MISRECOGNIZED MATERIALISTS: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN CANADIAN CONSTITUTIONAL POLITICS, 1938-1992

by

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Date **Oct 11, 2000**
Abstract

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Although Ronald Inglehart’s New Politics theory has attracted criticism, its influential distinction between materialist and postmaterialist values tends to go unquestioned. The influence of this distinction is particularly apparent when analysts interpret the “new” social movement emphasis on esteem and belonging as a “postmaterialist” departure from a traditional, or “materialist” focus on security. This way of understanding contemporary feminist and ethnocultural-minority movements is misleading because it rests on a one-dimensional view of esteem and belonging. By treating esteem and belonging as expressive, which is to say as purely aesthetic or psychological goods, New Politics obscures the instrumental significance of esteem and belonging for movements that represent traditionally marginalized constituencies.

This work undertakes a qualitative study of the participation of national social-movement organizations, “old” and “new,” in Canadian constitutional politics. The analysis is based on these actors’ presentations to parliamentary hearings and royal commissions on major constitution-related issues between the years 1938 and 1992.

Above all, the study illustrates what New Politics theory neglects: the instrumental role of social esteem and civic belonging as bases of voice and self-defence. I argue that attending to this role can help analysts to understand better the postwar politics of recognition. The work develops this argument in three major ways. First, I demonstrate the instrumental importance of esteem and belonging for the mid-century traditional left.
Second, I show that problems of misrecognition and disesteem presented feminists and ethnocultural minorities with severe difficulties in garnering a meaningful hearing for their security needs. Third, I analyze the discursive ways in which postwar “new” movement participants came to pursue forms of respect that had proved elusive in the past.

The work’s overall conclusion is this: the material nature of the politics of recognition is demonstrated by the extent to which increased esteem and belonging for traditionally disrespected groups has been paralleled by an expanded menu of recognized security concerns. The study’s major message follows from this conclusion: because struggles over esteem and belonging have crucial material stakes, they should not be contrasted a priori with struggles that may appear to target questions of security more directly.
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Summary and Concluding Thoughts

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAFC</td>
<td>Afro-Asian Foundation of Canada</td>
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<td>ACCL</td>
<td>All-Canadian Congress of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAVM</td>
<td>Canadian Association of Visible Minorities</td>
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<td>CCL</td>
<td>Canadian Congress of Labour</td>
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<td>CCNC</td>
<td>Chinese Canadian National Council</td>
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<td>CEC</td>
<td>Canadian Ethnocultural Council</td>
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<td>CIO</td>
<td>Committee for Industrial Organization</td>
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<td>CJC</td>
<td>Canadian Jewish Congress</td>
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<td>CLC</td>
<td>Canadian Labour Congress</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Communist Party of Canada</td>
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<td>CPC</td>
<td>Canadian Polish Congress</td>
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<td>FFQ</td>
<td>Fédération des femmes du Québec</td>
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<td>LDR</td>
<td>League for Democratic Rights</td>
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<td>LWR</td>
<td>League for Women’s Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>National Action Committee on the Status of Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOI</td>
<td>National Association of Canadians of Origins in India</td>
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<tr>
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<td>National Association of Japanese Canadians</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBCC</td>
<td>National Black Coalition of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCIC</td>
<td>National Congress of Italian Canadians</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCW</td>
<td>National Council of Women of Canada</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>NJCCA</td>
<td>National Japanese-Canadian Citizens’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUPGE</td>
<td>National Union of Provincial Government Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSAC</td>
<td>Public Service Alliance of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>QFL</td>
<td>Quebec Federation of Labour</td>
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<tr>
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<td>UCC</td>
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CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, SYMBOLIC CAPITAL AND RESPECT: AN INTRODUCTION

The great rise of "new" social movements representing the marginalized and oppressed comprises a central dimension of twentieth-century Western experience. Though overshadowed by cataclysmic wars, environmental destruction and state socialism's resounding defeat, the politics of recognition—the politics with which campaigns like feminism and anti-racism have become so closely associated—must surely warrant a top spot on the new century's agenda for historical stock-taking.

Indeed, the very reason that these campaigns are referred to as "new" social movements is their conceptual role in post-1960s social science as epigrammatic evidence of a fundamental transformation in the advanced capitalist states. This is a transformation that scholars employing the "new" movement label seek to interpret and understand.¹ Thus, the label "new" not only differentiates movements like feminism and multiculturalism from the "old" movements of socialism and trade unionism: it signals a contrast between the historical contexts in which these campaigns emerged. While the "old" movements are viewed as symptoms of the economic hardship wrought by the transition to industrial capitalism, the "new" are seen as telling reflections of the heightened significance of identity and culture in a more prosperous and increasingly post-

industrial world. On this view, the politics of recognition signals a striking departure from the modernizing era’s focus on material security in favour of a postmodern emphasis on questions of symbolism and aesthetics.

This work criticizes the adequacy of the new-versus-old contrast as a tool for interpreting the meaning and significance of the contemporary politics of recognition. It does so by examining some of the most central claims that are advanced by North American political science’s most influential version of the post-industrial society thesis, Ronald Inglehart’s New Politics theory. In particular, I shall argue that New Politics analysts misinterpret the “new” movement focus on questions of recognition and respect when they treat it as a “postmaterialist” emphasis that contrasts with the security and safety concerns that are said to have animated the “materialist” politics of old.

I endorse, and indeed provide supporting evidence for, the New Politics claim that movements like feminism and multiculturalism prioritize goods such as participation, rights, esteem and belonging. My major criticism is that much of the meaning and significance of “new” movement campaigns to realize these goods is obscured when these campaigns are contrasted with the “materialist” emphasis on security and safety. Thus, my analysis foregrounds two crucial points. The first point is that goods like participation, rights, esteem and belonging are instrumental to realizing and safeguarding economic

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security and personal safety. The second point is that a richer understanding of the politics of recognition can be realized by approaching both “new” and “old” equality-seeking movements on this common analytic basis.

The study proceeds by developing an historical and comparative analysis of the involvement of “new” and “old” movements in Canadian constitutional politics. From the 1930s Rowell-Sirois Commission to the parliamentary hearings of the 1990s, movements such as trade unionism, feminism, anti-racism and multiculturalism have been important participants in what Peter Russell describes as a “constitutional odyssey.” The attendant journey has engaged these movements in a series of civic debates over competing substantive visions of political community; debates that target what Alan Cairns calls Canada’s “informal constitutional culture of meanings and assumptions” as well.

This study approaches these debates as an opportunity to examine a significant role that movements such as trade unionism, feminism and ethnic and racial equality all share. This role is their service as vehicles for attaching increased civic respect to traditionally disrespected constituencies. At the same time, by offering a detailed account of how equality-seeking movements from “English Canada” have responded to the identity crisis of a fragmented political community, the work also participates in a Canadian studies tradition that approaches scholarship as an endeavour of collective self-understanding.

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As I aim to show, this is an endeavour in which social-movement critics of the dominant society can be of considerable assistance.

New Politics Theory

New Politics theory is a comprehensive theory of socioeconomic change, individual values and political culture. It addresses a daunting array of themes, such as the changed distribution of political skills, shifting notions of political left and right, the increased protest potential of Western publics and transformations in the bases of party choice. New Politics argues that these various changes are linked, and that they tend to be driven by a common force.

This force is a "culture shift," whose major contours Inglehart identifies succinctly as follows: "the values of Western publics have been shifting from an overwhelming emphasis on material well-being and physical security toward greater emphasis on the quality of life." Although New Politics attributes significant causal weight to the forces of values and culture, particularly by stressing the impact of these forces on the character of political conflict and social change, the theory also places considerable emphasis on structural and environmental factors. Indeed, Inglehart argues that the most important underlying stimulus for the culture shift is the unprecedented period of prosperity and peace enjoyed by Western nations in the decades following World War Two.

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6 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*.

7 Inglehart, *Silent Revolution*, 3.
New Politics theory elaborates this basic model of social and cultural change in three major ways. First, it advances what Inglehart calls the scarcity hypothesis, which posits that “one places the greatest subjective value on those things that are in relatively short supply.” The scarcity hypothesis suggests that the increased availability of economic security and personal safety has highlighted the importance of goods that prosperity and peace do not necessarily provide, such as free expression and a clean environment. Second, New Politics argues that citizens who came of age in the postwar era are better placed to pursue these goods politically than tended to be the case for earlier generations. Because the postwar “long boom” has fuelled great advances in access to higher education, growing numbers of people have gained the cognitive and communications skills that are necessary to effectively convey their demands. Thus, New Politics theory argues that the marked postwar increase in “unconventional participation,” such as protest marches and sit-ins, is a manifestation of the heightened self-confidence and political literacy that university and college graduates tend to enjoy.

Together, the scarcity hypothesis and the political-skills argument suggest that prosperity has helped to multiply the number of savvy activists who seek to focus their society on goods, like a clean environment, whose scarcity seems to reflect the legacy of capitalism’s emphasis on accumulation and growth. However, these two concepts do not satisfactorily explain why particular issues and values seem to have received increased emphasis in the postwar period. For example, brass hula-hoops may be scarce, and higher

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9 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 336.
education undoubtedly helps to equip people with the skills to demand them in effective ways, but our streets are not flooded with angry demonstrators demanding that the supply of brass hula-hoops be increased.

Thus, it is the third major dimension of New Politics theory, the concept of a shift from materialist to postmaterialist values, that provides the core explanation of the particular themes around which the new politics is said to revolve. For New Politics theorists, the materialism-postmaterialism distinction captures the central preoccupations of the old and new politics, explains why the character of political conflict has been changing and identifies the major process that has been driving the changes. The scarcity hypothesis and the political-skills argument supplement the postmaterialism thesis by suggesting, first, that goods like economic growth tend to reach a point of diminishing returns, and, second, that educational advances have enabled increasing numbers of citizens to become articulate social critics. The more central postmaterialism thesis is the aspect of New Politics theory to be addressed in this work.

The distinction between traditional materialist politics and the politics of postmaterialism contrasts the cleavages and issues that are fed by problems of deprivation and scarcity with those that are more likely to arise in settings of security and abundance. New Politics scholars employ this distinction in order to convey their central point: the great economic transformation of twentieth-century Western society has ushered in a corresponding transformation of values that is reshaping contemporary political landscapes. The postwar era of prosperity and peace, they argue, has led Western publics
to de-emphasize questions of economic security and personal safety in favour of focusing on issues such as self-expression, esteem and belonging.

This argument is informed by psychologist Abraham Maslow’s concept of a needs hierarchy. The needs hierarchy distinguishes between “lower-order” needs, which are physiologically essential to human survival, and “higher-order” needs, which comprise the social, intellectual and aesthetic concerns that individuals tend to emphasize when conditions of basic security have been reached. Thus, New Politics theory speaks of postmaterial value change in order to capture a transition to a context in which higher-order needs begin to become top priorities. At the same time, New Politics distinguishes between materialists and postmaterialists in order to identify actors that tend to emphasize one rather than the other category of needs.

The postmaterialism thesis does not assert a simplistically immediate correspondence between economic conditions and individual values. It contends that although short-term economic changes often alter immediate political priorities, individuals tend to develop their values on the basis of relatively early formative experiences. According to New Politics theory, this tendency means that postmaterial value change exerts its effects most profoundly through a long-term process of intergenerational population replacement. New Politics scholars derive their evidence for these arguments from a long-term project of quantitative survey analysis, whose basic message is that younger age cohorts tend to be more “postmaterialist” than older ones. Thus, New Politics theory traces the explosion of postmaterialist politics--the politics

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which is said to fuel the "new" social movements—to the civic arrival of the "baby boom" generation, which was raised under unprecedented conditions of peace and prosperity.

**New Politics Theory and the Politics of Recognition**

This study dissents from the common tendency to view equality-seeking social movements through the prism of the postmaterialism thesis. In particular, it takes issue with how New Politics approaches the question of "new" versus "old" social movements. The basic New Politics position is this: the traditional left's alleged relative indifference for issues of "belonging," "esteem," "civil rights," "free speech" and "participation" contrasts with the greater enthusiasm of "new" movements, such as feminism and ethnic and racial equality, which are said "to give a higher priority to nonmaterial needs."

This basic set of contrasts has much in common with a European body of work, New Social Movement theory, which also emphasizes the notion of a shift from the class politics of industrial society to a post-industrial politics of recognition and identity.

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12 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 68.


15 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 160.

16 Ibid., 56.

However, because the European theories are specifically attuned to critiquing Marxist understandings of societal development and human action, they are less relevant to a study that addresses a political and academic context in which Marxism's impact has been much less thorough and intense.\textsuperscript{18} The New Politics account is also widely accepted in North American political science. As even critics are quick to note, "an extensive body of research follows Inglehart's lead"\textsuperscript{19} because Inglehart offers the "most prominent and best developed theory of new politics."\textsuperscript{20} Indeed, "the concept of a materialist or postmaterialist value orientation has become a central variable in social science research."\textsuperscript{21}

Critics of New Politics theory often focus on methodological issues in quantitative analysis, such as how to discern materialist from postmaterialist value orientations among survey respondents, or whether Inglehart's survey questions tap values as opposed to attitudes or beliefs.\textsuperscript{22} A different set of disputes has arisen over whether postmaterialist

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values arise primarily from formative experiences of security, as Inglehart contends, or from increased access to higher education or other non-economic sources.\textsuperscript{23} Another line of criticism argues that postmaterialism can fuel a variety of political orientations, and not just the New Left outlook on which Inglehart and his colleagues tend to focus.\textsuperscript{24} What is striking about these critiques is their tendency to accept the basic distinction between the materialist politics of security and the postmaterialist politics of rights, participation, esteem and belonging.

Questioning the applicability of this distinction to the politics of recognition is the major theoretical preoccupation of this work. I shall argue that the contemporary focus on recognition and identity is misconstrued when analysts contrast it with a materialist emphasis on security and safety. A far more adequate understanding, I insist, foregrounds the instrumental importance that rights, participation, esteem and belonging tend to assume when historically disrespected actors attempt to focus democracy on their traditionally neglected safety and security concerns.

For many North American political scientists, the notion of postmaterialism supplies a ready shorthand for registering a set of understandings about the character of "new" and "old" social movements. There are three major ways in which this approach misconstrues equality-seeking social movements in general, and the politics of recognition


in particular. First, by presenting participation and rights as postmaterial goods, New Politics theory minimizes a crucial dimension of the significance that politics holds for disrespected and marginalized groups. Like their "old" working-class counterparts, movements representing women and minorities have campaigned for political and civil rights precisely because conditions of disfranchised voicelessness presented their constituencies with major problems of insecurity. Examples of these latter problems include hate crimes, women’s access to social programs and discrimination in the areas of housing and employment.

Thus, the significance of participation and rights as instruments for addressing these problems is effaced by how New Politics explains the "new" movement emphasis on rights and participation. This explanation, which holds that "economic and physical security" lead people "to devote more attention to postmaterialist concerns--such as politics,"25 skips too quickly over the problem of political exclusion. Political exclusion often confronts the excluded with grave problems of economic and physical security; concerns that have led both "old" and "new" movements to emphasize participation and rights as their basic avenue of redress.

Second, the postmaterialism dichotomy overlooks the importance of identity-related themes for the pre-war trade union and socialist movements. A well-worn contrast between the "class issues" of old and the "identity-based political claims" of prosperity encourages a false understanding of the traditional left as a spontaneous product of

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25 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 335.
economic deprivation. Even in conditions of terrible oppression and scarcity, workers were often torn between the class dimension of their identities and such potential competitor affiliations as nationality, ethnicity, region and religion. Marx's slogan that the workers have no country was no statement of fact: it was a pleading acknowledgment of the politics of identity in which socialism was necessarily enmeshed.

Furthermore, the imputed link between "non-materialist concerns" and "identity politics" loses considerable plausibility when one considers how the traditional left tended to frame its economic claims. After all, the movement placed great emphasis on the identity of its prototypical constituent—the manly "breadwinner." My point in calling attention to this emphasis is not simply to say that the prominent role that masculinity once played in left-wing rhetoric belies the New Politics view of identity as the novel fixation of "highly educated and well-paid young technocrats." It is also to argue that this role highlights one crucial way in which the contrast between materialist politics and identity politics is misplaced. Identity politics can be a highly materialist politics because successfully valorizing the group’s identity furthers the group’s capacity to make successful social claims.


29 Inglehart, Culture Shift, 67.
My third major line of criticism is that the New Politics heuristic promotes a highly one-sided view of the women’s and ethnocultural-minority movements. It ignores their sustained activism on issues of economic security and personal safety, and it comes close to presenting feminism and anti-racism as diversionary compensations for the boredom of affluence. New Politics analysts place great stress on survey evidence which seems to suggest that the ranks of the “new” movements “are not filled with those who suffer from any personal deprivation.” As Inglehart puts it, “postmaterialists tend to be those who start life with all the advantages . . . [and] that is why they are postmaterialists.” This evidence of economic privilege fuels a one-dimensional view of feminist and ethnocultural-minority movements as psychological havens in which participants seek a “sense of belongingness” and “self-fulfillment.” In short, the notion of postmaterialism tends to reduce concerns about “the status of women [and] the treatment of visible minorities” to the “aesthetic and intellectual needs” of the “modern middle class.”

The Material Significance of Particularistic Respect

These objections help to point up a larger misunderstanding to which New Politics theory all too easily leads. This misunderstanding is best considered by noting the following

30 Nevitte, *Decline of Deference*, 84.

31 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 171.


33 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 373.

central New Politics claim: "needs for a sense of belonging and the esteem of others... receive emphasis when the needs for sustenance and physical safety have been served." As an observation about what people do when they are not actually starving and face no gravely immediate physical peril, the point seems incontestable. But as critics of the alleged double standard surrounding humanitarian relief efforts in Europe and Africa suggest, starving and imperilled people who enjoy certain advantages of esteem and belonging often seem to fare better than those who do not.

In other words, the contrast between issues of esteem and belonging and issues of security and safety ignores the extent to which security and safety are socially produced goods. As I shall argue, to distinguish so sharply between questions of esteem and belonging and questions of security is to fail to reckon with what lacking esteem and belonging is all about—being deprived of the basic interactional regard on which people must depend in order to effectively convey their needs and aspirations to others.

At the extreme, excluding people from the basic framework of esteem and belonging that citizenship affords can be a way of compelling them to accept whatever conditions of existence the dominant society deems fit to offer. This is a point with which many migrant or "guest" workers might agree. But neither can formal citizenship rights guarantee that the formerly excluded will be able to garner a respectful hearing for their traditionally neglected concerns. For instance, women who attempted to participate in

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politics after winning the franchise were often demeaned as "old harpies, invariably childless and detesting babies." The corresponding message was that men were unwilling to listen to women's political opinions, and that humiliating attacks would replace the relative smoothness of regular interaction if women failed to accept men's views on topics such as employment opportunity and the disposition of assets in divorce.

The message that citizenship could not be a forum of esteem and belonging for women was often highly effective. According to sociologist Thelma McCormack, the "symbolic put-downs created a chilly environment," in which there was a heavy "stigma for women who tried [to participate in politics], and a psychological block for those who did not." In his work on prestige as a tool of social control, sociologist William J. Goode explains this dilemma by noting that humans are socialized to associate disesteem with "anger, rejection, and sometimes physical hurt," which in turn serve as threatening indicators of potential future problems, like the extreme powerlessness of ostracism and social exile. Thus, informally excluding people from esteem and belonging in the civic arena can be a way of creating second-class citizens when outright exclusion is no longer tenable.

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38 Ibid., 16.

This perspective on second-class citizenship suggests that social movements emphasizing questions of esteem and belonging target a quintessentially material problem: pursuing security in human society requires being able to focus others on one’s security needs. And when problems of esteem and belonging become problems of shaming and silencing, Goode’s view of prestige as a basis of social control becomes starkly evident. This understanding of prestige points up the fundamental material importance of goods like esteem, belonging, recognition and respect. The postmaterialism thesis neglects this understanding. What New Politics misses in this neglect is that to gain a meaningful hearing for any political complaint at all—including complaints about violence, personal insecurity and discrimination in employment—requires gaining acceptance as a worthy civic participant.

A useful oversimplification is to say that disrespected, second-class citizens are confronted with three major possibilities. First, as Erving Goffman observed in the 1950s, they can “play it safe” by adopting the “happy-go-lucky manner which Negroes . . . sometimes felt obliged to affect during interaction with whites.” Second, like the prototypically heretical religious sect, a disrespected group can withdraw from the wider society in order to become “insiders, the only society worth caring about.” The third option is to argue that one’s group deserves more respect than it receives. This study


focuses on how equality-seeking social movements have pursued the third option in Canadian constitutional debates.

Western citizenship once distinguished explicitly between those who deserved civic respect and those who did not. Propertied white males enjoyed a monopoly on citizenship, which they justified by saying that they possessed virtues that the excluded, whose participation was equated with the threats of civic corruption and decay, were said to lack.44 In the twentieth century, liberal democracies came to replace the old stress on particularistic virtue with a different understanding of citizenship.45 On this understanding, the concept of innate human dignity dictated the corollary injunction that the polity must offer equal respect to all its legal inhabitants.46 Campaigns against invidious distinctions in citizenship, distinctions that rely on pejorative stereotypes in order to justify withholding civil and political rights from particular groups, have often been animated by this more universalistic understanding of citizenship and respect.47

But underneath the philosophical and juridical notion of a basic human dignity that ought to command respect there still lurks a more sociologically-oriented emphasis on

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particularistic respect. At its strongest, this latter type of respect is captured by the notoriously conservative concept of honour. Although honour is a “protean concept, capable of many social and personal applications,”\(^4^8\) anthropologist Frank Henderson Stewart offers a particularly helpful approach. Stewart argues that the specificity of honour is best conveyed by saying that honour designates a “right to respect.”\(^4^9\) Now Stewart does not mean that honour refers to just any right to respect, but only to the sort of right to respect that is “losable.”\(^5^0\)

By contrast, the right to respect that political liberalism deduces from innate human dignity is of a permanent nature. As Charles Taylor points out, the concept of dignity enjoins us to “respect . . . a universal human potential . . . rather than anything a person may have made of it.”\(^5^1\) A polity that takes this belief in dignity seriously will not, for instance, strip heroin addicts of their voting rights. Thus, the difference between permanency and losability points up a contrast between two different forms of recognition, to which two different sorts of rights to respect tend to correspond.

Although the permanent right to respect that corresponds to dignity follows from our recognition of a basic human potential rather than from what anyone may “have made


\(^{50}\) Ibid., 23-24.

of it,” the losable right to respect that honour confers will tend to depend precisely on what one is seen to “make of their potential.”\textsuperscript{52} This work is primarily concerned with how equality-seeking movements have pursued the latter, particularistic type of respect; with how they have sought prestige and social esteem in order to command recognition as worthy civic participants.

People often seek particularistic respect because garnering respect for one’s contributions, virtues or exceptional qualities is a way to realize esteem and belonging.\textsuperscript{53} In this instrumental sense, esteem and belonging are resources of social interaction that help people more effectively to pursue their aims and aspirations. To take the extreme case, for instance, the person who lacks esteem and belonging is a pariah; someone who is routinely punished with deliberate, thoroughgoing non-cooperation. Conversely, people who are respected for their contributions, virtues or exceptional qualities tend to be rewarded with the ready assistance of those who respect them.

What is crucial to note is that the formal equalization of political and civil rights in modernity has transformed the context in which particularistic respect can be pursued. Groups that were once wholly excluded from the civic arena, such as women, racial and ethnic minorities and working-class people, can now use political and civil rights in order to pursue forms of recognition and cooperation that exclusion once aimed to foreclose. Indeed, their quests for recognition and cooperation have derived great ideational assistance from the basic egalitarian message that the notion of universal dignity so clearly

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

sends. But at the same time, "latecomers" to liberal citizenship have also found that inclusion under the rubric of equal dignity does not eliminate the political significance of differences in particularistic respect. This realization, I argue, is the most crucial stimulus for the postwar politics of recognition and respect.

The instrumental dimension of particularistic respect is crucial. As political scientists Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram argue, the distribution of social esteem helps to explain "why some groups are advantaged more than others independently of traditional notions of political power." A similar point is raised by political scientist Martin Gilens, who shows that the most powerful predictor of American hostility to welfare spending is support for the proposition that "blacks [and] poor people are lazy." For their part, Bruce Doern and his co-authors note that "Canadian public opinion differentiates and ranks social programs and their clientele groups according to [certain criteria of] ethical or political legitimacy," which penalize the "unemployed, immigrants and unions" in particular. These arguments and findings highlight the basic political importance of esteem and belonging; as crucial resources of effective civic participation and self-defence.


By contrast, New Politics theory treats esteem and belonging as purely expressive goods. It speaks of campaigns that pursue "cultural and humanitarian gains,"\(^{58}\) of movements that stress "life-style issues,"\(^{59}\) and of protest groups that "provide their members with a sense of belongingness."\(^{60}\) This expressivist perspective on esteem and belonging leads New Politics analysts to neglect two crucial points, which this work will seek to illustrate in some detail.

First, traditionally disrespected groups have often found that problems of esteem and belonging lead to problems of safety and security. The World War Two demonization and internment of Japanese Canadians stands as a clear example of this latter point. Second, the equality-seeker's focus on questions of esteem and belonging is driven by the instrumental importance of particularistic respect—a resource of interaction that helps its beneficiaries to more effectively pursue their security and safety concerns. For instance, the increased visibility of women's perspectives in contemporary economic policy debates reflects the great strides made by earlier feminists in attaching social esteem and civic belonging to female participants, who were once routinely demeaned and ignored.

By neglecting the material significance of particularistic respect, the postmaterialism thesis misconstrues equality-seeking movements that emphasize themes of civic belonging and social esteem. As I shall argue, a good gauge of the material significance of the politics of recognition is this: increased recognition for the neglected

\(^{58}\) Inglehart, "Silent Revolution," 1012.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.

\(^{60}\) Ibid.
virtues and contributions of traditionally excluded groups has helped to dramatically expand the polity’s menu of security and safety concerns. Just as the traditional left waged a struggle for respect that helped to focus the polity on questions of unemployment and income security, so the “new” movements have pursued recognition in order to raise problems—such as unequal employment opportunities, pervasive social discrimination and hate crime—on which disrespected actors were once scarcely able to speak.

This is not to say that the instrumental dimension exhausts the significance of esteem and belonging, or that the instrumental importance of esteem and belonging is all that there is to study about social movements. For example, Axel Honneth and Charles Taylor offer subtle and rewarding accounts of the politics of recognition that pay particular attention to questions of individual authenticity and self-development. This study takes a different approach. It interprets the politics of recognition as a response to high-stakes imperatives of social esteem and civic belonging, and it grounds this interpretation in an understanding of recognition as a crucial basis of social and political power. These imperatives are not “postmaterial.” As this work shall show, they tend to take centre stage when disrespected latecomers strive to focus others on their previously neglected concerns and needs.

The Setting: Constitution as Civic Context

To locate constitutional politics as a central arena in which Canadian equality-seeking movements have struggled over issues of recognition and respect is fitting. As Cairns

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points out, the most constitutional of questions is "who are we as a people?"62 And when Canada has asked itself this question, traditionally marginalized actors have asked back: "what is our place in the polity?"; "what is our role in influencing its direction as against the roles of other citizen identities and claims?"

The constitutional context has specificities that must be addressed. The parliamentary committees and royal commissions which furnish this study with its empirical basis have largely been the preserve of well-heeled lawyers and political professionals. And their frequently arcane subject matter, such as the legal meaning of the phrase "distinct society" and the desirability of various mechanisms of constitutional amendment, often thickens the patina of distance. Most typically, the snub is repaid. Constitutional politics has seen little of those important currents within feminism, anti-racism and socialism for which the realm of the official is the antithesis of grassroots authenticity. Even the "politics of transgression," which deploys a theatrics of ridicule against the self-importance of authority, bypasses the constitutional arena for more viscerally compelling targets, such as military-industrial complexes, corporate-university presidents and motorcading dignitaries.63

But if constitutional politics provides a field of action that seems remote, inauthentic and of interest primarily to the conventional, it also highlights for analysis an absolutely fundamental exigency that equality-seekers face. This exigency is that of using

62 Cairns, Reconfigurations, 9.

civic dialogue in order to alter the perceptions and practices of people who are not prospective movement supporters. The Canadian constitutional record is useful terrain for a study of equality-seeking movements precisely because the record shows dedicated Marxists, unlettered trade unionists, passionate feminists and uneasy ethnocultural minorities attempting to engage interlocutors whose identities and affiliations were often quite different.

Constitutional politics is not only significant for the dialogue that it engenders, but also for its potential to create outcomes whose effects reverberate throughout the wider society. Because it is the polity's most authoritative transmitter of civic messages and cues, a constitution can provide a compelling platform for actors who have been affected negatively by the messages and cues that exclusion once denied them the capacity to shape. It is certainly true that, by encouraging participants to orient their message-making endeavours toward the polity at large, this civic-communication function imposes something of a mainstream bias on the content of the messages. But this function also mitigates some of the elitism that characterizes the immediate setting of constitutional debate.

In short, constitutional politics is characterized by an ambivalent mixture of exclusivity and openness, in which the remote and the abstract commingle with the populist and the pressing. And although the class bias of the constitutional setting may bring the alleged foot-soldiers of postmaterialism to the fore, registering the apparent empirical connection is not an appropriate substitute for wrestling with the political significance of the focus on rights, participation, esteem and belonging itself.
It is undoubtedly the case that feminists and ethnocultural minorities have been prominent actors in Canada’s postwar constitutional debates. It is also true that these actors have emphasized the themes that New Politics associates with postmaterialism, and that their representatives have typically come from the educated middle class. But the common tendency in Canadian political science to package these tendencies as an “expression of the new politics of postmaterialism” is far too misleading. Categories of comprehension that automatically hive off the politics of esteem and belonging from an allegedly more traditional focus on security ignore some of the most central forms of insecurity in human society. It has been the remarkable contribution of both “new” and “old” equality-seeking movements to force Canadian constitutionalism and citizenship to respond to these forms of insecurity, whose opposites—esteem, belonging, recognition and respect—were once distributed quite differently.

Symbolic Capital

This study’s major tool for analyzing these social-movement struggles is the concept of symbolic capital. Sociologist and cultural theorist Pierre Bourdieu has developed this concept in order to call attention to honour and esteem as powerful social products that are produced in a context of unequal power. Following Marx, Bourdieu understands

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capital in the generic sense as "a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible." Where Bourdieu diverges from Marx is by arguing that, along with the economic form, there exists an important currency of social power that can be called symbolic capital.

Symbols, argues Bourdieu, are "such as to inspire actions which are very directly material." To call attention to the material stakes of symbolic conflict, Bourdieu emphasizes the importance of reputation and prestige for the ability of agents to participate successfully in social exchanges. He writes: "just as there are professions, like law and medicine, in which those who practice them must be 'above suspicion,'" so for instance a social group "has a vital interest in . . . its capital of honour, i.e., its capital of honourability."

With his emphasis on capital, Bourdieu is an egalitarian and a social critic. He shows how naturalized attributes like good taste, manliness and sophistication operate in social interaction as capital, that is, as bases of control and power. Bourdieu also situates symbols as capital in order to challenge the common tendency to see economics as the exclusive locus of competitive self-interest. This tendency, argues Bourdieu, defines the realm of culture in implicit opposition to the economic; as "noneconomic, and therefore disinterested." Too strong a contrast between the economic and the symbolic means


67 Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory, 181.

68 Ibid.

that the symbolic becomes “constituted negatively . . . as lacking concrete or material
effect, in short, [as not only] disinterested but also useless.”

Prior advantages of power, such as those conferred by the ownership of economic
capital, can be converted via what Bourdieu describes as processes of “social alchemy”
into goods such as cultural refinement, good manners and philanthropy. Because the
resultant symbols appear *prima facie* to have nothing to do with power, they help to
naturalize inherited privilege as achieved excellence. Accordingly, Bourdieu understands
symbolic capital as “one of the mechanisms which . . . make capital go to capital.”

Bourdieu’s critics counter that what he in fact offers (as the notion that capital goes to
capital might be fairly held to indicate) is simply a sophisticated but ultimately circular
argument about the inevitable ubiquity of domination. This reproach may derive
particular encouragement from the thrust of Bourdieu’s empirical work, which addresses
issues such as class biases in educational outcomes, the highly political function of high
culture and the workings of male prestige in traditional societies. It is therefore useful
to turn Bourdieu’s focus on how the powerful accumulate and deploy symbolic capital in

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71 Ibid., 192.
72 Ibid., 181.
the opposite direction—and look at how subordinate agents strive to position themselves as virtuous and important; as deserving of regard, esteem and respect.

**Tensions and Constraints**

The notion of symbolic capital is useful not only as a means of foregrounding the prior relationships of unequal power in which political signification is invariably embedded. It also helps us to understand better the tendency of respect-seeking actors to refrain from wholesale revolutionary attacks in favour of deploying those bases of civic voice, or capitals, that lie most readily at hand. As political scientist Sidney Tarrow notes, political weakness often produces an ironic corollary: the symbols used by oppositional movements are more often symbols of consensus than of revolt. This seems particularly to be the case in official debates about constituting citizenship, which take ongoing common membership in the polity as the hegemonic assumption, and which tend to discuss common values—such as equality, freedom, solidarity and happiness—in highly generalized terms.

This background helps to explain the character of the signifying work that most commonly appears in this study. Unlike Aboriginal movements, the constitutional actors that I analyze have not been reacting to the legacies of colonization that can make Canadian citizenship an object of ambivalence and even contempt. And unlike francophone movements from Quebec, even federalist ones, their basic attachment to Canadian citizenship has not found major challenges from competing national loyalties.

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Instead, the participants on which this work focuses have tended to assume that realizing esteem and belonging in Canadian citizenship is unambiguously desirable.

Furthermore, they have tended to pursue their projects of respect and recognition by deploying symbolic capitals whose currency is recognizably mainstream. From the Rowell-Sirois period well into the 1950s, the most common social-movement capitals in citizenship were the dignity and pride of the manly provider and the civic contributions of women-as-wives-and-mothers. The postwar era saw a new emphasis on the cosmopolitan sophistication of multicultural diversity, as well as on the first-hand expertise that makes victims of past oppression the most effective vindicators of Enlightenment values. Finally, recognition in the Charter of Rights has produced a symbolic capital of constitutional attachment, which positions disadvantaged groups as the helpful authenticators of the liberal claims of postwar Canadian nationalism.

In short, these approaches to seeking respect have not tended to be wildly transgressive of prevailing societal values. But rather than criticizing the evidently accommodationist tendencies of social-movement participants, I emphasize the inescapable tensions that result when marginalized groups pursue respect from more powerful actors. These tensions impose constraints that only the wealthy, violent, or socially indifferent can easily ignore.

Methodological Considerations

This work draws on a variety of academic traditions and disciplines, such as political science, political philosophy, history, sociology and cultural studies. It does so in the
service of a common objective. This objective is to explore why and how equality-seeking participants in Canadian constitutional debates have sought to position themselves and their constituencies as worthy of social esteem and particularistic respect. The venues on which I focus are major parliamentary committees and royal commissions which addressed key issues of constitutional change between the years 1938 and 1992. Thus, the study draws its primary source material from the representations that social-movement actors made to these committees and commissions.

Historical Periods

The study is structured chronologically: it sets social-movement participation within a larger narrative of Canadian constitutional development. This approach helps the analysis to focus on the different problems of recognition and respect that have faced equality-seeking movements at different historical points, and on how these actors have altered their approaches over time. The historical approach also lets the author tell an interesting story of citizenship development by taking the reader through Canada’s “constitutional odyssey”\(^7\) from the perspective of social-movement participation.

Three major periods are covered in this study. The attempt to construct a national welfare state, which began during the Great Depression and was well under way by the end of the Second World War, is the setting for chapters 2 and 3. The welfare-state debates of 1938-45, which led to a remarkable transformation in the federal government’s

\(^7\) Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey*. 
role, show Canadian citizenship beginning to assume dimensions of meaning that were almost unthinkable in the high days of laissez-faire.

Chapters 4 and 5 cover the years 1950-82. Although this period featured intense bouts of attempted constitutional reform, it also contained sustained lulls of relative inactivity. It focused on devising a federal response to Quebec nationalism, establishing a domestic formula for amending the constitution and securing agreement on a nation-wide charter of rights. These endeavours were shaped profoundly by the postwar international emphasis on human rights, which Ottawa sought to harness as a basis of national identity-formation in response to the diminished prestige of the British connection.

The 1987-92 controversies surrounding the unsuccessful Meech Lake and Charlottetown constitutional proposals provide the setting for chapter 6. In particular, these failed constitutional-reform attempts responded to Quebec’s rejection of the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The character of the ensuing debates was also affected powerfully by an important feature of the post-Charter civic environment. In this new environment, particular movement actors wielded symbolically potent bases of constitutional recognition, which made traditional approaches to national self-definition less tenable than before.

The Fora

The study begins with the 1938 public hearings of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. Ottawa summoned the Royal Commission in response to a set of jurisdictional roadblocks that militated against the social reforms that restive workers were
demanding. Further analysis of social-movement politics during the welfare state period focuses on the three wartime parliamentary committees that solicited citizen input on the topic of postwar reconstruction; the 1940 House of Commons Special Committee on Unemployment Insurance, the 1943 House Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re- Establishment and the 1943 House Special Committee on Social Security.

I approach the social-movement role in the postwar constitutional politics of identity and nation-building by looking at Ottawa’s initial response to the new international emphasis on human rights; the 1950 Senate Special Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Vehement provincial opposition to the idea of a national bill of rights meant that citizens favouring such a project would see three more sets of parliamentary hearings before the 1982 Charter of Rights was finally entrenched. These hearings are the 1960 House of Commons Special Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada and the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada.

Excluded from this study are two parliamentary committees which addressed similar questions, but heard only from invited “experts”; the 1947 Special Joint Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the 1978 Senate Special Committee on the Constitution. The other major constitutional preoccupation of this period was of course Quebec’s Quiet Revolution. I examine the social-movement response by studying the often angry reaction that confronted the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism between the years 1963-65.
Finally, I address the period of Charter recognition and resurgent Quebec nationalism by focusing on the public hearings of two landmark parliamentary committees. These committees are the 1987 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution and the 1991-92 Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada. Two additional parliamentary committees which covered substantially similar topics are excluded for reasons of redundancy; the 1988 Senate Submissions Group on the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord and the 1990 House Special Committee to Study the Proposed Companion Resolution to the Meech Lake Accord.

Thus, the study draws the vast majority of its primary research material from the public hearings of parliamentary committees. The exceptions are the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations and the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, whose great importance to Canada’s constitutional development warrants their inclusion. It is important to note that this work focuses on social-movement participation in these constitutional venues rather than on the venues themselves. Although noteworthy exchanges between citizen witnesses and their elite interlocutors are analyzed and discussed, the recommendations made by the various committees and commissions, their personnel and their specific contributions to Canadian constitutional development are not a major focus of this work. When I do address these latter questions, the purpose is to illuminate salient features of the particular context in which the movements were acting.

Parliamentary committees, as opposed to royal commissions or roving task forces, comprise the major terrain of research because they bring citizen witnesses face to face
with parliamentarians—the actors whose duty it is to represent the wider political community that the witnesses are ultimately trying to reach. Furthermore, their particular subject matter—the stuff of citizenship development and “high” constitutional politics—has helped social-movement participants to raise “big picture” issues of citizenship, identity and inclusion. This combination of high occasion and interactive civic forum affords a revealing look at the “public faces” that Canadian equality-seeking movements have presented in their struggles for increased recognition and respect.

Unavoidably, the study neglects a variety of constitutional arenas. Such arenas include the 1977 Task Force on Canadian Unity, the 1990 Citizens’ Forum on Canada’s Future, the six, publicly televised Renewal of Canada Constitutional Conferences of 1992 and a host of provincial inquiries into constitutional issues. But these omissions do not detract from the work’s major contextual focus: the federal parliamentary committees and major royal commissions that reflect Canada’s major constitutional preoccupations since the 1930s. By focusing on these latter venues, the work captures the most important aspects of the social-movement role in Canada’s major post-1930s constitutional debates. The attendant historical journey takes the reader from the interwar and mid-century focus on constructing a welfare state, to the increased postwar preoccupation with issues of rights and identity, and on to the agonizing unity battles of more recent decades. And as shall be seen, these constitutional vantage points clearly illustrate the rise to prominence of “new” equality-seeking actors in Canadian citizenship. Although a more comprehensive focus would certainly provide additional detail, the picture itself would not significantly change.
The Actors

For purposes of coherence and generalizability, this work studies social-movement organizations that are oriented toward the basic arena of action under study; Canadian citizenship. Hence, provincially- and municipally-based organizations are excluded. More specifically, the work studies national organizations that tend to be placed on one or the other side of the contrast between “new” and “old” equality-seeking movements. These movements are trade unionism, communism, feminism and ethnic and racial equality. Although these movements have often emphasized dissimilar issues and goals, they have all faced significant problems of civic marginalization and social disesteem.

The traditional left is represented by nationally-based trade unions, particularly the major umbrella organizations. The Communist Party is also included. Although the Party is now irrelevant, its once-prominent notoriety and dogged focus on questions of exploitation and class warrant inclusion in a study of equality-seeking movements. By contrast, the CCF-NDP is omitted because its electoral ambitions and participation in government have made its focus more diffuse.

Two major national women’s organizations, the National Council of Women of Canada and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, appear repeatedly in the study. More specifically issue-based feminist groups, such as the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, are excluded, as is the quasi-governmental Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. A plethora of ethnocultural-minority organizations, some of which seem to come and go as constitutional participants on an almost random basis, is covered. To my knowledge, no national organization representing visible
minorities which appeared before this study's constitutional fora is missed. However, I have narrowed the incredibly wide ethnic-minority field somewhat by including only the dominant national organizations representing Canadians of Jewish, Italian, Ukrainian and Polish ancestry.

Finally, the study does not cover organizations representing francophone Quebecers or Aboriginal peoples. The participation of these actors in Canadian citizenship has focused increasingly on issues of sovereignty and treaty rights, which cannot be adequately studied within a framework that analyzes how movements have pursued recognition within a single common citizenship. The point is not to say that Quebec nationalists and First Nations activists have been indifferent to questions of recognition and respect. It is instead to emphasize the specificity of their search for group-differentiated arrangements which reflect their respective historical claims.

Rather than pursuing respect as a basis of inclusion, Quebec nationalist and First Nations movements have more often been urging the hegemonic citizenship to observe a more respectful distance. This distancing emphasis can be underlined by noting the absence of any significant Aboriginal push for voting rights prior to the 1960 enfranchisement.\(^77\) Similarly, even before the Quiet Revolution and the ensuing independence movement, organizations representing francophone Quebecers tended to shun Canadian constitutional fora. When such organizations did appear, they did not usually demand an increased role within a common Canadian citizenship. For instance,

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when La fédération des travailleurs Catholiques du Canada participated in the wartime unemployment insurance debates it requested “family allowances [for] the province of Quebec” on the ground that “Quebec is noted for its large families.”

Even more strikingly, La fédération des femmes Canadiennes francaises approached the wartime social-security hearings by reading a letter from an official of the Catholic Church. This letter authorized the group to “request the Federal government to grant financial aid to the provinces in order to enable them to establish ... health insurance.”

In short, the problematic of respect as a basis of increased inclusion is inadequate for studying actors whose relationship to Canadian citizenship has been mediated so heavily by other loyalties and considerations.

The sole exception to the decision to exclude Quebec-based groups is the League for Women’s Rights, which appeared before the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations to argue for the enfranchisement of Quebec women (who lacked the vote until 1940). Examining the presentation offered by the League, which saw Canadian citizenship as a valued arena of participation for Quebec women, affords a focus on suffragism that this study’s temporal framework would otherwise preclude.

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78 La fédération des travailleurs Catholiques du Canada, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Bill No. 98 Respecting Unemployment Insurance, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 3, 24 July 1940, 221.

79 La fédération des femmes Canadiennes francaises, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Social Security, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 15, 28 May 1943, 409.
Summary of the Work

This study’s first substantive chapter is “Searching for a Forum: Social Movements at the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations.” It features trade unions, Communists and women’s groups; no ethnocultural-minority organization appeared before the 1938 Royal Commission. In particular, this chapter emphasizes the traditional left’s role as the first Canadian social-movement actor to call for a bill of rights. Because working-class demands for collective bargaining and economic reform had been stymied repeatedly by the repressive apparatus of the Canadian state, trade unionists and Communists saw the connection between civil liberties and economic security with particular clarity. Although the point is simple, it is important to make. Against New Politics theory, the Depression-era civil liberties advocacy of trade unionists and Communists highlights the extent to which questions of material security are often questions of participation and rights.

Women’s groups also emphasized problems of economic security, and they also protested against problems of civic exclusion and marginalization that relegated their security concerns to the Canadian political sidelines. This basic similarity in movement outlooks suggests that the distinction between materialism and postmaterialism can be unduly misleading. In the case of the Great Depression, the New Politics distinction overlooks the importance of rights and participation for the traditional left while missing the feminist focus on economic security.

More telling is the contrast between the measures of success that male and female presenters enjoyed in persuading the Commission to take their respective security
concerns seriously. Traditional left participants made good use of a symbolic capital of manliness, which depicted the Depression as a dangerous threat to the family stability that only the securely employed and self-respecting male breadwinner could provide. Conversely, women's views on economics and politics were trivialized and ignored by the all-male Commission, which preferred to divert discussion to what it regarded as more suitably female issues. I argue that this contrast points up the inadequacy of treating esteem and belonging as postmaterialist goods. A civic arena that was uniquely attuned to men's concerns about respect and recognition was also a remarkably uncongenial environment for women's economic aspirations and complaints.

The third chapter in this work, "Social Movements in Wartime: Particularistic Respect, Particularistic Exclusion," studies the same basic group of actors at a time when working-class politicization was pushing liberal citizenship in new directions. However, I argue that the New Politics understanding of materialism captures the specific nature of this traditional left advocacy poorly. Rather than adopting a cap-in-hand approach that sought security at any price, the traditional left was profoundly concerned with questions of esteem and belonging. Above all, working-class advocates insisted that social programs were an inadequate substitute for meaningful employment, in which workingmen could find dignity and esteem.

As was the case in the Depression, the emphasis on masculinity constituted a potent symbolic capital that was unavailable to female participants. Indeed, chapter 3 shows that the wartime premium on masculinity led to women's exclusion from most of the central reconstruction debates. Although women's groups had prepared
comprehensive proposals on the topic of postwar economic security, which they repeatedly asked federal reconstruction planners to consider, Ottawa deliberately confined women's parliamentary-committee input to the topic of public health insurance. Thus, the mid-century contrast between feminism and the traditional left appears not as a contrast between materialism and postmaterialism, but as a contrast between actors who were able successfully to anchor their political claims in the prevailing symbolic economy of esteem and belonging and those who were not.

Whereas New Politics theory locates the increased postwar emphasis on minority rights and women's equality as the innovation of a generation raised amidst prosperity and peace, this emphasis was firmly established long before the baby boom's political arrival. Indeed, the new international discourse of human rights was a direct response to previous experiences of insecurity: a world shaken by the terrible fascist example invested human-rights discourse with a remarkable moral fervor that insisted "never again." In the Canadian case, anxieties about national identity in an increasingly post-colonial world intersected with this human rights emphasis to produce a civic environment in which the claims of equality-seeking movements found dramatically increased resonance.

Thus, chapter 4, "Rights, Universalism and Virtue," analyzes the changed fortunes of equality-seeking in the new civic environment by looking at the 1950 and 1960 parliamentary hearings on human rights and at the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism of the 1960s. In particular, this chapter focuses on the participation of ethnocultural minorities. This participation points up a revealing paradox: the postwar emphasis on humanist universalism helped social movements to more effectively pursue
particularistic recognition for the neglected virtues and contributions of their constituencies.

Although these movements focused clearly on issues of esteem and belonging, the notion of a postmaterialist departure from safety and security concerns offers a remarkably misleading way of understanding this focus. More accurate is to say that they capitalized on what had become regarded widely as the "lessons of war" in order to more effectively confront the misrecognition and disrespect that had so often militated against their security and safety in the past. Communities that had experienced unjust internment, pervasive employment discrimination and, in many cases, a general relegation to the fringes of the Canadian economic and political life, did not discover the politics of esteem and belonging as the sated beneficiaries of postwar plenty.

Chapter 5 looks at "Charter Politics as Materialist Politics" by studying the early 1970s and early 1980s parliamentary-committee hearings that led to the 1982 entrenchment of the Charter of Rights. This chapter argues that social-movement participants capitalized on the intersection between postwar Canadian nationalism and the international human rights emphasis in a way that furnished feminists and ethnocultural minorities with a basis of increased symbolic power. In particular, I call attention to how formerly disrespected actors mobilized prestige considerations, considerations which revolve invariably around questions of esteem and belonging, as bases of social control.

The longstanding role of prestige considerations as tools of shaming and silencing helps to place the social-movement politics of recognition and respect in a revealing light. Rather than following New Politics theory by speaking of the expressive concerns of
postwar prosperity, it is more useful to say that formerly disrespected agents were responding to an age-old imperative. This imperative is that enjoying security in human society depends on the judgments and perceptions of others. Thus, the proponents of feminism and multiculturalism sought increased security by seeking to transform, or at least to neutralize, the hostile judgments and perceptions with which their past insecurity had so often been associated. And they did so far less as the unprecedented carriers of a “new” politics of esteem and belonging, and far more by following the lead of their former shammers and silencers: they wielded threats of disesteem and prospects of prestige as tools of voice and power.

The final substantive chapter in this work is chapter 6; “From Meech Lake to Charlottetown: Recognition, Power and Visions of Political Community.” It characterizes the feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants in Canada’s traumatic post-Charter debates as symbolically transformed participants. Above all, recognition in the 1982 Charter furnished these actors with an authorized symbolic capital attesting to their civic contributions and constitutional significance. Against the thrust of the Meech Lake Accord, whose architects seemed indifferent to the new constitutional context, feminist and ethnocultural-minority groups waged a struggle to defend the new recognitions, which they prized as a bulwark against the return of an exclusionary past.

Canadian New Politics scholars understand these debates by speaking of the constitutional arrival of groups that are “significantly different from . . . materialists.”80 I argue that this approach ignores the connection between questions of recognition and

questions of security. Furthermore, I suggest that the postmaterialist label forgets what
the old champions of the British connection and politics-as-men’s-business once so
emphatically demonstrated; that the symbols of first-class inclusion have long been prized
as bases of material power.

The Meech Lake debates were also affected profoundly by an exchange
relationship between the new symbolic capital of constitutional recognition and a more
generalized patriotic attachment to the new Canadian Charter. This relationship
attached increased recognition and voice to anglophone feminist and minority groups by
positioning their evident constitutional attachment as evidence of the exemplary character
of postwar Canadian nationalism. However, the vehement rejection of this nationalism in
francophone Quebec threatened both the exchange relationship and the idea of a pan-
Canadian welfare state more generally. My analysis of the Canada round debates charts
two different social-movement responses to this threat.

Feminist and trade union participants sought to defend the welfare state by
advocating asymmetrical federalism, which they saw as a means of ensuring that Quebec’s
social policy grievances would not lead Canada to adopt a lowest-common-denominator
approach to welfare provision and citizenship. Ethnocultural minorities, by contrast, saw
the idea of asymmetry as a dangerous move that would legitimate majoritarian intolerance
in both of Canada’s newly reconfigured “nations.” The contrast between these two social-
movement views is *prima facie* similar to the contrast between materialism and

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81 On exchange theory, see Stewart Clegg and David Dunkerley, *Organization, Class and
postmaterialism: one group of actors focused on questions of redistribution, while the other emphasized multiculturalism and the symbolic dimension of civic belonging.

However, the apparent similarity between these two contrasts underscores the inadequacy of the New Politics approach. Most obviously, the contrast between concerns about the fate of the welfare state, on the one hand, and minority fears about unjust majoritarianism, on the other, is difficult to construe as a contrast between sensitivity and indifference to security concerns. Furthermore, the feminist and trade union embrace of asymmetry points up the extent to which any enterprise of economic redistribution requires a framework of esteem and belonging that unites the inhabitants of the polity in which the redistribution is to take place. As the longstanding capacity of questions of culture and national attachment to delay the emergence of “straight class politics” suggests, this is a question with which the traditional left has long been seized.

Finally, the last substantive chapter concludes by suggesting that the recent prominence of feminists as participants on economic issues highlights a key argument of this work. This argument is that social-movement struggles for esteem and belonging are misapprehended when they are seen as evidence of a higher-order preoccupation with the alleged psychological and aesthetic concerns of prosperity. These struggles are far better understood as campaigns to garner respect. As the contrast between the Charlottetown hearings and women’s long history of de facto exclusion from economic policy debates so aptly demonstrates, respect—although it in no sense guarantees victory—affords actors with civic voice. And unless they can buy compliance with money or are willing to

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forcibly extract acquiescence with violence, voice is something that all people require in order to effectively communicate their aspirations and needs to others.
CHAPTER 2
SEARCHING FOR A FORUM: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AT THE ROYAL
COMMISSION ON DOMINION-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

This chapter analyzes the participation of trade unions, Communists and women's groups at a crucial juncture in Canada's constitutional development: the 1938 public hearings of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. Throughout the Great Depression, the working-class left and the women's movement argued that Canada's crisis of economic insecurity could only be properly addressed by a national network of unemployment insurance and social welfare programs. However, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled in 1937 that this crisis was of insufficient importance to allow Ottawa to act in areas of jurisdiction that were constitutionally assigned to the provinces. But because the Royal Commission was established to offer solutions to this constitutional stalemate, its public hearings created a new political space.

