accruing to the outgoing leader and also the deputy leader.² In addition the influence of trade unions, although difficult to assess, is an ever present factor. Finally certain backbenchers and peers, by respect of their special positions, will wield considerable influence. The editor of the Daily Mirror and the Herald (now the Sun) are not without a small measure of power.

Immediately after the Labour Party, under Clement Attlee, came into office, Harold Laski as chairman of the Party, unsuccessfully attempted to prevent Attlee from accepting

²Also the Chairman of Party. One year appointment. A power when the party is in office.

the post of Prime Minister until the Parliamentary Party had met and formally chosen a leader.³ Morrison claimed the right to do this under the rule introduced in 1933 which would also have subjected the leader to a three member committee consisting of the Party Secretary and two other P.L.P. members. This committee would have determined the formation of a Cabinet and Attlee would himself have been subjected to decisions of a Cabinet majority.⁴ All this machinery for party democracy set up after Ramsey MacDonald's "Great Betrayal" was rejected by Attlee who carried the majority of the party, for the first time a majority government, with him.

Ironically, Attlee, in setting up Labour democracy in Britain, imposed oligarchy, or at least élitism on the party. Michels was verified here at least. If the Conservatives could be criticised for choosing their leaders from Eton the Labour Party might be chastised for its "Oxford leadership".⁵ Perhaps some of Attlee's élitism could be deduced from the manner in which he announced that he had been charged with forming a government. According to McKenzie, "he never consulted anyone before assuming office".⁶ It was only later that critics began to indicate that this was against the spirit of the party. McKenzie explains the acquiescence to

³H. Pelling, A Short History of the Labour Party (London: Macmillan, 1961), p. 95.

⁴Ibid., p. 77.

⁵Gaitskell and Wilson.

⁶R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 331.

Attlee's action in this fashion.

The Labour leader's formal powers appear to be much more limited than those of the Conservative leader, but like the latter, he becomes, from the moment of his election as leader, a potential P.M. It must be emphasised that this above all else is the principle source of his influence and authority.

The change in the nature of Labour Party Cabinets since 1924, examined by Guttsman, and the contrast between the original powers of the leader and his strength today are eloquent reminders of Michels' law.

When Attlee succeeded Churchill as Prime Minister he was no longer leader of a mere "parliamentary group" but head of a sophisticated party in which "the appearance of the oligarchical phenomenon"⁷ was rapidly making itself apparent.

⁷See page 3.

DIAGRAM 5

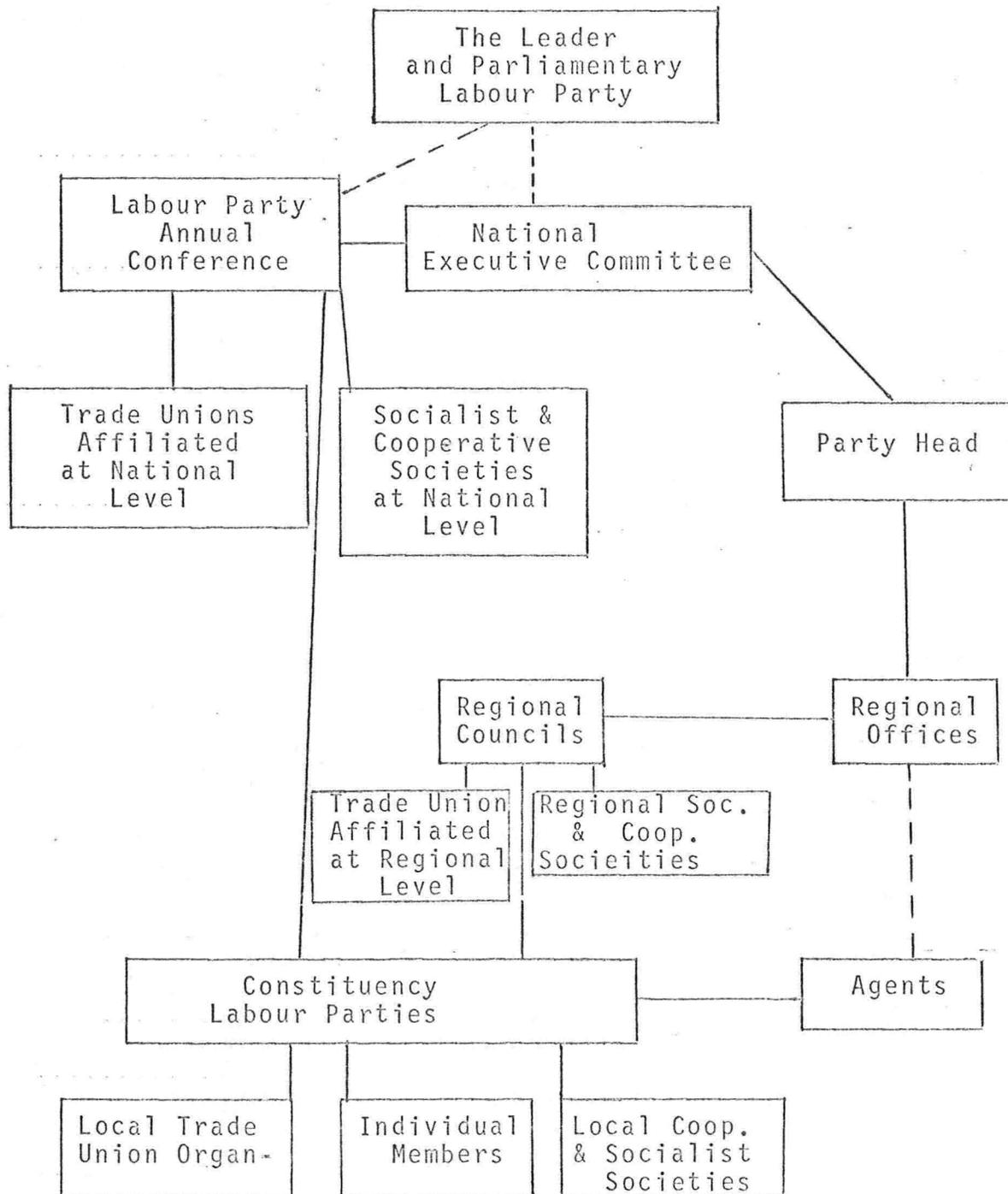
Working Class Background of Labour Party
Cabinets and Shadow Cabinets⁸

		<u>Total Number</u>	<u>Working Class Members</u>
1924	Cabinet	20	11
1929	Cabinet	14	8
1935	Shadow Cabinet	14	7
1945	Cabinet	20	10
1950	Cabinet	18	9
1951	Shadow Cabinet	14	3
1955	Shadow Cabinet	14	4
1959	Shadow Cabinet	14	4
1964	Cabinet	23	5

Guttsman's table clearly indicates the manner in which Cabinet power has shifted from a working class base as the Labour Party has itself become more powerful. A comparison between the cabinet of 1924 and that of 1964 is particularly revealing.

⁸W. H. Guttsman, op. cit., p. 7.

DIAGRAM 6
THE LABOUR PARTY⁹



⁹R. McKenzie, *British Political Parties* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 487. The power of the leader in the Labour Party is tempered (theoretically) by the Parliamentary Party and Conference. cf. *The Conservative Party*, p. 23.

The Selection of Hugh Gaitskell 14-12-55

By 1955 Attlee had decided that it was time for him to depart from the position of leader of the Labour Party. In 1951, after Aneurin Bevan's resignation, Attlee's leadership had been at issue but as only approximately one fifth of the party had supported the rebel the leadership had remained in Attlee's hands. When Attlee resigned on December 7th 1955 he was regarded as a father figure in the Labour Party, an impression heightened by his subsequent elevation to the peerage.

The election which took place on December 14th was the fourth in the history of the party. There is little doubt that Herbert Morrison fervently hoped to succeed Attlee who was equally determined that he should not. The result was to give Hugh Gaitskell and the right wing the largest margin of victory in the history of the party. A degree of manoeuvring took place behind the scenes in which Gaitskell offered not to contest the leadership if Bevan would do likewise. The inevitable result would have been a victory for Morrison who could have been little more than a temporary leader. Perhaps the selection of Gaitskell is an indication that in the "revolutionary parties" there is a greater degree of freedom from oligarchical control.

The result of the first ballot was conclusive.

Gaitskell	157
Bevan	70
Morrison	40 ¹⁰

This selection of Gaitskell had taken place relatively smoothly although as we have seen there was one last minute attempt to bargain between two of the contenders in the hope that a party consensus would be achieved. Gaitskell was not prepared to see Bevan become leader although perhaps he overestimated Bevan's support.¹¹ The result might have been a less decisive victory for the right however, if Morrison had been its sole representative.

Roy Jenkins has described "The Gaitskell Era as a continuous dialogue with the party of which he was the head".¹² It was also a dialogue punctuated by efforts of the left wing to remove the leader for Gaitskell is to date the only leader of the Labour Party who after being confirmed in office was subsequently challenged for re-election. The failure of the left wing to do so is in some measure to be attributed to the power of the leader and the oligarchy which develops around him. "Bevan at 58, because of his fiery personality, saw the much younger Gaitskell advance to the position of

¹⁰L. Smith, Harold Wilson (London: Fontana, 1965), p. 174.

¹¹W. T. Rodgers, Hugh Gaitskell (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), p. 122.

¹²Ibid., p. 116.

leadership with the support of Attlee, Morrison and the Trade Unions".¹³ This is one identifiable oligarchy in the Labour Party since 1945.

Gaitskell's attitudes were not calculated to heal the split between right and left in the party. On his accession to the leadership this pronouncement upon nationalisation incensed many left-wingers,

We have to show that nationalisation is related to economic security, we have to show that it is related to greater equality and to a new spirit in industry, that it is a necessity for economic planning.¹⁴

Many members of the left wing did not think that the virtues of nationalisation required cautious display. In their view the virtues spoke for themselves.

In the next election the defeat of the Labour Party was duly attributed to the split in the oligarchy or as King has described it in more personal terms, "Bevan's rifts with the leadership".¹⁵

The Trade Unions were especially eager to condemn Bevan for his activities and as one powerful group in the oligarchy they determined to limit his influence.

Meanwhile the left wing determined to challenge

¹³ M. M. Krug, Aneurin Bevan: Cautious Rebel (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961), p. 229.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 233.

the power of the leadership. In 1960 a conference decision to work towards unilateral nuclear disarmament was passed by 3,339,000 to 3,042,000. The Conference, according to the constitution of the Labour Party, determines policy but Gaitskell rejected the vote. Such an action confirmed the left wing in the belief expressed by Stonehouse that what applied to the Conservatives was rapidly being implemented in their own party namely, "a leader dictatorship".¹⁶ Michels' ideas echoed by Duverger that socialist parties "in order to safeguard their existence must follow the pattern of others",¹⁷ was now borne out by events.

