

WESTERN ALIENATION AND INTRA-REGIONAL VARIATION:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF REGIONAL DISCONTENT IN  
BRITISH COLUMBIA AND ALBERTA

by

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B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1981

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
(Department of Political Science)

We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 1982

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### Abstract

This paper is based upon a comparative study of regional discontent in British Columbia and Alberta. It is proposed that there are fundamental differences between the provinces with respect to the ideological, partisan, and class correlates of the dependent variable, 'western alienation'. If such differences are found, and if they cannot be explained by structural dissimilarities between the communities, then it is plausible that the phenomenon known as 'alienation' is in fact a collection of functionally distinct belief systems.

An analysis of data compiled from two sample surveys suggests that such differences do occur. While there is some convergence between the two communities with respect to the partisan correlates of alienation (i.e., alienation is fundamentally an anti-Liberal sentiment in both provinces), there are major discrepancies where ideological and class antecedents are considered. In British Columbia, alienation is primarily a working class and 'liberal' phenomenon, while in Alberta it is more closely associated with ideological conservatism, and is not systematically related to any particular social class. Moreover, these differences are not 'washed away' by appropriate controls.

The paper concludes with the assertion that western alienation is not a homogeneous, 'pan-regional' phenomenon, but is rather a collection of diverse belief systems which vary perceptibly along provincial lines. Finally, it is argued that the study of Canadian federalism stands to benefit if greater attention is paid to differences between provincial communities.

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# I) Introduction:<sup>1</sup>

Our deeds determine us as much as we  
determine our deeds.

George Eliot

Canada, like all western societies, readily surrenders to the rhythms of political fashion. In the late 1800's and the early part of this century, the dominant theme in Canadian politics was national integration<sup>2</sup>. In the period immediately following World War II it was economic recovery and subsequently, economic nationalism. In more recent years, Canadian analysts have been preoccupied with the problem of national unity. Traditionally, the unity question focuses upon Quebec and its various demands for political autonomy. However, as we move into the 1980's, the 'Quebec problem' is counterpoised by numerous other manifestations of regional unrest, none of which captures the popular imagination like the dubious phenomenon of western alienation.

The situation in western Canada is said to be particularly grave because it emerges from economic rather than from cultural issues<sup>3</sup>. Like Quebec nationalism, western alienation is often considered synonymous with separatism; furthermore, its ideological affinities suggest to some an inexorable linkage with right-wing radicalism<sup>4</sup>. It is my view that none of these images captures the essence of western alienation because each rests upon the assumption that the phenomenon constitutes a coherent, internally uniform belief system. This assumption, which originates in a rather loose conception of the region, obscures much of the heterogeneity of political attitudes in what is a large and fundamentally diverse com-

munity. In our rush to forge new explanations of the 'crises' which beset Canadian federalism we have created a superficial, if not an artificial, picture of the kinds of behaviour which define western Canada as a regional entity. What is particularly objectionable in this regard is our propensity to overlook the smaller units of political life, to appreciate the otherwise obvious fact that 'the west' is an agglomeration of distinct communities, each having a unique political culture and consequently, a unique interpretation of its status within Confederation<sup>5</sup>.

My objective is to demonstrate that at one level of 'intra-regional' community distinction --the provincial level-- , western alienation is not one but rather several different belief systems, each of which bears the mark of the particular political culture from which it derives. More specifically, I shall compare three elements of regional discontent, namely, ideology, partisanship, and social class, in hopes of establishing that alienation varies by province within the region itself.

In the pages that follow I shall compare data compiled from two major surveys --one in British Columbia, the other in Alberta-- by testing a number of hypotheses inspired by the existing literature. The conceptual background against which the analysis is juxtaposed is discussed in Sections II and III. In Section IV I lay out the basic assumptions and premises of the study, while Section V describes the data and methodology. The analysis itself is undertaken in Section VI, and some of its implications are discussed in the Conclusion.

## II) Some Observations on the Study of Western Alienation:

Regional unrest has been a recurring feature of western Canadian politics since the earliest days of Confederation, yet the study of western alienation, that is, as a general phenomenon which lies somewhere between regional consciousness<sup>1</sup> and aggregated protest,<sup>2</sup> is still in its infancy. The concept has yet to secure a theoretically tenable framework of analysis, and while it is not my intention to propose an overarching theory of western alienation here, I consider it necessary to highlight some of the conceptual difficulties present in the available literature before turning to the survey data. Five observations warrant particular attention.

First, western alienation suffers from what has in another context been labeled the 'problem of the dependent variable'.<sup>3</sup> An inability to define 'alienation', and to agree upon the political and geographic parameters of 'the west' as a regional entity, has prompted students of Canadian politics to become preoccupied with "constructing explanations of phenomena (rather) than...the description of behaviour to be explained."<sup>4</sup> 'Alienation' has become a euphemism for myriad unspecified and often ambiguous relations between the western provinces and central Canada. Few analysts have been so bold as to confront the major conceptual questions: what is western alienation? how do we know it exists, and how is it distinguished from other forms of political non-integration? at what point does 'alienation' become an active and ultimately separatism-oriented phenomenon, and finally, how does alienation in one province differ from alienation in another?<sup>5</sup>

Second, the definitional problems of western alienation are exacerbated



by the ambiguous relationships between different analytical traditions. There are at present two dominant approaches to the study of regional discontent in Canada. The first, which for simplicity's sake I shall call the 'political economy' approach, sees western alienation as a social by-product of the larger disorder known as regional dependence, whose foundations lie in the economic structure of capitalist societies. The uneven distribution of economic resources favours some regions over others and thus creates a state of dependence between developed 'metropolises' and underdeveloped 'hinterlands'; thus Canada is dominated by a powerful manufacturing 'core' in southern Ontario and, to a lesser extent, in Quebec, while western and Atlantic 'peripheries' struggle to obtain measures of autonomous control over their own economic destinies. The futility of their efforts gives rise to feelings of resentment, persecution, and antipathy with respect to the centre.<sup>6</sup>

The other dominant approach, which I shall call the 'political behaviour' approach, assumes that western alienation is an attitudinal phenomenon which lends itself to measurement through survey research. This approach explains alienation in terms of its relationships with other attitudinal variables; regional discontent in the western provinces is found to be endemic among those who support the federal Progressive Conservative party,<sup>7</sup> among those who dislike Pierre Trudeau,<sup>8</sup> and among those who are not favourably disposed to French Canadians.<sup>9</sup> The role of surveys in explaining western alienation has become increasingly prominent as both the mechanics of quantitative research and popular acceptance of such techniques have advanced. Indeed, the citation of survey results has

become as much a part of assessing western alienation as the monitoring of public opinion is an element of predicting election results.<sup>10</sup>

The concurrent predominance of these two perspectives imposes conceptual limitations upon analysts who are concerned with operationalizing 'western alienation' as a dependent variable. On the one hand, both approaches are concerned with the behaviour of western Canada as a community estranged from or in some way dissatisfied with the central Canadian 'core'. Both are broadly concerned with the manner in which societal forces induce such behaviour, and both borrow from one another as a means of structuring research. On the other hand, each tradition seeks to explain western alienation from a different perspective; the political economy approach emphasizes the dynamics of regional unrest in terms of historical and societal antecedents, while the political behaviour approach typically stresses structural and attitudinal symptoms of the phenomenon at a given time.

Each tradition leads the researcher to focus upon different aspects of western alienation with different degrees of emphasis. For example, class-based analyses are central to many political economists' explanations of regional discontent,<sup>11</sup> while students of the political behaviour persuasion pay considerably less attention to class as an explanatory variable.<sup>12</sup> Such differences of emphasis provide severe obstacles to the formulation of a clear, comprehensive definition of western alienation.

Third, students of Canadian politics have not always made clear the distinction between 'western alienation' and 'political alienation'.<sup>13</sup> To a certain extent we are all bound by the canons of our predecessors;

'alienation' has traditionally been coterminous with Marxist theories of labour, and use of the concept in the scientific study of politics is a relatively new development. The introduction of another extending variable -- western Canadian regionalism -- virtually divorces the idea from its philosophic origins.

A cursory reading of the relevant literature suggests no necessary relationship between the phenomena of 'political alienation' and 'western alienation'. Indeed, behavioural studies suggest that personal pathologies such as 'powerlessness', 'normlessness', and 'anomie', long considered cornerstones of political alienation, are conspicuously absent among western Canadians.<sup>15</sup> While some overlap is bound to exist (e.g., the consummately 'anomic' westerner, who is by definition estranged from political life per se, is likely to be detached from Central Canada as a political community as well), I am in general agreement with Gibbins' assertion that western alienation is something other than a regional variation of the generic phenomenon, political alienation.<sup>16</sup>

Fourth, the complexity of political life in a federal system confounds efforts to formulate tidy, comprehensive explanations of western alienation. The basic structures of Canadian government influence regional behaviour through two distinct yet functionally related processes. On the one hand, the federal system gives formal expression to regional interests through governments which in turn influence the form and force of alienation among the populations they represent. Alan Cairns' observation that governments are in large part responsible for moulding their own political environments<sup>17</sup> is no where better illustrated than in the

behaviour of western politicians who from time to time exploit the rhetoric of alienation to aggrandize provincial powers vis-a-vis the federal government.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, the disjunction of federal and provincial realms affects western Canadians quite independently of governmental forces. As Elkins has shown, national and regional allegiances can and do co-exist in Canada. The presence of a strong regional identity does not preclude a sense of attachment to the nation as a whole; rather, multiple loyalties complement one another within an integrated federal community.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, a strong sense of western alienation need not imply disengagement from the political nationality. Elkins notes elsewhere that alienation and subjective attachments to 'Canada' as a national entity are unrelated,<sup>20</sup> and indeed David Elton and Roger Gibbins carry this observation one step further with their assertion that "At heart, the western Canadian political culture is federalist",<sup>21</sup> that it "...represents a demand for greater inclusion in, rather than withdrawal from, the broader Canadian society."<sup>22</sup> Paradoxically, then, western alienation is a source of both potential disunity and integration. Our inability to reconcile one possibility with the other makes a general theory of the phenomenon an unlikely prospect.

Finally, while regional unrest in western Canada has a long and explosive history, the catchphrase, 'western alienation' is a relatively recent formulation. This leads us to wonder whether the contemporary phenomenon is cast from the same conceptual mold as earlier forms of western discontent. Howard Leeson, Saskatchewan's Deputy Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs, suggests that it is not. Leeson draws a line between "the

old and new alienation in the west,"<sup>23</sup> explaining that the old alienation was borne of economic trauma during the Great Depression, and gave rise to populism, agrarian radicalism, and a collection of protest parties which changed the face of political life throughout the region. The new alienation is sustained by the belief that federal policies prevent the region from developing its new-found economic potential to fullest advantage. Indeed, a major feature of the new alienation is its propulsion not so much by grassroots agrarian communities, as was typical of the old alienation, but by provincial governments themselves, which spur on regional discontent in the pursuit of province-building ambitions.<sup>24</sup>

The old and the new alienations undoubtedly meet somewhere on a common conceptual plane, but it is not at all clear how much the phenomena overlap. Should 'western alienation' be treated only as the more recent incarnation of East-West antipathies (i.e., the 'new' alienation), or should it be afforded a broader conceptual sweep, such that it includes earlier forms of protest, and the entire history of unrest from which they originate?

It is my impression that the 'new alienation' is an outgrowth of the old. The agrarian, populist foundations of old style western protest now take back seat to more secular forms of discontent, which are stimulated by new-found economic wealth, a more aggressive Quebec nationalism and a pervasive disregard for federal political elites. However, contemporary western alienation is not a wholly independent phenomenon. It is deeply rooted in the memory of past generations, and indeed feeds upon many images and symbols whose significance was far greater during the Great

Depression than in the present day. It is because western alienation persists as a historical force that many of these images are considered germane to the 'new alienation.' However, as we shall see, their contemporary relevance can be questioned on empirical grounds.

I shall use the terms, 'western alienation', 'regional discontent', and 'regional unrest' more or less synonymously throughout this essay. However, the term 'political protest' is reserved for those active manifestations of western alienation such as the farm movements and populist third parties of the 1930s, and the various separatist organizations of the present day.

### III) Western Alienation and The Pan-Regional Community

'Regions' are by nature relative entities. They can exist only in comparison to other regions, and concomitantly, any region of appreciable size can be reduced to component sub-regions, each of which is functionally distinct from the others. Thus in a purely physical sense, western Canada is nothing more than an agglomeration of contiguous communities, united by some criteria but separated by others.

Yet much of our inability to deal with western alienation in an effective manner results from the indeterminacy of 'the region' as a unit of political analysis. A cursory examination of the various works fashioned by critics, proponents, and impartial observers of western regionalism indicates the manner in which perceptions of 'the west' vary according to each analytical persuasion. To social and economic geographers, western Canada is the sum total of all four provinces west of Ontario, since each of these provinces shares a unique political and economic history vis-a-vis the founding provinces of Confederation.<sup>1</sup>

Alternatively, differences in the trade and commodity structures of each province have prompted the B.C. Government to argue that "As one moves to the more specific and operational policy levels the dichotomy between the prairie west and the pacific west becomes more and more apparent."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, to the sociologically minded, the various cultural, linguistic, and ethnic linkages upon which regional identities are built serve as sources of both unity and divisiveness between the western provinces.<sup>3</sup>

In short, the conceptual structure of western Canadian regionalism is

a highly subjective matter. Nonetheless, a single axiom has dominated studies of western discontent for several generations, namely, that western Canada is a pan-regional community, whose internal diversity pales in the face of integrative forces, foremost of which is a pervasive antipathy toward Central Canada. This antipathy, which in the vernacular of contemporary analysis is labelled 'western alienation', is said to provide the foundation of a homogeneous regional political culture. The essence of this political culture is that differences in the societal and governmental institutions of each component community are eschewed in favour of a collective unity at the regional level, a unity inspired by the communities' common 'hinterland' status.<sup>4</sup>

While systematic interpretations of western alienation are admittedly few, those who express concern for the region's grievances have displayed a remarkable talent for overlooking political differences between the four component provinces. A statement by former Saskatchewan Premier Allan Blakeney, offered at the Annual Conference of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council in 1976, is apposite:

...despite (substantial) differences, most of us regard the four western provinces as a distinct region, with shared perceptions, with mutual concerns, and, in many respects, with common objectives. And the governments of these four provinces have worked together...to promote regional interests.<sup>5</sup>

Similar sentiments were expressed at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference in Calgary during the summer of 1973. All participants used the term, 'the west' as if describing a monolithic body, united in its stand against the federal government and free from internal diversity.



Mr. Lougheed extolled the "unique spirit of the West" while Mr. Schreyer spoke of the region's "widespread concern" for losses of economic opportunity in natural resources and agriculture.<sup>6</sup> But many western policy concerns are less widespread than Mr. Schreyer would have us believe; in British Columbia only 2.5% of the provincial population is employed in agriculture,<sup>7</sup> and indeed the west coast province benefits from many of the transportation and tariff policies which traditionally aggrieve Prairie residents.<sup>8</sup>

Academics too are inclined to treat western Canada as a pan-regional community. Political historian David E. Smith uses the terms 'the west' and 'the Prairie provinces' interchangeably in at least three separate inquiries into western Canadian political culture, thus underplaying the significance of provincial dissimilarities within the region and neglecting the westernmost province of British Columbia altogether.<sup>9</sup> Similar allegations can be levelled against economist Kenneth Norrie for his otherwise illuminating analyses of western economic grievances.<sup>10</sup> Obversely, a handful of scholars focusses attention upon single provinces on the assumption that the behaviour observed therein has general applications throughout the region. A recent volume on the "Myths, Realities, and Dangers" of western separatism exemplifies this persuasion, purporting to deal with alienation as a regional phenomenon while in fact restricting the scope of its analyses to the province of Alberta.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, George Woodcock's "Case Against Trudeau's Canada" is less a treatise on western alienation than one British Columbian's polemic against the institutions of central Canadian government.<sup>12</sup>

The conception of western Canada as a monolithic region is not limited to elected officials and political scholars. As Clarke, et al., demonstrate in their analyses of Federal Election Survey data, residents of the western provinces are more likely than residents of any other region to think of Canada in simple East-West terms.<sup>13</sup> The East-West dichotomy is indicative of a model of Canadian regionalism which typically ignores 'the west's' internal diversity.