Feminist and traditional left actors sought to utilize this new space as a venue from which to begin forging a redesigned polity that would be more capable of responding to their concerns. Most notably, they argued for a unified Canadian citizenship that would show more respect for civil liberties and citizen participation than its predecessor had done. The pivotal role of participation rights in the traditional left's Depression-era fight against poverty and unemployment is particularly crucial to note. Attending to this role

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provides a useful corrective to the New Politics account, which identifies rights and participation as postmaterial goods that became priorities only after the increased economic security of the postwar "long boom." At the same time, I argue that New Politics theory misses the traditional importance of issues of economic security, employment and social welfare to the women's movement.

A crucial precondition for the successful participation of citizen groups in the political dialogue of the larger society is that they be recognized as worthy dialogic partners or, if the group is in some sense oppositional, at least as worthy adversaries. The workers' and feminist movements of interwar Canada were received very differently by the 1938 Royal Commission. A crucial difference, as I shall show, was the capacity of male-dominated groups to invoke themes and postures of masculinity that promoted their acceptance by the Commission as worthy civic interactants. By contrast, women's political claims tended to be shunted aside; to remain unheard even as they were being made. This contrast highlights something that the New Politics approach obscures. The so-called postmaterialist goods of esteem and belonging, whose importance New Politics theory associates with the tendency of security to create new priorities for the fortunate, have a particular significance when traditionally disrespected actors seek to convey their security concerns to others.
The 1938 Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations: Craft Unions and Communists

The Rowell-Sirois Commission (as it came to be known in honour of its two chairmen) was the first official forum of any significance to offer Canadians the opportunity to convey to government their particular views on constitutional issues.² By 1935 the unrest unleashed by market failure and agricultural catastrophe had forced Prime Minister R.B. Bennett to set aside his earlier "iron heel" approach to worker demands in favour of offering Canadians a "New Deal." This "deathbed repentance" established federal legislation on such topics as unemployment insurance, the marketing of agricultural products, minimum wages and hours of work.³ Before the New Deal could be implemented, however, William Lyon Mackenzie King's Liberals defeated Bennett's Conservatives in the federal election of 1935. Sensitive to claims of provincial rights and particularly anxious to avoid offending Quebec,⁴ Prime Minister King referred Bennett's legislation to the Supreme Court in order to ascertain whether the New Deal violated Section 92 of the British North America Act, which allocates lawmaking power over "property and civil rights" to the provinces.

² On the "closed, elitist" nature of pre-World War II constitutional politics, see Peter Russell, Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People? (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 55-57, 62.


When the British Empire's highest court, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), ruled in 1937 that the legislation was indeed outside Ottawa's jurisdiction it seemed that Canadians might be condemned to suffer the indignities of laissez-faire economics forever. Not only had social and labour reforms been for all intents and purposes proscribed federally, but the Canadian constitution also denied provincial governments the tax powers necessary if they were to attempt what Ottawa could not. The fact that adopting social welfare and labour legislation on a provincial basis would promote capital flight to "holdout" provinces (of which some were on the verge of bankruptcy in any event) seemed further to indicate that Canada's choice was between federal action or no action at all. Thus, because the Rowell-Sirois Commission was summoned primarily as a response to a crisis of jurisdictional allocation and constitutional inflexibility, political economists and constitutional scholars enjoyed a special prominence in the Commission's deliberations. At the same time, however, trade union and socialist witnesses gained uncustomary political leverage from the new environment of working-class politicization and protest. Most famously, Prime Minister King began to worry that any further appearance of official indifference to the Great Depression would lead "unrest in Canada [to] assume alarming proportions at any time."

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7 Quoted in James Struthers, No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 162.
The Communist Party of Canada and the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada were both keenly interested in helping the Commission to fulfill its mandate: to re-examine "the economic and financial basis of Confederation and of the distribution of legislative powers in the light of the economic and social developments of the last seventy years." On behalf of the Moscow-affiliated Communist Party of Canada (CP), Secretary-General Tim Buck, who considered that the Rowell-Sirois inquiry was "of tremendous importance," applauded the Commission's "establishment as an historic step forward." President P.M. Draper, speaking for the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC), a craft-union umbrella organization whose 1886 founding was intended to give Canadian unions a more effective presence in the corridors of government, praised the exercise as "most certainly welcome."

The enthusiasm of workers' representatives for their first real foray into constitutional politics reflected their frustration with the status quo. The CP viewed the Rowell-Sirois Commission as "the first serious effort of government" to respond to the "burning needs" of the Canadian people. The TLC also found it a "cause of surprise

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10 Presentation of the Communist Party of Canada, Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, Report of Hearings, Vol. 24, Brief 401, 31 May 1938, 9718. The records of the Hearings are available at Special Collections, Main Library, University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from the Hearings will read, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.


12 CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9718-9719.
that seventy years [had been] allowed to elapse between the passing of the British North America Act and this first enquiry into its operations.”

Indeed, the TLC proposed holding regular public hearings at ten-year intervals “to give all sections of the public a hearing on Dominion-Provincial Relations and constitutional questions.”

Draper buttressed this proposal by reciting a list of sixteen different legislative measures that the TLC had sought fruitlessly from Ottawa for more than forty years. As Draper rather mildly put it, “The Congress feels that the general resulting situation is to be deplored.”

Constitutional politics appealed to workers’ organizations as a forum for advocating courses of action that Canadian governments had hitherto been able to avoid. In 1938, radical Communists and cautious craft union leaders could easily agree that the constitutional changes necessary to enable the federal government to implement a New Deal program—in particular, readjusting in Ottawa’s favour the division of powers, abolishing appeals to the JCPC and securing a domestic formula for amending the constitution—required increased citizen input as the necessary impetus for their enactment. Interwar Canadian workers’ movements, which were stymied by employer power, police repression and the eagerness of governments to invoke constitutional limitations to avoid substantive discussion about reform, made their constitutional debut by seeking a basis from which to participate more effectively in Canadian politics and society.

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13 TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3086.

14 Ibid., 3102.

15 Ibid., 3114.

16 On using constitutional roadblocks as tools of political obfuscation, see Mallory, Social Credit, 51.
The CP and TLC also agreed on the desirability of a further constitutional solution for remedying the political marginalization of Canadian workers: they were the first Canadian actors to call publicly for a charter of rights. And behind this call was a larger campaign that was of crucial significance for the evolution of Canadian citizenship. As labour historians Wayne Roberts and John Bullen point out, Depression-era working-class movements “introduced tens of thousands of Canadians to collective organization and established such basic civil liberties as the right to petition and demonstrate.” Thus, contrary to the New Politics account, the traditional left’s economic preoccupations did not lead it to neglect issues of civil rights and political participation.

The left could not neglect these issues. During the 1930’s, prominent Communist leaders were imprisoned for sedition, foreign-born Communists were deported and Communist meetings were broken up routinely by police violence and mass arrests. And as historians Desmond Morton and Terry Copp point out, trade unionists often fared little better. In Sarnia in 1936, for example, an angry mob whom the city’s mayor had urged to assemble attacked a group of striking steelworkers, while “police watched with ill-concealed satisfaction.” When the workers attempted to flee, police arrested the bleeding

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strikers rather than the attackers.\textsuperscript{20} Little wonder that the CP and TLC advocated a charter that would protect rights to free speech, assembly, religion and union organizing.\textsuperscript{21}

The New Politics contrast between issues of security and issues of participation and rights fails to recognize that harsh restrictions on participation and rights were a profound source of insecurity for interwar workers. These restrictions left workers’ security almost entirely at the mercy of an unregulated labour market and an all-powerful class of employers. In the words of the TLC’s President Draper, “if workers cannot join a union without fear of dismissal, their rights are being stopped by economic pressure.” Rights such as those to free speech, he continued, are “necessary in a true democracy and ... should be given definite, legal standing.”\textsuperscript{22} The CP was more emphatic. Secretary-General Buck, himself a recently released political prisoner, declared: “civil liberties have been trampled underfoot. The present situation shows the need for a Canadian bill of rights and for a procedure giving the citizen redress when those rights are invaded.”\textsuperscript{23} As Buck was particularly eager to explain, “the democratic rights of the people are being


\textsuperscript{21} Although neither group can be accused of an undue preoccupation with institutional detail, both sought a bill capable of constraining provincial as well as federal governments. See CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9723; and TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3107.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 3107.

\textsuperscript{23} CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9826. On Buck’s 1931 imprisonment for leading an “unlawful association,” see Avakumovic, \textit{Communist Party}, 87-90.
crushed and destroyed because these rights assist the people in their struggle for economic
security and social reform."^{24}

The TLC was unwilling to join its Communist counterpart in aggressively
criticizing Canadian authorities for what both groups agreed was an unacceptable
situation. This demeanour was in keeping with the craft union approach to labour
advocacy, which stressed the "respectability" of the skilled and "honourable" tradesman as
the most appropriate basis from which to seek the ears of government.^{25} Indeed,
respectability had become particularly important for craft unions in their 1930s battle
against rival "industrial union" groups, which sought to bring ordinary labourers and
skilled tradesmen together in a single union framework.^{26} Craft bodies such as the TLC
responded to this challenge by re-emphasizing the old Victorian distinction between the
"respectable" and "rough" working classes. Craft unionists condemned the "catch-all"
approach for threatening to swamp their venerable institutions with an influx of
"dishonourable" workers, whom they described as "riffraff," "good for nothings" and
"rubbish."^{27}

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^{24} CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9723.

^{25} On this craft-union distinction and the appeal of respectability, see Eric Hobsbawm, "Debating
the Labour Aristocracy," "The Aristocracy of Labour Reconsidered" and "Artisans and Labour
Nicholson, 1984). E.P. Thompson traces the origins of the distinction between "an honourable and
dishonourable trade" to the increased division of labour that began to differentiate skilled from unskilled
English working-class men in the eighteenth century, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New


^{27} American Teamster President James Tobin, speaking in 1934 against industrial unionism,
quoted in Irving Abella, *Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist
Thus, the TLC avoided the CP's energetic project of critique, which linked Canada's inadequate welfare and labour-policy regime to the unchecked political influence of capital. Instead, the Congress blamed the backwardness of Canadian social and labour legislation on the JCPC, which, President Draper complained, had made "the interpretation of the law of first importance and the interests of those to be dealt with under the law of minor importance."\(^{28}\) The TLC's attack on the Imperial court's legal formalism was safe political rhetoric, for it allowed the Congress to convey its patriotic respect for domestic institutions. Thus, the TLC proposed to abolish appeals to the JCPC on the ground that Canadian "judges enjoy a high reputation for integrity and their knowledge of the law has never been shown to be less than judges elsewhere."\(^{29}\)

But the CP was not squeamish when it came to identifying the Canadian enemies of social progress. "It is not accidental," warned Buck, "that the two provincial governments which are leading the fight to prevent national unification are at the same time seeking to abrogate the rights of labour to organize."\(^{30}\) According to the CP, the strong insistence of Ontario and Quebec on provincial autonomy proved that "The divisions left by confederation have become the strongholds of reactionary finance in its fight against reforms demanded by the Canadian people."\(^{31}\) By contrast, the TLC would not go beyond its vague recommendation to strengthen "the public hold on [civil rights]"

\(^{28}\) TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3093.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., 3102.

\(^{30}\) CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9720.

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
for those who come after us.”\textsuperscript{32} Attacking particular Canadian governments by name was a shoal of controversy that the cautious Congress preferred to avoid.

It might seem appropriate to reduce this contrast between CP radicalism and TLC deference to an issue of ideological differences, and say that revolutionary communism made the former indifferent to the question of respectability that so obviously preoccupied the latter. Communism and craft unionism certainly furnished the CP and TLC with different political attitudes—Lenin, after all, was not Lloyd George. Nevertheless, it is important to observe that the CP was also keenly interested in the project of eliciting increased social respect.

The CP showed a surprising willingness to sacrifice key Marxist tenets in favour of harmonizing its demand for nation-wide social programs and a charter of rights with the nationalist inclinations of bourgeois Canada and its elite Royal Commission. For example, Marx’s famous dictum that “working men have no country”\textsuperscript{33} was supplanted entirely by an emphasis on the importance of “national unification.”\textsuperscript{34} Hallmarks of this emphasis were Buck’s attack on “the provincial dismemberment of the nation” and his celebration of civil liberties as “the special tradition of all British people for all generations.”\textsuperscript{35}

Running alongside this anglo-nationalist appeal was a suitably Marxist emphasis on class-conscious resistance. The CP boasted of “organizing and leading . . . movements . . .

\textsuperscript{32} TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3107-3108.


\textsuperscript{34} CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9720.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 9720, 9828.
for the people," of fighting "most energetically and consistently" against the "full fury of monopoly capital faced with declining profits." But the CP conveyed this emphasis to the august Commission by highlighting an important shared ground of affinity.

Whereas Marx scoffed at the "bourgeois clap-trap about the family" and made no effort to soothe fears that communism might destroy "the most hallowed of relations," the CP was anxious to appear as the traditional family's saviour. The Party buttressed its demands for federal social programs by arguing that the Depression had "shattered ... social standards." Using such catch-phrases as "immorality," "impaired moral standards" and "children ... running wild," Buck emphasized poverty as a dire threat to what traditionalists now call "family values." Of particular significance, claimed Buck, were the many Canadian families for which "the strain of worry has precipitated situations ... threatening to cause the break-up of the home"; not to mention those cases in which "the father [has] actually deserted, leaving his wife and children."

According to Buck, the root cause of this familial disruption was "the acute distress suffered by the workmen and farmers in Canada." Buck contended further that both the workman's distress and the attendant familial disruption could be alleviated by adopting the CP's program of social insurance, income redistribution and nationalization

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36 Ibid., 9724, 9874, 9718.
37 Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, 487.
38 CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9822.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., 9725.
of major industries. To have done so at the onset of the Depression, Buck claimed, "would have permitted the release of many of those at present unemployed from the demoralizing situation in which they now find themselves and given them an opportunity, not only for development, but to find a place in life in which they could hold up their heads and feel as if they were really part of Canada."\(^{42}\)

In short, the CP did not approach the Royal Commission with a traditional Marxist analysis. Rather, the Party appealed to traditional family values by invoking the widespread contemporary understanding of the Depression as a particular catastrophe for the legions of working-class men who had been deprived of their customary "breadwinner" status.\(^{43}\) This appeal framed the CP not as a foreign movement aiming to smash the most venerated of Canadian traditions, but as the understandable vehicle of stalwart providers who were only striving to "save their farms and homes and protect their families."\(^{44}\) This manly symbolism was a useful means of conjuring up emotional valences that harmonized with the male Commissioners' intuitive feel for the personal dimensions of the Depression to which they sought to respond.

Communism may have been anathema, but the imagery of dedicated men defending their loved ones against impersonal forces of disruption was evidently not. After engaging Buck in a wide-ranging and respectful period of questioning that came to

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\(^{42}\) Ibid., 9811.


run a remarkable sixty-one printed pages in length, Acting Chairman Joseph Sirois (who
replaced the ailing N.W. Rowell) promised that the CP brief "will be considered along
with the other submissions made to our commission."45 As will be shown shortly,

extensive question periods and concluding promises of consideration were not forms of

respect that the Rowell-Sirois Commission was prepared to extend to women’s

organizations.46

The TLC deployed a different capital of symbols with which to elicit the

interactional regard of the Commission. Its long history, its status as a "respectable"
organization and the roots of its membership in the "honourable" working-class trades,
such as carpentry, machining and printing, distinguished the Congress sharply from
competitor organizations.47 Accordingly, the TLC avoided the CP’s aggressive rhetoric
in favour of presenting its views as "the outgrowth of more than fifty years of experience
of Canada’s organized workers."48 In President Draper’s words, the Congress’s long
"experience in endeavouring to enlist the sympathetic support of governments” had
culminated in a program of “common sense” whose acceptance “would improve

45 Sirois, in CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9877.

46 The Commission concluded the appearance of the League for Women’s Rights by saying
flatly, "this brief will be marked Exhibit No. 345” (Sirois, in League for Women’s Rights, Presentation to
the 1938 Royal Commission, Vol. 21, Brief 345, 13 May 1938, 8320). The National Council of Women of
Canada was dismissed similarly: “will you kindly file the brief as Exhibit No. 381” (Sirois, in National
Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, Vol. 23, Brief 381, 26 May
1938, 9269).

47 On the status of the TLC, see Jack Williams, The Story of Unions in Canada (Toronto: J.M.
Dent and Sons, 1975), 190; Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics (Toronto: University of Toronto
Press, 1968), 63.

48 TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3086.
employer-employee relations” while advancing “the welfare of the masses.” The Commission responded with praise for the Congress delegation: “You have set forth your views clearly and forcefully, and your submission will be of assistance to us in considering the problems you have dealt with.”

Behind the prima facie ideological distinction between revolutionary combativeness and craft union deference lay two different symbolic repertoires for eliciting respect. Although the CP was unable to convince the Royal Commission of the merits of revolution, its emotive themes of male honour and family stability were a compelling means of portraying worker radicalism as an understandable challenge that deserved to be reckoned with. For its part, the TLC’s emphasis on organizational longevity and the hardworking artisan’s “common sense,” which played on the invidious distinction between steady craftsmen and rowdy labourers, deployed a thoroughly respectable manliness with which to court mainstream sensitivities.

Focusing on the symbolic capitals with which the CP and TLC aimed to win the respect of their audience highlights a crucial similarity between the two approaches. Both the CP’s aggressive challenge and the respectability of skill claimed by the TLC played upon deeply-held understandings of masculinity with which male contemporaries, whatever their specific political prejudices, were likely to identify. Masculinity helped both organizations to position their constituencies as virtuous candidates for political consideration and interactional respect. Interwar women seeking to participate in politics

49 Ibid., 3113, 3093, 3123.

50 Rowell, in TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3133.
were less fortunately situated. As the following discussion will show, neither the
craftsman’s expertise nor the fighter’s honour was a readily available resource of self-
positioning for female actors of the period.

Separate Spheres: Women’s Groups at the 1938 Royal Commission on Dominion-
Provincial Relations

Like their Communist and craft-union counterparts, both the National Council of Women
of Canada and the Quebec-based League for Women’s Rights seized upon the Rowell-
Sirois hearings as a rare opportunity to advance arguments for which more routine
political settings afforded little room. For its part, the League for Women’s Rights (LWR)
entered constitutional politics with a protest against the inadequacies of Depression-era
democracy that was even more elemental than that raised by the CP and TLC.

Because women were prohibited from voting or standing as candidates in Quebec
provincial elections, a national forum convened for the express purpose of reexamining
Canada’s constitutional arrangements gave the LWR an important opportunity to argue
for “equality of opportunity and rights [for] women.”51 Like its Communist and craft-
union counterparts, the LWR sought a constitutional amendment that would place certain
fundamental citizen rights beyond the reach of governments. The LWR urged that:

to give effect throughout Canada to the principle of the equality of status of men and
women . . . a clause be inserted in the following or similar terms in the BNA Act:
“No law of Canada or of any province thereof shall disqualify any person by reason
of sex from the exercise of any political rights or public function.”52

51 League for Women’s Rights, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 13 May 1938, 8296.
52 Ibid., 8310.
Although New Politics theory presents feminism as a movement that downplays economic security issues in favour of focusing on "self-realization and the quality of life," this tradeoff was foreign to the LWR. Instead, League President Thérèse Casgrain argued that an unjustifiable denial of political rights was a major cause of the economic difficulties suffered by her constituency. To this end, Casgrain cited evidence to show that Quebec women, as "a direct result of their vote-less condition," faced a remarkable battery of economic problems.

One problem was that Quebec’s women teachers were among the lowest paid in Canada. Another problem was a network of provincial and municipal regulations that made any Quebec woman not living under the direct supervision of a husband ineligible to receive relief payments. Further evidence offered by the LWR of the undue economic hardship experienced by Quebec women was how the provincial government had opted to spend recent federal grants-in-aid for worker training. Although Quebec had the largest percentage of women workers among all provinces, it devoted a far smaller proportion of


54 Future Senator Thérèse Casgrain would soon be the leader of the Quebec CCF, thus becoming the first Canadian woman to lead a political party. Her husband, Pierre, was also at this time the Speaker of the federal House of Commons. See Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, "Thérèse Casgrain and the CCF in Quebec," *Canadian Historical Review* 66 (1985): 125-153.

55 LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8309.

56 Ibid., 8303-8305.

57 Ibid., 8299.
its share of the federal monies to retraining women workers than did the neighbouring province of Ontario.  

Whereas New Politics theory depicts economic security and rights and participation as contrasting priorities, the LWR saw participation rights as a necessary prerequisite for economic security. As Casgrain put it: "It is clear that the disfranchisement of women in the Province of Quebec has been an important factor in allowing such discriminatory measures to be adopted against women." When asked by Commissioner Harry Angus whether increased legislative powers for Ottawa might mitigate some of the LWR's concerns about social policy in Quebec, Casgrain responded by insisting on democratic voice as a necessary basis of security. Although the LWR welcomed the prospect of federal intervention, it preferred enfranchisement as a more reliable basis for pursuing women's economic concerns: "If you have no power behind your demands you cannot get very far, and that is why we are insisting very much on this point."

The LWR presentation was clearly tailored to forestall potential objections that its object was beyond the purview of the Royal Commission. In particular, the League aimed to show that the status of women in Quebec posed a problem for Canadian federalism which was imperative for the Commission to consider. Casgrain's major point was that

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58 Ibid., 8306.

59 Ibid., 8301.

60 See ibid., 8317.

61 Ibid., 8318.
unless Quebec’s suffrage law were changed, Ottawa would increasingly find itself promoting, “indirectly, discrimination against women in Quebec which it would not presumably authorize directly.”62 Indeed, to act on either of the major alternatives being considered by the Rowell-Sirois Commission would only increase Ottawa’s culpability in this regard. If the Commission recommended increasing provincial tax powers to allow the provinces to meet their constitutional responsibilities, Ottawa would expose Quebec women to further taxation without representation.63 Yet if the Commission recommended an expanded use of the grant-in-aid device to promote provincial action on social security, federal monies would be implicated in subjecting Quebec women “to further discriminations of the type to which we have referred when discussing the distribution of relief funds.”64

Similarly, the LWR attempted to allay concerns that constitutional action against Quebec’s voting regime would violate the terms under which Quebec entered Confederation. Casgrain explained that because women’s disfranchisement was rooted in statutory law, the League’s proposals left untouched the sanctity of the Quebec civil code as guaranteed by the BNA Act.65 But these arguments did nothing to convince the Commissioners that the Quebec suffrage issue was relevant to their deliberations.

62 Ibid., 8309-8310.
63 Ibid., 8309.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., 8308.
Acting Chairman Sirois, for instance, inaugurated the LWR's question period with
the rather unpromising evaluation: “Of course, there are quite a number of your proposals
which are outside the scope of our enquiry.” *66 He was soon followed by legal advisor
Louis St. Laurent who, in order to prove that the Commission could not address the
Quebec suffrage issue, cited a recent court decision that had upheld British Columbia’s
disfranchisement of persons of Chinese ancestry. “We still have to admit, have we not,
that it is within the jurisdiction of the provinces to restrict the rights of citizenship?” *67
League Legal Counsel Elizabeth Monk blocked this attempted escape route by reminding
St. Laurent of the reason for the Commission’s existence: “I take it that this Commission
has been appointed because the Governments are not satisfied with the interpretation
which has been placed upon the BNA Act in the past both by the Judicial Committee and
by our own courts.” *68 This rejoinder the Commissioners elected to ignore.

Thus, a Commission charged with reevaluating “the economic and financial basis
of Confederation and . . . the distribution of legislative powers” *69 fled behind the cover of
a jurisdictional argument in order to avoid substantive debate. This irony is emblematic of
a specific form of civic disrespect that confronted mid-century Canadian women’s groups.

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*66 Sirois, in LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8317. This remark demonstrates
either disingenuousness on the Acting Chairman’s part or his failure to follow the LWR presentation. The
LWR did not have a “number of . . . proposals,” it had only one—to amend the BNA Act to force Quebec
to enfranchise women. The LWR presentation’s other themes were all examples offered in support of this
proposal.

*67 St. Laurent, in LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8318. On St. Laurent’s
Royal Commission role, see Dale C. Thomson, *Louis St. Laurent: Canadian* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1967),
95-102.

*68 LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8319.

After all, the Commission had engaged the CP’s Secretary-General Buck at some length on the history of international Communism and the desirability of violent revolution, which were topics at least as far removed from the Commission’s mandate as was the Quebec suffrage question. Yet the same Acting Chairman who had informed the LWR that its proposals were “outside the scope of our enquiry” told Buck to “take all the time you need.” Furthermore, such Communist planks as extensive wealth redistribution and the nationalization of industry would have involved far more federal involvement in provincial jurisdiction than would the single constitutional amendment requested by the LWR. Why, then, was the LWR received so dismissively by the Royal Commission?

As Canadian historian Ruth Roach Pierson explains, neither policymakers nor traditional left leaders saw the Great Depression as a crisis that required paying any specific attention to the economic problems of women. Public discussion revolved instead around men’s diminished capacity to serve as “breadwinners.” Thus, Pierson’s understanding of the 1930s as a decade of “masculinity in crisis” highlights the symbolic force that attached to the CP’s defence of “farms, homes and families” and to the TLC’s emphasis on its “fifty-five years of experience” in representing “Canada’s wage earners.” The resources of self-positioning available to female actors were of a much less powerful civic currency.

70 Sirois in LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8317; Sirois in CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9725.

71 Pierson, “Gender and the Unemployment Insurance Debates,” 78.

72 CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9718.

73 TLC, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 3113.
How was the LWR to frame its arguments for participation in an age that counterposed an understanding of acceptable femininity, one that submitted quietly to the protective leadership of men, against a damning portrait of politicized women as "old harpies, invariably childless and detesting babies?" The LWR delegation did so by adopting a strategic modesty that portrayed LWR women as "nice ladies" who, despite their suffragism, still "knew their place." Although Casgrain's memoirs condemn "the scornful and haughty attitude of our masculine elite towards women," she concluded the LWR presentation by submitting to the male Commission's protective beneficence: "we would ask for your kind consideration in view of the fact that we are very sincere." And although the LWR began its presentation by urging that a women's equality "clause be inserted in the . . . BNA Act," the imperative of feminine modesty led Casgrain to close on a contradictory note: "we would like to say that we are not trying to force any amendment to the BNA Act." The LWR, it would seem, could only counter the prejudice that politicized women were "bossy" by coming close to retracting the very proposal with which the League had approached the Commission in the first place.

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74 Magazine article from the 1950s, quoted in Catherine Lyle Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 232.


76 LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8317.

77 Ibid., 8310.

78 Ibid., 8317.
The LWR aimed to complement this strategic modesty with an emphasis on the unique advantages that women’s experience as mothers could bring to public life. As historian Alison Prentice and her co-authors point out, suffragists had often sought to emphasize how men would benefit from an expansion of woman’s customary role as “guardian of the home” to that of the nation. An understandable riposte to the widespread belief that women’s delicate “nature” was inappropriate for the rough-and-tumble world of politics was to say “that women had special experience and values that would ... establish order and well-being ... for the country.”

This was precisely the argument of the LWR. The League placed considerable emphasis on presenting the overall backwardness of interwar Quebec social policy as a “matter of national concern” that could only be remedied by women’s political inclusion. To buttress this position, the LWR dwelled at length on Quebec’s extremely high infant-mortality rates in order to present women’s motherly expertise as key to solving a problem with which many contemporaries were very concerned. Thus, concluded the LWR:

We have collected these vital statistics [on infant mortality] not only because they were so horrifying but because ... it is part of our thesis ... that in countries in

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79 On strategic modesty, which involves an actor embracing “a lower position than he covertly accepts for himself,” see Erving Goffman The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1959), 38.


81 Ibid.

82 LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8306.

83 On the links between the suffragist emphasis on infant mortality and nativist fears about “race suicide,” see Carol Lee Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 106.
which women have the vote . . . a great deal of attention is given to questions like these, and social questions immediately come into prominence.84

But the Commission seemed to view this emphasis on women’s maternal expertise as justification for restricting women’s “acceptable” political input to those issues men were prepared to concede. Thus, St. Laurent set aside his already incoherent jurisdictional scruples to seek the League’s opinion on what benefits the pasteurization of milk could bring to infant health. Referring to Ontario’s recently adopted practice of “enforcing [the] pasteurization of milk,” St. Laurent concluded the LWR’s question period by asking: “Has the league any opinion as to the possibility of a similar measure in the province of Quebec?”85 Although the pasteurization of milk was unambiguously a topic of provincial jurisdiction, the milk issue fell within what St. Laurent evidently viewed as the special domain of his witnesses.

Thus, the capacity of the LWR’s maternalism to aid reluctant interlocutors in search of convenient topics of diversion illustrates the weakness of the symbolic resources available to women participants in Canada’s first public constitutional debates. Hindsight may indict the “separate spheres” justification implicit in the LWR’s strategy. But because the LWR could neither easily invoke the association with skilled and honourable wage-labour that came so easily to the TLC, nor plausibly adopt the CP’s manly rhetoric of the challenge, maternalism comprised the most obviously reliable basis from which to seek the respect of its male audience. Men, after all, still drew comfort from a Victorian ideology of gender that prized female domesticity as a bulwark against the “competition, self-

84 LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8315.

85 St. Laurent, in LWR, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 8321.
interest and economic aggression” that had come to characterize public life in capitalism.\(^8^6\) To have eschewed maternalism would have been not only to threaten provocatively the destruction of men’s cherished “haven in a heartless world” but to sacrifice the only socially acceptable language of virtue in which feminists could speak to a predominantly anti-feminist society.

The other major women’s group to appear before the Commission, the National Council of Women of Canada, presented a maternalism whose propensity to justify a restricted political role for women was absolutely unambiguous. Its presentation focused exclusively on the constitutional position of marriage law in Canada. As the National Council of Women (NCW) representative explained in detail, the treatment of marriage under the 1867 division of powers had occasioned much confusion. Although the BNA Act gave Ottawa the exclusive power to legislate in relation to the validity of marriage, it also conferred legislative authority over the solemnization of marriage on the provinces.\(^8^7\) The Council’s major complaint about this constitutional tangle was that many inter-religious, or “mixed” marriages had been annulled in Quebec because they had not been performed by a Catholic priest.\(^8^8\) Thus, the NCW requested that the BNA Act be


\(^8^7\) Section 92 of the BNA Act assigned solemnization of marriage to the provinces because the latter power was, given the predominantly Catholic nature of Quebec, considered an essential “minority right.” See Paul Gerin-Lajoie, Constitutional Amendment in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 265.

\(^8^8\) National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 26 May 1938, 9236-9238.
amended so that any marriage that had been duly solemnized anywhere in Canada would be legally valid in any part of the country.\textsuperscript{89}

As historian Veronica Strong-Boag observes, the NCW "relied heavily on its faith in . . . women's maternal nature, [which] justified the Council's very existence and every intervention of women outside the home."\textsuperscript{90} Yet Strong-Boag also notes that NCW women were "reformers" and "apprentice social critics."\textsuperscript{91} In particular, the Depression-era Council advocated women's equal right to claim unemployment relief, the right of married women to seek employment and the desirability of establishing federal legislation governing wages, hours and conditions of work.\textsuperscript{92} However, available records of the NCW's Royal Commission presentation do not convey this latter focus--and explaining why this was the case requires some elaboration.

The Council's Rowell-Sirois brief was the product of considerable labour. Minutes of the 1938 NCW convention reveal that the Council executive, although it had not "realized in deciding to send forward such a brief, the amount of work entailed in preparation," had decided to press ahead anyway.\textsuperscript{93} The brief's title, "The Political and Civil Status of Women,"\textsuperscript{94} also conveyed a more far-reaching and overtly political focus

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 9248.


\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 401.


\textsuperscript{93} National Council of Women of Canada, \textit{Year Book for 1938} (n.p., 1938), 34.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
than that which had characterized the NCW’s earlier years. However, because the Rowell-Sirois Commission’s transcripts of citizen testimony are of briefs as read, not as submitted, only the NCW’s position on what the Council called the “marriage question” is available for analysis. But the choice to discuss only the marriage issue was made neither by the Commission nor by the Council. This decision was taken by the NCW’s honorary solicitor, Mr. Everett Bristol, who presented the organization’s brief on behalf of the Council’s absent executive members, who were on the day of their scheduled Commission appearance busy attending the annual NCW convention in Vancouver.

Bristol’s opening remarks revealed a condescending view of the NCW women as dilettantes for whom politics was simply a diversion. Bristol confessed to having had “very limited opportunity” to discuss with his “fair clients” the Council brief, “which they themselves have prepared.” This lack of consultation did not preclude Bristol from opining that “A number of the submissions in the brief are probably not within the purview of the Commission.” The issues that Bristol considered irrelevant included “such matters as the political status of women, their position in the civil service and under the Bankruptcy Act, and so on.” Bristol also made a perfunctory reference to the Council’s position in favour of federal legislation on such issues as wages, hours and conditions of work, which he described as a position upon which he “need not dwell.”

95 NCW, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9229.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 9230.
that the "commission [had] undoubtedly received representations from other bodies" on
the subject, Bristol revealed his belief that the views of male-dominated organizations on
the weighty economic and constitutional issues of the day could substitute for those of his
clients. This decision was remarkably inappropriate. For by seeking legislation
guaranteeing women equal pay and the equal right to work, the Council believed that
women's economic interests required their own specific advocacy.

Thus, Bristol transformed a brief on the "Political and Civil Status of Women" into
one dwelling exclusively on the topic of marriage. By contrast, the Council's convention
minutes touched with a quite secondary emphasis on "the resolution being submitted on
the marriage question." Much like St. Laurent, Bristol seemed less interested in what
was germane to the Commission than he was with establishing the appropriate purview of
women. The marriage issue, Bristol declared, "goes to the root of the basis of our
national life, the home, the family, and therefore is most important to women."

Bristol's approach testifies to the confining nature of maternalism as a symbolic
basis of civic interaction for female participants. This was the same problem that had
plagued the LWR delegation, which found that its male audience viewed the issues of
infant mortality and milk pasteurization as the only acceptable topics on which to solicit
women's views. Bristol's choice to focus exclusively on the marriage issue, which he
described as "most important to women" because it "touches, undoubtedly, near the

99 Ibid.
100 NCW, Year Book for 1938, 34.
101 NCW, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9231.
home," testifies similarly to women's basic symbolic disadvantage in civic interaction. The symbolic capital that was most evidently available to women tended to be received by men as a justification for confining women's political input to an unsatisfactorily narrow range of issues.

Conclusion

To the jaundiced eyes of the present, the hope that these early constitutional actors invested in their constitutional participation seems remarkable. They had great enthusiasm for a Royal Commission that was convened to reexamine the fundamentals of Canadian governance. This mandate, which raised the prospect of a forum of civic dialogue in which oft-ignored voices might find increased persuasive force, was greeted by working-class and women's movements as an opportunity for strengthening the rights of Canadian citizenship. Their common, Depression-era focus on enhanced participation opportunities and citizen rights suggests a basic continuity and commonality that the distinction between "new" and "old" movements tends to ignore.

New Politics theory contrasts the traditional left's alleged indifference for "civil rights," "free speech" and "participation" with the far greater enthusiasm of the

102 Ibid., 9231, 9254.


105 Inglehart, Culture Shift, 160.
"postmaterialists" of today. New Politics grounds this contrast by drawing a "basic distinction between the material needs for physiological sustenance and safety and nonphysiological needs, such as those for esteem, self-expression and aesthetic satisfaction." On this view, the "new" movements of the postwar era reflect the tendency of "economic and physical security" to lead people "to devote more attention to Postmaterialist concerns--such as politics."

However, this chapter has shown that problems of economic security led the traditional left to focus precisely on strengthening the participatory rights of Canadian citizenship. Communists and trade unionists found promoting their economic agendas exceedingly difficult in a polity that often denied the elementary freedoms of speech, association and assembly to workers. The inadequacy of the New Politics approach to understanding the traditional left is paralleled by its equally misleading depiction of feminism. New Politics theorists identify feminism as a postmaterialist movement that downplays issues of "economic and physical security" in favour of placing "greater emphasis on belonging, self-expression and the quality of life."

But the LWR pursued self-expression largely as a means of focusing attention on economic-security issues that male-dominated politics tended to ignore. Similarly, the NCW's conviction that women facing conditions of economic crisis required equal rights in employment and social welfare benefits led it to emphasize the importance of women's

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106 Ibid., 68.
107 Ibid., 335.
108 Ibid., 11. Also see ibid., 373.
political participation. The decision of its male solicitor to remove the NCW’s welfare and employment proposals from debate suggests that this emphasis on autonomous female expression did not lack for immediate sources of justification.

The common focus of feminists and the traditional left on participation rights as a basis of economic security is particularly crucial to note. By contrasting security needs with participation rights, New Politics theory ignores the extent to which exclusion and marginalization can pose severe problems of economic insecurity for the marginalized and the excluded. To describe movements that emphasize participation rights as products of prosperity is to miss a key point on which the women’s, trade-union and communist movements of the Depression all insisted: to be able to speak for oneself is a far more promising basis of security than is depending silently on the benevolence of more powerful others. Because participation rights are the citizen’s most basic means of acting collectively to solve any problem, the New Politics contrast between political and economic concerns can provide a misleading perspective on social-movement politics in liberal democracy.

Understanding social movements that represent marginalized constituencies also requires foregrounding the special importance of particularistic respect in conditions of mass democracy. This importance lies in the role of particularistic respect as a resource that helps the beneficiary to garner solicitude and assistance from those whom he or she seeks to persuade. As Murray Edelman argues, what distinguishes democratic politics from other methods of allocating values (such as the direct application of violence or the

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109 On the economic grievances of women teachers and pre-World War I suffragism, see Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred*, 15, 121.
outright purchase of favours) is the “competitive exchange of symbols,” through which participants “can not only achieve an immediate result but also win the acquiescence of those whose lasting support is needed.” Symbolic capital was particularly crucial for women and working-class men, whose desirability as partners and participants in the exercise of political power was by no means universally accepted. Thus, the TLC distinguished the Congress’s membership from the dishonourable mass of unskilled labourers, while the LWR sought to quell sexist fears about “bossy” yet politically ignorant women by deferentially emphasizing women’s expertise as mothers. And by framing Communism as a movement for fighting “immorality” and saving “farms, homes and families,” even the CP took pains to convey an image of virtue that relied on popular understandings of what constituted normal behaviour for men facing the humiliating chaos of Depression.

With these various emphases, movements representing marginalized people, much like the stigmatized individual whom Erving Goffman describes as particularly disadvantaged by the exigencies of “impression management,” sought to exert “strategic control” over the images they conveyed to others. Trade unionists and Communists did so by relying on masculinity as the elementary justification for their claims to deserve civic respect. Indeed, I have suggested that a pervasive view of the Depression as a crisis of

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111 CP, Presentation to the 1938 Royal Commission, 9822, 9718.

male pride and family stability did much to promote the acceptance of the latter organizations by the Commission as important and worthy political actors. But female participants faced a more troubling problem of impression management. This problem was that although female identity could position the LWR and NCW as organizations armed with expertise on issues such as infant mortality and marriage, their male interlocutors—and, in the case of the latter, their male representative—tended to respond in ways that militated against a respectful consideration of the very issues that the League and the Council sought to discuss.

Notwithstanding the liabilities, prejudices and barriers inhibiting the effective political participation of working-class men, the traditional left at least enjoyed an elementary symbolic capital that encouraged its acceptance as an actor whose proposals deserved consideration and debate. The fighter’s honour of the CP seemed a suitably manly response to the breadwinner’s catastrophe; the craftsman’s expertise claimed by the more deferential TLC positioned the Congress as an important group from which decision-makers might solicit the “respectable” worker’s views on the crucial economic issues of the day. But in the case of the LWR, maternalism supported rather than challenged the proclivity of male participants to divert attention to an unfairly narrow range of issues that excluded the very proposal that the League considered most important to discuss. And in the case of the NCW, the Council’s own representative found in maternalism a sexist criterion of relevance that relieved the Royal Commission from undertaking the tortuous work of avoidance that had marked its reception of the LWR delegation.
Thus, organizations associated with masculinity could draw upon elementary capitals of symbols with which to embellish the importance of their political participation in ways that women’s movements could not. In other words, the women’s movement faced problems of esteem and belonging that its male-dominated counterpart more easily managed. But contrary to the New Politics view, which sees esteem and belonging as postmaterial goods that become important when conditions of basic security are reached, esteem and belonging are better seen as crucial preconditions for effective self-defence in human society. Whereas New Politics characterizes the feminist emphasis on esteem and belonging as a response to formative experiences of prosperity and peace, it is more helpful to note that female participants have experienced problems of esteem and belonging as problems of civic voice. And as this chapter has shown, these were material problems: they presented interwar women’s movements with grave difficulties in finding a meaningful hearing for their distinctive security concerns.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN WARTIME: PARTICULARISTIC RESPECT,
PARTICULARISTIC EXCLUSION

With the exception of unemployment insurance, the various projects of constitutional amendment that social movements pursued at the Rowell-Sirois hearings proved remarkably slow to materialize. Some amendments, like transferring to the federal government regulatory authority over wages, hours and working conditions, would not materialize at all. However, the trade union movement, in particular, achieved considerable success in opening up the field of Canadian citizenship to a range of traditionally ignored aspirations and complaints. Testifying to this opening are the three parliamentary committees that this chapter analyzes; the 1940 House of Commons Special Committee on Unemployment Insurance, the 1943 Special House Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment and the 1943 House of Commons Special Committee on Social Security.

The increased political power of the traditional left owed much to the wartime context, both in terms of the increased bargaining power that workers enjoyed in a military economy, and in terms of the prevailing view of war as an arena of male sacrifice. These advantages were not enjoyed by female participants. As historian Ruth Roach Pierson shows, whatever leverage women might have derived from their wartime service as
workers and soldiers was vitiated by the understanding that theirs was an exceptional
departure from women's proper domestic "place."¹

The appearances of working-class and women's organizations in these forums of
citizenship dialogue highlight the importance of participation and social esteem as bases of
security. Contrary to the postmaterialism thesis, this chapter demonstrates the great
importance to the traditional left of rights, participation, belonging and esteem--goods
that New Politics analysts associate with the "new" movement denizens of the postwar boom. I argue further that a useful way to understand the strong emphasis on esteem and
belonging in postwar feminism is to notice the extent to which masculinity served the
traditional left as a symbolic capital for eliciting interactional respect. Women's exclusion
from the great mid-century debates about economic security illustrates the gendered
distribution of civic respect that the postwar feminist emphasis on recognition has
struggled to change. Thus, calling attention to the nature of this exclusion is a way of
foregrounding what the postmaterialism thesis forgets: the material role of esteem and
belonging as bases of voice and self-defence.

The 1940 House of Commons Special Committee on Unemployment Insurance

Trade Unions and the Male Worker's Esteem

When the provinces consented in January 1940 to establish unemployment insurance as an
area of exclusive federal government jurisdiction, the way was cleared for the biggest

¹ See Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All: The Second World War and
Canadian Womanhood" (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), chap. 4, "Wartime Jitters over
Femininity."
expansion of Ottawa's social responsibilities since 1867.\(^2\) With the July 1940 hearings of the House of Commons Special Committee on Unemployment Insurance, citizens enjoyed their first opportunity to influence the design of a major national scheme of reform that had a realistic chance of success. This opportunity was the fruit of persistent efforts by Canadian workers' movements. Although the wartime anti-communist ban prevented the Communist Party (CP) from appearing at any of the period's parliamentary hearings,\(^3\) the CP had certainly conveyed to the Rowell-Sirois Commission its "keen desire to get the unemployment amendments through."\(^4\) For its part, the All-Canadian Congress of Labour, an umbrella grouping of the nascent Canadian industrial unions, had called for a nation-wide unemployment insurance (UI) scheme since the group's 1927 founding, as had the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) since 1921.\(^5\)

This activism helped to create a Canadian citizenship that was considerably "thicker" than its predecessor. National UI, Canada's largest single income-security program by far,\(^6\) released millions of workers from depending on the often dubious mercy

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\(^3\) This ban, along with the internment of most of the Party's leaders, was Ottawa's response to the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939. The ban remained in place for the duration of the war. See Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada: A History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 139-148.


of the particular municipality in which they happened to find themselves unemployed. As James Struthers, the program’s major historian, characterizes this departure: “Whether searching for work or cashing their insurance cheques, Canadians could no longer regard Ottawa in the same way as before.”7 In contrast to the strong New Politics distinction between issues of belonging and issues of economic security, UI’s role in strengthening Canadian citizenship as a basis of belonging should not be overlooked. The Depression-era slogan of working-class UI advocates, “Citizens Not Transients,”8 captures this role well.

Although UI itself was often a “first place” concern,9 the interwar trade-union movement tended to place a secondary emphasis on the social-program arena. The eight-hour day, recognition of collective bargaining rights, better working conditions, job security and higher wages were instead the major priorities for the TLC and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour.10 Indeed, many workers regarded social programs as insidious substitutes for a more thoroughgoing acceptance of their demands.11

The Bill examined by the House of Commons Special Committee on Unemployment Insurance in the summer of 1940 proposed a contributory UI scheme which, with the exception of offering slightly higher benefits to claimants with dependent

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7 Ibid., 202.
8 Demonstrators’ placard, photo reproduction on the front cover of ibid.
9 Logan, Trade Unions, 473.
10 Ibid., 426-562.
11 Dennis Guest, The Emergence of Social Security in Canada (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1979), 80.
children, based contributions and benefits on the worker’s employment income.\textsuperscript{12}

Adopting the social insurance approach was a moral as well as a technical choice. By tying benefits paid and contributions received to the claimant’s income, market notions of differential reward were deliberately incorporated in the program. Although this approach made UI a terribly inadequate source of income security for many, it also framed benefits as a right that had been earned rather than as a stigmatizing form of “relief.”\textsuperscript{13}

The craft-union TLC and its younger industrial rival, the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL),\textsuperscript{14} both supported the long-awaited UI legislation. However, each group reacted to the Bill’s contents differently. President Tom Moore of the TLC voiced his support by observing that critics could find shortcomings in any UI Bill “that could be drafted inasmuch as it is impossible to foresee and provide for all varied [sic] cases that could come up in a widespread dominion such as ours.”\textsuperscript{15} This cautious approach

\textsuperscript{12} In order to ensure that the program would be self-sustaining, persons earning more than $2000 a year, self-employed, seasonal and resource-industry workers, civil servants and claimants unable to prove more than thirty weeks of continuous employment were all excluded from coverage. For these and other details about the 1940 UI Bill, see Leslie A. Pal, \textit{State, Class and Bureaucracy: Canadian Unemployment Insurance and Public Policy} (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1988), 39-50.

\textsuperscript{13} Guest, \textit{Emergence of Social Security}, 106-107.

\textsuperscript{14} The ACCL delegation also included representatives from the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), which was then merging with the ACCL to create the new Canadian Congress of Labour. On the merger, see Irving Abella, \textit{Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist Party, and the Canadian Congress of Labour, 1935-1956} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), chap. 3, “The Merger, 1939-40.”

\textsuperscript{15} Trades and Labour Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Bill No. 98 Respecting Unemployment Insurance, \textit{Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence}, No. 2, 23 July 1940, 110. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.
reflected the TLC’s longstanding reputation for “conduct[ing] its affairs with a carefully maintained dignity.”\(^{16}\)

The respectable craftsman’s approach took centre stage when a Committee member asked whether the TLC accepted the Bill’s provisions for denying benefits to workers for such reasons as involvement in a strike or loss of job due to “misconduct.”\(^{17}\) Moore replied by conveying his trust in the UI Commission whose business it would be to adjudicate contested claims: “It is built up out of a mass of experience over a period of time, and that has been found much more effective than attempting to devise strict regulations.”\(^{18}\) But the ACCL, which aimed to foster working-class solidarity across industries and income categories, took a more critical approach: it stated its intent to “watch carefully the application” of the disqualification rules, particularly “regarding Trade Union Activity.”\(^{19}\) This declaration of vigilance echoed the ACCL’s tendency to launch “slashing attacks on any government which failed to follow what was thought to be the proper course.”\(^{20}\)

The industrial and craft union groups differed most significantly on whether UI should be a redistributive enterprise or purely a program of social insurance. The ACCL pressed for a redistributive UI system that would use the fund’s reserves in order to

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\(^{17}\) See Hanson, in TLC, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 121.

\(^{18}\) TLC, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 122.

\(^{19}\) All-Canadian Congress of Labour, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, No. 2, 23 July 1940, 154.

\(^{20}\) Williams, *Unions in Canada*, 190.
significantly increase the benefits paid to unemployed low-wage earners,\textsuperscript{21} while the TLC urged that the plan be "actuarially sound"; that it be run strictly as an insurance program, with benefits fixed according to claimant contributions.\textsuperscript{22} But this difference does not mean that the TLC was driven by the bloodless concerns of accountancy. Rather, the TLC considered that the potential financial benefits of the ACCL's redistributive alternative were overshadowed by the capacity of a pure scheme of social insurance to uphold the unemployed workman's respect. As Moore explained, many workers associated redistributive programs with the humiliating requirements of Depression-era "relief":

> This Act does not take into account the social need. But in my opinion the worker would sooner take the benefits under unemployment insurance and maintain his independence in getting them as a right than take the higher rate and have to prove his destitution and disclose all his family affairs to investigators and be subject to general scrutiny.\textsuperscript{23}

This stance was an enduring staple of the respectable artisan. For instance, historian Eric Hobsbawm outlines the respectable artisan's stance by recounting a late-Victorian craftsman's views on the welfare question: "When asked why unemployed bricklayers did not want their wives to work, a building foreman said: 'I think they have a little more of what they term 'pride.' When asked why they avoided the Poor Law at all costs, he said simply: 'They would lose their votes. They are English you see.'"\textsuperscript{24} As

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} See ACCL, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 151.
\item \textsuperscript{22} TLC, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 110.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 117.
\end{itemize}
sociologist Jeffrey Haydu writes about the craft-union movement more generally: "skilled men's concerns extended well beyond the contents of their pay envelopes. . . . [The craft ethic featured] a testy sense of manhood, dignity and sturdy independence." These latter concerns are ignored by New Politics analysts: they describe the traditional left in unremittingly economistic terms and overlook the craftsman's focus on issues of identity and social esteem.

Perhaps the distinction between the craft union stress on the male artisan's respectability and industrial unionism's more redistributive focus reflects a split between postmaterialist and materialist values within the traditional left itself. One reading of Marxism's "labour aristocracy" thesis would certainly seem to support such an interpretation. As Hobsbawm explains, a strong version of the labour aristocracy thesis distinguishes between the reformist ideology of craft unionism and the industrial union focus on class unity. The similarity of the labour aristocracy thesis to New Politics theory is this: both focus on a connection between relative economic security (the proud craftsman was, after all, a labour aristocrat) and political orientations that emphasize issues of social esteem over "material" aspirations.

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26 For example, Neil Nevitte describes the protests of the prewar traditional left as motivated by "poverty" and "hunger," rather than the "quality of life" concerns that characterize postmaterialism, The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 1996), 84-85.

But Hobsbawm explains that strong versions of the labour-aristocracy thesis, which contrast craft reformism and industrial union socialism, are overblown. Late Victorian and early twentieth-century English industrial workers did not usually evince a socialist consciousness, while skilled craftsmen themselves became "radicalized when their position was threatened or undermined." Hobsbawm's qualification certainly applies to the TLC and ACCL, whose major "objectives were almost identical." As Gad Horowitz observes:

the TLC never assumed a rigid ideological . . . opposition to socialism. Socialists were active and influential in its [bodies]. The TLC convention of 1933 . . . declared itself in favour of co-operative ownership of the means of production . . . Professions of faith in "free enterprise" were . . . practically non-existent in the TLC.

And as Haydu points out, craft respectability was not always the same as political moderation: "Artisans were at the forefront of socialist movements and revolutionary politics in Western Europe, Russia, and North America."

The problem with contrasting the TLC and ACCL in the similar but more diffuse language of "values," which is the preferred idiom of New Politics theory, is that the industrial union ACCL was also keenly interested in questions of manly identity and social esteem. In particular, the ACCL aimed to convince workers that rejecting the craft union

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28 See ibid., esp. 223.

29 Hobsbawm, " Debating the Labour Aristocracy," in ibid., 223.

30 Williams, Unions in Canada, 191.


32 Haydu, Between Craft and Class, 3.
approach to respectability did not require assuming an emasculating dependency. It pursued this aim, first, by arguing that the workingman could increase his self-esteem and social prestige by engaging in organized resistance and, second, by identifying capitalists as the truly dependent class. Thus, in a 1938 editorial, ACCL President Norman Dowd castigated “the capitalists . . . who live . . . on unearned incomes,” and expressed his pity for the “great masses of unorganized workers, who live wholly at the mercy of their masters.” Against both forms of disesteem Dowd positioned the “organized workers,” who had “asserted their right to interfere with profit-making.” Dowd concluded by reminding his audience that “the unorganized are helpless; there remain only the organized.” This emphasis, which points up Dowd’s judgment that workers required far more than economic incentives for embracing industrial unionism, suggests that the distinction between craft and industrial unionism can be usefully conceptualized as a distinction between two approaches to negotiating the felt imperatives of masculinity.

