EVALUATING CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

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The long-run fate of political parties competing for office can be explained through a diverse range of organizational theories that locate them in the interplay between the universal and contending social forces of continuity and change (Clemens and Cook 1999). How these social forces play out is affected by three factors shaping all organizations. One is the institutionalization of practices and beliefs within parties, manifested in their structure (Scott 2001). Second is the environment that provides resources for sustaining parties and the milieu in which they compete with rivals (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). And third are actions by party participants themselves (Donaldson 1996). Here I adapt the perspective of organizational coevolutionists (March 1991; Lewin et al. 1999; Rodrigues and Child 2008) to treat continuity and change in party organizations through

the interaction between environmental and institutional factors with strategic actions.

Continuity is a general concept I use to cover the ways in which ongoing regularities in parties' existence over time may be explained. According to population ecology theory,[1] the normal state of organizations is inertia (Hannan and Freeman 1984). Organizations tend to resist change because of factors like sunk costs in existing practices, internal coalitions, and ties with other organizations. In other words, inertia is the result of both environmental and institutional factors with little weight given to the actions of individuals. The argument for downplaying the significance of those actions is tied to the complex world in which organizations exist, making it difficult, in a timely manner, for even prominent actors to assimilate and make use of all the information that affects their organization or to overcome the resistance of others. Although working with different assumptions, neo-institutional theorists argue that constraints from the institutional environment promote organizational isomorphism that comes to convey legitimacy, manifested as inertia (DiMaggio and Powell 1991a: 12; b: 65). Continuity can also stem from deliberate actions rooted in loyalty, the honoring of tradition, and preferences for the status quo.

Change, as well, is explained through a number of theoretical perspectives. For population ecologists, change is the result of adaptation to environmental pressures, mediated by institutional characteristics. Just as with their predictions of inertia, little credence is placed in what individual actors can accomplish. Among neo-institutionalists, change occurs through processes that lead organizations to imitate the forms and practices of those most successful in their field (DiMaggio and Powell 1991b: 64). Change, like continuity, is tied to the power and the interests of key participants

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(DiMaggio and Powell 1991a: 30-1). A new emphasis is added by those who recognize change in creative innovations (Bolton 1993; Cummings and O'Connell 1978). According to structural contingency theorists, change comes about through the actions of those who respond to altered conditions by adopting strategies to reshape their organization in ways that produce a better fit with the environment (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967; Donaldson 1996).

By recognizing that continuity and change do not exclude each other and are both affected by the same kind of social mechanisms, a number of important questions arise with specific relevance to the organization of political parties in general and Canadian and U.S. ones in particular. I use the organizational literature for guidance about what needs to be asked and here I restrict myself to three representative questions.

The first question asks, under what circumstances does innovation overwhelm the customary inertia? Organizational theorists see this happening when actors are stimulated by their organizations' poor performance to search for new and different approaches (Cyert and March 1963; Zaltman et al. 1973; Bolton 1993). Students of political parties recognize this same phenomenon when a period of continuing weakness in a party, particularly one that had been a major player in political life, leads to its openness to change. This is a phenomenon identified almost a century ago by Lippmann (1914), supported empirically by Lowi (1963), and made current by Galvin (2008). As Harmel and Janda (1994: 278) put it, "*Parties will only change under pressure.*" Lowi (1963: 571) also raised the likelihood that similar tendencies might be found in multi-party systems through the innovative actions of the second minority party. That prediction is compatible with Pinard's (1975) argument that one-party dominance in Canada's provinces gave rise to innovative new parties rather than to the remaking of the second of the two traditional major parties. The expectation, then, is that success, normally defined as governing status, will, over time, lead to inertia. The absence of such success should be a spur to innovation.

The two primary institutional sources of innovation are also the basis of continuity. The first of these involve continuing access to resources. Organizations attempt to overcome scarcity and competition from others by forming bridges to the environment (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). But inertia can take over once they have stockpiled resources and lose a sense of urgency. Innovative organiza-

tions, in contrast, should be especially vigorous in pursuing new resources.

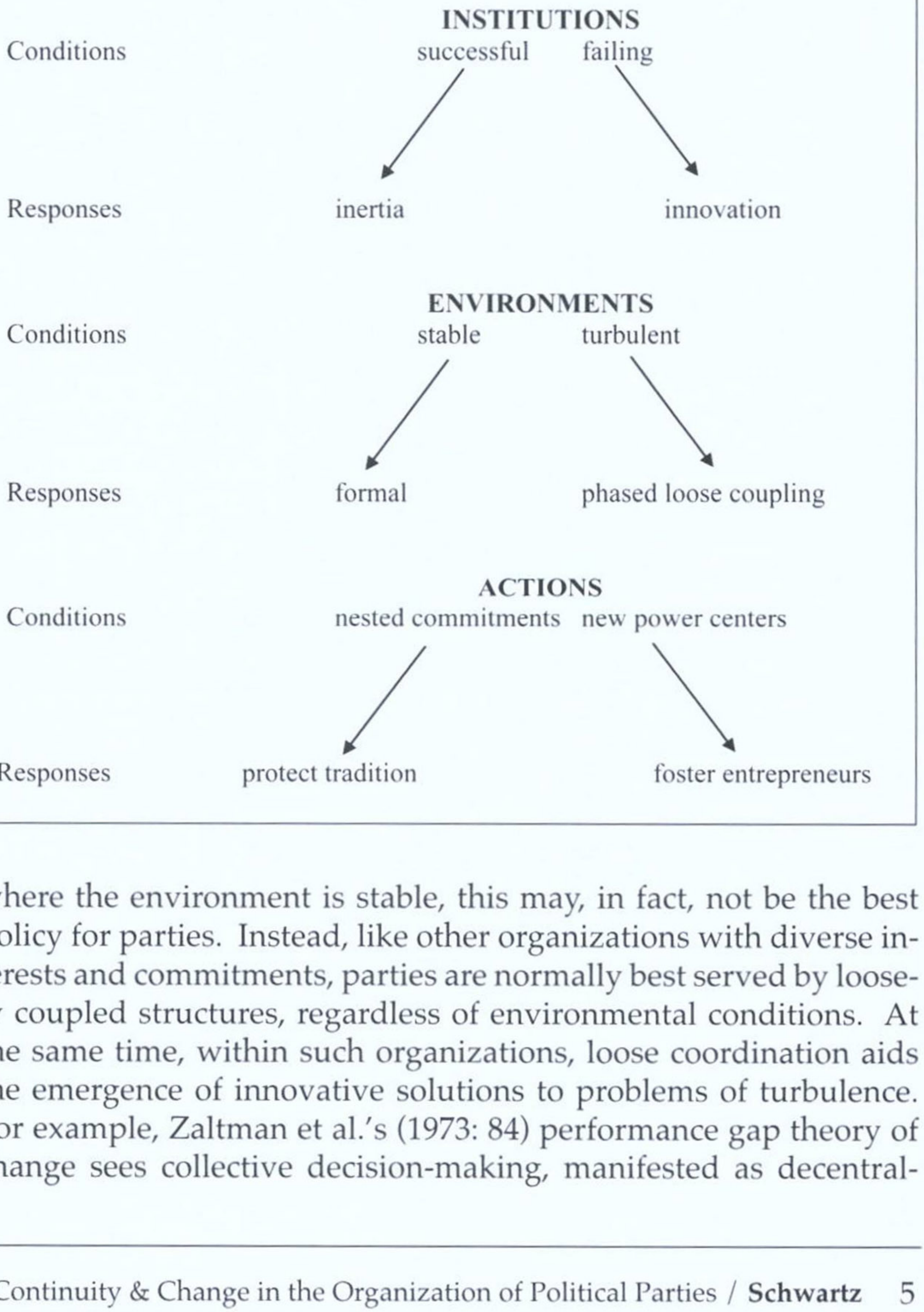
The second source stems from the need of every organization to provide some system of meaning that sets it apart from similar organizations and serves as a source of identification and a blueprint for action. As neo-institutional (DiMaggio and Powell 1991a; Scott 2001) and cultural theories (Trice and Beyer 1993) emphasize, institutions and culture constrain organizations' ability to adapt to changing conditions. In order to break from continuing along the same pathways, an emphasis on values promoting change becomes the essential spur to carrying out innovation (Damanpour 1991; Hage 1999: 601; Hage and Dewar 1973).

These general approaches to institutional sources of innovation lead to predictions about how innovation in parties will be manifested. It will be found in the use of new means for mobilizing resources, the search for added resources of money and support, and the promulgation of new and inspiring messages that convey the party's aspirations (Schwartz 2011).

The second question asks, when does the environment promote stability and when change? Answers are premised on viewing the environment as either stable or turbulent. It is not that stable environments are totally unchanging but that they change slowly, often predictably, and in incremental ways. Turbulence, in contrast, results from major and often unpredictable disruptions stemming from external events like financial crises, political upheavals, or large-scale demographic shifts. Contingency theorists argue that, at the ecological level, different structures will result from adapting to differing environmental conditions. Where the environment is stable, organizations that predominate are likely to be highly formal and centralized. However, where the environment is turbulent, adaptive organizations will be more loosely structured and more reliant on the personal qualities of participants (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967; Donaldson 1996). Yet Boyne and Meier (2009), in their study of public service organizations, found that environmental turbulence led organizations to perform poorly, especially when they attempted internal organizational changes. This led them to recommend that, under turbulent conditions, it is better to maintain structural stability. Such divergent expectations about the preferable way for organizations to respond to environmental conditions reflect the disruptiveness of both external turbulence and internal changes.

Structural responses to the environment pose special problems for political parties. Even though, in Figure 1, I present formal and presumably centralized organization as the most likely option

Figure 1
THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN CONTINUITY AND CHANGE



where the environment is stable, this may, in fact, not be the best policy for parties. Instead, like other organizations with diverse interests and commitments, parties are normally best served by loosely coupled structures, regardless of environmental conditions. At the same time, within such organizations, loose coordination aids the emergence of innovative solutions to problems of turbulence. For example, Zaltman et al.'s (1973: 84) performance gap theory of change sees collective decision-making, manifested as decentral-

ized authority, facilitating innovation. Loose coupling also allows the separation of arenas of action according to their strength, with stronger ones building up resources while weaker ones are isolated so as not to dilute the strength of others.[2]

As strategies of change are incubated in their own setting, they may arouse conflict elsewhere in the organization. The resolution of those conflicts and the spread of innovations may then require a different approach, one that relies on hierarchical structures characterized by professionalization in personnel and activities (Thompson 1967: 59; Damanpour 1991: 558). Zaltman et al. (1973: 144-5) argue that centralization is important for the implementation of innovations which Daft (1978: 206) associates with tight coupling. In parties, the consolidation of formal power relations will typically be manifested through centralization and professionalization--the adoption of practices designed to rationalize procedures and use personnel with specialized training (Gibson and Römmele 2009). In Figure 1, I label this response as phased loose coupling.

The third question asks: What makes party actors defend the status quo in contrast to seeking a break with the past? Given the experience that one's party is not winning office, would it not be rational to try new approaches? But such a view of rationality would underestimate the fact that all sizable political parties are made up of diverse interests and shifting coalitions, often in competition with each other. Even if all agree that winning office is the main objective, there are still likely to be individuals and factions that have additional commitments, whether to constituencies or existing privileges. Lawler et al. (2009: 92-111) describe these as "nested commitments" to local units within larger organizations. And it is such commitments to defending the status quo that can override exploring avenues to change.[3] In contrast, innovative organizations should encourage individuals to assume new roles and new ways of organizing tasks (Fligstein 1991: 313). Along with their perceptions of the overall good of the party, such individuals are likely to be linked to emerging coalitions and to new centers of power (Harmel and Janda 1994: 280). I treat them as emerging entrepreneurs, not in the sense of behaving like business people but with the connotation of initiators of action and even of risk takers.

The three questions, though hardly exhaustive, generate a framework for examining the organizational behavior of political parties, summarized in Figure 1. Because any description and anal-

ysis of the trajectories of political parties within that framework will be circumscribed by the inertial tendencies of organizations and the weight of environmental and structural factors, documenting change needs to encompass a time frame during which one of the main parties has been relegated to minority status over multiple consecutive elections. The framework should be applicable to parties in any competitive system, although national histories, political systems, and circumstances will also affect their organizational makeup. Here it is applied to an examination of continuity and change at the national level in parties in Canada and the United States.

