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Andrew F. Johnson, Andrew Stritch, eds.. *Canadian Public Policy: Globalization and Political Parties.* Toronto: Copp Clark, 1997. vi + 300 pp. 29.95 CD, paper, ISBN 978-0-7730-5566-7.

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In their Introduction, the editors of this stimulating book pose three key questions for the reader to ponder: 1) were the 1993 Red Book promises of Jean Chretien's Liberals kept, during their first term in office? 2) did the actual policies of the Chretien government differ appreciably from those of the Mulroney government that preceded it? and 3) what impact has the globalization phenomenon had upon Canadian government policies, Liberal or Conservative, over the past two years? These were the same questions that the eleven contributing authors, a list that includes the two editors, were invited to address in their separate chapters. The eleven issues covered, in order of their appearance and indicating respective authors, are: monetary policy (Peter Leslie); labour market policy (Stephen McBride); science and technology (Andrew Stritch); the environment (Michael Howlett); health (Geoffrey Weller); immigration (Doug Nord); social security (Andrew Johnson); aboriginal peoples (Kathy Brock); foreign policy (Andy Knight); status of women (Sandra Burt); and federal-provincial relations (Stephen Brooks).

Publishing a book with multiple authors is always a tricky enterprise. Just persuading eleven different academics to adhere to the publisher's deadlines would constitute the first challenge. The book's topicality as a kind of report card on the Chretien Liberals' first few years of office would relate directly to how soon thereafter it appeared in bookstore shelves. Given that the book came out in 1997, the same year as the federal election that allowed voters to pass judgment on the Grit government, we must concede that the first goal was met. Another major challenge for the editors is to maintain a thematic and stylistic unity to the overall book, without shackling the individual authors' creative and critical intelligence, or subjecting the reader to interminable repetition. Here, too, we must give the writing team full marks. To be sure, certain ideas (the decline of the Keynesian economic model, say) and events (the 1995 Paul Martin Budget, for example) come up again and again. But so they should. The various policy areas may be given separate treatment by expert authors in this book, but in the real world they constantly intermingle and overlap. The existence of certain common threads and overriding themes is to be expected. The reader of this book learns much about specific government policies, while at the same time developing a fairly sure grasp of the big picture.

The quality of the prose is almost uniformly good, and editing slips are few. My only stylistic quibble is that, occasionally, a few of the authors fall into the overuse of jargonistic acronyms. I would assume that the editors have aimed their book at a wider audience than the few policy wonks who might be able to decipher the following passage: "The merger of CAP with the EPF effectively repeals CAP because it will no longer be

driven by need; as a component of the CHST, CAP, like the EPF, is subject to a block fund, one of the alternatives discussed in the Green Paper" (p. 179). Ironically, this offending sentence comes from a chapter written by one of the co-editors. In fairness, each acronym was spelled out in full the first time it was used, but the result is still confusion and frustration for non-specialist readers.

The common perspective of the eleven authors is to critique the record of the government, and this is as it should be, given the nature of the book. However, it is unfortunate that the ideological range of these critics seems only to encompass one-half of the ideological spectrum. The liberal-left is well represented, and a neo-marxist perspective comes out in some chapters. However, where are the neo-conservative, or neo-liberal,[1] viewpoints among the writing team? Including one or more authors of the Right would definitely have complicated the editors' task of imparting thematic unity to the book, but the resulting diversity of opinion might have been worth the trouble. Perhaps an obstacle in this regard was simply identifying such right-wing voices within the ranks of Canadian academics. They tend to be found more frequently among the pundits and editorial writers of our country's business-oriented newspaper chains than within social-science faculties.

Returning to the book's key questions, a nearly solid consensus does exist among the authors, more or less as follows. To the extent that the campaign platform outlined in the Liberals' Red Book of 1993 went beyond the normal partisan platitudes, it promised an alternative vision significantly at variance with the mildly neo-conservative policy record of the Mulroney Conservatives. Creating employment for the unemployed was to be Job One, and the resulting increase in tax revenues and decrease in social welfare expenditures would largely solve the budgetary deficit problem. To be sure, the Red Book sought to alleviate any concerns about a return to the free-wheeling tax-and-spend days of yore, but the clear message was that the Liberals retained their belief in an activist federal government using its spending power to manage the economy and maintain a social safety net for all Canadians. This model is aptly characterized by Stephen Brooks as the "New Centralism" (p. 278), and it had held sway in Ottawa from 1945 to 1984.