The notion of the organized industrial worker’s manly pride was a crucial theme of the ACCL’s UI presentation. President Dowd sought to defuse fears that accepting wealth redistribution would be a badge of unvirtuous dependency by arguing that “the cost of maintaining unemployed workers should be a direct charge upon industry, since the individual workers are not responsible for unemployment.” Industry, of course, was

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 ACCL, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 151.
wholly unlikely to accept such a scheme. Thus, the ACCL’s real position was that low-income workers should be exempted from paying UI premiums if industry “as now organized” would not accept its proper responsibility.\(^{37}\) This position stressed that redistribution was a noble way for relatively advantaged union members to help their less fortunate, yet morally blameless counterparts.

Dowd claimed that ACCL members were eager to pay into a redistributive UI scheme that would help their more insecure brethren. This eagerness was presented as evidence of the generosity of those “senior [union] men who will never be laid off . . . [but who] have consistently . . . advocated unemployment insurance right throughout.”\(^{38}\) These men were willing “to make the [UI] contributions . . . in spite of the fact that . . . [they] will not . . . ever require the assistance which the insurance will afford.”\(^{39}\) A supportive Committee member was quick to amplify Dowd’s point: “the fortunate ones are satisfied to contribute something to the less fortunate.”\(^{40}\) Thus, the ACCL framed industrial unionism not as a humble petitioner to bourgeois superiors but as an enterprise of working-class solidarity in which organized workers could take pride. Because its leadership knew that working-class men placed great importance on the so-called postmaterialist values of identity and esteem, the ACCL joined its craft union counterpart

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\(^{37}\) Ibid.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 155.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 151.

\(^{40}\) Roebuck, in ACCL, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 155.
in harmonizing its economic advocacy with the symbolic requirements of manly independence.

The 1943 House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction

Trade Unions: Demanding Their Due

Three years of tremendous change for the Canadian trade union movement separated the 1943 House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment from the 1940 UI hearings. One indicator of this transformation is the surge of militancy that, until 1966, made 1943 unsurpassed as Canada's record year for number of strikes and total workers involved.41 Another marker is the growing interest of workers in politics, of which the most well-known evidence is the dramatic rise in electoral support enjoyed by the wartime CCF.42

Just as they had summoned the Rowell-Sirois Commission in response to working-class unrest, Mackenzie King's Liberals reacted in 1943 to an increasingly politicized labour movement by convening the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment. The Reconstruction hearings were a "morale-building device,"43 with which Ottawa sought to demonstrate its commitment to ushering


42 In particular, "the greatest new source from which the CCF was deriving members and revenue was Ontario's mushrooming trade union movement," Gerald Caplan, *The Dilemma of Canadian Socialism: The CCF in Ontario* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 95.

in "a new, more humane . . . era in which capitalism was subordinated to social needs."

Although this latter development did not materialize, it is fair to say that the welfare state that emerged from these debates significantly deepened the belonging conveyed by Canadian citizenship. The era of *laissez-faire* and classical federalism was over.

The domestic sacrifices of war fell with particular harshness on Canadian labour. Whenever wartime workers protested either their inadequate wages (which had been frozen at 1929 levels), their exceedingly long hours or the refusal of employers to bargain with workers over these issues, the state sided with the employers. In labour historian Laurel Sefton MacDowell’s words: “Business influence in the government and society was much greater, and that influence was reflected in the government’s wartime labour policy.” This frustrating situation prompted even “the traditionally restrained TLC” to abandon its customary posture of deference and official non-partisanship.

By 1943 the *Trades and Labour Congress Journal* could no longer inform its readers, as it had just a year earlier, of the federal government’s appreciation “of the splendid co-operation always rendered by the Trades and Labour Congress.”

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47 MacDowell, “Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System,” 577.


little about the new TLC for Ottawa to like. The TLC’s 1943 House Reconstruction Committee presentation condemned the “architects of depression” for their “gross mismanagement”; pejoratives that were wholly absent from the Congress’s UI Committee and Rowell-Sirois Commission appearances.

The TLC’s sudden readiness to challenge government elites was also encouraged by the King administration’s new willingness to recognize the ACCL’s rapidly ascending successor, the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL). Shortly after a merger with the Congress of Industrial Organizations made it the largest trade union umbrella in Canada, leaders of the industrial union CCL began to occupy the labour slots on the various government boards and agencies that had once been the monopoly of the TLC. Clearly, the CCL’s more disputatious attitude did not preclude Ottawa’s recognition once the

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50 Trades and Labour Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 24, 7 July 1943, 640, 639. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.

51 In the fall of 1940, the ACCL became the CCL in order to signal its merger with the Canadian branches of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). The CIO unions had been expelled from the ACCL’s competitor, the TLC, in 1939. The latter decision was in response to an order from the TLC’s parent body, the American Federation of Labor, which had expelled its own CIO unions in 1937 on the ground that the CIO’s focus on industry-wide organizing was incompatible with craft principles. Thus, the absorption of the Canadian CIO affiliates into the ACCL produced a rechristened CCL that boasted a dramatically enlarged membership. See Abella, Nationalism, Communism, chap. 3, “The Merger, 1939-40.”

52 By 1943, the CCL’s membership overshadowed that of the TLC, with 245,812 members as against 190,778. See Canada, Department of Labour, Labour Organization In Canada, Thirty-third Annual Report for the Calendar Year 1943 (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1944), 21-22.

53 See Abella, Nationalism, Communism, 72; Logan, Trade Unions, 522; Morton and Copp, Working People, 183.
strength of numbers made it a force too potent to ignore. As labour historian H.A. Logan argues, the TLC had learned much “by watching . . . the rival Congress.”

However, rejecting deference and official non-partisanship did not mean that the TLC had abandoned its traditional concern to safeguard the workman’s esteem and respect. For example, the TLC had only mild enthusiasm for the extensive network of social welfare programs proposed by the famous Marsh Report, whose recommendations Ottawa was considering as part of its reconstruction plans. Although the Marsh Report was “better than nothing at all,” TLC Acting President Percy Bengough insisted on “social security in its full sense”; employment for “every citizen of Canada [who is] able and willing to work.” At the same time, Bengough warned the Committee that his membership would not accept public works programs that reflected the 1930s philosophy that “twice as many could be put to work if a half sized shovel was used.”

By no means did the TLC’s economic security concerns make it willing to accept remedies that denied workers respect. As Bengough put it: “We can state emphatically that the workers of Canada want no more of that kind of treatment. . . . [Workers on public employment projects] have a right to participate in the benefits of the machines. . . . They want, and have a right to expect, useful creative employment with a decent standard

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54 Logan, Trade Unions, 437.


56 TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 642.

57 Ibid., 641.
of living.” Like its 1940 insistence that workers preferred the dignity of “independence” to the demeaning “general scrutiny” of relief, the TLC’s public works position aimed to confront problems of economic security in a manner that was consistent with the workman’s desire for esteem.

The TLC’s more overtly challenging stance infuriated the House Reconstruction Committee. After Bengough’s reference to the “architects of depression” and their “gross mismanagement,” many Committee members became openly hostile to the TLC presentation. Pro-business members responded to the “architects of depression” comment by challenging Bengough to prove that “anybody [had] benefited financially from the last depression.” This, Bengough failed to do. There then ensued an offensive from the Committee’s non-CCF contingent, which Bengough was unable to effectively counter. For instance, Mr. McDonald believed that many workers did not deserve to enjoy the benefits of automation on public-works projects: “During the period of depression I noted some cases where unemployment work was being carried on ... where the machine was doing the work and the men stood looking on, drawing relief payments at the same time.” Similarly, Mr. Purdy criticized what he regarded as an extravagant TLC

58 Ibid.

59 TLC, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 117.

60 TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 640, 639.

61 McDonald, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 643.

62 McDonald, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 646.
reconstruction program by suggesting that labour was seeking to be exempted from the very laws of nature: "You have no formula for regulating the weather . . . have you?"\(^{63}\)

Bengough had failed to verify his claim that certain unspecified "architects" had benefited financially from the Depression. And Bengough’s line of argument, "if people sit down to a game, they cannot all lose. Somebody has to win,"\(^ {64}\) had failed entirely to soothe the offended Committee members. In order to substantiate his larger point that depressions could be averted by deliberate action, Bengough then related a dubious tale of how the repeated circulation of a fake ten dollar bill had saved a small American town from economic decline.\(^ {65}\) At this point, CCF Committee members, who feared that the TLC presentation was not serving the cause of social democracy well, began to offer a faltering Bengough their assistance.

In particular, the CCF’s Clairie Gillis, that "tough, eloquent miner"\(^ {66}\) from Cape Breton, offered a critique of capitalism that proceeded for an incredible five pages of print, with occasional interruptions from Liberal and Tory members but none from the TLC’s silenced Bengough. When the Chairman pointed out that "we have a witness here and he is an audience rather than the one giving testimony," Gillis defended the CCF intervention: "We are merely trying to help him out. We belong to the same class."\(^ {67}\)

\(^{63}\) Purdy, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 647.

\(^{64}\) TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 643.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 647-648.

\(^{66}\) Morton and Copp, Working People, 204.

\(^{67}\) Turgeon and Gillis, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 659.
The reconstruction platforms of the TLC and CCL were almost identical. Like the TLC, the CCL argued for sustained federal-government economic intervention to realize full employment, an extensive program of public works and a comprehensive social welfare program. And like the TLC, the CCL believed that the major priority for workers was to enjoy employment under conditions of dignity. To convey this priority, the CCL's new director of research, the constitutional expert and future senator Eugene Forsey, devoted great energy to attacking the reconstruction brief of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce brief had criticized the left's notion of full employment on the ground that there must be "a certain reserve of people waiting for work." Forsey countered: "For us, full employment means full employment... and we do not believe that the Canadian people will tolerate anything else. . . Labour is human beings, persons, and must be treated as such."

The CCL presentation stands out for its pronounced emphasis on democratic participation, although the TLC was by no means uninterested in democracy. The TLC's official 1943 reconstruction pamphlet demanded that labour be recognized as "an equal partner in industry, and that representatives be appointed, after consultation with organized labour, on such boards, commissions, etc. already established, or those which in future may be set up." But it seems that the outrage caused by his "architects of depression" remark prevented Bengough from addressing the full range of themes

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68 Canadian Chamber of Commerce, quoted in Canadian Congress of Labour, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, No. 26, 15 July 1943, 689.

69 CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 690, 691.

70 TLC, quoted in Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, 523.
canvassed in the TLC’s brief: the CCL’s Forsey enjoyed a full fourteen pages of presentation time before submitting to the Committee’s examination, while the beleaguered Bengough managed just over three.

Thus, the far more effective Forsey was able to expound at length on the themes of democratic administration and worker participation. The CCL was particularly concerned that Ottawa’s postwar reconstruction program would proceed without worker involvement. This concern reflected a lesson learned from Ottawa’s wartime regime of wage and price controls. As Forsey explained, “in almost every case it is the business men themselves who have operated the controls.”71 Accordingly, the CCL insisted on the “democratization” of the existing controls, of the expected postwar works program and of the economic activities of the hoped-for future interventionist federal government more generally.72

If the civil liberties violations of the Great Depression convinced working-class organizations that democratic voice was a crucial basis of security, the wartime role of business in government reinforced the conviction further. According to Forsey, workers would no longer “submit to being pushed round. . . . [T]hey will accept the necessary [postwar economic] controls only if those controls are in the hands of their own representatives.”73 “Perhaps no single measure,” Forsey continued, “would do so much to restore labour’s waning confidence in government.”74 Contrary to the picture

71 CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 695.
72 Ibid., 688.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
suggested by New Politics theory, the trade-union movement—which linked long hours, low wages and poor working conditions to government’s close relationship with capital—saw participation not as a higher-order luxury but rather as an integral part of economic security.

In contrast to Bengough’s ill-fated challenge, which faltered under the Committee’s indignant reaction, Forsey’s polish and erudition elicited an almost deferential response. It was not that Forsey had refrained from making inflammatory criticisms of Canada’s business and state elite. Forsey considered that “the basic distinction between capitalists and non-capitalists is between those who won’t starve if they don’t work and those who will starve if they don’t work”75; he boasted that “strong trade unions . . . are likely to be far more effective guardians of freedom than the modern corporation”76; and he compared “the existing . . . capitalist state” to the “very fascism we are now fighting to destroy.”77

Yet the same Committee members who had been most hostile to the TLC raised only the most muted complaints in response to the CCL presentation. Hill agreed with Forsey “that there has been a lot of monopoly of capital,” and only suggested that “monopolistic unions . . . are using the same power.”78 Whereas Purdy accused the TLC of wanting to “regulate the weather,”79 McNiven worried that the CCL’s platform could

75 Ibid., 693.
76 Ibid., 697.
77 Ibid., 692, 696.
78 Hill, in CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 701.
79 Purdy, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 647.
not address "unemployment due to climatic conditions." And McDonald, who responded to Bengough’s remarks on the topic of public works by arguing that the unemployed wanted machines to “do the work” and yet to draw “relief payments at the same time,” only demurred that the CCL’s full employment plan would falter once industry caught “up with all the orders for the wants of the people.”

Forsey’s carefully prepared brief and impressive rhetorical abilities served both to pre-empt combative outbursts from Committee members and to render the CCF’s debating assistance unnecessary. Unlike Bengough, Forsey did not present a list of demands backed by vague threats and homespun anecdotes. He soundly derided the Canadian Chamber of Commerce’s reconstruction brief, whose argument against full employment was that “the social machinery cannot stand . . . top speed . . . any better than any other machinery can,” as “a beautiful example of the pitfalls which beset argument by analogy in political or economic discussions.” Forsey also cowed potential critics by offering carefully reasoned positions buttressed with academic citations, which he invoked almost gleefully—"as weapons for threatening a Committee of whose inferior argumentative prowess he seemed certain." This performance signalled that potential critics, particularly

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80 McNiven, in CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 705.
81 McDonald, in TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 646.
82 McDonald, in CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 709.
83 CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 690.
84 For example: “We do not think [that this argument] will be denied. If it is, we are quite ready to produce the evidence to substantiate what we have said.” Forsey again: “On this also we are prepared, if necessary, to submit detailed evidence,” ibid., 692.
rude ones, would do better to opt for the safety of acquiescence over the risks of humiliation.

In more recent years Ronald Inglehart has supplemented his original focus on postmaterial value change by observing that postwar prosperity has dramatically enhanced access to higher education. In particular, Inglehart argues that the great postwar university explosion has complemented the impact of value change by equipping citizens with new political skills, which promote "elite-challenging behaviour"—and therefore spur citizen participation in the "new" social movements. This argument, which Inglehart also advances by stressing the extent to which upper-class individuals engage most frequently in the more intensive modes of political participation, is not in dispute.

The contrast between the receptions afforded to Bengough, a Vancouver machinist catapulted unexpectedly to Ottawa by the illness of TLC President Tom Moore, and to Forsey, an Oxford-educated Guggenheim fellow and experienced university debater, certainly seems to illustrate Inglehart's point. Whereas Bengough was harshly and frequently interrupted, the CCL presenter presided over a veritable parade of honorifics. The Chairman concluded the CCL presentation with a "Thank you, Dr. Forsey," members repeatedly addressed "Dr. Forsey," while Mr. McNiven prefaced his questioning with two "Dr. Forseys" and one "doctor."

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86 Turgeon and McNiven, in CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 705-706.
Thus, Inglehart's basic point—that working-class people, such as Bengough, suffer educational disadvantages that tend to promote deference and a reluctance to participate in public political exchange—is surely significant. However, the tendency of postsecondary education and professional credentials to become bases of social esteem that greatly increase one's capacity to speak in self-defence highlights something that the postmaterialism thesis misses. Because our prospects for security, economic or otherwise, so often depend on successful interaction with others, the contrast between material needs for security and postmaterial aspirations for esteem distinguishes far too sharply between problems of disesteem and problems of insecurity.

The 1943 House of Commons Special Committee on Social Security

The National Council of Women: Pigeon-Holed and Ignored

The official mandate of the 1943 House of Commons Special Committee on Social Security was to evaluate a set of public health insurance proposals that Ottawa's reconstruction planners had commissioned from Assistant Deputy Minister of Pensions and National Health, Dr. J.J. Heagerty. In particular, the Heagerty Report called for a joint federal-provincial program of public health insurance into which all but "indigents" would be required to pay a flat-rate annual premium.87

Like the Reconstruction hearings, the House Social Security Committee provided Ottawa with a platform from which to herald its commitment to postwar reforms.88

87 See Guest, Social Security in Canada, 138-140.

Less explicitly, Ottawa used the health insurance issue as a means of steering women's groups towards a comparatively narrow sector of demobilization planning that male authorities viewed as an appropriate arena for female involvement. Although the National Council of Women (NCW) was invited to appear before the House Social Security Committee, not a single women's group participated in the more prestigious and far-reaching House Reconstruction hearings. The exact reason for this exclusion is impossible to conclusively ascertain. But a particularly likely explanation is that the Reconstruction Committee determined that women's groups failed to meet the standard that was then in force for making representations to parliamentary committees: "No witness shall be summoned to attend before any committee of the House unless a certificate shall first have been filed with the chairman of such committee, by some member thereof, stating that the evidence to be obtained from such witness is, in his opinion, material and important."89

By 1941, Ottawa's evident failure to treat women's views as "material" or "important" prompted feminists to complain about their exclusion from government reconstruction planning. As historian Gail Cuthbert Brandt recounts, women's groups wrote to the federal government to reiterate "the importance of the contribution which Canadian women were making to the war effort and [to underline] their keen interest in

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89 In Arthur Beauchesne, Rules and Forms of the House of Commons of Canada: A Compendium of Canadian Parliamentary Practice (Toronto: Canada Law Book Company, 1943), 193. The availability of at least one national women's organization for the Reconstruction hearings was certainly not at issue. As was announced at the National Council of Women's 1943 annual meeting: "The fact that the National President is resident in Ottawa gives our Organization great opportunity to be called upon at very short notice... Recently the National Council was asked to appear before the Government Committee set up for the study of Health Insurance," National Council of Women of Canada, Year Book for 1943 (n.p., 1943), 16.
post-war planning.” These appeals failed to garner any invitations to appear before the House Reconstruction Committee. Convened instead was a separate Advisory Committee on the Post-War Problems of Women, whose role was to compile information about women workers and then report to the parent body of the two parliamentary reconstruction committees, the Cabinet’s Advisory Committee on Reconstruction. But as Brandt shows, the parent Advisory Committee submitted its final report to Cabinet before even hearing from the Women’s Subcommittee, whose recommendations were then “pigeon-holed and forgotten.”

Thus, the decision to invite women’s groups to appear before the House Social Security Committee, but not the House Committee on Reconstruction, reflects Ottawa’s attempt to confine women’s participation to suitably “female” issues. Indeed, the Social Security Committee’s failure to solicit the views of unions on health insurance points up how consistent this pattern of gendered selectivity was. Much like the Rowell-Sirois Commission, the reconstruction planners seemed to view women’s organizations as appropriate participants on issues such as health and infant mortality but not on the “manly” questions of employment and economic policy.

This understanding was not shared by the 1943 NCW. As historian N.E.S. Griffiths points out, “one of the most important events” of 1943 for the Council was the development and circulation of the NCW’s “Program for Post-War Planning.”

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91 Ibid., see esp. 254.

Program, which had been drawn up by a Special Committee of Council on Reconstruction after a series of consultations with the national organization’s local councils, contained eleven detailed sections. It emphasized the need for future international initiatives to prevent war, for further consideration by Ottawa of the Rowell-Sirois Report, for a full postwar scheme of social security, for the eight-hour day and a national minimum wage, for more appointments of women to government boards and agencies and for women’s right to equal pay for equal work. But the federal government ignored this demonstrated familiarity with postwar planning issues. Indeed, Mrs. Edgar Hardy’s 1943 NCW Presidential Address reads almost as if it were written to describe her organization’s frustrated attempt to join the reconstruction debates: “we hear often, generally from men, the remark that ‘after the war women will go back to the kitchen.’... [W]e are in effect being told what we are to do before we have been given the chance to express what we intend to do.”

Female participants not only faced the problem that powerful men aimed to restrict women’s political input to issues such as infant mortality, marriage law and health. It seems that male elites sought to confine even this restricted participation to a “cheerleader” role, which encouraged women to express their approval of government policy but not to argue or debate. For example, although the NCW presentation to the House Social Security Committee raised two major issues that differentiated the Council’s

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93 See ibid., 229-232. The program is reprinted in its entirety in NCW, Year Book for 1943, 78-85.

94 Quoted in Griffiths, Splendid Vision, 233. Hardy’s address, “Where Are We Going?”, is reprinted in NCW, Year Book for 1943, 40-44.
approach to health insurance from that of the Heagerty Report, the Committee did not see fit to engage the Council in discussion on either point.

President Hardy began her testimony by referring to the health insurance recommendations that were contained in the Council’s “post-war program.” This program, Hardy continued, “asked for . . . Dominion leadership” in establishing a three-tiered health-insurance scheme, which would feature private coverage for the wealthy, contributory public health insurance for those with medium and low incomes and publicly-financed insurance for those “unable to pay.”

In what was perhaps intended as a subtle gesture of defiance, Hardy then managed a further reference to the NCW reconstruction platform for which Ottawa had displayed such disregard. She urged that public health objectives could be furthered not just by health insurance, but also by “an extension of benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act [and the] establishment of a national plan of contributory old age pensions.”

First, therefore, the NCW argued that the efficiency of any national health scheme could be improved significantly if standards of living were also raised. Second, the Council disagreed with the Heagerty proposals for a universal scheme around which the Social Security Committee’s deliberations revolved. Yet the Committee failed to engage the NCW on the relationship between income maintenance programs and health policy or to discuss the merits of public health insurance versus the mixed public-private scheme proposed by the Council. Indeed, no member of the Social Security Committee regarded

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95 National Council of Women, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Social Security, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 15, 28 May 1943, 407-408.

96 Ibid., 408.
the NCW delegation as sufficiently important to merit any exchange of dialogue at all. As the Committee’s proceedings read: “The Chairman: ‘Are there any questions?’ Witness retired.”

It must be noted that the NCW did not question the Committee’s choice to deny to the Council that concluding exchange of views in which male delegations participated as a matter of routine. Hardy even seemed to signal her willingness to forego the Committee’s examination: “I can assure you at this time that we will support any plan in principle which will secure for Canada an adequate national health plan.” This was a curious stance to take for an organization that had just spent a year developing a distinctive position on the health-insurance issue. Indeed, although even the most uninformed of male participants would likely have elected to “bluff his way through,” President Hardy offered a confession: “we have not yet studied the report of the Health Insurance Committee; I am trying to read it, but it is quite a long volume.” This admission was remarkable given that the Council’s reconstruction program contained an entire section on the topic of “National Health and Nutrition,” from which the NCW’s health insurance proposals derived.

The NCW’s reticence can be understood better by drawing on the work of sociologist Erving Goffman. Goffman argues that extreme modesty in social interaction, of which President Hardy’s approach is a classic instance, often reflects the wary

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97 See ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
subordinate’s desire to avoid public humiliation. As Goffman puts it, “the very anticipation” of experiencing disesteem in social encounters can lead “the stigmatized to arrange life so as to avoid them.” Thus, although Hardy spoke frankly at the Council’s 1943 annual meeting of her “aroused indignation” at men’s refusal to treat women as political equals, the prospect of an actual male audience’s reaction to such indignation led the NCW President to strike a very different tone.

The earlier analysis of the House Reconstruction hearings explored two different ways in which trade union organizations approached their parliamentary audiences. Acting President Bengough of the TLC, although obviously unversed in the technical details of economic policy, did not hesitate to speak in a frankly confrontational way. And although many members of the Committee took umbrage at Bengough’s remarks and considered his analysis uninformed, they certainly did not entertain the notion of neglecting to engage the trade union leader in a round of spirited debate. Conversely, Forsey’s numerous academic references, polished self-confidence and bevy of technical arguments conveyed his status as a professional expert. The Committee, whose majority was by no means friendly to the CCL’s social-democratic views, responded with a highly respectful round of questioning, in which even Forsey’s critics acknowledged that their witness was “well travelled and well versed in this matter.”

100 Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (New York: Touchstone, 1986), 12. On the converse phenomenon, which is the false modesty that the powerful may affect when they seek to disarm subordinates, see idem, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1959), 199.

101 NCW, *Year Book for 1943*, 41.

102 Mac Nicol, in CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 703.
The shock value of Bengough's outrage and Forsey's smooth erudition were both potentially available political resources for the NCW. As her presidential address confirmed, President Hardy did not lack "aroused indignation"; Griffith's account also observes that a "note of independence and conviction . . . was present throughout the Council deliberations of 1943." And given that the Council's member groups included the Canadian Diatetic Association, the Health League of Canada, the University of Toronto Medical Alumnae and the Victorian Order of Nurses, it is certainly safe to assume that the Council possessed more than sufficient expertise in the health care field.

This background points up the basic importance of esteem and respect as fundamental bases of self-defence. Hardy's hesitant and deferential interaction with the Social Security Committee contrasts starkly with the brashness and confidence that were conveyed by her trade union counterparts. Whether he was an unschooled angry critic or a smoothly polished expert, the male participant expected and received the basic courtesy of debate, which allowed him to better pursue his security interests. Thus, attending to the great advantages of maleness in the mid-century public sphere provides a far more compelling basis for understanding the postwar feminist emphasis on questions of social esteem than it does to see it as the progeny of prosperity and postmaterialism. This focus must be seen in terms of the context from which it emerged; a context in which problems of social esteem and civic belonging in a male-dominated public sphere led women--when

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103 NCW, Year Book for 1943, 41.

104 Griffiths, Splendid Vision, 234.

105 See ibid., 227.
they were actually allowed to participate—to downplay their perspectives on security and safety almost to the extent of being silent.

Conclusion

By 1945, the beginnings of the Canadian welfare state were clearly in view. As the proliferation of parliamentary committees on issues of social security and "reconstruction" suggests, there emerged a new political space; one far more attuned to workers' concerns than was its laissez-faire predecessor. By joining unions and participating in left-wing politics in unprecedented numbers, workers proved vital to the creation of a new Canadian citizenship. The 1940 UI Act was soon followed by such achievements as national collective-bargaining legislation, Old Age Security, the Canada Pension Plan and public health insurance. Thus, working-class activism transformed citizenship in Canada from a purely procedural affair into a more substantive regime that recognized, albeit incompletely, unevenly and imperfectly, the claims to belonging of traditionally marginalized people.

Although it is a simple point, it warrants reiteration: for working-class people, participation was a vital prerequisite of economic security. Whereas New Politics theory describes participation as a postmaterialist aspiration that becomes important in conditions of relative affluence, the history of the labour movement indicates a quite different sequence of priorities. As E.P. Thompson observes, it was only in the "late 19th century

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106 See Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 335.
[that] Socialism shifted emphasis from political to economic rights."\textsuperscript{107} The timing of this shift reflects what T.H. Marshall’s famous account suggests: workers could not even begin to conceptualize speaking in terms of a right to union membership, collective bargaining or unemployment insurance until winning the civil and political rights whose great expansion characterized the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively.\textsuperscript{108} And as the previous chapter showed, Canadian workers continued these struggles well into the twentieth century against a political regime that was prepared to crush left-wing activism with what Prime Minister R.B. Bennett frankly described as the “iron heel of ruthlessness.”

But effective participation requires more than the formal right to participate. In particular, I have argued that social esteem is a crucial basis of effective civic participation. In this regard, Hobsbawm’s analysis of the labour aristocracy thesis has proved an interesting case to consider. The notion of a labour aristocracy was first used by late-Victorian observers to describe a better-paid and more secure stratum of artisans that stood apart from the great mass of unskilled labourers. As Hobsbawm explains, an early generation of Marxist analysts drew upon the idea of a labour aristocracy to explain the skilled worker’s alleged immunity “to social disorder and revolutionary appeals.” Marxists, adds Hobsbawm with self-deprecating wit, “regretted these characteristics and used the existence of a ‘labour aristocracy’ to explain the lack of appeal of their cause.”\textsuperscript{109}


\textsuperscript{109} Hobsbawm, “The Aristocracy of Labour Reconsidered,” in Worlds of Labour, 228.
But as Hobsbawm argues, this picture of a strong ideological contrast between artisans and labourers fails to fit the evidence. Industrial workers did not tend to evince a revolutionary or often even a socialist consciousness, while many skilled craftsmen were more “socially or politically radicalized” than the notion of craft reformism leaves room to admit. Hobsbawm’s point captures the mid-century Canadian case well. The programs of the craft TLC and industrial ACCL-CCL were remarkably similar. And as the TLC’s angry appearance at the Reconstruction hearings made clear, deference was by no means an immovable article of the craft faith. Thus, drawing a strong ideological contrast between craft and industrial unionism can obscure more than it reveals.

I have argued that the distinction between the craft emphasis on conventional notions of respectability and the more aggressive industrial union approach is better conceptualized as a distinction between two different ways of managing the felt imperatives of working-class masculinity. By emphasizing the importance of UI as a dignified alternative to the demeaning “general scrutiny” of welfare, the TLC pursued economic security in a way that corresponded to the stress that many working-class men placed on notions of masculine independence and dignity. By the same token, the ACCL knew that its arguments for a more redistributive scheme could prove offensive to workers if the spectre of dependency and charity was not successfully addressed. Accordingly, it sought to focus moral condemnation on employers, who were accused of shirking the dignified manliness of work. At the same time, the ACCL aimed to vindicate the esteem

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111 TLC, Presentation to the 1940 House Committee on UI, 117.
concerns of its membership by framing redistribution as an altruistic gift from the more advantaged section of the working class to its less fortunate counterpart. Neither trade-union group was prepared to countenance an economic advocacy that neglected the importance of respect.

This common approach was also central to the wartime reconstruction debates. For instance, although the TLC abandoned its old posture of deferential respectability, by no means did it become indifferent to questions of social esteem. The TLC was highly suspicious of Ottawa's social security plans; it preferred "useful creative employment with a decent standard of living." And it conveyed its strong distaste for humiliating employment schemes, which were said to reflect the notion that "twice as many people could be put to work if a half sized shovel was used." For its part, the CCL framed its case for democratization by voicing what was then a strongly male-coded argument for respect. As Forsey put it, workers would no longer "submit to being pushed round."

Thus, pointing up this consistent trade union focus on manliness and respect is a useful corrective to the notion of an unflinching working-class economism. There is perhaps no imagery more central to the postmaterialism thesis than the contrast between the emphasis of the traditional left on economic concerns and the preoccupation of "new" social movements with higher-order needs, such as respect, pride and esteem. But as I

112 TLC, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 641.

113 Ibid.

114 CCL, Presentation to the 1943 House Reconstruction Committee, 688.

have shown, trade unions were seized with the importance of these themes. Indeed, contrary to what New Politics theory might predict—were it to even broach the question—the importance of esteem and respect transcended economic differences within the trade-union movement itself. Although craft unionists tended to be more secure than their industrial-union counterparts, neither actor could countenance a cap-in-hand economic advocacy that violated prevailing notions of the workman’s dignity and independence.

In short, I have argued that to neglect the importance of participation, rights and social esteem to issues of economic security is to adopt a misleading approach. Indeed, the treatment of women’s groups in the mid-century Canadian public sphere points up with particular starkness how important social esteem was for men who sought to use politics to pursue their economic security interests. During Canada’s first era of citizen participation in constitutional politics, considerations of social esteem intersected with prevailing stereotypes and ideologies in a way that was uniquely congenial to the political claims of men. From the 1938 Rowell-Sirois hearings to the 1943 reconstruction committees, problems of unemployment, demobilization, income security and constitutional change were framed by Canadian political elites as “men’s business.” This background is necessary to understand how it was, for example, that Communists and trade unionists could invoke so often an aggressive language of masculinity that refused to tolerate subordination, while female participants faced remarkable barriers to conveying their political aims and complaints.
These barriers reflect the great importance of participation, voice and social esteem as bases of security. For instance, the wartime stress on women’s “patriotic duty and [the] necessity to make sacrifices for the nation”116 buttressed a more general view that positioned women as the quiet subjects of men’s decisions rather than as active civic participants. Accordingly, women were excluded almost entirely from the central reconstruction debates. Even when they did manage to participate, women’s status as veritable civic non-entities was demonstrated clearly by the decision of the Social Security Committee to treat the NCW presentation as an inconsequential formality that did not even mandate the customary question period. And although women’s groups wrote letters complaining of their exclusion from reconstruction planning and condemned sexism strongly at their own meetings, their more visible civic participation bore the self-deprecat ing hallmarks of adjustment to a demeaning civic status.

Women’s \textit{de facto} status as subjects rather than participants helped to induce a posture of deference that went far beyond that ever contemplated by the respectable TLC. The persistent unwillingness of men to recognize women as actual civic partners, let alone as worthy adversaries, led mid-century Canadian feminism into a stance of adaptive deference that aimed to pre-empt the threat of humiliation. For to challenge is to ask publicly to be judged by the challenged party and, thus, for mid-century feminism, to have risked a highly visible ratification of precisely the inferior status that many women wanted to surmount. As Pierre Bourdieu characterizes this dilemma: “the challenge confers

honour... Only a challenge... coming from an equal in honour deserves to be taken up; in other words, for there to be a challenge, the man who receives it must consider the man who makes it worthy of making it.”

It would of course be erroneous to present the politics of manliness as unambiguously successful. Much of Canada’s political elite, and certainly the organizations of employers, portrayed workers as layabouts whose penchant for irresponsibility dictated using unemployment as a tool of discipline. It was precisely from such a position that the House Reconstruction Committee responded to the aggressive 1943 TLC presentation with disrespectful attacks, which were of sufficient force to virtually silence Acting President Bengough. The fact that Forsey’s almost identical complaints received a far more positive reception points up the great benefits that often accrue in civic interaction to actors possessed of the smoothness, confidence and polish that professional status so often confers. But because civic expertise tended to be an almost exclusive male preserve at mid-century, this was also a symbolic basis of respect that proved remarkably elusive for female participants, whatever their formal credentials.

In short, therefore, the distinction between a materialist emphasis on security and a postmaterialist focus on issues such as participation and esteem is a misleading approach to understanding the politics of equality-seeking movements. Trade unionists prized participation as a basis of security, and they focused consistently on pursuing economic objectives in ways that corresponded to the great emphasis that working-class men placed on questions of identity, dignity and respect—questions that New Politics theory associates

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exclusively with the "new" social movements. At the same time, women's groups were strongly interested in issues of economic security, as their repeated attempts to enter the wartime reconstruction debates attested. Yet a range of ideational and symbolic barriers to women's participation worked to deny to women a crucial advantage that male-dominated organizations could far more easily take for granted. This advantage was the social esteem and civic voice that working-class men were then effectively deploying, not as the higher-order goods of prosperity to which New Politics refers--but as fundamental bases of security and self-defence.
CHAPTER 4
RIGHTS, UNIVERSALISM AND VIRTUE

The major social-movement actor in Canada's Depression-era and wartime constitutional debates was the traditional left, whose sustained political activism produced a greatly expanded notion of Canadian citizenship based on the addition of what T.H. Marshall calls social rights. But beginning in the late 1940s, constitutional politics began to revolve around a different set of questions, such as the consequences for Canadian identity of Britain's imperial decline and how to forge a distinctive national citizenship.

Accompanying this shift in content was the involvement of a newly prominent set of constitutional actors; Canadian ethnocultural minorities. Their involvement comprises a central focus of this chapter's analysis of the following three constitutional reform arenas: the 1950 Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the 1960 House of Commons Special Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and, finally, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism of the early 1960s.

The new debates about constitutionalism and citizenship were shaped profoundly by the postwar rise of what critical theorist Axel Honneth calls "legal universalism." 

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1 "Social rights imply an absolute right to a certain standard of civilization which is conditional only on the discharge of the general duties of citizenship. Their content does not depend on the economic value of the individual claimant," T.H. Marshall, Class, Citizenship and Social Development, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), 94.

Before the full flowering of legal universalism, the distribution of formal citizenship rights tended to be determined by "the social esteem accorded to individual members of society in light of their social status."\(^3\) For instance, Romans who ran afoul of the Justinian Code's requirement that citizens maintain "the state of unimpaired dignity approved by law and custom" found themselves stripped of a range of civil and political rights.\(^4\) And as the failure to enfranchise Asian Canadians until 1946 certainly attests, a racist view of citizenship as the rightful property of the virtuous continued to influence the allocation of Canadian citizenship rights well into the twentieth century.\(^5\)

Thus, Canada's decision to pursue a more progressive vision of citizenship is best seen as a response to the international emphasis on the idea of innate human dignity, which so greatly distinguished the immediate postwar period.\(^6\) Like many other countries, Canada reacted to the apparent triumph of equal dignity by moving sharply away from the longstanding practice of distributing citizenship rights on the basis of perceived honour or virtue.\(^7\)

\(^3\) Ibid., 111.


Sociologist Peter Berger traces the beginnings of this crucial ideational turn to the Enlightenment. Noting the Enlightenment attack on feudal notions of hereditary rank, Berger argues that the “modern discovery of dignity took place . . . amid the wreckage of debunked conceptions of honor.” And nowhere is the victory of universal dignity over particularistic honour more clear, Berger observes, than in today’s celebrated human rights declarations, which “always pertain to the individual . . . [without regard to] any conceivable social status.”

Yet Berger’s account contains a revealing anomaly. Although Berger states that the “obsolescence of the concept of honor is revealed very sharply in [our] inability . . . to understand insult, which in essence is an assault on honor,” this chapter shows that many social-movement participants in Canada’s postwar constitutional debates demonstrated an unequivocal ability “to understand insult.” Indeed, far from rendering obsolete the virtue-related considerations to which notions of honour so often refer, the postwar rise of universalism was in fact accompanied by the heightened tendency of traditionally excluded actors to focus on the linked problems of virtue and insult.

Postwar universalism spurred increased activism because it made the prospect of equality in citizenship seem more attainable than it had in the past. But at the same time, many traditionally marginalized actors—and particularly ethnocultural minorities—

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10 Ibid., 83.
considered that unfair societal perceptions of their group were a major cause of their marginalization. From this perspective, a more genuine and secure civic inclusion could not rest on universalism alone: it required confronting the chauvinistic judgments of virtue on which the majority society had acted in the past.

Thus, equality-seeking movements came to focus on confronting a range of imprecations and slights, which they saw as dangerous indicators of their still-precarious status as rightful equals. From a philosophical standpoint, these struggles for recognition are illuminated by Honneth's argument about the evolutionary character of citizenship. The advent of legal universalism, Honneth argues, inaugurates a new historical stage by furnishing the necessary background context in which citizens can pursue deeper forms of intersubjective recognition.11

Another key contribution of the postwar environment to projects of equality-seeking should also be noted: the Second World War was framed as a great moral crusade to save Enlightenment values from the onslaught of fascism. In this remarkable environment, the obvious link between racism and the Nazi threat helped to make speaking out against domestic forms of injustice and intolerance a newly prestigious activity. The postwar context thus provided victims of discrimination with a potent symbolic basis from which to demand increased societal respect.

This account departs significantly from the approach taken by New Politics theory. New Politics theory argues that postwar movements emphasizing themes of recognition, esteem, belonging and respect reflect a new period of affluence, in which conditions of

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11 See Honneth, Struggle for Recognition, esp. chap. 9, "Intersubjective Conditions for Personal Integrity: A Formal Conception of Ethical Life."
relative security stimulate the emergence of higher-order aspirations. But as this chapter demonstrates, the dramatically increased emphasis on rights and equality for the unequal and rightless was anchored clearly in the latter stages of World War Two—long before prosperity and peace had any chance to create postmaterialist values.

Furthermore, by neglecting the highly significant wartime connection between racism and international insecurity, the postmaterialism thesis treats the postwar concern for equality and dignity in isolation from one of its most important catalysts. The New Politics account ignores the crucial role that the interaction between security concerns and the lessons of Nazism actually played in promoting a new societal receptiveness to equality-seeking movements. It also pays insufficient attention to the security concerns of equality-seeking movements themselves. As I shall show, many of these movements approached problems of respect and recognition not as the higher-order themes of postwar luxury, but as the demonstrated causes of such threats to economic security and personal safety as unjust internment and discrimination in employment.

Social-movement actors aimed to convey their unappreciated virtues, and therefore to establish their citizenship desert with a strong emphasis on what New Politics theory treats as the postmaterial themes of esteem and belonging. But I shall argue that the postmaterialist thesis misses the real significance of this emphasis, which can be usefully understood in light of the traditional political function of virtue; as a basis of esteem and belonging that justified the inclusion of the reputedly virtuous in citizenship. For the

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acknowledged participants of an earlier era, to lose one’s reputation for virtue was tantamount to suffering a “social death,” in which the right to participate gave way to the unchecked decisions of others.\textsuperscript{13} New Politics theory ignores this traditional connection between questions of citizenship, social esteem and self-defence. In particular, by contrasting the bids of marginalized actors to enjoy esteem and belonging in citizenship with traditional security concerns, New Politics fails to see that these campaigns pursue a longstanding and highly significant basis of security that Western citizenship once awarded to propertied white males alone.

\textbf{The 1950 Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms}

The major stimulus for Canada’s first official expression of interest in a charter of rights was a widely-shared resolve to prevent any recurrence of the fascist aggression that had so obviously caused the Second World War. The landmark proclamation of this resolve was the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As a signatory, Canada had undertaken to use its domestic jurisdiction to promote the goals of the Declaration.

This proved a controversial undertaking to have offered. Ottawa’s initial domestic response to the UN Declaration, the 1947 Special Joint Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which heard only from “expert” witnesses, foundered against the obstacle posed by provincial claims to constitutional primacy in the field of civil rights.\textsuperscript{14}


\textsuperscript{14} See Walter Tarnopolsky, \textit{The Canadian Bill of Rights}, 2d ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 9. The 1947 Special Joint Committee, which consulted with legal experts to determine
Nevertheless, commitments made in an international atmosphere of postwar moral reckoning dictated that the spring 1950 Senate hearings would proceed. These hearings sought public input on the question of entrenching a justiciable bill of Canadian rights based on the articles of the UN Declaration. And by inviting presentations from the citizen groups that the 1947 deliberations had excluded, the 1950 hearings allowed equality-seeking movements to demonstrate that the charter idea was beginning to attract a significant national constituency.

By the latter stages of World War Two, the desire to prevent a similar future catastrophe had prompted a remarkably strong Allied emphasis on the important contribution that human rights principles could make to international security. Like US President Harry Truman's famous 1945 speech at the San Francisco conference that established the United Nations, the 1948 UN Declaration announced that since disrespect for the principles of universal human dignity and equality had been the major

15 The listed grounds of non-discrimination in the UN Declaration, which the Committee proposed to retain, are "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." The Committee's Bill of Rights proposed to add: 1) a clause allowing complainants to "apply for relief on notice of motion to the Supreme or Superior Court of the province in which the violation occurred"; and, 2) a non-abridgement clause stating that none of the bill's articles would be "deemed to abridge or exclude any rights or freedoms to which any person is otherwise entitled." See Parliament, Senate, Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 1, 25 April 1950, iii.

16 The earliest such proclamation is the 1941 Atlantic Charter, in which US President Roosevelt and UK Prime Minister Churchill contrasted "Nazi tyranny" with the Allied aim of ensuring "that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want," reprinted in Laqueur and Rubin, eds., The Human Rights Reader, 156.

cause of war, vindicating those principles was the best means to achieve peace and security. Hence, the Declaration’s celebrated preamble spoke of “inherent dignity” and “the equal . . . rights of all members of the human family” as “the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

Long before postwar affluence had any chance to alter political priorities in favour of postmaterialism, the notions of rights, equality and dignity came to receive a dramatically increased emphasis as means for achieving the security that a generation still reeling from Depression and war so desperately craved. Indeed, the New Politics treatment of this postwar ideational turn as a form of value change is itself highly questionable. More to the point is that the Second World War served to re-energize the centuries-old values of Enlightenment. Eric Hobsbawm writes that the fascist threat “succeeded in uniting an extraordinary range of forces . . . based on the shared values and aspirations of the Enlightenment.” According to Michael Howard, Western socialists and liberals alike understood the Second World War “as a war to defend and vindicate all the cultural values for which they had stood since the dawn of the liberal conscience in the eighteenth century.”

In this highly charged context, the trinity of dignity, equality and rights became a “condensation symbol”, a uniquely visible and emotive crystallization of what had come

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18 For additional discussion, see Evelyn Kallen, *Ethnicity and Human Rights in Canada* (Toronto: Gage, 1982), chap. 1, “Race, Racism, and Human Rights.”


to be regarded as the lessons of war. Equality-seeking social movements could now, far more plausibly than in the past, frame their rights claims as part of a great struggle—to which all good world citizens had proclaimed their undying commitment—to vanquish forever the underlying causes of insecurity and war. Although the values of dignity and equality were not new, more novel was the dramatically strengthened purchase enjoyed by the belief that vindicating those values could produce peace and security. Thus, as examining the 1950 Senate Committee hearings shall demonstrate, the new ideational environment served as a crucial entry point for actors and concerns that had been almost entirely unheard in the Canadian civic arena before.

Social Esteem and Security: Jewish Canadians, Japanese Canadians and Communists

It would certainly be a mistake to present the human rights advocacy of the Canadian Jewish Congress as an orientation produced by formative experiences of security. Also crucial to note is that the almost fearful approach of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) delegation demonstrates how problems of social esteem can pose severe obstacles to defending group security interests.

Despite its enthusiasm for a charter, the CJC did not invoke the Holocaust as history’s most striking example of the evil to which racism can lead. It did not even stress the harms of domestic anti-Semitism to buttress its case for entrenching a domestic bill of rights. Instead, the CJC argued that a more energetic respect for human dignity would produce peace and security for humankind as a whole. Congress Vice-President Monroe
Abbey began by reminding his audience that the focus on the “common denominator of our humanity” in the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights... bespeaks the urgent desire to find the way to lasting peace.” The overriding importance of peace, Abbey concluded, obliged Canada to establish a domestic bill of rights: the “moral implications” of the UN Declaration imposed “upon the signatory the necessity of extending its provisions in the realm over which that sovereignty has power.”

The CJC complemented this argument with a Cold War entreaty that presented a bill of rights as a bulwark against communism. Abbey explained that the existence of “social systems which challenge or deny our own makes necessary the renewed dedication to the principles upon which our democratic society is founded.”

The CJC’s reluctance to mention anti-Semitism eventually prompted the Committee’s Senator Kinley to ask forthrightly: “is there any discrimination in this country that can be especially complained of, or do you regard it as an absolutely free country where you have the same privileges as everyone else?” Kinley’s unduly optimistic inference prompted the CJC’s National Director Saul Hayes to mention the clearly material problems of employment discrimination, restrictive covenants (which aimed to prevent the sale of certain properties to Jews) and exclusion from public

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22 Presentation of the Canadian Jewish Congress to the Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 70. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Kinley, in CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 74.
facilities. But Hayes hedged these examples by saying that "by and large the record of Canada is particularly excellent." "These are unfortunate situations," Hayes continued. "Where they are unimportant we don't feel, as a minority group, that it is worthwhile starting a terrific fight about them."27

This approach reflected the CJC's pessimistic judgment of the status of Canadian Jewry. As Yaacov Glickman explains, the 1950s CJC saw "quiet diplomacy" as its safest means of approaching a polity "still infested . . . with anti-Jewish and antiethnic sentiments."28 In particular, the CJC feared the adverse consequences of being seen to protest too strongly against majority-group wrongs. As Hayes stoically put it, although discrimination "hurts . . . the person discriminated against, we accept that as a penalty." More important was "the effect on the total community . . . when you allow one pattern of citizenship to be imposed on one group and another upon another group."29

The CJC disavowed the more controversial project of actively demanding increased social esteem. The Congress allowed repeatedly that "the Jewish community do not pretend to have all the virtues"; that "in given cases Jewish people are [not] without fault"; that "People are entitled to their likes and dislikes"; and that "there can be no law of the land which says that people must like each other."30 By distinguishing so

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26 CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 74-75.

27 Ibid.


29 CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 76.

30 Ibid., 77, 76, 75, 75.
consistently between seeking a formally equal citizenship and challenging the "likes and dislikes" harboured by others, the CJC stressed that it was not targetting for political action the ways in which Canadian society allocated respect.

Yet even this attempt to discuss human rights at the highest possible, and thus least controversial level of generality threatened to attract the disapprobation that recalcitrant majorities often reserve for so-called "special interests." For instance, Senator Kinley objected that racial discrimination in Canada was not "altogether a matter of indignity to one element." The Senator, after all, had "heard of farmers who put up the notice 'No Englishmen need apply.'" Hayes, who refrained from suggesting that anti-Semitism was perhaps the more pervasive form of discrimination, professed to be "as much against that." Senator Kinley was won over by the CJC's approach: he praised Hayes as "a very intelligent man" and declared that he could see "no reason why [discrimination] should exist with regard to such well-educated people as yourself." But this praise reflected precisely the majority society's tendency to use social esteem as a weapon for silencing those whose advocacy might prove more unsettling. Accordingly, the problem of Canadian anti-Semitism, which the Congress, "as a minority group," did not want to start "a terrific fight about," remained largely unconfronted.

31 Kinley, in CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 76.

32 CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 76.

33 Ibid., 76.

34 Ibid., 74.
The National Japanese-Canadian Citizens' Association shared with the CJC both a strong enthusiasm for entrenched rights and recent experiences of severe insecurity. The National Japanese-Canadian Citizens' Association (NJCCA) also praised the UN Declaration as a "major advancement," an "historical document" and a "source of inspiration and encouragement." Yet the NJCCA differed by seizing upon the Committee's mandate as an opportunity to forthrightly demand the increased respect that it felt its constituency deserved. As Ann Gomer Sunahara characterizes the community's immediate reaction to the wrongful World War Two internment: "The time had come for Japanese Canadians to [force] the Canadian government to acknowledge the injustice," for otherwise "the wartime myths of Japanese Canadian disloyalty would continue."  

Unlike the CJC, the NJCCA decided that the postwar human rights focus meant that its grievances would now receive a sympathetic hearing. Executive Secretary George Tanaka, who praised Canada's "growing awareness" of human rights issues, observed that he was addressing "a body that has, in effect, already shown much sympathy toward the question of human rights." Optimism was also reflected in the NJCCA's attempt to frame the internment experience as a source of moral authority, which reflected the Association's judgment that its audience was not composed of unrepentant racists. The

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35 National Japanese-Canadian Citizens' Association, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, No. 8, 10 May 1950, 270.

36 Ann Gomer Sunahara, The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1981), 147. The internment, which affected more than 20,000 individuals, also included property confiscations, the complete expulsion of the Japanese-Canadian community from its former British Columbia home and even the "repatriation" of thousands of Canadian citizens to Japan.

37 NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 270, 269.
NJCCA urged the importance of learning about the "individual experiences" of those who "know the harmful . . . effect discrimination has worked upon them." In particular, Tanaka suggested "that some aspects of the past experiences of Canadian citizens of Japanese ancestry merit consideration." The potentially controversial implication that the majority society had much to learn about human rights principles was also conveyed by the NJCCA's argument for the "tremendous educational significance" of a bill of rights. This educational function was "of the utmost importance": a domestic charter would serve as a "constant teacher," would "promote the idea of the dignity of the human person constantly," and would thus "constitute a powerful force to foster, in the minds of the people, the conviction that discrimination is wrong." Being seen to suggest that "the minds of the people" required a "constant teacher" was something that the CJC had sought to avoid.

Most controversial was the NJCCA's attempt to establish a new consensus on the wartime internment. First, Tanaka argued that the internment was unjust; that "despite their Canadian citizenship status," Japanese Canadians had been deprived "of civil, political, social and economic human rights on racial grounds." Second, Tanaka contrasted this injustice with the underappreciated virtues of the internees. He described Japanese Canadians as "Canadian Pioneers" of "undivided loyalty" who had "courageously

38 Ibid., 271.
39 Ibid., 270.
40 Ibid., 277.
41 Ibid., 277, 270, 271, 277.
42 Ibid., 271.
... determined to build for the future as citizens of Canada." Yet their "half-century's advance toward economic security and success" had been brought to a "drastic and disruptive end."

In short, the NJCCA expressed its hope that past injustices would be recognized, that Japanese-Canadian virtue would find newfound appreciation and that respect would be redistributed accordingly. The Committee response proved disappointing. For example, the ubiquitous Senator Kinley called upon the dubious wisdom of "an ardent friend," who "always said that the Japanese had two loyalties, that they never became quite separate from their home obligations." The Committee's usually avuncular Chairman, the dedicated civil libertarian Arthur Roebuck, appeared to second Kinley's insinuation: "What do you say to that, witness?"