In the United States, despite the use of common party labels and participation in simultaneous election events, the multiple units that make up the parties across federal levels are heterogenous in makeup and loosely linked (Epstein 1986; Schwartz 1990). Katz and Kolodny (1994: 23) argue that, "from a structural perspective, American national parties are best understood as being two loose alliances, each consisting of three fundamentally independent organizations." In Canada, in contrast, the weight of party organization for the two oldest parties has been in Parliament, dominated by its principal leaders. Although there had been a history of extra-parliamentary party structures, these were typically limited (Engelmann and Schwartz 1975: 176-180). However, reforms in the 1970s gave the national parties state-supported funding that was used to create centralized bureaucracies that now dominate campaigns and the electoral processes (Wearing 1981; Carty 1991).

In addition, there are distinct differences in the meaning of party success in the two countries. In Canada, electoral success means that one party has won the majority of seats in Parliament, allowing its leader to become Prime Minister and form the government. In the United States, a winning party could have a majority of seats in the House, the Senate, a majority of the Electoral College votes for the President, or some combination of the three.

But at least as relevant as these differences is one overriding organizational commonality: in both countries, party organization remains fluid, subject to both internal pressures and those from environmental conditions. When parties are stuck in minority status, they can be expected to become more open to restructuring in pursuit of electoral victory. By viewing parties as independent political actors it becomes possible to trace their initiatives and their

responses to external factors. National differences remain important, as do partisan ones, and my approach is still sensitive to those differences, even as it emphasizes similarities across political party organizations when they adapt to ongoing challenges.

In Canada, where a multi-party system allows taking into account the organizational behavior of smaller parties that are still important players in parliament, I begin with the prelude to the election of 1993. Why that period is critical is captured in the following assessment made shortly after the election.

The 1993 election was an event without precedent in Canadian history. The Progressive Conservative Party, the country's most successful political combination in 40 years, was effectively erased from the political map. The Liberal majority which replaced it is not constituted according to the traditional formula: the Quebec core is missing. The national NDP is now a wraith. The main parties in opposition now are the Bloc québécois and the Reform Party. One–perhaps both–is dedicated to breaking up the country as presently constituted. Neither presents itself as a government in waiting (Johnston et al. 1994).

Of the two upstart parties mentioned, only the Bloc is still present in Parliament, but now with just four seats. And, while no longer an organized party, the Reform Party continues to play an important generative role, evident as I tell the Conservatives' story.

The United States' more rigidly two-party system and the possibility of partisan victory for either the presidency, the Senate, the House, or some combination of the three makes the choice of time frame less clearcut. Keeping those factors in mind, I begin before the election of 1980 to capture changes in the Republican Party.[4] However, it will not be until the period preceding the election of 2008 that we begin to see significant change in the Democratic Party.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY: RISING THROUGH INNOVATION

In 1993, the Progressive Conservative Party (PC), the precursor of the present-day Conservative Party (CP), went from being the governing party, with a strong majority of 169 seats in Parliament and 43 percent of the popular vote, to just 2 seats and 15 percent of the vote. By dropping below 12 seats, the PCs (and the NDP) lost their status as official parties entitled to public funding. At the next

election, in 1997, the PCs saw a modest increase to under 19 percent of the popular vote. But with only 20 PC seats, the role of Official Opposition went to the Reform Party. In the 2000 election, the PCs declined again, winning only 12 seats. They were virtually wiped out in Ontario and found only weak support in the western provinces, both former strongholds.

Meanwhile, the Reform Party's position as Official Opposition was carried out from its regional enclave in the west. Encouraged by the decline of the PCs, it initially formed a "United Alternative" to bring together supporters on the right (Carty et al. 2000: 56). Since this had little impact on its fortunes, it then went on to form a new party in 2000, the Canadian Alliance. In the election held that year, the hybrid party, Reform Conservative Canadian Alliance, won 6 more seats than had been held by Reform in the previous parliament. But still unable to move beyond a western base, the Alliance began merger talks with the PCs. These were finalized in 2003, with Stephen Harper, the Alliance leader, now the leader of the newly named Conservative Party. The next year's election returned the Liberals to power but with a minority government and gave the Conservatives 99 seats. The situation was reversed in 2006, when the Conservatives gained 124 seats and assumed the government, also as a minority. Although still 12 seats short of majority status after the 2008 election, the Conservatives increased their lead to 143 seats, largely at the expense of the Liberals. The journey was completed in the election of 2011 when the Conservatives finally gained majority status with 166 seats and affirmed their strength from Ontario westward.

Was the abrupt change in fortunes in 1993 a spur to the PCs to transform their party? The ensuing electoral results, beginning in 2004, point to the likelihood that such change took place, of which the merger between the PCs and the Alliance was a primary ingredient. To begin with, then, we can ask how party institutions responded to their new status. Innovation is assessed with respect to mobilizing resources and promoting new meanings about the party's nature and goals. Assembling answers requires that we take into account not only the PCs but also the Reform Party, the Alliance, and then the new Conservative Party.

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding As money has become increasingly important to party operations, the state has sought to curtail and regulate how and from whom it is raised. Between 1974 and 2003, federal candidates and parties were reimbursed with public money for a portion of their election expenses, expenses that were themselves kept within limited bounds. In addition, parties also relied on individual, corporate, and associational contributions (Stanbury 1991). But in the face of accumulating evidence that the governing Liberal Party was involved in questionable, if not criminal, fund-raising[5] (to be revisited in the section on that party), the government introduced legislation in 2003 (Bill C-24), subsequently modified in 2004 (Elections Canada Online 2004), that sharply curtailed corporate and union contributions to national parties and replaced them with extensive public funding tied to each party's electoral performance in the preceding election. But as the discussion of funding unfolds for each party, it becomes clear that public funding had different implications for each party (Young and Jansen 2011).

In his 1991 study, Carty (1991: 248) found the PCs to have active constituency organizations engaged in regular fund-raising to a greater extent than either the Liberals or NDP. One consequence was that the PCs raised proportionately more money from individual contributors living in those constituencies. This had the effect of making them reluctant to share those moneys with the national party.

Although, at the time of Carty's study, Reform appeared in a state of flux, of all the parties surveyed, it was the most organizationally active. It had the most committed members and, relatively, the most prosperous constituency organizations (Carty 1991: 238). However, the successor Alliance reduced reliance on member participation and local contributions through its greater access to corporate support (Laycock 2002: 133).

By the time more extensive state-supported funding was instituted--the period when the Alliance and PCs merged--some compatible trends between the two merging parties were already evident. If money received by the two parties is combined in 2000, together they had the highest election income of all parties. That pattern continued for the election year of 2004, after the merger. The new Conservative Party continued the Alliances's relative dependence on individual contributions rather than corporate ones,

making it least reliant on public funding. Using direct mail, phone and internet appeals, some of which had already been introduced during Joe Clark's tenure as Prime Minister (Perlin 1988: 85), the Conservatives were able to carry over Reform and the Alliance's style in mobilizing activists and supporters as well as to become more professionalized (Young et al. 2007).

Supporters The PCs and its predecessors were the traditional home of the Protestant establishment, translated into strong voter support in the eastern provinces and Ontario. The prairie provinces became another source of support, particularly after the cooptation of some Progressives, reflected in the apparently oxymoronic name of Progressive Conservative, adopted when the Progressive premier of Manitoba, John Bracken, became the Conservative leader in 1942 (Kendle 1980). In the 1980s, under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, the party attempted to reconcile the special interests of Quebec, where a notable minority with conservative inclinations, regardless of how its nationalist views were expressed provincially, had supported the national PC Party. But it subsequently turned away from that party as a consequence of the failed constitutional negotiations intended to recognize Quebec's privileged position (Johnston 1993). At the same time, "alienated Westerners, opponents of official bilingualism and special status for Quebec, and those who espoused socially conservative family values were marginalized in the Conservative [PC] party, which was determined to maintain and project a more modern, progressive image" (Carty et al. 2000: 88).

With the formation of the new Conservative Party, mobilization of financial resources proceeded more easily than mobilization of activists. As the Conservatives worked to put together a campaign strategy before the 2004 election, they had to contend with dissidents of two kinds. On one side were Reform stalwarts displeased with renewed attention to accommodating Quebec and unbending in their desire for an emphasis on socially conservative issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. On the other side were longstanding PCs, including former Prime Minister Joe Clark, who objected to what they saw as the extremism of the Alliance and refused to affiliate with the new party (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2004: 83). Yet voter mobilization progressed with sufficient momentum so that, in the 2004 election, the Conservatives' 99 seats included renewal of the former PCs' base of support in Ontario. The search for electoral support in Quebec, however, produced no seats in that

election. Outreach continued, with better results in the following two elections. But now greater attention was given to immigrant and ethnic minority voters, formerly tied to the Liberals. The success of those efforts was signaled in 2008 by the gain in seats with heavy ethnic representation in Ontario and continued in the 2011 election (Flanagan 2011: 106).

Meaning Dividing parties according to their predominant ideological stance places the PCs in center-right, descriptive of their economic policies within the Canadian tradition of support for universal welfare policies. In their more recent history, they were equally centrist in approaching Quebec nationalism, minority rights, and social issues generally. But conservatism also has a social dimension and, by the late 1980s, the PCs were displaying the strains of trying to hold on to those dissatisfied with their moderation.

Reform Party beliefs were a combination of the vision expressed by its founder, Preston Manning, and the concerns of western Canadians, particularly those in Alberta. They included strong support for individual enterprise and fiscal conservatism, objection to special status for Quebec, suspicion of new immigrants, criticism of the welfare state, desire for greater provincial autonomy through a Triple-E Senate (elective, equal, and effective), and emphasis on moral issues (Flanagan 2009a). Harrison (1995: 161-177) describes these principles as a form of right-wing populism, inspiring followers with special fervor. Although a national party with aspirations to govern, Reform's appeal was largely directed to, as well as appreciated by, western Canadians.

The Alliance appeared different but only in degree. For example, under the initial leadership of Stockwell Day, it was more overtly identified with socially conservative moral issues (Laycock 2002: 177). Significantly, however, it abandoned Reform's anti-Quebec stance (Laycock 2002: 165). In modifying Reform's emphasis on western grievances, it replaced the demand for a Triple-E Senate with a call for an elected Senate without specifying how greater equality might be achieved (Laycock 2002: 167). The Alliance also sought to appeal to big business interests in central Canada by reiterating its own fiscal conservatism. In other words, Reform planks were deliberately adjusted to promote a wider national appeal (Flanagan 2001; 2009a).

The merger agreement between the Alliance and PCs served as the new Conservative Party's first ideological statement and bor-

rowed principles from both predecessors. The emphasis was on individual responsibility, fiscal caution, and government assistance when needed. Yet Laura Stephenson (2006) observes that there was little indication of how these principles would become the basis of ideological guidelines for future policy. When, just months after the new party was formed and it was forced to face a federal election, the platform it presented to the electorate was still inconclusively conservative. Major themes were "accountability and a clean government, a stronger economy achieved primarily through lower taxes, better health care, better communities, and a stronger Canada through better security" (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2004: 89-90). Although there was no mention of moral issues, support from Western religious conservatives remained strong in the 2004 election.

If the Conservatives struggled to present a clear message during the 2004 election, they managed to do better in 2006 (Stephenson 2006). But it was a message that was indebted to the PCs more than to Reform. Ellis and Woolstencroft (2006: 65) interpret the change to a pragmatic assessment of where victory would lie. "Exorcising the populist ghosts and taming the social conservative agenda demonstrated that even most former Reformers now concluded that the damaging electoral consequences of these policies had stalled the drive to build a national coalition of voters."

The Conservatives had some success in using ideology to meld together the principles of its predecessors into a broadly appealing message. The party kept the loyalties of the religious right, continued to attract PC sympathizers in the Atlantic provinces, renewed support in Quebec, and retained its hold on Reform and Alliance stalwarts in the West. But, as evident from its increased support in Ontario, it did so by under-emphasizing an emphatically Western-oriented message and promoting one that spoke to economic concerns of lowered taxes and fiscal responsibility. In that respect, the Conservatives could still risk losing the loyal support of Reform adherents. Yet Tom Flanagan's (2009b) description of how he and the small group advising Stephen Harper sought, over time, to develop a unifying message makes clear that the Conservatives treat emphasis on the party's meaning system as a strategic component of future victory, manifested in the 2011 campaign by combining social conservatism with fiscal responsibility (Flanagan 2011).