At a more conspicuous level, fledgling separatist groups proclaim that western Canada's overreaching political and economic interests transcend intra-regional dissimilarities and thus make territorial federation a viable and compelling alternative to the Canadian Confederation. West-Fed's 1980 brochure, the first detailed promulgation of separatist 'doctrine' of its kind, repeatedly invokes political independence as a harbinger of economic wealth,<sup>14</sup> yet no mention is made of the uneven distribution of economic resources within the region, of inter-provincial differences in trade relations, transportation costs, development strategies, or redistributive policies.<sup>15</sup> The separatists' fortunes ride upon two major assumptions about the western Canadian community, namely, that it is integrated and sustained by a pervasive disregard for central Canada, and that the region qua region is typified by its vast potential for economic prosperity. The uneven distributions of both political discontent and economic wealth are conveniently ignored.

On the other side of the national unity 'coin', the authors of the Pepin-Robarts Report maintain that 'regionalism' is one of two major cleavages threatening Canadian federalism today. Yet the definition of

western Canada offered in A Future Together is wholly unsatisfactory.

The authors opt for a "four or five region approach" throughout the report, with British Columbia and the Prairie provinces sometimes grouped together as one region and sometimes divided into two.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, in tying the western provinces to a common (English Canadian) 'political culture',<sup>17</sup> the authors effectively ignore some very important elements of intra-regional diversity. For example, social and economic differences between B.C. and Alberta might explain why (superficially at least) alienation and western separatism seem to be stronger in the latter province than in the former.<sup>18</sup>

Thus analysts from various walks of political life seem to think of western Canada as a monolithic entity. Mr. Trudeau himself has made this point with the remark that "there is a different culture in the West than there is in central Canada...it's not a different civilization but it's certainly a different form of culture than exists elsewhere."<sup>19</sup> Within this perspective, western alienation plays a vital role. Traditionally, regional unrest has been considered a consequence of the geographic, social and economic forces which distinguish the western Canadian provinces from their eastern counterparts. The notion that western alienation is in some way an outgrowth of these unique forces is particularly pronounced among analysts of prairie politics, many of whom have built studies of regional protest and agrarian populism on the premise that "the region's geography, economy and people set it apart from the rest of the country."<sup>20</sup> Moreover, as 'western alienation' becomes more deeply rooted in the language of Canadian federalism, this interpretation

applies to 'the West' as a larger region including British Columbia as well.<sup>21</sup> As we have seen, both West-Fed and the authors of A Future Together gloss over the inveterate question of whether B.C. should be considered a region apart from the prairies, and while the B.C. government officially propounds its case for recognition as a separate entity, there is some evidence in the behaviour of the current administration that the province is moving toward greater integration with the prairies, particularly in relations with the federal government. Norman Ruff has argued that the isolationist stance cultivated over two decades of 'highly personalized' leadership under W.A.C. Bennett has eroded, and that since the defeat of the (elder) Bennett regime in 1972, 'fed-bashing' has become less a local than a regional endeavour.<sup>22</sup>

Recently, Roger Gibbins has formulated an alternative view of the relationship between western alienation and western regionalism. While he is concerned only with the prairies, I suspect that the argument presented in Prairie Politics and Society captures the essence of many interpretations of regional discontent as applied to all four western provinces. Western alienation is the "distinguishing core" of a political culture which unites and gives form to a pan-regional community. It "constitutes a form of attitudinal regionalism that cuts across and integrates the rather disparate political histories" of the western provinces, and it persists even where structural and environmental differences conspire to mitigate the region's political homogeneity.<sup>23</sup>

Thus in relations between core and hinterland, the western provinces tend to be conceived of within the rubric of a pan-regional community, of

a functionally homogeneous entity bonded together by an amorphous phenomenon known as 'western alienation.' But on what grounds do we attribute to western alienation such powers of cohesion? British Columbians are more likely than prairie residents to think of their province as a region in itself;<sup>24</sup> in Alberta, alienation has followed a 'right' populist line, while in Saskatchewan it has been associated with 'left' populism.<sup>25</sup> In Manitoba, alienation is more deeply rooted in a history of ethnic conflict than are any of the other westernmost provinces.<sup>26</sup> It seems plausible, then, that western alienation is itself an internally heterogeneous phenomenon, i.e., both it and the 'regional' political culture for which it provides a 'distinguishing core' varies by province. This is the theme I wish to develop throughout the remainder of the present study.

#### IV) A Labyrinth of Belief Systems

The foregoing discussions suggest that for all the controversy it has stirred throughout the past decade, 'western alienation' is an amorphous concept whose potential for systematic analysis has yet to be developed in full. Traditionally, antipathy toward central Canada has been considered a key element of western political culture, either as a product of societal forces common to all parts of the region, or as a source of unity and shared purpose among disparate provincial communities. In both formulations it is assumed that alienation is the sine qua non of a homogeneous political culture which defines western Canada as a 'pan-regional' community.

Yet neither view has afforded us a comprehensive definition of the phenomenon itself. As was pointed out in Section II, 'western alienation' is still surrounded by theoretical ambiguities, and the 'problem of the dependent variable' imposes severe limitations upon our efforts to study the concept in systematic fashion. One explanation for these difficulties is that western alienation is not a single, homogeneous phenomenon, but is rather a labyrinth of diverse belief systems,<sup>1</sup> each loosely structured upon a variety of antipathies (primarily political and economic)<sup>2</sup> toward central Canada, but not bound by a prescribed set of orthodoxies. In Converse's terminology, there is little 'functional interdependence' between the ideas and values which comprise the belief systems.<sup>3</sup> Thus much of the ambiguity which surrounds western alienation is attributable to the misconception that it is a single, uniform set of beliefs.

Of course, it would be equally misleading to think of western alienation

as a collection of functionally independent ideas (if such were the case, it would be inappropriate to speak of belief systems). While the argument presented here suggests that the 'pan-regional' axiom obscures important differences between the west's sub-regions, it is important to remember that western alienation is concerned primarily with collectivities; it should therefore be possible to discern different patterns of beliefs among various 'intra-regional' communities. In the pages which follow I shall focus attention upon the provincial communities with the suspicion that the belief systems we designate 'western alienation' in one province are not necessarily the same as those found in another.

Each provincial community can be said to possess a distinct political culture<sup>4</sup> borne of unique societal forces and historical circumstances. To the extent that regional discontent is "one of the most conspicuous features"<sup>5</sup> of the western provincial political cultures, one would expect to find meaningful provincial variations in the structures of western Canadian belief systems, i.e., in those belief systems which collectively constitute 'western alienation'.

## V) Data and Methodology

The following analysis is based upon the premise that differences in provincial manifestations of 'western alienation' underscore fundamental dissimilarities between political cultures within the western Canadian region. If it can be shown that the sociodemographic and attitudinal correlates of western alienation diverge between provinces, then two conclusions are possible: either there are structural differences between the provincial communities which induce variation on the dependent variable (western alienation), or there are deep-rooted differences in the provincial political cultures, which account for the divergence.<sup>1</sup>

The impact of 'structural differences' can be tested by controlling for a variety of social, institutional, and demographic variables. For example, controlling for 'length of residence' (the sociodemographic variable which Gibbins finds most strongly related to western alienation) might explain why political 'conservatives' tend to be more alienated than non-conservatives in Alberta,<sup>2</sup> if it were found that most conservatives had lived in the province for a long period of time. Where differences in provincial manifestations of western alienation can be attributed to structural dissimilarities, we may conclude that the phenomenon is properly considered a pan-regional belief system having provincial variants. If, however, structural dissimilarities are not responsible for such variation then perhaps we may conclude that western alienation in one province is an intrinsically different belief system from western alienation in another province.

The data used in this study are compiled from two sample surveys



conducted independently in Alberta and British Columbia. The 1976 Alberta Electorate survey, administered under the direction of Roger Gibbins in the spring of 1976, polled 502 randomly-selected adults on a variety of items relating to government policy and political life in the province.<sup>3</sup> The B.C. Election Survey, administered under the direction of Don Blake, David Elkins, and Richard Johnston, consists of 1051 randomly-selected respondents interviewed after the federal and provincial elections of May, 1979.<sup>4</sup> These surveys constitute, in my opinion, the most effective examinations of western alienation undertaken to date.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, they are independent studies and therefore are subject to several caveats respecting comparability of measurement. Some of these caveats deserve recognition before the data analysis is undertaken.

First, the surveys vary in general form and content. While the British Columbia study deals extensively with broad orientations toward political life--efficacy, trust, liking and disliking of political institutions, ideas about participation and representative government, etc. -- the Alberta survey concentrates upon more specific policy questions: Syncrude, the Alberta Heritage Trust Fund, housing, the environment, the provincial Opposition, etc. If a crude distinction can be made, one might designate the Alberta survey an extended public opinion poll, and the B.C. survey a canvass of political attitudes and behaviour.

Second, the measures of western alienation differ. In assessing the political views of Albertans, I have adopted Gibbins' index of western alienation, which is based upon the eight Likert-scale items listed in Table 1. The items are scored from one (disagree strongly) to

five (agree strongly) and the index is constructed by adding the scores of the eight items such that lower values indicate less intense alienation and higher values more intense alienation.<sup>6</sup> The British Columbia alienation scale consists of the seven items listed in Table 2; responses are scored dichotomously with non-alienated responses valued at 'zero' and alienated responses at 'one.' The resulting index is constructed by adding the scores of the seven items.<sup>7</sup> For heuristic purposes, both indices are recoded into quartiles, so that possible scores range from 'zero' (low alienation) to 'four' (high alienation).<sup>8</sup>

Third, as is evident in Tables 1 and 2, different items make up each alienation scale. Only one pair of items -- namely, "In many ways Alberta has more in common with the United States than it does with Eastern Canada", and "In B.C., we have more in common with Washington than with people in Ontario" -- can be considered equivalent; the remainder vary by degree in both form and substance.

Nonetheless I am convinced that taken collectively, both sets of items constitute satisfactory measures of western alienation. Both meet standard requirements of scale validity<sup>9</sup> and both contain items of what have in other surveys been considered meaningful indicators of western alienation.<sup>10</sup> If systematic bias does exist in these indices, it probably lies in the surveys' emphases upon provincial rather than regional attitudes. In general, however, response bias does not appear to be a major problem.

Fourth, there are also differences in some of the items used to test the three correlates of alienation with which we are concerned.

TABLE 1

Items Used in Construction of the Alienation Scale,  
Alberta

Item	'alienated' response %	'unalienated' response %	DK/NA %
1. "The economic policies of the federal government seem to help Quebec and Ontario at the expense of Alberta"	74	10	17
2. "Because political parties depend upon Quebec and Ontario for most of their votes Alberta usually gets ignored in national politics"	75	14	9
3. "During the past few years the federal government has made a genuine effort to overcome problems of economic discrimination against Alberta"	45	32	23
4. "In many ways Alberta has more in common with the western United States than it does with Eastern Canada"	63	19	19
5. "Most Eastern Canadians seem to feel that Canada ends at the Great Lakes"	65	16	19
6. "Alberta benefits as much from the industries in the East Canada benefits from Alberta's natural resources such as oil"	63	24	13
7. "It often seems that Alberta politicians are not taken seriously in the East."	71	14	15
8. "If one part of Canada suffers we all suffer, and if one region prospers, we all share in the prosperity"	57	32	11

Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Disaggregated figures are presented in Roger Gibbins, "Western Alienation and the Alberta Political Culture", in Carlo Caldarola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, p. 147.

TABLE 2

Items Used in Construction of the Alienation Scale,  
British Columbia

Item	'alienated' response %	'unalienated' response %	DK/NA %
1. "Many things the federal government does, provincial governments would do a lot better"	45	47	8
2. "I don't find people from eastern Canada very attractive"	7	85	8
3. "The federal government has all but forgotten B.C."	26	66	7
4. "In B.C., we have more in common with people in Washington than with people in Ontario"	25	*	5
or "I think of myself as a Canadian first and a British Columbian second"	*	69	
5. "B.C. pays more into Confederation than she gets out of it"	21	*	9
or "On balance, B.C. is much better off in Confederation than out of it"	*	70	
6. "Ottawa is so far away, our MP's lose touch with the people who elect them"	62	*	11
or "I sometimes feel that the federal government is more in touch with B.C. opinion than the provincial government is"	*	27	
7. "Local questions just don't get the attention they deserve in Ottawa"	47	*	8
or "Frankly, I'm glad that the federal government resists certain kinds of local pressures"	*	45	

\* - respondents were asked to choose the statement they agreed with more closely

For example, in the Alberta survey education is measured using nine categories grouped by level of achievement, while in the British Columbia survey, education is coded according to the number of years the respondents have spent in the formal school system. I have attempted to minimize such discrepancies by recoding various responses into comparable categories. In most cases this poses no problems, although the measures of 'ideology', like those of western alienation, are based upon different sets of items. These differences are described in the following section.

Fifth, data limitations prohibit our exploring certain correlates of western alienation which, intuitively at least, might be considered quite salient. For example, because of differences in the format of the items, meaningful comparisons of political issues cannot be made.<sup>11</sup> Nor can examinations of the relationships between western alienation and liking or disliking of political leaders. While Elkins has pointed out that western alienation (in British Columbia) is highly correlated with distaste for Pierre Trudeau,<sup>12</sup> lack of comparable data precludes our testing this relationship in Alberta. Certain dimensions of western alienation cannot be compared simply because the data do not permit it.

Finally, I must emphasize that these are only relative measures of western alienation; no inferences are intended with respect to the absolute levels of respondents' attitudes or feelings; identical scores on each of the separate scales do not necessarily mean that the phenomena tested are identical.

These caveats are given careful consideration throughout the following analysis. They are weighty considerations, but for our purposes,

they are not prohibitive. In the following section I shall test a number of hypotheses relating 'ideology', partisanship, and social class to alienation, with the intention of determining that there are major differences in the structures and patterns of belief systems in B.C. and Alberta, differences which call into question many of the images conventionally associated with western discontent, and which expunge the notion that alienation provides the foundation of a homogeneous, pan-regional belief system.

## VI) Western Alienation and Intra-Regional Variation: An Analysis of the

### Data

#### Ideology:

The conceptual structure of an ideology varies widely and indeed has many dimensions. For our purposes, 'ideology' will be taken to mean a set of beliefs about what the individual's relationship to democratic government and society ought to be. Tables 3 and 4 list items which comprise the ideology scales for Alberta and British Columbia, respectively. The scales are constructed in the same manner as the indices of western alienation. Responses are grouped into categories which correspond roughly to a liberal-conservative dichotomy<sup>1</sup> with summed scores of all respondents forming a continuum ranging from extreme liberalism to extreme conservatism; the continuum is then broken down into three groups, which for ease of interpretation are designated 'liberal', 'neutral', and 'conservative'. I should emphasize once again that these measures are no more than relative indicators of an individual's ideological status. No judgements about formal ideological preferences (e.g., Marxism, liberalism, fascism, anarcho-syndicalism, etc.) are implied.