The following selection of rhetorical questions conveys the Committee's collective insistence that Japanese Canadians would do better to abandon their complaints and humbly accept whatever minimal respect the majority society was willing to pay: "What remains now?"; "Were you pretty well satisfied up to the time of the war?"; "But that is all cured now?"; "Is that not private? Is that not the attitude of the private employer?"; "the Japanese are allowed now to go back to Vancouver, are they?"; "They are allowed

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43 Ibid., 276, 271, 276.
44 Ibid., 276.
45 Kinley, in NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 273.
46 Roebuck, in NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 273.
now, are they?"; "can ... a man of Japanese origin ... engage in the fishing industry now?"; "He can own a boat now?"; "So there is not that objection today?" ⁴⁷

Despite the postwar view of equal and inalienable rights as the natural corollary of our innate human dignity, the age-old stress on particularistic virtue clearly remained. The NJCCA, which sought to confront the "suspicion that we were Japs and not loyal to Canada," ⁴⁸ certainly believed that to be citizens in any secure and meaningful sense would require being recognized as virtuous. For its part, the Committee defended recent Canadian human rights violations by rehearsing racist suspicions of "Japanese" disloyalty, while evincing a deep belief that Japanese Canadians lacked the informal right to criticize Canada's majority society and its political authorities. Above all, therefore, the NJCCA Senate Committee appearance was a failed bid for recognition of citizenship desert. Until the redress movement of the 1980s, the community would forego similar future attempts in favour of what novelist Joy Kogawa describes as "hiding in the woodwork and wanting to speak." ⁴⁹

It is no Cold Warriorism to describe the League for Democratic Rights as a Communist front. The League for Democratic Rights (LDR) was established by the Communist Party (CP) in 1950 in order to combat a renewed anti-communist offensive

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⁴⁷ From NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights: Roebuck, 273; Kinley, 272; Ross, 275; Roebuck, 273; Ross, 275; Ross, 274; Kinley, 273; Kinley, 273; and Ross, 275.

⁴⁸ NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 274.

without suffering the liabilities of the increasingly controversial CP banner. The tone for the LDR's reception was established by Senator David, who greeted the delegation by demanding "to know who are the members of the [LDR] board." Despite Marx's insistence that "Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their aims, their tendencies," a more circumspect LDR preferred to ignore the Senator's question.

The remarks of the LDR representative, Mrs. Margaret Spaulding (who is the first female witness in this study to appear using her own first name), signalled a remarkable departure from the strongly masculinist and socially conservative tone of the 1930's CP. Spaulding complained about "discrimination against Negro citizens," condemned the fact that "Indians and Eskimos are . . . segregated in their own schools, given no opportunity for employment and denied the right to vote," and demanded that "Canadian women . . . be placed in a position of complete equality with men." The postwar emphasis on universalism had evidently furnished a new potential basis of Communist prestige.

Canadians were "at the crossroads" and the LDR knew the way: it was time to decide

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51 David, in League for Democratic Rights, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 106.


53 LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 112, 113, 113.
whether the rights in the UN Declaration were to be "powerful and far-reaching" or a "limited, weak, mild... disaster."\footnote{Ibid., 106.}

Yet the League's nature as a front organization for a widely reviled movement discouraged it from making any direct claims about the merits of communism itself. Instead, the Cold War atmosphere of the 1950s produced a straightforwardly liberal argument for anti-discrimination rights: "no Canadian should be discriminated against, or refused employment, or penalized in any way because of his or her political beliefs."\footnote{Ibid., 113.} A clear product of the CP's disloyal Cold War image as the servant of an enemy foreign power was a flurry of undefended accusations from the Committee.\footnote{As Avakumovic notes, the Party "was reeling under the blow of Gouzenko's disclosures," while "the Communists' glorification of Stalin [and] their zealous defence of every Soviet move... did not increase the appeal of [Communism] in Canada," \textit{Communist Party}, 180, 181.}

For instance, Senator David declared that a Communist "could not take the oath of allegiance"; Chairman Roebuck argued that in one of the LDR's cited cases, "the victim owed his allegiance to Russia rather than to Canada"; and Senator David added that "it is a well known fact that a communist would take allegiance to any country, and remain loyal to Russia."\footnote{Roebuck, and David, in LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 110.} "We know," David continued, "that a man took the oath of allegiance not to be a traitor to England, and got work on a government project, and was a traitor from the first month he was there."\footnote{David, in LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 110.} In a hesitant response, Spaulding countered with nothing

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\footnote{Ibid., 106.}
\footnote{Ibid., 113.}
\footnote{As Avakumovic notes, the Party "was reeling under the blow of Gouzenko's disclosures," while "the Communists' glorification of Stalin [and] their zealous defence of every Soviet move... did not increase the appeal of [Communism] in Canada," \textit{Communist Party}, 180, 181.}
\footnote{Roebuck, and David, in LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 110.}
\footnote{David, in LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 110.}
\end{footnotes}
other than the LDR's despair at "the lack of protection of freedom of expression" that mid-century Canada afforded. 59

Marx is famous for condemning liberal anti-discrimination rights for relieving people from having to rely on community judgments to facilitate their endeavours. In Marx's view, bills of rights express "the essence of differentiation" because they frame politics as a matter of coping with conflicting private interests rather than of realizing human emancipation through collective action. 60 Thus, the LDR's apparent agreement with Marx's assessment of how such rights function placed it in the paradoxical position of seeking refuge in the liberalism that Marx claimed to reject. Indeed, the LDR's approach to rights strongly resembled that of the impeccably liberal CJC. Both groups opted to use the newly salient discourse of universal principle rather than the evidently more contentious rhetoric of socially-specific merit; both hoped to find in a charter of rights some much-needed shelter from the impact of societal disesteem. As these defensive strategies suggest, to be freed from the need for such shelter would have been preferable by far.

Retrenching Virtue: The National Council of Women

Postwar universalism was a source of initial encouragement for the National Council of Women (NCW). The 1950 NCW, which had just convened "two conferences of women's national organizations to consider the position and rights of women in Canada,"

59 LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 112.

60 Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in Marx-Engels Reader, 34-35.
considered it of the "utmost importance" that "fundamental rights" be made the "equal possession of every citizen without discrimination because of race, religion, language or sex."\(^61\) The NCW also noted enthusiastically that "the principles set forth" in the UN Declaration affirmed women's equal "right to employment and the [going] rate for the job," which were economic security objectives that the Council had been pursuing "for many years."\(^62\)

The increased availability of universalist discourse prompted a striking change in the NCW's approach: the Council departed from its traditional practice of invoking maternal virtue to justify an increased political role for women. For instance, in contrast to the interwar NCW's argument "that women's particular abilities were too precious to restrict to the home,"\(^63\) Vice-President Mrs. Robert Dorman forthrightly declared that "since women are about 50 per cent of the adult population, we regard it as our right that we should have women on the Boards that control and direct many public services."\(^64\)

Universalism also framed Dorman's insistence that "there has been discrimination against women in making appointments to public bodies" and "that more women [should] be appointed to the Senate, seeing that about half the population of Canada is female."\(^65\)

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\(^61\) National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, No. 2, 26 April 1950, 53.

\(^62\) Ibid., 54.


\(^64\) NCW, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 55-56.

\(^65\) Ibid.
This view of an increased political role for women as an issue of universalism and equal entitlement does not mean that an emboldened NCW believed that questions of virtue were no longer politically relevant. On the contrary, Dorman took care to note that “The contribution of women to our nation during wartime proved beyond a doubt that women are capable of assuming their full share of responsibility.” Nevertheless, the NCW now invoked virtue almost exclusively as a means of seeking increased respect for traditional, that is, “non-political” and “private,” female accomplishments and activities. Indeed, Dorman called deliberate attention to the retrenchment of the NCW’s focus on virtue by concluding her reference to women’s wartime accomplishments with a highly revealing qualification: “In peacetime also [women’s] contribution is made in many ways. For good homes and well brought-up children, the contribution of women is at least equal to that of men.”

The postwar decision of the NCW to confine its virtue arguments explicitly to the home also informed a set of economic proposals on which the Council delegation placed considerable stress. These proposals were for “legal support and recognition [of] a wife’s right to one-half of the earnings of her husband” and for a special widows’ exemption from paying succession duties. Unlike the NCW’s political representation demands, which it defended on universalist grounds, the Council justified these economic security measures in terms of women’s virtue.

66 Ibid., 54.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
For instance, the NCW argued for the "wife's right to one-half of the earnings of her husband" by stressing women's "contribution to the family and the State in bearing and raising children," which Dorman described as "foremost in the building of any nation." Similarly, the NCW defended its request to exempt widows from paying succession duties by saying that such an exemption would honour the widow's "contribution to the building of the estate and her contribution to the state in the bearing and raising of children"; it would recognize "the wife's . . . general place in the scheme of things in the nation." Thus, the NCW's financial proposals had a clear symbolic purpose; to establish "that one [gender's] function is just as important as the other, and should be recognized as such."

In essence, the NCW was hedging its bets: it invoked virtue where child-raising and household management were concerned while defending increased political representation in terms of universalism. This approach allowed the NCW to telegraph its willingness to restore a regime of strong gender differentiations that had been undermined by the exigencies of war production. At the same time, the Council joined the CJC by capitalizing on universalism as a non-confrontational way to keep the object of civic equality in view; a way that did not involve directly challenging the merits of the upper-class anglo-saxon males who took such pride in their role as rightful lords of the Canadian

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69 Ibid.

70 Ibid., 55.

71 Ibid., 57.

72 On women's role in war production and the postwar emphasis on the return to the home, see Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986).
public sphere. In contrast to Nellie McClung’s famous admonition that Parliament needed a good house-cleaning, which inferred that men were the careless makers of political messes, in no way could the Council’s new representation arguments be interpreted as a challenge to men’s civic merit. In short, the NCW used universalism as a way of conveying that it accepted the postwar move to re-establish the domestic sphere as the proper venue for the expression of female virtue.

Despite the Council’s new efforts, the reception of women’s groups at the 1950 Human Rights Committee was no different from that offered by the 1938 Rowell-Sirois Commission. Both bodies ignored women’s stated political positions in favour of undertaking almost ritualistically obsessive attempts to confine women’s political input to the established boundaries of gender. Thus, Senator Reid greeted the arrival of the NCW witnesses by observing that “these delegations get better looking all the time.” This greeting inaugurated a presentation in which not one Senator discussed the NCW’s stated views on equality rights, equal pay, women’s employment rights, economic and social rights, or representation in federal government institutions. The following sample of trivializing digressions illustrates the nature of the NCW’s reception: “children must be brought up right”; “[in] the country from which I came . . . if a young man was escorting a young lady and she discovered that there was tuberculosis in his family, the marriage would be called off”; “I suppose you agree that proper discipline is an element of freedom?”; “if a woman had a sizable income and the husband did not, should she share that equally with her husband?”; if “we set ourselves forward to saying that we believe in

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73 Reid, in NCW, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 52.
the preservation of the Sabbath, we might be doing something useful.”\textsuperscript{74} Little wonder that Dorman quickly signalled the NCW’s retreat by stating, “Our contribution has been a short one.”\textsuperscript{75} Once again, an attempt of traditionally marginalized actors to capitalize on the postwar context of universalism highlighted the extent to which actually using participation rights in an ostensibly equal framework of citizenship would require commanding civic respect.

\textit{Trade Unions and the Power of the Strike}

By 1950, Canadian labour seemed to have secured the major elements of T.H. Marshall’s “industrial citizenship”; a status “parallel with and supplementary to [that of] political citizenship” that aims to place the civil rights of workers in a position of \textit{de facto} equality with those of owners.\textsuperscript{76} New collective bargaining legislation in eight provinces required employers to bargain in good faith with recognized unions, while the 1946 Rand formula established the compulsory payment of union dues, via the payroll check-off, in union shops.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} From NCW, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights: Kinley, 56; Reid, 57; Kinley, 56; Baird, 57; and Kinley, 56.

\textsuperscript{75} LDR, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 57.

\textsuperscript{76} Marshall, \textit{Class, Citizenship and Social Development}, 94.

These achievements demonstrated conclusively the superiority of the more wide-ranging and solidarity-minded industrial unionism over its craft counterpart. Consequently, Canadian craft unionism rapidly assumed the antiquated aura of the departed JCPC, which it soon joined in retreat to its English stronghold. The final installment in the demise of craft unionism in Canada would come in 1956, when the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) merged with the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) to form the Canadian Labour Congress. As Gad Horowitz points out, merger with the more politicized industrial union CCL represented the TLC’s “tacit acceptance of the inevitability of eventual . . . support for the CCF.”

This acceptance represented a conclusive departure from the non-partisan posture of mainstream respectability that was so important to the interwar TLC.

Yet continuity was also to be found: Canadian labour remained an enthusiastic proponent of a bill of rights. The CCL proclaimed that obtaining a charter was vital to “our very existence as a free society,” while the TLC demanded no “further delay” in providing “an immediate avenue for the enactment of . . . human rights and fundamental freedoms into the law of Canada.”

Labour’s pioneering role on issues of rights was further strengthened by the Canadian union movement’s postwar turn towards a stance of anti-racism. The CCL

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79 Canadian Congress of Labour, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 103.

condemned "the deplorable shortcomings of our policy towards [the] original owners of our country,"81 while the TLC urged "definite legal restraints against discriminatory practices which may be employed to the detriment of any members of . . . minority groups."82 These positions drew upon a longstanding, albeit fitfully observed labour movement tradition. For example, the Canadian Labour Congress's 1956 insistence that "discrimination and prejudice are in direct conflict with the underlying principles of the labour movement"83 had such clear antecedents as Marx's 1848 pronouncement that "the working men have no country"84 and the 1887 declaration of the Canadian Knights of Labour that "all [are] of the Earth and with equal rights to Earth."85 As Hobsbawm suggests, this recurring strain of left-wing egalitarianism has often made working-class movements "champions of the rights of minorities and the rightless of all kinds."86

The timing of this reinterpretation of labour's Enlightenment inheritance also points up the role of the Second World War in furnishing a more congenial environment for anti-racist politics. Whereas New Politics theory speaks solely of the influence of prosperity and peace, the increased societal receptiveness to anti-discrimination arguments

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81 CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 84.
82 TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 168.
84 Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, 488.
in the postwar period cannot be understood without attending to a crucial lesson of the war itself: racism breeds violence and insecurity. This belief dramatically increased the capacity of anti-racism to serve as a source of civic prestige.

For example, the CCL and TLC not only asserted that fighting racial discrimination was important: they strove conspicuously to convey their leadership of that fight. Research Director Eugene Forsey pointed out that the CCL’s National Committee for Racial Tolerance (established 1946) had undertaken a “careful survey” of the existence of “racial and religious discrimination . . . in Canada.” 87 Not to be outdone, Research Director Leslie Wismer announced that the TLC’s own Standing Committee to Combat Racial Discrimination (also established in 1946) had offices in the “main trade union and industrial centres” whose common task was to promote “education on matters of racial and religious prejudice and discrimination.” “As their work has progressed,” Wismer continued, “a better feeling as between members of divers racial and religious groups has become evident.” 88 By contrast, women’s exclusion from the postwar human rights emphasis is attested to by the fact that neither union group saw fit to make a single reference to women’s equality, still less to trumpet any feminist achievements of their own.

Labour was certainly keen to underline the inclusion of its own major constituency in the ranks of the rightless, whose plight had become an increased object of societal concern. Trade union witnesses complained of a past in which “the rights of citizens,

87 CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 83.

88 TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 165.
because they were trade unionists, were often abrogated.” Labour, which had “suffered more from the deprivation of human rights and fundamental freedoms than any other section of the community,” knew “from bitter experience the need for constitutional protection of the right of peaceful assembly and the freedom of association.” Thus the labour movement, much like the NJCCA, reacted to the postwar human rights emphasis by attempting to transform experiences of oppression into a capital of victim’s expertise with which to garner respect for its political views.

Yet, as Japanese-Canadian and Communist witnesses had discovered, postwar universalism had not entirely vanquished the contrasting doctrine that advocated withholding rights from groups that were suspected of lacking virtue. Trade unionists encountered this problem when they demanded that Canadian authorities refrain from using court injunctions or police and military intervention to vitiate labour’s newly-won collective-bargaining rights. Like Senator Kinley, who objected that labour unions were not “pure and undefiled,” many Committee members suggested that limitations on trade union freedoms were necessary because the movement’s new clout was a strength unmatched by the requisite level of virtue. For instance, Senator Baird viewed Forsey’s defence of “entirely peaceful picketing” as a covert attempt to gain constitutional

89 Ibid., 166.
80 CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 78.
81 TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 166.
82 See CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 98-105; and TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 167, 173, 175.
83 Kinley, in TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 174.
protection for brute intimidation: "Why do you want picketing if it has to be peaceful?"94

Kinley, who considered that picketing did not merit protection because it was so often "carried on forcibly," proclaimed that "it rather shocks people in Canada to see the extent to which these things are carried on."95 Senator David supported Kinley's short speech on the subject by declaring that picketing "is more fists than anything, I think."96

Because the Committee relied on negative judgments of working-class virtue to justify its restrictive view of trade union freedoms, it is interesting to note that unionists did not envisage using the hoped-for Canadian statement of fundamental rights to undermine widely-held prejudices about workers. On this question, labour stood apart from groups like the NJCCA, which emphasized the potential educational function of a charter, and the NCW, which sought explicit legislative recognitions to reflect increased prestige on traditional female activities. But despite the UN Declaration's repudiation of discrimination on the basis of "social origin, property, birth or other status," labour displayed no interest in using official symbolism to impress the civic worthiness of workers upon other Canadians. Although the TLC believed that by "promoting education... racial and religious prejudice... can be reduced and finally eradicated,"97 the trade union movement did not see its problems as amenable to any similarly "educational" solution.

94 Baird, in CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 104.
95 Kinley, in TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 175.
96 David, in TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 176.
97 TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 165.
Rather, labour acted on the understandable assumption that, as a vehicle for eliciting respect from often-hostile employers and governments, the efficacy of more purely symbolic strategies was inferior to that of the strike weapon. Thus, the TLC and CCL focused almost entirely on protecting the recently-won collective bargaining rights from potential diminution.\textsuperscript{98} Above all, trade unionists wanted to protect those “laws respecting labour relations,”\textsuperscript{99} which they had “worked all their life to build”\textsuperscript{100} —and which they would not “give . . . up without a struggle.”\textsuperscript{101}

The 1960 House of Commons Special Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The end of the Second World War saw the emphasis on Canada-wide social and trade union rights shade into a period of constitutional change with a different focus. It was not that the 1950 Senate hearings had suddenly ushered in a bold new march to entrench a charter of rights. Rather, an increasingly important constitutional emphasis responded to a different consequence of war, which this chapter has not yet examined. This consequence was the dramatic weakening of the British Empire, which prompted two successive Liberal federal governments to pursue a symbolically refashioned Canadian citizenship as a

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{98} For example, the CCL presentation devoted 7 pages to the subject. See CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 98-105.

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 98.

\textsuperscript{100} TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 173.

\textsuperscript{101} CCL, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 88.
\end{footnotesize}
means of compensating for the diminished ability of the imperial connection to fulfill its previous identity-defining role.102

One significant example of the new focus was the 1949 abolition of appeals to the JCPC. Another was the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, which broke with the past to define Canadians as citizens of Canada rather than as subjects of a disintegrating colonial empire. Similar attempts to forge a distinctive Canadian citizenship were the 1949 appointment of the nationalist Massey Commission, the moves to drop the word “Dominion” from federal government discourse and the 1949 constitutional amendment granting Parliament the power to amend the constitution in areas of exclusive federal responsibility.103

However, the immediate postwar mood of change was not durable. In particular, what historian Donald Creighton describes as Quebec’s stance of “uncompromising resistance” to further constitutional change convinced Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent of the wisdom of retreat.104 The revival of the charter idea, whose potential connection to the postwar nationalist project the Liberals had neglected to pursue, awaited the 1957 election of Conservative John Diefenbaker, the architect of the 1960 Bill of Rights.

Diefenbaker’s disdain for the traditional emphasis on French-English dualism broke with the far greater sensitivities of his Liberal predecessors: the German-Canadian Prairie

102 As Donald Creighton explains, the King government reacted to Britain’s new position by seeking to make Canadian sovereignty “manifest to the whole world by the removal of the remaining emblems of colonialism and the substitution of the symbols of independent nationhood,” *The Forked Road: Canada, 1939-1957* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), 128.

103 On the preceding federal-government attempts, see ibid., 127-131.

104 Ibid., 180.
outsider's objections to Canada's "long-established status hierarchy" made him see in a bill of rights an importance that King and St. Laurent could not. 105 Much of this importance lay in the capacity of a hortatory statement of equal citizenship rights to diminish the symbolic priority accorded the so-called "founding races." 106 A hint of Diefenbaker's subsequent approach was the praise that he had expressed for the Liberals' Canadian Citizenship Bill while in Opposition: "This bill achieves a lifelong dream of mine . . . a citizenship free of racial origin and unhyphenated." 107

Once the charter idea was viewed from this symbolic-citizenship perspective, the significance of provincial opposition vanished--for the simple reason that Diefenbaker's approach made provincial consent irrelevant. Diefenbaker was concerned primarily to establish an authoritative "rejection of 'second-class citizenship' grounded in the particularisms of race or ethnicity", 108 not to interfere with provincial jurisdiction over civil rights. Hence, the Conservatives made no attempt to explore the possibilities of entrenching the 1960 Bill of Rights or to otherwise induce the provinces to embrace its provisions. 109 Nor did the Tories go out of their way to help disappointed would-be citizen litigants to attack the Bill's shortcomings: an almost furtive series of procedural...


107 Quoted in Creighton, Forked Road, 129-130.

108 Pal, Interests of State, 91-93.

moves forced prospective witnesses to prepare their briefs on the proposed Bill of Rights with less than a week’s notice. Thus, only six groups managed to appear before the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, of which only two, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), represented equality-seeking social movements.

The distinction between the minimal legal potency of the Diefenbaker Bill and its appeal as a manifesto of a new, non-ethnic citizenship was paralleled by two contrasting social-movement reactions. Although the CJC regretted the Bill’s weaknesses, Diefenbaker’s repeated emphasis on “recognizing the sacredness of the human personality [with a] Bill of Rights which assures equality to every Canadian, whatever his race, his colour, or his religion” attracted the CJC’s support. But the CLC and its predecessor organizations had pioneered the charter idea primarily as a legal bulwark against the anti-union misdeeds of police and governments. Although the CLC was a far more active critic of racism than many, it considered that Diefenbaker’s declaration of equality and an undifferentiated citizenship fell terribly short of labour’s traditional objectives. Thus, while labour strongly condemned what it saw as the Bill’s inadequacies, the CJC welcomed Diefenbaker’s concern to elevate the civic status of ethnocultural minorities.

110 Tamopolsky, Canadian Bill of Rights, 13-14.

111 Quoted in Peter C. Newman, Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 230. Newman describes this emphasis as “typical of the way [Diefenbaker] treated the new law in his political presentations,” ibid.

112 On the CLC’s 1950s role in the anti-discrimination movement, see Hill, Human Rights in Canada: A Focus on Racism, 19-20.
Labour and the Canadian Jewish Congress: Strikes and Exhortations

The CLC began its presentation by excoriating the House Committee for its reluctance to consult with the citizenry. About the short notice and limited time offered for consultation, CLC President Claude Jodoin complained that “This is not the way to deal with questions of such import. It is not seemly.” Jodoin also observed that, since the union movement had “consistently pressed for a bill of rights,” workers might “be expected [to] welcome this bill unreservedly.” But the CLC was appalled by the Bill’s apparent inability to quell “flagrant violations of fundamental rights and freedoms,” of which it cited police harassment of labour organizers and Newfoundland’s harsh anti-union laws as major instances. The Diefenbaker Bill would “not provide any protection against violation of rights or freedoms by a future parliament.” Nor would it “provide even momentary protection against ... provincial outrages on freedom.” “That is why,” Jodoin concluded, “the congress cannot accept it as ... anywhere near adequate.”

The CLC reserved its harshest criticism for Diefenbaker’s failure to seek provincial support for an entrenched charter: “Why this despairing posture in the face of a supposed,

113 Canadian Labour Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 3, 19 July 1960, 191. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid., 192, 196.

116 Ibid., 192.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid., 194.
unproven, even untested, refusal of the provinces to take any action to protect the fundamental rights of their own citizens?" Shaming the provinces into relinquishing their jurisdictional preoccupations was the CLC's preferred course of action. "Let us find out which province might be opposed to such a bill of rights," Jodoin thundered. "Maybe it would be a good idea to have a nice debate on the matter. I would like to know which province would be opposed to such a bill of rights." 

For its part, the CJC "highly commend[ed] the government for having introduced the bill." But this support was not a function of traditional CJC quiescence. More to the point is to say that, in direct contrast to its earlier approach, the Congress was attracted by the prospect of using human rights discourse as a means of attaching increased social esteem to its constituency. Whereas the 1950 CJC refrained from making any comments that might have even hinted at unseemly activism, Executive Vice-President Saul Hayes now described his organization as "prime movers in this field" and "pioneers in this matter [of] human rights." Indeed, Hayes suggested that "Perhaps we were a little too much in advance of our time."

The CJC also demonstrated a new emphasis on the history of discrimination experienced by Canadian Jews, which helped the Congress to underscore the importance

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119 Ibid.
120 Ibid., 200.
121 Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, No. 1, 12-15 July 1960, 88.
122 Ibid., 87, 89.
123 Ibid., 87.
of hearing its views on human rights. To this end, Hayes told the Committee the early
nineteenth-century story of Zachary Hart; a man who, despite having twice been elected
to the Lower Canadian parliament, had been barred by law from taking his seat. Observed
Hayes: “I mention this because I think it is a matter of some historic interest, and perhaps
the Jewish community, to some extent, have been alive to the issue of human rights and
fundamental freedoms with a certain sensitivity that may not be true of other groups.”124

The CJC’s new stance is best understood in light of the striking tendency of the
Diefenbaker administration to respond to the international human rights emphasis by using
the state’s exhortative role as a means of amplifying its commitment to equality for
ethnocultural minorities. To groups such as the CJC, the increased ethnic diversity of
Cabinet, the unprecedented appointment of an ethnic-minority Senator and the Bill of
Rights itself were all signals that universalism promised not just formal equality, but also
the possibility of eliciting increased social esteem.125 It was in this context that Hayes
observed that “the climate is different in 1960 from what it was in 1950” and noted
appreciatively that “it was referred to . . . in parliament recently that this year the Canadian
Jewish community is observing its 200th anniversary of settlement in Canada.”126

Thus, concerns of recognition and respect rather than the enthusiasm of a
prospective litigant prompted the CJC to welcome the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights. When
praising the Bill, Hayes used a highly revealing, and quintessentially exhortative, word;

124 Ibid., 90. Hart finally took his seat upon being elected for a third time, after Britain had
dropped its insistence that the Empire’s legislators be Christian. See ibid., 89.

125 See Cairns, Reconfigurations, 112-113.

126 CJC, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, 93, 89.
“declaration.” As Hayes explained, the CJC was “very much concerned” to see Canada adopt “some form of legislation which would conform to the spirit of the universal declaration of human rights.”

Above all, the CJC approached the Bill of Rights from the perspective of a traditionally marginalized group seeking “a declaration of citizenship.”

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism: Hearings and Briefs, 1963-65

The dramatic arrival of a new constitutional challenger accompanied the 1963 announcement of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. This challenger, which assumed an aggressive new moniker as Canada’s “third force,” was a loose coalition of ethnic-minority organizations that emerged to protest the civic primacy accorded to what the Commission’s mandate unabashedly called “the two founding races.” As the earlier constitutional participation of Jewish and Japanese Canadians demonstrates, ethnic-minority representatives had been advocating a new citizenship based on anti-discrimination principles since at least the end of the Second World War. Yet it is with only slight exaggeration that analysts describe the ethnic-minority reaction to the Royal Commission as a “wave of resentment” and the “first stirrings of protest.”

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127 Ibid., 87.
128 Ibid.
129 On Senator Paul Yuzyk’s notion of a “third force” coalition against anglo-french dominance, see Kallen, Ethnicity and Human Rights, 198.
Les Pal’s words, “Observers are virtually unanimous . . . that Canadian ethnic groups were politicized . . . by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.”

Initiating a public challenge can be a wrenching experience. As Erving Goffman explains, apparent quietude often reflects the fear of the quiet party that those who break with the given “definition” of a particular situation will somehow “lose face” for disrupting what would otherwise have been a smooth encounter. Goffman even suggests that our fear of losing face makes “avoidance maneuvers,” such as “discretion,” “circumlocution” and “deception,” the quintessence of social interaction. These “face-work” considerations undoubtedly helped to promote ethnic-minority quiescence at a time when Canada’s self-definition was almost completely of British-, and to a lesser extent, French-Canadian authorship. However, traditional definitions were precisely what the postwar constitutional reform trajectory had begun to question.

Cosmopolitan Virtue: Ethnic-minority Organizations and the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism

The mandate of the B&B Commission, as the bilingualism and biculturalism inquiry was soon dubbed, was to “recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking


132 Pal, Interests of State, 114.


134 Ibid., 230-234.
into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups to the enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution." The soundness of this mandate was a point on which most of the Commissioners seemed to agree. Indeed, a majority of members began their duties by viewing the public hearings as an opportunity for educating English-speaking Canadians about the virtues of a renewed bicultural partnership.\(^{136}\)

Shock at seeing this initial conception come under fire helps to explain a striking feature of the Commission’s public deliberations. Rather than engaging the B&B Commission’s critics in debate, members tended to sit in stunned silence while witness after witness denounced the very notion on which the Commission’s deliberations were predicated. And in what was perhaps a reflection of their particular status as last-minute “afterthought” additions, the Commission’s two ethnic-minority members, Jaroslav Rudnyckyj and Paul Wyczynski, proved no less reticent than their fellows.\(^{137}\)

In both their written briefs and in their presentations to the Commission’s preliminary public hearings of 1963, ethnic-minority organizations condemned the B&B mandate with a vehemence that had once been the almost exclusive political hallmark of the traditional left. A “disturb[ed]” Ukrainian Canadian Committee criticized the “retrograde and discriminatory . . . division of Canadian citizens into . . . first and second

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\(^{136}\) Granatstein, *Years of Uncertainty*, 253.

\(^{137}\) Ibid., 6.
class Canadians”; a “seriously disturbed” Canadian Polish Congress rejected the “discriminatory . . . assertion” that its members were “second class citizens”; while a “most unhappy” CJC urged that “this loose document be so amended [so] that [the] reference to races [or] ethnic groups be eliminated altogether.”

As their judgment that shame could be attached to the alleged proponents of a discriminatory, two-tiered and racially-defined citizenship suggests, ethnic-minority organizations noticed a glaring discrepancy between the B&B mandate and the tenor of postwar constitutional change. The overall human rights emphasis, the 1960 Bill of Rights and the focus on forging a non-colonial Canadian citizenship all furnished a basis for presenting the B&B Commission, and not the opposition of its ethnic-minority critics, as an “out of face” disruption. These critics castigated the authorities for their failure to grasp the “fundamental and moral principles of [Canadian] nationhood.”

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138 Ukrainian Canadian Committee (Winnipeg Section), Presentation to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Preliminary Hearing, Cathedral Hall, Ottawa, Ontario, 7-8 November 1963, 84. The presentations to the Royal Commission that are dealt with in this chapter are all from the Preliminary Hearings of 7-8 November 1963. They are all available at Government Publications, Walter Koerner Library, University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Presentations from the Preliminary Hearings will be referred to hereinafter by the designation, Presentation to the B&B Commission. This chapter also analyzes written briefs that participants submitted to the Commission. Briefs will be identified by their specific titles.


140 Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 257, 261.

141 “The status order within which [ethnic minorities] had been making headway was abruptly deflected in another less appealing direction by the federal government response to Quebec,” Cairns, Reconfigurations, 42.

142 UCC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 83.
Even the CJC, which supported the notion of linguistic and cultural dualism, was appalled by a document that spoke of "the two founding races." The CJC saw this terminology as evidence that Canadian authorities had failed to absorb a key lesson of the Second World War: "race . . . is a very dangerous word . . . [that has] caused a great deal of trouble throughout the world. . . . It is a word not to be used."\(^{143}\) With an astute twist on the colony-to-nation theme, an angrier Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC) argued that the B&B mandate was "inconsistent with the existing concept of Canadian citizenship."\(^{144}\) Because Canada had "evolved from the status of a subordinate British colonial dependency to an independent and self-governing democratic nation," insisted the UCC, any "principle which would tend . . . to imply the superiority of one group . . . over another" threatened a "return to a colonial status from which it has taken so long to emerge."\(^{145}\)

The Canadian Polish Congress (CPC) stated flatly that the B&B mandate constituted "discrimination against the remaining ethnic groups and a violation of the Bill of Rights."\(^{146}\) For the CPC, any notion of dualism that went beyond official bilingualism would make "the statement . . . that all Canadians are first class citizens . . . a platitude and a negation of the truth."\(^{147}\) To emphasize its point that the B&B mandate was

\(^{143}\) CJC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 264.

\(^{144}\) UCC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 84.

\(^{145}\) Ibid., 82-83.

\(^{146}\) CPC, "Brief Presented to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism," 11.

\(^{147}\) Ibid.
"specifically contrary to . . . the Canadian Bill of Rights . . . and [to] the Preamble" of the UN Declaration, the CPC appended passages from both documents to its written brief. 148

But these participants were also deeply concerned with the "face" of their own constituencies. Using universalism to critique the symbolic exaltation of "the two founding races" was seen by ethnic-minority advocates as insufficient to elicit the actual judgment of civic respect that they sought. Accordingly, they supplemented universalism with a much older discourse; that of virtuous citizenship. In doing so, ethnic-minority spokesmen aimed to establish that their constituents merited equal recognition—not as a gratuity flowing from principled postwar liberal reflection, but as the dividend of their concretely demonstrated desert.

The CPC stressed the quintessential citizenship virtue of loyalty to country by highlighting its "devotion to Canada," its "concern for . . . unity" and its desire "to serve this country in the common interest of all its citizens." 149 For its part, the UCC invoked the virtue of loyal citizenship by highlighting the Ukrainian-Canadian military contribution. The UCC pointed out that "seven [Ukrainian] Canadian Legion Branches" testified to the fact that Ukrainian Canadians had "given Canada good service, including comrades departed." "In two world wars," insisted the UCC, "Canada's soldiers were better, stronger, braver and more plentiful because of the added direct positive contribution of the Ukrainian language and culture." 150

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150 UCC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 85, 86. On military service and the ancient Roman practice of citizenship, see Heater, Citizenship, 16-17.
Furthermore, third-force representatives emphasized the virtues of cultural and linguistic cosmopolitanism as a means of conveying their constituencies’ contribution to Canadian citizenship. The imagery of refinement was a useful means of defusing the potential charge that the B&B Commission’s critics were insufficiently sophisticated to appreciate linguistic dualism. But it also helped to counter what ethnic-minority representatives clearly saw as a central basis of their traditionally subordinate status; a widespread view of ethnic-minority immigrants as uneducated farmers and labourers. Thus, Dr. I. Hlynka initiated the UCC presentation by pointing out that “I have with me two colleagues, one is bilingual Ukrainian-English, and the other is bilingual, Ukrainian-French. I also am bilingual, Ukrainian-English, and I do have a reasonable knowledge of French and German.”

Sharing Dr. Hlynka’s emphasis was the CPC’s Dr. J.A. Wojciehowski, who dissented from the proposition that “teaching a child a second language is wrong or is lost, inevitably. Well, I know from my experience and my family experience,” he continued, “that the knowledge of a second or several languages is not only possible but feasible.”

Although the CJC downplayed specific community achievements in favour of stressing the integration of anglophone Jews within the “English culture of Canada,” it too, strove to connote sophistication. For instance, the Congress’s major evidence of integration was its suggestion that Commission member “Professor [F.R.] Scott may recall

151 UCC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 81.
152 CPC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 184.
153 CJC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 259.
that only a month ago he had a little confab of Canadian English poets. In 1867 I think the names would have been Scott and Hughes, but in 1963 there was Leonard Cohen and Gilbert Laten.”

The plainly discernible message underlying this cosmopolitan self-positioning was rendered remarkably explicit in the CPC brief. The CPC began an extensive discussion of Polish-Canadian history by characterizing early Polish immigrants as “penniless, uneducated . . . farmers . . . [who] filled the ranks of Canadian unskilled labour.” Now “Even among this oldest group . . . there were some exceptional cases of outstanding individuals or families who were able to play an important part in Canadian politics, science or jurisprudence.” But most impressive were the more recent arrivals, whose “initiative and ingenuity” enabled them to achieve “a relatively high standard of living.” Although “we still find . . . blue collar workers,” continued the CPC brief, “there are increasing numbers of clergymen, engineers, architects, doctors, lawyers, teachers, professors, scientists, journalists, merchants, industrialists, civil servants, etc. There is no lack among them of prominent and especially gifted individuals who have . . . [rendered] this country valuable services.” On this basis, the CPC concluded that “the Polish ethnic group is now entitled to full participation in all the various fields of public life in Canada.”

The claim that class advancement “entitled” Polish Canadians to “full participation” came close to effecting the symbolic evacuation of those unprestigious “blue-collar workers” who remained. Even the far more liberal-universalist CJC, as its

154 Ibid.

155 All quotations in this paragraph are from CPC, “Brief Presented to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism,” 3-5.
tendency to approach the larger society through its “professional Jewish civil service”\textsuperscript{156}
amply demonstrates, seemed unconcerned to advance an image in which poor and working-class Jews might find recognition. The UCC’s stress on martial virtue was slightly more inclusive because it evoked achievements for which (male) working-class community members could share credit. Yet the repeated cosmopolitan emphasis of the UCC’s Dr. Hlynka, who portrayed his “multilingual” constituency as a source of “experts” who could serve Canada internationally as “trusted and efficient world servants,”\textsuperscript{157} also indicates his calculation that stereotypically professional attributes were the most politically efficacious of all.

This decidedly cosmopolitan self-positioning is analogous to the strongly masculinist public face of the traditional left. Both approaches were remarkably unhelpful means of furthering the social-esteem claims of women. Furthermore, their more general common tendency to pursue respect in ways that served to disproportionately advantage particular members of the group points up a crucial impetus for the emphasis among postwar equality-seeking movements on representing discrete, identity-based constituencies. The signal was clear: the differential distribution in society of a range of potential bases of respect makes the politics of seeking respect too dangerous a task to leave in the hands of differently situated others.

\textsuperscript{156} Daniel J. Elazar and Harold M. Waller, \textit{Maintaining Consensus: The Canadian Jewish Polity in the Postwar World} (Lanham, Md.: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 1990), 71.

\textsuperscript{157} UCC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 87.
The Traditional Left and the Royal Commission: Divergent Constitutional Directions

In direct contrast to the cosmopolitan enthusiasm of ethnic-minority representatives, the CLC feared that discussions which framed citizenship in terms of culture might become the constitutional equivalent of a black-tie banquet, from which all but well-heeled diners would be barred. The CLC brief decried a putative understanding of "culture . . . as the private property of the upper income classes," and insisted that trade unions "have a contribution to make not only to the economic well-being of [their] members but their cultural benefit as well."\(^\text{158}\)

In particular, the CLC argued that by bringing "leisure to working people through the shorter working day and work-week, paid vacations and statutory holidays . . . trade union action has made it possible for workers . . . to participate in the cultural heritage . . . which was in large measure denied to them."\(^\text{159}\) Furthermore, the CLC urged that the labour movement merited increased acknowledgment as the vehicle through which workers had managed to find meaningful recognition as citizens at all. "In a society which is property and management oriented," argued the CLC, without the trade union movement many Canadians would "live in the community but . . . not form part of it"; workers would be "aliens among their own people."\(^\text{160}\) Thus, the CLC saw the stereotype which portrays working-class people as exclusively concerned with economic security as a source of disrespect.


\(^{159}\) Ibid., 3-4.

\(^{160}\) Ibid., 9.
This is not to say that the CLC’s proud account of labour’s mid-century struggle to participate and belong precluded a focus on the traditional left’s economic agenda. Rather, the CLC attempted to re-frame the unity debate by insisting that “successful bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada” would require an attack on “marked differences of income and other economic impediments” and a “vast expansion in educational opportunity . . . everywhere in Canada.”\textsuperscript{161} The CLC also conveyed this left-centrist emphasis by claiming that “the Canadian Labour Congress is a cohesive force . . . which binds [people] together as Canadians where they might otherwise be divided.”\textsuperscript{162}

By contrast, the Communist Party (CP) recognized that unreconstructed centralism was untenable in the era of the Quiet Revolution. Whereas the CP had urged the Rowell-Sirois Commission to reign in “the powers of landlordism and feudalism,”\textsuperscript{163} the Party now proposed a dramatic restructuring of the Canadian federation along two-nations lines. According to the Party’s new unity platform, Quebec representatives would vacate the federal scene in favour of a separate parliament with quasi-sovereign powers.\textsuperscript{164} This new respect for Quebec nationalism rested conspicuously on the hope that Quebec might “choose a course of development which involves . . . extensive measures of nationalization

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., 9, 5.

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., 2.


\textsuperscript{164} The CP proposed a “new confederal pact between French and English Canada,” which would include “a national legislature replacing the present provincial legislature of Quebec,” Communist Party of Canada, “Submission to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism by the Communist Party of Canada,” 24 June 1964, 24.
moving in the direction of socialism rather more quickly than the people of English
Canada will be prepared to move.”

The CP also found it easy to abandon the old insistence on “national
unification” because the Party’s overall postwar weakness gave it a freedom of
manoeuvre that the stronger CLC lacked. Incomplete as this might have been, the
mainstream labour movement was constrained by its legacy of past success. The CLC was
unprepared to assert a two-nations stance for which its major constituency had failed to
demonstrate an appetite; and neither was it eager to call into question the foundations of a
pan-Canadian social citizenship that provided the postwar labour movement with a civic
niche that its predecessor had sorely missed. But the CP, which had felt the ignominy of
public repudiation almost as soon as the 1940s spate of welfare-state construction began,
had little in the way of acknowledged Canadian glories to defend.

Defending Universalism: The National Council of Women

Accepting the new unity focus posed little difficulty for the NCW. This highly civic-
minded organization, which had been founded at least in part as an attempt to heal the
national breach exposed in the 1890s by the Manitoba Schools question, could easily

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165 Ibid., 27. This approach also reflects Lenin’s principle of self-determination for nationalist
movements that Communists can deem progressive. On this point, see Sava D. Bosnitch, “The Current
Communist Party Line on the ‘National Question’ in Canada,” paper presented at the 51st Annual
Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Saskatoon, 1979, cited in Alan C. Cairns,
Disruptions: Constitutional Struggles, from the Charter to Meech Lake, ed. Douglas E. Williams
(Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), n.3, 268.

166 Presentation of the Communist Party of Canada, Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial
accept the unity issue as paramount. Thus, the NCW’s President, Mrs. Saul Hayes, described the NCW as an organization whose dedication “to the betterment of the family and the State” made it “no ‘Johnny-come-lately’ to the whole problem of biculturalism, bilingualism and Canadianism.”

However, the usually deferential NCW launched a strong attack on the Commission’s “most unfortunate” terms of reference, which it criticized for “dividing Canada into a primary group of First Citizens and a secondary group of citizens who may qualify as Canadians, under certain conditions.” Although the specific reasons for the Council’s new, more challenging stance are difficult to pinpoint, that such a stance was taken at all is significant. Perhaps Hayes, as a Jewish woman whose husband was a CJC stalwart, was simply attuned to problems of racism in a way that her predecessors were not. Although this was probably the case, Hayes informed the Commission that “I am not here [simply] as an individual. . . . We do not operate that way.” Furthermore, that the Council had for the first time in its history chosen a non-anglo-saxon leader indicates that the organization as a whole was beginning to reject ethnocentrism. Hayes’s proud stress on “including—and I say including—ethnic groups such as the North American

167 Strong-Boag, “The Roots of Modern Canadian Feminism,” 399.

168 National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 446.

169 Ibid., 447-448.

170 Ibid., 455. Hayes also reported in her 1964 Presidential Address that the NCW National Executive was “unanimous” in objecting to “those sections [of the B&B mandate] which gave statutory recognition to the term ‘race,’” National Council of Women of Canada, Yearbook 1964 (n.p., 1964), 38.

171 Strong-Boag describes the interwar NCW as a group whose “ethnic and religious loyalties . . . overrode [its] pretence to universality,” “Roots of Modern Canadian Feminism,” 408.
Indian, Polish, Italian, Jewish, Chinese, Negro, Ukrainian and Greek” suggested this NCW attempt to become a more inclusive organization.\textsuperscript{172}

What must also be considered is that the NCW critique of the “founding races” mandate was also a defence of universalism. And by defending universalism, the NCW was protesting against the B&B Commission’s apparent departure from what had proven to be the most promising basis of citizenship inclusion for Canadian women; that, as the famous 1929 Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decision seemed to suggest, the word “persons” was not to be interpreted idiosyncratically.\textsuperscript{173}

After all, the Council’s previous constitutional participation had demonstrated repeatedly that attempts to invoke the specifically “female” virtues tended to backfire. Male participants almost invariably seized upon these attempts as an opportunity to launch discursive detours, in which demeaning homilies about domesticity triumphed over respectful consideration and substantive debate. This background context must have made the principle of universalism seem particularly indispensable. It is certainly difficult to imagine that when Hayes argued that “a nation cannot be . . . two-thirds first class citizens and one-third on probation,” a view which she amplified by referencing Lincoln’s dictum that “A nation cannot be half slave and half free,”\textsuperscript{174} the civic status of Canadian women was entirely absent from her mind. Thus, this approach suggests once again that a

\textsuperscript{172} NCW, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 446.


\textsuperscript{174} NCW, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 449.
crucial function of universalism for early second-wave feminism was as a means of compensating for problems of civic disesteem, which prevented women from garnering the basic interactional consideration on which successful social claims-making tends to rest.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced a shift in Canadian constitutional debates that seems to mirror the New Politics account of a postwar transition from the “material” questions of economic security to a “postmaterial” focus on recognition and identity. For example, whereas the traditional left had long sought a charter in order to more effectively press its claims at factory gates and in the streets, the 1960 Bill of Rights came into being primarily as a symbolic device for according increased civic recognition to Canadian ethnocultural minorities. And it would certainly be pointless to deny the most central New Politics claim, and assert that postwar prosperity was irrelevant to such a shift. Let it be acknowledged, then, that the absence of depression and war opened political space for concerns that would have had difficulty competing for attention with bankrupt treasuries and dying soldiers.

But the distinction between materialism and postmaterialism can also inhibit our understanding of social-movement participation in these postwar constitutional debates. New Politics theory presents the postwar emphasis on rights, esteem and belonging as a reflection of the economic security and personal safety enjoyed by people who have not suffered “from any personal deprivation.” But Jewish and Japanese Canadians pursued

this emphasis precisely because past experiences, such as the Holocaust and internment, made them extremely concerned about problems of insecurity. The New Politics contrast between economic security and participation and rights also fails to recognize that these actors pursued rights and participated in order to address such undeniably material problems as racial discrimination in housing, property transactions and employment. Thus, this chapter has argued that the New Politics approach tends to obscure an important point: equality-seeking social movements tend to pursue goods like participation, rights, esteem and belonging in order to more effectively redress material problems of safety and security.

I have also pointed out that the emphasis on postmaterial value change ignores the extent to which overall societal experiences of insecurity helped to create an ideational environment to which the anti-racism movement could more successfully appeal. The moral and political conclusions that many drew from what Hobsbawn calls the “age of catastrophe”176 promoted a new understanding of human rights as the means by which the general interest in peace and security could best be pursued. The emphasis of the NJCCA on “the dignity of the human person,”177 like the CJC’s warning that the word “race [has] caused a great deal of trouble throughout the world,”178 drew great force from the terrible example of a regime whose very essence was to repudiate dignity.
The striking new tendency of social-movement actors to frame their human rights advocacy as a prestigious activity testifies further to the role of catastrophe in creating a more receptive political environment for the victims of racism. Participants enjoined their audience to heed the “individual experiences” of those who “know the harmful ... effect discrimination has worked upon them.” They boasted of their work in promoting “better feeling ... between members of divers racial and religious groups,” and they began to look back with retrospective pride on their role as “pioneers in this matter of human rights.” These arguments point up the important stimulus to equality-seeking that the postwar link between international security and the Enlightenment values of equality and dignity provided. It is a stimulus that New Politics theory, which sees “greater public sympathy for minorities” as the product of prosperity and peace, ignores.

Perhaps most important is that to contrast the focus of ethnocultural minorities on issues of esteem and belonging with security concerns is to obscure the distinctive political judgment that such a focus represented. The emphasis on civic recognition and social esteem did not arise because postwar prosperity left ethnocultural minorities with no “material” needs to pursue. The point is simple, but it is important to make: many minority groups understood problems of exclusion and disesteem as major causes of the

179 NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 271.
180 TLC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 165.
181 CJC, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, 89.
security problems that they had experienced in the past. For instance, the CJC objected to the symbolism of the B&B Commission because "the suffering of the smaller groups" seemed to follow "whenever this word [race] is emphasized,"\(^{183}\) while the NJCCA linked the wartime internment to "the suspicion that we were Japs and not loyal to Canada."\(^{184}\) In short, to fail to connect struggles over esteem and belonging to material goals—such as fighting racial discrimination in employment and reducing the possibility of future harsh outbursts of majoritarian racism—is to neglect one of the most central purposes behind the civic participation of ethnocultural minorities in Canada.

Sometimes the causal link between the politics of social esteem and questions of security lies in the past, and is made apparent to the outside observer only when group memory spurs an attempt to elicit the respect that once seemed exceedingly elusive. For instance, ethnocultural minorities approached the B&B Commission bearing a symbolic capital of cosmopolitan sophistication that was seen as a necessary fortification against any potential return to the civic disabilities of a proletarianized past. For these actors, the new badges of class ascent buttressed their claim to be "entitled to full participation in all the various fields of public life in Canada."\(^{185}\)

This approach clearly indicated the sense that social esteem is most easily pursued from the "riches" end of that famous and often fictive narrative of capitalist success. However, this does not mean that esteem as a political good should be contrasted \emph{a priori}

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\(^{183}\) CJC, Presentation to the B&B Commission, 258.

\(^{184}\) NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 274.

\(^{185}\) CPC, "Brief Presented to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism," 5.
with issues of personal safety and economic security. Such a contrast fails to consider the crucial problem of civic voice. Ethnocultural-minority participants feared that disrespect for their constituencies would compromise their ability to be heard; and their Canadian pasts certainly furnished ready examples of the link between the negative perceptions of others and the indignities of being silenced and ignored. Here lies social esteem’s true political significance.

Social esteem furnishes a vital basis for engaging in successful claims-making. The social-movement emphases on universalism that this chapter has canvassed are particularly revealing on this point. Jewish Canadians, women and Communists all seized upon the elevated postwar role of universalism as a substitute for having to challenge directly the unfavourable judgments of others. For instance, by insisting repeatedly that “people are entitled to their likes and dislikes,” the 1950 CJC aimed to establish that it was not seeking to raise the social status of Canadian Jewry by resort to what is so often derided as “special interest” trickery. For its part, the NCW feared the danger of being seen to question the virtue of others: it carefully restricted the purview of female virtue to the realm of the “private,” and it used universalist discourse to pursue political inclusion in a way that avoided raising the perilous issue of men’s civic deficiencies.

These strategies highlight a crucial reason why universalism has not made the politics of virtue disappear. This reason is that universalism alone does not necessarily vanquish the problems of disesteem that so often underpin social subordination in the first

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\(^{186}\) CJC, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 75.
place. The tendency of stigmatized groups to deploy universalism as a second-best strategy for directly confronting problems of social esteem highlights this point starkly.

For instance, when the LDR used equal rights discourse as a means of avoiding the charge that communists were likely to use citizenship rights disloyally, communists appeared to give tacit admission of their disloyalty. And when the CJC insisted that other Canadians were “entitled to their likes and dislikes” the Congress came close to accepting that bigots should be left to hold, and perhaps even to promote, their anti-Semitic views freely. Conversely, when the NJCCA demanded that Canadians change their views about “Japanese” disloyalty, the demonstrated unwillingness of its audience to do so served to confirm a social reality in which Japanese Canadians were indeed labelled disloyal. The subsequent thirty-year public silence on the internment issue testifies eloquently to the consequences of being rebuffed as a “presumptuous inferior.” In short, although universalism undoubtedly represented a great advance over virtue-based patterns of rights allocation, reversing societal judgments of disrespect was likely to remain the greatest prize of all.

To deploy symbolic bases of social esteem as tools of civic voice is not a novel innovation of postmaterialism. As the entitled inhabitants of virtue-based citizenships could never forget, it is a product of the understanding that successful participation requires enjoying the respect of others. This distinction between formal inclusion and

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187 Ibid.


189 On the salience of virtue for using participation rights in the early-modern era, see Honneth, *Struggle for Recognition*, 123.
usable rights is vital to appreciating the significance of the emphasis on questions of esteem and belonging conveyed by movements representing the traditionally disrespected. When New Politics theory speaks of the “aesthetic and intellectual” aspirations of postindustrial prosperity, this emphasis is misconstrued. The New Politics approach ignores the significance of esteem and belonging as bases of voice that established actors have used to defend their security needs for centuries; and it ignores the extent to which “latecomer” or traditionally disrespected participants may find the age-old link between citizenship and virtue particularly pressing.

