

Once again, it seems, Canadians have been disappointed.

Apparently, this disillusionment will not prevent Campbell from becoming party leader, whether or not on the first ballot. With 45 percent of the delegates already committed to her cause, however uncertain their enthusiasm, it is difficult to see how she can be stopped. Her only serious opponent is not only improbably young for a prime minister, but hails from Quebec at a time when English Canada clearly would like to look elsewhere.

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Nonetheless, it is far from certain that Campbell can lead the PCs to victory in the next election. If Campbell is reduced to being "just a politician like the others," there is little reason to return to power the party that has provided such spectacularly unpopular government.

#### WHY NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVE?

Thus, the rapid decline of Campbell's star raises an interesting question. Why has there not emerged a more credible force for change? Given the patent alienation of the electorate, the times seem to be ripe for a radical shift in political loyalties.

To be sure, the notion that a leader of the PCs, even with a more clearly personal agenda than Campbell's, could significantly alter Canadian politics was bound to collapse under serious scrutiny. But why cannot

some other political formation effectively exploit the popular demand for change? With the NDP's loss of its bearings, why not a challenge from the left? Conversely, if the spirit of the times precludes a challenge from the left, why not one from the right? Just a few months ago, there seemed to be no limits to the electoral prospects of the Reform party, which did have a very clearly defined agenda for change.

Part of the answer may lie in the very distrust of politicians that is leading voters to seize on new faces. Little is needed for voters to conclude that "new" politicians are in fact just like the old ones. In their distrust of politicians, voters are unsparing. Even self-styled anti-politicians, like Preston Manning, may be found wanting. During his campaign against the Charlottetown accord, Manning was too quick to label the agreement as Mulroney's accord, appearing to engage in precisely the type of partisan politics that he had declared himself to abhor. Given the new focus of political debate on the deficit, the Reform party may have a new chance — provided that Manning can once again convince voters that he and his party really are a break from the old politics.

It may also be that Canadian voters sense full well that the problems facing contemporary Canada, economic and social as well as political, stem from forces that transcend state boundaries and that are beyond the control of any set of politicians. The striking similarity in the economic policies of contemporary provincial governments — Liberal, PC, and NDP — is a powerful demonstration of the extent to which the forces shaping policy lie elsewhere than the ideology of the party in power or the personal qualities of its leaders.

*Continued, see "Still Waiting" on page 118.*

## CAMPBELL HEADED FOR FIRST-BALLOT WIN DESPITE GAFFES

### Obstacles facing late comeback by Charest appear insurmountable

by Patrick J. Monahan

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With leadership front-runner Kim Campbell stumbling badly in early May, the door seemed to be opening for a late comeback by Environment Minister Jean Charest.

The last of the convention delegates were chosen by Conservative riding associations on May 8. Although Defence Minister Campbell possessed a commanding lead, up to 25 percent of the delegates were not

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*"The current race fits almost perfectly the established pattern of first-ballot conventions."*

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formally committed to a particular candidate. [Informal surveys had Campbell with 45 percent support, Charest with 27 percent, Edwards with 6 percent, and the remainder either uncommitted or unknown.]

The large block of uncommitted delegates has fuelled speculation that Campbell's "enemies of Canadians" comment at the May 13 candidates' debate, along with her controversial interview with Peter Newman in *Vancouver* magazine, would give Charest enough support to force at least a second ballot at the convention.

The problem for Charest, however, is that the structure of the lead-

ership race, and particularly the limited field of candidates, makes the chance of a second ballot extremely remote. Barring some unforeseen disaster, Campbell seems to have a first-ballot win all but locked up.

### ONE BALLOT OR TWO?

This basic political reality becomes apparent by looking back at the major national party leadership conventions held over the past 45 years. Table 1 presents the *first ballot* results of the 10 Liberal and Conservative leadership conventions held over that time. Half of the conventions were decided in a single ballot, while half required two or more ballots to select a winner.

There appear to be a number of clear distinctions between those conventions that are decided on a single ballot and those that require multiple ballots.

The first distinction relates to the number of candidates on the ballot. The smaller the field of candidates, the greater the chances the convention will be decided in a single ballot. Conversely, as the number of candidates increases, so do the number of ballots required to determine the winner.

Consider, for example, the four conventions held between 1948 and 1958, all of which were decided in a single ballot. In each instance, there were a mere three candidates on the

ballot. The leadership fields were so small in all four cases because a clear front-runner with an overwhelming lead emerged almost immediately. The commanding position of the front-runner discouraged potential challengers from entering the race and kept the number of contenders very low.