Again, the book's authors largely agree on what happened next. A few promises (such as cancelling the helicopter purchase) were quickly redeemed; some others (such as significantly changing the NAFTA treaty) were soon broken. For the rest of its first year in office, the Chretien government seemed genuinely to be trying to implement its Red Book vision. The major sea change came with the release of Paul Martin's Purple Book (a general review of fiscal policy options) in October 1994. The elevation of a balanced budget to top priority over job creation, and over everything else for that matter, was then confirmed, and entrenched, by the Martin Budget of February 1995. From that point on, Liberal macro-policy was distinguishable from that of its Conservative predecessor only by its greater degree of success (read ferocity) in actually paring down federal expenditures. Good-bye centralized, activist, welfare-state liberalism; hello mean-spirited, neo-liberal, downsizing and decentralization.

There is a longstanding debate within Canadian political science as to whether party labels really do indicate, and indeed ever have indicated, significant policy differences. The classic interpretation is the brokerage model, frequently associated with the work of MacGregor Dawson, who authored a widely-used survey textbook in the 1940s entitled ***The Government of Canada***,[2] and also wrote the first volume of an official biography of Prime Minister Mackenzie King. According to this model, any party seriously interested in forming the government will gravitate to the centre, seeking to accommodate all significant groups and interests within its ranks. Classic examples of the

successful application of the brokerage model are to be found in the careers of three long-serving prime ministers: John A. Macdonald, Wilfrid Laurier, and Mackenzie King, all of whom won several elections while reaching out to divergent segments of the Canadian population. Given the fractured nature of this country, it is difficult for more than one party to successfully mediate between the various interests at any one time. So, according to this model, when the Mulroney-inspired electoral coalition of 1984 and 1988 broke up, the Chretien-led Liberals were able to move in and occupy the Centre. In the brokerage model, campaign platforms serve a vital symbolic function at election time, but have never been of much use as a guide to actual policy-making, once a party is in power.

The competing model, best articulated by William Christian and Colin Campbell in a book entitled ***Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada***,[3] contends that Canadian parties do present long-standing and important ideological differences. While granting that all historically significant Canadian political parties are primarily rooted in a liberal consensus built upon ideas of individual freedom and personal dignity, their model states that the parties do differ on the meaning and application of those ideals. The Progressive Conservative party is thus a blend of business liberalism and traditional toryism, for example, while the Liberal party encompasses business liberalism and welfare liberalism, and the New Democratic Party spans welfare liberalism and social democratic values. Interestingly, Christian and Campbell's book first appeared while Pierre Trudeau, a more polarizing leader than Macdonald, Laurier, or King, was in power. The policy images of Trudeau, Robert Stanfield, and David Lewis, for example, do seem to coincide closely with the ideological ranges described in their model.

It is still too early, in 1999, to say which model best applies to the Chretien Liberals. Did the Martin Budget of 1995 indicate a movement by the Grits to accommodate the same powerful business interests who had dominated decision-making during the Mulroney era? This is the conclusion reached by the editors and most individual authors of ***Canadian Public Policy***. It is also, by the way, the conclusion reached by Maude Barlow and Bruce Campbell in their popular 1995 polemic ***Straight Through the Heart: How the Liberals Abandoned the Just Society***,[4] which also sought to hold the Chretien Liberals accountable to their Red Book promises. On the other hand, prominent Liberal cabinet ministers, including Paul Martin himself, have argued that slashing expenditures to balance the books has only been a short-term expedient, a necessary but not defining action that will create opportunities for the activist, safety-net welfare liberalism they continue to favour. Viewed from this longer-range perspective, there will continue to be significant differences between Grits and Tories, on the one hand, and between Grits and Socialists, on the other. The true litmus test will come when the current Liberal regime is finally voted out of office. Will their replacements move quickly to appropriate most of their policies, regardless of the platform they campaigned on? If so, the brokerage model wins. If there is a sharply disruptive break, something akin to the first three years of the Mike Harris-led PCs in Ontario, following upon five years of NDP rule, then the ideological model is sustained. Stay tuned.