Yet there is an undeniably important contrast to be drawn between how the postwar labour and ethnic-minority movements came to pursue societal respect. As this chapter has shown, the latter actors demonstrated an increasing tendency to highlight the virtues and contributions of their neglected constituencies. But labour seemed less enamoured of this strategy: it was more disposed to back up its respect claims with the weapon of the strike. Thus, while ethnic-minority groups tended to prize a bill of rights as a “constant teacher” for influencing “the minds of the people,” the labour movement focused squarely on gaining more directly usable constitutional protection for trade-union activities. A signal illustration of this contrast is provided by the 1960 Bill of Rights debates, in which the CJC proclaimed its enthusiasm for “a declaration of citizenship.”

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191 NJCCA, Presentation to the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights, 270, 277.

192 CJC, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, 87.
while the CLC opposed a document that ignored “provincial outrages on freedom” and said nothing of the worker’s “right to freedom of association in the union of his choice.”

This is not to say that the trade union movement did not feel the sting of the symbolic disabilities of working-class status. Threatened by the new focus on culture and civic symbolism, the CLC feared an understanding of “culture... as the private property of the upper income classes.” Accordingly, the CLC underlined labour’s oft-neglected contribution to Canadian citizenship by reminding the Commission that without trade union efforts workers would still be “aliens among their own people.” But it is important to note the extent to which collective-bargaining rights seemed to relieve trade unions from the imperative to convince others of working-class virtue. As Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson observe about the immediate aftermath of labour’s wartime victories: “unions were confident that they had carved a legitimate place for themselves in the Canadian social fabric.” Yet before securing the strike weapon, the traditional left conveyed a strong focus on respectable manly virtue—which was nothing if not a vehicle for pursuing the “postmaterial” goods of esteem and belonging—to gain recognition of the worthiness of its constituency.

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193 CLC, Presentation to the 1960 House Committee on Human Rights, 192, 197.
194 CLC, “Submission to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism,” 12.
195 Ibid., 9.
196 Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson, Crisis, Challenge and Change: Party and Class in Canada (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), 226.
This approach receded because the industrial union strategy for eliciting respect, which involved organizing as many workers as possible in order to better confront employers and state, won victories that manliness and respectability alone could not. The point, then, is that labour's capacity to use the strike as a tool of self-defence helps to point up the particular importance of esteem and belonging for the feminist and ethnocultural-minority movements. These latter equality-seekers, whose major bases of organization did not usually allow them to exert strategic power over the processes of economic production, found the connection between problems of voice and the negative perceptions of others far more difficult to avoid.
CHAPTER 5
CHARTER POLITICS AS MATERIALIST POLITICS

While the B&B deliberations were still ongoing, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson’s government sought provincial agreement on a full-fledged domestic constitutional amending formula. Since at least 1945, a series of federal Liberal administrations had pursued such an agreement as part of a larger strategy of replacing Canada’s quasi-colonial identity with the symbols of sovereign maturity. However, soon after Quebec formally rejected the proposed Fulton-Favreau amending formula in 1966 as an insufficient response to the basic Quiet Revolution premise of expanded powers for the Quebec state, the scope of constitutional debate began to widen significantly.¹

A crucial ingredient in this expansion was Pierre Trudeau’s appointment as federal Justice Minister in 1967. Trudeau rejected the idea that Quebec nationalism was simply a reality to be accommodated, and set out to launch an attack of his own.² Key to Trudeau’s approach was the idea of entrenching a Charter of Rights that would recognize the “basic human values of all Canadians” and “establish that all Canadians, in every part of Canada, have equal rights.”³ Trudeau’s approach also capitalized on the postwar

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¹ On the Fulton-Favreau formula, see Peter H. Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 72-74.


international-security imperative, which enjoined decent nations to serve the values that were enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.4 Thus, Trudeau officially unveiled the Charter idea in 1968, the International Year of Human Rights, by reminding Canadians of "the hopeful expectation of the [UN] General Assembly that in 1968 an aroused awareness by all peoples will result in government action everywhere."

"Canada," he urged pointedly, "has the opportunity to take a lead in this respect."5

This chapter shows how groups representing historically disrespected constituences capitalized on Trudeau's nation-building project, and on the postwar discourse of humanism and legal universalism in which that project was embedded, as an opportunity to change traditional distributions of symbolic power among Canadian citizens. I argue against the tendency in Canadian politics to understand this remarkable development as a by-product of the "rhythms of late industrialism."6 On this latter account, the politics of recognition reflects the great prosperity of the postwar "long boom," which has replaced the old "struggle for economic and physical security" with a new focus on esteem, belonging, self-expression and aesthetics.7 This New Politics


approach sees “Charter politics as postmaterialist politics,” and it finds countless echoes in a more general understanding of “the politics of difference and identity [as] postmodern.”

I argue that esteem, belonging and recognition must be seen not through the misleading prism of the postmaterialism thesis, but in terms of their longstanding and quintessentially political significance as bases of social control. Above all, I argue that social-movement struggles to accumulate a symbolic capital in citizenship must be seen as material struggles. This view is anchored in the understanding that personal and group security in human society tend to depend on the perceptions and judgments of others.

As New Politics theory would predict, the traditional left was an insignificant player in a set of constitutional debates that revolved around themes of rights, participation and respect. Yet it is important to remember that the labour movement was in fact the social-movement pioneer of the idea of a Canadian charter of rights. Indeed, earlier chapters have shown that the traditional left pursued this idea consistently, from the Rowell-Sirois hearings of the Depression well into the early 1960s. Furthermore, this chapter shows that the trade union movement avoided the post-1960s constitutional debates not because the movement was indifferent to the questions that these debates raised. Rather, the Canadian Labour Congress found itself paralyzed by an intra-

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movement nationalist dispute over questions of recognition, identity and belonging. The importance of these so-called postmaterialist themes for the traditional left is underscored further by the constitutional participation of the Communist Party. Communists, I show, were early exponents of asymmetrical federalism precisely because they feared that the intersection between Quebec nationalism and the growing norm of provincial equality was feeding the longstanding, and insufficiently "materialist," tendency of Canadian workers to identify on bases of social difference other than class. That class politics is necessarily identity politics is a basic political truth that the distinction between materialism and postmaterialism often serves to obscure.¹⁰

At the same time, the women’s movement continued to emphasize questions of employment opportunity, equality of access to social programs and the disposition of assets in divorce. This consistent focus on questions of economic security belies the postmaterialist label that is so often applied to feminism. Moreover, feminist economic advocacy was undermined by the severe difficulties that women experienced in eliciting esteem and belonging in the Canadian civic arena. The symbolic capital that accrued to wives and mothers did not seem to compel men to treat women as worthy participants in the public sphere. This point highlights something that New Politics theory ignores. Because the allegedly postmaterialist goods of esteem and belonging are crucial resources for eliciting recognition and civic voice, their relevance to security needs has made themes

¹⁰ For example, see Raymond Bazowski’s use of Inglehart’s work in “Contrasting Ideologies in Canada: What’s Left? What’s Right?” in Canadian Politics, ed. James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon, 3d ed. (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 1999). Bazowski argues that the “class issues” of old have been superseded by the rise of “identity-based political claims,” ibid., 87.
of esteem and belonging feature with particular prominence in the citizenship advocacy of traditionally disrespected constituencies.

An oft-invoked distinction, which bears an interesting resemblance to the postmaterialism distinction, differentiates the allegedly “expressivist” emphasis of ethnic minorities on multiculturalism from the evidently more instrumental visible-minority focus on problems such as employment discrimination and hate crime. However, I argue against equating the third-force emphasis on multiculturalism with the expressivist or aesthetic focus of which New Politics theory speaks. Instead, I insist, this emphasis is better seen as an instrumental politics of respect; a politics fuelled by group memories of how problems of disrespect had been used as tools of silencing and exclusion in the past.

By the same token, visible-minority participants saw constitutional symbolism and recognition for multiculturalism as important means of militating against problems of esteem and belonging, which they saw in turn as significant causes of the economic and personal insecurity experienced by their constituencies. Thus, both types of ethnocultural-minority advocacy reflected the same understanding: esteem and belonging derive their significance not from the higher-order concerns of prosperity, but from their role as tools of respect and voice. This role suggests the overarching political significance of esteem, belonging and recognition; as crucial bases of social power that allow actors more effectively to pursue any goal, whatever its specific nature. In short, I argue that the symbolic politics of Charter recognition is a materialist politics.

As will soon be apparent, women's and ethnocultural-minority groups became increasingly central participants in post-1960s constitutional debates. This increased prominence is a central theme of the following two chapters. What is important to note at the outset is that this development led to a dramatic expansion in the number of social-movement organizations participating in Canadian constitutional politics. Hence, there is a corresponding shift in how the remainder of the study proceeds. Just as members of post-1960s parliamentary committees on constitutional issues found that a significantly increased workload was a corollary of the heightened citizen interest in constitutional affairs, my treatment of the relevant committees expands to accommodate the burgeoning ranks of constitutional presenters as well.

The 1970-72 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada

After assuming the prime ministership in June 1968, Trudeau went on to secure the unanimous intergovernmental agreement that became known as the Victoria Charter of June 1971. The Victoria proposals featured a watered-down Charter, which was stripped of the 1968 package's anti-discrimination rights in response to provincial misgivings, a limited concession to Quebec on powers over social policy and a new amending formula that gave de facto vetos to Ontario and Quebec. But Premier Bourassa cancelled the Victoria deal after Quebec nationalists mobilized successfully against the alleged tokenism of the social policy provisions.

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The period’s major non-electoral forum for citizen input on constitutional issues was the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada, which was co-chaired by MP Mark MacGuigan and Senator Gildas Molgat. As Les Pal has shown, Trudeau’s nation-building offensive also involved an attempt to strengthen citizen allegiance to national institutions by providing Canadian social movements with some of the funding and participation opportunities that had been denied their American counterparts.\(^{13}\) The MacGuigan-Molgat Committee, which held cross-Canada public hearings and proclaimed “the necessity of expanding the traditional procedures of . . . decision-making,”\(^{14}\) provided a venue for those eager to seize the political opportunity that the Trudeau strategy presented. With more than a hint of the dynamic that would characterize the entrenchment debates of the early 1980s, groups championing human rights persuaded the Committee to recommend the adoption of the original, more full-blooded 1968 Canadian Charter of Human Rights.\(^{15}\) And even before the hearings had ended, similar citizen pressure led the Committee to become a crucial voice prompting the landmark October 1971 announcement of the federal policy of multiculturalism.\(^{16}\)

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Asymmetry and Identity: The Traditional Left

Despite the traditional left’s longstanding interest in issues of rights, respect and participation, Ottawa’s invitation to engage in the new national unity debates was not taken up by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The major reason for the CLC’s failure to participate was the dispute in which it was then engaged with the umbrella organization of its Quebec affiliates, the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL). Particularly after 1968, the two camps engaged in a nationalist standoff, with the QFL demanding “full powers over organization, education, public relations, and most other CLC functions, and the funds to provide them.” Thus, if the CLC had publicly reiterated its B&B position, which held that “successful bilingualism and biculturalism” required a federally directed expansion of Canada’s education and welfare systems, an already bitter conflict would surely have been exacerbated. Yet at the same time, most of the non-Quebec CLC leadership and English-speaking rank-and-file remained attached to the idea of a single Canadian political community led by an activist central government.

But as the Communist Party’s (CP) vanguard structure, basic electoral infirmity and increasingly ruinous ties to Moscow combined to ensure its utter Canadian irrelevance, it became correspondingly freed from the membership pressures that made

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post-Duplessis constitutional politics so agonizing for the CLC.\textsuperscript{20} Thoroughly disabused of its old premise that Quebec workers needed Canada’s protection from a reactionary provincial state, the CP continued its B&B-era retreat from the policies and rhetoric of constitutional centralism. The Party devoted its major energies to defending what would soon be called “asymmetrical federalism”; a new division of powers that would exempt Quebec from what would otherwise be a pan-Canadian social-program regime while offering the province self-determination rights and a level of “economic control which [it does] not now possess.”\textsuperscript{21}

Although many on the Committee rejected the emphasis on self-determination as “words for the pleasure of words,”\textsuperscript{22} the CP presentation had a clear logic as a program for re-ordering the constitutional underpinnings of Canadianness. The CP wanted to exempt Quebec from the pan-Canadian welfare regime because it feared the implications of the Pearson-era decision to make available the social policy “opt-out,” which Quebec alone had demanded, on a basis of provincial equality.\textsuperscript{23} According to Kashtan, Ottawa’s

\textsuperscript{20} On the CP’s slide into irrelevance, see Ivan Avakumovic, \textit{The Communist Party in Canada: A History} (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 278-281.

\textsuperscript{21} Communist Party of Canada, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, \textit{Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence} No. 81, 27 May 1971, 15. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.

\textsuperscript{22} Breau, in CP, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 15. Also see Mssrs. Allmand and Prud’homme, in ibid., 10-12, 16-19.

mistaken premise that whatever is given “to one people . . . you must give to all . . .
provinces” was leading to “the balkanization [of] Canada.”

The CP saw the interaction between nationalism in Quebec and regionalism in the
rest of Canada as a hindrance to the further development of socialist consciousness in
each. Thus, regionalism was to be countered by eliminating the availability of the opt-out
device that threatened to nourish it; Quebec nationalism, by transforming an “oppressed
nation” into a co-equal partner armed with self-determination rights. In essence, the CP
program was a bid to defuse competitor identities. The Party considered that Ottawa’s
misguided attempt to address Quebec as one province among others was only serving to
inflame and legitimate regionalist demands elsewhere. Accordingly, the CP sought to
staunch this balkanizing dynamic, which it feared was sapping the “unity of the working
class” and making “the struggle against [workers’] common enemy ineffective.”

New Politics theory interprets the late twentieth-century rise of separatist and
regional-autonomy movements by suggesting that postwar prosperity has reduced the
political salience of “materialism” and class politics. But the tendency of workers to
ignore Marx’s famous injunction that the worker has no country is as old as Marxism
itself. This tendency highlights the bald, yet often ignored fact that class politics is

24 CP, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 14.
25 Ibid., 22.
26 Ibid., 5.
27 For example, see Ronald Inglehart, “The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational
necessarily a species of identity politics: for purposes of political action, working people must be persuaded to prioritize the class facet of their identity above others. Thus, the CP's early 1970s sensitivity to this requirement is a useful reminder that the questions of belonging and identity have been far more significant for workers and their would-be vanguard than New Politics theory leaves room to admit.

The Prestige Dilemma of Feminism

While the recently-formed National Action Committee on the Status of Women attended to the organizational business of its 1971-72 founding, the role of arguing for women's equality at the MacGuigan-Molgat hearings remained with the senior National Council of Women (NCW). The Council, which appeared just one month before the Victoria Charter's June 1971 collapse, devoted its major efforts to protesting the "disappointing" deletion of the proposed 1968 anti-discrimination rights from the tentative intergovernmental agreement of February 1971. The NCW desired a Charter that could do what the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights had not; force governments to amend existing statutes that discriminated against women. The statutes cited by the NCW, such as the Canada Pension Plan, Public Service Employment Act, Canada Labour Code and Fair

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29 See Jill Vickers, Pauline Rankin and Christine Appelle, Politics as if Women Mattered: A Political Analysis of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), chap. 1, "The Intellectual and Political Context for the Development of NAC."

30 National Council of Women, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 74, 4 May 1971, 37.
Employment Practices Act, were almost invariably laws concerning employment opportunity or social program benefits.\textsuperscript{31}

Despite the existence of the milestone 1970 report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, to which Ottawa had yet to respond,\textsuperscript{32} the NCW sensed that sexual equality still remained a low priority in Canadian politics. Accordingly, the NCW took pains to point out that the deletion of the 1968 non-discrimination rights was “not restricted to women.”\textsuperscript{33} Legal Advisor Ann Booth critiqued the initial Victoria package for neglecting “any person who for one reason or another might be discriminated against.”\textsuperscript{34} “There is nothing,” she observed, “about racial or ethnic origin, nor religion, none of these things.”\textsuperscript{35} The interim agreement was thus “unsatisfactory from the point of view of lack of protection against discrimination of any kind, not just that against women.”\textsuperscript{36}

This approach not only displayed a laudable belief in human equality: it also reflected the lowly ranking of women’s equality on the mainstream postwar human-rights agenda. For instance, when Prime Minister Diefenbaker celebrated the 1960 Bill of Rights as an instrument for assuring “equality to every Canadian, whatever his race, his colour, or

\textsuperscript{31} See ibid., 35.


\textsuperscript{33} NCW, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 37.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 42.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 37.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 38.
his religion,"\textsuperscript{37} it seemed as if the Bill made no mention of sexual equality at all. Prevailing attitudes to women's rights were demonstrated with particular clarity when Tory Justice Minister Davie Fulton asserted that the Bill of Rights "would not be interpreted by the courts so as to say we are making men and women equal, because men and women are not equal: they are different."\textsuperscript{38} Fulton's belief that the goal of sexual equality paled next to the importance of protecting what he described as women's "natural . . . difference"\textsuperscript{39} highlights the crucial prestige dilemma that feminism faced. This dilemma was that whatever symbolic capital women might accumulate as wives and mothers, the two major roles in which the difference to which Fulton alluded was prized by men, seemed to compel little respect for women as participants in the civic arena.

The NCW did not respond to this dilemma by relying on legal universalism as a basis of equal entitlement, as it had with such great optimism at the Senate human rights hearings in 1950. The Council instead returned to its interwar tendency of discussing rights in terms of virtue. But rather than invoking maternal or domestic virtue, the NCW now aimed for acceptance in the same evaluative terms that had been traditionally reserved for male participants alone.

\textsuperscript{37} Quoted in Peter C. Newman, \textit{Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years} (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 230.


"One thing that did concern" the NCW "very much" was the practice in some provinces of excluding women from jury duty or allowing them to avoid service without having to submit reasons.\textsuperscript{40} By voicing this concern, the Council approached women's difficulty in finding workable bases of civic prestige via the longstanding historical significance of jury eligibility as an indicator of full-fledged citizenship.\textsuperscript{41} Booth, who sought to prove that the Council's demand for equality rights was "not a completely one-sided thing," stressed her acceptance of the principle that "if women are to assume their rights and their proper place in society it is absolutely essential for them as well to assume the duties of a citizen." "And certainly," she concluded, "one of these duties is compulsory jury duty."\textsuperscript{42} Thus, the jury-service emphasis, with which the Council conveyed its eagerness to satisfy dominant standards of good citizenship, illustrates the NCW's view of a Charter as a potential tool for eliciting increased respect; as a lever for helping women to be seen more prominently to assume "the corresponding responsibilities and challenges that go with the rights that they are demanding."\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} NCW, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 35.

\textsuperscript{41} On jury duty in ancient Rome, see Frank Henderson Stewart, \textit{Honor} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 55-56.


\textsuperscript{43} NCW, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 38.
Whatever humiliation followed from building a presentation around the knowledge that women's maternal and domestic work had failed to become recognized indices of civic desert was doubtless compounded by how some men on the Committee responded to the Council's jury duty argument. Mr. Hogarth suggested that women were not appropriate candidates for the equal-rights-and-equal-responsibilities approach that the NCW was advocating. "For instance," he threatened, "take the provincial legislation concerned with deserted wives. Should husbands be responsible to support their wives when they desert them or should there be complete equality?" For his part, Mr. Prud'homme discussed the question of "mixed juries" with a jocularity that, whatever its intent, indicated one difficulty that women often faced when seeking recognition from men as serious civic participants. Although it "might never give a verdict," Prud'homme quipped, "I would like to be a member of that jury. . . . If it is a mixed jury, it might take a long time." Women seeking to raise the issue of civic equality had once again failed to encounter Canadian democracy at its deliberative finest.

Multiculturalism and the MacGuigan-Molgat Hearings: Recognition and Voice

The MacGuigan-Molgat hearings afford an interesting look at the advocacy that would soon elicit the multiculturalism policy. The Committee's major ethnic-minority presenters, the Canadian Polish Congress (CPC) and three different regional sections of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC), appeared just months prior to Trudeau's landmark October

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44 Hogarth, in NCW, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 40.

45 Prud'homme, in NCW, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 45.
1971 statement on multiculturalism. In essence, the UCC and CPC prioritized two basic demands that would also inform the multiculturalism announcement. The announcement promised, first, that ethnocultural minorities would be recognized as "essential elements in Canada" and, second, that "various cultures and ethnic groups" could expect to receive "government assistance." The UCC request to "recognize Canada as a complex ethnocultural country" and the CPC appeal that ethnic minorities be "duly recognized as a presence" both corresponded to the first plank. Harmonizing with the second was their common argument that Ottawa should provide "funds for support of study of all Canadian languages" and lend "encouragement and support" to minority "cultural communities."

With this multiculturalism advocacy, third-force representatives continued their assault on the symbolism of bicultural citizenship. They condemned dualism for placing the so-called founding peoples on an exalted plane of belonging from which ethnic minorities were looked down upon as designated inferiors. This critique, for instance,

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46 For reasons unknown, such high-profile organizations as the Canadian Jewish Congress and the National Congress of Italian Canadians did not appear or send written briefs. The only visible-minority organizations to do so were groups (such as the Chinese-Asian Cultural Association of New Brunswick) whose lack of a national organizational focus excludes them from this study.


48 Ukrainian Canadian Committee, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 73, 29 April 1971, 49.

49 Canadian Polish Congress, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 72, 28 April 1971, 27.

50 Ukrainian Canadian Committee, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 119. For similar positions, see CPC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 27, 28.
prompted the UCC to demand an amendment that would constitutionally define "the
mother language of [any] Canadian citizen[s] . . . [as] Canadian languages." To explain
the importance of this measure, the UCC drew attention to a recent newspaper article that
referred to "immigrants" speaking in "foreign tongues." "That could be a third or fourth
generation Canadian," the UCC's Anthony Yaremowich complained: when "[h]earing
[someone speaking a minority language] are you going to say first that he must be an
immigrant?" "These are the things," declared Yaremowich, "that we would like to see
stopped."  

Ethnic-minority critics took particular exception to what they saw as Ottawa's
exclusive focus on ensuring the survival of the "French fact" alone. These critics viewed
the new emphasis on safeguarding the francophone presence outside Quebec as
humiliating evidence that the cultural assimilation of the third force was an official
desirability.  

Thus, the CPC implored Ottawa to accept that "The preservation and
influence of all the great values that can be found in the tradition of ethnic groups is no
less precious to all Canadians than the British and French traditions." Minority cultures,
insisted the CPC's Dr. André Kawaczak, should also "be recognized as a valuable
collection to Canada." At its strongest, this view was conveyed by the UCC's
Bohdan Zarowsky, who insisted that Ottawa's approach to citizenship treated ethnic-

51 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 8, 10 September 1970, 30-31.

52 On how minorities understand majority demands for assimilation as signals that they are seen
as "inferior," "childish" or "threatening," see Fleras and Elliott, Multiculturalism in Canada, 60-61.

53 CPC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 27.

54 Ibid., 28.
minority as outcasts “to be kicked around” rather than as people “which you can respect.” “We are not apes,” Zarowsky declared. “We have backgrounds and we are proud of them. Perhaps our ancestors were just as good, or better, than some of the most distinguished people here.”

As was the case at the B&B hearings, Ukrainian- and Polish-Canadian representatives fought against what they evidently regarded as a stigmatizing link between East European ethnicity and working-class status. Participants whose Canadian predecessors had been labelled “illiterate,” “unskilled” and “ignorant” called attention to “centuries of cultural development,” suggested that their “ancestors were just as good, or better, than some of the most distinguished people here” and stressed personal accomplishments such as “23 years . . . teaching . . . at McGill University” and a “knowledge of . . . seven modern languages.”

However, direct invocations of overlooked minority virtues were less prominent than was the case during the B&B debates. Key to understanding this shift is to note that actors who had initially protested the “founding races” insult in personal or group-specific terms had begun to unify around an emergent discourse of multiculturalism that highlighted the benefits that Canada derived from diversity more generally. This new

55 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 130.

56 These adjectives are used to describe Ukrainian immigrants in J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates: or Coming Canadians (Toronto: Frederick Clarke Stephenson, 1909), 135.

57 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 118; ibid., 130; CPC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 24; and ibid., 29.

58 An early proponent of unification was Senator Paul Yuzyk, who coined the “third force” phrase to promote the idea of “a united organizational force [that] could hold the balance of power between English and French,” Evelyn Kallen, Ethnicity and Human Rights in Canada (Toronto: Gage, 1982), 198.
discourse translated ethnic-minority bids for civic recognition into a more politically saleable form.

By insisting that positive recognition for multiculturalism would serve internationally as a profitable hallmark of Canadian cosmopolitanism, third-force participants pursued a more generalizable symbolic capital that framed Canadian support for diversity as an important potential basis of national prestige. A drab colonial dualism, these participants insisted, was inimical to forward-looking national development: Canada could not "afford in the age of conquest of space to adhere rigidly and inflexibly" to past ways. Rather than staying "fossilized as it was . . . 100 years ago," Canada should embrace its identity as "a constantly changing thing" by recognizing itself as a "multicultural nation." Doing so would provide a "creative contribution to the community of nations," prove that Canada knows "better than other nations how to preserve unity in diversity" and confer an international "advantage in business." This approach impressed the Committee's Mr. Ryan, who responded to the UCC's "excellent" brief by recommending the "encouragement of multiculturalism" as a means of differentiating Canada "from the United States" in order "to continue to be an independent country."

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59 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 118.

60 Ibid., 129, 119.

61 CPC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 25, 26, 29.

62 Ryan, in UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 120.
New Politics theory characterizes these themes of linguistic and cultural recognition as the "self-expression and aesthetic satisfaction" concerns of fortunate postmaterialists. But viewing the politics of ethnicity as a vehicle for expressive aspirations fails to capture the instrumental nature of what was clearly a protest against civic subordination on the part of actors who had a powerful sense of having been "kicked around." And although it may be tempting to see the third-force rhetoric of cosmopolitanism as an indicator of postmaterialist prosperity, this rhetoric is better understood as a response to a legacy of immigrant proletarianization. The symbolic capital that equated multiculturalism with sophistication was the product of an investment strategy driven by group memories of insecurity. These communities knew epithets like "griny," "animalized" and "despised," barbs for which even the great Christian socialist J.S. Woodsworth found frequent use, as weapons of shaming that helped to promote conditions of minority defencelessness. As I will now go on to show, group memories of these conditions were a crucial stimulus for the ethnic-minority focus on including multiculturalism in the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms.


64 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 130. On expressive versus instrumental approaches to studying Canadian multiculturalism policy, see Kallen, Ethnicity and Human Rights, 166.

The 1980-81 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada

The national-unity drama of the late 1970s and early 1980s, to which Prime Minister Trudeau’s revival of the Charter idea constituted a daring response, is well-studied elsewhere. Suffice it to say that the 1976 election of a separatist government in Quebec, Trudeau’s surprise return to office in February 1980, the referendum loss suffered by the Parti Québécois in May 1980, a pivotal Supreme Court decision and a growing Western regionalism all played crucial roles. From the standpoint of this study, it is important to note that the role of equality-seeking social movements was strengthened markedly by Trudeau’s decision to frame the national-unity question—far more relentlessly than he had done during the Victoria round—as one of citizen rights. In Alan Cairns’s words, “the federal government brilliantly employed a ‘people versus powers’ antithesis to contrast what it sought—a Charter of Rights for the people—with the jurisdictional goals of provincial governments, which were portrayed as selfish aggrandizement.”

Peter Russell points out that the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee on the Constitution, which was co-chaired by MP Serge Joyal and Senator Harry Hays, became “[t]he crucial instrument in the process of building legitimacy for the federal initiative.” By providing a key opening in what political scientist Sidney Tarrow would call Canada’s


67 See the chronology in Cairns, Disruptions, 105-107.

68 Ibid., 83.

69 Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, 113.
“political opportunity structure,” the Committee hearings granted traditionally marginalized actors an uncustomary degree of political leverage. In particular, synergy between the “people versus powers” framework and the Hays-Joyal context of televised parliamentary hearings made “the concept of an entrenched Charter . . . [into] a motherhood issue.”

As Robert Sheppard and Michael Valpy observe, parliamentarians who feared being caught “on the wrong side of history . . . fall over each other” to respond to citizen proposals and complaints. The Hays-Joyal Committee recommended 123 amendments to the Charter, more than half of which were accepted by a government that wanted to be seen to honour the implications of its own rhetoric. Most notably, equality-seeking social movements achieved a significant tightening of the proposed Section 1 “reasonable limits” clause, a thorough strengthening of the Section 15(1) and (2) equality rights and affirmative action provisions, the addition of the Section 27 multiculturalism reference and the final incorporation of the overriding Section 28 statement on sexual equality.

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70 Tarrow’s political-opportunity theory insists that because social movements typically fare poorly from the standpoint of the “internal resources” (like money and organization) upon which states and corporations thrive, external resources, i.e., political opportunities—such as enhanced institutional access, elite divisions or the availability of an influential ally—are the social movement’s lifeline. See Sidney Tarrow, Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), chap. 5, Seizing and Making Opportunities.


72 Ibid., 140, 138.

73 On social-movement witnesses, amendments to the package and the Hays-Joyal Committee, see Ronald James Zukowsky, Struggle Over the Constitution: From the Quebec Referendum to the Supreme Court (Kingston: Queen’s University Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, 1981), 71-86.
From the New Politics perspective, the movement of public opinion that made equality rights such a crucial basis of appeal to public opinion in the early 1980s reflects postmaterial value change. On this view, postwar prosperity and peace made Canadians increasingly inclined to support social-movement struggles for equality, esteem, belonging and self-expression. The following account of the Charter debates does not dispute the argument that increased security enables people to develop sympathies and interests that the exigencies of daily survival may preclude. But it does emphasize a key feature of the postwar ideational environment that New Politics theory neglects.

Postwar movements of the historically disrespected, I argue, capitalized on more than just unprecedented conditions of security. They were able to appeal to what the chastened inheritors of a post-Hitler world had come to learn about the sources of insecurity as well. The increased public sensitivity to issues of racism and discrimination that characterized the postwar era did not just reflect the balm of prosperity and peace. It also reflected a process of social learning—a process that the mid-century catastrophe set in motion, and which equality-seeking movements of the postwar period did much to further.

The following analysis also argues against using the notion of postmaterialism to understand the social-movement emphasis on esteem and belonging itself. As I shall stress, neither the complaints that led the proponents of multiculturalism, feminism and

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75 Nevitte, Decline of Deference, 104-105.
anti-racism onto the constitutional field, nor the goals that they hoped to achieve, are adequately understood as manifestations of postmaterialism.

*Labour (not) at the Hays-Joyal Hearings*

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) broke once again with an older Canadian labour movement practice by neglecting to participate in debates that revolved around issues of participation and rights. As Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz explain, the CLC’s absence was “the product of political paralysis.” Above all, Canada’s trade union umbrella feared losing the Quebec Federation of Labour, which “was determined that labour not get involved in improving the Constitution in case this strengthened the federalist case among Quebec workers.”76 The prominence of these disputes over belonging and identity in the Canadian labour movement contradicts the New Politics notion of working-class materialism. Neither do the 1980s versions of these disputes point up the recent arrival of postmaterialism in the Canadian working-class itself. After all, even amidst the insecurity of World War Two, the francophone trade union movement was insufficiently “materialist” to embrace the notion of a pan-Canadian welfare state. It angrily rejected this notion as “contrary to national unity as we see it in Quebec.”77

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77 Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour (the main trade-union group in Quebec until the 1960s), quoted in Dennis Guest, *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1979), 116.
Ethnic and Visible Minority Advocacy: Prestige, Social Learning and Social Control

The enthusiasm that ethnocultural minorities would come to display for the 1982 Charter was not as noticeable a feature of the Hays-Joyal hearings as might be supposed. At least as conspicuous were strong attacks on an initial set of constitutional proposals whose guarantees of French-English minority language rights were unaccompanied by any reference to multiculturalism. Thus, the Canadian Polish Congress (CPC) spoke for many when it decried a package that it saw "as an insult to Canada’s smaller ethnic groups, whose partnership in this country is of legally equivalent validity." This critique was accompanied by demands for a constitutional recognition of multiculturalism. The CPC urged that the "entrenchment of... multiculturalism" was necessary to "underline the character of the Canadian nation"; the UCC sought a "new constitutional house" for all to "enter... through the front door together." As Rita Desantis of the National Congress of Italian Canadians (NCIC) put it, ethnic minorities were offended by "talk

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79 Canadian Polish Congress, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 9, 20 November 1980, 104. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.

80 Ibid., 103, 118.

81 Ukrainian Canadian Committee, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, No. 14, 27 November 1980, 58.
about the English and French forever... I am a Canadian and I belong in that
constitution."^{82}

Ethnic-minority participants struggling for constitutional recognition found a
useful lever in the multiculturalism policy. The 1971 all-party embrace of multiculturalism
had come to assume great purchase in Canadian nationalist imagery as an emblem
heralding the sophistication of a country free of the ethnocentricities that were seen to
plague less enlightened others.\(^83\) The UCC could thus now speak of "multiculturalism
[as] the very base of . . . national unity"; as "what makes us different, wonderfully
different."\(^84\) By the same token, those who ignored multiculturalism could more easily be
rebuked for depreciating a symbolic capital dear to the country as a whole. According to
the CPC, multiculturalism "is a way of life in Canada": "Book Four [of the B&B
Commission] affirmed this," "the Prime Minister tabled it as . . . official policy" and "[a]ll
parties accepted it."\(^85\) The Committee was therefore threatened with a choice: to either
prove that Ottawa's past proclamations were "more than just window dressing" or "stop
beating around the bush and admit that there is only room for two chartered ethnic groups
in this country."\(^86\)

\(^{82}\) National Congress of Italian Canadians, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee,

\(^{83}\) See Fleras and Elliott, Multiculturalism in Canada, 69.

\(^{84}\) UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 62.

\(^{85}\) CPC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 103, 106.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., 106, 108.
This shaming elicited a pledge from the Committee's Bryce Mackasey to urge his government to establish "officially in [the] constitution that this is indeed a multicultural country."⁸⁷ And when Justice Minister Jean Chrétien closed the Committee hearings in January 1981 by tabling a list of amendments to Ottawa's original patriation resolution, he added the future Section 27 guarantee that "This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians."⁸⁸

By treating the politics of ethnicity as a manifestation of the postmaterialist's focus on "self-expression" and "aesthetic satisfaction," New Politics theory stresses the expressive dimension of identity without placing any corresponding weight on its instrumental aspects.⁸⁹ I argued earlier that applying such a framework to third-force multiculturalism advocacy misses the movement's quintessentially political nature as a revolt against problems of disrespect. To say that ethnocultural-minority groups were induced by postwar prosperity to pursue previously dormant aesthetic interests in unduly simplistic. Even in the hypothetical case of a wholly prosperous minority whose lower-order needs are fully met, to erect too strong a divide between an insecure past and a secure present is to miss the linking significance of group memory.⁹⁰

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⁸⁷ Mackasey, in UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 69.

⁸⁸ See Zukowsky, Struggle Over the Constitution, 79-80.

⁸⁹ For examples of this imbalance, see Inglehart, Silent Revolution, 15, 22; and idem, Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 23, 303-305.

⁹⁰ On this theme, see Alan C. Cairns, Reconfigurations: Canadian Citizenship and Constitutional Change, ed. Douglas E. Williams (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), "Author's Introduction: Whose Side is the Past On?"
An understanding of the constitution as something that “colours . . . the ideological framework within which you live,”\textsuperscript{91} and which therefore must “stand the test of time,”\textsuperscript{92} was anchored strongly in a view of past experiences as warnings of potential future harms. Ukrainian Canadians did “not wish ever to see the experience of [the] World War I [internment] repeated,”\textsuperscript{93} just as Polish Canadians remembered a time when “persons of central European origin were prohibited from the use of their languages.”\textsuperscript{94} As Manoly Lupul of the UCC put it: “If you are a member of a minority and you read history, you see minority groups abused time and time again, arbitrarily, no defence. . . . There is just not the kind of security that you need.”\textsuperscript{95}

From this perspective, it was important to include in the Charter not just civil liberties guarantees but also symbols of positive recognition that would help to militate against majoritarian disrespect in the future. The emphasis on multicultural sophistication is particularly important to understand in this light. Take, for instance, the contrast drawn by the Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations between that “cold wasp city” of “30 years ago” and a new Toronto, which the Council described as “alive, vibrant, beautiful, cosmopolitan . . . rich in the diversities of its people. . . . A true multicultural city.”\textsuperscript{96} The political significance of this imagery cannot be captured by presenting it as a

\textsuperscript{91} UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 70.

\textsuperscript{92} CPC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 107.

\textsuperscript{93} UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 54.

\textsuperscript{94} CPC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 109.

\textsuperscript{95} UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 67.

\textsuperscript{96} Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations of Canada, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, No. 22, 9 December 1980, 75.
reflex of prosperity. It must be seen instead against the historical backdrop of a social system in which minorities were expected deferentially to go about their business “digging sewers and cutting lumber.” Although this historical link may seem fanciful to many, the point is that movements emphasizing themes of esteem and belonging—even when conditions of peace and prosperity seem to have been realized—are not simply “mov[ing] up the needs hierarchy.” They are influenced by group memories that underline the relation between disesteem and insecurity; they have apprehensions that the future may not be as happy as the present; and, above all, they know the extent to which monopolizing esteem and belonging in citizenship was once a key basis of an unchecked majority’s power.

Whether New Politics theory views movements that are organized more explicitly around the politics of anti-racism as expressivist offshoots of prosperity is difficult to gauge. A note of qualification is sounded by Neil Nevitte, whose research suggests that fears about discrimination are what prompt Canadian ethnocultural minorities to support the Charter. As Nevitte puts it, “minorities are likely to support and pursue Charter issues not because of new-politics orientations but because they are minorities.” On the other hand, Inglehart flatly contrasts “cultural ... politics” with “material concerns.”

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97 An early twentieth-century Ukrainian-Canadian complaint about racism and the labour market, quoted in Avery, “Radical Alien,” 226.


99 Ibid., 402.

100 Inglehart, Silent Revolution, 13.
Similarly, Seymour Martin Lipset’s essay on New Politics theory describes “struggles for civil rights [and] equal rights for . . . minorities” as key features of “postmaterialist politics,” while F.L. Morton and Rainer Knopff classify “ethnocultural organizations” as carriers of “the politics of postmaterialism.”

This approach pays insufficient attention to racism as a source of economic insecurity. The postmaterialist label does not capture the testimony of Sebastian Alakatusery of the Afro-Asian Foundation of Canada (AAFC), who spoke about facing the threat of “discrimination in employment, job promotion [and] housing . . . every minute of our life.” Nor does it properly describe the presentation of the National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC), whose President referred to an upbringing in “segregated housing” and “black ghettos,” and urged affirmative action on the ground that even if “one simply opens up equality of opportunity . . . it would take another 100 years before we were able to make up for . . . past discrimination.”

The New Politics account also fails to recognize visible-minority activism as a response to threats of violence. For example, NBCC President Wilson Head protested the circulation of “hate messages . . . in favour of the destruction of black people” and worried that Canada was “ripe for the evolution of a group like the KKK.”

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102 Afro-Asian Foundation of Canada, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, No. 32, 6 January 1981, 32, 40.


104 Ibid., 20, 15.
complained similarly about the “aggression and violence” perpetrated “by groups whose stated objective is to promote hatred and racism.” This hatred, explained the AAFC, engendered a “sense of insecurity” that the “haphazard nature of provincial human rights legislation” and “unequal protection by law enforcement agencies” did little to ease.\footnote{AAFC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 33, 32.}

These security fears constitute an important “new” social movement emphasis on which the New Politics literature seems entirely silent.

How did visible-minority organizations propose to address the problems of physical and economic insecurity? One cluster of solutions involved entrenching legal anti-discrimination rights in a pan-Canadian Charter (which was to be stripped of the proposed Section 1 “reasonable limits” clause), establishing effective affirmative action programs and undertaking a more vigorous enforcement of provincial human rights codes. But seeking a Charter was not simply a bid to litigate more effectively in the nation’s courts and tribunals. Entrenchment was also pursued as an act of high symbolic significance that might spur an erosion of the “false perceptions” and the “hatred and disdain for that which is different” that seemed to create the need for anti-discrimination rights in the first place.\footnote{Ibid., 33.}

For the AAFC, “The patriation of the constitution with an entrenched Charter of Rights would be a most important step in the direction of building a truly egalitarian multicultural society.” It hoped that entrenchment would prompt Ottawa “to exercise a position of leadership in helping to redress [a] most unhealthy situation.”\footnote{Ibid., 32.} According to
the NBCC, by signalling “that the protection of human rights is a very important consideration in Canadian society today” a Charter would help to make “the people... aware that... certain types of behaviour... [are] not acceptable here.”

Certainly, the fact that bills of rights in other countries had “not been lived up to fully” led President Head to acknowledge that entrenchment might “merely be symbolical.” “But,” he concluded, “I think in this case the symbolical act is important.”

As entrenchment was expected to help foster a new civic climate in which racism would be less likely to flourish, so the symbolism of multiculturalism was prized as a tool for attaching respect to those whom the AAFC described as “stereotyped, ostracized, victimized and ghettoized.” According to Alakatusery, “the two nation concept” ignores “the significant contributions of non-white Canadians” and helps “to relegate nonwhites to a peripheral position in our society.” It was therefore necessary “to develop a truly Canadian identity,” to recognize “the many significant contributions that have been made by Afro-Asian Canadians” and to erase the “impression that those of Asian and African descent are all newcomers.”

The NBCC conveyed a similar emphasis: its sense that “a great number of Canadians seem to feel that most black people who are in Canada now are recent immigrants” led it to point out that “black people... have contributed greatly to the growth and development of Canada... including fighting in the wars that

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108 NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 23, 20.
109 Ibid., 17.
110 AAFC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 31.
111 Ibid.
Canada has been involved in.” Since “we tend to lose sight” of such facts, the NBCC’s J.A. Mercury concluded, “the policy of multiculturalism must be . . . entrenched in our constitution.”

In short, visible-minority advocates drew strong connections between social disesteem and non-recognition of their group civic histories, on the one hand, and problems of economic insecurity and violence, on the other. These connections serve as useful reminders that problems of esteem and belonging can have an intimate bearing on problems of personal safety and economic security.

The New Politics distinction between pursuing security and seeking esteem is misleading because it ignores what sociologist William Goode identifies as the longstanding importance of prestige as a basis of social control. In other words, it fails to take due account of individual or group security as a condition that may depend on the prestige judgments of others. As Thomas Hobbes so long ago insisted, perceptions of one’s “publique worth” are of immense practical consequence: they can make the difference between enjoying the “assistance and service of many” or being denied such “gifts,” “helps” and “employment” as others may offer. This reading of the importance of prestige is essential to understanding political campaigns that aim to reverse the societal

112 NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 7, 15, 12.


diseasteem from which marginalization, restricted economic opportunity and personal
insecurity often follow.

In particular evidence at the Hays-Joyal hearings was an emphasis similar to the
early Christian valorization of the "last" and the "meek" that Nietzsche derided as "the
slave revolt in morality." In both ancient and modern incarnations, this symbolic capital
framed prior experiences of oppression as bases of moral authority. For instance, the
UCC criticized the proposed Section 1 reasonable limits clause as a window for majority
tyrranny by noting that "we have a bit of historical experience to bear this out." The UCC
did "not wish ever to see the experience of World War I repeated, when over 8,000
Ukrainian Canadians were interned by the Canadian government as enemy aliens." More
generally, the Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations implored those
"running . . . this country" to stop ignoring "the knowledge . . . and experience" of
Canadians who had "been subjected to internment or imprisonment as aliens and even
enemies." Similarly, the Canadian Jewish Congress pointed out that its membership's
"own historical experience as victims of human rights violations" meant that there were
"areas where the Jewish interest happens to be . . . very sensitive."

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116 UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 60, 54.

117 Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint
Committee, 74-75.

118 Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, No. 7, 18
November 1980, 80, 84.
Arguments that the fortunate and powerful should more respectfully hear voices that had been silenced in the past drew great force from a key lesson of World War Two, which has since become a pillar of liberal- and social-democratic civics. This teaching is that ignoring the experiences and perspectives of the vulnerable may threaten the security of all. For example, this understanding of security was central to the presentation of the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC), which insisted that the story of internment “more than ever must be told to contribute to the making of our future nation.”

NAJC representatives spoke of facing “locked doors in practically every line of pursuit,” of “having to pay taxes for 70 years without even the right to vote,” of seeing the “government . . . confiscate homes and sell them without the owner’s consent” and finally of being “uprooted and dispossessed” when over 22,000 Japanese Canadians were interned during World War Two. “Surely,” concluded the NAJC’s Roger Obata, a “Charter of Rights entrenched in the constitution to prevent what we have gone through is the least that Canada can do . . . ensure that such injustices will never be repeated.”

The increased political efficacy of this emphasis was revealed strikingly by the Committee’s response. Whereas the 1950 Senate Human Rights Committee had reacted indignantly to an attempt by Japanese-Canadian witnesses to convey the “individual experiences” of those who “know the harmful . . . effect discrimination has worked upon

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120 Ibid., 7, 9, 8, 7.

121 Ibid., 9.
parliamentarians now competed to convey their sensitivity. The NDP's Svend Robinson praised the NAJC's "very moving presentation," observed that he had read Ken Adachi's "very fine book" on internment and condemned Ottawa's "embarassing" draft Charter as a document "which would permit exactly the same kind of shameful history . . . which happened to your people." Bryce Mackasey of the Liberal Party expressed his "latent feeling of guilt . . . about the grave injustice" of internment, and promised to take the NAJC brief to his riding to be "circulated in the schools of the Niagara Peninsula." For his part, Conservative MP John Fraser noted that his Vancouver childhood had been marked by "fights . . . because [he] was born in Japan," and that his father had protested "against the internment" and made "interventions . . . on . . . behalf" of an interned family friend. And despite his Party's opposition to a patriation plan that outraged key Tory provincial allies, Fraser professed his eagerness to strengthen the Charter. He asked the NAJC delegation: "can you give us any guidance as to what ought to be done? . . . Do you think that you ought to be able to view [a redrafted resolution] to consider whether in fact it has met your objections?"


\[123\] Robinson, in National Association of Japanese Canadians, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 15.

\[124\] Mackasey, in NAJC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 17.

\[125\] Fraser, in NAJC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 12, 11, 12.

\[126\] Fraser, in NAJC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 13.
It is no slur on the sincerity of either the NAJC or the Committee to interpret the solicitude displayed by the latter as an illustration of a social movement mobilizing prestige considerations as a means of social control. The interaction between the NAJC and its parliamentary audience highlights a postwar prestige environment that reflected not just the morally inert fact of prosperity, but the impact of historically-derived lessons that framed indifference to the plight of the vulnerable as a badge of shame. The responses that various Committee members offered to minority-group presenters illustrate this new environment aptly. For instance, Lorne Nystrom concluded an exchange with the NBCC on the topic of hate crime by saying: “I... do not wish to rest on my laurels and say it can never happen again. ... So I want to ask ... whether or not [you] can add anything else to what we should be putting in our Charter?” And Chairman Joyal thanked the NBCC “for reminding us of our responsibilities as members of Parliament,” embraced the task of “redefin[ing] the... future of this country” and promised to help “make sure that [hate] groups do not find any kind of opportunity to ... spread themselves in Canada.”

As these remarks attest, the Committee wished to be seen to pay respect to the historically disrespected. But whereas New Politics theory stresses peace and prosperity as the basis for the great postwar rise of “public sympathy for minorities,” societal experiences of insecurity are important to emphasize as well. In particular, equality-seeking movements both capitalized on and contributed to a crucial post-Holocaust

127 Nystrom, in NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 17.

128 Joyal, in NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 24.

understanding, which held that to silence the marginalized and the oppressed was to convey the sort of indifference to suffering from which past tragedy had grown. There is, therefore, a profound link between historical experience and social learning—which postwar equality-seeking movements have used prestige considerations to amplify, and which the rather mechanistic notion of a prosperity-induced turn to postmaterialism serves to occlude.

Constitutional Ambivalence: The National Action Committee and the Charter Debates

The distance travelled by Canadian feminism from the MacGuigan-Molgat hearings to the early 1980s patriation battles is marked by an organizational transformation, which saw the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) replace the National Council of Women (NCW) as Canada’s preeminent women’s organization. Indeed, while NAC was a key participant in the Hays-Joyal hearings, the NCW failed to appear at all.

Intergenerational changes clearly helped to promote NAC’s ascent. As historian N.E.S. Griffiths notes, membership decline in the mid-1970s NCW ran parallel to the rising interest shown in the more politicized NAC by younger women. Yet intergenerational consensus was also crucial to NAC’s successful emergence as Canada’s new “parliament of women.”

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women’s groups to lobby for the implementation of the recommendations of Ottawa’s 1968-70 Royal Commission on the Status of Women; and first-wave feminism supplied the two key figures to push for the Commission whose recommendations NAC was created to support. Furthermore, the Royal Commission report, which centred around the themes of formal equality in law and increased assistance for women in housework, pregnancy and child-raising, reflected longstanding NCW positions. Certainly, a more aggressive NAC attracted those who rejected the NCW’s stress on “volunteerism as one of the self-sacrificing norms of the older generations of feminists.” But the young organization also benefitted greatly from the fact that the Royal Commission recommendations provided a basic platform upon which to rally traditional women’s organizations, the newer feminist groups and trade-union women alike. NAC’s most recent major analysts conclude that success in the task of “generational bridging has proved to be one of NAC’s greatest strengths.”


135 Ibid., 73-74. Although a “radical caucus of women” took issue with what it saw as NAC’s undue reformism (ibid., 75), founding member groups included the New Feminists and the Women’s Liberation Movement (Toronto), as well as the Canadian Home Economics Association, the NCW itself and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. See Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Maragaret McPhail, Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women’s Movement in Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), 52.

The question remains whether NAC’s ascendancy can be characterized as a reflection of postmaterialism. A key point militating against such a characterization is that the theme of economic security constituted an absolutely central basis upon which NAC’s intergenerational partnership was founded. Jill Vickers calls attention to this basis when she argues that a longstanding tradition of support among Canadian women for the state’s role as a provider of social services has facilitated both “intergenerational continuity and the transmission of [older women’s political] experience.” Indeed, far more striking than any passage to postmaterialism is NAC’s role in strengthening the focus on women’s economic security that was pioneered by the Depression-era NCW.

Take, for instance, NAC’s critique of the proposed Section 15(1) of the Charter. This section initially followed the 1960 Bill of Rights in speaking of women’s “right to equality before the law and to the equal protection of the law without discrimination.” As President Lynn McDonald explained, Canadian courts had already used this phraseology to uphold prima facie legislative discrimination against women: the judicial reading of “equality before the law” and “equal protection of the law” was simply that “laws, once passed, will be equally applied to all individuals in the category concerned.” NAC therefore insisted that an acceptable Section 15(1) would have to provide for


\[138\] The draft Charter of 2 October 1980 is reprinted in McWhinney, Canada and the Constitution, 141-148. The Bill’s non-discrimination guarantee speaks of “the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law.”
"equality in the laws themselves." Of what, then, did the legislation that NAC hoped to overturn consist?

As was the case for the NCW in 1971, NAC's declared targets were all laws that inhibited women's economic security. The blanket denial of Unemployment Insurance benefits to pregnant women, the courts' refusal to recognize women's economic contribution when determining divorce settlements and the ineligibility for band-status benefits of aboriginal women who married non-native men represented security issues that the NAC brief raised repeatedly. More generally, NAC demanded affirmative action programs on the ground that women only "earn 60 per cent of what men do," took issue with those who might "argue that women do not have a right to jobs on the same basis [as] men" and described the references to "economic equality" in some international conventions as "[m]uch more positive that what we have in the present charter." This focus militates against presenting NAC as an entity defined by its tendency to prioritize "non-material" goals.

Most interesting is that NAC refrained from using the Hays-Joyal hearings as an opportunity to pursue explicitly the themes of esteem and belonging. Unlike ethnocultural-minority participants, for instance, the NAC delegation did not speak of using civic symbolism as a vehicle for changing societal attitudes, of bringing its

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140 For example, see NAC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 59-60.

141 Ibid., 73, 64, 59.

142 Inglehart, Culture Shift, 134.
constituency more fully into the Canadian polity or of gaining recognition for
contributions that had been unappreciated in the past. McDonald’s introductory remarks,
which departed from a more common tendency among witnesses to speak of partaking in
a “most historic event”143 or “momentous occasion,”144 set the tone for a doggedly
spartan presentation: “Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will first of all give our written
brief, all three of us will be speaking, and I will make some remarks and then we will be
available for questioning.”145

This dry approach reflected the reticence of an organization wracked by internal
divisions about the desirability of offering feminist support for a pan-Canadian Charter.
One line of division was a nationalist one, which mirrored labour’s ongoing constitutional
standoff between anglophone and francophone activists. However, although the
Fédération des femmes du Québec would withdraw four months later in protest against
NAC’s pro-Charter stance, the Quebec nationalist position had little initial effect on the
anglophone-dominated organization.146 A more immediately important influence on the
muted nature of NAC’s approach was opposition from what Vickers et al. call the
organization’s “radical grass roots.” As the latter authors explain, NAC’s grassroots
radicals tended to eschew the “official political system” in favour of “the authenticity of

143 AAFC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 30.
144 NAJC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 5.
145 NAC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 57.
146 See Naomi Black, “Ripples in the Second Wave: Comparing the Contemporary Women’s
Movement in Canada and the United States,” in Challenging Times: The Women’s Movement in Canada
and the United States, ed. Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-
Queen’s University Press, 1992), 104; Vickers et al., Politics as if Women Mattered, 9; Penney Kome, The
small-group processes, which allowed for a high degree of comfort and a recognition of shared experiences."