Two central hypotheses guide our examination of relationships between ideology and western alienation, namely, that alienation in Alberta is a fundamentally conservative phenomenon, and that alienation in British Columbia is not aligned with any particular ideological group. These hypotheses are inspired by several observations regarding political life in the two westernmost provinces.

The observation that Alberta is a politically conservative community

TABLE 3

Items Used in Construction of the Ideology Scale,  
Alberta

Item	% agree	% disagree	% DK
1. "There should be less regulation of private business"	50.6	31.1	18.3
2. "All civil servants should have the right to strike"	56.0	35.9	8.2
3. "Trade unions have become too powerful in Canada"	83.3	9.6	7.2
4. "Canadian governments have become too involved in the lives of their citizens"	37.6	42.4	19.9
5. "Able-bodied men who apply for welfare should be made to work for it"	95.0	2.6	2.4
6. Governments in Canada are making the taxpayer pay for too many unnecessary services"	71.9	15.5	12.5
7. "The free enterprise system in Canada is obsolete"	48.0	32.0	19.1



TABLE 4

Items Used in Construction of the Ideology Scale,  
British Columbia

Item	% agree	% disagree	% DK
1. "After a person has worked until he is 65, it is proper for the community to support him"	41.7	58.0	0.30
2. "The government ought make sure that everyone has a decent standard of living"	21.7	78.2	0.10
3. "Let's face it, most unemployed people could find a job if they really wanted to"	60.2	39.6	0.10
4. "'Do-gooders' and 'bleeding hearts' have too much influence on how government is run these days"	50.1	49.7	0.10
5. "Why should the government spend my tax dollars on sick people; my family always put aside something for a rainy day"	7.3	92.7	-
6. "Big corporations have so much power that we also need big unions"	47.9	51.6	0.5
7. "If I do my best, it is only right that the government should help me out when I get some bad breaks"	34.3	*	0.4
or "Each individual should accept the consequences of their own actions"	65.3	*	

\* - respondents were asked to choose the statement they agreed with more closely

is not at all new. It is a view propounded by political analysts from academia, the news media, and elected officialdom alike. Donald Smiley describes Alberta's 'ideological' proclivities in this manner:

Prevailing political attitudes in Alberta are considerably to the 'right' of those which dominate the federal government and the governments of the other provinces. Alberta is closer in time than the other parts of Canada to the individualism of the agricultural frontier and the 'new Alberta' has been developed through a free-wheeling variant of private enterprise.<sup>2</sup>

This interpretation is reinforced by many peculiar features of Albertan politics -- the propensity for electing ideologically conservative governments by overwhelming majorities and for rejecting the CCF/NDP out-of-hand ;<sup>3</sup> the current Administration's emphasis upon private enterprise as the touchstone of provincial economic development;<sup>4</sup> the relatively greater support for right-wing separatist organizations than exists in other western provinces.<sup>5</sup> 'Western alienation' has traditionally embraced political conservatism in Alberta, beginning with the religious populism of Social Credit in 1935, through to the present generation's 'prairie capitalism'.

In contrast, British Columbia politics are commonly considered competitive struggles between left and right, between organized labour and big business, and between socialism and free enterprise. However, regional discontent finds no more allies at one ideological pole than at the other; the anti-Ottawa posturing of an avowed free-enterpriser like W.A.C. Bennett for two decades complemented the earlier remonstrances of a T.D. Patullo, whose approach to fiscal operations was in many ways emblematic of a more 'liberal' regime. Today, the younger Bennett's

crusade for provincial rights is rarely linked to ideological issues while the catchphrase, 'western alienation' has never preoccupied the left in British Columbia as it has, for example, in Saskatchewan.<sup>6</sup> In B.C. regional unrest runs behind, rather than alongside ideological cleavages.<sup>7</sup>

Relationships between ideology and western alienation are summarized in Table 5. The data support our first hypothesis quite nicely; alienation is strongest among the ideologically conservative in Alberta, and indeed, conservative respondents make up the bulk of the provincial sample.<sup>8</sup> However, our second hypothesis is not confirmed. The expected non-relationship between ideology and alienation in British Columbia is belied by a weak yet statistically significant relationship in which 'liberals' are more alienated than 'neutrals', who are in turn more alienated than conservatives. Moreover, no single ideological group dominates the B.C. sample to the extent that conservatives dominate the Alberta sample. Thus it appears that western alienation in B.C. has a modest correlate in liberalism, even though no single persuasion accurately describes the ideological structure of a west coast political culture. These distinctions suggest that, according to at least one indicator, western alienation consists of substantively dissimilar belief systems, that is, belief systems which do not transcend differences in provincial political cultures.

However, we would be ill-advised to accept these differences at face value. Presumably, provincial boundaries do not mould belief systems of themselves; instead, each community's structural peculiarities may be responsible for the observed differences in provincial manifestations of western alienation.

TABLE 5

Mean Alienation Scores by Respondent's Ideological Group,  
British Columbia and Alberta

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ideology	Levels of Alienation				total	mean alienation score
	1	2	3	4		
liberal	25.2 (75)	25.2 (75)	19.5 (58)	30.2 (90)	39.2 (298)	2.55
neutral	26.5 (49)	27.6 (51)	18.4 (34)	27.6 (51)	24.3 (185)	2.47
conservative	32.4 (90)	21.2 (59)	21.6 (60)	24.8 (69)	36.5 (278)	2.39

Pearson's  $r = 0.059$ 

significance = 0.05

## ALBERTA

Ideology	Levels of Alienation				total	mean alienation score
	1	2	3	4		
liberal	29.9 (46)	27.9 (43)	27.3 (42)	14.9 (23)	30.7 (154)	2.27
neutral	14.9 (18)	33.9 (41)	28.1 (34)	23.1 (28)	24.1 (121)	2.60
conservative	15.9 (36)	24.2 (55)	31.7 (72)	28.2 (64)	45.2 (227)	2.72

Pearson's  $r = 0.18$ 

significance = 0.0000

Few of the standard sociodemographic controls reveal structural differences which modify our understanding of relationships between ideology and alienation. In Alberta, ideologically conservative respondents are more alienated than the ideologically neutral, and 'neutrals' more so than 'liberals' for virtually all categories of age, family income, education, occupation, location of residence, and length of residence in the province. While these relationships become insignificant in some categories (particularly among various family income and occupational groups), the ordering of mean alienation scores within ideological groups is rarely altered.

Similarly, in British Columbia, liberal respondents tend to be most highly alienated even when controlling for the appropriate sociodemographic variables. However, it should be noted that the relationships are more often than not reduced to statistical non-significance after such controls have been introduced. This is hardly surprising, given the relationship's weakness ( $r = 0.059$ ,  $p < .05$ ) at the aggregate level. Nonetheless the ordering of mean alienation scores is once again rarely disrupted, and of course the strength of the relationship increases wherever acceptable significance levels are obtained.<sup>9</sup>

While demographic factors do little to explain provincial differences in the ideological correlates of western alienation, it is possible that occupational affiliations impinge upon or in some way forge unique linkages between the two variables. We are told, for example, that competition for economic and jurisdictional control of key energy resource industries is a major source of antipathy between Ottawa and the western provinces,<sup>10</sup> and that the industries' concurrent objections

to federal energy policies and their predilection for laissez-faire gives western alienation a distinctly conservative tone. This is said to be particularly true in Alberta, where the predominance of petroleum buttresses a traditionally 'right wing' political culture and places the province at the forefront of regional unrest.<sup>11</sup> Is there a relationship between oil industry affiliation, political conservatism, and western alienation in Alberta?

The data suggest that there is not. Only thirty-six respondents, or 7.2% of the Alberta sample claim to be 'involved' in the oil industry.<sup>12</sup> These respondents are no more likely to be 'conservative' than respondents who are unaffiliated with the industry, and while their mean alienation scores tend to be slightly higher than those of non-affiliated respondents, the small group size renders score differences virtually meaningless.

Trade union affiliation has similarly little impact upon the ideological correlates of western alienation. B.C. is the most highly unionized province in Canada, which in part explains its ideological polarization. Just over twenty-six percent of the British Columbia sample claims trade union affiliation, while 31% report having other union members in their households. While union members tend to be more 'liberal' than non-union members (a plurality of union members -- 48.7% -- falls into the liberal category; by contrast, only 35.8% of non-union members are liberal while 39.7% are 'conservative'), there is no cause for claiming that this relationship translates into greater or lesser feelings of western alienation.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, though, there is a modest relationship between ideology and

alienation among non-union members, and once again it is the liberal respondents who seem to be most alienated.<sup>14</sup> This relationship disappears among respondents having no other union members in the household. Thus trade union affiliation does not appear to be the force which stimulates linkages between ideological liberalism and western alienation in British Columbia. With respect to Alberta, small group sizes prevent us from drawing any clear conclusions about relationships between trade union affiliation, ideology, and alienation. Ties between political conservatism and alienation are washed away among respondents who belong to unions, but not among those whose 'spouses only' belong. In any event, the fact that only one in ten respondents is unionized casts doubt upon this variable's influence upon the ideological correlates of western alienation.

Party identification may also be a factor influencing relationships between ideology and alienation. As mentioned above, Alberta's propensity for electing ardently provincialist governments has traditionally gone hand-in-hand with its ideological conservatism.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, much of the rhetoric which sustains an ideologically 'bipolar' political culture in British Columbia is nurtured by the parties themselves.<sup>16</sup> While a fuller discussion of the partisan underpinnings of western alienation will be undertaken shortly, some observations about relationships between ideology and alienation among various partisan groups warrant our attention here.

Tables 6 and 7 describe these relationships for both federal and

TABLE 6

Mean Alienation Scores by Ideology, Controlling for Federal Party Identification,  
British Columbia and Alberta

	Federal Party Identification					
Ideology	Liberal	Conservative	N.D.P.	Social Credit	Other	
BRITISH COLUMBIA						
liberal	2.39 (71)	2.75 (64)	2.69 (109)	3.00 (2)	3.00 (4)	valid cases = 631
midling	1.78 (55)	2.36 (44)	2.86 (43)	2.75 (4)	1.75 (4)	
conservatives	2.07 (82)	2.40 (99)	2.38 (39)	2.75 (4)	1.57 (7)	
ALBERTA						
liberal	1.85 (26)	2.57 (61)	2.58 (12)	2.25 (8)	1.94 (34)	valid cases = 455
midling	2.44 (18)	2.79 (58)	2.56 (9)	2.00 (1)	2.10 (20)	
conservative	1.92 (24)	2.95 (130)	2.86 (7)	3.20 (10)	2.30 (37)	

N's are in parentheses



TABLE 7

Mean Alienation Scores by Ideology, Controlling for Provincial Party Identification  
British Columbia and Alberta

	Provincial Party Identification					
Ideology	Liberal	Conservative	N.D.P.	Social Credit	Other	
BRITISH COLUMBIA						
liberal	2.00 (14)	2.88 (16)	2.67 (155)	2.33 (49)	2.60 (20)	valid cases = 645
midling	2.27 (15)	1.83 (6)	2.53 (68)	2.46 (57)	2.20 (5)	
conservative	2.32 (22)	1.47 (15)	2.25 (57)	2.36 (123)	2.52 (23)	
ALBERTA						
liberal	1.72 (18)	2.54 (56)	2.47 (15)	2.45 (20)	1.95 (38)	valid cases = 470
midling	1.80 (10)	2.80 (54)	2.71 (7)	2.49 (13)	2.21 (24)	
conservative	1.78 (18)	2.91 (108)	3.11 (9)	3.00 (38)	2.24 (42)	

N's are in parentheses

provincial party supporters. Turning first to national politics, one is immediately impressed that in Alberta systematic linkages between ideology and alienation disappear among Liberal and New Democratic Party supporters and can, owing to small cell frequencies, be effectively discarded among Social Credit supporters. Thus the relationship between ideology and alienation in Alberta is most pronounced among Progressive Conservatives and supporters of 'other' parties. However, since these categories account for over three-quarters of the valid cases in the Alberta sample, the apparent interdependence between ideology and partisanship is not terribly surprising.

Meanwhile, no significant relationships are revealed in the B.C. data. Predictably, mean alienation scores across all ideological groups are lower among Liberals than among followers of the other national parties (the same is true in Alberta),<sup>17</sup> but in no cases do alienation scores align in systematic fashion with categories of ideology. In British Columbia the ideological structure of western alienation is not determined by federal partisanship.

Similar results obtain at the provincial level. In Alberta the ideological correlates of western alienation among provincial partisans closely resemble those of their federal counterparts, indicating perhaps a conjunction between party allegiance and ideology which cuts across distinctions between the two levels of government. Alternatively, the pattern could simply reflect the ubiquity of anti-Liberal sentiment in the Prairie province. While in British Columbia distaste for the Liberals is distributed more or less evenly between competing parties (that is,

Progressive Conservative and New Democratic Parties at the federal level), Social Credit and New Democratic Parties at the provincial level), in Alberta a historical aversion to the New Democratic Party, coupled with the political bankruptcy of the Socreds at both levels<sup>18</sup> virtually compels people to support the Conservatives. Indeed, it is interesting to note that a larger proportion of the Alberta sample considers itself 'Conservative' at the federal level than at the provincial level<sup>19</sup> indicating that to Alberta voters, there is simply no viable alternative to the Progressive Conservatives in national politics, where the governing Liberals are considered a major object of regional animosity.

Interestingly, the relationship between ideology and alienation in British Columbia is significant only among supporters of the NDP when controls for political partisanship are invoked. It is plausible then, that party identification is the causal variable in relationships between ideology and alienation on the west coast. Yet it is difficult to explain why this should be the case. While it is true that provincial New Democrats are more likely to be ideologically 'liberal' than are supporters of other provincial parties, they do not tend to be noticeably more or less alienated throughout the three ideological groups. Furthermore, (and this will become apparent in the following analysis of partisanship and alienation), there are very few sociodemographic variables which explain in any plausible way why provincial New Democrats should be more likely than supporters of other parties to structure beliefs about central and western Canada along ideological lines.

Nonetheless the important point for our purposes is that alienation

in British Columbia is most pronounced among ideological 'liberals', and least so among ideological 'conservatives', while the converse is true in Alberta. Furthermore, to the extent that relationships between ideology and alienation are structured along partisan lines, the most similar relationships are found among dissimilar parties. Thus there is virtually no evidence that the ideological component of western alienation conforms to a 'pan-regional' model. Of course 'ideology' is only one element of western alienation. Let us now turn to a second by considering partisanship as a stimulus in and of itself.

#### Party Identification:

Traditionally, there has been a close association between political partisanship and political unrest in western Canada. The rise of protest-oriented third parties during the Great Depression was in large part a reaction to the old Parliamentary party system -- to an unresponsive, unrepresentative Liberal Government and an ineffective Conservative Opposition.<sup>20</sup> Third parties, particularly those able to exploit the class and sectional interests of the rural communities,<sup>21</sup> became synonymous with political discontent in the Canadian West.