On October 14th 1960, Anthony Greenwood resigned from the Shadow Cabinet and announced his challenge to Gaitskell's leadership. After some persuasion, Harold Wilson, who had been an ardent Bevanite, decided to stand against Gaitskell, and Greenwood withdrew. The spectacle of the British Labour Party leadership being contested by two ex-Oxford men now appeared before the British public. On November 3rd the result was announced and predictably Gaitskell, with his own group of supporters, won a decisive victory.

Gaitskell 166

Wilson 81

¹⁶R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 618.

¹⁷R. Michels, op. cit., p. 151. See page 7.

¹⁸R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 628.

The left wing was still unable to challenge the leadership oligarchy effectively. The M.P.'s had rallied to the call to "fight, fight and fight again for the party we love".

Gaitskell's re-affirmation as leader gave him "a mandate to defy conference"¹⁹ which was in part anticipated by the party. At the Conference of 1961 the motion on Unilateralism was defeated by 4,526,000-1,750,000. The Labour Party had recognised the need for unity and acted accordingly. However the fact that the party permitted contesting of the leadership annually was a powerful "democratic" factor retained from the days of the Labour Representation Committee. Despite the action of Gaitskell the democratic nature of the party represented in the will of majority prevailing on major issues of policy continued, certainly the "iron law" was weaker in the Labour Party at all times than within the Conservative Party.

¹⁹R. McKenzie, op. cit., p. 622.

The Selection of Harold Wilson 14-2-63

In 1963 the P.L.P. was probably more conscious than ever before of the fact that it was choosing not only a leader but also a possible Prime Minister. This partly explains the selection in 1963 of a man whom McKenzie has called the party's "ablest parliamentary performer", despite the massive rebuff he had suffered when challenging Gaitskell only two years before.

The leadership contest of 1963 presented a prospect of the two rival groups in the P.L.P. hierarchy meeting head on in a massive confrontation. Divisions amongst the group which had formed around Gaitskell effectively deprived them of a chance of victory. Remarkably enough Wilson had been defeated by George Brown, who had the active backing of Gaitskell, in the election for Deputy Leader in 1962. On that occasion Brown won by 30 votes.²⁰ It was anticipated that as Gaitskell would be, in all probability, the next Prime Minister, he would not be favourably inclined to those who selected a left winger as his deputy.

The first ballot to select Gaitskell's successor was scheduled to take place on 7th February 1963. Brown, acting as party leader, was confident of success. He regarded himself as Gaitskell's heir and hoped that the P.L.P. would recognize

²⁰L. Smith, op. cit., p. 187.

the fact. Howard and West have noted that,

Of Brown's loyalty and allegiance to Hugh Gaitskell there was, and could be, no doubt: it was to be his strongest card in the three week party struggle to find the new leader.²¹

Brown however, is a volatile personality. He almost destroyed his "strongest card" by his comments on the eulogy offered up for Gaitskell. "We shall be told", said Brown, "that the rest of us left behind are a pretty poor lot. Time will show whether we are or not".²²

Comments like this prejudiced Brown's case from the very beginning. Despite his backing from the old oligarchy he alienated so many rank and file M.P.'s that his support waned as the campaign progressed. Like Butler, although in a different sense, Labour M.P.'s began to sense that Brown was not "of the stuff of which leaders are made", much less Prime Ministers. An article in the Guardian supported this view:

Mr. George Brown, in spite of his great service and long devotion to the Labour Party, hardly measures up to the requirements. There are other candidates who come nearer to doing so.²³

Robert Mellish, M.P. spoke for many of his colleagues when he said, "It is a choice between the bear and the fox--

²¹A. Howard and R. West, op. cit., p. 117.

²²Ibid., p. 13.

²³Manchester Guardian, (January 24, 1963).

and in politics there isn't one. You have to choose the fox".²⁴ Perhaps it was significant that the honourable member made this comment in the bar of the House of Commons.

On January 19th 1963, Harold Wilson, Thomas Balogh and Richard Crossman met and planned their campaign to recreate a Labour Party of the left. Crossman expressed the view that, "it was essential for Wilson to keep above the contest".²⁵

Meanwhile James Callaghan had decided to enter the leadership contest and thus a split developed in the old Gaitskellite right wing, jeopardising their chances of victory. Crosland, Toney, Prentice, Diamond and Donnelly comprised Callaghan's major support.²⁶

The remainder of the Gaitskellites decided, despite the Guardian, to support Brown. However for a brief period a further faction developed around Patrick Gordon Walker. This further confused the issue for the right wing whilst the left continued to be quietly united. If the right had rallied around Brown and Brown himself had remained silent the Gaitskellites could have remained the dominant force in the Labour Party. Events moved in a different direction however.

On the first ballot,

²⁵A. Howard and R. West, op. cit., p. 16.

²⁶Ibid., p. 17.

When Chuter Ede announced the figures at the beginning of the meeting of the Parliamentary party at the House of Commons. . . a full muster of Labour M.P.'s received them, it is said, in complete silence.²⁷

The results reflected the fact that division in the right wing had placed the left in a strong position.

Wilson	115
Brown	88
Callaghan	41
Abstentions	5 ²⁸

The old Gaitskellite faction panicked. A "stop Wilson movement" developed amongst the old Gaitskellite oligarchy. They saw that Wilson as a prospective Prime Minister of the very near future would create a band wagon effect. The Times said exactly this, "M.P.'s will be tempted in the second ballot to climb on board what promises to be the successful bandwagon".²⁹

Overnight one wing of the oligarchy had been eclipsed. On hearing the result a shocked Brown is reputed to have said, "Tell me, is there a big enough Trade Union leader in town to swing this thing".³⁰

Meanwhile, George Wigg, who was to receive his reward,

²⁷The Times (February 8, 1963).

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰A. Howard and R. West, op. cit., p. 29.

worked indefatigably for Wilson in trying to swing some of Callaghan's support leftward. Evidently twelve of Callaghan's old supporters so pledged themselves.

The eventful result on February 14th, "clearly accorded with the general expectation of the Parliamentary Party".³¹

Divisions of the party were clearly represented in this result and a complete lack of consensus boding ill for the future, was revealed.

Wilson	144
Brown	103 ³²

The "iron law" of oligarchy is weak within the leadership selection process of the Labour Party. However the leader is today far stronger than MacDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister, in 1924. The reality of power and the need to organise government has made a Labour Party leader no longer head of a mere parliamentary group. All three recent labour leaders have shown that they can be a law unto themselves at times and inevitably they hope to see men of their own persuasion succeed them in the office of leader. When all this is said it must be admitted that the Labour Party allows far more open competition between groups for the leadership; perhaps immeasurably more, than its Conservative counterpart. At times the party on its better occasions is a shining

³¹The Times (February 15, 1963).

³²Ibid.

example of party democracy. Disputes are openly permitted between the party groups but party democracy does not always bring electoral success.

CHAPTER V

CANADA

The Selection of Leaders in Canada

At first sight the Canadian method of leadership selection making use of the convention system appears to be far more democratic than the methods employed by either of the British parties.

In Canada the rank and file party members as well as the M.P.'s are apparently given an active part to play in the selection process.

As Ruth Bell has written:

It was as a result of the demands of the "grass roots" that conventions were introduced to give the party supporters an opportunity to take part in the selection of party leader and in the formulation of party policy.¹

The leadership convention is of fairly recent origin in Canada, Mackenzie King being the first leader thus chosen in 1919. In 1927 the Conservatives followed the Liberal example and selected Arthur Meighen by means of a party convention.² Previously both Liberal and Conservative leaders had been selected by caucus.

¹R. Bell, Conservative Party National Conventions 1927-1956 (unpublished M.A. Thesis Carleton University), Ottawa, 1965.

²F. H. Underhill, Canadian Political Parties (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1964), p. 7.

It appears that the caucus or oligarchy was less fearful of the introduction of the convention as a democratic expedient than might at first be supposed. Perhaps the idea of the convention,

To take control of the parties out of the hands of pseudo-aristocratic oligarchies or of inner groups of professional politicians is more a question related to theory rather than practice.³

The convention is a useful method of giving publicity to the party and provides a rallying point for party sentiment. Ostrogorski describing the United States Presidential Conventions of 1902 conveys the publicity value of the event.

The attention of the whole country excited to the highest pitch by the great periodic duel, centres on these [Presidential Conventions] so as to make them a unique institution; and these basking under the eyes of the whole fever stricken nation, a unique spectacle.⁴

In fact the Canadian Convention has only recently reached the "fever pitch" of its American counterpart. Much of the Canadian convention is devoted to policy committees although the leadership selection, conducted by secret ballot, is the climax.

There are no primaries in Canada and the parliamentary system of government places less (though increasing) emphasis upon leadership than the presidential system. The composition

³F. H. Underhill, op. cit., p. 5.

⁴M. Ostrogorski, op. cit., p. 244.

of the Canadian party convention gives the party caucus a considerable role. MacGregor Dawson, in a comment which the parties would probably repudiate today, has written,

Neither Liberals nor Conservatives have accepted wholeheartedly and with genuine conviction the system of choosing a national leader by the convention system.⁵

This comment was written, it should be noted, in the 1950's and party opinion has since changed.

The influence of the United States is being continually felt. Suggestions of regular conventions which would give the rank and file a continuing influence upon the party leadership have been rejected by all parties save the N.D.P. The process of a continual review of the leadership by the mass is extremely obnoxious to the caucus. Similarly suggestions that the convention should be only used for the selection of a leader have also been rejected until now. Canada has made some effort to preserve the parliamentary form of government despite the pressures from the United States.

The Convention is "an inter election function as in the United Kingdom and not an electoral function as in the United States".⁶ Clearly when selecting a leader certain

⁵M. Dawson, The Democratic Government of Canada (4th ed.; Toronto: University Press, 1963), p. 504.