Those who insisted that "the basic unit of feminist politics ought to be the small primary group" tended to reject the very possibility of finding esteem and belonging within the "malestream" context of constitutional politics and national symbolism.

Therefore, frustration with the undertaking that informed the senior NCW’s constitutional participation—seeking esteem and belonging in a civic arena dominated by men—underpinned much of NAC’s aloofness. Women who discovered that "reticence and the inability to speak out soon vanish in a supportive atmosphere" sought to build "a world apart from the dominant society" with its own "images of a female-centred beauty and strength." In this sense, the disdain evidenced by NAC’s radical-feminist grassroots for the Charter issue mirrors what Inglehart describes as the postmaterialist’s insistence on "individual self-expression." But the pronounced insecurity that tends to lie behind feminist variations on this insistence are elided by the New Politics account.

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148 Ibid., 97.


152 Inglehart claims that postmaterialists reject "bureaucratic organizations . . . because they are inherently impersonal and hierarchical, minimizing individual self-expression and human contact," "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," The American Political Science Review 75 (1981): 896.
Insisting on feminism's status as a movement of the oppressed may seem a partisan banality. But the imagery of fortunate postmaterialists unburdened by problems of inequality or exploitation leads to misleading political analysis. One such example is F.L. Morton and Rainer Knopff's argument that sociological affinity with the "postmaterialist 'chattering classes'" led the Canadian women's movement to view "the courts . . . as a favoured vehicle for achieving its policy ends."\(^{153}\) On Morton and Knopff's account, the feminist role in "shaping the Charter's content" furnishes a classic illustration of how "Postmaterialism has provided the political buoyancy that breathed life and energy into the Charter."\(^{154}\) Shape the Charter's content the women's movement undoubtedly did. In particular, the original Section 15(1) equality-rights provision was changed under feminist pressure to include guarantees to equality "under the law" and to the "equal benefit of the law," while a new Section 28 was added to affirm that "Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons."\(^{155}\)

But the notion that women's participation in the Charter debates reflected the comfortable postmaterialist's enthusiasm for her natural legal habitat is simply wrong. As was shown above, the group within NAC that emphasized most strongly the "postmaterialist" goal of authentic self-expression was in fact opposed to mobilizing in.


\(^{154}\) Ibid., 67, 76.

\(^{155}\) See McWhinney, *Canada and the Constitution*, 58, 105-106.
favour of a Charter. And this opposition reflected less the straightforward influence of postwar security than it did a fear of humiliation in male-dominated prestige environments.

Moreover, the consensus position that drove NAC’s participation in the entrenchment debates owed virtually nothing to the alleged feminist-postmaterialist affinity for the courts. The overriding sentiment among Canadian feminists was instead a fear that “Women could be worse off if the proposed charter of rights and freedoms is entrenched.”156 This fear responded directly to the courts’ evident hostility toward the very idea of sexual equality. The “sorry record of the courts on women’s rights cases” made NAC “very nervous” at the prospect that future “ludicrous decision[s]” would be handed down by a judiciary that suffered from a “terrific inability . . . to understand inequality against women.”157 Thus, far from seeking eagerly to enhance judicial power, NAC sought Charter wording that would constrain a judiciary whose future increased policymaking role many feminists viewed with alarm. President Lynn McDonald, whose own suspicion of the courts led her to personally oppose entrenchment, encapsulated NAC’s basic posture of constitutional apprehension by saying, “I do not think we can leave this one to chance.”158

Two months after NAC’s November 1980 appearance, the House of Commons ratified the hoped-for amendments to Section 15.159 However, the women’s movement

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156 NAC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 57. For further discussion, see Vickers et al., Politics as if Women Mattered, 105.

157 NAC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 59, 64, 72, 73.


159 Kome, Taking of Twenty-Eight, 40.
continued to demand changes to Ottawa’s proposals after the parliamentary hearings that
comprise the focus of this chapter had ended. In order to “eliminate any doubt that the
right of equality as between the sexes [would be] meaningful and enforceable,” feminists
now worked to secure the overriding constitutional statement of sexual equality that
became Section 28 of the Charter.\textsuperscript{160} The vehicle for this second stage of mobilization
was the Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Women on the Constitution, which was a
temporary coalition that relied significantly on NAC connections and resources.\textsuperscript{161} By
employing a combination of vigorous protest demonstrations and persistent lobbying, the
Ad Hoc women forced the federal Justice Department to devise an acceptable wording for
Section 28 on 18 March 1981, which the House duly added to the proposed Charter on 23
April.\textsuperscript{162}

Yet shocked activists soon found themselves engaged in a third phase of
mobilization. The 5 November “kitchen accord,” which saw all the provinces save
Quebec agree on the key elements of a final patriation package, subjected Section 28 to a
new legislative override provision.\textsuperscript{163} In essence, the Section 33 “notwithstanding
clause,” which the provincial “Gang of Eight” extracted from Ottawa as a condition of its
assent, allows governments to declare particular pieces of legislation immune from Charter

\textsuperscript{160} Lynn Smith, “A New Paradigm for Equality Rights?” in \textit{Righting the Balance: Canada’s New

\textsuperscript{161} Vickers et al., \textit{Politics as if Women Mattered}, 105.

\textsuperscript{162} Kome, \textit{Taking of Twenty-Eight}, 75-77.

\textsuperscript{163} For an account, see Romanow et al., \textit{Canada ... Notwithstanding}, 208-212.
challenges for successive five-year periods. Accordingly, feminists who feared that Section 33 would vitiate the hard-won equality provisions began a lobby of federal and provincial officials that was “without parallel in Canadian history.” On 24 November, the Ad Hoc women succeeded in their struggle to exempt Section 28 from the legislative override: the political campaign memorialized by Penney Kome as the “taking of twenty-eight” was complete.

Whereas NAC’s initial constitutional approach was muted and skeptical, a different majority tendency among Canadian feminists quickly took hold. The new tendency celebrated the sexual equality provisions as evidence of an “outstanding achievement in the face of incredible odds.” As Kome describes the subsequent political and media reaction to feminism’s role in the struggles over entrenchment: “The new strength of women’s organizational networks, the fearful respect of politicians right across the country, and the puzzled but respectful attention of the press became apparent in the following months.” Thus, the Charter’s sexual equality provisions came to symbolize a new understanding: that to ignore feminist aspirations and complaints was to risk confrontation with a powerful and highly determined social movement.

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164 Section 33, which can be used only to circumvent Sections 2 and 7-15, can be successively re-invoked after the end of each five-year period.

165 Cairns, Disruptions, 82.

166 Kome, Taking of Twenty-Eight.

167 Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Women on the Constitution, quoted in ibid., 120.

168 Kome, ibid., 95.
As many commentators argue, the "major victory" and "expansive moment" of 1980-82 did much to strengthen--both within the Canadian feminist movement in general and within NAC in particular--those forces that warned against neglecting the established structures of male-dominated politics. The Charter campaign demonstrated that a sufficiently vigilant reformism could produce results; even against the intransigence of the all-male and overwhelmingly conservative Gang of Eight. In other words, as "the Charter... retroactively... developed into a source of pride and solidarity among federalist feminists in Canada," the grassroots objection to pursuing esteem and belonging on "malestream" terrain underwent a corresponding decline in influence. This shift would be demonstrated strikingly during the late 1980s controversy over the Meech Lake Accord.

**Conclusion**

From the MacGuigan-Molgat hearings to the early 1980s patriation controversy, equality-seeking social movements played a key role in Canada’s crisis of separatism, regionalism and intergovernmental conflict. Many Canadian political scientists argue that the New Politics paradigm affords a useful means of placing the social-movement role in a wider analytic context. These scholars contend that in Canada, as in other late-capitalist states, "peace and prosperity" have led to the " politicization of minority issues." They

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171 For example, see Brodie and Nevitte, "Evaluating the Citizens’ Constitution Theory"; Morton and Knopff, "Supreme Court,"; Nevitte, "New Politics."
argue that the social-movement contribution is best approached by noting that Canadian constitutional politics has been transformed by the rise of actors whose “concerns and priorities . . . are significantly different from those of materialists.”

Increased security has undoubtedly allowed movements to pursue new issues and has helped publics to develop sympathies that were less evident before World War Two. But I have argued that equating Charter politics with postmaterialist politics furnishes a misleading understanding of the complaints and aspirations that led traditionally marginalized actors onto the constitutional field. For instance, visible-minority representatives prioritized problems such as violence and hate crime, inadequate police and human rights protection and discrimination in housing and employment. This constitutional advocacy was pervaded by a “sense of insecurity,” on which Afro- and Asian-Canadian leaders dwelled at length. For their part, feminist participants in both the MacGuigan-Molgat and Hays-Joyal rounds focused on issues of discrimination in employment and equal access to social program benefits. To this common focus on economic security the newly ascendant NAC added a strong emphasis on affirmative action. The postmaterialist label trivializes this Charter advocacy by presenting it as a departure from security concerns.

For instance, Inglehart’s contention that “postmaterialist values underlie” women’s concern for “self-fulfillment and . . . the opportunity to have a career outside the home”

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173 AAFC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 33.

174 Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, 373. Also see Nevitte, *Decline of Deference*, 332.
overlooks the feminization of poverty and the demise of the “family wage.” This New Politics view of feminism is paralleled by an equally one-dimensional picture of the traditional left. This latter picture misses the self-fulfillment that working-class men hoped to gain by engaging in labour, and it ignores the emotive symbolism of manly identity that helped the traditional left to better connect with wider societal audiences. When wartime trade unionists insisted on their “right to expect useful creative employment,” or when Depression-era Communists decried a system that prevented the unemployed from being able to “hold up their heads and feel as if they were really part of Canada,” far more than economic security was at issue. In short, the New Politics contrast between feminism and the traditional left fails to notice that both movements have been concerned to help their constituencies enjoy self-realization, identity and security through work.

The contrast between “new” social movement eagerness and labour’s absence from the entrenchment debates is said to illustrate how “The postmaterialist analysis . . . explains one of the most distinctive characteristics of Charter politics: the division of the Canadian left.” But Communists and trade-unionists were in fact the first Canadian social-movement actors to propose the idea of a Charter. And contrary to what the New Politics framework would predict, the most important factor accounting for labour’s absence in 1980-82 was a longstanding intra-movement dispute over questions of

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175 Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 24, 7 July 1943, 641.


177 Morton and Knopff, “Supreme Court,” 76.
belonging and identity. Indeed, a key reason that the Communist Party became an early advocate of asymmetrical federalism was because divisions on these "postmaterial" questions seemed to overshadow whatever consensus Canadian workers had managed to reach on other concerns.

Furthermore, the postmaterialist enthusiasm that authors like F.L. Morton and Rainer Knopff invoke to characterize the feminist approach to the Charter is belied by the reserved and skeptical character of the NAC presentation. NAC withstood radical feminist and Quebec nationalist objections to participating in the debates only because it so greatly feared the constitutional elevation of the old Bill of Rights approach to sexual equality. Entrenchment without feminist input, NAC felt, would sacrifice movement concerns about affirmative action, the disposition of marital assets in divorce and women's access to social program benefits to a jurisprudence that had shown a "terrific inability ... to understand inequality against women." Thus, because the basic assumptions of New Politics theory predispose it to ignore both Canadian labour's longstanding identity crisis and feminism's pronounced focus on economic security, the postmaterialist analysis fails to explain the stances that NAC and the CLC adopted in 1980-82.

A longer-term view of Canadian constitutional politics highlights the political significance of esteem and belonging for "new" and "old" movements alike. From the Rowell-Sirois Commission to the Reconstruction debates, the traditional left sought more

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179 NAC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 73.
effectively to utilize the participation rights of citizenship by pressing claims to esteem and belonging, which it tended to locate within a prevailing moral economy of masculinity. Although NAC’s early 1980s approach departed from the constitutional prestige-seeking of the senior NCW, postwar movements representing women and minorities have also pursued esteem and belonging as bases from which to command recognition as valid sources of political claims. Indeed, a key reason that movements like feminism and anti-racism have been so uniquely identified with the politics of recognition is because their tendency to lack any instrument comparable to the strike weapon has made their focus on questions of discourse and prestige particularly explicit.180

But this distinction between the different tools that may enable recognition should not blind us to the political significance of recognition itself. New Politics theory misses this significance because it views esteem and belonging as expressive, or higher-order needs; goods that are pursued not for material reasons but for the intrinsic psychological satisfaction that they bring.181 Against this approach, I have argued that the citizenship participation of both the traditional left and the “new” movements has been influenced powerfully by the longstanding role of prestige as a basis of social control.182 This understanding of prestige suggests that presenting movement emphases on esteem and belonging as evidence of postmaterialism overstates the novelty of today’s politics of


181 On the role of Maslow’s concept of a needs hierarchy in New Politics theory, see Inglehart, Silent Revolution, 22-23; and Modernization and Postmodernization, 33.

182 Goode, Celebration of Heroes.
recognition while neglecting recognition’s fundamental political importance. The New Politics view of recognition as a higher-order luxury, against which material needs stand in clear and perpetual contrast, forgets that to gain a meaningful hearing for any political complaint at all—including complaints about violence, personal insecurity and discrimination in employment—requires gaining acceptance as a worthy civic participant.

Analyses that neglect recognition’s quintessentially political significance misconstrue the politics of respect. For instance, when New Politics interprets the heightened postwar salience of ethnicity as evidence of a turn to issues of “aesthetics” and “self-expression,” the link between disrespect for minority cultures and material problems of discrimination and violence is ignored. It was this linkage between the ideational and the concrete, far more than any turn to higher-order expressivism, that led visible-minority activists to see “the symbolical act [of entrenchment as] important.”

But even if the New Politics interpretation is applied more restrictively to the third-force emphasis on linguistic and heritage recognition, the common focus of ethnic- and visible-minority advocacy is too easily missed. Both sets of actors pursued positive civic symbolism as a prerequisite of effective voice. Third-force representatives insisted on being seen as persons “you can respect” rather than as nobodies “to be kicked around,” while visible-minority groups praised multiculturalism as a promising basis from which to make their “contributions to this society in freedom and with respect.”

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184 NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 17.

185 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 19, 7 December 1970, 130; NBCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 12.
to deny any distinction between, say, movements that focus on third-language education and ones that stress problems of hate crime. It is instead to argue that this very diversity of approaches to multiculturalism underscores the political importance of esteem and belonging; as goods that enable people, be they “postmaterialists” or not, to better pursue any goal that requires sympathy or cooperation from others.

Rather than illustrating a departure from an earlier materialism, the Charter debates comprise a crucial historical juncture when citizens managed to focus constitution-making on material concerns that a previous era had been less willing to hear. This achievement, I have argued, points up the increased capacity of previously marginalized actors to wield symbolic capital. The notion of symbolic capital is particularly useful for foregrounding the fundamental political significance of prestige as a technology of power. Like its economic analogue, the symbolic capital concept designates a property that can force desired responses or non-responses from those subjected to its deployment.  

As this and the preceding chapter have shown, for instance, ethnocultural minorities marshalled a symbolic capital of moral authority whose purchase was strengthened greatly by the impact of the Holocaust and World War Two. These actors insisted that the “victims of human rights violations” and those who had “been subjected to internment or imprisonment as aliens” possessed an authority based on “historical

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experience” that the fortunate and powerful must heed if past tragedies were to be prevented from recurring.\textsuperscript{187}

The symbolic power of these invocations is misconstrued by saying that peace and prosperity “produce greater public sympathy for minorities.”\textsuperscript{188} Rather, by providing listeners attuned to the basic post-Holocaust message of “never again,” societal understandings about insecurity furnished a key basis from which minorities could garner increased respect. Thus, the notion of symbolic capital helps to point up the enterprise of attempted social control in which equality-seeking movements have been engaged. People who prioritize authentic expression and inner fulfillment can find means to vindicate these goals, like new-age religion and psychoanalysis, that do not require high-stakes campaigns of political challenge. Movements seeking to confront problems of disrespect and powerlessness are far more likely to target the prestige judgments of others.

Social-movement struggles for recognition intersected with Trudeau’s Charter project in a way that effected the constitutional ratification of particular symbolic capitals. To borrow from Cairns, it can be said that entrenchment brought these capitals into “the constitution . . . rather than being isolated in private realms, or confined to an underground existence from which they rarely surface.”\textsuperscript{189} Ethnocultural minorities pursued and won the Section 15 ethnic and racial equality rights as an official repudiation

\textsuperscript{187} CJC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 80; Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 75; UCC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 60.

\textsuperscript{188} Nevitte, “New Politics,” 361.

of the racism manifested in “such acts as . . . enslavement . . . an immigration policy . . .
[that] sought to maintain Canada as a [Northern European] refuge . . . the segregation of
blacks . . . [and] the evacuation of the Japanese.”190 The strong advocacy of those who
had been for decades “left out and until today not really listened to”191 gave this
repudiation a significance that goes far beyond the purely legal. As Sheppard and Valpy
note, the emotionally potent and televised testimony of ethnocultural minorities “quickly
disabused . . . [t]hose politicians who had boasted so glibly of Canada as a just,
discrimination-free society.”192 The entrenchment of racial and ethnic equality rights thus
crystallized an emergent understanding of the role of minorities in Canadian citizenship;
not as voiceless bystanders but as first-hand civil liberties experts whose determination to
build a better Canadian future helped to wrest the Charter “from the cool hands of the
government planners.”193

By the same token, the Section 27 recognition of multiculturalism was not just a
bland acknowledgment that Canada is culturally diverse: it also constitutionally ratified a
symbolic capital of multicultural cosmopolitanism. Beginning in the mid-1960s, the third-
force movement fought dualism by insisting that diversity serves Canada as a basis of
external political prestige, domestic cultural enrichment and international economic
success. This movement positioned itself as a “vibrant and colourful” “struggle against the

190 AAFC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 31.

191 Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint
Committee, 74.

192 Sheppard and Valpy, National Deal, 135.

193 Ibid.
mass culture of the lowest common denominator”; it framed support for the “precious” and “valuable” nature of Canadian ethnic diversity as a measure of one’s sophistication.\(^{194}\)

Thus, traditional categories of bourgeois distinction became resources of respect for actors who strove to be heard over a “founding races” discourse, which seemed to highlight an underlying premise “that all Canadians are equal except that the French and the English are more equal than all the others.”\(^{195}\) The recognition of multiculturalism in Section 27 of the Charter stamps this new symbolic capital with the most potent form of authorization available.\(^{196}\)

Of the proposition that movements pursue esteem and belonging to better influence the crucially material question of whose voice is heard, the case of NAC stands as the exception that proves the rule. NAC, after all, did manifestly not approach the Charter debates as an opportunity for garnering esteem and belonging. This aloofness reflected the particular nature of women’s traditional civic marginalization, which owed much to the remarkable tendency of women’s symbolic capital as-wives-and-mothers to depreciate in the civic arena. As historian Maggie Andrews observes, the women’s circles of an earlier era responded to this longstanding problem by creating environments in which participants could “explore their own abilities ... away from male censure.”\(^{197}\)

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194 CPC, Presentation to the 1980-81 Special Joint Committee, 103, 107; CPC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, 27, 28.

195 UCC, Presentation to the 1970-72 Special Joint Committee, No. 8, 10 September 1970, 35.

196 Indeed, Fleras and Elliott note that entrenchment was followed by an “expansionist phase,” in which a view of multiculturalism “as a desirable Canadian export with marketable ... economic [and] political ... benefits” became an official state commitment, Multiculturalism in Canada, 75, 97-98.

1970s, a "radical grassroots" feminism adopted a similar but more aggressive approach. This latter feminism reacted to a male-defined public sphere by working to establish an underground economy of belonging and esteem. From its perspective, legitimating "malestream" liberalism by participating in the parliamentary-committee setting of Canadian officialdom was an offensive prospect indeed.

NAC's partial disengagement from the 1980-82 debates was thus influenced strongly by what many feminists saw as the evident fruitlessness of seeking esteem and belonging in male-dominated environments. This influence serves to further highlight the potency of prestige as a medium of social control. As previous chapters have shown, male authorities were remarkably persistent in using a range of humiliating interactional sanctions to keep would-be female participants firmly in "their place." It is little wonder that many feminists came to eschew the "official political system" in favour of the small-group "recognition of shared experiences." But after the unexpected victory of 1980-82, the Charter "developed into a source of pride and solidarity among federalist feminists in Canada": Sections 28 and 15(1) and (2) furnished a symbolic capital of constitutional relevance with which to underscore the official illegitimacy of the denials of civic esteem and belonging that had worked so long as bases of women's political exclusion.

In summary, the Charter debates effected the constitutional recognition of particular social-movement symbolic capitals, which could be deployed as tools for helping to transform the once silenced victims of male supremacy and racism into shamers.

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of the would-be silencers. To apprehend the significance of this recognition by contrasting traditional security concerns with the "postmaterialist" values of esteem and belonging is utterly misleading. The capacity of recognition to serve as a tool of prestige and voice was certainly not unknown to a rising nobility that enjoyed the Magna Carta as a symbol of its triumph over unchecked royal dominance. Neither was it unfamiliar to the erstwhile anglo-saxon overseers of a constitution "similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom."

Rather than contrasting the traditional politics of economic security and personal safety with the postmaterial politics of esteem and belonging, it is better to note the longstanding significance of prestige as a tool of social control. From the perspective of social-movement politics, the real significance of the Charter debates is as a crystallizing moment, when actors long familiar with the social-control function of prestige—but primarily from the standpoint of recipients--increased greatly their capacity to wield a technology of voice whose political importance belies the contrast between materialism and postmaterialism.
CHAPTER 6
FROM MEECH LAKE TO CHARLOTTETOWN: RECOGNITION, POWER AND VISIONS OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY

It is difficult to extract much comfort from the controversies surrounding the 1987-90 Meech Lake Accord and the 1991-92 “Canada round” debates. As Peter Russell notes, their cessation “marks the end of Canada’s age of constitutional innocence.”¹ These high-stakes constitutional debates solved little, beyond establishing that past approaches to constitutional reform have almost invariably failed and that realizing a consensus on change will probably require the stimulus of an extraordinary crisis. But academics can take comfort in Alan Cairns’s observation: “A constitutional process dealing with issues of nationhood, survival, identity, and community at a time of crisis shakes the inertia and ongoingness characteristic of society in normal times. When the dust has settled on such existential episodes, they should receive intense academic scrutiny for the light they may throw on what normality conceals.”²

In particular, this chapter scrutinizes the following major themes: the Charter as a source of civic “authorization” for previously marginalized groups; the distinction between majoritarian and more explicitly particularistic constitutional orientations; and the emergence during the Canada round of a strong contrast between asymmetrical and pan-Canadian perspectives on constitutional change. The overall argument links social-

¹ Peter H. Russell, Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People? (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 228.

movement views on these themes to a longstanding and key feature of Western citizenship. This feature is the understanding that enjoying security requires acceptance as an acknowledged participant. In contrast to the New Politics approach, which frames the "new" social movements as expressivist campaigns that downplay questions of security, this chapter sees a consistent focus among "new" and "old" movements alike. This focus is on how one "fits" in the community; on recognition as a crucial basis of respect and power; and on the importance of realizing a civic framework in which the polity's lines of esteem and belonging are allies rather than foes. Above all, it is a focus that can be understood better by emphasizing the instrumental importance of esteem and belonging for groups that seek to realize and to safeguard their security and safety needs.

**Approaching Meech Lake**

The 1987 Meech Lake Accord was an intergovernmental bargain designed to elicit Quebec's formal assent to the patriated 1982 Canadian constitution, whose "bloody Charter," in particular, Premier René Lévesque had refused to accept. But the Meech Lake bargain collapsed in 1990. Following a sustained attack from First Nations, pan-Canadian social movements and opponents of special status for Quebec, the legislatures of Manitoba and Newfoundland--whose newly elected governments had not participated in the making of the original Accord--failed to approve the deal in time to meet the ratification deadline required by the 1982 amending formula.

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3 René Lévesque, quoted in ibid., 286.

The Meech Lake saga began soon after the 1985 election of a federalist government in Quebec. Liberal Premier Robert Bourassa announced that he would sign the 1982 Constitution Act if Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and the other first ministers would agree to certain fundamental conditions. With only two exceptions, the resultant constitutional amendment package was reached by proposing to extend to all provinces the rights and powers initially demanded by Quebec.\textsuperscript{5} The major exception to this provincialization of Quebec’s conditions was a requirement instructing judges to interpret the Canadian constitution, and most notably the Charter of Rights, “in a manner consistent with . . . the recognition that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society.”\textsuperscript{6} The second exception was a provision that Ottawa insisted on adding to the agreement in order to ensure the continued protection of official-minority language rights in the post-Meech environment. This guarantee would subordinate constitutional interpretation to the principle that linguistic duality “constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Canada.” Parliament and the provincial legislatures were also instructed “to preserve” this “fundamental characteristic,” while the role of the Quebec legislature to “preserve and promote the distinct identity of Quebec” was explicitly affirmed.


\textsuperscript{5} The Meech Lake package was in fact the product of a series of intergovernmental negotiations, which took place at various provincial capitals during the summer of 1986, at Meech Lake itself in April 1987 and, finally, at Ottawa’s Langevin Block in June 1987. The discussion here refers to the final contents of the deal reached at Langevin.

\textsuperscript{6} As Russell notes, the distinct society clause could not be provincialized without violating Quebec’s fundamental insistence on some form of special status, \textit{Constitutional Odyssey}, 138.
The four key remaining provisions reflected clearly the decentralizing dynamic that tends to characterize intergovernmental negotiations in which the federal government is but one voice in eleven. These provisions proposed that the provinces would have a key role in determining immigration criteria; that future senators and Supreme Court judges would be selected from provincial lists; and that the provincial-unanimity principle would be extended to cover a range of constitutional-amendment areas that were formerly subject to the seven-provinces-with-50 percent-of-the-population rule. Finally, the Accord also featured a controversial proposal that would restrict the federal spending power by promising full compensation to any province choosing to opt out of a future shared-cost social program in an area of provincial jurisdiction.

Commentators agree that the ethnocultural-minority and feminist groups that comprise a major focus of this study were key players in Meech’s demise. At the public hearings of the Special Joint Committee on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, which were co-chaired by Senator Arthur Tremblay and MP Chris Speyer, these actors “bitterly attacked” what they saw as an “insulting” subordination of Charter rights to the principles of dualism and Quebec specificity. This atmosphere of angry tension was exacerbated both by the all-party consensus in favour of the Accord and by the hard-nosed decision of the governing federal Conservatives to define the Tremblay-Speyer Committee’s mandate as that of “explor[ing] the implications of [Meech Lake] so it is well understood by

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8 Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, 143.
everyone.” The apparent corollary of this mandate was the Committee’s remarkable unwillingness to give ground to skeptical witnesses. Thus, as Cairns puts it, a “process [that] looked . . . like a military manoeuvre by governments to keep the citizens at bay” helped to feed a “pervasive constitutional paranoia” among the Accord’s social-movement critics.10

Understanding the social-movement role in these constitutional battles requires attending to Cairns’s “Charter Canadians” thesis.11 Although this thesis had clearly begun to take shape by the time of Trudeau’s late 1970s patriation initiative,12 of particular relevance here is Cairns’s interpretation of the controversies surrounding the Meech Lake Accord. Cairns argues that the architects of Meech Lake failed to appreciate the extent to which the Charter, with which Trudeau hoped to strengthen a sense of pan-Canadianism and popular sovereignty against provincialist and Quebec nationalist forces, had begun (although not in French-speaking Quebec) to realize its purposes. Thus, Cairns interprets the Meech Lake debacle as a conflict between the sensibilities and concerns of the new

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10 Cairns, *Disruptions*, 135, 125.


12 See, for example, Cairns, *Disruptions*, chap. 1, “Recent Federalist Constitutional Proposals” [first published 1979].
“Charter Canadians” and those of the government actors who proceeded in apparent ignorance of the transformed constitutional context.

It is important to note that Cairns sees two groups of Charter Canadians. The first is a generalized category of Canadian nationalist Charter supporters, who approach the constitutional order as the sovereign holders of country-wide citizen rights. The second category refers to those citizens, such as women and ethnic and visible minorities, who tend to relate positively to the provisions that enumerate their identities in the Charter. These latter Charter Canadians not only see themselves as sovereign Canadian citizens: they are also inclined to exhibit a proprietorial relationship to their particular constitutional clauses. Cairns suggests that this latter tendency reflects the long histories of civic marginalization endured by women and ethnocultural minorities and these actors’ not-unrelated knowledge that their constitutional recognition was resisted strongly by white-male provincial elites.

This analysis leads Cairns to four major conclusions. First, the Charter is not simply a mechanism of judicial review: “It also enhances the status of citizenship and brings the citizenry into the constitutional order.”

Second, the constitutional enumeration of particular citizen identities means that the Charter has become Canada’s “supreme instrument of social recognition and its denial.”

Cairns’s third major conclusion is that the fundamental asymmetry between a government-controlled amending formula and the Charter’s stimulus to discourses of popular sovereignty produces an

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13 Cairns, Disruptions, 111.

14 Ibid., 118.
“incoherence at the heart of our constitutional existence.”15 And fourth, Cairns argues that what he sees as the tension between the Charter’s generalized pan-Canadianism and its selective focus on particular enumerated identities makes urgent the task of forging a citizenship that reconciles “common membership in a single polity” with our “growing . . . diversities.”16 Key to Cairns’s analysis of the political impact of the Charter is his focus on the political effects of constitutional recognition. As Cairns puts it, the “Charter gives the citizenry constitutional interests of a highly visible nature. They are given constitutional connections, constitutional niches, constitutional identities, constitutional clauses they can identify with.”17

The notion of symbolic capital serves as a useful companion to Cairns’s Charter Canadians thesis. Bourdieu’s focus on how power is symbolically euphemized and “consecrated,” and hence rendered more acceptable than power in its “naked” state, draws attention to how acts and forms of discourse that conform to established procedures assume an aura of propriety that helps to mitigate their potential appearance as arbitrary expressions of self-interest.18 Political and legal institutions, of course, are particularly powerful sources of this sort of symbolic authority. Thus, as social theorist John Thompson states in his commentary on Bourdieu’s work: “Individuals possess more or

15 Ibid., 110.

16 Cairns, “Political Science,” 130.


less of this [symbolic] capital in so far as they are in a position to mobilize more or less of
the authority delegated by an institution."19 As this observation suggests, institutional
innovation—particularly when the status of that institution as the supreme law of the land
gives it unique visibility and legitimacy—may help to alter the distribution of symbolic
capital. It is a particularly useful observation for understanding the social-movement
mobilization against the Meech Lake Accord.

With its uniquely recognizable language of legitimate claims-making, the Charter helped
to establish enumerated movements as actors of authorized civic relevance. But by
placing dualism and Quebec’s distinctiveness at the very front of the constitution, a
position from which they seemed poised to trump racial and sexual equality rights—both in
constitutional adjudication and in Canada’s symbolic order—the Meech Lake Accord
portended a return to an older set of civic coordinates. For non-francophone feminists,
Meech re-established an unseemly legal and symbolic hierarchy in which “women’s rights
could be seen as second class rights.”20 Visible-minority representatives launched an
analogous defence of racial equality rights.21 And although Section 16 of the Meech Lake
Accord exempted multiculturalism from the purview of the linguistic duality and distinct

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20 Kathy Brock, *A Mandate Fulfilled: Constitutional Reform and the Manitoba Task Force on
Meech Lake* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Outreach Fund, 1990), 77.

21 For example, see Coalition of Visible Minority Women (joint presentation with the Ad Hoc
Committee of Women on the Constitution), Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate
15, 31 August 1987; and National Association of Canadians of Origins in India, Presentation to the
Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord,
*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 7, 13 August 1987. Subsequent references in this chapter to
presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, and will be
preceded by the name of the relevant witness.
social clauses, ethnocultural-minority organizations saw the exemption clause as a demeaning "afterthought." These actors denounced Canada's apparent return to "the outdated and discredited concept of two founding nations," and insisted that "the concepts of multiculturalism and bilingualism [be made] equal." Thus, the Accord seemed to devalue a symbolic capital that traditionally marginalized citizens prized as a basis of recognition and civic voice. And as will be seen, the defence offered by Meech Lake supporters only served to further convince feminist and ethnocultural-minority advocates that their symbolic capital was indeed being deliberately depreciated by an anti-Charter coterie dominated by "founding races" males.

Although the ensuing disputes over recognition and respect were centred clearly around the "postmaterialist" themes of esteem and belonging, the New Politics approach fails to capture their nature and significance. As the previous chapter explained, Canadian New Politics analysts dispute the link that Cairns draws between Canada's post-Charter battles over recognition and the symbolic authorization furnished by entrenchment. These analysts prefer the "wider perspective on political change provided by" New Politics theory. This perspective sees the politics of recognition as a reflection of the rise of actors who "are less preoccupied with satisfying material wants or with security" and have instead "turned to 'higher order,' postmaterial needs." But by pitting the need for

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22 For example, see Ukrainian Canadian Committee, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 7, 13 August 1987, 108.

23 Ibid., 100, 108.


25 Ibid., 241.
security against aspirations for belonging and esteem, New Politics theory relegates recognition to the realm of personal psychology and inner satisfaction: it dwells on the expressive dimension of recognition while ignoring the relevance of recognition to issues of power. I argue that such an approach misconstrues the feminist and ethnocultural-minority reaction to the symbolism of the Meech Lake Accord. This reaction must be seen as a protest against what these civic actors saw as a dangerous attack on a recently acquired symbolic capital, which they valued as a basis of future security.

The Special Joint Committee on the 1987 Constitutional Accord

Authorization and Symbolic Power

The importance of symbolic capital as a basis of security can be better appreciated by underscoring the distinctive manner in which feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants condemned the Meech Lake agreement. Witnesses at the Tremblay-Speyer hearings denounced the Accord as an affront to an authoritative understanding of Canadian belonging, which had been enshrined as the supreme law of the land. This stance of empowered rectitude reflected a sense that Charter recognition had transformed the basis from which representatives of enumerated constituencies could participate in civic interaction.

For example, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC) invoked newly authorized criteria of representation that the old "governments' constitution" of Canadian federalism did not provide. Because Meech Lake focused on the Senate and Canadian

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26 Cairns, Disruptions, 109.
Supreme Court as vehicles for regional representation while ignoring the fact that ethnic minorities were "under-represented" in these same institutions, the UCC complained that the deal's architects had not "been living up to the letter and spirit of the Charter." The Chinese Canadian National Council also began by invoking the Charter as the relevant standard on which the adequacy of constitutional reform should be judged. Because the Charter was "in place to protect the rights and freedoms of all Canadians regardless of their race or origin . . . every facet of [Meech Lake would have to be] examined to make sure that the interests of all Canadians are not overlooked in any way."

Thus, a crucial way in which the Charter helped to effect what Cairns describes as a "restructuring of the psyche of Canadians" was by creating a transformed civic arena in which newly recognized groups could wield symbolic resources that they had tended to lack in the past. These changes were particularly evident in the feminist campaign against the Accord. For instance, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), described by its 1980 representatives as a "voluntary organization working to improve the status of women," had become "the defender of women's rights in Canada." NAC's former ambivalence about seeking esteem and belonging on male-

27 UCC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 99.


31 NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 13, 26 August 1987, 22.
dominated terrain had thus given way to a contrasting appreciation of the “very strong symbolic significance” of Charter rights for women. This new approach reflected the availability of a feminist symbolic capital that other Canadians could be expected to recognize. As the Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution put it: “We have our rights in our own country to protect . . . and we will do what needs to be done.”

Feminist and ethnocultural-minority witnesses thus invoked the Charter as a symbol of recently acquired “first-class” citizen status, as an authoritative basis for evaluating constitutional proposals and as an entry point into the constitutional reform process. This orientation points up the material significance of recognition: an actor speaking a recognizable and authorized discourse is situated very differently in relation to power from one whose claims may be summarily dismissed as foreign or idiosyncratic.

Inglehart argues that formative experiences of security allow postmaterialists to tolerate ambiguity. Materialists, by contrast, are said to insist on “rigid, predictable rules” because insecurity makes them “feel anxiety”: “they need to be sure of what is going to happen.” If this view is correct, then the reaction of feminists and ethnocultural minorities to Meech Lake was anything but a manifestation of postmaterialism. For instance, NAC, which reminded the Committee that “[w]omen are disproportionately represented among the poor,” feared that weakening the spending power would eliminate

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32 Ibid., 38.

33 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 15, 31 August 1987, 136.

the protection afforded by "national standards and objectives that are well defined." The National Association of Canadians of Origins in India (NACOI) was similarly "disturbed at the general trend on the part of the federal government to abdicate its responsibility and authority." "In particular, given the weak record of several provincial governments in equality rights and multiculturalism," NACOI was "extremely concerned about" the proposals to decentralize federal immigration powers. The Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) seconded this view. As a "minority community in Canada that has had unpleasant experiences," argued the CCNC, "we can only seek national standards as our safe refuge." As these apprehensions make clear, Meech's social-movement critics not only feared ambiguity: they also rejected what Inglehart describes as the postmaterialist emphasis on "local autonomy from the central authority" and the "devolution of decision-making power to local communities."

This insecurity and corresponding insistence on national standards and legally binding reassurances surfaced with particular prominence when witnesses discussed Meech's potential impact on the Charter. Feminist and ethnocultural-minority representatives worried that the linguistic duality clause might allow Ottawa to restrict

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35 NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 23, 40.

36 National Association of Canadians of Origins in India, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 80.

37 Ibid., 82.

38 Chinese Canadian National Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 63-64.

"the immigration of women from certain groups," that the distinct society provision could allow "pro-family measures . . . [e]ncouraging [francophone] women to have children" and that a future Quebec government might seek to "prohibit the use of a specific language because it fears there is a dilution of . . . [Quebec's] distinctive identity." Witnesses reminded the Committee that "equality is a very fragile thing," that reflecting on "past history [makes one] realize that yes, it can happen" and that "the past has not been glorious with respect to the treatment of minorities in Canada." These alleged postmaterialists, whose advocacy was "coloured by being on the receiving end of a substantial amount of inequality," were remarkably fearful about the potential impact of an ambiguous constitutional amendment on their future.

The response of the Committee to these fears was twofold. First, members cited "a distinguished group of constitutional experts" to prove that Meech Lake threatened "no derogation of the rights in the Charter." Second, the Committee warned that reopening

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40 NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 25.
41 Ibid., 29.
42 Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 7, 13 August 1987, 53.
43 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 128.
44 Ibid., 131.
45 UCC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 107.
46 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 144.
47 Layton, in Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 52.
the agreement would unleash a “potential unravelling effect.” Feminist and ethnocultural-minority concerns would therefore have to wait until a “second . . . round of negotiations.” The witnesses were not soothed by this attempted line of reassurance. If governments did “not want to override . . . women’s rights,” feminists asked, then “why wait to see if [Meech] will do that?” Why would the Committee refuse to insulate equality rights from the Accord, “unless maybe [it had] intentions somehow to do something [sexist] in the future?” And if it were “really true” that the agreement did not compromise the Charter, ethnocultural-minority representatives queried, then why not insert a “formal recognition” of this truth in order to offer “some kind of appeasing effect?” These were baiting insinuations that skeptical witnesses deployed in order to gauge how seriously authorities regarded their concerns.

In so doing, social-movement participants were probing the immediate environment of interaction to see if their recently acquired symbolic capital was exerting any positive impact on the conduct of Canada’s predominantly anglo-french male elites. Group memories of “past history,” of “governments behaving unconstitutionally” and

48 Turner, in Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 53.

49 Blais-Grenier, in Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 59.

50 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 147.

51 NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 37.

52 Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 57.

53 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 131.

54 Ibid.
of a time "when . . . the Canadian government [would routinely] discriminate against minorities"\textsuperscript{55} prompted a keen focus on ascertaining the group’s capacity to command positive recognition in the present. Witnesses wondered about the willingness of their interlocutors to address "that sensitive topic of racism"\textsuperscript{56} or to respect "the clearest, the strongest and the most cogent constitutional statement on the rights of every individual in Canada."\textsuperscript{57} Perhaps above all, they were anxious to determine whether others would "learn to see these things the way we see them, by listening to us."\textsuperscript{58}

From this perspective, the Committee’s response—which was to argue that although Meech Lake left Charter rights untouched, it was impossible to say so in the Accord itself—was a distressing indicator of second-class citizenship sustained. Whereas feminists and ethnocultural minorities proceeded on the basis of a new self-conception as authorized and honoured participants, the felt absence of corroborating support for this conception produced an unsettling contrast.\textsuperscript{59} What seemed the remarkable staying power of business-as-usual in the post-Charter environment imbued these actors with a

\textsuperscript{55} CCNC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 62.

\textsuperscript{56} Coalition of Visible Minority Women, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 134.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 144.

renewed, even heightened sense of aggrievement at being "forgotten people";\textsuperscript{60} an "afterthought"\textsuperscript{61} relegated "again to the lower class of people in this country."\textsuperscript{62}

Its exclusive focus on prosperity and peace as bases of security disposes New Politics theory to misconstrue the significance of this insecurity about respect and recognition. After all, New Politics defines esteem and belonging \textit{a priori} as goods whose importance lies in their putative role as reflections of security, and not as prerequisites for it. But understanding the civic recognition concerns of women and ethnocultural minorities as a function of the freedom from "personal deprivation" enjoyed by "the educated new middle class" will simply not do.\textsuperscript{63} Citizens who can readily equate their identities with problems of silenced defencelessness know how group members fared under conditions of exclusion or pervasive disrespect. And their determination to fare better in the future reflects a strong awareness of the connection between recognition and questions of security and power. The postmaterialism thesis neglects this connection, which disposed Meech Lake's feminist and ethnocultural-minority critics to defend their symbolic capital with a vehemence that New Politics theory is ill-equipped to understand.

\textsuperscript{60} UCC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 108.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{62} Coalition of Visible Minority Women, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 135.

\textsuperscript{63} Neil Nevitte, \textit{The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Cross-National Perspective} (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 1996), 84.
Charter Recognition and Nationalism: Exchanging Prestige

Although the Committee's response was disheartening, it would be a mistake to overlook the symbolic power that the bearers of enumerated Charter identities commanded in the wider Canadian debates over the Meech Lake Accord. For instance, right-wing commentators began to use phrases like "special recognition" and "constitutional machismo" to describe a new Charter-identifying coalition of "special interests," whose "power," it was insisted, "cannot be doubted given the outcome of Meech Lake." A particularly instructive confirmation of this symbolic power was the strong emphasis that was often placed on Charter rights by those Meech critics who came neither from the political right nor spoke as representatives of enumerated groups. Exemplary of this latter camp was Deborah Coyne who, as advisor to Newfoundland's anti-Meech Premier Clyde Wells, considered that the "firm belief in the equality of all citizens," which she attributed to the "new popular coalitions," was "perhaps the most significant lesson we have learned."

These "popular coalitions" figured prominently in the rhetoric of those who sought to defend Trudeau's conception of Canada as a single moral community of rights-bearing individuals. For instance, dissident Liberal MP and Meech opponent Donald Johnston

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64 Brian Lee Crowley, The Road To Equity: Gender, Ethnicity and Language--Impolitic Essays (Toronto: Stoddart, 1994), 115, 118.

65 Rainer Knopff and F.L. Morton, Charter Politics (Scarborough, Ont.: Nelson, 1992), 79.


declared: "If you believe that . . . sexual equality rights should be protected against the collective rights of a distinct society, you must reject Meech Lake." New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna, who came to office as a Meech critic, expressed similar concern that "women's equality rights, hard fought for and achieved in 1981-82, are threatened by [the] Accord." Asked McKenna: "Are you the person who is going to say . . . to heck with the rights the women have achieved? Is that going to be your position? It is not mine." And perhaps most strikingly, the Manitoba Task Force on Meech Lake, which Premier Gary Filmon established after withdrawing the Accord from his legislature in protest against Quebec's French language signs law, stressed the concerns of enumerated equality-seekers as its major rationale for rejecting the Meech bargain. Although outside observers saw a "significant degree of anti-Quebec feeling" on display at the Manitoba public hearings, the Task Force report skirted this issue. It emphasized a quite different set of "doubts and uncertainties," which feminist and ethnocultural-minority witnesses had outlined in their "persuasive" and "truly impressive" briefs. These "presentations made it clear," the Task Force concluded, "that Canadians cherish their rights and freedoms and will not tolerate any real or perceived threats to those rights."


70 Filmon was reacting to Quebec's decision to invoke the Charter's notwithstanding clause in order to protect the province's signs law from a recent unfavourable court ruling. See Brock, Mandate Fulfilled, 43-45.

71 Pal and Campbell, Real Worlds, 104.

The point is not to say that concerns about the Accord’s potential impact on equality rights were wheeled in as cynical cover for francophobe bigotry. Rather, it is that enumerated movements—in their new role as “Canadians [who] cherish their rights and freedoms”—commanded increased symbolic power by conferring legitimating prestige on a more general pan-Canadianism that viewed the Charter as a unifying beacon of national purpose.

This process of social exchange, through which Canadian nationalist anxieties about Meech Lake attached heightened symbolic power to enumerated movements, reflects the basic character of civic honour. As the contrast with the notion of dignity explained in the introduction to this work, to speak of civic honour is to speak of a losable, or conditional right to respect. Actors enjoy this right in reward for the benefits that their perceived contributions are seen to offer those who pay the respect. Thus, when Hobbes describes honour as the “manifestation of the Value we set on one another,” he emphasizes that the act of honouring is all about recognizing the “vertue and power” of those whose “ayde” or assistance we seek. And “the more difficult the ayde is,” Hobbes suggests, “the more is the Honour.”

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73 Ibid.


In their new role as enumerated champions of the existing constitutional order, feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants came to the aid of a precariously situated Canadian nationalism. Their evident attachment to the Charter helped to validate a conception of Canadianness which feared that "Meech Lake may mean the peace of the grave for the Canada we know and love." After all, the notion of a "just society" was central to the civic pride of those who saw the Meech Lake package as a dangerous violation of a "Canadian spirit" whose "crucial importance" was reflected in the "common values" of the Charter. Other exponents of the Trudeau vision spoke similarly of a country that "has come to stand for . . . justice and freedom and equality and mutual respect"; they praised a Canada that offered "a model of tolerance and a demonstration to all the nations that unity can be formed out of diversity." This Canada's major symbol had become the Charter, which, its nationalist defenders proclaimed, "articulates the fundamental values that are common to all of us and that define ourselves, our concept of the Canadian federation, and our commitment to a fairer, more compassionate society."

Thus, the symbolic power that attached to enumerated movements in the Meech Lake debates derived significantly from an exchange relationship between the claims of enumerated Charter defenders and the postwar nationalist vision of Canada as a single moral community dedicated to human rights. This latter vision was central to New

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77 Ibid., 34.


79 Coyne, "Commentary," 139.
Brunswick’s willingness to contemplate amendments to the Accord, to Newfoundland’s insistence on the inviolability of the Charter, to the decision of the Manitoba Task Force to recommend against accepting the Accord and to the high-profile interventions of Trudeau himself. But this vision could not stand on its own: its claims about Canadianness required authenticating support from those who had been traditionally denied the “justice,” “equality” and “tolerance”\(^\text{80}\) of which defenders of the Trudeau vision so passionately spoke. Hence, the imperatives to display receptivity to the “new popular coalitions” and to show dedication to the goal of building a “fairer, more compassionate society”\(^\text{81}\) provided a civic platform from which the concerns of equality-seeking Charter defenders loomed larger than they might otherwise have done.

**Conflicting Communities**

But the civic platform afforded by the postwar nationalist vision has been anathema to movements that prefer to find recognition within the framework of a sovereign or near-sovereign Quebec. Thus, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) abstained from participating in the 1980-82 Charter debates out of deference to the predominantly separatist Quebec trade union movement’s fear of “strengthening the federalist case among Quebec workers.”\(^\text{82}\) NAC, of course, made the opposite choice in 1980-82: and

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\(^{81}\) Coyne, “Commentary,” 141, 139.

this choice prompted the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ) to leave its pan-Canadian umbrella counterpart.\(^3\) Although the FFQ rejoined NAC in 1984, the nationalist breach was remarkably quick to reopen. In contrast to NAC’s claim that the FFQ supported insulating women’s equality rights from the Meech Lake Accord, the 1987 FFQ presentation to the Tremblay-Speyer Committee made no mention of having accepted such a position. Instead, the FFQ used praise for the distinct-society clause as an opportunity for contrasting Quebec’s prestige-conferring feminist credentials with the allegedly more disappointing record in the rest of Canada. The FFQ was happy to point out that while the “respect of women’s rights [was] more and more becoming part of the political culture” of Quebec, English-Canadian feminists were “much more distrustful of their provincial authorities than we are.”\(^4\) The denouement came in 1989, when NAC’s increasingly evident Charter patriotism and insistence on an unfettered federal spending power led the FFQ to once again quit in protest.\(^5\)

Just as Charter nationalism increased the capacity of movement actors like NAC to garner increased respect from adherents of Trudeau’s pan-Canadian vision, so postures redolent of this nationalism attracted enmity from the advocates of sovereignty or special status for Quebec. The FFQ recoiled from a Charter advocacy that framed Canada as the central arena for voicing feminist aspirations, just as the Quebec Federation of Labour


\(^4\) Fédération des femmes du Québec, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 13, 26 August 1987, 44, 43.

refused to legitimize Canada as the appropriate audience for the demands of Quebecois workers. For their part, pan-Canadian Charter defenders seemed doggedly indifferent to arguments that linked “the progress [of feminism in Quebec] to the concept of a distinct society,” or which pointed to Quebec’s provincial Charter as evidence of an “exemplary record of rights protection.” Pervasive disagreement about the nature of Canadian belonging seemed to mean that commanding prestige and respect in one particular community of belonging would engender almost invariably the opposite result in the other.

This environment of conflicting nationalisms forced social-movement organizations to make agonizing choices whose outcomes proved unsatisfactory. By opting for solidarity with its dues-paying Quebec affiliates in 1980-82, the CLC lost not only the opportunity to entrench collective bargaining, picketing and strike rights in the Charter. The Congress also found itself sidelined while other equality-seeking movements received increased civic prestige as the legitimating exponents of a threatened Canadian nationalism. Conversely, although NAC’s constitutional advocacy as the “defender of women’s rights in Canada” capitalized on Charter nationalism, this advocacy also came to symbolize anglophone feminism’s embarrassing failure “to comprehend ... the aspirations of francophone women in Quebec.” The women’s and labour movements would respond to these dilemmas by adopting a new constitutional approach. This

86 FFQ, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 44.
88 NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 22.
approach hinged on conceding Quebec’s claim to nationhood while restricting their own representative capacities to an emergent entity known as the Rest-of-Canada.

Unions and "The People"

The trade union presentations to the Tremblay-Speyer Committee might seem to confirm the distinction between traditional-left materialism and "new" movement postmaterialism. While feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants stressed Meech's impact on Charter equality rights and Canada's symbolic order, labour tended to emphasize the apparent threat to future shared-cost social welfare programs and, to a lesser extent, the importance of recognizing collective-bargaining, picketing and strike rights in the Charter.

But such an assessment should be qualified by noting that labour’s participation depended on somehow resolving the "postmaterialist" conflicts that had sidelined the trade union movement in 1980-82. Although Inglehart describes Quebec sovereigntists as "postmaterialists motivated by concerns for cultural autonomy and a sense of community," the importance of these concerns for Canadian labour should not be

90 These presentations were made by the CLC and a series of member unions; namely, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of Canada, the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the National Union of Provincial Government Employees.

91 On social programs, see Public Service Alliance of Canada, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 6, 12 August 1987, 58-60; National Union of Provincial Government Employees, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 3, 5 August 1987, 98; United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of Canada, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, No. 10, 20 August 1987, 109; Canadian Labour Congress, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 6. On trade-union rights, see Public Service Alliance of Canada, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 48; and United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of Canada, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 112.

92 Inglehart, Modernization and Postmodernization, 303.
missed. Indeed, it was the leading position of Quebec trade unions in the sovereignty movement that determined the character of the CLC's constitutional return. Rather than remaining the silenced preserver of a tenuous and formalistic pan-Canadian common front, the CLC now embodied asymmetrical federalism in action. Citing its "recent convention . . . resolution on Quebec," the CLC returned to constitutional politics to advocate a strong central government and national social programs for Canadians outside Quebec. The necessary basis for this return was the CLC's acknowledgement that Quebec affiliates were free to "express . . . completely different arguments from those we are raising."