Recent analyses reveal that partisanship is still an important component of the western malaise. Working from data prepared in 1971, Thelma Oliver concluded that selected 'aspects' of alienation were most extreme among Social Credit and New Democratic Party supporters in Alberta.<sup>22</sup> More recently, both Elkins and Gibbins have found negative relationships between western alienation and allegiance to the Liberal

Party. That is, in both British Columbia and Alberta, and at both levels of government, Liberal supporters are less alienated than supporters of other parties. Moreover, as strength of partisanship increases, the intensity of alienation among Liberals declines.<sup>23</sup>

It appears, then, as if the partisan dimension of western alienation is a matter of some consequence. For our purposes, two questions are of particular concern: first, are there significance relationships between party identification and western alienation which transcend provincial boundaries, or is there variation on the dependence variable, 'western alienation', within partisan groups? And second, does the bifurcation of party support in a federal system induce differential relationships between partisanship and western alienation?

Parties of the same name may be substantively dissimilar in different provinces. For example, the Social Credit party in British Columbia has traditionally had very little in common with its Alberta counterpart;<sup>24</sup> in many ways the very raison d'être of the Aberhart, Manning, and to a lesser extent, the Strom regimes in Alberta was to aggregate and articulate regional protest,<sup>25</sup> while in B.C., Social Credit's foundations lie in rather political and economic circumstances than have existed in the Prairie provinces. If western alienation were a truly pan-regional phenomenon, then one would expect to find similar linkages between it and the variable, 'party identification', in the British Columbia and Alberta samples. If however western alienation is not a pan-regional phenomenon, then dissimilarities between the provincial parties may induce differences within the relevant belief systems themselves.

These differences should crop up between levels of government as well if the structure of Canadian federalism has any meaningful impact upon relationships between partisanship and alienation. For example, neither the B.C. nor the Alberta Social Credit parties displays any kind of solidarity with the national party of the same name. Indeed, it has become common fare for opposition parties in British Columbia to accuse the governing Socreds of 'being in bed' politically with the federal Progressive Conservatives. This was apparently one of the factors which prompted Brian Westwood to abandon the leadership of the provincial Tories in favour of the separatist Western Canadian Concept. The disjunction between federal and provincial wings of the various parties is emblematic of what Smiley calls a 'confederal' model of Canadian federalism,<sup>27</sup> and may induce variation on the dependent variable 'western alienation' among respondents representing various combinations of party support between levels of government.

In responding to the questions posed above, the present analysis is tailored to three central hypothesis. First, we will find different relationships between partisanship and alienation in British Columbia and Alberta. Recalling that alienation is strongest among ideologically liberal respondents on the west coast, and among ideologically conservative respondents in the Prairie province, it is expected that the partisan correlates of provincial belief systems will be structured in like manner; i.e., alienation will be strongest among followers of the more 'liberal' parties (primarily the N.D.P.) in British Columbia, and among the more 'conservative' parties (namely, Progressive Conservatives and

Social Credit) in Alberta.<sup>28</sup>

Second, to the extent that they are commonly considered both 'right wing',<sup>29</sup> and supportive of a third party which has roots in the 'old alienation', Social Credit partisans will be the most alienated respondents in the Alberta sample. No similar pattern will obtain in British Columbia, where Social Credit (and indeed third parties in general) has very different ideological and historical roots.<sup>30</sup>

Third, the 'confederal' structure of the Canadian party system will induce variation in partisan-alienation linkages between levels of government. We know that in both British Columbia and Alberta western alienation is associated with a partisan dislike for the Liberals at both levels; if however respondents perceive meaningful differences among the parties at different levels of government, then one would expect the pattern of alienation scores to be disrupted. For example, people who support both the federal Liberals and the Alberta Socreds will be neither highly alienated (as is expected of 'pure' Socreds) nor weakly alienated (as is expected of 'pure' Liberals). The bifurcation of federal and provincial party systems creates tensions in peoples' partisan allegiances; these tensions are expected to induce disorder in the partisan structure of western alienation.

Table 8 presents a comparison of mean alienation scores by party identification in British Columbia and Alberta. Predictably, Liberal supporters are the least alienated respondents in both samples and at both levels of government. However, further examination of the data yields some surprising results, many of which disconfirm our first two

TABLE 8

Mean Alienation Scores by Federal and Provincial Party Identification,  
British Columbia and Alberta

BRITISH COLUMBIA	Federal	Provincial
Liberal	2.09 (217)	2.17 (53)
Progressive Conservative	2.61 (214)	2.51 (41)
New Democrat	2.78 (199)	2.65 (290)
Social Credit	3.00 (11)	2.44 (241)
None	2.84 (74)	2.66 (80)
Cramer's V =	.135	.0958
F-test significance=	0.0002	0.5846

ALBERTA	Federal	Provincial
Liberal	2.03 (68)	1.80 (46)
Progressive Conservative	2.82 (249)	2.78 (218)
New Democrat	2.64 (28)	2.77 (31)
Social Credit	2.74 (19)	2.77 (71)
Other*	2.29 (138)	2.29 (136)
Cramer's V =	.186	.208
F-test significance=	0.0000	0.0000

\* - Independents, Others, Refused, No Opinion



hypotheses while leaving the third in some doubt.

While alienation is strongest among Progressive Conservatives and Social Crediters in Alberta, mean score differences between the non-Liberal parties are small enough to be considered meaningless. Similarly, New Democrats are no more alienated than supporters of the other non-Liberal parties in British Columbia. Thus, it is possible to say that there is some similarity in partisan-alienation relationships between Canada's westernmost provinces. The only meaningful statement to be made about either community is that Liberals are less alienated than non-Liberals at both levels of government.

Furthermore, none of the third parties, including Alberta's Social Credit elicits a particularly high score on alienation (with the exception of the federal Socreds in B.C., whose support --  $N = 11$  -- is negligible. Thus no single partisan group is manifestly 'alienated'; western discontent appears to be associated with anti-Liberal sentiment, but there is little evidence to suggest that a given party in one province bears any 'special' relationship western alienation, i.e., a relationship not found for a party of the same name in the other province.

The data also reveal only minor differences on the dependent variable, 'western alienation', with respect to Canada's 'confederal' party system. Differences in the mean alienation scores for federal and provincial parties of the same name are slightly larger in British Columbia than in Alberta. More importantly, differences in the numbers of respondents supporting each party at each level are much greater on the west coast than in the Prairie province; one is more likely to support

both wings of a given party in Alberta than in British Columbia.

Differences in the degree to which party systems are bifurcated may be held responsible for provincial dissimilarities in the partisan correlates of western alienation. For example, the high score (3.00) of British Columbians who support the federal Socreds may be spurious owing to small numbers. By contrast, fully 241 respondents support Social Credit at the provincial level and the mean score on alienation is only 2.44. Nonetheless, such differences do not induce meaningful variation among Liberals or Progressive Conservatives. Thus the impact of federal structures upon relationships between party identification and western alienation is unclear.

The partisan structure of western alienation is unaltered by a variety of sociodemographic and attitudinal controls. While there is modest evidence that alienation increases in relation to ideological conservatism among Alberta Socreds, and in relation to ideological liberalism among British Columbia New Democrats<sup>31</sup> (evidence which, paradoxically, is nominally supportive of our first two hypotheses), the major patterns seem to persist -- alienation is weakest among Liberal supporters at both levels in both provinces, and no one party emerges as being significantly more alienated than the others.

One control which does produce interesting results is 'place of previous residence'.<sup>32</sup> In general, where one lived prior to settling in British Columbia or Alberta is not likely to affect aggregate relationships between partisanship and western alienation. However, as Table 9 demonstrates, there is some discrepancy between the alienation scores of

TABLE 9

Mean Alienation Scores of Respondents Having Lived Elsewhere in Canada Compared  
With Alienation Scores of Total Samples for British Columbia and Alberta

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

	Federal		Provincial	
	lived elsewhere*	total sample	lived elsewhere*	total sample
Liberal	1.92 (65)	2.09 (217)	1.96 (16)	2.17 (53)
Progressive Conservative	2.21 (73)	2.61 (214)	1.80 (10)	2.51 (41)
New Democrat	2.20 (55)	2.78 (199)	2.34 (79)	2.65 (290)
Social Credit	2.50 (2)	3.00 (11)	2.04 (76)	2.44 (241)
Other	2.10 (10)	2.84 (74)	2.45 (11)	2.66 (80)

\* - 'lived elsewhere' refers to those who have lived in another province since leaving school, regardless of level of education.

## ALBERTA

	Federal		Provincial	
	lived elsewhere	total sample	lived elsewhere	total sample
Liberal	2.19 (36)	2.03 (68)	2.11 (19)	1.80 (46)
Progressive Conservative	2.76 (66)	2.82 (249)	2.68 (69)	2.78 (218)
New Democratic	2.57 (14)	2.64 (28)	2.36 (14)	2.71 (31)
Social Credit	3.00 (4)	2.74 (19)	2.59 (17)	2.77 (71)
Other	2.07 (55)	2.29 (138)	2.25 (56)	2.29 (136)

respondents who have lived elsewhere in Canada and the entire samples for each province. The data suggest that respondents having out-of-province experience are less alienated than those without.<sup>33</sup> Thus one may speculate that western alienation is not transmitted through migration from other parts of the country, but is more typically an indigenous collection of beliefs. This conclusion would seem to intersect Elkins' thesis that provincial political cultures remain stable in the face of widescale migration, and indeed mould the political attitudes and values of incoming migrants.<sup>34</sup> The deviants from this pattern are Alberta liberals, whose alienation scores are slightly higher if they have lived elsewhere in Canada. Again, small numbers prohibit our drawing any firm conclusions on the basis of this anomaly, although a preliminary explanation might be that Liberals who settle in Alberta become more alienated because of their comparatively greater removal from the institutions of national power -- i.e., greater than that of Liberals in most other provinces.

Controls for political partisanship at the 'other' level of government (when partisanship at one level is designated the independent variable) allow us to test the manner in which various combinations of party allegiance affect respondents' alienation scores. The results of these controls are presented in Tables 10 through 13. Note that while most respondents support federal and provincial parties of the same name in both British Columbia and Alberta, transfers of allegiance are more likely to occur in the west coast province. The only major shift of party identification in Alberta is found among provincial Socreds, 56.3% of whom consider themselves

TABLE 10

Combined Party Allegiances Between Provincial and Federal Levels,  
British Columbia

Provincial Party Identification	Federal Party Identification	% Support (Pairs of Parties)	Mean Score on Alienation
Liberal (N=49)	Liberal	93.9	2.22
	Conservative	2.0	3.00
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	4.0	3.00
Conservative (N=40)	Liberal	12.5	1.80
	Conservative	87.5	2.60
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	-	-
New Democrat (N=272)	Liberal	21.0	2.19
	Conservative	11.4	2.68
	N.D.P.	67.3	2.65
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	0.4	1.00
Social Credit (N=216)	Liberal	33.3	2.14
	Conservative	58.8	2.42
	N.D.P.	2.8	2.83
	Social Credit	4.6	2.90
	Other*	0.5	1.00

\* - 'Other' includes supporters of 'Independent' candidates and those who refused to respond.

TABLE 11

Combined Party Allegiances Between Federal and Provincial Levels,  
British Columbia

Federal Party Identification	Provincial Party Identification	% Support (Pairs of Parties)	Mean Score on Alienation
Liberal (N=190)	Liberal	24.2	2.22
	Conservative	2.6	1.50
	N.D.P.	30.0	2.19
	Social Credit	37.9	2.14
	Other*	5.2	2.10
Conservative (N=203)	Liberal	0.5	3.00
	Conservative	17.2	2.60
	N.D.P.	15.3	2.67
	Social Credit	62.6	2.42
	Other*	4.5	2.33
New Democrat (N=190)	Liberal	-	-
	Conservative	-	-
	N.D.P.	96.3	2.65
	Social Credit	3.2	2.83
	Other*	0.5	2.33
Social Credit (N= 11)	Liberal	9.1	4.00
	Conservative	-	-
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	9.1	1.00
	Other*	81.8	1.89

\* - 'Other' includes supporters of 'Independent' candidates and those who refused to respond.

TABLE 12

Combined Party Allegiances Between Provincial and Federal Levels,  
Alberta

Provincial Party Identification	Federal Party Identification	% Support (Pairs of Parties)	Mean Score on Alienation
Liberal (N= 46)	Liberal	80.4	1.73
	Conservative	8.7	2.00
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	10.9	2.20
Conservative (N=218)	Liberal	6.0	2.54
	Conservative	86.2	2.80
	N.D.P.	0.9	2.50
	Social Credit	0.5	2.00
	Other*	6.4	2.93
New Democrat (N= 31)	Liberal	6.5	1.00
	Conservative	16.1	3.60
	N.D.P.	77.4	2.67
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	-	-
Social Credit (N=71)	Liberal	11.3	2.38
	Conservative	56.3	2.95
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	25.4	2.78
	Other*	7.0	2.00
Other* (N=136)	Liberal	5.9	2.50
	Conservative	8.8	2.67
	N.D.P.	1.5	2.50
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	83.8	2.23

\* - 'Other' includes supporters of 'Independent' candidates and those who refused to respond.

TABLE 13

Combined Party Allegiances Between Federal and Provincial Levels,  
Alberta

Federal Party Identification	Provincial Party Identification	% Support (Pairs of Respondents)	Mean Score on Alienation
Liberal (N=68)	Liberal	54.4	1.73
	Conservative	19.1	2.54
	N.D.P.	2.9	1.00
	Social Credit	11.8	2.38
	Other*	11.8	2.50
Conservative (N=249)	Liberal	1.6	2.25
	Conservative	75.5	2.80
	N.D.P.	2.0	3.60
	Social Credit	16.1	2.95
	Other*	4.8	2.67
New Democrat (N=28)	Liberal	-	-
	Conservative	7.1	2.50
	N.D.P.	85.7	2.67
	Social Credit	-	-
	Other*	7.1	2.50
Social Credit (N=19)	Liberal	-	-
	Conservative	5.3	-
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	94.7	2.78
	Other*	-	-
Other* (N=138)	Liberal	3.6	2.93
	Conservative	10.1	2.20
	N.D.P.	-	-
	Social Credit	3.6	2.00
	Other*	82.6	2.23

\* - 'Other' includes supporters of 'Independent' candidates and those who refused to respond.



Progressive Conservatives in national politics. By contrast, one finds in British Columbia a great deal of 'switching' between provincial Socreds, federal Conservatives, and federal Liberals.

I suggested earlier that the pattern of alienation scores among people who support different parties at different levels of government would deviate from patterns discerned in the total samples. Yet the data presented in Tables 10 through 13 indicate that this is not so. In almost all groups of respondents (where numbers are large enough to be meaningful), the ordering of alienation scores resembles patterns observed in the aggregate samples, i.e., Liberals are least alienated in both provinces, and there is little variation between mean scores of non-Liberals. The notable exception is found among federal Liberals in British Columbia, where respondents who also support the provincial Liberals are not less alienated than respondents who support some other party at the provincial level. No comparable pattern is revealed in the Alberta data.

To summarize, there is little evidence that western alienation is anything more than anti-Liberal partisanship in either British Columbia or Alberta, and it is not the case that the relationships are highly fluid. Instead, alienation gives the appearance of being a reasoned response to individual parties.

Alberta mean alienation scores are lowest among respondents who support the federal Liberals, even if those respondents are also Socreds or Tories at the provincial level. Similarly, British Columbia New Democrats who also support the federal Liberals manifest mean scores than New Democrats who

support some other party at the national level.

More importantly for our purposes, the patterns of relationships observed in British Columbia and Alberta are similar. There are some differences in the order of mean scores for non-Liberal partisans, but none of these differences is significant. Moreover, while the standard controls for 'structural' dissimilarities (i.e., disparities in the provinces' sociodemographic and attitudinal profiles) have little bearing upon these relationships, controls for party identification at the 'other' level of government reinforce patterns observed at the aggregate level. Thus while provincial sub-populations differ in the kinds of support afforded individual parties, they seem to concur in the manner in which the various parties are perceived.