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The environmental turbulence that preceded the 1993 election was, at one level, a continuation of longstanding tensions in the society over uneven economic development and the aspirations of francophone Quebec played out in a regionally-divided milieu (Schwartz 1995). Those tensions were more specifically shaped by events that followed the PCs' sweeping victory in the 1984 election. Then, an anglophone leader from Quebec, Brian Mulroney, was able to convince voters from that province to abandon their long attachment to the Liberals and cast their ballot for the PCs in unprecedented numbers. Mulroney's persuasiveness was apparently aided by his fluency in French in the pre-election leadership debates (Lanoue 1991). After assuming the prime ministership, he attempted to reconcile Canada with Quebec through the Meech Lake Accord, negotiated in 1987 with the provinces and intended to give Quebec the kind of recognition it desired in order to persuade it to endorse the 1982 Constitution Act, enacted under Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. When the Accord collapsed in 1990 because of lack of support from two provinces, Mulroney tried again with the Charlottetown Accord, to be passed by a referendum held in 1992. But when that too failed, Quebec's estrangement was solidified, both from Canada and the PCs (McRoberts and Monahan 1993).

At the same time, the governing PCs both faced and stirred up economic tensions. During Mulroney's second term there was a global recession and he increased government revenues with the enactment of a highly unpopular Goods and Services Tax. During his term of office he also negotiated the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA), but not before producing considerable dissent (Ayres 1996). Free trade itself was another component in regional economic divisions, with opposition strongest in the most industrialized province of Ontario (Wood 1985). Although the PCs were no longer in office when the next agreement was ratified, they had begun the proceedings that would lead to the even more contentious North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Schwartz 1998).

If these tensions help account for the defeat of the PCs in the 1993 election, they also set the conditions to be faced by the PCs if they were going to emerge from that defeat. In response to turbulence, I look at the interplay between centralization and loose coupling. Once again, we need to take into account each of the three parties that would constitute the new Conservatives.

For much of Canadian history, whatever could be said to consist of a national party was centered in the parliamentary leadership. Organization was mainly at the constituency level, where it rested with the local candidate/MP and volunteers.[6] But the PCs, more than either the Liberals or NDP, were oriented to national activities (Carty 1991: 247). In addition, the PCs differed from the other two parties in having more active constituency organizations with activities that spanned the full year rather than concentrated solely in the electoral cycle. In his study of constituency organizations, conducted in 1991, Carty (1991: 248) notes that, "of the three large parties, it is the Conservatives [PCs] that report engaging in the most policy study, both for its own sake but also as part of its regular fund-raising projects." In general, the PCs were characterized by constituency organizations with considerable autonomy. From that we may assume that the party organization was loosely coupled.

The Reform Party was a Canadian pioneer in permitting its members to join the national party directly rather than through intermediate organizations. Integrating its grassroots members in order for them to play a meaningful role in party affairs figured in its constitution through the establishment of an Executive Council-Party Caucus Liaison Committee. The goal was to give members influence on their representatives in Parliament through the formation of policy directives (Carty et al. 2000: 118). At the same time, Reform's structure was highly centralized and oriented to coercing total commitment to the party (Schwartz 2006: 41-42). In its initial concern with avoiding penetration by extremist elements, it carefully vetted candidates, even refusing to validate an unacceptable one chosen by the local constituency (Carty et al. 2000: 41). Internal disputes were met with "suspension, expulsion or departure, rather than by the compromises over policy or position that make traditional parties work" (Flanagan and Harper 1998: 181-182). It was this structure that the new party inherited.

After their 1993 defeat, the PCs began to reorganize following the Reform model (Carty et al. 2000: 119-121). Among critical changes was the introduction of a dues-paying national membership that, symbolically at least, gave members the sense that they had a stake in their party. Additionally, a National Council was formed, mainly made up of the presidents of all the constituency associations and charged with looking after all party concerns between the nation-

al conventions, including a new emphasis on policy consultation. But after the merger with the Alliance, the new party followed the PC model of selecting leaders based on representation by electoral district and not directly by individual members (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2006: 64). Most important, the Conservatives began planning for the next election immediately after 2004 by calling their first national convention. At that point, the party's organizational strategies became clear. Instead of emphasis on grassroots' influence, it would be centralized and professionally run. That would become evident in the 2006 campaign, with its tight coordination and its platform the product of the leader, principal advisers like Tom Flanagan and Ian Brodie, and senior members of its parliamentary caucus (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2006). Clarke et al. (2009: 37-66) rightly call the campaign "flawless." Innovations introduced in the face of turbulence were being met, first with loose and then with tighter coupling.

TAKING ACTION

When, in the face of their party's continuing weakness and a turbulent environment, party actors decide to take action, they are likely to come out of new power centers and take on challenges in an entrepreneurial manner, relying on their own initiatives and those of a small group of advisers to take bold steps toward change. Where, however, established power centers stay strong, supported by substantial groups with nested commitments to current arrangements, the result will be the protection of existing interests. Such preexisting sources of power in each of the precursor parties were important in shaping the behavior of the new Conservative Party, initially impeding and then encouraging innovation.

Reform, from its beginning, was dominated by its first leader, Preston Manning, the scion of an earlier leader of a protest party in Alberta. At the same time, once Reform had parliamentary representation, there were typical conflicts that arose, stemming from competing demands over membership participation, caucus solidarity, and Manning's leadership (Carty et al. 2000: 50-51; Harrison, 1995: 247). As Reform's electoral appeal remained limited and Manning proposed forming a broader conservative movement, his own leadership was placed in jeopardy (Hutchinson 1999). When the Alliance was formed in 2000, it would be under the leadership

of Stockwell Day, a former Alberta finance minister who was closely associated with the evangelical Right.

Under Day, the Alliance's performance in the 2000 election, even while gaining two seats in Ontario, was insufficient to move the party outside its regional home. From then on, Day's troubles mounted as he was blamed for the party's inability to make significant inroads into vote-rich Ontario (Laycock 2002: 177). Internal disagreements with Day escalated over matters of judgment and his handling of a possible merger with the PCs (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2004: 69-70). A number of candidates began vying for leadership and, in the 2002 race, the leader's role came to Stephen Harper, a former Reform activist.

During this same period, the PCs were dealing with the effects of their devastating defeat in 1993 and ongoing efforts to merge with the Alliance. Brian Mulroney had left the prime ministership the preceding June, leaving the office to the new leader, Kim Campbell. But when she led the party down to defeat, she also lost her own seat. She was succeeded by Jean Charest, the only former Cabinet Minister to retain his seat in the new parliament. When Charest left to lead the Liberal Party of Quebec after the 1998 election, he was followed by Joe Clark, a former Prime Minister. Although all of these formal leaders came from different power centers, none could be considered to have moved the organization in a different direction. They were, in effect, defending existing interests and commitments.

When Clark took over the party, he was determined to rebuild it without the Alliance. Instead, "Day's leadership crises and Clark's outright refusal to meet formally with the Alliance led a number of Alliance and PC members to decide to take matter into their own hands" (Ellis and Woolstencroft 2004: 74). Among those defying their leaders and engaged in informal negotiations was Peter MacKay, who was the PC deputy leader. On Clark's resignation, the PC leadership convention in 2003 elected MacKay. MacKay had made it know that he would oppose any merger with the Alliance but, in fact, quickly joined in negotiations. When the new party formed, however, its leader would be Stephen Harper.

In his former position as head of the Alliance, Harper, though considered more moderate than Day, was still seen as close to the evangelical Right. When he became leader of the Conservatives, this presumed weakness remained, one to be emphasized by the

governing Liberals in the 2004 campaign (Gidengil et al. 2006). Conservative Party decision-makers, in turn, did everything they could to present Harper as a center-right moderate and they were sufficiently effective to help him win the prime ministership in 2006 (Wells et al. 2006). This suggests that, considering the contexts from which he emerged, Harper displayed characteristics of an entrepreneurial leader.

THE CONSERVATIVES AS INNOVATORS

In light of the Conservatives' past history and status as a new party, their accomplishments were impressive in mobilizing resources, promoting an ideology, restructuring organization in the face of turbulence, and providing leadership directed along new pathways. In all respects, the Conservatives were able to mount strong campaigns that confounded skeptics, first in 2004 (Clarke et al. 2005) and even more so in 2006 (Geddes 2006; Clarke et al. 2009). Political commentators spoke of the competing pulls between fear of the Conservative agenda and loathing of the corruption surrounding the Liberals. In the end, fear was not sufficient to deter support (Stephenson 2006). The Conservatives would obtain 36.3 percent of the popular vote and 124 seats in the 2006 election. Though still without a majority in Parliament, they were now a national party, having won seats in every province, including 10 in Quebec and 40 in Ontario. The 2008 election gave them 143 seats even as majority status still eluded them. Vindication came in 2011 with a clear 166 seat majority. Now the question becomes how long past innovations will sustain them.

THE LIBERAL PARTY: THE INERTIA OF PAST SUCCESS?

In the 1984 election, the governing Liberal Party was reduced to 40 seats and 28 percent of the popular vote. Up to then, and beginning in the election of 1896, it had won 17 out of 25 elections, holding office for all but 22 years and came to be viewed as synonymous with the government (Whitaker 1977). Fortunes turned with the election of 1993, allowing the Liberals to govern through three more elections until 2004. From such events, LeDuc et al. (2010: 24-7) portray Canadian political history as a series of lengthy periods of stability broken only by short interludes. Moreover, they associate stability with single leaders, what they term dynasties. The Liberal victory in 1993, under the leadership of Jean Chrétien, was the har-

binger of such a dynasty. Even though it might make sense to look for earlier evidence of organizational changes that led the Liberals to govern for the ensuing 11 years, for the sake of consistency I stick with the 1993 starting point. For the Liberals, the critical question is how they dealt with their more recent defeats, first anticipated by their reduction to a minority government in 2004. Subsequent elections not only continued to keep them from office but, in 2011, left them with a meager 34 seats. To what extent did the Liberals become sensitive to the implications of their decline? Would they adopt innovative measures in mobilizing resources and conveying new cultural meaning?

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding Although the public financing introduced in the 1970s gave all parties a substantial base from which to operate, during the 1980s the national Liberal Party spent more than it raised (Carty 1991: 229). The 1993 campaign, which brought the Liberals back to power, still left the party with considerable long-term debt. Don Johnston, then president of the national Liberal organization, made progress in increasing fundraising and, even more significantly, in restructuring the party's debt (Jeffrey 2010: 257). But what is especially noteworthy is the way money has been a powerful source of contention for the Liberals, demonstrated by two series of events: one affecting their own financial weakness; the other, known as the sponsorship scandal, sinking into corruption.

Almost ironically, the dominance of the Liberals over Canadian politics left them less than prepared to reach out to those small donors that have become a mark of party vitality and connection with supporters (LeDuc et al. 2010: 507). Additionally, conflict between Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his rival for the party's leadership, Paul Martin, motivated legislation that would severely limit contributions from corporations and unions (Jeffrey 2010: 391-4). If the latter would hobble the NDP, the former was aimed at the ability of Martin to tap his corporate connections. When the second money-related crisis led the Prime Minister to resign and Paul Martin took over the office, the latter would remain constrained by his predecessor's actions. The result was that, when the Liberals entered the 2004 election, they lacked adequate funding.

Events leading to the sponsorship scandal begin in 1996, after the closely-fought 1995 Quebec referendum on whether the prov-

ince would continue as a part of the Canadian federation or would pursue a separate path as a sovereign nation (Clarke and Kornberg 1996). Hoping to build up the federal side of the controversy, the Chrétien government created a sponsorship program to purchase advertising in Quebec at community, sporting, and cultural events that would promote the value of current federal arrangements. Much of the work was contracted out to private firms without adequate supervision, resulting in the selection of those with close ties to the provincial Liberals who, in turn, were then rewarded with donations. The Auditor General began auditing the advertising contracts in 1998 and, in 2002, called in the RCMP to investigate some irregularities. The result was a scathing assessment of the Liberal Party's role (Auditor General 2003). When he took over from Chrétien, Martin did what he could to distance himself from the scandal and appointed John Gomery to head a commission to investigate the charges and recommend remedies for past abuses (Gomery 2005).