⁶F. C. Engelmann and M. C. Schwartz, Political Parties and the Canadian Social Structure (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 192.

factors such as the personality and the ability of the leader to win elections must be considered. Yet since the convention is an inter-election function the crucial question is likely to be, "can he unify the party and lead it in the Commons?" In contrast "in America the consideration is can he win?"⁷ Recently however the selection of Trudeau, and earlier that of Diefenbaker in some measure fall into the latter category. In Canada one cannot deny that leadership has for many years been the pivotal point of party politics. The oligarchies of each party have certainly recognised this salient fact. The similarity of the two major parties on grounds of policy has made it necessary for elections to become choices based upon personality factors. As Underhill has written previously,

A disillusioned English student of politics remarked that the successful (Canadian) party leader is the man who can dangle the largest number of carrots in front of the noses of the largest possible number of donkeys.⁸

Porter further indicates the position in Canada when he says,

The popular image of the P.C.'s representing the Bay Street Crowd is not accurate. Only

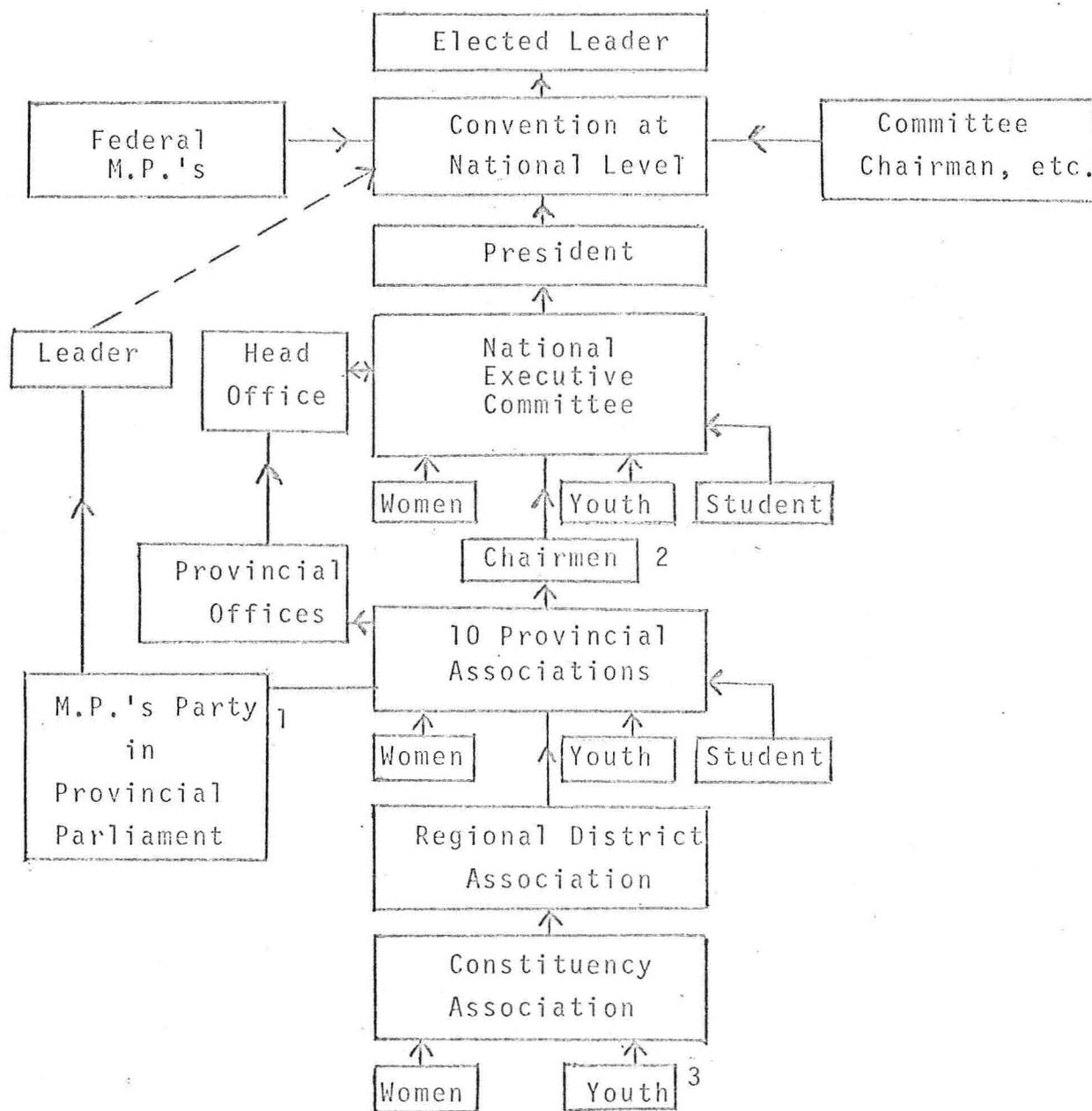
⁷R. Bell, op. cit.

⁸F. C. Engelmann and M. C. Schwartz, op. cit., p. 192.

← success
of
convention
is result
of leader

✓

DIAGRAM 6

The Convention in Canada

1. (a) In the Liberal Party 1/4 of members of Provincial Assembly attend.
(b) In the Progressive Conservative Party all attend.
2. Chairman and officers select delegates at large.
3. Each Liberal constituency organisation sends 6 delegates. Each Progressive Conservative organisation sends 5 delegates. These include 1 woman and 1 young person in the case of each party.

37 Liberals and 19 Conservatives have been both members of the economic élite and M.P.'s.⁹

Perhaps the best definition of the importance of leadership although exceptions exist, and therefore incidentally the importance of the oligarchy having overall control, is given by John McLeod:

A successful leader becomes the major symbol of his party; the party stands for what he stands for, and his pronouncements become party dogma. Whether it is Macdonald or Laurier, King or Diefenbaker, 'The Chief' is the main-spring of the machine, and absolute power to formulate policy is concentrated in his hands.¹⁰

The final sentence is of the utmost significance for it helps to explain the manner in which Canadian party leaders have been so often successful in grooming their successors and seeing them safely installed in office despite all the "democratic" panoply of the convention. Usually it is the group around "le chef"¹¹ which triumphs, although changes appear to be in the offing.

The composition of the convention is similar for each party and will be described in detail under each party head. The federal nature of Canada makes a leadership convention more acceptable than in Britain.

⁹Porter, Party Politics in Canada, ed. H. G. Thorburn (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 88.

¹⁰J. T. Macleod, "Explanation of Our Party System" in Politics: Canada, ed. P. Fox (2nd ed.; Toronto: McGraw Hill, 1966), p. 331.

¹¹Ibid., p. 365.

The federal nature of Canadian politics is a significant difference from the British political scene. However, as the "fathers of confederation" attempted to avoid the pitfalls of the United States federal system so have the founders of the convention attempted to avoid the evils of state delegations and the like, although not always successfully. Certainly the power of certain provincial leaders is not to be dismissed. Certain of these men have been notorious for their domination of the provincial groups. In the Globe and Mail on April 5, 1968, Scott Young wrote, "A few ward bosses like Joey Smallwood call the shots".¹² Whilst there is a possibility of overestimating such power it is a factor that must be considered. Stanfield's influence in the Maritimes, and indeed the influence of the Maritimes in the Party at this time (1968) has been noted as an unfortunate trait of the Conservative Party.

Ontario and also Toronto have been significant factors in the selection of leaders in the Conservative Party.

The special position of Quebec within the convention arrangement is significant. Ruth Bell has indicated the very authoritarian methods of appointing delegates in that Province until 1956. "In 1948 Monsieur Sabani (the Provincial leader) could virtually deliver the vote".¹³

¹²Globe and Mail (April 5, 1968).

¹³R. Bell, op. cit., p. 104.

The Liberal Party has made a practice of selecting alternate French and English leaders at its conventions and candidates in both parties made considerable efforts in the 1967 and 1968 conventions to accord the Quebecois the pleasure of being addressed in their own tongue.

Both parties permit the appointment of delegates-at-large by the Provincial Party Organisers, a factor which provides considerable opportunity for provincial organisers to influence the convention.¹⁴

In 1948 the Winnipeg Free Press conducted a campaign against the appointment of delegates-at-large calling the method of choice, "undemocratic" and "permitting bossism and packing the Convention".¹⁵

The federal nature of Canada is reflected also in the appointment of Provincial representatives to the various convention committees. Ruth Bell describes the method in the Progressive Conservative Party in which members of the Nominations and Credentials Committees are appointed in equal numbers from each province whereas the Resolutions and Organisation Committees are appointed according to provincial population.

¹⁴R. Bell, op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁵R. Bell, op. cit., p. 199.

In fact in the appointment of committees as in other matters the object is to strive for a national party unity rather than federal division.

Another significant feature of the convention is the power its delegates possess when the party is in office for in such instances they are not merely selecting a leader but also a Prime Minister.

The actual structure of the convention in terms of delegate representation is described in the sections relating to the respective parties. However, at this point the advantages for the party hierarchy should be remarked upon. Most notable is the special representation given to M.P.'s, Senators and Members of Provincial Legislatures. Although each riding elects and sends members (5 Conservatives, 6 Liberals) the large Parliamentary element is a strong force.

Ruth Bell has written:

The influence exercised by the ex-officio delegate is probably considerable. The very nature of his position--an elected representative, or a member of the party hierarchy. . . indicates that he is accustomed to lead and to influence the voter. It is then expected that he would wield more influence in the Convention than his fair share, which is some 15-20% of the total number of delegates.¹⁶

Added to this are a number of delegates at large from each Province, selected by the president of the provincial party.

¹⁶R. Bell, op. cit., p. 101.

Although these features favour the "party brass" it should also be noted that the riding representation has recently been increased for 3-5 in the case of the Conservatives and from 3-6 in the case of the Liberals. Special status is also accorded to women, youth and student groups.

Certainly the "democratic façade" in Canada is an impressive structure. Despite the fact that Canada is a more "democratic" nation than Britain it is a fact that "since 1867 only 12% of Canadian cabinet minister have been of humble working class origin as the following tables indicate".¹⁷ In the field of education and occupation the cabinet minister is of an élite group.

As we turn to consider the examples of leadership selection since 1945 by the convention method an earlier remark of Ostrogorski will be shown to be of particular significance. In the very first United States leadership convention Ostrogorski observed, "The candidate was marked out beforehand".¹⁸ In Canada this situation has frequently prevailed also, although today both parties have fully accepted the convention as part of their structure and party democracy is closer to being realised than ever before in terms of the open competition of groups and the method of representation.

¹⁷L. D. Epstein, op. cit., p. 197.

¹⁸M. Ostrogorski, op. cit., p. 71.

DIAGRAM 7

EDUCATION OF CANADIAN MINISTERS, 1867-1957, BY PARTY¹⁷

Party	University	Secondary	Elementary	Uncertain	Total
Liberal	110	13	4	18	145
Conservative	89	17	2	22	130
Total	199	30	6	40	275

DIAGRAM 8

OCCUPATION OF CANADIAN MINISTERS, 1867-1957, BY PARTY¹⁸

Party	Lawyer	M.D.	Other Prof.	Journalist	Business	Farmer	Manual & Clerical	Uncertain	Total
Liberal	76	4	16	8	29	7	4	1	145
Conservative	64	12	5	6	36	4	0	3	130
Total	140	16	21	14	65	11	4	4	275

¹⁷L. D. Epstein, op. cit., p. 198.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 197.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

The Selection of Leaders in the Progressive Conservative Party

The Progressive Conservatives have held three conventions since 1945 and under John Diefenbaker their fortunes recovered from the low ebb to which they had sunk during the period of McKenzie King's hegemony. Granatstein ably describes the latter part of that period and shows the efforts of the Conservatives to escape from a "Bay Street" image. In selecting R. Manion they thought they had succeeded.