Such relationships suggest that western alienation may have a 'pan-regional' quality, at least insofar as political partisanship is concerned. We have already seen that this is not the case where ideology is considered an independent variable; thus the complexity of western Canadian belief systems becomes increasingly apparent.

### Social Class:

It has been argued that class cleavages are less salient in Canada than in other anglo-American democracies,<sup>35</sup> yet a handful of class-based analyses has dominated the study of western regional unrest for over thirty years.<sup>36</sup> Since C.B. Macpherson first published his classic Democracy in Alberta in 1953, it has been customary to think of Albertan society as a "relatively homogeneous" community of independent commodity producers locked in a 'quasi-colonial' relationship with central Canadian capital.<sup>37</sup> Even today Macpherson's theory constitutes one of the best-loved tools in Canadian political economy, and is often invoked to explain many of the peculiarities of Albertan political culture.

In contrast, there has been a paucity of theoretical works linking regional discontent and social class in British Columbia, although the class theme per se has not been neglected. Where class has been invoked to explain political unrest on the west coast, its role has been to justify the seeming impotence of organized protest rather than to illuminate the social bases of its support.<sup>38</sup> Unlike Alberta, B.C. is defined by a highly polarized, highly competitive political system pitting 'big business' against 'big labour'; the class cleavage dominates political life and ostensibly undercuts aggregated protest, for which the 'relative homogeneity' of class interests is a functional prerequisite.<sup>39</sup>

Throughout the 1950's and 1960's these themes enjoyed a scholarly pre-eminence based largely upon the academic community's lack of interest in studying provincial politics.<sup>40</sup> Yet throughout much of that period, western Canada was undergoing major economic and social transformations which rendered

the old interpretations anachronistic. Only recently have we seen fit to challenge them in any meaningful way.

Examining the internal social structures of Alberta and Saskatchewan in the inter-war period, A.N. Jackson has questioned the accuracy of Macpherson's thesis on empirical grounds, proposing that the "internal social structure of the hinterland was not homogenous,"<sup>41</sup> as Macpherson had suggested. More importantly, a number of contemporary scholars have divined that the quasi-colony interpretation is now seriously outdated.<sup>42</sup> Alberta's class structure is far more heterogeneous today than it was during the Depression; the agriculture industry, whose domination of the provincial economy was the cornerstone of Macpherson's analysis, has declined to the point at which it now accounts for only 12.6% of the labour force,<sup>43</sup> a far cry from the 50%-plus figures which applied during the pre-Social Credit era of the 1920's and 1930's. In its place has appeared a booming energy resource industry, whose impact has been not only to make Alberta one of the central actors in an increasingly regionalized federal system, but also to elicit major transformations in the social structure of the province itself.

Ironically, Macpherson's most strident critics may themselves have succeeded in forging a 'monopoly of interpretation' with respect to class politics in Alberta. The prevailing view of Alberta politics is best described by John Richards and Larry Pratt in their major work, Prairie Capitalism. The province is now said to be dominated by a dynamic, secular middle class, comprised of an entrepreneurial arriviste bourgeoisie, a large body of professionals and technicians, and a powerful bureaucratic elite,

each of which associates its interests with those of the energy industries, which are vital to the provincial weal.<sup>44</sup>

As is indicated in Table 14, British Columbia too has experienced social and economic change since the Depression years, although the impact of such change has been less severe than in Alberta. Indeed, unlike Alberta, the literature documenting these transformations remains sparse. The business-labour dichotomy is embraced with little modification,<sup>45</sup> and still no one has produced a synthetic analysis of class and regionalism in the west coast province. Philip Resnick has argued that British Columbia's 'hinterland condition' induces a divergence in class politics, with business moving closer to eastern Canadian capital, and exploited labour tending toward working class radicalism.<sup>46</sup> Yet the regional implications of Resnick's Marxian interpretation are unclear. Organized labour in B.C. has given little indication of being more alienated than other groups, and as Resnick points out, the B.C. bourgeoisie has displayed little sympathy for Canadian nationalism.<sup>47</sup>

The prevailing interpretations of class and alienation, while admittedly constrained by the unevenness of the existing literature, suggest three hypotheses which can be tested using the data considered here: first, it is plausible that there is still a portion of the Alberta population which can be designated 'petit-bourgeois' and which, following Macpherson, is manifestly 'alienated'. We would therefore expect farmers, particularly older, self-employed farmers who support Social Credit at the provincial level, to be more alienated than other social groups in Alberta.<sup>48</sup>

TABLE 14

## Percentage of Net Value of Production of Selected Industries in British Columbia, 1929-1978

INDUSTRY	1929	1931	1941	1951	1954	1957	1961	1965	1971	1974	1978
Agriculture	11.8	14.1	9.7	5.9	5.2	4.1	4.9	4.1	3.4	3.0	2.7
Forestry (2)	26.2	20.2	26.0	13.1	13.1	13.8	15.0	10.9	8.7	8.5	7.6
Fisheries	7.2	5.7	6.3	3.3	2.6	1.6	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.5	2.3
Trapping	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mining (3)	20.6	18.2	15.9	9.9	7.1	4.8	5.0	6.5	7.8	11.5	10.6
Electric Power	3.1	5.5	4.5	2.9	3.7	3.5	5.2	4.0	5.5	4.4	5.1
Manufacturing	17.3	22.7	26.9	47.8	49.0	41.1	45.5	47.1	46.4	47.7	49.7
Construction (1)	10.6	10.0	6.8	17.0	19.3	31.1	22.4	25.6	26.7	23.4	22.0

## Percentage of Net Value of Production of Selected Industries in Alberta, 1929-1978

Agriculture	54.0	55.6	58.3	49.9	27.0	19.4	21.2	21.2	14.9	15.1	7.7
Forestry (2)	3.2	3.3	2.3	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Fisheries	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-
Trapping	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Mining (3)	14.6	14.3	13.1	15.1	23.0	26.3	26.5	29.8	38.9	49.4	51.5
Electric Power	1.9	2.8	2.3	1.7	2.3	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.1	2.1
Manufacturing	14.1	14.3	14.8	14.1	19.6	21.7	26.5	20.5	19.8	15.5	14.4
Construction (1)	8.0	5.6	5.7	18.0	27.1	28.8	28.2	25.1	22.9	17.5	24.2

(1) = includes Yukon and Northwest Territories beginning in 1951

(2) = 'forestry' industry includes logging, bucking and felling, bunching, yarding, forwarding, decking, loading, transportation (driving, booming, sorting, towing), barking mills  
DOES NOT include integrated operations such as lumber, veneer, particle board, etc.

(3) = 'mining' includes oil wells

SOURCE(S): Thomas M. Sanford, The Politics of Protest: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit League in British Columbia, (Ph.D dissertation, California, 1961), p. 46.

and Statistics Canada, Survey of Production, v. 37(1957), v. 41(1961), v. 44(1965), v. 50(1971), v. 53(1974), and January, 1981(1978).

Second, in response to the social transformations which have been taking place in Alberta since the discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947, and especially since the 'rebirth' of the Progressive Conservatives in 1971, one would expect to find greater alienation among the 'upper' strata of the provincial population since, following Richards and Pratt, this 'new middle class' is "fiercely loyal to the province as a semi-sovereign political entity and deeply involved in the process of province-building."<sup>49</sup> To the extent that it is also a wealthy middle class whose prosperity depends upon the provincial government's extension of control over a politically volatile energy industry, it is expected that the 'ingroup' allegiances which typify the province-building ethos will also be manifest as 'outgroup' antipathies directed against central Canada in general and against the federal government in particular.

Third, a somewhat different tradition of protest on the west coast leads one to suspect that B.C. alienation is not the preserve of a single class, but that it applies indiscriminately to the province as a whole. Here Sanford's conviction that

...social and economic cleavages have been more numerous in B.C. than in the rest of Canada, (that) no single commodity dominates the westcoast province, places most people on the same producer level, or unites them against alien forces 'back East',<sup>50</sup>

is apposite, and suggests that alienation transcends class divisions. The internal class competition implicit in British Columbia's 'bi-polar' political culture<sup>51</sup> is expected to attenuate western alienation at the aggregate level.

In attempting to operationalize the variable, 'social class', we are confronted with one of the most ill-defined, indeterminate concepts in the social scientist's analytical repertoire. For the purposes of this paper I shall follow convention by considering only the 'objective' indicators of social class, namely, income, occupation, and education. However, I do so in full recognition of the methodological perils inherent in this formulation.<sup>52</sup>

The social class index is constructed by grouping income, occupation, and education scores into three categories, each having values '1', '2', or '3', and then by adding the adjusted scores. The cut-off points for each of these groupings are described in Appendix 1. The resulting scale is then recoded into quintiles to produce an index which varies from 'one' ('lower' class) to '5' ('upper' class). Frequencies for each of these groupings are presented in Appendix 2.

Considered separately, income, occupation, and education correlate highly with one another in both British Columbia and Alberta; however, when each is cross-tabulated with western alienation, some interesting patterns of inter-provincial variation emerge. In British Columbia, both occupation and education are weakly related to alienation (Pearson's  $r = -0.12$  and  $-0.13$ , respectively);<sup>53</sup> i.e., mean alienation scores tend to be lower among respondents having more years of schooling and more 'prestigious' occupations. There is, however, no systematic relationship between income and alienation.<sup>54</sup>

In Alberta, neither income, nor occupation, nor education is related to western alienation. The highly educated, high-salaried professional is



as likely (or unlikely) to have a high alienation score as the unskilled labourer.<sup>55</sup>

It is not surprising then, that relationships between alienation and the aggregate variable, 'social class' are also differentiated along provincial lines. As is indicated in Table 15, there is a net negative association between social class and western alienation in British Columbia, while no systematic relationship is revealed in Alberta.

The data presented in Table 15 undermine at least two of the three hypotheses cited above. Intense feelings of alienation are no more the preserve of the 'new middle class' than of other social strata in Alberta. Indeed, when the alienation scores of class '4' and class '5' respondents are combined (not an unreasonable procedure, since only thirteen respondents fall into the class '5' category), the result is a relatively low mean score of 2.22, which suggests that perhaps middle class respondents are less alienated than those falling into the 'lower' strata. Furthermore, neither involvement in the oil industry nor trade union membership has a major bearing upon the distribution of alienation scores. It does not appear, then, as if energy-related social transformations have given rise to a 'blue chip' variant of western alienation in Alberta, as a number of contemporary observers have proposed.<sup>56</sup>

The data also stand at odds with the hypothesis that class and alienation are unrelated in British Columbia. As Table 15 indicates, B.C. alienation decreases as one moves through the higher social strata; thus not only does a systematic relationship exist, but it too debars any notion that regional discontent has a 'blue chip' quality. In British

TABLE 15

Mean Alienation Scores of Social Class Groups,  
British Columbia and Alberta

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Class	Mean Alienation Score	N =
5 (upper)	2.07	61
4	2.40	199
3	2.47	149
2	2.53	132
1 (lower)	2.81	69

Number of valid cases = 710

Pearson's  $r = -0.129$       significance = 0.0003

## ALBERTA

Class	Mean Alienation Score	N =
5 (upper)	2.62	13
4	2.13	61
3	2.69	85
2	2.53	201
1 (lower)	2.52	54

Number of valid cases = 414

Pearson's  $r = 0.02$       significance = 0.3402

Columbia at least, western alienation is more typically a property of the 'lower' than of the upper classes.

As for our first hypothesis, there is only slight evidence that Alberta's surviving petit-bourgeoisie is more highly alienated than other segments of the provincial community. Farmers are indeed the most alienated respondents in the occupational sample (mean score on alienation = 2.93), and farmers who support the provincial Socreds are more alienated still (mean score = 3.29). However, there are too few cases for us to draw any firm conclusions on this matter. Only twenty respondents are farmers, and only seven of these consider themselves Social Credit supporters.

Thus the data suggest major differences in the class bases of western alienation, and coincidentally cast suspicion upon much of the conventional wisdom associated with regional interpretations of Canadian political economy. To what extent are such differences attributable to structural differences between the provinces?

After controlling for a number of attitudinal and sociodemographic variables in British Columbia, correlations between class and alienation are reduced to unacceptable levels of significance in all but three categories of respondents, namely, ideological liberals, supporters of the federal Liberal party, and residents of metropolitan Vancouver. Moreover, relationships in the latter group become insignificant when 'metropolitan Vancouver' is disaggregated into its component ridings.<sup>57</sup> Thus in British Columbia class and alienation are most clearly related among ideological liberals and federal Liberal partisans.

There is, however, no necessary conjunction between the two groups. As we learned in Table 6, ideological Liberals are no more likely to support the Liberal party than are ideological conservatives, and while Liberal partisans tend to fall into upper categories of education, occupation, and to a lesser extent, family income, ideological liberals are interspersed more or less indiscriminately throughout all socioeconomic groups. Thus it appears as if ideology and political partisanship are independent stimuli insofar as relationships between class and western alienation are concerned.

More to the point, no such pattern of relationships turns up in the Alberta data. Indeed, none of the appropriate controls produces significant correlations between class and alienation in the Prairie province, even among groups of ideological liberals and supporters of the Liberal party.<sup>58</sup> Thus while Albertans are less likely than British Columbians to be 'liberal' in either the ideological or the partisan sense of the term, there is little evidence that this distinction accounts for differential class-alienation relationships between the two provinces. In Alberta the non-relationship between class and alienation is ubiquitous, while in B.C. such is not the case.

Unfortunately, data limitations prevent us from exploring the subjective dimensions of social class in a comparative manner. While controls for subjective social class, political efficacy, and political trust fail to turn up any significant correlations between objective class and alienation in B.C.,<sup>59</sup> the absence of comparable data in Alberta renders such controls meaningless for the purposes of our analysis.

Nonetheless the evidence cited here suggests that many of the class images we have come to associate with western alienation -- 'relative class homogeneity', 'independent commodity producers', 'arriviste bourgeoisie', 'blue chip-ism'-- do not provide accurate descriptions of western alienation as a provincial phenomenon. In British Columbia regional discontent is most pronounced among lower class groups while in Alberta different degrees of alienation are equally likely to be found among all social strata.

These differences seem to be ingrained in the provinces' unique political cultures. As we have seen, people sharing similar ideological and partisan proclivities in each province are distributed differentially on the dependent variable, 'western alienation'. While the possibility that we have 'missed' a crucial structural variable is always present, the data tested suggest that disparities in the class correlates of western alienation are imbedded in the diverse historical, symbolic, and conditional forces which collectively comprise the provincial political cultures.

## VII      Conclusions

To recapitulate, western alienation in Alberta is strongest among the ideologically conservative, is least prominent among Liberal partisans, and does not have a meaningful correlate in social class. By contrast, western alienation in British Columbia is strongest among the ideologically liberal and among the 'lower' social classes; as in Alberta, it is least prominent among supporters of the Liberal party. Few of the control variables invoked throughout the analysis give us cause to believe that the relationships gleaned in each dataset converge at some point in the sociological universe. While respondents in both provinces seem to associate western alienation with the Liberal party, there is on the whole little evidence that 'structural' dissimilarities between the communities are responsible for differential relationships in the various correlates of western alienation. Unfortunately data limitations preclude our examining certain aspects of regional discontent (e.g., assessments of party leaders or orientations toward specific issues) in a comparative manner.

However, my objective here has been simply to point out that western alienation is not a homogeneous, pan-regional phenomenon, but is rather a collection of multi-faceted belief systems which vary perceptibly along provincial (among other) lines. To the extent that western alienation is associated with political culture, it is better understood in terms of the diverse provincial communities from which it is spawned than of the larger regional community to which it ostensibly provides conceptual order.