Going into the 2004 election, the Liberals were burdened both by the lack of money and by the scandalous trail left by money. Subsequent fund-raising has been more circumspect but without indicating much in the way of new approaches. Rather, the party has done poorly, both absolutely and in comparison to the Conservatives and the NDP, in attracting money from individual donors (Taber 2010). With two more unsuccessful elections quickly following, further restrictions on campaign finance, and costs of repayment of debts incurred in leadership races, the Liberals trailed in the effort to increase revenue (Jeffrey 2010: 618-19). The 2011 election once again revealed the party's fundraising deficiencies.

Supporters The Liberal Party had, more than any other, the strongest claim to being a national party, with the longest history of support from all parts of the country and from an ethnically and financially diverse electorate. For example, as the demographic makeup of Canada changed and politicians came to appreciate the importance of incorporating them as loyal supporters, special attention was directed to visible minorities.[7] The Liberals, already long attuned to mobilizing support from those of allophone (non-English and French speaking) origins, had attracted enough visible minority representation among executive members of riding associations not to need to make additional efforts to recruit such voters (Carty 1991: 231). But their strengths have not been uniform over

time and recent years reveal some serious vulnerabilities, including in their formerly robust appeal to ethnic and visible minorities. In addition, and most notably, are changes in support from Quebec, where, since the time of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Liberals had been able to count on loyal voters.

When the Liberals won 41 percent of the popular vote in 1993, enabling them to form a majority government, in Quebec they were outmatched 33 to 49 percent by the newly formed Bloc Québécois. The position of the Liberals improved somewhat in that province in the next two elections as the Bloc declined. But, in the critical election of 2004, when the Liberals were reduced to a minority government, the Bloc surged back to capture 49 percent of the province's vote. In the following two elections, Bloc support ebbed to 42 and 38 percent respectively but the Liberals were not the beneficiaries. During the period under consideration, whether through defections or declining turnout[8], the political forces in Quebec that took shape at the time of the Liberals' greatest popularity nationally would be a harbinger what was to follow. By the 2008 election, the Liberals would win only 26 percent of the vote nationally and 24 percent in Quebec. In 2011, that vote declined to 19 and 14 percent respectively.

Meaning Under the leadership of Jean Chrétien, an overriding concern of the party was national unity, defined as a strong federal system in which Quebec remained a central player. It was a message, however, that was also a source of contention. This was the case in Quebec, where even those not committed to the sovereignist solution were often in favor of a more flexible federalism that gave special recognition to the province. It was even a divisive element in Cabinet (Jeffrey 2010: 287), although it was appealing to the rest of the country and helped the Liberals consolidate their position. With Paul Martin, in his role as Minister of Finance, able to lead the country into an enviable period of financial growth and stability, those conditions would enhance the Liberals' message as the party of prosperity. In winning office in 1993, the Liberals began with what Marland (forthcoming: 64) describes as the "most successful campaign war room in Canadian history." A small group close to Chrétien formulated a campaign document (the Red Book) to articulate policies on national unity and the economy that would be a driving force in the campaign (Frizzell et al., 1994: 2-4).

The 2004 election was run by the freshly-installed Prime Minister Paul Martin who used his prerogatives to deliver his own message and in his own way. But nothing the Liberals did to present themselves as best for the future of Canada could override the importance voters attached to the sponsorship scandal and their perceptions that Martin had not handled the issue effectively (Gidengil et al. 2006). Left with a minority government at that election, the party continued along a failing path by not providing a coherent and electorally appealing message. The Liberals' downward trend continued in 2006, haunted by the sponsorship scandal and a leader who became known as "Mr. Dithers" for his inability to make clear and timely decisions (Clarkson 2006).

In a leadership convention called in December 2006, the Liberals selected Stéphane Dion as party leader. Dion, a professor of political science at the University of Montreal, had been Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in the Chrétien cabinet, where he played a leading role as an advocate of strong federalism (Jeffrey 2010: 310-11). Initially dropped from Martin's first Cabinet, he became Minister for the Environment in the second (Jeffrey 2010: 528). The latter position became the pathway to a campaign centered on protection of the environment. The message of a "Green Shift" policy, presented during the 2008 campaign, combined a carbon tax with prospects of economic stimulation. But as a unifying and mobilizing theme, it appears not to have had much traction. In fact, the Conservatives were able to exploit it as an unwarranted added tax (LeDuc et al. 2010: 509-10).

As the focus of blame for the Liberals' poor showing in the 2008 election, Dion was pressed to resign as party leader and Michael Ignatieff was chosen his successor. But the new leader did not become associated with any vital message about where he would lead the Liberal Party and the country. In an effort to fill this vacuum prior to the 2010 "thinkers' conference"[9], Thomas Axworthy (2009), former principal secretary to Prime Minister Trudeau, proposed a return to liberal principles by making a commitment to equality and community. With little to show of an arresting ideological framework as they came out of their devastating 2011 defeat, former MP Martha Hall Findlay (2011: 28) agreed: "The biggest challenge to the Liberal Party—one that must be tackled before trying to woo more members and more money—is determining and defining what the Liberal Party actually stands for."

The sharp decline in the Liberals' fortunes is evidence in itself that the party had not found countervailing means to energize past support or mobilize new sources of support, whether financially or from the electorate, or to present an exciting and unifying message foretelling where it would lead the country.

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

I have already reviewed the environmental turbulence that contributed to the PCs' repudiation in 1993. Since then, there was a period of stability until about 2000 but, after that, turbulence returned with even greater force. It was reflected in major economic challenges, accusations of corruption affecting both parties, the absence of a stable majority government, and the frequency with which elections were called.

There is a suggestion that the Liberal defeat in 1988 may have been a prod to organizational change (Carty et al. 2000: 78). To the extent this occurred, it was part of the consolidation of power that took place under Chrétien, who was chosen party leader in 1990. By the time of the 1993 election, the party organization had been strengthened and revamped (Jeffrey 2010: 206-7) to include ensuring centralized control over the recruitment of candidates (Jeffrey 2010: 224-9). That Chrétien saw his role as party-builder is evident in his appointment of an early supporter of his leadership, George Young, as national party director, extending an unprecedented invitation to him to attend daily meetings with the Prime Minister's Office (Jeffrey 2010: 255). Another period of formal party-building occurred after the 1997 election, when full-time paid organizers were recruited, mainly in the under-represented provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, but this attempt at centralization did not last (Jeffrey 2010: 259).

The centrifugal forces of federalism were a strong deterrent to consolidating control in the Liberal Party and loose coupling remained more congenial. However, the kind of coupling present was not in the form associated with fostering innovation. Instead, organizationally, it appears to have been more of an opportunity to continue the relative independence of the party's component parts in constituencies and provinces. For example, in the 2006 election, the three largest provinces ran their own virtually autonomous campaign organizations (Clarkson 2006).

Finally, after the 2006 defeat, party reorganization became more feasible. In anticipation of the next national convention, which would also become a leadership convention, the national executive promised major restructuring. A task force was appointed toward that end and its final report recommended changes relating to membership, division between provincial and national responsibilities, committee structure, and leadership selection. The convention adopted almost all the recommendations though they had no effect on how the concurrent leadership race would be conducted (Jeffrey 2010: 613-6).

TAKING ACTION

It should theoretically be possible for actors dedicated to organizational change to emerge from any geopolitical unit making up a Canadian party or from interest groups with links to the party. In reality, however, it is difficult to conceive of any such actors becoming effective without acquiring a direct connection to the party leader. For this reason I concentrate on the leader himself, whether as the instigator of actions designed to build the party, the source of ideas on how this should be done, or the eventual legitimator of changes inspired by others. Party-building and party leadership go hand in hand when new sources of support are carved out, new party roles are introduced, and new approaches to critical national interests are presented. In other words, I put the leader in the center of responses to institutional and environmental problems.

Throughout its history, the Liberal Party has benefitted in different ways from strong leaders. For example, Sir Wilfrid Laurier played a major role in making Quebec a bulwark of the Liberal Party. Mckenzie King solidified that support and, along with Louis St. Laurent, they were convincing advocates of the Liberals as the natural and national governing party. With Pierre Trudeau, personal popularity became an unprecedented element affecting the party's organization (LeDuc et al. 2010: 257).

In recent years, specifically in the period carved out for this paper, what has changed is that internal contention over leaders has left the party divided and weakened. Nested commitments have made it difficult to even sustain traditional means of internal governing, let alone allow entrepreneurial leaders to emerge. Instead, the Liberals experienced their own form of civil war, originating in the 1990 leadership race (LeDuc et al. 2010: 401-4).

Without elaborating the details of that race (see Jeffrey 2010: 170-206), it is sufficient to note that the two major candidates were Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, Jr. and the victory of the former would set in motion a bitter and long-lasting rivalry. Yet at least as important initially was the ability of both men to put aside their rivalry, allowing Martin to serve as finance minister and put the country into a deficit-free and prosperous state. But the stress on the party from having two antagonists, consumed with ambition, confrontational in style, and deeply divided over the core issue of how to deal with Quebec, could not be contained for long (LeDuc et al. 2010: 478-80; Jeffrey 2010: 374-82). As I have already noted, once Martin was out of the Cabinet in 2002, Chrétien moved to handicap Martin's fund-raising ability, although doing so would also handicap the party.

Despite his personal vindictiveness, Chrétien demonstrated considerable initiative in party-building, evident from his role in efforts to centralize the party machinery, discussed with respect to responses to environmental conditions. In the end, however, the feud with Martin would undercut much of the progress made.

Martin and his advisers had been astute in capturing the party machinery during the last years of Chrétien's tenure. The formidable organization they built would then guarantee that Martin would become leader (Jeffrey 2010: 404-8). Loyalists would also have a place in the PMO and in the National Party Office (Jeffrey 2010: 456-9). It was from similar loyalists and volunteers that the 2004 election was mounted even though they were regarded as too inexperienced to handle a national campaign. The effort to consolidate Martin's position in the party took shape through advertising that emphasized "Team Martin" rather than the party itself, to the irritation of party stalwarts (Jeffrey 2010: 477-81). The importance of loyalty to Martin was also manifested in efforts to rid the party of candidates, including incumbents, who had challenged him (Jeffrey 2010: 486-8). Centralization was then bought at the price of internal dissension. The 2006 campaign showed even greater ineffectiveness, with the leader and his team unable to communicate a convincing portrayal of their accomplishments (Clarkson 2006).

One action taken by Martin that did help the party move forward was his announcement that he would step down as party leader, made at the same time that he conceded his government's defeat. Yet the civil war between Martin and Chrétien would con-

tinue to bedevil the party as it prepared for the next leadership race. Among the initial flood of candidates, two stood out as clear frontrunners. One, Bob Rae, former NDP Premier of Ontario and a recent convert to the Liberal Party, was seen as the choice of Chrétien supporters. The other, Michael Ignatieff, who had recently returned to Canada after living in the United States and Britain for 30 years and joined the Liberal Party only days before filing as a candidate in the 2006 election, was seen as the representative of the Martin camp (Jeffrey 2010: 607). In the end, when the winner was Stéphane Dion, it was a victory of behind the scene negotiations that took advantage of the frontrunners' difficulties. Although she offers no documentation for her assessment, Jeffrey (2110: 618) states that the media came to see the Dion victory as that of "an anti-leader whose lack of charisma and political skills was actually an advantage and represented a 'new beginning' for the Liberal Party." Yet no evidence would emerge that Dion had the skills, either personally or indirectly through those he appointed, to push his party in an innovative direction. Instead, the party remained divided along Chrétien-Martin lines.

After the Liberal defeat in the 2008 election and Dion's departure, the next leader would be Michael Ignatieff (Jeffrey 2009). Although, to an outsider, he might seem a strange choice, given his lengthy absence from Canada and the short duration of his participation in party politics, he has a long connection with leaders in the Liberal Party and the anglophone establishment through his familial ties to the Grants and Masseys. At the same time, as an experimental study of the 2006 leadership race demonstrated, Ignatieff's policy positions were outside those held by the mainstream of convention delegates (Loewen and Rubenson 2011). Nor did he arouse positive feelings among the electorate. Ignatieff displayed a "tone-deaf approach to politics" generally (Sears 2011: 28) and "terrible political instincts"(Goldstein 2011) through his efforts to trigger the 2011 election by defeating the government in a vote of no-confidence and mishandling potential cooperation with the NDP. In the final coup, he lost his own parliamentary seat and resigned as party leader. He appeared even less able than his two immediate predecessors to demonstrate entrepreneurial skills and be a leader with the ability to rejuvenate his party's organization.