A new leader, free of stereotyped Tory views of the past, was needed if the opportunity was to be exploited. Was there such a man in the Conservative Party? And if so, would the party allow him the manoevrability he would need to fight and defeat Mackenzie King?² However, 'Meighen and Bennett and their old guard supporters had a tremendous influence'.³

Clearly it has taken the Conservatives many years before they have come to accept the idea of the convention.

Manion, who resigned after defeat in the federal elections in 1940, said,

My election as leader took place at a National Convention; but a convention is not a continuing body, the only group who at the moment have any authority to speak from our Party from a federal

¹J. L. Granatstein, The Politics of Survival (Toronto: University Press, 1967).

²Ibid., p. 17.

³Ibid., p. 17.

standpoint are the Conservative members of the House of Commons.⁴

This statement illustrates an important point which is applicable to both parties but is of particular relevance to the Conservatives. Until recently it has been the decision of the leader which has dictated the time of a convention. Inevitably he chooses the time with care if circumstances permit. Diefenbaker is an example to the contrary as we shall see for in 1967 the party oligarchy split and decided upon a convention against the wishes of "the chief".

It is interesting to note at this point that Diefenbaker gave as his reason for entering the convention on December 2nd 1942 the fact that he had heard it was to be "a cut and dried affair".⁵ Certainly Arthur Meighen planned John Bracken's election carefully although at one stage he wrote to his son, "I am meeting with cruel disappointment in my plans for the Convention".⁶

In the period under review the oligarchy, which dominates the Canadian Conservatives, will be seen to differ from its British counterpart. The differences may partly be deduced from an examination of the Canadian parliamentary

⁴Ibid., p. 55.

⁵Ibid., p. 143.

⁶Ibid., p. 14+.

system and also from an examination of the delegate structure of the convention. This structure gives inbuilt advantages to the oligarchy, a fact already briefly considered, but which may now be examined in greater detail. Despite these inbuilt advantages theoretically a revolt of the rank and file could occur. In reality it has never done so although the pressures of the ordinary party members have on occasion, seriously affected decision by a divided oligarchy.

The Report of the Executive Committee of the Progressive Conservative Party upon the Forthcoming Convention in 1967

listed the following individuals as delegates:

All Privy Councillors who support the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada; Progressive Conservative Members of the Senate; Progressive Conservative Members of the House of Commons; Members of Provincial Legislatures or Legislative Bodies who support the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada; the Executive Officers of the Women's Association; Executive Officers of the Progressive Conservative Student Federation of Canada; Progressive Conservative Candidates nominated for redistributed ridings based on the electoral redistribution of 1966; Chairmen and Co-Chairmen of Convention Sub-Committees and active members of the Policy Advisory Committee and other Convention Committees and Sub-Committees.⁷

⁷Report of the Executive Committee of the Executive

From the details outlined above it becomes immediately obvious that special representation is given to the "party brass".

In the constituency areas five delegates are elected by each constituency. It is significant that in 1927 five delegates were appointed from each constituency to the first Progressive Conservative Convention. In the conventions that followed this number was reduced to three. However in 1967 five delegates were again sent from each constituency!⁸ Two delegates are also selected from each student club.

Delegates at large are also elected:

Yukon-3; North West Territories-3; British Columbia-30
Alberta-25; Saskatchewan-25; Manitoba-25; Ontario-90;
Quebec-90; New Brunswick-20; Nova Scotia-20; Prince
Edward Island-10; Newfoundland-15.⁹

The general delegates-at-large are appointed in each province by the provincial president for the party provincial organisation, the provincial vice-president for the province and the two federal directors for the province.

Women--nine delegates at large from Ontario and Quebec, to be appointed by the Provincial Association.

Officers of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada
Being the Convention Committee of the Progressive Conservative
Centennial Convention to the Convention, August 28, 1967, p. 4.

⁸R. Bell, op. cit., p. 94.

⁹Report of the Executive Committee. . .August 28, 1967,
p. 6 and 7.

Young Progressive Conservatives--Nine delegates at large from Ontario and Quebec, three of whom must be women to be appointed by the Young Progressive Conservative Associations in conjunction with the federal Young Progressive Conservative Association.¹⁰

The directors of the party are clearly given considerable powers in the selecting of delegates at the convention. Basically the oligarchy in the Progressive Conservative Party may be defined in the following manner. The Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet, with special powers accruing to the leader; the President of the federal association and President of the Executive Committee, provincial premiers and presidents of provincial associations, certain Senate members and privy councillors. There are also other individuals, such as influential backbenchers, who play a prominent part.

Dawson, in his account of Canadian Government, recognises the great advantages the "official element" possesses in the selection of leaders.

The strong official element will inevitably weaken the influence of the ordinary party or riding delegate. Neither party has apparently considered the possibility of apportioning candidates on a basis of party votes cast. The presences and influence of this element (party oligarchy) can, however, scarcely be regretted, they should represent much of the

¹⁰Report of the Executive Committee. . .August 28, 1967, pp. 6 and 7.

practical wisdom of the party and they certainly constitute the more experienced members.¹¹

Dawson applies his remarks to both parties as an indication that neither has fully accepted the convention system. The oligarchy certainly has inbuilt advantages when imposing its united choice of leader upon the convention. Frequently, as Michels has stated, that oligarchy will be divided and attempt to enlist the support of the delegates to one candidate or another.

It is notable that efforts to make the convention an annual event have been rejected by the Progressive Conservative and Liberal leaders. Such a reform would perhaps threaten their control of the party although the British Labour Party and N.D.P. appear to have an oligarchy despite annual election. In fact there still exists much in the Canadian convention system which lacks organisation. Financial contributions for example come from a variety of sources, often obscured. Ruth Bell states that the 1948 Convention cost \$52,000 and the 1956 Convention, \$76,000. These figures however, ignore the sums spent by the candidates and their supporters, which have been immense but undefined in the period 1967-68. Canada is more closely allied to the strataarchy which Eldersveld describes although it does not fully accord

¹¹M. Dawson, op. cit., p. 506.

with it. The convention is today a curious mixture of the rank and file and the parliamentary party members participating in the selection of a leader who is acceptable to the party and hopefully to the nation.

The Selection of George Drew as Leader 2-10-48

George Drew came to a position of power in a party whose fortunes were at a very low ebb. In 1948 the Conservatives had witnessed the long unbroken dominance of the Liberals under King for many years and had seen the rise of a successor who would continue to lead a Liberal Party in office.

The 1948 Convention is notable for displaying the power of the Tory oligarchy at its height.

The events leading up to the Convention on October 2nd and the occurrences that followed it illustrate only too clearly the truth of Michels "iron law". Bitterness engendered by the manipulation of the convention, or as Newman has called it, "The intrigues of the palace guard",¹² influenced John Diefenbaker for the rest of his active political career.

His (Diefenbaker's) deepest feelings of personal bitterness were directed at his own political cohorts for choosing George Drew over him at the Party's 1948 leadership Convention. In Fredericton, New Brunswick, where he was accorded the wildest welcome of the 1958 campaign with a woman clutching at his coat and gasping: "I touched

¹²P. C. Newman, Renegade in Power--The Diefenbaker Years (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. 76.

him!", Diefenbaker reacted by turning to a friend and saying bitterly: "I could have had all this in 1948 but for them".¹³

The 1948 Convention result was forecast long in advance by most of the press. The Winnipeg Free Press wrote on the day before the convention,

While all the evidence continues to point to a victory for Premier George Drew of Ontario in the leadership contest, possibly even without going beyond a single ballot, policy is still vitally important.¹⁴

The Toronto Star concluded, "It's Drew's Platform".¹⁵

Drew, as Premier of Ontario, was the only Conservative premier in Canada. He had succeeded in smashing the C.C.F. in Ontario and it was hoped that his victorious example could be repeated federally. Drew as the darling of the "Toronto Tories" could expect very wide support. Most important of all the old oligarchy was united behind him.

At the 1948 Convention the "old guard" appointed more than 300 delegates-at-large who practically all promised unreservedly to vote for Drew. One old Conservative allegedly saw the leadership struggle in these terms:

¹³P. C. Newman, op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁴Winnipeg Free Press (October 2, 1948).

¹⁵Toronto Star (October 2, 1948).

Ghost delegates with ghost ballots, marked by the ghostly hidden hands of Bay Street, are going to pick George Drew, and he'll deliver a ghost written speech that'll cheer us all up, as we march briskly into the political graveyard.¹⁶

Walker, Diefenbaker's campaign manager, sensing a growing feeling amongst the delegates of resentment against the impositions of the "palace guard" suggested as a slogan, "Diefenbaker--the man from Main Street not Bay Street";¹⁷ but Diefenbaker rejected this approach.

Certainly the "Toronto Tories" who had supported Bracken and wanted to see Drew as his successor worked hard to achieve their ends.

Heath Macquarrie says of Drew: "He was in fact the choice of hundreds of rank and file delegates who thought little about right-centre-left gradation".¹⁸ Previously the Liberal Winnipeg Free Press had written:

A large proportion of the Convention delegates will not be elected by any meeting of the local Conservative supporters but will be chosen by the bosses of the party.¹⁹

Yet Macquarrie describes Drew as the epitomy of "right wing, high tariff, Bay-Street Toryism". So anxious were the "Toronto

¹⁶P. C. Newman, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁸H. Macquarrie, The Progressive Conservative Party (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), p. 126.

¹⁹Winnipeg Free Press (August 31, 1948).

Tories" to stop Diefenbaker's threat that they allegedly, "Entered the names of his (Diefenbaker's) visitors in a black book".²⁰

The vote on the first ballot was decisive.

Drew	827
Diefenbaker	311
Fleming	104 ²¹

Possibly this was the most decisive victory of any Conservative convention. Diefenbaker, dejected and depressed, felt cheated by an impossibly powerful oligarchy.

Drew now had to seek a seat in the House of Commons in order to take his place as party leader. His failure to gain victory for the party gradually disillusioned even his closest supporters. Meanwhile Diefenbaker waited.