Therefore, and as Tom McIntosh's recent account of the Canadian labour movement makes clear, "only the most formal connections . . . across the linguistic divide" remained. The benefit of this arrangement for the CLC was a new capacity to advocate the constitutional positions of the English-Canadian left without sacrificing the prospect of future coalition with Quebec workers. As these developments suggest, the New Politics interpretation of labour's materialism may unhelpfully obscure the importance that workers actually place on issues of culture, language and identity. This importance forced the CLC to adopt as a major priority the "postmaterialist" enterprise of devising a

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94 CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 18.

95 Ibid., 10.

workable approach to the clashing communities of esteem and belonging with which it was confronted.

New Politics theory makes a serious error by presenting this focus on belonging and esteem, which it associates with the “new” movements, as a higher-order departure from humankind’s more enduring preoccupation with security. This chapter has already argued that the postmaterialism thesis misconstrues the politics of feminism, anti-racism and multiculturalism by ignoring the extent to which security in human society depends upon being recognized as a worthy and legitimate civic participant. Appreciating this link between recognition and security is also vital to developing an adequate understanding of the labour movement.

Most distinctive about labour’s approach to criticizing the Meech Lake Accord was its fundamental populism. Whereas women and ethnocultural minorities contrasted their constitutionally authorized status with the “tendency of power-holders to forget their existence,” trade-union participants deployed a different symbolic repertoire. This repertoire positioned the insufficiently heard voice of “the people” against the constitutional dominance of the “power brokers and the jurisdiction traders.” Populism, of course, would soon be a key feature of Canadian constitutional politics. It became perhaps the most common basis for attacking the Meech Lake Accord after Quebec’s

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98 National Union of Provincial Government Employees, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 95.
invocation of the notwithstanding clause in December 1988; and it was most certainly a major feature of the 1991-92 Canada round talks, in which even NAC relied more than occasionally on populist rhetoric. But labour was the only social-movement actor to speak in populist terms during the original Meech Lake debates of the summer of 1987.

This unique readiness to invoke populist discourse is best understood by recalling the nature of the labour movement's entry into Western citizenship. For instance, British working-class suffragists, who stressed the themes of "independence, patriotism and the Englishman's birthright," assumed the civic stage bearing an unchallenged claim to identity with "the people."99 From their perspective, democracy's signal failure was that the electorate and "the people" were not coextensive entities. This failure was to be remedied by enfranchising the workingmen of the dominant group. Thus, the six-point "People's Charter," the major document of the nineteenth-century British workers' movement, demanded universal manhood suffrage in the name of "the people" while remaining silent on the civic status of women and minorities.100 A similar approach prevailed in nineteenth-century France, where it was commonplace to distinguish between the "legal country" and the "real country."101 But once male workers of the dominant ethnic group won the franchise, it became equally commonplace to see the "real country" and the "legal country" as the same.


This enduring populist imagery, which helped to position unions as defenders of "the people" against established elites, furnished labour with a ready weapon for denouncing the Meech Lake Accord. It was in the name of the "citizens of Canada" that the National Union of Provincial Government Employees (NUPGE) attacked the premiers for their "incredibly arrogant" authorship of a deal "negotiated in secret." Because the constitution was "the possession of the people of Canada," NUPGE argued for subjecting the Accord to "a ratification vote of the people of Canada." The Union also urged "that the Canadian people [should] be invited to become involved in drafting their own Constitution" at "conferences where [they] . . . would have something to say about how their Constitution would read." For the CLC, which saw the constitution as "a pact between the citizens and their government," it was the "sovereign right of a country's citizens to determine [their] basic rights and freedoms." But "The people of Canada [had] been effectively excluded" by an "authoritarian . . . process." Accordingly, the CLC demanded that "the people of Canada [be] consulted prior to any constitutional amendments" so that "the people [could] be heard before constitutional change is brought about."

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102 NUPGE, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 91, 93, 92.
103 Ibid., 99, 102.
104 Ibid., 95.
105 CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 5.
106 Ibid., 8, 5.
107 Ibid., 5, 6.
By contrast, populism has not usually figured in the political rhetoric of feminist and anti-racist movements. This is unsurprising, because dominant understandings of the identity of "the people" have tended to exclude women and ethnocultural minorities. Little wonder that not once in the Meech Lake debates did these actors speak in the name of the "people of Canada" or the "average Canadian."¹⁰⁸ Neither did they invoke the "sovereign right of a country's citizens to determine [their] basic rights and freedoms" or demand a national "ratification vote" on the Meech Lake Accord.¹⁰⁹ Instead, the Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution complained that "our rights were discussed . . . in our absence and without the benefit of our accumulated expertise,"¹¹⁰ while the National Association of Japanese Canadians urged the Tremblay-Speyer Committee to "take very seriously the experiences of Japanese Canadians."¹¹¹ And whereas the CLC urged "dialogue . . . [with] the people" in order to elicit "input from the average Canadian,"¹¹² the Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution recommended "dialogue . . . between the women of the country and [the] government."¹¹³ One way in which such dialogue could be furthered, the Ad Hoc Committee suggested, was for its

¹⁰⁸ NUPGE, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 99; and CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 19.

¹⁰⁹ CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 5; and NUPGE, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 102.

¹¹⁰ Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 154.

¹¹¹ National Association of Japanese Canadians, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 91.

¹¹² CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 19.

¹¹³ Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 153.
representatives “to meet with [the Tremblay-Speyer Committee] . . . for a detailed working session.” In short, although feminist and ethnocultural-minority groups were no friends of executive federalism, they were reluctant to see populist majoritarianism as a satisfactory alternative.

Labour’s quickness to denounce elite-driven constitutional change in populist terms, at a time when other movement actors tended to remain silent on such topics as executive dominance and referenda, reflects a history in which inclusion in the ranks of “the people” had not been encountered as a problem. After all, even the most ardent nineteenth-century critics of working-class enfranchisement happily acknowledged that the electorate and “the people” were not the same: their position was simply that “the people” were incapable of self-rule. By contrast, the basic citizenship dilemma for feminist and ethnocultural-minority movements was that of finding voice in a public sphere that saw itself as inclusive of “the people” even in their civic absence. This latter dilemma has served to highlight the importance of accumulating particularistic symbolic capitals with which to elicit positive recognition from established civic participants.  

114 Ibid., 133.

115 On this theme, also see NACOI, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 80; and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 54. And also note the concerns about referenda expressed during the 1980-82 Charter debates: UCC, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 14, 27 November 1980, 60; National Association of Japanese Canadians, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 13, 26 November 1980, 16; and NAC, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 9, 20 November 1980, 70.

The novelty and uniqueness of this “new” movement emphasis should not be overstated. As the old working-class stress on “independence, patriotism and the Englishman’s birthright” indicates, labour also fought for citizenship inclusion by mobilizing symbols that might garner increased respect from the circle of the officially entitled. New Politics theory overlooks this link between “old” movements and the politics of recognition because it neglects to actually investigate the character of class politics during the “materialist” era of which it so confidently speaks. Nevertheless, it is crucial to remember that the white-male face of the old labour movement, which served effectively to identify it with “the people,” has furnished an enduring symbolic repertoire of civic inclusion, with which feminists and ethnocultural minorities have been far less familiar. As latecomers that remained deliberately excluded from what the universalization of white-male entitlement had suddenly transformed into “mass” democracy, these latter actors encountered populism not as a helpful ally, but rather as a fundamental barrier to the project of enjoying esteem and belonging in citizenship.

Thus, the distinction between populist and more evidently particularistic repertoires reflects a contrast between labour’s historically-derived sense of identity with “the people,” on the one hand, and the psychological and numerical minoritarianism experienced by feminists and ethnocultural minorities, on the other. Legal and symbolic exclusions from the ranks of “the people” have made these latter actors particularly alive to how misrecognition and civic disesteem can work as forms of defencelessness that give free reign to the dictates of others. But the working-class movement, for all its trials and

struggles, has enjoyed a longstanding advantage when it comes to certain "postmaterialist" prerequisites of effective civic participation. Labour entered citizenship claiming identity with "the people" in a public sphere that was at least minimally disposed to recognize the manly anglo-saxon provider as a legitimate member of a common civic network of belonging and esteem. In summary, then, the New Politics distinction between old left materialism and "new" movement postmaterialism effaces two important facts. First, the politics of recognition has been crucial for both sets of actors. Second, the more evident emphasis on esteem and belonging displayed by the latter reflects less the great fruits of postwar prosperity than it does the sheer arduousness of the task.

**The Road to Charlottetown**

For a brief time during the summer of 1987, labour was the only social-movement actor to offer a significant populist attack on executive dominance over constitution-making. But by the end of a three-year process that resembled "a military manoeuvre by governments to keep the citizens at bay," the populist critique had become near-orthodoxy outside Quebec. In David Milne's words, "public exasperation with elite manipulation of the constitutional process" was now "a deeply imprinted legacy from the failed Meech Lake Accord."  

118 Cairns, *Disruptions*, 135.  
This legacy shaped the federal government’s eventual response to Meech Lake’s June 1990 collapse. Ottawa brought an unprecedentedly chastened approach to what now seemed the inescapable task of staving off separation with a last-ditch attempt to address Quebec’s constitutional grievances.\(^{120}\) As Patrick Monahan recounts Prime Minister Mulroney’s June 1990 vow: “Promising that ‘you will not be able to get me to ever cut off debate on a constitutional resolution,’ Mulroney said that, in future, the Constitution would be taken to the people: ‘They can go on for as long as they want, years. I want to hear everybody.’”\(^ {121}\)

Mulroney came remarkably close to fulfilling his word. Starting in November 1990, Ottawa charged long-time civil servant Keith Spicer with heading up the Citizen’s Forum on Canada’s Future, which became a \textit{de facto} constitutional tribune for “ordinary” citizens from the ROC. At the same time, a Special Joint Committee on the Process for Amending the Constitution was exploring, albeit somewhat inconclusively, proposals for proceeding by way of a constituent assembly or national referendum.\(^ {122}\) And through the winter of 1991-92, the constitutional venue with which the following analysis is concerned, the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada, began soliciting input on the federal government’s new constitutional proposals. These had been released under the

\(^{120}\) A useful summary of how the revival of the Quebec sovereignty movement prompted this attempt is provided in Russell, \textit{Constitutional Odyssey}, 157-163.


Further testimony to the new participatory imperative was Ottawa's winter 1992 decision to supplement the Renewed Canada hearings with six, publicly televised "mini constituent assemblies" on selected topics pertaining to constitutional reform.124

Because Meech Lake's procedural secrecy was so widely seen as part of a larger attempt to subordinate the constitutional interests of citizens to those of governments, Ottawa moved not only to adopt a more open constitutional process but to pursue a dramatically expanded agenda as well. In contrast to the earlier debacle, which proponents had billed as a "Quebec round," and which critics had condemned as a "provincializing round,"125 the federal government had little choice but to frame the constitutional process leading up to the August 1992 Charlottetown Accord as a "Canada round." Hence, participants in the Renewed Canada discussions, which were co-chaired by MP Dorothy Dobbie and Senator Gérald Beaudoin, confronted a set of no less than twenty-eight different amendment proposals which aimed to offer "Something for everyone."126 The proposals were grouped around the following eight subject areas: a Canada clause to guide future constitutional interpretation; a modified distinct society clause; changes to the Charter that would entrench property rights and weaken the notwithstanding clause; recognition of Aboriginal self-government; provisions for Senate

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125 Cairns, *Disruptions*, 156.

reform; a renewed attempt to entrench Meech Lake's Supreme Court proposals; the transformation of Canada into a free trade area with harmonized fiscal and monetary policies; and, finally, decentralization of the division of powers, which included an even more restrictive approach to the federal spending power than that contemplated in Meech.\textsuperscript{127}

Requirements of space and intelligibility are challenged severely by this remarkable expansion of constitutional process and substance. Accordingly, the following analysis of the Canada round debates is highly selective. Most notably, the analysis does not treat the fall 1992 referendum campaign, which, following a series of summer intergovernmental negotiations, addressed a package that differed significantly from Ottawa's original proposals. Suffice it to say the following: the 26 October referendum result produced a resounding defeat for the proposed amendments; the referendum precedent all but eliminated executive federalism as a means of future constitutional change; and the negative result cast severe doubts on the desirability of constitutional reform as a national unity option for the future.\textsuperscript{128}

The following analysis, then, addresses only the social-movement contributions to the public hearings of the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada. Further, in order to manage the unprecedented complexity of the hearings' subject matter, the

\textsuperscript{127} For a fuller summary, see ibid., 171-174.

analysis focuses more specifically on two distinctive constitutional visions; the contrasting perspectives of asymmetrical federalism and undifferentiated pan-Canadianism. The hearings mark the end of a constitutional era that began with the Rowell-Sirois Commission. This era was characterized by the basic premise that constitutional change was a desirable solution to key Canadian problems: the sense that such a solution could be realized through civic dialogue encouraged equality-seeking social movements to demand forms of change that might make Canadian citizenship more open to their oft-neglected aspirations and complaints. The visions that I distill for analysis from these, the final hearings of this constitutional era, are chosen for two reasons. First, they afford an interesting look at some of the key themes raised by New Politics theory. Second, they are likely to become particularly significant in the event that "an actual, not an apprehended, crisis of national unity" places constitutional change on the Canadian agenda in the future.\textsuperscript{129}

**The Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada**

*Constitutional Visions: Asymmetry versus Pan-Canadianism*

The Renewed Canada hearings demonstrate the unmistakable crystallization of two, clearly divergent social Movement approaches to Canadian constitutional reform. One approach, which was favoured by NAC and the labour movement, posited a three-nations understanding of Canadian identity in order to better advance an explicitly rest-of-Canada (ROC) constitutional perspective. As Cairns notes, Quebec's post-Meech nationalist

\textsuperscript{129} Russell, "End of Mega Constitutional Politics," 211.
ultimatum—that an October 1992 sovereignty referendum would be held if the province were not offered an acceptable constitutional alternative—stimulated the "development of a separate, incipiently nationalist self-consciousness in the ROC." But Cairns also points out that the institutional constraints of a "federal constitutional order that defines Canadians in the traditional terms of province and country" work to "submerge and conceal" the ROC perspective. Thus, a new willingness to reshape substantially the constitutional order by embracing Aboriginal peoples' right to self-government—and, more particularly, by advocating a substantial degree of autonomy for Quebec--positioned groups such as NAC, the CLC, the National Union of Provincial Government Employees (NUPGE) and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) as heralds of the ROC's conceptual emergence.

This approach responded to the desire of the major feminist and trade union organizations to become more effective constitutional advocates for their predominantly ROC constituencies. These groups had experienced first-hand the near-impossibility of advancing a coherent pan-Canadianism that could win acceptance from their Quebec counterparts; and their new solution to Canada's constitutional predicament reflected those prior experiences. Thus, Vice-President Nancy Riche offered the CLC's decision to combine massive autonomy for its Quebec affiliates with central authority over the other provincial wings as "a model . . . [for] recogniz[ing] the distinctiveness . . . [of] Quebec." "[W]e're saying . . . clearly by our actions," Riche declared, "that we support . . . different

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130 Cairns, Reconfigurations, 289.

131 Ibid., 281, 290.
powers for Quebec than for the rest of Canada."\textsuperscript{132} Similarly, President Judy Rebick stressed that the major conclusion to emerge from NAC’s “long discussion on . . . Meech Lake” was that “women [cannot] get what [they] need from the Constitution unless we break this log-jam . . . between Quebec and the rest of Canada.”\textsuperscript{133} NAC’s new approach to this otherwise “insolvable dilemma” was to “recognize that Quebec is a distinct society and that this has implications.”\textsuperscript{134}

The other social-movement approach shunned the notion of jurisdictional asymmetry in favour of a more traditional perspective on constitutional reform. This latter perspective was advanced by ethnocultural-minority organizations, whose memberships tended to include Quebec wings that were strongly attached to a unified, pan-Canadian understanding of constitutionalism and citizenship.\textsuperscript{135} For instance, the joint delegation of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), National Congress of Italian Canadians and Hellenic Canadian Congress emphasized its pan-Canadianism by electing to be represented by group leaders drawn from Quebec. The CJC \textit{et al.}, whose “vision of Canada” was of a “pluralistic . . . society based upon diversity, but, at the same time, unity,” insisted on subordinating the proposed distinct society clause to “the importance of preserving and

\textsuperscript{132} Canadian Labour Congress, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on a Renewed Canada, \textit{Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence}, No. 59, 4 February 1992, 19. Subsequent references in this chapter to presentations from these hearings will read, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, and will be preceded by the name of the relevant witness.


\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 18.

promoting pluralism in Quebec."\textsuperscript{136} Asymmetrical federalism was not on this delegation’s list of priorities.

Similarly, the Canadian Ethnocultural Council advocated “one Canada,” ignored the asymmetry issue and proposed to subject distinct society to the overriding “responsibility of governments” to uphold “the fundamental values upon which Canadian society is built.”\textsuperscript{137} The National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC), National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC) and Canadian Association of Visible Minorities (CAVM) also avoided asymmetry: they spoke repeatedly of a singular Canada defined by its character as a “multicultural society.”\textsuperscript{138} The NBCC offered no position on distinct society, while the CAVM would accept such a reference, “provided of course that [it] does not derogate from the equality provisions [of the Charter] as contained in section 15.”\textsuperscript{139} And although the NAJC professed to accept the concept of distinct society, it simultaneously advocated what was anathema in nationalist Quebec: the inclusion of “people of French background [as] part of multiculturalism.”\textsuperscript{140}

\textsuperscript{136} Canadian Jewish Congress, National Congress of Italian Canadians and Hellenic Canadian Congress, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, No. 58, 3 February 1992, 41, 36.


\textsuperscript{138} National Black Coalition of Canada, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, No. 16, 4 November 1991, 49.


The fundamental conservatism of this constitutional perspective is striking. The CJC et al. aimed to salvage whatever it could of the pan-Canadian status quo, while the other ethnocultural-minority presenters—by skirting Quebec's staunch insistence that its claim to nationhood be addressed—simply carried on as if the Meech fiasco had never occurred. By no means was this elementary conservatism somehow peculiar to ethnocultural minorities. For instance, Canada's postwar constitutional history demonstrates nothing if not that "the 'ten equal provinces' view overpowers the 'two nations' view when office-holding incumbents take charge." And as Cairns observes more generally, a majority of ROC citizens also seems to prefer "the inertial world of the status quo, in which Canada still exists and receives loyalty and civic attachment." Thus, the determination of NAC and the trade unions to leave this "inertial world," to "break this log-jam... between Quebec and the rest of Canada," suggests the influence of a set of considerations that weighed less heavily on many other participants.

These considerations were to a very significant extent economic. As the prominent roles played by NAC and the CLC in the 1988 campaign against free trade with the United States suggested, the increased dominance of free-market politics in late 1980s and early 1990s Canada had done much to focus feminist and labour activists on a common set of social-democratic concerns. At the same time, their forced abdication of any claim to

141 Cairns, Reconfigurations, 290.
142 Ibid.
143 NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 20.
represent their Quebec counterparts allowed NAC and the non-francophone labour
movement to prioritize one, increasingly central objective. This objective was to defend
Ottawa’s capacity to develop social programs for the ROC.

NAC and the trade unions pressed repeatedly the same conclusion that the
Communist Party had urged the MacGuigan-Molgat Committee to adopt in 1971:
Canada’s major constitutional problem is its tendency to respond to Quebec’s aspirations
with proposals for across-the-board decentralization. Behind this diagnosis has been the
fear that decentralization will subordinate social policy considerations to an
interjurisdictional “race to the bottom,” in which capital’s favoured laissez-faire, low-tax
approach becomes the inescapable finish line. And in the staunchly pro-capitalist
1990s, the prospect that decentralization might become the official solution to Canada’s
constitutional impasse was particularly threatening to the English-Canadian left.

This conjuncture of ideological and constitutional developments pushed NAC and
the trade unions to entertain the incertitudes of the unfamiliar. The CLC feared that
decentralization would “weaken the federal government’s ability to . . . develop national
programs” while “pitting province against province.” Thus, the only appropriate
solution to Canada’s nationalist standoff was to adopt “asymmetrical federalism in terms
of a strong central government for outside of Quebec and different powers for

145 A clear statement of this diagnosis is A.W. Johnson, “A National Government in a Federal
State,” in Constitutional Politics: The Canadian Forum Book on the Federal Constitutional Proposals,

146 CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 6, 17.
Quebec.\textsuperscript{147} The joint PSAC/NUPGE delegation advanced the same argument more informally: it advocated "generosity towards Quebec" while pleading, "for God's sake don't decentralize things in the rest of Canada."\textsuperscript{148} NAC's major message was also remarkably similar. Rebick rejected the notion of parcelling out "piece by piece, province by province," powers that were best given to Quebec alone; she insisted that "Women in the rest of Canada . . . want a strong federal government to deliver social programs"; and, like her trade union counterparts, she enjoined Canadians to embrace asymmetry as the "way people in the rest of Canada can get what they want and people in Quebec can get what they want."\textsuperscript{149}

The imperative to react to a "large and diffuse"\textsuperscript{150} federal package at an acknowledged moment of national crisis forced social-movement participants to sharpen their constitutional priorities. Although they accepted Aboriginal self-government, ethnocultural-minority organizations devoted their major efforts to ensuring the primacy of the Charter in a singular Canada that was to be defined by its multicultural pluralism. NAC and the labour movement, on the other hand, sought to abandon the inertial constraints of Canada's existing arrangements in order to maintain an active, redistributionist federal government for the ROC. The role that economic considerations played in driving this basic divergence seems pivotal. In particular, the unanimous lack of

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 19-20.

\textsuperscript{148} Public Service Alliance of Canada and National Union of Provincial Government Employees, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, No. 30, 12 December 1991, 50.

\textsuperscript{149} NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 18.

\textsuperscript{150} Russell, \textit{Constitutional Odyssey}, 171.
interest that ethnocultural-minority groups showed in the asymmetrical-federalism alternative was paralleled by their strong tendency to remain silent on the welfare state concerns that preoccupied NAC and the trade unions. Thus, the former displayed a seeming indifference to the economic fears that prompted the striking constitutional departure of the latter. The similarity of this contrast to the New Politics distinction between materialism and postmaterialism is important to consider.

After all, and as the preceding account suggests, two different sets of social-movement participants viewed the same constitutional proposals through the contrasting prisms of economics and culture. A more specific example of this contrast was occasioned by the federal government’s economic union proposals, which called for a ban on interprovincial trade barriers and for vesting in Ottawa the power to ensure the economic union’s “efficient functioning.” The CLC saw a “corporate agenda [for] ... constitutionalizing ... a free market economy”; NAC perceived the future outlines of a “market-driven capitalism in which the government doesn’t have very much to say.” But the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC) overlooked such “materialist” considerations in favour of a “postmaterialist” focus on belonging: it praised the economic union proposals as a welcome recognition that “we are all of one Canada.”

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152 CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 13.

153 NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 23.

154 CEC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 11. The CJC et al. also endorsed the economic union proposals, while the other ethnocultural-minority participants simply neglected to comment. See CJC et al., Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 38.
The CEC also ignored the economic implications of the federal government’s decentralization proposals. The Council simply requested that the ensuing “transfer of power agreements” contain “guarantees” for protecting “multiculturalism” and “minority rights.”¹⁵⁵ Labour, by contrast, protested Ottawa’s apparent disregard for “the economic and social insecurity that exists across this country.”¹⁵⁶

However, this contrast also suggests inadequacies in how New Politics tends to describe “new” social movements. In particular, the connection between NAC’s focus on the welfare state and women’s disproportionate exposure to economic insecurity is difficult to square with the postmaterialist depiction of the women’s movement in the New Politics literature.¹⁵⁷ As Rebick put it, “social programs [are] absolutely critical for women [because] [w]omen are the majority of the poor. . . . We are hurt the worst by cutbacks.”¹⁵⁸ A similar observation can be extended to some visible-minority organizations, which veered toward the “materialist” perspective when issues such as the NDP-sponsored proposal for a social charter of rights were discussed. For instance, the plight of constituents “smothering in airtight cages of poverty” led the CAVM to find the notion of a social charter “very pertinent.”¹⁵⁹

Economic themes in feminist and minority constitutional advocacy cannot be understood without recognizing something that New Politics theory seems to overlook:

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¹⁵⁵ CEC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 7.
¹⁵⁶ CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 5.
¹⁵⁷ For an example of this depiction, see Inglehart, Culture Shift, 373.
¹⁵⁸ NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 28.
¹⁵⁹ CAVM, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 26, 27.
problems of esteem and belonging can have significant economic ramifications. For example, NAC opposed Ottawa’s proposal to constitutionally entrench property rights because it feared that giving “big property owners . . . the right to use their property in any way they see fit” would allow sexist employers to “discriminate” by defying “certain wage [and] equality laws.”\textsuperscript{160} The CAVM made a similar point about how disesteem and exclusion create economic insecurity. It protested the plight of “those who find their tongues twisted and their speech stammering as they seek to explain to their children . . . why they are denied access to opportunities.”\textsuperscript{161}

Its failure to notice the economic significance of esteem and belonging in human society reflects the more basic tendency of New Politics theory to understand “non-economic” and “postmaterial” as synonomous terms. To suggest that an actor who seems to emphasize questions of belonging and esteem over economic issues therefore accords low priority to security concerns is to advance an unduly reductive understanding of what security entails. The extent of this reductionism is particularly apparent in Inglehart’s early work, which features a distinction between “bourgeois” and “post-bourgeois” orientations.\textsuperscript{162} Thus, Inglehart’s subsequent adoption of the terms, “materialist” and “postmaterialist,” signals a retooled approach. This approach emphasizes that postwar generations in the West have enjoyed not just financial prosperity but a markedly

diminished exposure to military conflict as well.\textsuperscript{163} However, the all-too limited nature of Inglehart's amendment is revealed by the continued failure of New Politics analysts to address majority domination as a source of insecurity for minorities. These analysts present consistently "the politics of ethnicity," "social equality . . . for racial and ethnic minorities" and "cultural or 'ideal' politics" as expressions of postmaterialism.\textsuperscript{164}

It is certainly true that ethnocultural-minority participants in the Canada round debates emphasized these so-called postmaterialist themes over saving the welfare state. But it would also be misleading to present this ordering of priorities as evidence of their indifference to security concerns. Far more accurate is to say that a distinctive set of insecurities prompted ethnocultural-minority groups to reject the asymmetrical solution in which their "materialist" counterparts saw the welfare state's last hope. Organizations with significant non-francophone Quebec memberships were particularly anxious to block any line of constitutional reform that might establish the Quebec state as the authorized instrument of the province's linguistic majority. Hence, the CJC et al. insisted that the "French language . . . is not the only aspect of [Quebec's] identity" and that "Quebec society is not homogeneous."\textsuperscript{165} The minoritarian insecurity that animated this delegation of Quebec's Jewish, Italian and Greek communities was clear. "As to the impact of including the distinct society clause in the Constitution," Max Bernard of the Quebec CJC

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{163} Inglehart, \textit{Silent Revolution}, 28, n.9.
\item \textsuperscript{165} CJC et al., Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 36.
\end{footnotes}
observed with delicate even-handedness, "it would be fair to say that Quebec, as well as
the rest of Canada, has seen some troubling moments with regard to the treatment
afforded to minorities."\textsuperscript{166}

These fears about lending constitutional sanction to a French-centred
understanding of the Quebec state's role had a highly significant corollary apprehension.
This apprehension was that adopting asymmetrical federalism might precipitate a more
majoritarian refashioning of the ROC as well. Thus, while NAC and the trade unions
spoke enthusiastically about an emergent nation "unequivocal in [its] support for a strong
central government,"\textsuperscript{167} ethnocultural-minority participants viewed the ROC's growing
sense of self-consciousness with alarm. As the NBCC worried, for instance: "We notice
in western Canada particularly, a majority of Canadians . . . embracing right wing parties
with right wing philosophies and, mind you, racist policies like the . . . Reform Party."\textsuperscript{168}
The CEC displayed a similar discomfort with the ROC's new populist emphasis on "free
votes, recall of MPs, and referenda," which it cited as a line of constitutional innovation
that would "work against the interest of minorities."\textsuperscript{169}

A contrast between social-democratic and minoritarian orientations also informed
two divergent social-movement views of the Spicer Commission. The Spicer
Commission, which fielded input from "ordinary" ROC citizens via a 1-800 number, "went

\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., 37.

\textsuperscript{167} CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 6.

\textsuperscript{168} NBCC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 52.

\textsuperscript{169} CEC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 6-7.
the populist route and became a sounding board for all sorts of pent-up rage." The women's and labour movements called repeated attention to one of the Commission's major conclusions: that the ROC desired "a strong central government which will act with resolution to remedy the country's economic ills." But the Commission's other well-known finding was that citizens in the ROC "overwhelmingly" blamed Canada's multiculturalism policy for "reminding us of our different origins . . . [rather] than emphasizing the things we have in common." Little wonder, then, that ethnocultural-minority representatives declined to base their constitutional interventions on the high-profile Spicer inquiry, which none of their number managed to mention.

The aversion that ethnocultural-minority participants displayed for the "Thinking English Canada" project is conspicuous and remarkable. Their neglect of the themes raised by the Spicer Commission was emblematic of a more general tendency, which saw asymmetrical federalism as the dangerous terrain of populist majoritarianism rather than the needful soil in which a stifled social democracy might bloom. This perspective certainly downplayed the economic considerations that prompted the women's and trade union movements to propose asymmetry. And it was also voiced by organizations that tend to be dominated by "a growing immigrant petit bourgeoisie which has an awareness

170 Johnston et al., Challenge of Direct Democracy, 52.

171 Quoted in Russell, Constitutional Odyssey, 165. For NAC on the Spicer Commission, see NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 18, 20.

172 Quoted in Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, Multiculturalism in Canada: The Challenge of Diversity (Scarborough, Ont.: Nelson, 1992), 123.

173 Philip Resnick, Thinking English Canada (Toronto: Stoddart, 1994).
Thus, the notion of postmaterialism might seem to offer a pithy explanation for why ethnocultural-minority participants neglected the threatened welfare state in favour of prioritizing the themes of multiculturalism and pan-Canadian belonging. But such an interpretation would obscure the historically justified, anti-majoritarian sense of insecurity that permeates the constitutional advocacy of Canadian ethnocultural minorities. This insecurity, whose early, famous expression was the minority outcry against the B&B Commission's notion of two "founding races," is almost certain to resurface as an important challenge to any proposals for asymmetry in the future.

Redistribution, Belonging and Prestige

A closer look at the constitutional approach taken by NAC and the labour movement highlights further the unduly artificial nature of the New Politics contrast between materialist and postmaterialist values. By no means did the decision to prioritize the "economic and social insecurity" of those who were "hurt the worst by cutbacks" prompt these actors to downplay the themes of esteem and belonging. On the contrary, feminist and trade union participants focused consistently on addressing the latter themes in order more effectively to confront the former problems. This focus reflects a crucial phenomenon that New Politics theory ignores: wealth redistribution almost invariably


175 CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 5.

176 NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 28.
foregrounds issues of esteem and belonging. For instance, Keith Banting observes that
welfare rules both reflect and shape the polity’s understanding of belonging, “defining . . .
who is a member of the . . . community, who is not a member and therefore . . . a
‘stranger’ to whom little is owed.” 177 And as those eager to assume the benevolent
mantle of philanthropy certainly know, redistributing money is also a potent means of
attaching increased social esteem to the generous redistributor.

Indeed, it is telling and ironic that the particular Canadian significance of this
recognition-redistribution nexus owes much to Quebec’s embrace of what the province’s
elites had once condemned as “godless materialism.” 178 Contrary to both the Church’s
warnings and the postmaterialism thesis, the rise of class conflict and social democracy in
late-modernizing Quebec did not engender a prosaic indifference to questions of identity
and culture. Rather, the welfare state became a central stake in a conflict between two
rival projects of esteem and belonging. Nationalist Quebecers, who objected to the notion
of belonging conveyed by the pan-Canadian welfare state, sought to use social policy to
reflect prestige on their own political endeavour. From the pan-Canadian perspective,
massive decentralization was one solution to this national-unity predicament—but it was a
solution that NAC and the trade unions could not accept.

Thus, the labour and women’s movements reframed their welfare state advocacy in
order more effectively to address Canada’s constitutional crisis. This crisis, after all,

177 Keith Banting, The Welfare State and Canadian Federalism, 2d ed. (Kingston and Montreal:

178 For the attack on “materialism,” see Quebec’s famous response to the Rowell-Sirois
Commission, reprinted as The Tremblay Report, ed. David Kwavnick (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart,
1973).
seemed to tie the future prospects of "materialist" redistribution to the outcome of Canada's nationalist dispute over the "postmaterial" goods of esteem and belonging. Left-wing participants insisted that asymmetrical federalism would both mollify Quebec and vindicate the belonging and prestige needs of a threatened Canada, which NAC and the trade unions now defined implicitly as the ROC.

According to the CLC, the welfare state comprised "a Canadian mosaic, the threads of which are shared values and fundamental beliefs." "By forging the bonds of citizenship in this way," the CLC continued, "we have defined ourselves in terms of common values that crystallize the essence of what it means to be Canadian."¹⁷⁹ The PSAC/NUPGE delegation also held that social programs are "what define the country": "What connects us are strong national institutions, equalization payments, national programs such as medicare. That is what really binds the rest of Canada together."¹⁸⁰

This understanding of Canadian belonging was portrayed as a vital symbolic capital of nationalist esteem in which the ROC remnant of a besieged polity could take indispensable pride. For instance, NAC quoted from the Spicer Report in order to frame the welfare state as the major expression of Canada's "deeply felt core values . . . [of] equality and fairness,"¹⁸¹ while the CLC spoke of a "great country" built on "[c]ompassion," a "commitment to equality" and "vibrant national institutions."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 7.
¹⁸⁰ PSAC/NUPGE, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 54, 50.
¹⁸² CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 7.
From this perspective, a federal government package that promoted decentralization, property rights and the more "efficient functioning"\(^{183}\) of Canada's economic union was ripe for attack. As the CLC put it: "Canadians are a fair and caring people, and they do not like the fact that more and more people are slipping through the cracks of an inadequate social and economic system. Yet there is not one proposal in the government's package . . . that even hints at any commitment to our social programs and national standards."\(^{184}\) For its part, NAC claimed that "compassion," "generosity" and a "national conscience" were "values . . . that most people in Canada share." However, Rebick continued, "we don't see any reflection of [those values] in the [federal government's] constitutional proposals."\(^{185}\) The PSAC/NUPGE delegation also failed to detect "a truly Canadian concept of ourselves" in Ottawa's amendment proposals. It portrayed these proposals as a recipe for emulating "our neighbours to the south"; for "turn[ing] our health care system into one like theirs, and [for] treat[ing] our poor like they treat theirs."\(^{186}\) In summary, advocates of asymmetrical federalism presented the welfare state as a vital source of belonging in the ROC; they argued that national social programs were a crucial basis of Ottawa's legitimacy and prestige outside Quebec; and they warned that decentralization was a false unity cure that would sacrifice the very things about Canadian identity that were most worth saving.


\(^{184}\) CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 6.

\(^{185}\) NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 20.

\(^{186}\) PSAC/NUPGE, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 43.
This constitutional advocacy is best understood by highlighting two longstanding and intersecting dynamics. First, redistribution requires prior agreement that there exists an important framework of belonging in which the proposed redistribution is to take place. Second, redistributing wealth tends to confer increased prestige on the redistributing entity. The postmaterialism thesis neglects these crucial dynamics because it divorces the materialist emphasis on redistribution from its human context—a context in which redistribution is not only functional but is also a meaning-making activity.

Therefore, the preceding account challenges the postmaterialism thesis by showing that enterprises of redistribution require prior attention to questions of belonging and esteem. New Politics theory trivializes these questions by speaking of an expressive turn to postmaterialism, which it presents as a reflection of postwar security. Now perhaps a New Politics analyst might respond by saying that the link between the fate of the welfare state and Canada’s nationalist conflicts over belonging and esteem simply reflects the tendency of postwar postmaterialism to bring expressive concerns to the fore. This response would be mistaken.

For instance, Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan suggest that the nineteenth-century emergence in Western Europe of “straight class politics” depended on the satisfaction of two vital preconditions. First, the new national community had to be established as the common focal point for citizen loyalties. Second, it was therefore imperative that clashes over culture and identity, which the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century enterprises of territorial unification greatly intensified, be somehow defused. In Lipset and Rokkan’s words, the advent of “functional oppositions” required
alleviating the conflicts over “language, religion and morality” that had tended to frustrate the “initial consolidation of the national territory.”

A similar observation about the basic priority of belonging can be usefully distilled from E.P. Thompson’s account of the early-modern “bread riot.” This seemingly most materialist of moments was also a quintessentially communicative activity, which aimed to convince the powerful to respect certain obligations—most notably, the provision of bread at fair prices—that were seen as constitutive of community. As Thompson explains, the rioters were able to overcome the traditional “motives of fear and deference” because they believed that in “defending traditional rights or customs” they were “supported by the wider consensus of the community.” Thus, what the bread-riot and the nation-building examples both suggest is that the existence of a common framework of belonging has been an enduring prerequisite for turning materialist aspirations into actionable complaints.

The special difficulties of maintaining a welfare state in a divided polity highlight the same observation: materialist redistribution requires agreement on the common framework of esteem and belonging in which the redistribution is to take place. In the Canadian case, a failure to solve the basic question of belonging, which most Western European states had successfully addressed by the late nineteenth century, and upon which elementary forms of social justice have long depended, has made redistribution a highly controversial activity. For eighteenth-century bread rioters, nineteenth-century national

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working classes and today's ROC left alike, "materialism" has been very much a "postmaterialist" affair. In other words, the longstanding significance of esteem and belonging for projects of redistribution testifies to the basic inadequacy of a contrast that dissociates the former goods from the politics of material security.

NAC's role as a key welfare state advocate in the Canada round debates warrants a brief concluding note. Against the common depiction of feminism as a postmaterialist actor, previous chapters have noted the consistent focus of the women's movement on questions of welfare provision. But pervasive disrespect for women as civic actors has often kept this focus from view. For example, the National Council of Women was unable to present its welfare state arguments to the Rowell-Sirois Commission because the Council's male solicitor decided that the question of marriage and divorce was a more appropriate outlet for female expertise. Similarly, Ottawa stymied women's repeated attempts to enter the wartime special committee debates on economic reconstruction by restricting the Council's input to the topics of health and hospital insurance instead.

The far more visible feminist economic advocacy of the late 1980s and early 1990s stands in strong contrast to this earlier picture of coerced invisibility. For instance, Jill Vickers and her co-authors offer the following observation about NAC's participation in the free-trade debates: "[Women] had achieved a significant framework of rights, and they were now exploring them. They were increasingly coming to see themselves as equal partners in the process of making choices about Canada's future."\(^{189}\) Although the "framework of rights" to which Vickers et al. explicitly refer is the framework provided by

\(^{189}\) Vickers et al., *Politics as if Women Mattered*, 272.
the Charter, the statement’s profound meaning is best seen as a reference to women’s hard-won right to civic respect. The statement links women’s increased capacity to speak on economic issues in public forums, without being deliberately excluded or subjected to demeaning sexist digressions whose intent has undoubtedly been to silence, to their new status as recognized, first-class civic participants. This is not to say that women are necessarily always so treated. But it is to say that the lines of esteem and belonging in the Canadian public sphere have been redrawn in response to decades of feminist activism; and that women’s increased visibility in economic disputes has been one significant result. The point, once again, is that esteem and belonging have a basic and enduring political significance, which the all-too pervasive notion of a historical passage from materialism to postmaterialism predisposes analysts to ignore.

Conclusion

A crucial dimension of security in human society involves enjoying acceptance as an acknowledged participant. For without this acceptance, the capacity to speak for oneself yields almost wholly to the unchecked decisions of others. This understanding of security is not idiosyncratic or novel. It was certainly familiar to American revolutionaries, who rejected the aristocratic principle that “those on the top could meaningfully speak for those below them.” ¹⁹⁰ Yet property-owning white males in the West monopolized this type of security well into the nineteenth century. And a measure of how seriously they regarded their monopoly is that its major justification, which was located squarely in notions of

civic virtue, could lead to violence when an entitled participant found his claim to virtue in serious doubt. For instance, cultural historian Ute Frevert explains that the duel in pre-Weimar Germany served as “an instrument of self-assertion” for insulted high-status men, who sought to safeguard their threatened “standing in the world” by vindicating their claim to deserve the “respect and recognition” of similarly situated others.  

Although duelling no longer attracts many adherents, the understanding of security that once incited duellists is still relevant. In this chapter, I have argued that the disputes over constitutional recognition that surrounded the Meech Lake Accord are usefully understood by calling attention to an enduring view of recognition and civic honour as sources of self-defence and power. Canadian New Politics analysts take a different approach. They see the feminist and ethnocultural-minority reaction to Meech Lake as a function of postwar “prosperity and peace,” which equipped the Accord’s social-movement critics with a set of “concerns and priorities that are significantly different from those of materialists.”

This perspective places today’s politics of recognition in a misleading interpretive context. It neglects the security preoccupations of formerly excluded groups—groups that have good reason for associating voicelessness with problems of social discrimination, denied economic opportunity and physical abuse. New Politics theory also misses the extent to which social-movement fears of second-class citizenship correspond to an age-old problematic of civic virtue, which holds that redeeming one’s formal entitlement


requires commanding recognition and respect. In particular, this chapter has argued that treating the social-movement participation in the Meech Lake debates generically, as a species of postmaterialism, is a poor substitute for focusing on the crucial role of constitutional recognition.

Feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants did not attempt to defeat Meech Lake because prosperity rendered them indifferent to the material concerns of an earlier era. More appropriate is to build on Cairns's approach, and say that actors armed with specific, recently-won constitutional recognitions confronted a set of amendment proposals whose thrust clashed powerfully with their new self-conception as authorized, first-class civic participants. Like the duellist of yore with his honour, feminist and ethnocultural-minority representatives leapt to defend a symbolic capital that they prized as a basis of security.

This was an authorizing capital to be wielded as a weapon of legitimating propriety. A document of "very strong symbolic significance to . . . women,"\textsuperscript{193} that "clearest . . . strongest and . . . most cogent constitutional statement,"\textsuperscript{194} which was "in place to protect the rights and freedoms of all Canadians regardless of their race or origin,"\textsuperscript{195} was seen as an authoritative repudiation of an exclusionary past. For actors who entered citizenship as latecomers, faced strong resistance to their inclusion and then continued to experience significant difficulties in gaining a respectful hearing for their

\textsuperscript{193} NAC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 38.

\textsuperscript{194} Coalition of Visible Minority Women, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 134.

\textsuperscript{195} Chinese Canadian National Council, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 62.
complaints, Charter recognition became the prized source of a new official status. This status was that of an "in-place" participant with sanctioned rather than idiosyncratic civic interests to defend. In short, therefore, the New Politics emphasis on postmaterial value change fails to notice that equality-seeking movements seek to maximize a value that established participants have cherished for centuries; the first-class inclusion that serves as a basis of voice and power.

Feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants sensed that formal participation rights were not enough: they considered that vindicating these rights required the supplementation of a deeper form of recognition that would testify to their hard-won status as acknowledged equals. The fundamental similarity of this orientation to that of an earlier era, in which "Coats and Scutchions painted" were "signes of favour in the Common-wealth," is crucial to note.\textsuperscript{196} Whereas New Politics theory makes much of the supposed irony that postwar prosperity has served to increase rather than to diminish political discontent,\textsuperscript{197} the emphasis on forms of recognition that go beyond formal equality paints a less flattering picture. Traditionally marginalized actors continue to orient their civic participation towards a set of virtue-oriented imperatives that liberal univeralism was supposed to render irrelevant.\textsuperscript{198} This phenomenon suggests that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{196} Hobbes, \textit{Leviathan}, 65.
\item \textsuperscript{197} For example, see Inglehart, \textit{Modernization and Postmodernization}, 259; and idem, \textit{Silent Revolution}, 209-211.
\item \textsuperscript{198} On this supposed irrelevance, see Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner, \textit{The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness} (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), Excursus, "On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honor."
\end{itemize}
"latecomers" still feel the sting of a range of informal sanctions and imperatives that others more easily ignore.

Conversely, marginalized actors may employ populism rather than more evidently particularistic strategies as a means of challenging their marginalization. For example, labour attacked the Meech Lake Accord by invoking the "sovereign right of a country's citizens to determine [their] basic rights and freedoms." On this view, which harkened back to Trudeau's "people versus powers" rhetoric of the early 1980s, the Accord's signal defect was that the "power brokers and the jurisdiction traders" had ignored the better judgment of the "average Canadian." This latter figure did not appear in the constitutional advocacy of feminists and ethnocultural minorities. I have argued that this contrast reflects labour's historically rooted sense of identity with "the people," which has furnished a symbolic repertoire for confronting marginalization that feminists and ethnocultural minorities have tended to lack.

Instead of contrasting the politics of insecurity with the politics of recognition, it is more useful to speak of two different politics of recognition; the populist versus the more explicitly particularistic. One virtue of this approach is that it highlights something that the New Politics account occludes: workers could only make effective economic demands after "the people" had succeeded in winning recognition as the electorate. At the same

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199 CLC, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 5.

200 NUPGE, Presentation to the 1987 Special Joint Committee, 95, 99.

201 Cf. T.H. Marshall on the historical sequence that saw the advent of economic rights follow the extension of civil and political rights, Class, Citizenship and Social Development, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), chap. 2, "Citizenship and Social Class."
time, the distinction between trade union populism and "new" movement identity politics reflects the particular importance of esteem and belonging for actors who have been traditionally excluded from "the people." This distinction challenges the contrast between the insecure materialist's indifference to recognition and the secure postmaterialist's emphasis on esteem and belonging. Populism and more evidently particularistic repertoires are both responses to the fundamental importance of recognition for realizing security in human society.

It is useful to consider these differing repertoires, one which focused on Meech Lake as a devaluation of particular symbolic capitals, and the other which complained of an affront to pan-Canadian citizen sovereignty, in terms of Cairns's Charter Canadians thesis. The first reaction came from Charter Canadians who were concerned with whether "their clause [was] likely to receive more or less recognition as a result of a pending constitutional shuffle." The second was characteristic of "a more diffuse category of Charter supporters and defenders," who viewed Meech as "an unwelcome shrinking of their capacities to act as Canadians."²⁰² I have argued that the Accord's fate was influenced significantly by an exchange relationship between these two categories of Charter Canadians.

Provincial electorates soon forced the governments of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Manitoba to join former prime minister Trudeau in raising objections to the Meech Lake package. These critics' common concern was to defend the idea of Canada as a single moral community of sovereign citizens possessing a common bundle of

²⁰² Cairns, Disruptions, 134, 127.
rights. Previous chapters have traced this particular framing to Canada’s postwar search for prestigious unifying symbols. The nature of this search was influenced profoundly by the postwar international imperative of “permanent peace and security,” which measured national decency in terms of a country’s willingness to serve the values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. One notable result of this search was a nationalist self-understanding of Canada as “a model of tolerance and a demonstration to all the nations that unity can be formed out of diversity.”

But this self-understanding required sociological verification, which in the Meech Lake debates only close attention to the claims of traditionally disadvantaged groups could provide. Thus, Meech critics who shared Trudeau’s vision took particular care to amplify the concerns of enumerated movements, whose new role as “Canadians [who] cherish their rights and freedoms” provided a crucial source of legitimating prestige.

But this prestige relationship soon faced a massive challenge. Although Charter nationalism could amplify the voices of the traditionally disrespected, Quebec’s reaction to Meech’s collapse seemed to indicate that the single moral community notion had become a grave threat to Canada’s continued existence. This problem had been brought home

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viscerally to the women’s and labour movements by their Quebec nationalist counterparts. Although NAC and the trade unions responded by embracing distinct society and differential Charter application, this solution was insufficient to address Quebec’s insistence that Ottawa withdraw from its role as a provider of pan-Canadian social programs.

I have argued that NAC and the labour movement pursued asymmetrical federalism in order to realize a civic framework of belonging and esteem in which projects of wealth redistribution would fare better than under the pan-Canadian status quo. Quebec’s determination to gain full social policy control as a means of reflecting prestige on its own project of belonging served to establish asymmetry as the only apparent alternative to massive decentralization. The 1990s context of growing decentralist pressures seemed to mean that insisting on Canada as a single moral community would also mean accepting a lowest-common-denominator approach to the welfare state. In other words, the corollary of pan-Canadianism and “equality” seemed to be an ensuing process of parcelling out Quebec’s jurisdictional demands across the country, “piece by piece, province by province.”

Thus, asymmetry proved attractive as a way of extricating a ROC framework of esteem and belonging from a less auspicious approach to Canadian unity. This latter approach threatened to sacrifice the network of programs that served as a crucial locus of nationalist sentiment for ROC feminists and trade unionists in the first place. For left-wing proponents, therefore, asymmetry would satisfy Quebec’s demands without sundering “the

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207 NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 18.
bonds of citizenship”\textsuperscript{208} that kept “the rest of Canada together”;\textsuperscript{209} the ROC could maintain its “deeply felt core values” of “equality and fairness”\textsuperscript{210} rather than succumb to the allegedly contrasting values of “our neighbours to the south.”\textsuperscript{211}

Ethnocultural-minority groups could not accept this approach: their vision of Canadian belonging clashed fundamentally with the dualist understanding on which they considered the asymmetrical perspective to rest. Ethnic- and visible-minority representatives preferred to belong to a “multicultural society”\textsuperscript{212} whose singularity was “based upon diversity, but, at the same time, unity.”\textsuperscript{213} They insisted firmly that “we are all of one Canada.”\textsuperscript{214} Behind this insistence was the fear that lending official sanction to a French-centred definition of Quebec’s constitutional role would stimulate a parallel majoritarianism in the ROC. Thus, while NAC and the labour movement saw a nascent social democracy struggling for a framework in which to find expression, ethnocultural-minority movements discerned a less salutary trend. They feared a rising ROC populism that threatened to “work against the interest of minorities [and] minority rights” and, at the extreme, to make “tyranny of the majority an everyday feature of life.”\textsuperscript{215}

\textsuperscript{208} CLC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 7.
\textsuperscript{209} PSAC/NUPGE, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 50.
\textsuperscript{210} NAC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 20.
\textsuperscript{211} PSAC/NUPGE, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 43.
\textsuperscript{212} NBCC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 49.
\textsuperscript{213} CJC et al., Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 41.
\textsuperscript{214} CEC, Presentation to the 1991-92 Renewed Canada Committee, 11.
\textsuperscript{215} Ibid., 7, 9.
This chapter has considered the distinction between the social-movement advocates of asymmetry and pan-Canadianism in light of the New Politics distinction between materialism and postmaterialism. The basic concern of NAC and the labour movement to protect the Canadian welfare state seems highly suggestive of what New Politics would characterize as a materialist perspective. By the same token, actors who emphasized what Inglehart describes as “cultural or ‘ideal’ politics” had little to say about problems of economic insecurity. I have argued that the similarity of this contrast to the postmaterialism thesis serves usefully to illustrate a basic inadequacy of the New Politics approach.

Presenting the ethnocultural-minority perspective as a postmaterialist departure from security concerns would require ignoring its driving force; the unshakeable fear that any significant move towards asymmetry would legitimize populist majoritarianism in each of Canada’s newly reconfigured “nations.” Ethnocultural-minority participants in Canadian national unity debates did not demonstrate the postmaterialist’s willingness to embrace “ambiguity . . . [and] accept deviation from familiar patterns.” Like the quintessential materialist, they sought “rigid, predictable rules” while voicing their fundamental “anxiety [about] what is going to happen.” This orientation points up a glaring weakness in the New Politics understanding of security. A theory that links an emphasis on diversity and minority rights to formative experiences of security, while

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216 Inglehart, Silent Revolution, 13.

217 Inglehart, Modernization and Postmodernization, 40.

218 Ibid.
ignoring the basic insecurity that often accompanies minority status, is a remarkably poor tool for understanding the civic advocacy of ethnocultural minorities.

New Politics analysts err significantly by treating esteem and belonging as goods that become prominent when security turns satisfied actors towards expressive needs. This approach fails to recognize the fundamental importance of esteem and belonging for realizing any aspiration that requires the good-will and cooperation of others. More specifically, this chapter has argued that the unduly mechanical distinction between materialism and postmaterialism misses the particular relevance of questions of esteem and belonging for issues of wealth redistribution. After all, labour’s capacity to exploit the themes of “independence, patriotism and the Englishman’s birthright”219 was absolutely crucial in winning the civic inclusion upon which pursuing redistributionist politics depended. The importance of recognition for redistribution is reinforced further by noting that women’s increased inclusion in a field of esteem and belonging once reserved exclusively for men has been paralleled by an expanded cast of materialist claimants. These examples are reminders that how the polity configures its lines of esteem and belonging can have significant security ramifications for those who are excluded. They suggest further that even if one accords predominant weight to economic factors, the capacity to enjoy esteem and belonging in a common field of participation should still be regarded as a crucial dimension of security. And this is no expansive, “postmodernist” redefinition: dominant actors have prized and enjoyed this form of security in citizenship for centuries.