PAST SUCCESS WEIGHS ON THE LIBERALS

The aftermath of the 2004 election, leading to minority status, and the one in 2006 that brought defeat, were assumed by observers, and not just by the theory I offer, to be a period of potential renewal for the Liberals. Jeffrey (2010: 605) succinctly sums up this perspective.

If ever the Liberal Party should have taken the opportunity to renew itself in its traditional fashion - debating and developing new policies, revamping and modernizing its organization, and selecting a leader who represented mainstream Liberal values - the 2006 leadership race was surely the time. But little party renewal occurred. Only in the area of organization and structural reform did the Liberals manage to make significant progress, and even there they were playing a game of catch-up with the other federal parties.

By the time of the 2011 election, there were still no signs that recent organizational changes, adopted in 2006 but not in place for the 2006 leadership race, were having a profound effect on the party's ability to move on from the past. Nor had the leaders selected demonstrated qualities that would lead to party-building. However impressive the Liberal Party's past performance as a national party, resourceful in attracting diverse support and able to govern over long periods of Canada's history, today there is still little sign that it has the will to effectively transform itself. At the time of writing, the party is under the interim leadership of Bob Rae and awaits a leadership convention in 2013 before tackling the consequences of its new position.

THE BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS: LOCKED IN A NICHE

The Bloc Québécois began in 1991.[10] It was made up of a small group of Quebec PCs and Liberals in Parliament who left their parties after the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord. The intention was to promote Quebec's sovereignty within Parliament until a successful referendum in that province would no longer make its presence relevant. The Bloc's purpose for existence ties it to the provincial Parti Québécois (PQ), a nationalist and separatist party founded in 1968 that first formed the provincial government in 1976. In 1980 and again in 1995 the PQ government held referenda on sovereignty association–a form of separation from Canada that would still allow some ties to continue, for example, with respect to currency and

defense. But although committed to a common agenda, the provincial and national parties are not united. For example, PQ Premier Jacques Parizeau and Bloc leader Lucien Bouchard were divided over their approach to the 1995 referendum, reflecting longstanding division within the separatist movement over how hard to push for its objectives (LeDuc et al. 2010: 441).

The extent of Quebec's unhappiness with the failed constitutional accords came to a head in the 1993 election when, contesting its first full election, the Bloc won 54 out of a total of 75 provincial seats with 49 percent of the popular vote and became the Official Opposition. But after that, it ceded its role as Official Opposition, first to the Reform Party in 1997 and 2000, then to the Liberal Party, and now to the NDP.

Even though the emergence of a new party is, by definition, a mark of innovation, analysis of the Bloc requires, paradoxically, at least equal attention to issues of continuity, given what organizational theorists recognize as the liability of newness, leading new organizations to have relatively short life spans (Stinchcombe 1965; Singh et al. 1986). While the Conservatives are also a new party, their newness is of a different order since their creation represents considerable continuity with previously existing parties. The Bloc, too, has connections with past political developments and organizations, yet its decision to enter Parliament as a separatist movement makes it an anomaly among political parties (Noel 1994). At the same time, its parliamentary role shaped its performance to make it similar to other political parties (Cairns 2003). By 2011, the Bloc succumbed to its liabilities, leaving it with only 4 seats.

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding The Bloc's concentration in a single province made it subject to much more limited need for financial resources than would be the case for a national contender. Initially, it adopted a Quebec-based approach to party funding, in common with the PQ, in which only individuals would contribute. This led to recruiting a large base of support made up of about 75,000 dues-paying members (Crête and Lachapelle 1996: 423). The Bloc abandoned this approach to funding for the 2000 election, when it agreed to accept contributions from corporations and trade unions (Cross 2004: 146-7). However, because of opposition to its political agenda, it did not develop access to funding from upper income Quebeckers

or large business owners (Bernard 2001). Whatever durability it achieved remained linked to government funding for political parties (Young et al. 2007).

Supporters There are certain obvious features about the Bloc's support: it is confined to Quebec, it is almost entirely francophone, it is attractive to those offended by those outside the province who refuse to legitimate the special character of Quebec and its independentist aspirations[11], and it has the support of those who vote for the PQ provincially (Crête and Lachapelle 1996: 425). Perhaps less predictably, in the pivotal 1993 election, supporters were more likely to be younger than those of other parties (Nevitte et al. 1995: 589). In the 2000 election, the Bloc attracted those with higher levels of education (Bernard 2001: 143).

The Bloc's initial success in attracting support from almost half the Quebec electorate fluctuated over six elections from 38 to 49 percent. But then, in 2011, it fell to only 23 percent. Its ability to mobilize support was constrained by the pull exerted by its competitors, both federally and provincially, and the push propelled by its own policies and actions and those of the PQ. Some voters switched to the Liberals as the Quebec Liberal Party under Jean Charest proved its mettle, forming the provincial government after the elections of 2003, 2007, and 2008. Meanwhile, the federal Conservatives reorganized to recapture some of the Bloc vote. The 2011 loss in support was largely the result of a sudden upsurge in attraction to the NDP, a phenomenon still difficult to explain but one that Guay (2011) attributes to nothing less than a cultural revolution.

The Bloc had benefitted from the attraction exerted by the dynamic leadership of Lucien Bouchard (Cornellier 1995). But after Bouchard left to head the PQ and was replaced by the low key Michel Gauthier, the party could no longer keep the same energized following (Bernard 1997: 135). Spillover from unhappiness with policies of the PQ led, in 1997, to withdrawal of support for the Bloc by the main trade union federation, the Féderation des travailleurs et travailleuse du Québec (Bernard 1997: 141). In 2000, loss was attributed to unpopular PQ policies regarding Quebec City (Bernard 2001: 139). In 2008, when support fell to 38 percent, there were reverberations from the conservative, nationalist, and separatist agenda of the provincial Action démocratique du Québec. That party captured 41 seats in the preceding 2007 election to come in second after the Liberals. Even the separatist cause itself fluctu-

ates in popularity, as it appeared to do in 1997. In this regard it is worth noting that Pinard's examination of vote intentions discerns a persisting ambivalence to both the Bloc (Pinard 2004) and the PQ (Pinard 2005) that undermines voters' partisan commitments.

Meaning The primary purpose of the Bloc, and the essential message it promotes, is the sovereign identity of Quebec. Justification for its initial presence in the federal Parliament came from serving as the voice of that position and its defender in relations with the rest of Canada. In addition, it conveyed a message of social democratic leanings. For example, among the Bloc's initial objectives on entering Parliament was working for deficit reduction and opposing reductions in benefits to those hurt by the recent recession (Crête and Lachapelle 1996: 424). Yet, even though it is important to see the Bloc as representing more than a purely sovereignist position in its parliamentary role, it is that position, perhaps broadened for some Quebeckers to include the overall protection of Quebec interests, that defined it.

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The Bloc was born directly out of the turbulence of national-Quebec political contention. That remained a principal factor in its continuing existence. Less directly but still important has been the turbulence associated with periods of economic instability. Response to these conditions gave it the initial contours of a social movement as well as a political party–what I have elsewhere termed a party movement (Schwartz 2006: 7-11). It is movement-like in representing "a sustained challenge to power holders in the name of a population living under the jurisdiction of those power holders by means of repeated public displays of that population's worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment" (Tilly 1999: 257). Cornellier (1995) recognized those movement qualities particularly in what she saw to be veneration for the Bloc's first leader, Lucien Bouchard. Although the relevance of her characterization of the Bloc as a movement is disputed by Bernard (2001: 146), he rests his argument principally on its later change in leadership. But the broader way in which I conceptualize party movement allows me to continue drawing on it for insight into the Bloc's organization.

In suggesting the dilemmas that party movements are likely to face in creating appropriate structures, I anticipate that they "will struggle over pulls between loose and tight coupling, entre-

preneurial and conventional leadership, and specialized or professional versus broad member participation" (Schwartz 2006: 38). It is no surprise that these are the same dilemmas facing all political parties. In this paper, I assigned professionalization to structural responses and leadership types to agency. While I will continue with that division here, it is, at the same time, important to look at leadership selection as part of the Bloc's structural responses.

The Bloc's desire for its members to provide it with funding also reflects its intention to make the party one that relied on the participation of a broad membership base (Crête and Lachapelle 1996: 423). But it soon became evident that the party would, in fact, be run by relatively few insiders, demonstrated by the selection of its next leader. When the popular Lucien Bouchard resigned in 1996 as leader both of the party and the official Opposition, his replacement, Michel Gauthier, was appointed through a closed process by a group of 160 (Bernard 1997: 135). The dual leadership roles, which had represented Bouchard's central position as an entrepreneurial leader, could not be carried on by Gauthier, who resigned as party leader after less than a year but retained his place as the Bloc's leader in the House until 2007. In order not to repeat the closed-door form of leadership selection in 1997, six candidates were offered to party members in a mail ballot. The ballots, returned by less than half the membership, were counted in a party convention that presented an image of disarray to a TV-viewing audience (Bernard 1997: 137).

Responses by the Bloc to the turbulence of its environment were internally at odds with each other. On one side was the attraction of an involved and participatory membership. On the other was the efficiency and unity from a more centralized decision-making apparatus.[12] What appears to have been lost was the flexibility of loose coupling. In addition, problems related to leadership made centralization itself problematic. Some of the Bloc's organizational problems stemmed from its own definition of Quebec as the critical political arena and the dominance there of the PQ. It then found itself punished for unpopular moves by the PQ yet still dependent on the PQ for campaigning. In effect, this made the Bloc a secondary player on the Quebec political scene and created difficulties in recruiting activists and candidates as well as raising funds (Carty et al. 2000: 53).

TAKING ACTION

The Bloc initially benefitted, in true social movement style, from the presence of a charismatic leader, Lucien Bouchard. Such a leader has the capacity to define the movement and embody its aspirations in ways that inspire a devoted following. Bouchard had been a close friend and advisor to Brian Mulroney and the environment minister in his Cabinet when he withdrew from the PC Party to begin what would become a distinct political party. His rating by Quebec voters during the 1993 campaign was higher than the ratings received by any of the other party leaders (LeDuc et al. 2010: 425). An experienced politician as well as a dynamic leader, Bouchard was able to keep together a highly disciplined party caucus (Cornellier 1995: 92).

Once Bouchard left to head the PQ, the Bloc had to deal with the difficult problems of succession that confront a movement on the loss of a charismatic leader (Carty et al. 2000: 52). Those problems are greater than the normal experience of an ordinary political party because, when a movement's origins are associated with a charismatic figure, the destiny of both are so closely entwined that a successor must demonstrate that he too is the bearer of charisma. Or, if that quality is not present, then the successor must be able to build on his predecessor's achievements by consolidating the movement's gains into a thriving organization. The Bloc's choice for this role, Michel Gauthier, had neither of those dynamic qualities. Moreover, he was chosen by a small ingroup without participation by the party membership. He soon resigned from the party leadership role but kept his parliamentary one. I referred to this episode earlier as an instance of how the party structured its responses to the environment.

The next leader, Gilles Duceppe, was selected in 1997 through direct election by party members. Since the PQ had been the leader among Canadian parties in following such a procedure, Cross (2004: 84) feels that the Bloc "found it easy to follow in the PQ's footsteps." Yet participation rates were not particularly high compared to the experiences of similar parties (Cross 2004: 88) and competition among the six candidates was acrimonious (Bernard 1997: 137; Carty et al. 2000: 52). Prior to the 1997 election, Quebec voters indicated that their approval of the Bloc's leader had dropped over 10 percentage points from the rating given to Bouchard (LeDuc 2010: 447).

This is not to say that Bloc leaders were totally ineffective in taking actions to help their party. For example, LeDuc et al. (2010: 473) commend Duceppe for running a "smart" campaign in 2004. But the division of authority between Duceppe and Gauthier may have reflected a serious problem in the provision of leadership in the Bloc, although it may also have been part of a conciliatory gesture by Duceppe and a sharing of responsibilities similar to that followed by other parties.[13] Duceppe's loss of his own seat in 2011 was quickly followed by his resignation as leader.