\* \* \* \* \*

Throughout this essay I have argued that western discontent is a more complex phenomenon than is commonly thought. The peculiar configuration of attitudes, values, and beliefs which passes for 'alienation' in British Columbia differs from that which is defined by the same label in Alberta. This I suspect is true in Saskatchewan and Manitoba as well.

Like all political analysts, I would hope that my point is something more than a simple footnote to the existing literature. Regionalism is an increasingly important part of the analysis of Canadian politics. A brief review of the major developments in Canadian federalism over the past decade -- the Western Economic Opportunities Conference, the Report of the Task Force on Canadian Unity, numerous debates over the control of the energy-related economic 'rent', various proposals for a restructured federalism, and of course the bogey of western separatism -- illustrates the extent to which western Canada, as a collective entity, has come to be seen as a major player in the national unity 'crisis'. This I believe is a positive evolution, for it stimulates a more responsive, more creative polity -- one which concurrently pursues unity and celebrates diversity.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, we ought not to become obsessed with the regional nature of Canadian politics, for as this paper has shown, regional stereotypes can enjoy a conceptual hegemony which ultimately promotes an inaccurate picture of political reality. Western alienation in fact varies by province, although many students of western Canadian politics -- including provincial officials themselves -- might have us believe otherwise.

Of course, the western provinces are not totally dissimilar, and estrangement from the centres of national power provides a popular and common denominator upon which provincial governments can congregate and, through the force of numbers and the sharing of political resources, gather strength in the pursuit of 'positional advantages'.<sup>2</sup> Thus regional discontent may itself be a powerful resource for self-interested provincial governments.

But within the mass public, western alienation seems to be a more complex phenomenon. In British Columbia, alienation is most prevalent among liberal members of the working class, while in Alberta, it transcends class boundaries and aligns with a broadly-based conservative political culture. Such variation suggests that it may be more appropriate to speak of 'western alienations' than of western alienation as a single, omnipresent phenomenon.

\* \* \* \* \*

The data presented in this paper have a number of implications for federalism and political science in Canada. In concluding, I shall focus attention upon four major points.

First, western Canada's internal heterogeneity constitutes a major impediment to western separatism. If the road to secession is paved with democratic stones, then proponents of the movement will have a difficult time capturing the popular vote on a regional basis, for as we have seen, people who are 'alienated' in one provincial community are not necessarily the same as people who are alienated in another. Even if the



separatists were to increase their aggregate support (few public opinion polls show more than a modicum of support for separation),<sup>3</sup> a region-wide mandate for political independence would not come easily; the conservative impulse currently exploited by active separatists such as Gordon Kesler, Doug Christie, and Elmer Knutsen may have a ring of appeal in Alberta, where a conservative political culture finds a modest correlate in western alienation, but it is somewhat less inviting in British Columbia, where by our estimate western alienation is not strongly related to conservatism and indeed is typically lower among conservatives than among either liberals or 'neutrals'. Similarly, B.C. separatists would have greater appeal among members of the 'lower' socioeconomic strata than among the provincial bourgeoisie, while Alberta's separatists would presumably have to pursue a cross-section of social support in order to be successful in electoral politics.

The prospects of this sort of selective canvassing seem unlikely. Current separatist leaders are unable to coordinate efforts between themselves within a province, much less between them. If 'western separatism' is ever to get off the ground on a truly regional basis, its successes will represent a masterful play of political coordination and strategy.

Second, while the separatists may experience difficulties making inroads in western Canada, 'western alienation' is by no means a spent force. The ongoing presence of ingroup antipathies directed against Ontario and Quebec in the form of agrarian protest, 'fed-bashing', province-building, evasion of fiscal obligation, or popular support for nascent separatist organizations, suggests that the condition with which we are concerned is

a robust phenomenon which stems the tide of societal change. Extreme shifts in economic wealth, changes of government at both levels, and major transformations in the social structures of provincial communities have not succeeded in erasing western discontent from the slate of forces which threatens Canadian federalism. The ubiquity of western alienation can, in part, be attributed to the complexity of the phenomenon itself. Alienation varies in relation to the diverse provincial political cultures from which it is borne. If, for example, western unrest were nothing more than a component of agrarian radicalism, then it would have been exhausted in Alberta many years ago, and indeed, it would never have become an element of B.C. politics. But because it has very diverse bases of support within the region itself, western alienation persists in the face of specific societal transformations.

Similarly, because it varies with the diverse provincial political cultures, western alienation is unlikely to be eradicated by explicit policy changes, constitutional reforms, or any one of the many blueprints for a restructured federalism which have engaged Canadian political scientists throughout the past two decades. For example, the federal government's attempts to formalize competitive freight rate structuring by instituting the National Transportation Act (NTA) in 1967 erased some of the railway industries' more blatantly discriminatory practices, such as imposing 'horizontal' rate increases and granting direct subsidies to the railways in compensation for limited rate adjustments. Nonetheless, the Act did little to assuage western provincial governments' dissatisfactions with the freight rate issue, and indeed at the Western Economic Opportunities

Conference the four provinces submitted a joint condemnation of the NTA, even though the freight rate issue had by that time become somewhat a red herring in some parts of the western Canadian community.<sup>4</sup>

Third, in a symbolic sense, western alienation represents the artificiality of regionalism in western Canada. There is today an increasing tendency to think of the country in regional terms. Agencies such as the Task Force on Canadian Unity, the Canada West Foundation, the Canadian Bar Association, the Parti Libérale, and the Government of British Columbia have submitted blueprints for restructured federalisms which emphasize the need for greater representation of regional interests in the affairs of the nation.<sup>5</sup> Within this framework, western Canadian political culture is often interpreted as a more or less monolithic force, whether as a straw man for provincial rights, (as, for example, is the case with B.C.'s constitutional proposals), or as an arbitrary delimiter of regional boundaries. Western alienation is similarly conceived. Gibbins' argument that the growth of strong provincial governments mitigates the regional nature of Prairie politics makes alienation the sine qua non of distinct regional political cultures.<sup>6</sup>

But while alienation exists in all of the western provinces, it is not necessarily the same phenomenon in each. To say that a single phenomenon (western alienation) cements together a unique regional identity when the phenomenon itself is internally fragmented, is to create a regionalism which is for conceptual purposes, somewhat illusory.

Finally, the implications for future research seem obvious. While regional studies should not be abandoned altogether, they must be approached

with greater caution, with greater sensitivity to the inter-provincial diversity which a concept such as 'western alienation' may obscure. Gibbins may be correct in contending that provincial rather than regional institutions serve as the loci of western politics. This becomes increasingly apparent as Canadian federalism evolves through the current 'crisis' period: Alberta's pursuit of a 'new federalism' which recommends equal status and jurisdictional paramountcy for the provinces in Constitutional affairs;<sup>7</sup> British Columbia's demand for recognition as an autonomous region of itself, and Newfoundland's independent challenge to the federal government with respect to offshore energy resources -- all suggest that at the governmental level, regional discontent has a markedly 'provincial' flavour. At the mass level, political analysts must pay greater attention to dissimilarities in the provincial attitudes of western Canadians vis-a-vis their eastern counterparts. Not all westerners are alienated, and those who are need not share any unique social, economic, or psychological traits. If we are truly interested in western alienation, we ought to consider it in terms of the provincial political cultures themselves, of the unique historical, institutional, and structural forces which cumulatively distinguish one community from the next. Considering western alienation in this manner is a formidable task, one made necessary precisely because we have hitherto eschewed provincial in favour of regional communities as objects of analysis. But it is a necessary task if we are to keep abreast of the changing forces which shape contemporary Canadian federalism.

## I)

NOTES

1. This paper could never have been written without the help of numerous friends and colleagues. While space limitations preclude my listing all of these people, a few select names must be mentioned: Donald Blake, Alan Cairns, David Elkins, Richard Johnston, Ian Urquhart, Roger Gibbins, Jim Bruton, Steve Tomblin. I owe a special debt to Nancy Wong for lasting patience, administrative foresight, and typing aid beyond the call of duty, and to Professor Elkins for sharing technical expertise, insights, and enthusiasm in all areas. None of these people is responsible for any flaws found herein.
2. V.C. Fowke, "National Policy: Old and New", in W.T. Easterbrook and M.H. Watkins, eds., Approaches to Canadian Economic History, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), passim.
3. The view is attributed to former Conservative M.P. Chuck Cook in "Separatism West: Fact or Fad?", Maclean's, v.93, no.48, (Dec. 1, 1980), p.31. A similar view is expressed by former Parti Libérale leader Claude Ryan in the Vancouver Sun, Dec. 4, 1980, p.A15.
4. See Maclean's, op.cit., for an example of these views as advanced by the news media. See also Denise Harrington's article, "Who Are the Separatists?", John Richards' "Populism and the West", and the editors' introduction to Larry Pratt and Garth Stevenson, eds., Western Separatism: The Myths, Realities, and Dangers, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1981).
5. This interpretation is inspired in part by a passage taken from sociologist Daniel Bell: "...theory construction... has become a highly deductive system derived from a few basic axioms or really analytical concepts, such as the patterned variables in the action schema of Parsons, in which the empirical referents no longer stand for concrete entities --the individual, the society, and the like". See The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, (New York: Basic, 1976), p.98.

## II)

NOTES

1. Clarke, et al., use the term 'regional consciousness' to describe citizens' "perceptions of regional differences", which are central to the study of Canadian politics because "...only if such feeling is present will the differences between regions that the observer can document be effectively politicized...(and) only if such feeling is present can region itself, aside from particular social or economic characteristics which it may contain, be used to explain behaviour." See Political Choice in Canada (abridged ed.), (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), p. 36.
2. The body of literature dealing with aggregated protest in western Canada is not in its infancy. Indeed, many of the 'classics' of Canadian political science fall into the category of western protest. Several of these volumes will be mentioned throughout the present paper. For an extensive bibliography, see Alan F.J. Arbitise, Western Canada Since 1870: A Select Bibliography, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978).
3. Richard Simeon, "Studying Public Policy", Canadian Journal of Political Science, IX: 4, (December 1976), p. 552.
4. Ibid. The quotation is from Lewis Froman. Similar allegations may be levelled against other concepts in popular usage among contemporary political scientists. For a discussion of the problem with respect to political culture, see David J. Elkins and Richard Simeon, "A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?", Comparative Politics, XI: 2, (January 1979).
5. Indeed, few analysts have even bothered to define western alienation in any meaningful way. Roger Gibbins' notion of a "political creed (later modified to 'political ideology') of discontent" is probably the most seriously thought out, yet it does not seem to have taken hold among analysts of Canadian politics, probably because its operative terms -- 'creed', 'ideology', and 'discontent' -- are themselves beset by the problem of the dependent variable.
6. See, e.g., Wallace Clement, "A Political Economy of Regionalism in Canada", and Carl J. Cuneo, "A Class Perspective on Regionalism," both in Daniel Glenday, et al., Modernization and the Canadian State, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1978). Classical economists such as Harold A. Innis and Vernon C. Fowke also subscribe to a 'political economy' perspective on regionalism. See The Fur Trade in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), and The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957).

## II)

7. Roger Gibbins, Prairie Politics and Society, (Toronto: Butterworth, 1980), pp.184-85.
8. David J. Elkins, "Allegiance and Discontent in British Columbia", unpublished manuscript, University of British Columbia, March, 1982, pp.25-29.
9. Gibbins, "Models of Nationalism: A Case Study of Political Ideologies in the Canadian West", Canadian Journal of Political Science, X: 2, (June, 1977), pp.358-59.
10. The use of public opinion polls in analyzing western alienation is by no means limited to the academic sphere. Numerous other institutions --political parties, the media, and private research organizations like the Canada West Foundation-- have conducted studies which deal directly or indirectly with western alienation. Unfortunately, few of these studies consider the phenomenon in a comprehensive manner, focussing instead upon a few select indicators. However, if western alienation continues to be a major issue in Canadian politics, it is only a matter of time before larger, more extensive surveys are undertaken. Indeed, the Canada West Foundation began a major cross-provincial poll in the summer of 1982, as research for this paper was in process.
11. See, for example, Clement, op. cit., and Cuneo, op. cit., as well as C.B. Macpherson's Democracy in Alberta, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), and S.M. Lipset, Agrarian Socialism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).
12. This is in part a consequence of the difficulties inherent in measuring a concept such as social class. See Section VI, "Social Class", in this paper. In his analyses of western alienation in Alberta, Gibbins pays little attention to social class as an explanatory variable. The same can be said for Elkins' study of western alienation in British Columbia.
13. For a useful survey of the literature on 'political alienation', see Kirk Koerner, Political Alienation, unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1968. The classic statement on political alienation, defined in terms of powerlessness, meaninglessness, anomie, isolation, and self-estrangement, is Melvin Seeman's "On the Meaning of Alienation", American Sociological Review, XXIV, (December, 1959), pp.783-91. See also Ada Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation", American Political Science Review, (June, 1970), pp.389-410, for a discussion of alienation as powerlessness and normlessness.

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14. Beginning with Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation", op. cit., in 1959.
15. For example, 'powerlessness', described by Finifter as the anti-thesis of political efficacy, is clearly not a feature of western alienation. At least two independent analyses of Canadian Federal Election Survey data suggest that British Columbians are the most efficacious people in Canada, while Prairie residents tend to be no more and no less efficacious than the Canadian population as a whole. See Clarke, et al., op. cit., pp. 30-31; see also David J. Elkins and Richard Simeon, Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life, (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), pp. 37-41.
16. Gibbins, Prairie Politics and Society..., p. 167.
17. Alan C. Cairns, "The Governments and Societies of Canadian Federalism," Canadian Journal of Political Science, X: 4, (December 1977).
18. In a particularly damning (and controversial) example, Larry Pratt accuses both Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed and Saskatchewan ex-Premier Allan Blakeney of using "the rhetoric of provincial rights and alienation ... to force (oil) prices up, a policy strongly supported by the (petroleum) industry" during tripartite negotiations over the financing of Alberta's Syncrude project in 1973. See The Tar Sands: Syncrude and the Politics of Oil, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976), p. 140.
19. Elkins, "The Sense of Place," in Elkins and Simeon, op. cit., esp. p. 22.
20. Elkins, "Allegiance and Discontent," p. 9.
21. David Elton and Roger Gibbins, "Western Alienation and Political Culture", in R. Schultz, O. Kruhlak, and J.C. Terry, eds., The Canadian Political Process, 3rd ed., (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979), p. 83.
22. Ibid., p. 95. At the 1973 Western Economic Opportunities Conference, Alberta's Lougheed proclaimed that "The people of western Canada feel strongly that they could contribute much more to Confederation if certain existing federal policies were altered so that the talents and energies of Western Canadians could be more meaningfully applied to the western region, and that this would significantly strengthen the nation as a whole." Cited in Western Economic Opportunities Conference, Verbatim Record and Documents, (Ottawa, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1977), p. 19.