Contrast this to the number of candidates in conventions requiring multiple ballots in order to select the winner. In the five such instances, there were at least 7 and as many as 11 candidates on the first ballot. Moreover, there is a direct relationship between the size of the first-ballot field and the number of ballots required: the 1967 Conserva-

**Table 1**  
**First-Ballot Results**  
**National Leadership Conventions 1948-1990**

Convention	Candidates on 1st Ballot	Percentage of Delegates Voting for Candidate Finishing					Total No. of Ballots Required
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Others	
Liberal August 7, 1948	3	St. Laurent 69.1%	Gardiner 26.3%	Power 4.6%	—	—	1
Conservative October 2, 1948	3	Drew 66.6%	Diefenbaker 25%	Fleming 8.4%	—	—	1
Conservative December 14, 1956	3	Diefenbaker 60.1%	Fleming 30.1%	Fulton 9.1%	—	—	1
Liberal January 16, 1958	3	Pearson 77.8%	Martin 22.1%	Henderson 0.1%	—	—	1
Conservative September 9, 1967	11	Stanfield 23.3%	Roblin 15.6%	Fulton 15.4%	Hees 13.2%	32.6%	5
Liberal April 6, 1968	9	Trudeau 31.8%	Hellyer 14%	Winters 12.4%	Turner 11.7%	30.1%	4
Conservative February 22, 1976	11	Wagner 22.5%	Mulroney 15.1%	Clark 12%	Horner 10%	40.4%	4
Conservative June 11, 1983	8	Clark 36.5%	Mulroney 29.2%	Crosbie 21.4%	Wilson 4.8%	7.6%	4
Liberal June 23, 1984	7	Turner 46.4%	Chrétien 31.1%	Johnston 8.1%	Roberts 5.4%	9%	2
Liberal June 23, 1990	5	Chrétien 57%	Martin 25%	Copps 10.7%	Wappel 5.7%	1.5%	1

Source: Canada Watch staff

tive convention had the largest number of first-ballot candidates (11) and required the most ballots to choose a winner (5).

A second distinguishing factor between the first-ballot and the multiple-ballot conventions relates to the percentage of votes captured by the leading two contenders on the first ballot. (See Figure 1.)

In the five conventions decided in a single ballot, the top two contenders captured an average of 92 percent of the ballots cast. Contrast this to those conventions requiring multiple ballots: here, the top two contenders captured an average of only 53 percent of the first ballots cast. To put this another way, in conventions that go beyond the first ballot, almost half of the first-ballot votes (on average) go to candidates finishing in third place or lower.

### CONVENTION WON'T GO BEYOND ONE BALLOT

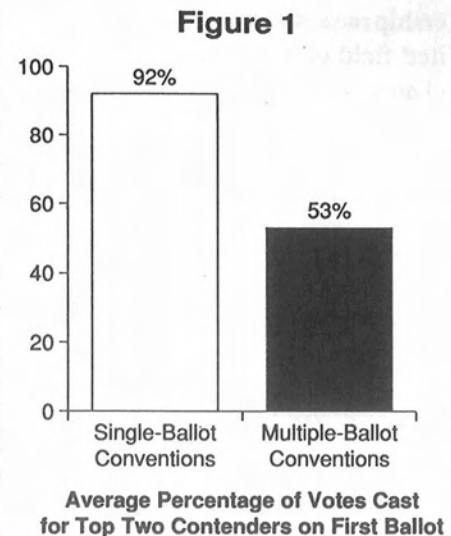
This brief review of the historical record makes it plain that the upcoming Conservative convention is almost certain to be decided in a single ballot.

The current race fits almost perfectly the established pattern of first-ballot conventions. There are only five candidates in the field and, of these, Patrick Boyer and Garth Turner have almost no visible support. Just as occurred in the 1948 to 1958 leadership races, an early front-

runner with a commanding lead emerged who seemed almost guaranteed to win the convention. This scared off most of the other potential challengers and even led to talk in early March of cancelling the entire event.

Similarly, the share of the vote going to the top two contenders — Campbell and Charest — appears to be in the range of 90-95 percent. Jim Edwards is said to enjoy the support of about 6 percent of the decided delegates, with Turner and Boyer combined standing at about 1 percent. The 90-95 percent support for the top two contenders fits the pattern of previous single-ballot conventions. Another way of looking at this is to observe that in all of the multiple-ballot conventions since 1948, the candidates finishing third or lower have attracted a *minimum of 22 percent* of the first-ballot vote. Edwards, Boyer and Turner combined have virtually no chance of reaching that level of first-ballot support.

What all of this points to is the fact that the contest on June 13 will be decided on a single ballot and that Kim Campbell will emerge as the winner. Her recent "gaffes" will probably reduce her margin of victory, chiefly because her image as a "political winner" who will sweep the Tories to a third mandate has been badly tarnished. But the small size of the leadership field and the



absence of serious third or fourth place challengers appears to rule out the possibility of a second ballot.

Of course, winning the convention is one thing, but winning a general election is quite another. As we reported last month, the vast majority of governing parties who change leaders tend to go down to defeat in the subsequent election [see "Campbell Cakewalk May Be Sign of Trouble in Fall Election" (April 1993) 1 *Canada Watch* 95]. Kim Campbell's recent controversies suggest that this same pattern may well be confirmed when Canadians go to the polls this fall.

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