CONSTRAINTS ON A NICHE PARTY

The history and demography of Quebec make it fertile ground for the emergence of its own parties. Most of these have operated solely at the provincial level where they may be in more or less equal competition with others. That is, they are not, in the sense I use the concept here, niche parties–ones that exist within a narrowly-defined environment of interests, voters, or geographic arenas.[14] At the federal level, other niche parties have existed, tied to a distinct regional base, but what made the Bloc unique was its representation of a separatist agenda.[15] While that agenda served as a powerful mobilizing message for many Quebec voters, it remained an equally powerful constraint on either recruiting additional support or retaining the support it has. The instability of commitment has multiple reasons, of which probably the strongest is its relations with the PQ. It is the latter's policies, not what the Bloc does, that will determine whether sovereignty succeeds. As both parties engage in normal legislative activities, whether in opposition or governing roles, they necessarily dilute the fervor of their following and the very qualities that otherwise give them their social movement character. But especially for the Bloc, its subsidiary role in relation to the PQ further constrains it in responding to challenges and in recruiting the kind of entrepreneurial leadership that could enhance its position. Presence in a narrow niche initially helped make the Bloc an influential actor in Parliament. Yet that same niche made it vulnerable to both internal and external pressures that have left it with an uncertain future.

THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY: AN ONGOING QUEST

The precursor to the New Democratic Party (NDP) began in the 1930s as the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF),

dedicated to transforming Canada into a socialist society through collaboration between labor and farmers. Yet, based on its support, the CCF was largely a Western protest party representing agrarian socialism (Lipset 1968). In response to the changing demography of Canada and the desire to become more of a national party with the likelihood of achieving governing status, the CCF reorganized in 1961 in partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to become the NDP. The principal objective was to move from its western base into Ontario and expand its appeal to labor and urban residents generally (Carty et al. 2000: 64).[16] A comparison of election results indicates that the NDP was in fact able to modestly increase its support over that of its predecessor (Whitehorn 1996: 317). Although the newly formed NDP had advocated a more decentralized form of federal-provincial relations in recognition of Quebec's special situation (Whitehorn 1992: 57-8), Quebec remained one area where support was negligible (Whitehorn 1996: 318).

If the NDP, like the CCF before it, seemed destined to play a secondary role as a federal party, the same was not true at the provincial level. There it has varied from official opposition to actually governing in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia.

The 1993 election was a calamity for the NDP, similar in scale to what happened to the PCs. In the previous election of 1988, the NDP had won 43 seats with just over 20 percent of the vote, its best showing ever. The 1993 election left the party with under 7 percent of the popular vote and only 9 seats, depriving it of the 12 seats needed for official recognition in the House of Commons. The election results were a call for change but it was unclear how that call would be heeded (Carty et al. 2000: 68). Eventually, the energy that had been generated to make over the CCF emerged once again. In the 2011 election the NDP won 103 seats, with the largest number, 59, in Quebec, to become the Official Opposition.

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding Initially, the NDP's close ties with the CLC provided it with ready access to resources. One source came from dues through a system of indirect membership from affiliated union members. In addition, unions and their locals could make direct contributions. An especially critical resource came from the donation of time and personnel to run election campaigns. Both these sources of union

support were sharply curtailed with the passage of Bill C-24 in 2003 (Whitehorn 2004). Up to that point, reliance on contributions from trade unions solidified ties with the party and ensured that labor concerns remained central to the party's agenda.

Although the NDP raised more money from individuals than was true for the two older parties (Stanbury 1996: 77), characteristically, the size of those contributions was more modest (Carty et al. 2000: 143). This made government funding to political parties a critical resource, one that substantially increased the NDP's coffers. The party's loss of official status after the 1993 election was consequently particularly painful.

At the same time, relations between the federal and provincial wings of the party affected how money was raised and dispersed, reflected in tensions over the sharing of lists of donors (Stanbury 2006: 80). The NDP relied on provisions for public funding that allowed donors income tax credit when funds given to the national office were transferred to the provincial parties, where they were used in support of provincial elections (Stanbury 1996: 86).

Transforming the party after 1993 required that it find a way to reestablish its financial stability. Some help came when the party regained its official status in the 1997 election after winning 21 seats. Alarmed by the prospect of losing the financial assistance of trade unions, a special Election Readiness Committee, set up in 2002, recommended a final donation from them. That policy was also urged by Jack Layton, who assumed party leadership in 2003. The result was a one-time donation that enabled the NDP to purchase its own headquarters in Ottawa, an asset that could then be used to obtain loans in anticipation of subsequent government reimbursement (Whitehorn 2004). Layton is further credited with finally stopping the party's financial decline (LeDuc et al. 2010: 490).

Support One might assume that, given the NDP's origins, connections with the CLC, and its own agenda, support would be mainly from the working class. However, for a variety of historical and structural reasons, class voting in Canada has relatively low salience compared to other industrialized countries (e.g., Pammett 1987). This is reflected in the difficulty that the NDP continues to have in mobilizing not only the working class but even union households (Gidengil et al. 2006).

The NDP's problems in activating support have been compounded by the political salience of regional cleavages, not all of

which can be explained away by the impact of the electoral system. Regional constraints mean that a party with governing aspirations must have substantial support in those areas that are especially vote rich--Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta. Of these, only Ontario and British Columbia had provided appreciable support, justifying the NDP's originating intentions to expand into industrialized and urbanized areas. But after the 1993 debacle, the NDP was unsuccessful in winning any seats in Ontario in 1997 and only one in 2000. It did not resume its prominence in that province until the election of 2004. But the most extraordinary shift came in 2011 when, after previously winning only one seat in Quebec, the NDP won 59 seats in that province, by far outpacing the 22 won in second-place Ontario.

Mitigating some of its difficulties are other signs that the NDP has begun to attract new kinds of voters. It has shown recent success in attracting support from women and young people (Nevitte et al. 1995; Gidengil et al. 2006). This reflects the party's outreach to social movements representing the interests of women and the environment (Whitehorn 2004).

Meaning If the NDP's experiences contradict any easy assumptions about the kind of supporters it is likely to mobilize, they create even more difficulty if one assumes the coherence of its political meaning. From its beginnings as the CCF, the party has had to deal with contention over the pull between Fabian socialism and Marxism, the interests of farmers and organized labor, and the accommodations required for participating in legislative politics with the demands of holding true to ideology (Schwartz 1991). During the period covered by this paper, similar kinds of issues had the potential for dividing the party between left and right and between the appeals of nationalism and social democracy (Whitehorn 1996: 329).

The party went into the 1993 election having accepted the Charlottetown Accord. This policy was unattractive to the West and it weakened the NDP's support there. That year's election campaign tried to focus on NAFTA but this was no longer an issue energizing the electorate (LeDuc et al. 2010: 420). Carty et al. (2000: 64) blame the apparent irrelevance of the NDP's message on its alliance with labor, leading to internal conflict and limiting "the party's ability to engage the electorate, for labour had no distinctive position on the regional and constitutional claims that dominated much of the period's political debate."

A shift in emphasis away from traditional class-related issues gathered momentum with the election of Jack Layton as NDP leader. Layton was associated with such post-modern issues as the environment, feminism, and peace (Whitehorn 2004: 106). These are now issues connected to the left wing of the party as evidenced by the actions of the New Politics Initiative (NPI). The NPI was a faction within the NDP, founded in 2001, to push for a left agenda. When Layton became leader, the movement felt sufficiently secure to disband (Whitehorn 2004). And while there is still dispute about what drew Quebec to the NDP in 2011, one possibility is that changing perspectives on sovereignty coincided with openness to the NDP's message (Guay 2011). Leebosh (2011: 113) goes so far as to argue that "The social and cultural values of most Quebecers and their views on most public policy issues have long been in sync with the NDP's social democratic ideology and postmodern stances on various moral and social issues."

The importance of whether or not the NDP has a consistent and attractive meaning system is variously interpreted, depending on the audience to which its message is directed. Internally, among committed activists, ideology serves as a source of contention, dividing labor from others, East from West, and nationalists from continentalists and social democrats. At the same time, there are those who argue that the relevance of the party's message to the electorate is subsidiary to perceptions of whether it has a chance of forming the government (Whitehorn 2006; LeDuc et al. 2010: 510). The possibility of such strategic voting overriding ideological attractions was recognized by Jack Layton through his 2008 campaign promise that he was running for no less than the prime ministership (Erickson and Laycock 2009).

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The turbulent environment that faced the other three parties going into the 1993 election would also hit the NDP particularly hard. On the constitutional crises of the time, the federal party took the side of the Liberals but this was a position at odds with its supporters in the West. In Ontario, budget-slashing by the incumbent NDP government of Bob Rae had already angered trade union leaders and some union locals disaffiliated from the party. For the electorate generally, the NDP's strengths were in relation to social issues, none of which were in the forefront at this time. In contrast,

it was not seen as a leader with respect to constitutional issues and it was considered weak in handling economic ones (LeDuc et al. 2010: 419).

Based on two characteristics of its organization, the NDP appeared well equipped to deal with the turbulent environment then current. One derived from the loose association between the provincial and federal wings of the party, allowing the provincial parties greater autonomy in policy positions (Schwartz 2006: 151). The other was its reliance on member participation, a basic tenet of its founding. Yet both these qualities had significant down sides.

The effect of stronger provincial wings, especially when their parties form the government, is to make the federal party hostage to discontent with provincial policies. This was especially pertinent after the defeat of the Ontario NDP government in 1995, when the NDP failed to win a single seat in that province in the 1997 federal election.

The principle of broad participation in the party has long been central to both the CCF and NDP as an avenue for fostering internal democracy through regular consultation and a way of setting them apart from the older parties. However, once each party began to acquire representation in legislative bodies, even without assuming a governing role, member consultation began to disappear (Schwartz 2006: 61-2). When Carty (1991: 99) did his assessment of constituency organizations in 1991, he found the NDP to have more "paper organizations" than any other party.

It appears then that the NDP's existing organization, despite its loose coupling, did not provide much help in dealing with the environmental turbulence that faced all parties leading up to the 1993 election. The party called a national conference in 1994, intended to begin its renewal, but the tenor of debate discouraged holding follow-up regional meetings that might propose major changes (Carty et al. 2000: 68). But once its leader, Audrey McLaughlin, resigned in 1995, the NDP began to confront its problems in leadership selection and address its own deficits in internal democracy (Archer and Whitehorn 1997). The party's dependence on organized labor and its combination of direct members, concentrated in the West, and indirect ones, concentrated in Ontario, led to a similarly divided way of selecting leaders in convention. Not until 2003 did the party use a direct ballot for voting by all party members.

Although some central planning for national election campaigns has always been customary, much of what resulted came from actions taken by participating trade union personnel. Local issues and local concerns, particularly as these were shaped by regional interests, generally predominated along with the national party leader's attention to a few selected issues. By 2002, party activists became more focused on the contours of a truly national campaign at the same time as they remained alert to the importance of responding to local issues. Beginning with an Election Readiness Committee that made recommendations to a broadly representative Election Planning Committee, and the committees that flowed from the latter, the party moved in the direction of greater centralized planning and greater professionalization. By the time of the 2004 election, and with a new leader on board, the party was better able to conduct a national, leader-centered campaign (Whitehorn 2004).

Apparently, the 1993 election caught the NDP off guard. Its weakened position then contributed to slowness in bringing about the kind of internal changes that would help change its status. Some structural shifts began to gather momentum in 2003 that were then reflected in increasing electoral success in subsequent elections.

TAKING ACTION

The suggestion that innovative leaders will emerge out of new centers of power and represent new kinds of interests appeared to hold among leaders in the NDP but not, as anticipated earlier, in ways that led to entrepreneurial results. For example, when Audrey McLaughlin was selected leader in 1989, she represented neither labor nor the West but Yukon. The North could be thought of as a new power center, but hardly one with enough population to make a significant difference. Moreover, rather than demonstrating an orientation to the future, her presentation of the party's message in 1993 linked it more with issues of the past than with concerns of the time (LeDuc et al. 2010: 419-20; Whitehorn 1996).

McLaughlin was replaced in 1995 by Alexa McDonough, a social worker from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Once again the leadership went to someone who represented yet another power center with limited demographic power and with interests marginal to the rest of Canada (Carty et al. 2000: 69). In a convention still dealing with the effects of its divided approach to leadership selection, McDonough essentially won by default after the fourth ballot. As Car-

ty et al. (2000: 69) observe, "This left the party with a new leader it hadn't quite chosen, and a leadership that hadn't been won." Campaigning in 1997, she helped the party regain some seats, winning new ones in the Atlantic provinces. But the 2000 election brought another period of loss, augmented by what LeDuc et al. (2010: 465) criticize as McDonough's campaign style, in which she "failed to control her often harsh rhetoric."