The third key question posed by the editors focused on the impact of globalization upon the dynamics of federal policy-making. To what extent could the apparent sameness of Liberal and Conservative policy be attributed to irresistible pressure from powerful supranational forces that have, in the final third of this century, grown so strong that no party in power can do other than acquiesce? There are several schools of thought among international scholars on the issue. For a time, it was fashionable to forecast the doom of the conventional nation-state, caught between the

centralization of power in supranational bodies such as NAFTA or the European Community, and the localization of loyalties to smaller, often ethnoculturally-based entities. Conventional states are left with little leverage to resist the power of global markets and multinational corporations. A second view contends that traditional nation-states still retain a modest autonomy that permits them some leeway in negotiating with and between global interests, while accommodating a wide range of internal pressure groups. A third view sees most nation-states of the 1990s as having capitulated to powerful domestic business interests that utilized the spectre of globalization to cover their own self-interested ambitions. In this view, such nation-states still possess considerable power to act, but currently lack the will to do so. The Right tends to welcome the first model, with its vision of a very limited state, while the Centre tends toward the second model of pragmatic accommodation, and the Left yearns for a turn toward the vigorous state intervention to curb rampant Big Business that the third model envisions. Choose your poison carefully.

When asked to indicate which set of pressures, global or domestic, most affected government policy-making in their assigned area of expertise, the majority of individual authors sensibly (and in good, cautious Canadian form) reported that both were of great significance. Doug Nord, for example, stated that immigration policy was inescapably an "intermestic" concern (p. 149), because events beyond a country's borders created pressure for emigration, but forces from within that potential host country created the rules and procedures which governed immigration. Even the chapters that focused on social issues traditionally seen as internal matters--health, status of women, aboriginal peoples--note the impact on these policy areas of funding cuts forced by the fear of international capital markets, and their likely adverse reaction to ballooning budgetary deficits. At the same time, other chapters pointed out the importance of influential domestic interest groups, usually business-oriented, in structuring the fiscal debate in favour of monetarist prescriptions, and against Keynesian solutions. Globalization was simply a handy club for the pro-Business forces to use against their traditional union, welfare and environmental adversaries.

The editors in their Epilogue concede that "globalization has meant that governments are under severe pressure to implement policies that enhance industrial competitiveness" (p. 297). Canada is not unique in this regard; other economically advanced countries face the same dilemma. However, Johnson and Stritch regret that both Liberals and Conservatives have apparently chosen to promote competitiveness by resorting to the neo-conservative/neo-liberal agenda of social welfare cutbacks and widespread business de-regulation. They retain a residual faith in the ability of a middle-power nation-state like Canada to creatively mediate between domestic interests and global forces in pursuit of less socially harmful growth policies, thus forestalling the 'race to the bottom' gloomily predicted by some critics of the globalized economy.

This book will be of interest to scholars alike of political parties, public policy-making, and the impact of globalization. Down the road, it will be of great use to Canadian political historians as a contemporary report card on the record of the Chretien government during its first term in office. The critique it offers is insightful and at times harsh, yet respectful of the difficulties facing any government in the postindustrial era. The book deserves a wide readership.

Notes

[1]. The difference between neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism lies mainly in their differing attitudes toward non-economic issues like abortion, traditional family values, censorship, and so on. Neo-liberals tend to favour limiting the state's role right across the board; neo-conservatives are somewhat more prepared to counte-

nance the use of state power in non-economic areas of human activity.

[2]. R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Government of Canada*, 5th ed., revised by Norman Ward (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).

[3]. William Christian and Colin Campbell, *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1983).

[4]. Maude Barlow and Bruce Campbell. *Straight Through the Heart: How the Liberals Abandoned the Just Society* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1995).