219 Thompson, Making of the English Working Class, 78.
From the standpoint of social-movement participation, the story of the Canada round debates is the story of actors scrutinizing proposed lines of constitutional change in terms of their potential impact on issues of esteem and belonging. As I have shown, NAC and the trade unions paid great attention to questions of civic prestige and belonging in order to more effectively address issues of redistribution. Above all, they worried that authorities would seek to preserve a tenuous pan-Canadian unity by adopting a "thin" approach to civic esteem and belonging that would be incapable of sustaining a welfare state. By contrast, ethnocultural-minority participants downplayed this emphasis on wealth redistribution in favour of pursuing a focus on questions of culture and identity. In particular, they feared a reconfigured federation in which multiculturalism would give way to a renewed emphasis on two "founding nations." Despite this contrast between economic and cultural preoccupations, it makes no sense to say that the former set of actors was alive to security considerations while the latter was not. It is also crucial to note that both constitutional perspectives were driven by considerations of esteem and belonging--although these were not the expressive goods of primarily psychological import of which New Politics theory speaks. Thus, instead of resorting to the all-too ready contrast between materialists and postmaterialists, the difference between the social-movement exponents of asymmetry and pan-Canadianism can be captured by a single observation: two sets of movement actors advanced distinctive approaches to esteem and belonging that corresponded to how they thought their future prospects for security would best be served.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION: SOCIAL ESTEEM AND MATERIAL STRUGGLES

The contrast between materialism and postmaterialism can be misleading because it uses an imagery of sequencing and opposition to characterize two dimensions of social life that are coexistent and interdependent. The first dimension is that of economic security and personal safety. The second dimension is the realm of social interaction and communication: in New Politics terms, it is the “postmaterial” dimension of participation, rights, esteem and belonging. These dimensions are coexistent and interdependent because security and safety are socially produced, rather than self-executing conditions; they depend on our interaction with others, and pursuing and realizing them tends to require recognition and voice.

By emphasizing that defending group security interests depends upon successful interaction with differently situated others, this work has argued that the distinction between the materialist politics of safety and security and the postmaterialist politics of participation and respect is a poor tool for understanding the politics of recognition. I have argued that New Politics misconstrues the politics of recognition because it ignores the extent to which addressing successfully one’s safety and security concerns in conditions of democracy requires participating as an actor who commands interactional respect.

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Because the fundamental importance of belonging and esteem is a recurring theme in social and political theory, this argument has found inspiration in a wide variety of sources. Communitarian political philosophers, for instance, argue that liberal individualism posits a false understanding of human development. They contend that individualism ignores the developmental importance of social esteem and belonging, and therefore undermines the very possibility of the meaningful personal choice that individualists so energetically endorse. Liberals have responded by arguing that the liberal tradition offers indispensable resources for the crucial task of balancing the claims of community and culture with individual needs and differences. From the standpoint of critical theory, Axel Honneth has recently emphasized the importance of positive recognition for individual and societal development. On Honneth’s account, the “intersubjective structure of personal identity” means that healthy relations to self and to others require respectful relations of mutual recognition. This requirement, Honneth concludes, is the thread that ties together the spheres of love, law and ethical life: it provides an overarching interpretive framework for understanding both the ancient origins of law as a reciprocally binding moral code and the rise of contemporary social movements emphasizing questions of respect and identity. In other words, Honneth

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3 In particular, see Will Kymlicka, Liberalism, Community and Culture (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

argues that questions of esteem and belonging have been at the heart of Western thinking about justice all along.

From a more instrumental standpoint, the enduring significance of belonging and esteem is captured aptly by sociologist William J. Goode, who observes that “all people share the universal need to gain the respect or esteem of others, since without it they can not as easily elicit the help of others.” Gramsci made a similar point about political struggles when he argued that questions of civic belonging and social esteem were more instrumentally important to the socialist project than previous Marxists had supposed. Gramsci enjoined communists to learn from how the Italian fascists had attained hegemony; a position which he described as a potent admixture of economic power and “intellectual [and] moral prestige.” No less alive to the instrumental significance of belonging and esteem were the classical theorists of “possessive individualism.” Hobbes devoted a chapter in *Leviathan* to the competitive nature of “honour and worthinesse,” while Locke suggested that “The principal spring from which the actions of men take their rise . . . seems to be credit and reputation, and that which at any rate they avoid, is in the greatest part shame and disgrace.” More recently, a similar understanding has informed

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Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach to sociology, which presents human conduct as a series of performances that pivot around "symbolically conveyed appraisals of social worth."\textsuperscript{10} This work has stressed the instrumental perspective in order to elucidate the quintessentially material and political significance of recognition for equality-seeking social movements. Throughout, it has been guided by a central message from Pierre Bourdieu: "Only an inconsistent . . . materialism can fail to see that strategies whose object is to conserve or increase the honour of the group . . . are dictated by interests no less vital than are . . . practices directed towards the maximizing of [economic] profit."\textsuperscript{11} With this emphasis, I have taken a different approach from many important contemporary accounts, which tend to downplay the instrumental dimension of the politics of recognition in favour of focusing on questions of authenticity and psychological integrity.\textsuperscript{12} Above all, I have stressed the instrumental dimension in opposition to the postmaterialism thesis--whose purely expressive treatment of questions of esteem and belonging provides an influential perspective on the politics of recognition that leaves recognition's material significance entirely untouched.


Yet there is also a sense in which chronicling the diminished instrumental significance of esteem and prestige was what early social science was all about. The original scientific analysts of modernity charted the ways in which capitalism and bureaucracy had dislodged particularistic positive recognition from its former role as a crucial basis of political power. For Marx, there remained "no other nexus between man and man than . . . callous cash payment,"\textsuperscript{13} while Weber described a transition from the enchantment of charisma and tradition to a rational domination that gave pride of place to "the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands."\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, as recently as the early 1970s, sociologist Peter Berger characterized modernity in terms of the "obsolescence of honor" and our correspondingly pervasive "inability . . . to understand insult."\textsuperscript{15}

Thus, the increased postwar prominence of equality-seeking social movements, which emphasize questions of esteem and belonging while demonstrating an unequivocal ability to understand insult, reflects something of a paradox. This paradox is that the move from the politics of particularism toward the politics of universalism--the famed and fabled transition from status to contract, from enchantment to reason--has been accompanied by a renewed rather than decreased emphasis on the questions of virtue and group specificity with which an older politics was so obviously seized. In many respects,


this is the paradox to which New Politics theory applies itself. New Politics suggests that prosperity has led actors to pursue higher-order goals, like esteem and belonging and participation and rights, which the modernizing era’s alleged preoccupation with security and safety precluded.

A central difficulty with this resolution is that it treats security and safety as goods that the old politics was committed to ensuring equally for everyone. The notion of feminism and multiculturalism as postmaterialist movements begs the question of how marginalized and disrespected groups, whose voices Western citizenship once sought explicitly to silence, were to pursue their security and safety concerns without undertaking a politicized focus on questions of esteem and belonging. Thus, I have argued that the social-movement emphasis on questions of belonging and esteem responds to the great difficulties that “latecomer” citizens experienced in garnering a respectful hearing for their traditionally excluded perspectives and concerns. By pursuing esteem and belonging as antidotes to the disabilities of second-class citizenship, a position from which humiliation, and therefore extreme powerlessness, loomed as the ready punishment for abandoning the quiet diplomacy of deference, equality-seeking movements have targeted bases of security that New Politics unhelpfully overlooks.

The intimate relationship between recognition and security has led equality-seeking movements to approach citizenship as an arena in which to win recognition for the neglected virtues and contributions of their constituencies. In doing so, they have often highlighted a sense that their participation remains subject to a set of virtue-related considerations that liberal universalism was supposed to render irrelevant, and which more
fortunate actors seem to escape. At times such as the commencement of the B&B Commission and the attempted passage of the Meech Lake accord, this understanding has imbued Canadian constitutional politics with features redolent of the old politics of honour. Much like the Tudor England described by historian Mervyn James, though without its clashing cacophony of swords, “there was a latent irascibility in the air. [People] were prone to . . . take offence . . . [and] quarrels escalated into battles.” ¹⁶

Rather than understanding today’s battles over recognition as the unanticipated byproduct of prosperity and peace, it is better to insist on a point whose very simplicity means that it often goes unnoticed. This point is that the politics of recognition follows the inclusion of previously excluded groups in citizenship. If exclusion conveyed the basic message that the civic virtue of the excluded was forever a foregone conclusion, then inclusion makes virtue a more actionable topic of concern. Inclusion also brings latecomers into a basic circle of equality within which judgments of social esteem assume a heightened significance. This significance is suggested by the immense seriousness with which insults from recognized equals were regarded by “honoured” citizens during the high days of the duel: “Nothing which happened outside [their] circle . . . could cast as serious an aspersion upon their personal integrity as insults and affronts among themselves.”¹⁷ Furthermore, attempts to participate in the politics of universalism encourage disrespected latecomers to focus on the specific role of misrecognition and


disrespect; as informal barriers to the effective use of their newly minted citizenship rights. In short, I have argued that the move from non-citizenship to second-class citizenship is the crucial context in which to place the social-movement politics of voice, recognition and respect.

*The Traditional Left*

This work began by highlighting the oft-neglected importance of recognition and respect for the traditional left. Throughout the Great Depression, working-class movements faced incredible problems in attempting to focus Canadian politics on their concerns. Prime Minister R.B. Bennett incarcerated unemployed men in punitive “relief camps,” and only promised a “new deal” on the eve of his impending electoral defeat. And as Desmond Morton and Terry Copp explain, Prime Minister King’s “chief achievement” in this regard was “to enable the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to dispose of virtually all of . . . Bennett’s belated reforms.”18 At the same time, to protest against this record of inaction was often to be singled out for police harassment and violence.

Against the rather artificial tradeoff between a materialist focus on questions of economic security and a postmaterialist focus on issues of rights and participation, I have pointed out that Depression-era working-class movements could not adequately raise economic security claims without focusing on issues of rights and participation. This link between questions of security and questions of rights and participation was reinforced further by the federal government’s economic role in wartime. Ottawa assumed sweeping

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powers of economic management, which it wielded by showing a solicitude for capital and management that it denied to workers. For socialists and trade unionists, the lesson of Depression and war was clear: without civil liberties, effective political participation and meaningful collective-bargaining rights, worker's concerns would always be a distant afterthought in Canadian politics.

Accordingly, the traditional left campaign for a Canadian bill of rights extended from the Great Depression well into the 1960s. And by the Second World War, the trade union movement broadened this original focus by insisting on a full democratization of the federal government's economic role and by directing its energies towards establishing a viable left-wing alternative to the Tories and Liberals. In short, even at times of great fear and insecurity, the traditional left was a citizenship movement that focused consistently on questions of rights, participation and voice.

The crisis that the workers' movement was addressing was by no means solely economic: it was also a crisis of masculinity. And as Ruth Roach Pierson observes, out of this crisis emerged a discourse of social policy and state intervention that "gave precedence to . . . men, as their income-earning capacity was construed as central to the male's identity both as worker and as husband/father."19 This consistently masculine inflection helped to normalize a politics that had long been demonized as dangerous and abnormal: it explained working-class movements to upper classes and state elites as manly defences of home and hearth. But while Prime Minister King came to accept the

idea of "the mass of the people coming . . . into their own," such acceptance tended to be reserved for majority-group males. Minority immigrant activists often faced harsh campaigns of vilification, while women's specific security concerns were trivialized and ignored.

The traditional left made extensive use of a symbolic capital of majoritarian masculinity. Even the Communist Party, whose reputation was for being less wedded to mainstream respectability than most, pursued rights as "the special tradition of all British people for all generations," while framing the Depression as a crisis of "immorality," "impaired moral standards" and "children running wild." The Party argued that such a crisis could only be resolved by attending to "the acute distress suffered by the workmen and farmers in Canada." On this understanding, politicized workers were only seeking to "save their farms and homes and protect their families," and to rectify a "demoralizing situation" that denied them the "opportunity [to] hold up their heads and feel as if they were really part of Canada."

For their part, trade unionists also prized manliness as a crucial basis of recognition and voice. Hence, they took particular care to frame their advocacy in ways that

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21 For example, Gerald Caplan notes that during the 1940s, "xenophobia and anti-Semitism were particularly popular [among right-wingers] in connection with [Ontario NDP leader] David Lewis," *The Dilemma of Canadian Socialism: The CCF in Ontario* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 123.


23 Ibid., 9725.

24 Ibid., 9718-9719, 9811.
harmonized with the felt imperatives of working-class masculinity. The "respectable" craft unionists, who feared being lumped in with "riffraff," "good for nothings" and "rubbish," knew that state welfare provision raised the spectre of emasculating dependency. In the words of one early contemporary, the craftsman was loath to seek state assistance because he had "a little more of what they term 'pride.'" Thus, the Trades and Labour Congress insisted that "the worker would sooner take ... unemployment insurance and maintain his independence [rather] than take the higher [family welfare] rate and ... disclose all his family affairs ... and be subject to general scrutiny." Although wartime craft unionists began to abandon the old "respectable" approach in favour of embracing the CCF and its welfarist policies, they maintained their "testy sense of manhood, dignity and sturdy independence." For the Trades and Labour Congress, "social security in its full sense" meant "useful creative employment." Furthermore, the Congress warned authorities that workers would rebel against demeaning make-work programs whose premise was that "twice as many people could be put to work if a half sized shovel was used."


27 Trades and Labour Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Bill No. 98 Respecting Unemployment Insurance, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 2, 23 July 1940, 117.


29 Trades and Labour Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-Establishment, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 24, 7 July 1943, 642.

30 Ibid., 641.
Neither was the more politicized industrial-union movement indifferent to questions of pride and esteem. When the All-Canadian Congress of Labour argued for a redistributive unemployment-insurance program, it emphasized that such a program would not be a humiliating form of state largesse. Rather, redistribution would reflect the generosity of those "senior men who will never be laid off . . . [but who] have consistently . . . advocated unemployment insurance right throughout."\(^{31}\) Similarly, industrial unions sought to win new recruits by framing their more politicized approach as the worker's only honourable choice. While "the capitalists" were accused of idling on "unearned incomes," and the "great masses of unorganized workers" were said to "live wholly at the mercy of their masters,"\(^{32}\) the industrial unionist was a man who would not "submit to being pushed round."\(^{33}\)

This advocacy helped to transform Canadian citizenship. As the Canadian Labour Congress explained to the B&B Commission, by acting as a "cohesive force . . . which [brought] Canadians [together] where they might otherwise be divided,"\(^{34}\) the traditional left expanded Canadian citizenship to include claims to recognition and belonging that had been previously stifled and ignored. Trade unions also brought "leisure to working people through the shorter working day and work-week, paid vacations and statutory holidays,"

\(^{31}\) All-Canadian Congress of Labour, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on Bill No. 98 Respecting Unemployment Insurance, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 2, 23 July 1940, 155.


\(^{34}\) Canadian Labour Congress, "Submission to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism," 13 December 1965, 2.
and therefore helped “workers . . . to participate in the cultural heritage . . . which was in large measure denied to them.”

There is undoubtedly virtue in a bare-knuckled political-economy approach that explains these transformations as responses to workers’ collective economic power. But these transformations also required ideas, symbols and understandings.

The mid-century traditional left’s core emphasis was on realizing independence and dignity through meaningful work, trade union rights and contributory social programs. By asserting the rightful claims of masculinity against the alternating threats of unemployment and the unfettered dominion of capital, the movement used the symbolic capital of masculinity to convey workers’ demands to wider societal audiences in terms that seemed “in place” and “reasonable.” The same emphasis also helped the movement to explain to prospective supporters how workingmen could pursue new political directions without sacrificing their claims to dignity and respect. In short, the case of the traditional left points up the material significance of positive recognition. Even if the traditional left is seen exclusively as a movement concerned with economic security, pursuing even this comparatively narrow understanding of security still required an enterprise of successful civic communication. And crucial to this enterprise was a politics of identity that capitalized on the resources of esteem and belonging that mid-century anglo-saxon manliness afforded.

35 Ibid., 3-4.
The Women's Movement

The relevance of esteem and belonging to questions of safety and security is demonstrated strongly by the case of the women’s movement. Interwar and mid-century feminists confronted a Canadian civic arena in which acceptable claims-making was a highly selective affair. In particular, male authorities attempted to use strategies of trivialization, shaming and exclusion to prevent citizenship from becoming a venue for women’s specific security concerns. Thus, as is also suggested by the more physical tactics of repression that were initially used against the traditional left, the notion of an old politics devoted to issues of safety and security obscures the more important question: around whose security interests were the old politics to revolve?

Until 1940, women in Quebec were forced to confront this question by targeting the legal dimension of recognition. As the Quebec-based League for Women’s Rights explained to the Rowell-Sirois Commission, the impact of disfranchisement was evidenced by almost unparalleled levels of wage discrimination against women teachers, the ineligibility of single, separated and divorced women for social benefits and the typical exclusion of unemployed female workers from provincially-sponsored retraining schemes. At the same time, the reception accorded to the League by a forum in which it was entitled formally to participate highlights the more subtle barriers to security that traditionally disrespected actors may face when they attempt to use the formally equal rights of liberal citizenship.

The Commissioners seemed hardly to have listened to the League’s presentation at all. By claiming that social policy in Quebec was beyond its purview, the Commission
conveniently ignored the fact that the League for Women's Rights was merely offering social policy examples in order to buttress its case for a constitutional amendment that would establish a uniform bundle of political rights for all Canadians. Moreover, the Commission itself had been established to reexamine Canada's constitution and division of powers. The jurisdictional excuse began to appear particularly shaky when the Commission began querying the League on the issue of milk pasteurization for infants in Quebec, which was clearly an item of provincial jurisdiction. Simply put, the Commission's jurisdictional claims were in fact gendered claims that reflected a view of economics and constitutional change as men's business alone. No mere idiosyncrasy of the Commission, this same view led the National Council of Women's male solicitor to shelve his client's brief on the "Political and Civil Status of Women." He suggested that the Council's views on welfare, wages and employment opportunity for women were views on which he "need not dwell."36 A far more suitable topic of discussion was the Council's resolution on the topic of marriage and divorce, which he described as "most important to women" because it "touches, undoubtedly, near the home."37

Women were consistently marginalized in the mid-century debates about unemployment and the welfare state. The Rowell-Sirois Commission worked hard to avoid feminist concerns, while women were almost entirely excluded from the wartime reconstruction debates. Ottawa finally responded to women's pleas for inclusion by establishing a separate Advisory Committee on the Post-War Problems of Women, which


37 Ibid., 9231, 9254.
held no parliamentary hearings, and which found that the parent Reconstruction Committee had reported to Parliament without even receiving its recommendations. As historian Gail Cuthbert Brandt puts it, women were “pigeon-holed and forgotten.”

In short, a dominant view of politics as a male preserve meant that women faced severe difficulties in making their specific security concerns heard. Women may have been allowed to vote, but they were expected to avoid the actual business of political debate in favour of discharging dutifully their roles as wives and mothers. Thus, questions of esteem and belonging in the civic arena were plainly questions of security for women. Problems of eliciting esteem and belonging in a male-dominated public sphere presented women with problems of voice and respect: and the severity of these problems is evidenced by the extent to which women’s security concerns were evaded and rebuffed.

Women often sought to manage their subordinate civic status by conveying strategic modesty. For example, when the National Council of Women presented its brief to the House Social Security Committee, it neglected to challenge women’s exclusion from the Reconstruction hearings or to complain about the Social Security Committee’s failure to question the Council delegation. Council President Mrs. Edgar Hardy concealed the “aroused indignation” that her Presidential Address of the same year had directed at men who told women to “go back to the kitchen.”

Similarly, when appearing before the 1950 Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Council hedged its argument for equal rights and increased female representation by describing

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women's “peacetime . . . contribution” exclusively in terms of “good homes and well
brought-up children.”  

Women who attempted to participate in the great mid-century recasting of
Canadian citizenship were subjected to demeaning digressions about the ethics of
courtship, their apparent physical attractiveness, the great importance of family discipline
and the pleasing diversion that men might find while serving on “mixed” juries. Some of
these digressions may have been well-intentioned. But they also hinted at the harsher
treatment that women might expect if they strayed farther from the gendered norms of
civic participation than male parliamentarians were prepared to allow. As Goffman’s
work suggests, therefore, strategic modesty was a particularly important posture of self-
protection for women, who feared losing “more than [they] could have gained had [their]
move won the point.”  

Thus, while interwar and mid-century feminists sought to focus political attention
on women’s problems of work, welfare and wages, the great difficulties that they
experienced in doing so highlighted the disabilities of a second-class citizenship that
separated women from the ranks of worthy civic claimants. This background affords a
useful context for thinking about the subsequent feminist emphasis on eliminating sexist
imagery in language and fighting against exclusionary signals and practices in public
interaction. As I have argued, a major legacy of women’s attempt to join their more

40 National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the Special Senate Committee on
Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 2, 26 April 1950,
54.

established counterparts in using participation rights as a basis of voice and self-defence has been a feminist politics of recognition. This legacy suggests an important point: the postwar rise of legal universalism did not vitiate the political significance of particularistic differences in interactional respect. Because these differences in respect have so often proved crucial in determining whose security concerns are heard, particularistic emphases in the politics of recognition cannot be captured under the rubric of personal psychology or group authenticity alone.

Ethnocultural Minorities

National organizations of ethnocultural minorities did not participate in the Rowell-Sirois or Reconstruction forums. However, the close relationship between problems of esteem and belonging and problems of security is clearly demonstrated by the early postwar participation of groups representing Japanese and Jewish Canadians. These constituencies had experienced a host of material injustices, which were fuelled by problems of social esteem and civic belonging. These injustices include internment, confiscation of property and pervasive discrimination in the areas of employment, property transactions and access to housing.

More subtly, pervasive disesteem could prevent the disesteemed from conveying effectively their distinctive security concerns in the first place. For instance, “as a minority group,” the Canadian Jewish Congress did not wish to start a “terrific fight” about anti-Semitism with the 1950 Senate Human Rights Committee.\(^\text{42}\) By professing to “accept

\(^{42}\) Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 74.
[discrimination] as a penalty,” by emphasizing that people were “entitled to their likes and dislikes” and by framing a bill of rights as an patriotic rebuke to communism, the Congress responded to its fear that further exposure to demonization and bigotry would be its punishment for criticizing more powerful others. Thus, problems of esteem and belonging discouraged the Canadian Jewish Congress from approaching the Human Rights Committee with actual human rights complaints. The Congress offered no suggestion that anti-Semitism required a forceful state response, and its stance of adaptive deference only reinforced norms of civic interaction that helped to keep minorities “in their place.”

The Senate Human Rights Committee certainly imparted these norms to the National Japanese-Canadian Citizens’ Association. When the group’s delegation argued that its community deserved more respect than Canadian society had proved willing to pay, the Committee angrily warned the “Japanese” to be content with being “allowed” to enjoy such marvellous benefits of citizenship as the legal right to own fishing boats and to reside in the province of British Columbia. The warning was potent: if a Committee charged with advancing the cause of human rights took such umbrage at a minority bid for increased respect, what could Japanese Canadians expect from the citizens who had so energetically pressed for their internment?

Thus, the material role of esteem and belonging not only arises from the prima facie link between disesteem and problems of security and safety. As the strategic

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43 Ibid., 75.

deference of the Canadian Jewish Congress and the harsh rebuff experienced by the
National Japanese-Canadian Citizens’ Association both suggest, actors must also enjoy
social esteem and civic belonging in order to effectively convey their problems and
aspirations to the wider society in which they live.

Shelter from Disrespect

Our basic dependence on respect and voice means that anti-discrimination rights can
become a second-best alternative strategy when pervasive disesteem makes effective civic
communication seem impossible. For example, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the
National Japanese-Canadian Citizens’ Association, the National Council of Women and
the Communist Party all appeared before the Human Rights Committee on behalf of
constituents whose need for anti-discrimination rights stemmed from the tendency of more
powerful or numerous others to regard them with disrespect; as unvirtuous, disloyal or
“just not up to the job.” These groups would undoubtedly have preferred respect, which
was indeed an object that a host of “new” movements would soon begin to pursue more
directly: as a basis of security that allows people to defend and pursue their own needs
rather than being outcasts who must focus on seeking shelter from the unfavourable
judgments of others.

The case of the labour movement points up a different avenue of partial escape
from problems of disrespect. Increasingly able to wield the weapon of the strike, and
therefore to amplify working-class voices regardless of the personal views of their high-
status interlocutors, postwar trade unions lost sight of their former emphasis on working-
class virtue. Attesting to this point is the speed with which the late 1940s advent of collective-bargaining rights sealed the old craft-versus-industrial union debate over how best to garner a respectful hearing from authorities. The arrival of usable strike rights made agonizing over issues of style and posture seem moot. But while the new availability of strike rights appeared to insulate labour from the political impact of disesteem, movements not organized along workplace lines were positioned quite differently. I have argued that this contrast highlights the particular importance of questions of discourse and identity for the feminist and ethnocultural-minority movements.

Trade unions foregrounded this difference implicitly when appearing before the 1950 Senate Human Rights Committee. While stressing the importance of "promoting education . . . [to eradicate] racial and religious prejudice," labour made no mention of using education to persuade bosses and authorities to respect working-class people. Unions instead devoted their efforts to urging that the recently-won collective-bargaining rights be constitutionally protected from potential legal encroachment. Similarly, while the 1960 Canadian Jewish Congress praised the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights as a valuable symbolic declaration of equal citizenship, labour scorned a hortatory document that would be legally useless to union organizers and striking workers.

The feminist and ethnocultural-minority emphasis on identity and civic symbolism can also be understood better by pointing up a contrast with the basic character of the labour movement's entry into Western citizenship. Early working-class movements pursued recognition by highlighting their claim to identity with "the people" and by

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stressing the special duties of the male breadwinner. But feminists and ethnocultural minorities faced a more arduous route: they had to challenge unduly restrictive understandings of to whom “the people” referred. I have argued that this position of psychological minoritarianism and this tendency to lack any political instrument comparable to the strike have fuelled an acute sense of vulnerability to negative social perceptions among feminist and ethnocultural-minority participants. This vulnerability is the most important source of the particularly strong “new” movement emphasis on accumulating symbols of recognition and respect.

Universalism, Symbolic Capital and Voice

In the years immediately following World War Two, social movements tended to battle discrimination and exclusion on straightforwardly universalist grounds. Ethnocultural minorities, in particular, saw the famous Allied exhortations, which framed World War Two as a crusade to vindicate the Enlightenment values of equality and dignity, as a “source of inspiration and encouragement.”\(^{46}\) As I have argued, groups like the Canadian Jewish Congress stressed the “moral implications”\(^{47}\) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to amplify the goal of equality without having to launch a more confrontational emphasis on the specifics of racial discrimination in Canada. In later years, human rights discourse came to be invoked in more explicitly challenging ways. This


\(^{47}\) Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, \textit{Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence}, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 70.
latter approach was amply demonstrated when ethnic minorities sought to cast shame on the advocates of “two founding races” by brandishing their copies of the United Nations Declaration and the 1960 Bill of Rights.

Universalist discourse also became important for the mainstream women’s movement in the decades immediately following World War Two. As the earlier participation of the National Council of Women and the League for Women’s Rights indicated, the traditional suffragist language of maternal virtue seemed to encourage male authorities to restrict women’s “acceptable” political input to questions of marriage, infant mortality and the importance of inculcating morals in children. At the same time, the norms of interactional deference tended to militate against confronting sexist disrespect directly. Thus, universalist discourse offered a potentially useful means of linking women’s equality claims to the more commonly accepted norm of racial equality. For instance, the National Council of Women relied on universalism to remind the B&B Commission that “a nation cannot be . . . two-thirds first class citizens and one-third on probation” any more than it could “be half slave and half free.”

Similarly, the Council protested the elimination of anti-discrimination rights from the Victoria Charter by observing that the impact of the decision was “not restricted to women”: it neglected “any person who for one reason or another might be discriminated against.”

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48 National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Preliminary Hearing, Cathedral Hall, Ottawa, Ontario, 7-8 November 1963, 449.

49 National Council of Women of Canada, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 74, 4 May 1971, 37, 42.
different feminist perspective, this cautious emphasis pointed up the excessive difficulties that women faced in garnering respect in male-dominated prestige environments. By the early 1970s, a radical-grassroots strain in feminism began to respond to these difficulties by constructing counter-images "of a female-centred beauty and strength,\(^{50}\) which were sometimes anchored in quasi-separatist attempts to build a "world apart from the dominant society."\(^{51}\)

Postwar ethnocultural minorities launched a more immediately direct bid to surmount the indignities of "latecomer" status. Increasingly, they began to voice their resentment at being treated as unimportant afterthoughts whose inclusion reflected nothing more than the great liberal principles of the dominant society. With what was often a masculine and almost militantly middle-class emphasis, these actors began to demand recognition as virtuous and worthy civic participants. During the B&B debates, for example, Ukrainian-Canadian representatives stressed that "in two world wars, Canada's soldiers were better, stronger, braver and more plentiful because of the added direct positive contribution of the Ukrainian language and culture."\(^{52}\) For its part, the Canadian Polish Congress argued that the great contributions of its community's "prominent and especially gifted individuals" meant that "the Polish ethnic group [was]
entitled to full participation in all the various fields of public life in Canada." And increasingly, a range of ethnocultural-minority participants began to invoke a new discourse of multiculturalism. This discourse framed "unity in diversity" as an international "advantage in business," and it emphasized the role of minority cultures in transforming a drab colonial backwater into a country that was "alive, vibrant, beautiful [and] cosmopolitan."55

Thus, traditionally disrespected groups began to deploy symbolic capitals of civic contribution and virtue as resources of political power. I have argued that this approach emerged because universalism in and of itself did little to change the differentials in particularistic respect around which Canadian politics so obviously revolved. For example, the 1950 Senate Human Rights Committee treated female, Jewish- and Japanese-Canadian witnesses in ways that underlined clearly the distinction between being formally entitled to participate and actually being heard. The Committee ignored women’s equality arguments in favour of offering patronizing homilies about femininity, which began with the observation that “these delegations get better looking all the time."56 Similarly, Committee members suggested that “the Japanese ... never became quite separate from


54 Canadian Polish Congress, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 72, 28 April 1971, 26, 29.


their home obligations” and that excessive self-interest had led Jewish advocates to ignore the problem of discrimination against “Englishmen.” More generally, authorities seemed unable to grasp how the notion of “two founding races” might be seen as an affront, just as the Diefenbaker government discerned no inconsistency in enshrining sexual equality in the Bill of Rights while proclaiming that Canada was not “making men and women equal, because men and women are not equal: they are different.”

These problems of voice and respect did not necessarily lead equality-seekers to dismiss universalism as empty rhetoric, although this may have been the case for some. Rather, just as dominant groups had long used prestige as a weapon for shaming those who dared to “stick out their necks,” traditionally subordinate groups seized on international human rights discourse as a means of making prestige considerations work in the opposite direction. Perhaps most spectacularly, victims of oppression capitalized on the postwar motto of “never again” as a basis of moral authority.

Ethnocultural-minority representatives pointed out that “race . . . is a very dangerous word . . . [that has] caused a great deal of trouble throughout the world.” They enjoined those “running . . . this country” to heed “the knowledge and experience”

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58 Senator Kinley, in Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the Special Senate Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 3, 27 April 1950, 76.


60 Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Preliminary Hearing, Cathedral Hall, Ottawa, Ontario, 7-8 November 1963, 264.
of citizens who had "been subjected to internment or imprisonment as aliens and even
enemies." 61 They emphasized their work as "pioneers in this matter [of] human rights"; 62
they reminded their audiences that they were "alive to the issue of human rights and
fundamental freedoms with a certain sensitivity that may not be true of other groups"; 63
and they insisted that other Canadians needed to learn about the "individual experiences"
of those who "know the harmful . . . effect discrimination has worked upon them." 64 By
the same token, and particularly after the Charter victory of 1982 began to undermine
radical-grassroots objections to women's constitutional participation, feminists urged male
authorities to "learn to see these things the way we see them, by listening to us, and by
recognizing that we have valid . . . expertise." 65 As feminists pointed out, their expertise
had been "informed and coloured by being on the receiving end of a substantial amount of
inequality." 66 Thus, by capitalizing on the human rights discourse that crystallized the
international reaction to World War Two, equality-seeking movements worked to increase

61 Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee
of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and
Evidence, No. 22, 9 December 1980, 74-75.

62 Canadian Jewish Congress, Presentation to the House of Commons Special Committee on
Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 1, 12-15 July
1960, 89.

63 Ibid., 90.

64 National Japanese-Canadian Citizens' Association, Presentation to the Special Senate
Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 8,
10 May 1950, 271.

65 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the Special Joint
Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, Minutes of
Proceedings and Evidence, No. 15, 31 August 1987, 144.

66 Ibid.
the prestige that victims could claim in postwar Canadian debates about constitutionalism and citizenship.

The ensuing social-movement advocacy was not "just talk." Just as the traditional left deployed a discourse of manly breadwinners and "the people" to amplify voices that dominant groups had previously refused to hear, so the women’s and ethnocultural-minority movements invoked themes of civic contribution, first-hand civil liberties expertise and group virtue to raise concerns that had once been unspeakable. In the case of the traditional left, struggles for voice and recognition produced an expanded citizenship that encompassed material issues which the old nightwatchman had been ordered to ignore. And although the notion of a transition to postmaterialism misses it, the same point applies to the case of the postwar women’s and ethnocultural-minority movements. By pursuing esteem and belonging as bases of recognition and voice, these movements broadened the focus of Canadian citizenship to include long-stifled material complaints.

As this study has shown, the list of newly utterable, prima facie material concerns is remarkable. It includes the following: gendered discrimination in wages and hiring practices; women’s unequal access to social programs, such as the Canada Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance; income security for widows and divorced women; discrimination in allocating assets in divorce; the feminization of poverty; the gendered impact of free trade and state retrenchment; racial discrimination in hiring, promotion, housing and property transactions; laws excluding minorities from particular professions; the internment, deportation and confiscation of property experienced by misrecognized
minorities; racist violence and hate crime; biases in law-enforcement protection; and affirmative action.

Therefore, a central message of this study is that struggles to garner esteem and belonging have helped women and minorities to highlight aspirations that, no matter how impeccably material their nature, the polity once refused to hear. Structural changes in immigration patterns, a transformed workforce, increased access to postsecondary education and a more secure citizenry that can better expand its sympathies have undoubtedly been important. But it is inconceivable that such a dramatic broadening of the polity's menu of security and safety issues could have taken place without a politicized focus on recognition and respect. Thus, I have argued that this connection—between enjoying recognition and using voice as a basis of claims-making and self-defence—is where the profoundly material significance of esteem and belonging lies.

Group Memory

Concerns about esteem and belonging also become prominent when future prospects are viewed through the prism of traumatic group memory. Ethnically-defined communities whose living elders were interned, ridiculed and confined systematically to the fringes of the labour market carry highly personalized links to history that anchor their political action in lessons drawn from the past. I have suggested that this historical anchoring informs the pronounced emphasis on cosmopolitan sophistication that ethnic-minority representatives have brought to Canadian constitutional debates.
This is a distancing emphasis, which aims to draw the sharpest line possible between what was typically permissible in the past and what is appropriate today. It seeks to convince the majority society that the formerly stigmatized community has “paid its dues” and therefore warrants a corresponding societal reevaluation. In Canadian constitutional politics, these “third-force” bids for recognition have also been shaped by a sense of numerical minoritarianism, by the unpredictable French-English dialectic and by a more diffuse globalized awareness that seemingly happy conditions of inter-group harmony are not infrequently shattered.

Therefore, I have argued that it is crucial to understand the emphasis on recognizing and valorizing multiculturalism as a response to fears about how minority futures might turn out if a durable consensus on diversity is not achieved in the relatively auspicious conditions of the present. By insisting that multiculturalism must become the benchmark of Canadian civics, a criterion that constitutional change must always be constrained to respect, ethnic-minority participants have tended to cluster around a constitutional conservatism that reflects their apprehension about the future. Like the prototypical materialists of whom New Politics speaks, they insist on “rigid, predictable rules” because “they need to be sure of what is going to happen.” But by no means does this insecurity lead ethnic minorities to ignore questions of esteem and belonging: as I have argued, it does quite the reverse.

At the same time, visible minorities have been no less alive to questions of symbolic status, recognition of group histories and respect for minority languages and

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cultural practices. In particular, Canadians of Asian and African ancestry have linked problems of civic symbolism and societal disrespect to problems of employment discrimination, restricted social opportunity and hate crime. The basic similarity of this focus on symbolism and respect to that of the more typically established "third force" highlights the inadequacy of confining the importance of esteem and belonging to the realm of personal psychology and authenticity alone. Esteem and belonging are instrumentally relevant to a remarkable diversity of purposes because they speak to the basic dependence of human goal-seeking on eliciting the sympathy and cooperation of others. Esteem and belonging are potent instruments of goal-seeking in the present, yet they are also future-oriented goods which offer the security of helping beneficiaries to respond more effectively to the unknowable and unforseen.

**Prestige: Authorization and Exchange**

Equality-seeking social movements in Canadian citizenship have placed particular emphasis on the constitutional good of symbolic authorization. This emphasis links today's politics of recognition to the days when "Coats and Scutchions painted" were "signes of favour in the Commonwealth." Discontinuity lies in the extent to which the state's role in conferring civic recognition has been democratized. As Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe observe, the great eighteenth-century revolutions marked "the end of a society . . . ruled by a theological-political logic in which the social order had its

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foundation in divine will.\(^69\) Conditions of mass democracy have thus transformed what it means to secure a favourable state response: positive civic recognition is no longer seen as an expression of kingly favour or divine grace but as evidence of the group's importance in the society at large.\(^70\)

The contemporary emphasis on recognition also reflects the increased tendency of postwar states to be social exhortators.\(^71\) As the 1950 Senate hearings indicated, the political impact of the Allied campaign, which mobilized Western societies against a generalized ideological enemy, was immediate. In particular, the remarkable exhortative role of the United Nations Declaration encouraged equality-seeking movements to see a domestic bill of rights as "a powerful force to foster, in the minds of the people, the conviction that discrimination is wrong."\(^72\) The basic message was the same in the 1980-82 entrenchment debates. Anti-racists argued that a charter would make "people . . . aware that . . . this is where Canada stands, not only the government, but the people of

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Canada. Thus, a charter would help to teach Canadians that "certain types of behaviour [are] . . . not acceptable here." Constitutional recognition of multiculturalism was valued similarly; as an "important step in . . . building a truly egalitarian . . . society"; a society in which those who saw "Canada as a country that should remain an exclusively white homeland" would experience the disrespected outsider's fate.

More easily missed is the function that recognizing the traditionally marginalized and oppressed has fulfilled for the dominant society. The crucial backdrop for this function is our knowledge that prejudice wreaks catastrophe when it wields the coercive machinery of the modern state. The postwar international community responded to this knowledge by promoting a link between national prestige and the nation's efforts to further the cause of human rights. And this international link, I have argued, has been a particularly important influence on postwar Canadian citizenship. Uneasy about the diminished viability and prestige of the British connection, Ottawa sought immediately to capitalize on the new emphasis. In 1946, for example, Paul Martin Sr. introduced a decidedly progressive understanding of the meaning of Canadian citizenship, which he defined as "full partnership in the fortunes and in the future of the nation." The most

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74 Ibid.

75 Afro-Asian Foundation of Canada, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 32, 6 January 1981, 32.

skilful and energetic proponent of this understanding was Prime Minister Trudeau, who unveiled the Charter idea during the International Year of Human Rights as Canada’s “opportunity to take a lead” in what the reaction to World War Two had established as a prestigious national endeavour.\textsuperscript{77}

Thus, I have argued that postwar Canadian constitutionalism has been the major site for an exchange relationship between the aspirations of equality-seeking groups and the identity concerns of Canadian nationalism. As the potent Charter advocacy of the National Association of Japanese Canadians demonstrated in particular, Trudeau’s project of defining Canadian identity in terms of human rights did much to frame the idea of respect for the traditionally disrespected as crucial “to the making of our future nation.”\textsuperscript{78}

This exchange relationship surfaced most strikingly during the Meech Lake debates, when the Trudeau-inspired foes of dualism and provincialism conducted their attack by emphasizing the Accord’s disregard of the actors who had been recognized in the 1982 Charter.

The evident transformation of traditionally oppressed groups into “Canadians who cherish their rights and freedoms” was a repeated touchstone for Meech Lake’s Trudeauian opponents.\textsuperscript{79} After all, concern about the renewed constitutional marginalization of equality-seeking groups was a particularly important stance to take for

\textsuperscript{77} Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Minister of Justice, \textit{A Canadian Charter of Human Rights} (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1968), 12.


a nationalism that had staked so much of its prestige on its "commitment to a fairer, more compassionate society." Angered by this "politically correct" solicitude, the right responded by decrying the "constitutional machismo" of the new, Charter-identified "special interests." From a quite different vantage point, the exchange relationship raised the spectre of co-optation: it threatened to subordinate the respect claims of marginalized groups to their willingness to embrace the priorities and assumptions of the dominant society's nationalism. But there can be little doubt that social-movement actors speaking an authorized discourse of constitutional recognition had gone some distance toward using prestige considerations, which had once worked so consistently against them, as bases of voice and power.

The nationalist exchange relationship has become a shadow of its once robust self. The postwar attempt to enlist equality-seeking groups as national unity allies, whose institutional and fiscal dimensions are charted perceptively in Les Pal's *Interests of State*, seems largely over. At a time when human rights are increasingly prominent on the West European agenda, Canada’s emphasis on attending to the respect claims of marginalized

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81 Brian Lee Crowley, *The Road To Equity: Gender, Ethnicity and Language--Impolitic Essays* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1994), 118.


84 Pal, *Interests of State*.

groups has markedly receded. The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women has been scrapped, while a rather Orwellian makeover has transformed the former multiculturalism ministry into the Ministry of Canadian Heritage. The notion of negotiating reparations for historical injustices, which Prime Minister Mulroney pursued with willingness if not consistency, has also found little support from the Chrétien government.86

From a right-wing perspective, these salutary developments are symbolized by the 1992 referendum defeat of the Charlottetown Accord: the demise of a document scattered with symbolic nods to particular group identities is celebrated as the victory of common sense over the unfortunate fixations of our recent constitutional past. As one scholar puts it, a "constitutional politics that satisfies special interests by granting them preferred constitutional status" has been vanquished by the "substantially correct" judgment of the Canadian electorate.87 The "artificial, ideological agenda . . . of political correctness" has been put in its place.88

The point here is less to decry Canada’s turn to the right than it is to emphasize that questions of esteem and belonging have crucial ramifications for the distribution of

86 For further discussion, see Matt James, "Redress Politics in Canadian Citizenship," in The State of the Federation 1998: How Canadians Connect, ed. Harvey Lazar and Tom McIntosh (Kingston: Queen's University Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, 1999), 250, 269.


political power. The dominant postwar approach to national unity, which sought to establish Canadian citizenship as a prestigious emblem of moral decency, helped to alter the prevailing distribution of power by linking Canada’s self-image and international reputation to its willingness to hear the marginalized and the oppressed. In revolt against this exchange relationship, a resurgent right has fought to reframe Canada as an entity whose future health requires not the stimulus of “political correctness,” but rather an attractive business climate, a healthy dose of decentralization and the elimination of special rights.

In large part, the right attacks the link between Canadian nationalism and postwar human-rights discourse because such a link has helped to establish a civic prestige environment that marginalizes conservatives. As Conservative MP Leo Duguay put it when he complained of the difficulties of being “a man on [the Meech Lake] committee,” feminist concerns seemed to be taking “more time . . . [than] all the other issues put together”: 89 “If some man had [condemned the Accord] we would not have paid as much attention to it, because it would not be as sensitive.” 90 More generally, right-wing critics condemn the postwar approach to civic symbolism as an attempt “to coerce Canadians into [rejecting] . . . those experiences and opinions that form the . . . foundation of Canadian identity.” 91 Thus, like their postwar “new” movement rivals, conservatives now

89 Duguay, in Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 15, 31 August 1987, 140, 141.


91 Darby and Emberley, “‘Political Correctness’,” 234.
react to the unhappy experience of being subjected to esteem and belonging as bases of social control.

Although the author's political sympathies lie with the former camp, this is not the point: both sides in today's battles over identity politics seek to mobilize prestige considerations in a competitive struggle to master the symbolic and discursive means of persuasion. But although the politics of esteem and belonging is clearly in high gear, to speak of a postmodern departure from security and safety concerns is too misleading by far. Each camp is animated by concerns about the economic and physical well-being of its putative constituents, as the ongoing disputes about how to approach social welfare, tax cuts, affirmative action, child care and violence against women amply testify. And for each camp, the exigencies of enjoying voice in mass democracy make social esteem and civic belonging crucial stakes in a struggle for particularistic interactional respect. This struggle targets not the higher-order aspirations of prosperous expressivism, but the enduring problem of symbolic power and voice: the struggle revolves around whose distinctive claims and approaches to security and safety will become priorities, and whose will be discarded or ignored.

**Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

It may be useful to gather these threads together by stating in a more abstract and summary fashion the major observations and premises that this study has sought to illustrate and defend. A basic empirical message of this work is that equality-seeking movements are typically fuelled by a mix of material and ideal concerns. Just as an
insurgent seventeenth-century liberalism was keen to valorize the Protestant faith as well as to defend the claims of property,\textsuperscript{92} so the traditional left and its "new" movement counterparts have pursued concerns ranging from income security and hate crime to the virtues of manliness and the civic contributions of minority cultures. I have argued that this typical blending tendency reflects the basic importance of communication for goal-seeking in human society. Because we must be heard in order to effectively pursue our goals, the material and the symbolic domains are inevitably and profoundly linked. This linkage means that how the polity addresses questions of recognition and voice plays a crucial role in determining how it approaches issues of safety and security.

A basic illustration of this linkage is the extent to which difficulties in one realm are accompanied by difficulties in the other. The Great Depression confronted unemployed men with agonizing dilemmas of pride and esteem, just as racist disrespect presented Japanese Canadians with grave problems of economic security and personal safety. The same seems to hold true for the relationship between symbolic and material gains. As I have shown, increased respect for traditionally disrespected groups has been accompanied by a dramatically expanded agenda of recognized security and safety concerns.

An emphasis on recognition in the present may also reflect one's awareness of the extent to which symbolic and material problems were linked in the past. Even when conditions of relative prosperity and interactional respect seem to have been reached, painful experiences may fuel anxieties about the future. From this historically saturated

vantage point, symbolic indicators testifying to the group's claim on the continued interactional respect of others appear as crucial resources of security. Thus, ethnocultural minorities have prized multiculturalism as a symbolic basis with which to mobilize the sympathies and good will of others in the event of unknown future exigencies.

Coping with problems of exclusion and misrecognition can often lead groups to pursue second-best alternatives to actual societal respect. As is suggested by the typically cautious approach that movements brought to the early postwar anti-discrimination debates, disrespected actors may concentrate on seeking legal protection from the societal prejudices that they are loath to confront more directly. I have argued that this phenomenon points up the great importance of voice: voice is the only democratic means with which to ensure that one's needs and aspirations are not excluded from the deliberations of more favourably placed others. A third-best alternative, the posture of strategic modesty which is often assumed by the disrespected, makes the point starkly. When voice seems particularly elusive, actors tend to wear a self-censoring cloak that smothers their aspirations and complaints.

Thus, I have argued for the importance of understanding particularistic respect as a currency of social power. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital is particularly useful for this purpose because it foregrounds the basic point: particularistic respect is deeply implicated in the competitive world of struggle and interest with which economic capital is more commonly associated.93 This crucial role of symbolic capital stems in part from what the business of celebrating and defending values is all about. As Goode's work

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makes so wonderfully clear, societies and sub-groups distribute esteem and prestige in order to reinforce behaviours and practices that they wish to uphold. Thus, because people disagree about what is praiseworthy and desirable, they tend to engage in competitive attempts to establish their vision of what ought to be esteemed or disesteemed by the group. This was as true in the days when Christians began praising the lowly and the meek as it is for the "new" movement struggles of today.

Capitalism can sometimes make the outcomes of prestige conflicts seem permanently rigged. By fuelling and naturalizing massive differences in wealth, differences which are also inter generationally transferable, capitalism gives the middle and upper classes a great edge in the politics of respect. As Bourdieu's study of *Distinction* shows, capitalism positions the propertied in ways that allow them to accumulate great badges of achievement, discernment, benevolence and taste. But struggles over particularistic respect also reflect a more intractable problem: our terrible shortage of time. Even if the great socialist dream becomes reality, priorities will still have to be selected and sorted. Thus, people with divergent priorities will continue to compete for respect and attention by seeking to mobilize symbols in order to present themselves and their projects as meritorious candidates for special consideration.

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From this perspective, it is easier to understand the more modest paradox that politics in the age of legal universalism still revolves around disputes over particularistic respect. The great twentieth-century opening of the public sphere to the traditionally denigrated and marginalized merely set the stage for a series of symbolic struggles that the fist of exclusion had served to forestall. I have placed particular emphasis on this point in order to counter the pervasive view that sees today's politics of recognition as a wild departure from some presumed state of normalcy. Until we find a way of allowing people to live as autonomously empowered individuals who have no need for the assistance of others, a development which would by no means be happy, these struggles are highly unlikely to disappear.

This does not mean that they will stay the same. Struggles for recognition are now being waged by former beneficiaries of differences in particularistic respect, such as champions of the heterosexually-defined and father-guided traditional nuclear family. As Raymond Breton notes, the postwar effort to vindicate the spirit of liberal universalism by making "it easier for certain social segments to identify with [Canadian] institutions" has engendered resistance from "those accustomed to a sense of cultural dominance."⁹⁷ Although conservatives now seem to accept the idea of universalism itself, they bitterly resist the transformed prestige environment, which they experience as a source of humiliation and disempowerment. When a shaken Reform Party MP responded with a

string of angry profanities to a Liberal MP’s use of the label “racist,” this visceral stimulus was plainly apparent.98

The politics of recognition also highlights a serious dilemma: equality-seeking campaigns may mobilize identity in ways that reflect prestige on some group members and not others. The point can be made by looking back at the participants analyzed in this study, and asking: to which social-movement organization was a female, working-class member of an ethnocultural minority to turn? To a strongly masculinist and anglo-dominated traditional left acting in the name of the manly breadwinner? To an assertively bourgeois and typically masculinist national ethnocultural organization boasting of its “prominent and especially gifted individuals”?99 To the traditionally WASP-dominated, middle-class women’s group emphasizing its “professional ... expertise?”100 In short, the understandable attempt to put the group’s “best foot forward” can raise internal problems of exclusion similar to the dilemmas of societal disrespect that animate equality-seeking campaigns in the first place.

The quandary has not gone ignored. Social-movement organizations have increasingly sought to frame their constituent identities as multiple and diverse. For example, the labour movement has developed internal strategies of affirmative action and

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98 The MP was Darrell Stinson, who asked Liberal MP John Cannis: “Do you have the ... gonads to come across here and say that to me, you son of a bitch? Come on. ... I will not have some asshole call me a racist.” Quoted in Maclean’s, “MP Slinging Match,” 17 February 1997, 13.


100 Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, Presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on the 1987 Constitutional Accord, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, No. 15, 31 August 1987, 144.
guaranteed representation in order to transform the public face of its leadership as well as
the content of its deliberations. The National Action Committee on the Status of
Women has adopted similar strategies in a bid to increase the power and profile of
disabled and visible-minority women within the feminist movement.

Thus, struggles for recognition have become increasingly complex. In the new
context, the prestige challenge for the women’s, trade union, anti-racism and
multiculturalism movements is twofold. The first challenge is to address more successfully
right-wing appeals that attract people who have experienced “political correctness” as a
source of shaming. The second challenge is to do so while simultaneously combating a
traditional reliance on bases of respect which disproportionately benefit more powerful
group members. Because successful civic appeals tend to amplify mainstream values, the
latter task promises to be particularly difficult. No liberatory movement worth the
name can afford to reflect uncritically in its own representations and practices the biases
and exclusions of the society that it seeks to change. Yet, at the end of the day, that
society furnishes the basic prestige environment in which the movement must act. As this
study’s basic message suggests, the unavoidable dependence of human goal-seeking on the
perceptions of more powerful or more numerous others makes this work of balancing far
too important to ignore.

101 See Craig Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History, 2d ed. (Toronto:
Lorimer, 1996), 143-149.


103 Sidney Tarrow, Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics (New
This study has also aimed its message at analysts and policymakers. I have argued against drawing a sharp, *a priori* distinction between political struggles that revolve around security and safety and ones that focus on esteem and belonging. The distinction seems compelling because security and safety are the most basic human needs. But the contrast between materialism and postmaterialism can also lead analysts and policymakers astray, because it seems to suggest that issues of personal safety and economic security--those most fundamental requirements of human life--should always take civic priority over the higher-order questions of esteem and belonging. This way of ordering civic priorities might be unfailingly sound if we knew how to provide safety and security for all, at least without committing outrages against human dignity--but we do not. It is more accurate to note that the varying safety and security concerns of groups like refugees, pensioners, young families, single mothers and blue-collar workers seem impossible to address effectively all at once. Political actors understand this difficulty, which is why they compete in order to focus the polity on the particular safety and security needs of the groups that they represent. This dimension of political competition makes esteem and belonging particularly vital material stakes for those whom the polity's lines of esteem and belonging have traditionally excluded. And it is for this reason that analysts and policymakers should not misconstrue the ensuing struggles over recognition and voice as the diversionary pursuits of the lucky. The struggles must instead be treated with the seriousness that their material stakes deserve.
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