The next choice of leader would take the NDP into a new phase, reflected by notable and growing increases in seats. In the 2003 leadership race--a contested election with a number of credible candidates–Jack Layton solidified his legitimacy by winning on the first ballot and in the first election with direct voting by all members. Layton, a professor, Toronto city councilor, and former president of the Federation of Canadian of Municipalities, could claim association with a number of constituencies critical to the NDP. Along with his credentials as an authority on urban issues, he had worked with environmental, women's, and peace movements. Not yet a sitting member in the House of Commons, he had no history to deal with. His ability to speak French gave him a distinct advantage in Quebec during the election debates. By the time of the 2008 election, Layton received the most favorable rating of all party leaders except for Duceppe, who was rated only by Quebec voters (LeDuc et al. 2010: 509-10). In all respects, then, Layton appeared to have given the NDP the kind of entrepreneurial leadership it needed to finally emerge from the depths of the 1993 defeat.

MOVING AHEAD

The NDP's devastation in the 1993 election was a clear sign that it would need to change in order to survive, but carrying out relevant changes has been slow and difficult. Traditional reliance on trade unions for resources and organizational assistance has not been possible to sustain both because of legal changes with respect to campaign funding and the frequent disconnect between union membership and partisan loyalty. The party's growing appeal to women, young people, and the better educated has been helpful but may be unstable as their constituents age and move to other interests. In addition, the dominance of the union movement has been a factor in the contention over ideology that still remains unresolved. The kind of message that will best sustain the party in its continuing quest for power is not yet evident. Structural changes

have similarly been slow to emerge but these are evolving through greater internal professionalization. There also appears to be growing recognition of the need for a flexible approach to both the timing of and the arenas for tight and loose coupling. Finally, in a political system where there is strong focus on the person of the party leader, the NDP had been slow in finding the kind of leadership to move it forward. But with Jack Layton at the head, the party was poised to become stronger and more competitive. Tragically, the party's strong showing in the 2011 election was soon followed by Layton's death and a new period of uncertainty.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY: HARNESSING THE TOOLS OF CHANGE

Although Republicans won the presidency in 1952 and 1956 and again in 1968 and 1972, both houses of Congress remained in the hands of a Democratic majority. The Democrats' hold on government began with the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1932 and gave them the aura of a natural governing party even when experiencing temporary displacements from the presidency (Milkis 1993). The challenge for the Republicans was to change those partisan dynamics and give the party control over the legislative as well as the executive branch. The journey would be a long one, beginning in a series of concerted efforts to create a more effective organizational apparatus. The new strength generated by organizational changes in the Republican Party would finally have an impact in the 1980 election (Gibson et al. 1983: 216) with the election of President Reagan and the first Republican majority in the Senate in 28 years. The Democrats retained a majority in the House but with the loss of 34 seats.

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding The Republicans, early leaders in developing tactics for raising vast sums, had, by the late 1930s, centralized financing of the Republican National Committee (RNC) and the two campaign committees (Cotter and Bibby 1980: 10). Fund-raising through direct mail was first used in the 1964 Goldwater campaign and subsequent campaigns followed the same path (Galvin 2010). When William Brock became chairman of the RNC in 1978, he successfully adapted and expanded reliance on such fund-raising (Kayden and Mahe 1985: 73-4). In addition, campaign finance laws helped em-

power interest groups to influence the course of elections directly and independently of involvement with political parties, reinforcing the influence of conservative groups on the Republicans (Weissman and Sazawal 2009).Changes in those laws also aided both parties in increasing small donations (Malbin and Cain 2007), a newly-appreciated element in mobilizing support.

The party's success in raising large sums of money has continued to the present but with a significant change. Although the Republicans had always been helped by financial support from large donors, these were constrained by the 2002 Campaign Reform Act, particularly in limiting issue advocacy ads by special interests. But, in invoking freedom for political speech and redefining corporate bodies as the equivalent of individuals, the Supreme Court in 2010 struck down the restraining features of the Act. The full impact of that change is not yet evident but there is notable precedent for the effects of non-party resources on partisan outcomes. For example, Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens was the major funder behind the so-called Swift Boat attacks on John Kerry's military record that seriously undermined Kerry's presidential bid (Vogel 2010). As such independent political activities proliferate, they shift control away from the core party organizations and leave it in the hands offunders with their own agenda.

Supporters The Republicans had their traditional base of support among white Protestant males in the traditional professions and business, and concentrated in midwestern states. That pattern began to change beginning in the early 1960s (Manza and Brooks 1999). Republicans benefitted from two factors adversely affecting the Democrats. The first was the aftermath of the civil rights movement and the sharp dropoff in white Democratic support from the South. The second was the aftermath of the Vietnam War and the simultaneous cultural revolution, events that would seriously loosen working class support for the Democrats. Both these phenomena opened the door for the political and Religious Right to enter the Republican Party. These new sources of support would help deliver the 1980 election for the presidency throughout the country and for the Senate in the south, mid and far west (Leege et al. 2002). The Republicans have continued their strategic recruitment policies, gaining and retaining support among whites, males, and suburban voters almost everywhere except the Northern states.

Meaning On winning the Republican presidential nomination in 1964, Barry Goldwater established a new legitimacy for conservatism in his party (Schoenwald 2001). His message brought about a union of economic concerns over taxation and small government with social concerns about life style and morality (Goldwater 1960: 9-12). Aaron Wildavsky (1965: 411) saw Goldwater representing "a profound cultural current within the Republican Party" and foresaw that conservatives who supported him would remain dominant in the party. By the time of the 1980 election, conservatism had overwhelmed other positions to the extent that, to be labeled a moderate, was to be placed in a suspect category (Schwartz 1990: 204). Kayden and Mahe (1985: 70-1) initially argued that the capture of the national party organization by western entrepreneurial and social activists, superseding eastern banking and business interests, was the result of changes in the geographic and class makeup of the party. But it was also clear to them, given that those activists were Goldwaterites, that ideology played a significant role. Among the consequences was a sharpened sense of differentiation from their Democratic counterparts among state parties (Paddock 1992).

Having gained some electoral advantage in 1980, the Republicans remained alert to the importance of a clear ideological theme. In particular, beginning in 1982, Congressman Newt Gingrich defined a choice between what he termed the Democrats' Liberal Welfare State and the Republicans' Conservative Opportunity Society that became the core of his message in recruiting candidates. Petrocik and Steeper (2010: 4) attribute the Republican congressional majority that finally took hold in 1995 to the ideological coherence of that message and the persistence with which it was delivered.

An emphasis on ideology continues to characterize the party, contributing to the sharp polarization that is now a feature of U.S. politics. Although some argue that the polarization does not extend to the general public (e.g., Fiorina and Abrams 2009), there is agreement that both parties have become more ideologically coherent (Abramowitz 2010). Most recently, conservative beliefs in the Republican Party have been reinforced by the activism of the Tea Party movement (Williamson et al. 2011).

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The late 1970s presented the United States with a number of internal and external crises: inflation, energy shortages, the Soviet

invasion of Afghanistan, and the Iranian embassy staff held hostage. All these events occurred under the watch of an exceedingly unpopular president.

The result was a turbulent environment that provided new opportunities for the Republicans.

On the one hand, the material presented thus far suggests that the Republicans were well into developing centralized structures before 1980. At the same time, environmental turbulence encouraged loose coupling through competing power centers associated with different claimants for leadership and different conceptions of the party's direction. Because such competition can lead to bitter internal struggles that take time to resolve, it becomes likely that radical changes first need to be developed in their own supportive environment. This was illustrated in the Republican Party's struggle over principles, initially embodied in the 1964 primary race between Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater. Resolution came later, when Ronald Reagan, relying on conservative principles, first when he ran for governor of California, and then as he became a presence in national politics, helped to push the party away from the centrism of Richard Nixon (Milkis and Rhodes 2007).

These signs of loose coupling gave scope to innovations that moved the party to the next phase, where changes are coordinated. In the Republican Party this was manifested by staffing changes and adoption of new technologies. National party units linked with state organs by providing services, begun after the 1964 election (Bibby and Huckshorn 1968). Elaborated under Chairman Brock, those services targeted resources to arenas that could best benefit from their infusion. By 1979, computerization allowed voters to be classified into effective targets (Kayden and Mahe 1985: 79). Based on 1984 data, Herrnson's (1989) description of decision-making and resource distribution between the congressional campaign committees and candidates fit with earlier research on the coordination between the RNC and state parties (Huckshorn et al. 1986). National staff had the autonomy to allocate most resources to "competitive candidates, nonincumbents, southerners, and candidates who had assembled formidable campaign organizations–precisely those candidates who were likely to derive the greatest benefits from party help" (Herrnson 1989: 318). The result was a more centralized party machinery (Cotter and Bibby 1980: 19; Huckshorn et al. 1986). The RNC's assistance to state races (Kayden and Mahe 1985:73) illus-

trates the importance Kanter (2000: 169) assigns to "imperialistic" steps in the process ofinnovation.

Changing external conditions along with recurring elections and new claimants to elected office contribute to the likelihood that turbulence will soon replace stability. But will centralization, once imposed, give way to loose coupling? In the case of the Republicans the answer is a qualified yes. The loose coupling that followed arises from the porous nature of U.S. parties, allowing them to be penetrated by individuals and interests that find in them a congenial electoral avenue through which to pursue their concerns (Epstein 1986; Schwartz 2006). And because those doing the penetrating are highly motivated to work on behalf of their interests, they appear as welcome assets to the party. This was true for the political and Religious Right (Gilbert and Peterson 1995; Green 1995; Schwartz 2006) who, energized by belief in the rightness of their cause and undeterred by the difficulty in achieving their goal, became enthusiastic campaign workers for Republican candidates (Fairlie 1980: 16). The Tea Party movement, emerging after the 2008 Republican defeat, is then another manifestation of how loose coupling is associated with turbulence.

TAKING ACTION

Resource dependency theory emphasizes the role of individuals in actively managing an organization's environment (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and upper echelons theory (Hambrick 2005) adds how the personal qualities of executives affect their strategic decisions. The scope for individual action is augmented by the structure of U.S. political parties, which makes the creation of new power centers relatively easy. The most potent of these power centers is the presidency.

Party-building may follow from either direct intervention by the President or indirectly, from his personal qualities. Intervention occurs through appointments to the RNC, participation in fundraising and campaigning for other candidates, and the articulation of a clear message for rallying support. In all these ways Republican presidents have played an influential role in party-building (Galvin 2010). Ronald Reagan, in particular, contributed to the transformation of his party at the same time as he strengthened the power of the executive. Milkis and Rhodes (2007) assign even greater significance in both these respects to George W. Bush.[17] Additionally, ear-

lier Republican presidents have been important if less visible agents of party-building (Galvin forthcoming).

The centrality of presidents in the U.S. political system allows them to also have less direct but still critical effects on their party. This can come about when they are empowered by "situational charisma" (Panebianco 1988: 52-53), embedded in their promised solutions to stressful situations. Situational charisma describes Ronald Reagan who promised to bring about change when competing, first in his own party against opponents with less appealing personae or agendas, and then against an unpopular president during times of severe domestic and international difficulties. This allowed him to tap into the multiple ways in which presidents can be the heads of their nations separately from issues of partisanship by becoming identified as the symbolic representatives of the national community (Alexander 2009). Yet there is still spillover to their party.

Even unsuccessful contenders for the presidency can create new power centers, demonstrated in the aftermath of the 1964 campaign. Barry Goldwater had drawn enthusiastic supporters into the Republican Party where they remained as a critical core of workers who would eventually help produce the 1980 victory.

Legislative leaders can also take initiative in party-building. This is how Petrocik and Steeper (2010), from their perspective as party insiders, evaluate the cumulative effects of Newt Gingrich's renewed conservative message in the 1980s. They argue that,

> . . . anyone close enough to observe his effort to forge a Republican majority over the preceding decade, and the energizing effect it had on Republicans, can tell a compelling story about his role in inspiring Republicans to run for office and giving them a common language about the programmatic shortcomings of the Democratic party and why the Republican approach was superior. Would there have been a unifying theme or *Contract with America* without the sustained effort of Gingrich during the preceding decade? We think not, and we think it was a factor in the 1996 election (Petrocik and Steeper (2010: 5).