## II)

23. Cited in Gerard F. Rutan, "Western Canada: The Winds of Alienation", American Review of Canadian Studies, XII: 1, (Spring 1982), pp. 77-78.
24. There is a subtle distinction between the activities of contemporary governments which are engaged in 'province-building', and the governments of an earlier generation which were involved in 'protest'. As Larry Pratt has pointed out, one of the major features of province-building in contemporary Alberta is that the state is deliberately used to spur on provincial development, i.e., it is not simply reacting to the asymmetries of the core-periphery system, but is engaged in a purposive strategy to aggrandize political and economic power. See "The State and Province-Building: Alberta's Development Strategy," in Leo Panitch, ed., The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977). It should be noted, however, that the authors of the original 'province-building' idea state quite explicitly that provincial governments have been engaged in such activities since Confederation, i.e., what we now think of as having been a different variant of political protest is by original definition part of the same process as province-building. See Edwin R. Black and Alan C. Cairns, "A Different Perspective on Canadian Federalism," in J. Peter Meekison, ed., Canadian Federalism: Myth or Reality? 3rd ed., (Toronto: Methuen, 1977).

## III)

## NOTES

1. See for example, A.K. Davis, "Canadian Society and History as Hinterland versus Metropolis", in R.K. Ossenberg, ed., Canadian Society: Pluralism, Change, and Conflict, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1971).
2. See Province of British Columbia, British Columbia's Constitutional Proposals, presented to the First Minister's Conference on the Constitution, October 1978; paper #2: "B.C.: Canada's Pacific Region," p. 19.
3. For a brief list of different definitions of regionalism, including sociological interpretations, see H. Odum and H.E. Moore, American Regionalism, (New York: Henry Holt, 1938), especially pp. 2 and 276.
4. Of course, some provinces are considered regions in themselves. Ontario and Quebec are commonly viewed in this manner, although one cannot overlook the fact that intra-regional differences occur there, too. For example, there are major social and economic dissimilarities between northern and southern Ontario. On this point, see Francois-Pierre Gingras, "Ontario," in D. Bellamy, J. Pammett, and D. Rowat, eds., The Provincial Political Systems, (3rd ed.), (Toronto: Methuen, 1976), pp. 34-36.
5. Cited in J. Peter Meekison, Canadian Federalism: Myth or Reality? 3rd ed., (Toronto: Methuen, 1977), p. 239.
6. Western Economic Opportunities Conference Verbatim Record and Documents, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976), pp. 19-20.
7. Calculated from Statistics Canada, Census of Canada (1971), III: 4 (1971), cat. #94-740.
8. On these points see T.D. Regehr, "Western Canada and Transportation Policies," in D.J. Bercuson, ed., Canada and the Burden of Unity, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1977); Howard D. Darling, The Politics of Freight Rates, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), part I; L. Auer and K. Mills, "Confederation and Some Regional Implications of the Tariff on Manufactures," and Kenneth Norrie, "Western Economic Grievances: An Overview With Special Reference to Freight Rates," both in Institute of Intergovernmental Relations (Queen's University) and Economic Council of Canada, Workshop on the Political Economy of Confederation: Proceedings, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1979).

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9. David E. Smith, "Western Politics and National Unity," in Bercuson, op. cit., "Political Culture in the West," in Bercuson and Phillip A. Buckner, ed's., Eastern and Western Perspectives, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), and "The Prairie Provinces," in D. Bellamy, J. Pammett, and D. Rowat, eds., op. cit.
10. Kenneth H. Norrie, "Some Comments on Prairie Economic Alienation," in Meekison, op. cit., "Western Economic Grievances: ..." and "The Economics of a Separate West," (with Michael Percy) in Larry Pratt and Garth Stevenson, ed's., Western Separatism: The Myths, Realities, and Dangers, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1981).
11. Pratt and Stevenson, op. cit.
12. George Woodcock, Confederation Betrayed! The Case Against Trudeau's Canada, (Vancouver: Harbour, 1981).
13. Harold Clarke, et al., Political Choice in Canada (Abridged ed.), (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), pp. 41, 43-45.
14. The brochure, made available in 1980, is replete with grandiose claims of western wealth. For example, "Remember the coal deposits, the oil and gas resources that can be made available for industrial and domestic needs even in the remotest corners of the area, for generations. The almost limitless production of farm, field, and ranch, able to pile up a store of the best foods into the lap of a world it now so sorely lacks," (p. 7).
15. Canada Tax Foundation The National Finances, 1976-77, ch. 10, reprinted in Paul Fox, ed., Politics: Canada, 4th ed., (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1977), and Economic Council of Canada, Living Together: A Study of Regional Disparities, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1977), chapter 6.
16. Canada. Task Force on Canadian Unity, A Future Together, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1979), p. 26.
17. Ibid., pp. 27-28.
18. See, for example, Philip Resnick, "B.C. Capitalism and the Empire of the Pacific," paper prepared for the Western Sociology and Anthropology Meetings, Winnipeg, March 4-6, 1981, passim.
19. Cited in Smith, "Western Politics and National Unity", op. cit., p.166.
20. G.F.G. Stanley, "The Western Canadian Mystique", in D. Gagan, ed., Prairie Perspectives, (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1970), p.16.

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21. Smith, The Prairie Provinces, p. 47.
22. Roger Gibbins, Prairie Politics and Society, (Toronto: Butterworth, 1980), p. 167.
23. Norman J. Ruff, "Leadership Autonomy and Federal-Provincial Relations: B.C.'s Approaches to Federalism in the 1970's" paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Halifax, May 28, 1981, p. 11.
24. Clarke, et al., op. cit., pp. 48-49.
25. John Richards and Larry Pratt, Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), chapter 2.
26. See, for example, Smith, "Political Culture in the West," in Bercuson and Buckner, op. cit., passim.

## IV)

## NOTES

1. The term, 'belief system' is borrowed from Philip Converse and is used in the manner in which he defined it, namely, as "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence." See "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics", in David Apter, ed., Ideology and Discontent, (New York: Free Press, 1964), pp. 206-61. I prefer the term, 'belief system' to 'ideology' precisely because of its greater flexibility in accounting for degrees of constraint. In contrast, Elton and Gibbins have employed the term 'ideology' in their definition of western alienation, i.e., as a 'regional political ideology of discontent'. See "Western Alienation and Political Culture," in R. Schultz, O. Kruhlak, and J.C. Terry, ed's., The Canadian Political Process, 3rd ed., (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979), p. 83.
2. At the National Feasibility Conference on prairie union in 1970, then Premier Harry Strom of Alberta proposed that "Western feelings against the East are primarily against economic injustices....At the heart of this issue are those aspirations and concerns of Alberta people which require recognition and action at the federal level if they are to be realized...." See David K. Elton, ed., One Prairie Province? Conference Proceedings and Selected Papers, (Lethbridge: Lethbridge Herald, 1970), p. 32. Black echoes similar sentiments in his examination of B.C. politics: "Federal relations with the province have always been marked by disputes over money and economic control and little else...separatist sentiments and movements...date from the time of Confederation and almost invariably are manifested in assertions that the province would be better off as an independent sovereign state." See "B.C.: The Canadian of Exploitation," in H.G. Thorburn, ed., Party Politics in Canada, 4th ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1979), pp. 290-91.
3. Converse describes 'constraint' or 'functional interdependence' as "the success we would have in predicting, given initial knowledge that an individual holds a specified attitude, that he holds certain other ideas and attitudes." See Converse, op. cit., p. 207.
4. See for example, Richard Simeon and David J. Elkins, "The Provincial Political Cultures," in D.J. Elkins and R. Simeon, Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life, (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), passim, and John Wilson, "The Canadian Political Cultures: Towards a Redefinition of the Nature of the Canadian Political System," in Paul Fox, ed., Politics: Canada, (4th ed.), (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1977), pp. 316-37.
5. Roger Gibbins, "Western Alienation and the Alberta Political Culture," in C. Calderola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, (Toronto: Methuen, 1979), p. 156.

V)

NOTES

1. The logic of this methodology is adopted from Elkins and Simeon in their discussion of political cultures. See "A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?" Comparative Politics, XI: 2, (January 1979), esp. pp. 135-36.
2. Roger Gibbins, "Western Alienation and the Alberta Political Culture," in Carlo Caldarola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, (Toronto: Methuen, 1979), passim.
3. The total sampling frame consists of 969 individuals, 25.1% of whom refused to be interviewed, 2.8% of whom were incapable of completing the interview, and 20.3% of whom were eliminated because they could not be located after four callbacks. See Gibbins, *op. cit.*, p. 146.
4. In addition, 808 of the respondents were re-interviewed by telephone after the February 1980 federal election.
5. The Canada West Foundation has conducted a number of polls tapping aspects of western alienation; while they have the advantages of utilizing cross-provincial samples, a single, comprehensive study has yet to be undertaken. Some of the Foundation's results can be found in Gibbins' Regionalism: Territorial Politics in Canada and the United States, (Toronto: Butterworth, 1982), pp. 181-82, and Gerard F. Rutan, "Western Canada: The Winds of Alienation," American Journal of Canadian Studies, XII: 1, (Spring 1982), pp. 82-84.
6. For further discussion of this index, see Gibbins, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-49.
7. For further discussion of the B.C. alienation scale, see David J. Elkins, "Western Alienation in British Columbia," unpublished manuscript, draft, University of British Columbia, October 1981, pp. 3-8.
8. I must stress that this adjustment is made for heuristic purposes only. Thus one who scores, say, 2.63 on one alienation scale is not necessarily more alienated than one who scores 2.50 on the other.
9. Gibbins, *op. cit.*, p. 166, ff. 26, and Elkins, *op. cit.*, p. 4. Guttman scale analyses yield mean inter-item correlation coefficients (Yule's Q) of .337 for B.C. and .478 for Alberta.

V)

10. Many of the items employed by the Canada West Foundation in its Public Opinion Updates closely resemble those used in the B.C. and Alberta alienation scales. So too do some of Oliver's items in her 1971 survey. See especially Rutan, op. cit., and Thelma Oliver, "Aspects of Alienation in Alberta," paper prepared for the forty-seventh annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, June 2-6, 1975.
11. The Alberta survey deals primarily with issues of specific concern to the province and the provincial government. By contrast, the B.C. study deals with political issues in a broad manner, utilizing open-ended questions (e.g., "what are the three most important political issues to you personally?") to capture respondents' views.
12. Elkins, op. cit., pp. 27-35.

## VI)

NOTES

1. For example, people who agree with the statement that "all civil servants should have the right to strike" are assumed to have a positive orientation toward the formal organization of collective interests in the workplace and therefore probably disagree with the statement that "trade unions have become too powerful in Canada." We designate their views 'liberal' in contrast to respondents who disagree that all civil servants should have the right to strike and agree that trade unions have become too powerful, and whom we designate, for want of a better term, 'conservative'. The functional relationships between such ideas are defined by Converse as 'constraints'.
2. Donald V. Smiley, Canada in Question: Federalism in the Seventies, 2nd ed., (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976), p. 195.
3. See J.A. Long and F.Q. Quo, "Alberta: One Party Dominance," in M. Robin, ed., Canadian Provincial Politics, 2nd ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1978), and Myron Johnson, "The Failure of the C.C.F. in Alberta: An Accident of History," in Carlo Caldarola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, (Toronto: Methuen, 1979).
4. Larry Pratt, "The State and Province-Building: Alberta's Development Strategy," in L. Panitch, ed., The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 149.
5. There is some difficulty in substantiating this point, although I have little doubt about its accuracy. Membership figures for the major separatist groups are unreliable, owing to the organizations' propensities to exaggerate their bases of support. My conviction is based largely upon inferential evidence -- the election of a separatist MLA in Olds-Didsbury during a 1982 by-election, the comparatively wide proliferation of minor separatist groups in Alberta. On this latter point, see Gerard F. Futan, "Western Canada: The Winds of Alienation," American Review of Canadian Studies, XII: 1, (Spring, 1982), pp. 80-82.
6. Indeed, the NDP's emphasis upon national rather than regional economic issues, particularly during the 1981 constitutional negotiations, is indicative of the British Columbia left's comparatively weak interest in regional politics. Mr. Barrett's position was that constitutional reform was not a pressing concern when compared to larger (national) issues such as inflation, unemployment, and income security. By contrast, Premier Bennett used the constitutional forum to advance the cause of western provincialism in maverick fashion.



## VI)

7. As a number of analysts have pointed out, the ideological bases of party politics in British Columbia are not rigidly adhered to. While Social Credit readily embraces the rhetoric of free enterprise, capitalism, and conservatism, its behaviour tends to be somewhat more pragmatic than 'ideological'. See, for example, R.M. Burns, "British Columbia and the Canadian Federation," in R.M. Burns, ed., One Country or Two? (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1971), and D.V. Smiley, "Canada's Poujadists: A New Look at Social Credit," Canadian Forum, 42: 500, (September 1962), pp. 121-23.
8. Not surprisingly, Gibbins also finds a conservative strain in Alberta alienation. His tests for 'political conservatism' employ ten survey questions including the seven items and the use in the 'ideology' scale referred to here. The omission of three items and the use of different coding procedures has not altered the similarities in our results.
9. Pearson's  $r = -0.298$  with significance at the .002 level for respondents having family incomes of \$12,000 to \$14,999 per year, and  $r = -0.214$  with significance at the .025 level among respondents having lived in British Columbia for over thirty-five years. These are the only 'family income' and 'length of residence' categories in which relationships satisfy conventional requirements of statistical significance.
10. See, for example, Glen A. Toner and Francois Bregha, "The Political Economy of Energy," in M.S. Whittington and G. Williams, Canadian Politics in the 1980's, (Toronto: Methuen, 1981), pp. 16-18.
11. See Larry Pratt, "Whose Oil is It?" in L. Pratt and G. Stevenson, ed's., Western Separatism: The Myths' Realities, and Danger, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1981), pp. 163-66.
12. There is some ambiguity as to what is meant by 'involvement' in the industry. Judging by its location in the survey, I assume that 'involvement' deals in the main with employment. Census data indicate that as of 1971, only 2.5% of Albertans were gainfully employed in either the petroleum or natural gas industries. While this figure obviously refers to only those people who are directly employed in the industries, both it and the 7.2% figure obtained from the Alberta Electorate survey suggest that perhaps the manner in which the oil industry 'dominates' life in the province is overestimated.

## IV)

13. Among trade union members, the relationship between ideology and alienation is not statistically significant. The mean alienation score of liberal respondents is 2.36, of 'neutrals' = 2.87, and of conservatives = 2.32.
14.  $r = -0.085$  with significance at the 0.02 level. Mean alienation scores of liberal respondents is 2.64; of neutrals = 2.33, of conservatives = 2.21.  $N = 562$ .
15. See Terrence Levesque and Kenneth H. Norrie, "Overwhelming Majorities in the Legislatures of Alberta," Canadian Journal of Political Science, XII: 3, (September, 1979), pp. 452-71.
16. Gordon Galbraith, "British Columbia" in D. Bellamy, J. Pammett, and D. Rowat, ed's., The Provincial Political Systems, 3rd ed., (Toronto: Methuen, 1976), pp. 70-71.
17. David J. Elkins, "Allegiance and Discontent in British Columbia," unpublished paper, draft, University of British Columbia, March 1982, 21-25; Roger Gibbins, "Western Alienation and the Alberta Political Culture," in Carlo Caldarola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, (Toronto: Methuen, 1979), pp. 152-56.
18. The Socreds, after having dominated the Legislature for over three decades, have declared that they will field no candidates in the next provincial election, which at the time of this writing was set for November 2, 1982.
19. 49.8% of Albertan respondents consider themselves Progressive Conservative in national politics, while 43.4% consider themselves Progressive Conservative in provincial politics.
20. See, for example, S.M. Lipset, Agrarian Socialism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), ch. 11, passim; C.B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), passim; Evelyn Eager, "The Conservatism of the Saskatchewan Electorate" in N. Ward and D. Spafford, ed's., Politics in Saskatchewan, (Don Mills: Longman's, 1968), pp.2-3, and passim. For a more theoretical approach, see Maurice Pinard, The Rise of a Third Party, (Englewood-Cliff: Prentice-Hall, 1971).
21. For a useful classification of these parties and the kinds of class, ideological, and regional support which distinguishes them, see John McMenemy, "Fragment and Movement Parties," in C. Winn and J. McMenemy, Political Parties in Canada, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976).