The Selection of John Diefenbaker 11-12-56

The final triumph of John Diefenbaker in his struggle to capture the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party came in 1956, fourteen years after his first attempt in 1942. For many years the "old guard" of "Toronto Tories" had actively opposed him but by the mid 1950's the oligarchy was becoming desperate. Indeed Ruth Bell has observed:

²⁰Newman, op. cit., p. 28.

²¹Ibid., p. 29.

"During the 1956 Convention period, the party hierarchy were almost unanimously opposed to the popular candidate".²² The Conservatives had failed to win more than 30% of the votes in federal elections for nearly twenty years. Diefenbaker appeared as a possible antidote to the ill fortune which dogged the party.

The choice of Diefenbaker was guaranteed nevertheless by the undeniable fact that he had a better prospect than any competitor to win the next election, though the prospect seemed pretty slight to anyone but him.²³

Diefenbaker broke the 30% barrier in 1957 by polling 38.9% of the votes and winning 112 seats. in 1958 this figure increased to 78.8% and 205 seats.²⁴

Diefenbaker is an example in part of the "accordion theory" of Michels in operation and yet it is an example which must be highly qualified. Although Diefenbaker was given the support of the "old guard" when he was victorious he could never completely forgive them for what he considered to be earlier wrongs. The "old guard" for their part disposed

²²Bell, op. cit., p. 204. Source--Interview, Personal Observations etc.

²³B. Hutchinson, Mr. Prime Minister 1867-1964 (Toronto: Longmans, 1964), p. 320.

²⁴H. Scarrow, Canada Votes (New Orleans: Hauser, 1962), p. 161.

of Diefenbaker, although not without some difficulty, when his usefulness to them had past.

In the thirty years up to 1956 the Progressive Conservatives had experienced six changes of leadership. The 1956 Convention presented, according to Meisel, three vital questions:

1. A need to get a leader to stay in office and revitalise the party.
2. A question of the very survival of the party. A need to select a leader who would block social credit and stop the Liberals. ✓
3. A need to recognise the factions in the party. Drew had recently been attacked by Finlayson (leader in British Columbia) who accused him of pandering to Toronto interests.²⁵

On October 2nd 1956, 40 members of the Conservative Association of Canada, President León Balcer, met and decided to hold a Convention on December 10th of that year.

The Convention Executive Committee was, according to Meisel, "Composed entirely of members of the 'old guard', such as W. L. Rowe (National Director). Most of the chairmanships and secretaryships of Committees were also in the hands of the 'old guard'.²⁶

However the "old guard" were divided on the action they should take some seeing the party's only possible salvation in Diefenbaker whilst others remained opposed to him. The question of the appointment of delegates-at-large

²⁵J. Meisel, The Canadian General Election of 1957 (Toronto: University Press, 1962), p. 18.

²⁶Ibid., p. 21.

again arose:

There was only one place where it was possible to do some substantial 'rigging' of the Convention for whoever controlled the provincial association had a strong voice in choosing the provincial delegates-at-large and also the delegates from constituencies where the party organisation had decayed.²⁷

An analysis of the number of delegates by Ruth Bell indicates that in 1956 the constituency delegates composed 59% of the Convention, the delegates ex-officio 16% and the delegates-at-large 24% of the members. The remainder consisted of party leaders and the like.²⁸

Despite the division in the oligarchy or perhaps because of them "a bitter struggle for power was being waged in the Convention"²⁹ Allister Frossart, "the architect"³⁰ of Diefenbaker's victory as "the chief" called him was an ex-"Toronto Tory" who had been convinced by events prior to 1956 that Diefenbaker was the only man who could lead the Conservatives to victory. His faith was reflected in the slogan he devised, "We can win with Diefenbaker".³¹

²⁷J. Meisel, The Canadian General Election of 1957, p. 21.

²⁸R. Bell, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁹Ibid., p. 25.

³⁰P. C. Newman, op. cit., p. 159.

³¹Ibid., p. 164.

In 1948 Grossart had planned Drew's victory and in 1956 he helped Diefenbaker. Here was only one example of the oligarchical split.

The candidates³² who finally emerged at the Convention illustrated the lack of a party consensus. Fulton, the youngest candidate, a forty year old Catholic, west coast lawyer, had a big University backing. It was argued that in the future he would lead the party to victory but the "old guard" wanted victory now. Diefenbaker, previously a colleague of Fulton, now became an enemy.

Fleming, a fifty-two year old lawyer and M.P. for the Eglinton Riding of Toronto, was now the local representative of the "old guard". Drew personally supported Fleming but some of Drew's followers at the last moment made a desperate bid to draft the President of the University of Toronto as a candidate,³³ an unsuccessful action which caused added confusion.

Diefenbaker had established a reputation in the Conservative Party as an M.P. (Prince Albert) and also as a past contender for the leadership. At the beginning of the Convention call all but two or three of the Tory front bench were

³²P. C. Newman provides profiles of leading personalities.

³³J. Meisel, op. cit., p. 27.

opposed to Diefenbaker. However as the convention progressed he won more support from the provincial and constituency associations and also the individual and indefatigable support of Grossart, Churchill and Hees.

The Convention of 1956 illustrated the special part Quebec can play in Canadian party politics. An effort was made to make Diefenbaker appear as the chosen candidate of "la Belle Province". This, according to Meisel, was not intended to convince Quebec that Diefenbaker was the best candidate for them but rather to convince the other areas of Canada that the Quebec delegation thought this was the case.³⁴

Diefenbaker disrupted these arrangements however by asking the Premier of New Brunswick and Major-General Pearless of British Columbia to propose and second his nomination. Arrangements made for a representative from Quebec to second Diefenbaker were accordingly dropped.

Sévigny describes in This Game of Politics,³⁵ how he laboured on Diefenbaker's behalf only to be met by the chief's indifference. This resulted in the fact that, "the greater part of the Quebec delegation simply got up and

³⁴J. Meisel, op. cit., p. 30.

³⁵P. Sevigny, This Game of Politics (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965).

left" after Diefenbaker was elected.³⁶

On December 11th 1956 1,234³⁷ delegates elected a new leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

Victory for Diefenbaker was predicted by the press. The Winnipeg Free Press correctly forecast victory on the first ballot.

Diefenbaker	744
Fleming	393
Fulton	117 ³⁸

Diefenbaker was ecstatic for at last he appeared to have broken the hold of the oligarchy. In a phrase typical of the man he declared, "I ask for your prayers, I ask for your assistance and co-operation".³⁹

The man whom Pearless had described as "the greatest living Canadian--a cross between Simon de Montfort and Benjamin Disraeli",⁴⁰ had defeated the "old guard". Diefenbaker had triumphed over a desperate and divided oligarchy.

³⁶P. Sevigny, op. cit., p. 43.

³⁷Winnipeg Free Press (December 14, 1956).

³⁸P. C. Newman, op. cit., p. 67.

³⁹Ibid., p. 47.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 46.

Whilst his leadership reflected credit upon the party, that oligarchy would reluctantly accept him. The man from "Main Street" temporarily victorious over "Bay Street" would eventually be eased out of office when his value to the party and that oligarchy had gone.

The Selection of Robert Stanfield 9-9-67

The selection of Robert Stanfield was a triumphant reassertion of the power of the "Toronto Tories". Inevitably the sources of information for this, the latest Conservative leadership selection process to be considered, are principally derived from the press and are highly biased.

The leadership convention was decided upon some ten months before it actually took place in September 1967. An account by The Canadian for October 21st 1967 sets the scene of the convention in its perspective.

Dalton Camp had inspired a leadership convention by winning a bitter battle over the Diefenbaker forces at the annual party meeting in Ottawa ten months before.⁴¹

This victory by Camp to unseat Diefenbaker had many unique features. Diefenbaker vacillated after the Ottawa meeting and eventually decided to stand at the convention which was to be "replete with the stuff of King Lear, Macbeth and Julius

⁴¹S. Miller, "The Canadian Section", Hamilton Spectator (October 21, 1967).

Ceasar as he (Diefenbaker) brought defeat and humiliation at the hands of his own party upon himself".⁴² After considering the situation it appears that the "Toronto Tories" relished these visible signs of their resurgence.

Stanfield, the victor, was no less than "the chosen candidate of the party President Dalton Camp",⁴³ a "Toronto Tory" operating in the convention city of Toronto. Admittedly Stanfield as Premier of Nova Scotia was not himself from Toronto but his image was such as to make him attractive to the "old guard". Perhaps, ironically, Stanfield had become Premier of Nova Scotia in 1956, the year of Diefenbaker's convention.

The long intervening period between the announcement of the convention and the actual event itself gave the Toronto Tories time for advanced planning. The Financial Post warned, "The P.C.'s may suffer from flagging interest in the tedious leadership grind until the September Convention".⁴⁴ Meanwhile Diefenbaker continued to waver, candidates became confused and Dalton Camp planned carefully.

In an interesting article in The Globe and Mail

⁴²O. Clausen, "Magazine Section", Toronto Globe and Mail (September 16, 1967).

⁴³Toronto Globe and Mail (September 16, 1967).

⁴⁴Financial Post (March 11, 1967).

around the time the convention was announced, the paper proclaimed,

An independent survey of delegates to the Ontario Progressive Conservative Association General Convention yesterday showed that 70% of those questioned are in favour of regular leadership reviews.⁴⁵

The question arises as to whether this was an indication of growing democratisation in the Progressive Conservative Party or rather an effort by the Toronto Tories to legitimise their challenge to Diefenbaker. Whatever the motive behind this survey it gave strength to Camp's campaign.

The convention was to be the largest and most vigorous the Conservatives had ever embarked upon. There were to be 2,400 delegates voting on the question of the leadership, Lincoln Alexander, voting Secretary for the Convention, had said that all delegates were democratically elected although "in the past you had to know someone".⁴⁶

"Camps Commandoes",⁴⁷ for such they had now become, using the services of their leader's advertising agency in Toronto planned their support for Stanfield meticulously. Aiding them in their task was, Flora Macdonald, who had worked at Conservative Headquarters for ten years but had been fired

⁴⁵ Globe and Mail (October 2, 1966).

⁴⁶ Speech by Lincoln Alexander M.P. to McMaster University P.C. Club, October 12, 1967.

⁴⁷ Hamilton Spectator (October 21, 1967).

for suspected disloyalty to Diefenbaker. In 1966 she had been elected as party Secretary running on "the Camp ticket".⁴⁸

When the other candidates arrived in Toronto they found to their dismay that Stanfield's campaign was well organised and entrenched.

Dalton Camp had considered entering the campaign himself if neither Stanfield nor Roblin had done so. Now Camp, although playing a prominent part in the campaign, decided that his participation, "should be discreet to the point of secrecy".⁴⁹

The "Toronto Tory" element at this stage was further strengthened by the entry of Elmer Bell, Ontario Conservative President, into the Stanfield group. A special effort was made in the days immediately before the convention to persuade Fulton to openly declare his support for Stanfield if he (Fulton) failed to make a significant gain on the early ballots.