## IV)

22. Thelma Oliver, "Aspects of Alienation in Alberta," paper prepared for the forty-seventh annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Edmonton, June 2-6, 1975, p. 8. Working from the same data base, Gilsdorf draws similar conclusions in his "Western Alienation, Political Alienation, and the Federal System," in Caldarola, op. cit. The survey from which their data derive was conducted shortly after the 1971 provincial election, in which the Progressive Conservatives came to power after thirty-six years of Social Credit Government were concluded. The timing of the survey may explain, in part at least, why their conclusions seem to diverge from those of Gibbins, who finds alienation greatest among the 'old-line' Conservatives, i.e., in 1971 the incoming Tories had yet to distinguish themselves in popular conception from earlier versions of the Conservative party (alternatively, one might argue with Larry Pratt that the Lougheed Conservatives are for practical purposes no longer an 'old-line' party. See Prairie Capitalism, pp. 162-66).
23. David J. Elkins, op. cit., and Roger Gibbins, op. cit.
24. Interestingly, while Elkins joins Laponce in proposing that "Social Credit seems to be more a middle of the road party in B.C. than elsewhere," 10.2% of the respondents in Gibbins' 1976 Alberta Electorate survey thought 'Social Credit' stood for socialism. Fully 53.8% of respondents offered no opinion; when these responses were coded as missing data, the proportion of Albertans who associated Social Credit with socialism stood at 20.2%. See "The Structure of Provincial Party System" in D.J. Elkins and R. Simeon, Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life, (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), p. 237 for the Elkins reference.
25. Terrence Levesque and Kenneth Norrie, "Overwhelming Majorities in the Legislature of Alberta," Canadian Journal of Political Science, XII: 3, (September 1979), pp. 452-71. The authors argue that Government parties have shared a common formula for electoral success throughout the province's history, i.e., adopting an anti-federal stance in inter-provincial politics, and adopting a conservative stance in intra-provincial politics.
26. Thomas Sanford, The Politics of Protest: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit League in British Columbia, (Ph.D thesis, California, 1961), chapter 2, and Martin Robin, "The Social Bases of Party Politics in British Columbia," in B. Blishen, F. Jones, K. Naegle, and J. Porter, Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives, 3rd ed., (Toronto: MacMillan, 1971).

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27. Donald V. Smiley, Canada in Question: Federalism in the 1980s (3rd ed.), (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), pp. 121-22.
28. 57.1% of B.C. New Democrats are ideologically 'liberal', while 52.2% of Alberta Progressive Conservatives and 52.6% of Albertan Socreds are ideologically 'conservative '.
29. As Elkins has shown, supporters of each of the major parties in Alberta consider Social Credit to the 'right' of all other parties. See Elkins, op. cit., p. 228.
30. See the references in ff. 26.
31. Mean alienation scores for Alberta (provincial) Socreds by ideology: liberal = 2.45; neutral = 2.46; conservative = 3.00; there are too few cases for mean scores to be worth noting among federal Socreds. Mean alienation scores for British Columbia New Democrats (provincial) by ideology: liberal = 2.67; neutral = 2.53; conservative = 2.25.
32. One hundred seventy-five Alberta respondents report having lived elsewhere in Canada; the bulk of these come from Saskatchewan (58), followed by Ontario (45), and British Columbia (31). One hundred eighty-one respondents in the B.C. sample have lived in another Canadian province since leaving school. Most come from Ontario (63), Alberta (46), and Saskatchewan (33). A greater percentage comes from out-of-country.
33. Interestingly, the few (federal) Liberal British Columbians who have lived in either Saskatchewan or Manitoba tend to be more alienated than Progressive Conservative supporters having the same experience. Mean alienation scores for respondents having lived in either Saskatchewan or Manitoba are: Liberal = 2.44; Progressive Conservative = 2.13; however, N's = only 16 and 23, respectively.
34. Elkins, "The Horizontal Mosaic", in Elkins and Simeon, op. cit., p. 107, and passim.
35. Robert Alford, Party and Society: The Anglo-American Democracies, (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963), pp. 250-86.
36. I take as point of reference the first publication of S.M. Lipset's Agrarian Socialism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

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37. C.B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), chapter 1, especially pp. 6-20.
38. In a particularly insightful assessment of British Columbia's economy and class structure, Thomas Sanford writes, "The very plurality of key commodities prevents the growth of a dominant commodity Weltanschauung similar to the one-time position and outlook of wheat farmers on the Canadian prairie or cotton pickers in the American South." The Politics of Protest: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit League in British Columbia, (Ph.D Dissertation, California, 1961), p. 67. See also Philip Resnick, "B.C. Capitalism and the Empire of the Pacific," paper prepared for the Western Sociology and Anthropology Meetings, Winnipeg, March 4-6, 1981, pp. 17-18.
39. Martin Robin, "The Social Bases of Party Politics in British Columbia," in B. Blishen, F. Jones, K. Naegle, and J. Porter, ed's., Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1971), p. 293.
40. See Alan Cairns, "The Study of the Provinces: A Review Article," B.C. Studies, XVI: (Summer, 1972-73), pp. 72-73.
41. Andrew N. Jackson, "Patterns of Hinterland Revolt: Alberta and Saskatchewan in the Inter-War Period," paper presented at the forty-ninth annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Fredericton, N.B., June 1977, p. 8.
42. See, for example, D. Poetschke and R. McKown, "Perceptions of Class in Alberta," in Carlo Calderola, ed., Society and Politics in Alberta, (Toronto: Methuen, 1979), pp. 193-96; J. Anthony Long and F.Q. Quo, "Alberta: The Politics of Consensus," in M. Robin, ed., Canadian Provincial Politics, 2nd ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1978), especially pp. 22-23.
43. Calculated from Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, III: 4 (1971), cat. #94-740.
44. John Richards and Larry Pratt, Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), pp. 166-68.
45. See, for example, Gordon Galbraith, "British Columbia", in D. Bellamy, J. Pammett, and D. Rowat, eds., The Provincial Political Systems, 3rd. ed., (Toronto: Metheun, 1976), pp. 62-75.

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46. Philip Resnick, "The Political Economy of British Columbia: A Marxist Perspective," in P. Knox and P. Resnick, ed s., Essays in B.C. Political Economy, (Vancouver: New Star, 1974), pp. 5-6.
47. Ibid., p. 8. Interestingly, since returning to power in 1975, B.C.'s Social Credit Government, and Premier Bennett in particular, has been far more bellicose in fanning the fires of western alienation has the Opposition N.D.P. To the extent that each party is roughly aligned with a particular social class interest (vide Robin), one has difficulties in discerning any tidy pattern of class-alienation association.
48. We were admittedly doing an injustice to Macpherson, who defined Alberta's petit-bourgeoisie as a community of independent commodity producers marked by a 'false consciousness' vis-a-vis their relationship to the market economy. On the one hand, the farmers were independent in that they were free to direct their own labour and did not direct the labour of others, "yet dependent on an economy otherwise directed and of which they were a subordinate part" (Democracy in Alberta, p. 224). Unfortunately, the data from which we are working are not sufficiently sensitive to measure the political attitudes of this group as Macpherson defined it. As we shall see, very few respondents are farmers who support Social Credit; in all likelihood, fewer still employ no labour. Thus our analysis of this 'aspect' of class-based alienation should be taken as no more than a rough indicator of petit-bourgeois attitudes.
49. Richards and Pratt, op. cit., pp. 167-68.
50. Sanford, op. cit.
51. Galbraith, op. cit., and Martin Robin, "B.C.: The Politics of Class Conflict," in M. Robin, ed., Canadian Provincial Politics, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1971).
52. Two of the major difficulties are outlined by Porter in his classic work, The Vertical Mosaic, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965). Firstly, the arbitrary designation of social boundaries in statistical analyses allows no more than an 'artificial' construction of class. In Porter's words, "(The 'artificial' classes) are not social groups because in social groups the members have a sense of identity with one another, share common values and traditions, and have an awareness of unity and common purpose" (p. 10). This criticism leads to a second methodological problem, one which has plagued virtually all class analysts since Marx: what is the relationship

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between 'objective class' and 'subjective class'? (p. 9). For an interesting treatment of this problem with respect to class consciousness and Macpherson's conception of false consciousness in Alberta, see Poetschke and McKown, op. cit., pp. 197-202.

53. significance levels = .0002 for occupation, .0001 for education.
54. When family income is cross-tabulated with western alienation, Pearson's  $r = -0.049$  with significance at the .091 level.
55. In Alberta, relationships between alienation and the three components of social class are as follows:
  - a) occupation by alienation:  $r = -0.034$  (significance = .167)
  - b) family income by alienation:  $r = 0.034$  (significance = .223)
  - c) education by alienation:  $r = 0.0005$  (significance = .495)

All correlation coefficients are Pearson's  $r$ .  
 In contrast, Thelma Oliver finds a strong relationship between alienation and what she calls 'lower status', although her definition of alienation differs from that which we have employed here. See "Aspects of Alienation in Alberta," paper prepared for the forty-seventh annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Edmonton, June 2-6, 1975, pp. 5-6.
56. See Denise Harrington, "Who Are the Separatists?" in Larry Pratt and Garth Stevenson, ed's., Western Separatism: The Myths, Realities, and Dangers, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1981), pp. 33-35, and Wayne Skene, "Will the Prairies Go West?" Quest, X: 1, (March 1981), pp. 11-17.
57. The 'metropolitan Vancouver' region consists of the provincial ridings, Vancouver Centre, North Vancouver-Seymour, Burnaby-Willingdon, and Surrey, or of the federal ridings, Vancouver Centre, Vancouver East, Vancouver Kingsway, North Vancouver-Burnaby, and Burnaby.
58. This includes controls for length of residence and age, which Gibbins find most strongly related to alienation. All of the sociodemographic correlates cited by Gibbins were tested as controls; none produced significance results.
59. When cross-tabulated with western alienation, the subjective social class variable yields an insignificant Cramer's  $V$  of 0.086. The efficacy and trust variables, which are constructed from a number of items, are both inversely related to western alienation at acceptable levels of significance ( $r = -0.274$  and  $-0.214$ , respectively,

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both significance levels are 0.000). However, little is revealed when efficacy and trust are controlled in cross tabulations of class and alienation; significant relationships are elicited only among middle groups on efficacy (i.e., neither extremely efficacious nor extremely inefficacious), and among groups scoring '3' and '5' on a 7 point 'trust' scale ranging from '0' (low trust) to '6' (high trust).



## VII

## NOTES

1. A similar view is advanced in the conclusion to Simeon and Elkins' Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life, (Toronto: Methuen, 1980).
2. The term, 'positional advantage', and the concept of government self-interest from which it derives was formulated by Alan Cairns. See "The Governments and Societies of Canadian Federalism", Canadian Journal of Political Science, X: 4, (December, 1977) for a general statement of these premises, and "Constitution-Making, Government Self-Interest, and the Problem of Legitimacy in Canada," (paper to be published in a book tentatively titled, Political Support in Canada: The Crisis Year, ed. Harold Clarke and Allan Kornberg, forthcoming) for more explicit use of these terms.
3. Surprisingly few pollsters have actually asked whether respondents are in favour of the west's separating from Canada. Alberta is the only province in which the question has been asked on a somewhat regular basis. Thus we find the following:

Year	Source:	% of Albertans in favour of separation:
1980	Canada West Foundation	7%
1977	<u>Calgary Herald</u>	2.7%
1974	<u>Gibbins (Calgary)</u>	2.8%
1970	T. Oliver	12%
1969	David Elton	5%

4. See e.g., F.W. Anderson, "The Philosophy of the Macpherson Royal Commission and the National Transportation Act: A Retrospective Essay," in K.W. Studnicki-Gizbert, ed., Issues in Canadian Transportation Policy, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1974) and esp. H.D. Darling, The Politics of Freight Rates, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980). Darling's conception of the 'Railway Age Ideology' is particularly relevant to the 'ideology' of alienation in western Canada: "It was perhaps to have been expected that the familiar symptoms of the old sickness should reappear, namely, a new outburst in the old style on freight rates, just a few years after everything was thought to have been settled by the passage of the National Transportation Act in 1967...a rational interpretation of this phenomenon today leaves a wide credibility gap, which suggests that it may not be meant to be understood in this way but rather as a ritual war dance or even a college yell" (p. 235).

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5. See especially the recommendations of: Canada. Task Force on Canadian Unity, A Future Together, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1979); Canadian Bar Association, Towards a New Canada, (Montreal: Canadian Bar Foundation, 1978); David K. Elton, et al., Alternatives: Towards the Development of an Effective Federal System for Canada: Amended Report, (Calgary: Canada West Foundation, 1978); Parti Libérale du Québec, A New Canadian Federation, (Montreal: The Quebec Liberal Party, 1980).
6. Roger Gibbins, Prairie Politics and Society, (Toronto: Butterworth, 1980), chapter 1, passim.
7. See Government of Alberta, Harmony in Diversity: A New Federalism for Canada, (Position paper on Constitutional Change, October 1978). The Province recommends provincial paramountcy in natural resource ownership and control, taxation, offshore minerals, fisheries, some aspects of transportation, culture, and trade. It is also proposed that the provinces have equal constitutional status in any amending formula adopted (pp. 24-25).

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# APPENDIX 1: Construction of the Class Index

Value:		British Columbia	Alberta
3	Occupation*	Professionals/Managers/Technicians	Professionals/Owners-Managers
	Income	\$ 25,000 +	\$ 25,000 +
	Education	13 + (years of schooling)	University/Post-graduate/other post-secondary
2	Occupation	Supervisor/Foreman/Skilled clerical-sales-service/Skilled crafts and trades	Sales/Clerical/Skilled
	Income	\$ 15,000 - \$ 24,999	\$ 15,000 - \$ 24,999
	Education	11-12 (years of schooling)	Some high school/Finished high school
1	Occupation	Farmers/Semi-skilled clerical-sales-service/Semi-skilled crafts and trades/Unskilled clerical-sales-service/Unskilled crafts and trades/Unskilled labour/Farm labour/Inappropriate	Unskilled/Farmer/Rancher/Housewife/Widow/Armed Forces/Student/Unemployed
	Income	\$ 000 - \$ 14,999	\$ 000 - \$ 14,999
	Education	0-10 (years of schooling)	No formal schooling -- Completed grade school

\* The B.C. occupation category is a combination of Pineo/Porter occupation scales for both self-employed and non-self-employed respondents. The B.C. data provide several occupation classifications; the Pineo-Porter scales are used here because they approximate the classification used in the Alberta study.

## APPENDIX 2

After having grouped the Occupation, Income, and Education categories in this manner, all values were summed, thus creating a scale with values varying from 3 to 9. These values were subsequently recoded into quintiles, resulting in the final Index of Social Class. The distribution of respondents, by class, is as follows:

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Class	Number	Relative Frequency
1	100	11.2%
2	302	33.7%
3	175	19.6%
4	238	26.6%
5	80	8.9%
missing	156	-
median = 2.76		N = 1051
		Valid Cases = 895

## ALBERTA

Class	Number	Relative Frequency
1	54	13.0%
2	201	48.6%
3	85	20.5%
4	61	14.7%
5	13	3.1%
missing	88	-
median = 2.26		N = 502
		Valid Cases = 414