Unlike previous Tory leadership conventions a total of eleven candidates stood on the first ballot, an indication of the confusion which reigned in the party. Nine of these candidates went into the second ballot. It was a remarkable in that although Stanfield had been predicted by the press

⁴⁸Hamilton Spectator (October 21, 1967).

⁴⁹Hamilton Spectator (September 11, 1967).

*problems of
conservative
in Ontario
and
1967-70*

as victor the issue remained in doubt for some time. On the fourth ballot Fulton was left as a "Power Broker".⁵⁰ In 1965 in an interview Fulton had uttered these significant comments:

It must be accepted that the caucus, practically speaking, has the effective word. If a man cannot command the support of the caucus, there isn't much use in having him as leader. Conversely, if he does have the support of the caucus, it would be extremely difficult to dislodge him.⁵¹

This was the final test of Dalton Camp's organisation and it stood the test. The final result indicated how easily Roblin might have been the victor if Camp had supported him instead.

The results of the convention indicated that the oligarchy around the "old guard" had reasserted itself. Camp is reputed to have said: "That was my Centennial project. Thank God I've finished".⁵² Only the future can tell how permanent the reassertions of their power can be. The 1968 Federal Election was not a good omen.

⁵⁰ Globe and Mail (September 11, 1967).

⁵¹ R. Bell, op. cit., p. 214, interview, 9-2-65.

⁵² Hamilton Spectator (October 21, 1967).

Globe and Mail 11-9-67

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Ballot Number</u>				
	1	2	3	4	5
Stanfield	519	613	717	865	1150
Roblin	349	430	541	771	969
Fulton	343	346	361	357W	
Hees	295	299	277W		
Diefenbaker	271	172	114W		
McCutcheon	137	76W			
Hamilton	136	127			
Fleming	126	115			
Starr	45	34E			
Mackay	10W				
Sanka	2E				

E= eliminated

W= withdrawn

The Progressive Conservative Party has held five leadership conventions in its history. Much of the time it has been a party in turmoil searching for a leader and an identity. Perhaps it was no accident that the first convention of 1927 (See page 82) gave greater representation to the constituencies than any succeeding convention until 1967.

For much of the period under review a particular group of Ontario and more particularly "Toronto Tories" appears to have been a powerful element within the leadership selection

process. One would expect that the Conservatives were less able to accept the convention as a means of selecting their leader than the Liberal Party and in a measure this appears to be the case.

However when all has been considered the manner in which John Diefenbaker won the party leadership remains as an example of party democracy in action. Diefenbaker's Convention represented a new stage in the history of the convention for never before had a convention been called against the wishes of a party leader. Partisanship amongst convention officials does exist. "Some of the chairmen were actively partisan and their opinions were known. A few attempted to manipulate the convention in favour of the choice."⁵³ Although the convention is weighted in favour of the "party brass" the events of 1956 illustrated that a determined rank and file have great power, although not necessarily continuing power, in the Conservative Convention.

⁵³R. Bell, op. cit., p. 133.

CHAPTER VII
THE LIBERAL PARTY

The Selection of Leaders in the Liberal Party

It was the Liberal Party which first used the convention to select its leader. In that first convention in 1919 an unknown politician called McKenzie King was elected as leader by 1800 delegates. The success of this choice confirmed the use of the convention in the Liberal Party but it was not implemented again until 1948. At the time of the second Liberal leadership convention an effort was made to institute a leadership convention every four years but this was defeated.¹ The 1919 Convention had a closer resemblance to that of 1968 in many ways than the conventions which intervened between these dates. In 1919, Fielding, Sir Wilfred Laurier's logical heir, was considered too old at 71 to lead the party.² In 1968 Paul Martin, in some senses Lester Pearson's logical heir, found that age was against him. The convention which elected King ran to three ballots. Louis St. Laurent and Lester Pearson, each of them heirs of the outgoing leader, were selected on the first ballot. However in 1968 four ballots were required before Pierre Trudeau was confirmed as leader.

¹M. Dawson, op. cit., p. 128.

²B. Hutchinson, The Incredible Canadian (Toronto: Longmans, 1952), p. 47.

The Liberal Party under King had no opportunity to organise a convention whilst the Conservatives lurched from one convention to the next searching desperately for a leader.

Dawson has written:

Most people believe it (the Convention) is efficacious as a publicity device, vote-getter and rouser of enthusiasm and that a man who can carry a Convention successfully is also likely to be the kind of man who can carry an election.³

In most respects the structure of the Liberal leadership convention is similar to that used by the Conservatives, giving especially advantageous representation to "party brass".⁴

The Structure of the Convention:⁵

1. Liberal M.P.'s and Privy Councillors and defeated candidates from the last General Election and nominated ones for the next.
2. Ten Provincial Leaders.
3. All members of the Executive Committee of the National Liberal Federation, the National Federation of Liberal Women, the Young Liberal Federation, the Canadian University Liberal Federation.
4. The four members of the Executive of each Provincial Association.

³Dawson, op. cit., p. 504.

⁴Ibid., p. 506.

⁵Ibid., p. 505.

5. The President and two other officers of each of the ten Liberal Provincial Women's Organisations and ten Young Liberal Organisations and two representatives from each Liberal University Club.

6. Six delegates from each federal constituency (One a woman and one a young Liberal) elected by a local meeting.

7. Provincial delegations equal to one quarter of the membership of each Provincial Assembly (chosen from and by the Liberal members and defeated Liberal candidates of each Assembly).

Certainly the ordinary constituency delegations have one more member than their Conservative counterparts but as Dawson states, following in the steps of Michels, "Divisions, however are likely amongst party 'brass' rather than the rank and file and the brass".⁶

As we shall observe the 1968 Convention went against the convention tradition in giving a man who was not particularly of the oligarchy a massive popular note which helped him to defeat the divided members of the old oligarchy. Trudeau was however, favoured by Pearson, and this was of considerable aid to him in his victorious campaign. Possibly parallels between Diefenbaker and Trudeau begin at the time of their selection by the Convention.

⁶Dawson, Ibid., p. 506.

The Selection of Louis St. Laurent 7-8-48

The selection of St. Laurent exhibits certain interesting features which the Conservative Conventions have hitherto not displayed.

First, St. Laurent was being selected not merely as a leader but also as a Prime Minister. The oligarchy, especially King, was particularly anxious that their nominee should be victorious.

Secondly, the selection of St. Laurent indicates the perpetuation of the unwritten law of the Liberal Party that their leadership should alternate between the English and French section of Canada.

The 1948 Liberal Convention was notable for the attempt by Power to contest the election of a man whom he contended was being thrust upon the party by King, and his supporters and who would continue King's domestic policies.

During the Autumn of 1947 there were rumours that King would rather favour St. Laurent as his successor. An article appeared in the Montreal Gazette about that time, by Arthur Blakely, to the effect that many of the Quebec Liberals were not satisfied with the choice of St. Laurent as leader and intended to back L.G. Power.⁷

In a sense St. Laurent was reluctant to accept the position of party leader and Prime Minister. He had only

⁷C. V. Power, A Party Politician, ed. Norman Ward (Toronto: Macmillan, 1966), p. 384.

been a Cabinet member and active parliamentarian since 1941. St. Laurent had also been involved in more than one bitter argument with King. King had apparently considered the probability of Pearson, Canadian Ambassador in Washington, as his successor, but Pearson refused to serve under King.⁸ St. Laurent had angered King in 1947, when as Minister for External Affairs, he approved the appointment of a Canadian to the United Nations Commission in Korea, whilst King was absent. King was furious and asked Pearson to remedy the situation. This action resulted in a resignation threat from St. Laurent and a warning from the other prominent Liberals. Claxton told King that the question of the succession was being exploited by the Conservatives and that

The best way to minimise the consequences of the inevitable change of leaders was to persuade the one person best qualified and most generally acceptable as the next leader to remain in Ottawa.⁹

King therefore, "had made up his mind to hand the dynasty on to St. Laurent, silently and with all King's subtlety".¹⁰ Despite the poor showing by St. Laurent in the Quebec election King persisted in his choice.

"In public he never indicated his choice by word or gesture. In private he pulled the strings".¹¹

⁸B. Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 425.

⁹D. C. Thomson, Louis St. Laurent: Canadian (Toronto: Macmillan, 1967), p. 210.

¹⁰Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 436.

¹¹Thomson, op. cit., p. 236.

King persuaded Horne, Abbot and Claxton to allow their names to go before the Convention if necessary and then to withdraw in St. Laurent's favour. He also approached Chévrier and Martin who agreed to support King's action.¹² The oligarchy was virtually united in its choice of successor but Gardiner and Power refused to acquiesce.

However, "When the Convention met on August 5th King had it well in hand."¹³ Power was determined to make a token gesture of defiance against the oligarchy and Gardiner still imagined he might be successful.

King had wanted everyone in the party to understand he saw St. Laurent as his successor but the latter disagreed. King had told St. Laurent of this when he decided to resign on January 24th. St. Laurent however was afraid of being "manipulated by the professionals".¹⁴

He made little effort to campaign actively. King probably was more diligent in this respect than his successor.

¹²Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 437.

¹³Ibid., p. 437.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 225.

In Winnipeg, when St. Laurent was asked if he was going to contest the leadership, shortly after King's resignation announcement, he replied, "If it was something which would further rather than retard Canadian unity I don't see how I could refuse".¹⁵

The Convention began in August with three contenders for the leadership but King had worked well and St. Laurent was expected to win. On August 4th the Toronto Star reflected national opinion when it said, "Behind the scenes the Liberal hierarchy is confident that it will be a shoo-in for Mr. Laurent".¹⁶

Power also thought that St. Laurent would be the victor and he attributed this to the manipulation of delegates which the Convention Structure permitted and added, "the weakness is that very often the constituency delegates are the choice of the federal M.P.'s".¹⁷ He further reflected, "My chances were extremely poor",¹⁸ but he was determined to stand regardless of this.

The oligarchy was concerned lest Power should disrupt what promised to be quiet and orderly transition of power directed by them, with Gardiner giving token opposition.

¹⁵Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 226.

¹⁶Toronto Star (August 4, 1948).

¹⁷C. V. Power, op. cit., p. 371.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 396.

A convention which gave the party publicity without discord was the aim. Power describes in detail the efforts to prevent him from standing and is worth quoting in detail.

*Abuse - power of
retirement*

On the opening day of the Convention Sir James Dunn came to see me and said that Horne and he had settled their differences. . . .He suggested that in my best interest, and since I knew I had no chance of winning, I could now in honour retire. I had expressed my views, he said, and there was no use in my antagonising the party and hurting my future chances. If I persisted, he suggested, I could not expect to receive anything, but if I retired now I could pretty well write my own contract.¹⁹

This is only one example of what Thomson has described as King "exercising his influence quietly behind the scenes, counselling St. Laurent on matters of detail and making known his personal preference".

The speeches which preceded the balloting and the effect they had upon the individuals concerned is of particular interest. The balloting illustrated that the speeches had little influence upon the result.

Power gave a good speech and used his candidature as a protest against the prevailing policies of the Liberal government.

However, when Gardiner spoke and delivered a speech "proclaiming himself as the spark plug of the party, the man who knew how to win elections", King was so disgruntled that he seized a ballot and (despite his 'professed neutrality')

¹⁹C. V. Power, op. cit., p. 397.

prepared to vote for St. Laurent.²⁰

St. Laurent's own speech was the most mundane of those delivered. The voting that took place following these speeches gave St. Laurent victory on the first ballot.

St. Laurent	848
Gardiner	323
Power	56 ²¹

It is interesting to record that St. Laurent received a larger portion of votes from Ontario than from Quebec, a provincial delegation which resented the imposition of a new leader by King.

The victory of King and his supporters in choosing a new leader was vindicated at the election and no further criticism was heard.

St. Laurent remained King's clear personal choice as the next Liberal leader, both on a basis of personal qualifications and because he felt it would be poetic justice to hand back to a French speaking Canadian the mantle he had inherited from Sir Wilfred Laurier.²²

The 1948 Convention became a "democratic" sham, allowing the rank and file the pleasure of apparently participating in a choice which the Cabinet had previously agreed upon.

²⁰Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 438.

²¹Globe and Mail (August 9, 1948).

²²Thomson, op. cit., p. 205.

The Selection of Lester Pearson 16-1-58

Lester Pearson emerged as Louis St. Laurent's successor some little time before the Convention of January 1958. Although St. Laurent gave only limited indications that he wished Pearson to succeed him there was little doubt in party circles that such was the case. Thomson claims indeed that Pearson saw St. Laurent before the latter resigned, an action which he allegedly would have refused to carry out, if Pearson had not agreed to succeed him. Norman Ward describes the process by which Pearson was selected in these words:

On January 16th 1958, for the third consecutive time, the Liberal Party chose as its national leader a man who had not worked his way upwards through the party ranks, but instead had moved in close to the top.²²

Pearson's own successor would also qualify for such a description.

The fact that the 1958 Convention was to be held under the omniscient eye of the television camera made the Liberal leadership anxious to prove that its selection process was a paradigm of democracy. Delegates were told to be in their seats early, "so that when television starts at 8 o'clock we will be in good shape to be observed by the people of Canada".²³ In fact T.V. has really placed the final seal on

²²Thomson, op. cit., p. 524.

²³N. Ward, "The Liberals in Convention" in Party Politics, ed. H. Thorburn (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 97.

the undoubted truth that the Convention has become little more than a façade. Ward's remarks echo this fact:

To blame T.V. for converting the convention into a show, however, ignores the obvious fact that the leadership convention is a show, and is carefully arranged to be as good a show as possible.²⁴

Indeed the convention committee set up for the 1958 Liberal Convention stressed, "The Convention must look as democratic as possible".²⁵

Before the Convention began the delegates were cast in special moulds which were to appeal to journalists and commentators.

Paul Martin was seen as the popular candidate whereas Lester Pearson was seen as "The choice of the Liberal Establishment". Little wonder that the Winnipeg Free Press could forecast, "Pearson by a landslide",²⁷ or the Hamilton Spectator, "Martin battling to stop Pearson".²⁸

In many respects the leadership was decided before the Convention took place. On January 15th the Hamilton

²⁴N. Ward, op. cit., p. 97.

²⁵Ibid., p. 98.

²⁶Globe and Mail (December 15, 1957).

²⁷Winnipeg Free Press (January 11, 1958).

²⁸Hamilton Spectator (January 7, 1958).

Spectator reported,

Unless there is a spontaneous combustion at the grass roots Lester Pearson tomorrow night will take over the mantle of the Liberal Party leadership.²⁹

In this T.V. Convention ruled by the oligarchy everything was carefully planned to illustrate party unity and party democracy.

The results on the first ballot were:

Pearson	1,074
Martin	305 ³⁰

For the first time since the war the Liberals were out of office and they hoped that Pearson would lead them back again.

Prior to the 1958 Convention, Norman Lambert, a former secretary and chairman of the National Liberal Federation and the chief organiser of the Liberal campaigns of the period 1930-5 and 1940, held strongly to the belief that only one item should be submitted to the Convention, the choice of a leader.³¹

In 1958 the "cut and dried" affair made him change his mind. It was, it seemed, too easy for the oligarchy to win.

²⁹Hamilton Spectator (January 15, 1958).

³⁰Hamilton Spectator (January 18, 1958).

³¹C. V. Power, op. cit., p. 370.

The Selection of Pierre Trudeau 6-4-68

The selection of Pierre Trudeau, as has already been mentioned, has many interesting features in connection with Michels' theory. Trudeau was himself a newcomer to the Liberal scene, only having been a cabinet member for one year. The oligarchy was divided in its opinion of him and this division helped Trudeau immeasurably. So disorganised did the oligarchy become over the question of Pearson's successor that the duties of the cabinet and the government of Canada suffered from neglect. The fact that once again the convention was choosing a Prime Minister as well as a leader of the Liberal Party gave added impetus to the race.

The Globe and Mail expressed the matter in an excellent fashion:

The stakes among the Conservatives were high enough, with a good chance that the leader would form a government in the not excessively distant bye and bye. The man who wins the Convention on April 6th in Ottawa will step out of there that Saturday night to lead the country. Whoever he is, he'll be wielding his sword from the top of the heap.³²

When Pearson announced his intention to resign on December 14th 1967, the "old guard", from which the successor was expected to emerge, consisted of four personalities

³²Globe and Mail (January 11, 1968).

Mr. Sharp Minister of Finance
 Mr. Hellyer Minister of Transport
 Mr. Marchand Minister of Manpower and Mines
 Mr. Martin External Affairs³³

By April of 1968 a failure to reach a cabinet and oligarchy consensus and the lack of any definite instruction by Mr. Pearson had resulted in the number of candidates reaching the record figure of nine.

Bourne remarked that, "Liberals have a tradition of choosing the leader behind closed doors".³⁴ Fear of changing such a method of choice led Mr. Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce) to state: "I criticise the method of selection. It is a key factor in my decision of not running for the leadership".³⁵ Winters favoured the choice of a new leader by the outgoing leader and his lieutenant. In contrast were the true feelings of John Turner, another leadership aspirant, when he stated, "It's all fixed up before by the power brokers".³⁶

Both of these men were fairly recent arrivals on the political field and neither could expect to win at that time. An almost neurotic situation concerning the leadership

³³ Professor Bourne, University of Toronto, C.B.C. 6:30-7:00 p.m., December 14, 1967.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Globe and Mail (January 13, 1968).

³⁶ C.B.C. News, 6:00 p.m., April 4, 1968.

selection had developed by April.

The leadership issue remained in doubt as the convention approached. With no definite guide from the outgoing leader and a divided oligarchy it looked as if the delegates might exercise a higher control on the question of the party leadership than ever before.

However, shortly before the voting on the issue took place, the trends which Michels has observed began to develop. Certain cabinet members, observing the popularity of Pierre Trudeau, the young Justice Minister, decided that he would be ably qualified as leader. In supporting him they would also be on the winning side for what it was worth. Certainly by April the remark of one anonymous cabinet minister ran true, "It's a hell of a way to choose a Prime Minister".³⁷

By April 1st the rumours of pledged votes far exceeded the total number of delegates. On April 3rd the Globe and Mail reported: "Most of the non-Trudeau camps are in regular touch".³⁸ However the oligarchy could still not overcome its divisions. Meanwhile Sharp, the day before the ballot, decided to act. He declared his support for Trudeau and Drury

³⁷ Globe and Mail (April 3, 1968).

³⁸ Ibid.

(Industry Minister), Pepin (Energy) and Chrétien (Revenue) followed suite. Smallwood, the Liberal Premier of Newfoundland also supported Trudeau.

By Friday April 5th Scott Young of the Globe and Mail, concluded:

I am not expressing anyone else's opinion here, or purporting to quote delegates or to analyze a trend, or do a damn thing except to say that unless the delegates themselves can bring some return to reason, the Liberal Party right now is involved in a fraud on democracy--A few ward bosses like Joey Smallwood really call the shots.³⁹

Certainly Smallwood had almost absolute power over his band of delegates. The Globe and Mail suddenly launched a campaign against the inevitable oligarchical tendencies of Canadian politics but it did certainly prove its point. Quoting John Turner the Globe stated a fact which had been an acknowledged feature of Conventions: "Behind the scenes deals are taking place".⁴⁰ It also stated a remark by a Tory Senator referring to Stanfield's selection, "Everyone wants to make a deal".⁴¹

The Convention itself had 2,396⁴² voting delegates. Voting for the nine contestants was to be by ballot and through

³⁹Globe and Mail (April 5, 1968).

⁴⁰Globe and Mail (April 3, 1968).

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²C.B.C. Radio coverage of Convention.

the use of machine. On the first ballot Trudeau emerged with a lead and Martin, a man who had never been fully accepted by the Liberals, (the Morrison of the Party) withdrew.

If a "stop Trudeau" movement was to be launched by the members of the oligarchy opposed to him now was the time to act. They continued divided. James MacEachen however carried out one of the wisest moves of the convention and declared for Trudeau. A further polarisation of votes took place after the second ballot and finally on the third ballot a "stop Trudeau" movement occurred. Hellyer decided to back Winters in the final struggle of the Convention but Turner, who remained critical of the convention machination, refused to make use of his position as "power broker".

Trudeau thus achieved victory but a victory which reflected far less consensus than those of earlier conventions. By offering Cabinet posts to Hellyer and Turner Trudeau indicated a desire to unify the party. Trudeau now was placed in a position strangely reminiscent of Diefenbaker's, a position confirmed by subsequent events.

Trudeau's selection was by far the most open and democratic of those conducted by the Liberal Party. It reflected a victory for the new popular element over the more traditional "party brass" and greater participation by the rank and file than ever before. However, there remained the mysterious factor of the influence exerted by the old leader.

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Trudeau	752	964	1,051	1,203
Winters	293	473	621	954E
Turner	277	347	279	195E
Hellyer	330	465	377W	
Greene	169	104	29E	
MacEachen	165*	11E		
Martin	277W			
Kierans	103E			
Henderson	0E			
Spoiled	24	15	19	13
Total	<u>2,390</u>	<u>2,379</u>	<u>2,376</u>	<u>2,365</u>

43

E= eliminated

W= withdrawn

* Withdrawl notice too late to be accepted before next ballot

Within the Liberal Party the leadership convention has become an accepted feature of party organisation. It was the Liberal Party which first inaugurated the convention in reponse to the demands of the grass roots for greater participation. However, until the present time (1968) the outgoing Liberal leader has always been successful in seeing his chosen

⁴³Globe and Mail (April 8, 1968).

heir succeed him. Possibly Pierre Trudeau's election possessed more of an element of democracy in terms of a decision made by the constituency delegates, than previous conventions. The final results (See Page 119) are some indication of this. Pearson certainly never made his own choice public but there can be little doubt that he was satisfied with the result.

The outgoing leader within the Liberal Party appears to command vast support in contrast to the manner in which certain Conservative leaders have been hustled out of office. Perhaps this is a reflection of the success in office of the Liberal Party rather than an indication of the respect of the party members for the leadership.

Within the Liberal Party the oligarchy headed by the leader is indeed a powerful force. Perhaps today it is even as powerful as in the period of King's hegemony. A final remark by Ruth Bell is a fitting conclusion to this review of Canadian leadership selection, "The parliamentary system has been hospitable to the Convention; it has not, however, let it become indispensable".⁴⁴

⁴⁴R. Bell, op. cit., p. 215.

CONCLUSION

From a necessarily brief survey of the leadership selection process of the major political parties in Britain and Canada since 1945 it appears that Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" is a persistent but rapidly weakening force. There appears to be in Britain and Canada a more democratic approach to the leadership selection process by the political parties in terms of more open competition. In Canada and in Britain the representation of the various groups composing the party have been extended in the leadership selection process.

The manner in which Trudeau was elected was almost a model of pluralist democracy in action with the various groups fairly freely participating in the selection process. However this is not to deny that Michels' theory is still a continuing force. An oligarchy exists at the summit of every party, a small controlling group which is invariably more powerful than any group on strata below it. This is the axiomatic part of Michel's theory. Although Eldersveld may have produced evidence to show the power of the various groups in the stratarchy of the United States party system it is difficult to apply his findings to Canada and even more so in Britain. A federal system with a notoriously loose fragmented arrangement of political parties lends itself

to the establishment of more independent groups. In Canada the more rigid party system cannot prevent the power of provincial leaders but any "stratarchy" is nonetheless subordinate to a central oligarchy based upon the cabinet or shadow cabinet. British political parties which today permit the M.P.'s alone to select their leader are even less open to the influence of subordinate party groupings and correspondingly more prone to oligarchical domination.

When the oligarchy is united it manages to impose its collective decision upon the remainder of the party with comparative ease as was the case with Eden or Pearson. If the oligarchy is divided, a fairly frequent occurrence, the factions of the oligarchy bid for the support of the rank and file groupings. This gives the rank and file, or in the case of Britain the backbenchers, an opportunity to represent their views and play an active part in the selection process and it is here that a degree of democracy is at work. For the M.P. the reward for supporting the winner may be great. Failure to do so may jeopardise his political career. The position for an ordinary rank and file delegate is hardly so daunting.

The extent to which the various groups are permitted to compete and the measure of representation accorded to groups outside the oligarchy has already been used as an indication of the degree of democracy within a political party's leadership selection process. Clearly there is a

far greater measure of party democracy in Canada than in Britain according to this definition.

At the convention a majority vote decides the leadership, although the manipulation of delegates and the inbuilt advantages for "the party brass", still give the oligarchy great power. However practical politics and the organisation of large meetings requires "the work of benevolent dictators--in this instance the convention executive committee".¹ The selection of Stanfield was, it appears, an example of the old oligarchy reimposing its will upon the party. Britain is more closely akin to Michels' description of oligarchical rule in the political party. The Conservative Party until recently made no attempt to implement even an element of democracy in the leadership selection process as far as the rank and file was concerned. A comment by Gouldner is in a sense applicable to the Conservative Party before 1964:

Typically men and women of Western European society believe that leadership behaviour may be learned, that one does not have to be 'born to the purple' in order to lead. This in contradiction to the feudal conception of leadership which held that leadership skills were the distilled products of generations of rule.²

It appears that only recently the Conservative Party reluctantly took a step away from feudalism and aristocracy and

¹R. Bell, op. cit., p. 130.

²Gouldner, op. cit., p. 4.

into the mould of Western European society.

Leaders, as Kutner has stated,³ "to be really democratic should homologously reflect the group they serve". In the survey undertaken here the differences between the Canadian and British oligarchies and the men who lead the parties have already been considered. Michels' theory once again is more nearly applicable to Britain than Canada, where the social structure lacks any aristocratic bias. In Britain the educational background of the leaders who have been selected or have emerged since 1945 is sufficient indication of the "iron law of oligarchy" at work in some degree.

<u>Conservatives</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>University</u>
Churchill	Harrow	
Eden	Eton	Christ Church, Oxford
Macmillan	Eton	Balliol, Oxford
Home	Eton	Christ Church, Oxford
Heath	Chatham House, Ramsgate	Balliol, Oxford ⁴

Certainly Heath is an exception to the rule which appears to bind the selection of leaders in the Conservative Party and perhaps it is significant that his selection took place

³See p. 18.

⁴F. Elliot and M. Summerskill, A Dictionary of Politics (4th ed. rev.; London: Penguin, 1964), pp. 75, 29, 224, 166, 164.

under the new method.

In the case of the Labour Party the educational background of its leaders is also remarkably similar.

Labour Party	School	University
Attlee	Haileybury	University College, Oxford
Gaitskell	Winchester	New College, Oxford
Wilson	Wirral G.S.	Jesus College, Oxford ⁵

It is interesting to compare the educational backgrounds of these men with that of Ramsay MacDonald, the elementary school education miner's leader.

In many respects it appears that in Britain the rank and file are fairly content with the present situation. The Labour Party certainly provided a greater opportunity for a "democratic" leadership selection process to operate but the events of 1960-61 have cast doubts upon the influence of the rank and file within the party. Today the Labour Party displays the manner in which the reality of power entrenches a certain group and thus the "oligarchical tendencies (present) in every kind of human organisation which strives for the attainment of definite ends are revealed."⁶

⁵F. Elliot and M. Summerskill, op. cit., pp. 26, 389.

⁶R. Michels, op. cit., p. 11.

The soi-distant "accordion theory" in which the oligarchy absorbs an outside member who, by his leadership, will confer benefits upon them by giving their party electoral victory seems to be of increasing importance.

In Canada Trudeau is an obvious example of this phenomenon and in Britain the selection of Edward Heath may be viewed in a similar light. Yet ironically the aspect of party democracy described by Kutner, namely that of the leader "homologously reflecting the group he serves", is perhaps more readily exemplified in these men than in any of their post-war predecessors.

In Canada the similarities of the major parties is certainly reflected in the leadership selection process. Britain's major political parties are also moving closer together and here the leadership selection process is no exception. A powerful groups of Labour M.P.'s contrived to prevent Brown succeeding Gaitskell.

When Churchill was thought to be dying in 1953 and Eden was also seriously ill the establishment was in a panicky flutter. Not for the last time they did not want Butler so a powerful cabal--unknown to most of the cabinet--arranged that if Churchill died, Eden, though very sick, would be flown back to London to accept a commission to form a government.⁷

⁷Bevins, op. cit., p. 150.

Both British parties have leadership groups. Yet the Conservative Party, in response to pressure from its members has widened the participating group of the leadership selection process. The Labour Party certainly is more clearly an example of party democracy yet it is not without its oligarchical taint.

In Canada as we have seen both parties arrive at the selection of a leader through a process which presents an impressive display of democracy. Within the Liberal Party the influence of the outgoing leader until 1968 has been especially strong. Englemann and Schwartz have written:

As King, St. Laurent and Pearson all owed their cabinet appointments from 'outside' to the previous leader, we feel justified in saying that selection in at least two cases came close to appointment by the predecessor.⁸

In the Progressive Conservative Party although the outgoing leader has played a significant part it has been less important than that of his Liberal counterpart. The "Toronto Tory" group have been of special importance, wielding an influence far in excess of their position and numbers and undoubtedly at variance with the professed democratic nature of the Progressive Conservative Convention system for selecting new leaders.

⁸F. C. Englemann and M. C. Schwartz, op. cit., p. 194.

One aspect of the democratic nature of the leadership selection process which has only recently become a prominent feature of party organisation is the power to decide when the leadership selection process shall take place. No formal statement exists in Britain's Conservative Party nor in Canada with regard to this situation, in contrast perhaps to the Presidential System in the United States. Despite moves by certain sections of the Liberal Party in Canada such periodic reviews of the leadership have not been implemented. Only in the British Labour Party is such a provision made, in this case for annual leadership review.

The financial aspect of the leadership struggles is difficult to estimate. Certainly in an age of mass media it is a factor. Indeed in the United States it is fast becoming a primary political factor. No reliable figures can be obtained in Canada or Britain relating to the sums involved however or the sources of those sums.

Michels called the selection of leaders, "The cruel game without end"⁹ and it is an apt description. Yet he also stated:

The old leader must keep himself in permanent touch with the opinions and feelings of the masses to which he owes his position. Formally at least by its goodwill and pleasure.

Although the oligarchy has enormous power, usually

R. Michels, op. cit., p. 408.

out of all proportion to its position and size it must nevertheless take into account the feelings of the followers. Today the political parties of Britain and Canada appear to be providing for greater participation in the selection of leaders than ever before. Yet the salient fact remains that theoretically, "while all have the right to become functionaries few only possess the possibility."¹⁰ It is essential, if party democracy is to develop, for the various groups in the party to be allowed free competition and participation in the leadership selection process. It appears that in response to mass society's pressures the political parties are conceding these demands.

A recent comment by Peter Jenkins in the Manchester Guardian relating to the United States is of especial interest for the light it throws upon the home of the leadership convention which is taken as the personification of democratic leadership selection. He observed: "the arm twisting and horse trading now tends to be done before the conventions."¹¹

Inevitably organisation calls for an élite governing group. However this "oligarchy" need be neither closed nor prevent democratic participation as Michels states in his classic work.

¹⁰R. Michels, op. cit., p. 156.

¹¹Manchester Guardian Weekly (May 30, 1968).

Today in Britain and Canada the trappings of democracy are becoming more of a reality and although Michels' "iron law" is still operating the fetters are slowly yielding to the pressures of mass society.

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