Power may stem, as well, from already existing centers where actors redefine and expand their roles. In this way a strengthened RNC came with the appointment of strong chairs like Ray Bliss after the 1964 defeat and William Brock after another loss in 1976 (Klinkner 1994).

Interest groups and political movements that embrace political parties as vehicles for ensuring that their concerns are included in the latter's agenda are yet another source of change-directed power. The previous section on relations with the environment noted how the porous nature of U.S. parties allowed penetration by interest groups as well as large donors, especially before restrictions imposed by campaign-finance laws. Even without official recognition, such individuals and groups became part of the network of relations making up each of the parties, as I described in detail for the Illinois Republican Party (Schwartz 1990: 38-42). The consequence is to make leadership from such interests an important influence in shaping party agendas and defining party identities. For the Republicans, this happened with the Religious Right and the Tea Party Movement. Some effort to curtail such influences came with the McCain-Finegold campaign finance law of 2002, but that has now been challenged by the 2010 Supreme Court ruling that corporations have the equivalent of individual free speech rights. Today, groups, like Grover Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform or Karl Rove's American Crossroads, are among the most skillful leaders of the Republican Party though they operate without apparent official sanction.

STRUCTURE AND IDEOLOGY

An important contribution to the 1980 presidential victory was the Republican Party's transformation through mobilization of new and additional resources, emphasis on a clear and unifying message, responses to environmental pressures, and direction from strong leadership. The party retained the presidency until 1992 and kept its majority in the Senate until 1988. In the midst of the Clinton presidency it finally reached a majority in the House, losing it only in 2008 and regaining it in 2010. From a party once able to enjoy only limited electoral success it became one that has shaken the national Democrats from their long-running governmental role. Structure and ideology have helped propel the Republicans to victory. How long will their innovations continue to sustain them and when will they become the victims of their own success?

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY: IMPRINT OF THE NEW DEAL

Because of the two-party system characteristic of the United States, we know that the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party

must be the mirror image of the Republicans'. The Democrats became the majority party during the Great Depression, winning the presidency in five consecutive elections beginning in 1932. Since then there have been six presidential victories for the Democrats compared to nine for the Republicans. The Senate was also won by the Democrats in the 1932 election and they did not lose it until 1980. Beginning with that election, the Democrats have been the majority in five elections, ceding to the Republicans in eight, and tying in two. In the House, with exception of the election of 1946, Democrats were the majority from 1932 until 1994. Since then they have formed the majority only as a result of the elections of 2006 and 2008. Although the House remained the most reliable basis of the Democrats' dominance after the shake-up of the 1980 election, eventually it too was affected by Republican inroads. Yet, even as these trends were taking place, Democrats tended to see loss of power as the temporary consequence of a more attractive Republican presidential candidate.

Compared to the Republicans, historically, the Democratic Party has been more diverse in make up and more a creature of its local parties. The possibility of major reorganization has not been part of accepted solutions to its problems. Even the initial victories of the 1930s were not primarily the result of organizational innovation. As humorist and commentator Will Rogers then observed, "I am not a member of any organized party. I am a Democrat." With the passage of time and a changing environment the Democrats still remained reluctant to change their organization until very recently. It was not until organizational stock-taking after their 2004 defeat that Democrats were spurred to begin decisive changes that culminated with gaining both the presidency and Congress in 2008.

PARTY INSTITUTIONS

Funding It would not be until after the 1984 defeat that the Democratic National Committee (DNC) expanded its use of direct mail and its appeal for large donations (Klinkner 1994: 181-2). But major change was still not an objective and even in 1997, when the DNC chairman accepted President Clinton's charge to expand party-building, the response was mainly rhetorical, though it was given some impetus by the President's own fund-raising efforts and carried further in 2000 (Galvin 2008).

More serious reexamination of Democratic strategies began with the election of Howard Dean as chairman of the DNC in 2005. Dean introduced new approaches to fund-raising through online appeals; outreach to new donors, including small donors; and matching donations, resulting in a 50 percent increase in DNC funds in the first half of 2005 (Corrado and Varney 2007). From the beginning of the Obama campaign, fund-raising strategies introduced by Dean were reinforced, emphasizing outreach through the internet and encouragement of small and repeat donations (Lizza 2008: 52).

Support The New Deal solidified the Democrats as the party of industrial America, of organized labor, immigrants and racial minorities, Catholics, but also of the rural South. The previous discussion of the Republican Party pointed out how some of these traditional social bases of Democratic support were undermined. Moreover, the changing industrial makeup of the United States was making the importance of unionized labor, along with the funding and services that union personnel provided, less dependable.

Faced with these demographic shifts, Chairman Dean took the initiative to build a centralized data bank. Potential support was identified based on such variables as ethnicity and race, marital status, gender, location, size of household, and home ownership (Kuhn 2008). With this kind of information available for the first time in advance of the 2008 election, the Democrats could now utilize theirresources more efficiently. The Obama campaign not only increased enthusiasm among such traditional supporters as African-Americans and young people but also mobilized more urban, Hispanic, and better-educated voters. Instead of surrendering the religious vote to the Republicans, where it had come to be associated with opposition to abortion and same sex marriage (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2007; Schwartz and Tatalovich 2009), 2008 saw "one of themost intensive campaigns ever by Democrats to woo people of faith" (Evers 2008).

Meaning The cultural revolution of the 1960s and 70s gave the Democrats a new identification in attracting support from women and gays and lesbians while driving away long-standing alliances with working class and Catholic supporters. But the party had no overarching ideological message to effectively counter the earlier losses or unify its base.

Finally prompted by their 2004 defeat, the Democrats began to pay attention to the Republicans success in communicating their

views. George Lakoff (2004), a linguist, became a principal advocate for countering Republican thinking by focusing on how issues can be framed to reflect crucial values. Rather than represent new value commitments by a full-fledged ideology—defined as a comprehensive set of beliefs that explain current conditions and offer a blueprint for change (Schwartz and Lawson 2005: 278-9)—a meaningful message can, more loosely, provide a frame through which events and issues are interpreted (Oliver and Johnston 2000). Lakoff and others like him attracted attention from some party leaders, particularly Howard Dean and Nancy Pelosi (Bai 2005).

Then, in 2008, Obama made his venture into framing by expanding on the need for change. Although the concept of change lacks the trappings of a full-fledged ideology, it does have an emotional connotation suggesting movement forward (Campbell and Converse 1972). Lemann (2009) feels that "Part of the appeal of Obama's awesomely vague campaign slogan, 'Change,' was that it evoked the civil-rights movements without saying so directly." If the change theme was often weak on specifics, it was still evocative enough to unify those attracted to the Democrats and to mobilize the indifferent.

RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Going into the 2008 election, the Democrats were aided by circumstances that were not of their own making. From an apparently endless war in Iraq, to the onset of an economic meltdown, to a President and advisers sinking into deep unpopularity, turbulence was the norm. With it, came opportunities for partisan reversal that could not have been more favorable.

Relations with a turbulent environment are resolved by finding a balance between centralization and loose coupling. One avenue is through professionalization, a move Democrats were slow to follow. After the defeat in 1984, DNC Chairman Paul Kirk did extend services through regional field coordinators and support for local candidates (Klinkner 1994: 181-2). Further momentum began under Chairman Joe Andrew in 1999, including seminars on campaign management and upgrading of software used by state parties (Galvin 2008: 14). But only under Howard Dean did the Democrats seriously follow the Republican lead, building data banks, expanding methods of fund-raising, coordinating activities across states, and treating the campaign process as subject to direction by

experts.[18] In these ways they were poised to take advantage of dissatisfactions already current among the electorate.

Most innovative was Dean's decision to establish a Democratic presence in all 50 states, a strategy that both recognized the internal diversity of the party and used it as the basis for potential expansion. In addition, he introduced the training of local organizers and expansion of professional staff even though many Democratic leaders felt Dean was making poor use of resources (Bai 2008; Berman 2010). His strategy paid off, first in electing a Democratic House in 2006 and then with the more complete victory in 2008.

By the time of the 2008 campaign, procedures were in place to benefit the victor in the primary race. According to party insider Ari Melber (2010: 4), "President Obama came into the White House with the largest, most wired supporter network in American history." In the presidential race, all the pieces were put to work in a remarkably unified and focused effort (Nagourney et al. 2008).

But professionalization and the coordinated organization of the presidential campaign did not herald the kind of centralization that is presumed necessary for innovations to become diffused throughout an organization. Instead, they coexisted with the customary loose coupling in an uneasy alliance. When Berman (2010) writes about the creation of a grass roots movement to remake the Democratic Party after the 2004 election as "herding donkeys," he evokes the obstinate nature of those creatures.

TAKING ACTION

The critical role in party-building played by Republican presidents, and even, in the case of Barry Goldwater, presidential candidates, is not evident in the Democratic Party (Galvin 2010). Although Bill Clinton showed some interest in party-building, he shifted course to concentrate on building support for himself and his agenda during 1998, when the Lewinsky scandal broke (Galvin 2008: 12). To what extent President Obama is playing a significant part in building his party as against building his own campaign organization is not yet clear if, as Galvin's (2010) work suggests, party-building is more likely to occur in a President's second term. Yet there are a number of positive signs indicating his entrepreneurial potential (Greenstein 2009).

To begin with, Obama was endowed with the kind of situational charisma previously attributed to Ronald Reagan, an indirect,

though still important asset. Even Obama's inexperience came to represent the promise of a new era as well as a sober awakening to the problems to be faced.[19] But, like Max Weber, who described the unstable nature of authority based on charisma and how charisma needs continual reaffirmation, Alexander (2010) traces comparable ups and downs in the Obama presidency.

Speaking more directly to his potential as a party-builder were indications that Obama was, from the outset, attuned to the uses of power. He demonstrated this by recruiting David Axelrod and Rahm Emanuel, who had already honed their skills in electing a Democratic House (Lizza 2008: 46). Of more lasting importance was Obama's adoption and elaboration of the changes introduced by Howard Dean. It is, in fact, Dean's appointment in 2005 that enhanced the power of the DNC and led it to assist the Democratic victories of 2008.

Like the Republicans, the Democrats too have been open to penetration from interest groups and social movements intent on ensuring that their agendas are incorporated into the party's policies. The most significant of these for the Democratic Party include organized labor, civil rights, environmental, feminist, and LGTG groups, each of which have brought active and enthusiastic workers, financial support, and new leadership into the party (Schwartz 2010). At the same time, some of these groups may be in contention with each other to the extent of affecting their mutual incorporation. Frymer (2008), for example, describes how the competing interests of African Americans and organized labor have proved detrimental to the Democrats. Even as interest groups shape the party's agenda, they can remain a volatile component, becoming less active when their own positions are not fully adopted and driving away other supporters when their positions become dominant. In 2008 these groups were more or less united in their support for the Democrats only to become disenchanted by what they saw as the slowness to change.

CHANGE IS DIFFICULT

Although the Democratic Party has made crucial changes in how it mobilizes resources, delivers its message, and attempts to coordinate activities, the 2010 election raised questions about how far-reaching these have been and how well they have become institutionalized. With respect to resources, Democratic fund-raising for

that election was more than respectable but lacked some of the large major contributors who were engaged in the presidential race. Both paid and volunteer workers were busy encouraging voter turnout but not nearly to the extent seen in 2008. These incomplete changes have led some party actors to reassess what needs to be done for the next election and how best to utilize new technology (Bai 2010a).

Meanwhile, internal debate unfolds about the content of the party's message and whether its perceived liberalism was to blame for the loss of seats. Some believe that it was Democratic congressmen, particularly ones who had only recently been elected, unwilling to stand firmly with the President's policies for producing change, who contributed to the loss (Bai 2010b). Even more severe criticism comes from those who argue that those policies have not been sufficiently radical or consistent enough to encourage a new culture of liberalism. At the same time, there remain exponents of more restrained policy changes and middle-of-the-road approaches. In other words, the unifying message of change that had been forged going into the 2008 election appears to have had relatively short-term relevance, without the sustaining power of messages with more substantive content. Only when those messages give clear and inspiring voice to a party's plans and aspirations do they contribute to the kind of cultural change that identifies a transformed party. The test will come in 2012.

THE BOND BETWEEN CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Specific elections have been used to frame the period during which political parties may encounter pressures for change. This is not to say that election outcomes are a product only of the organizational qualities of parties. To varying degrees, they are also the result of campaigns; local, national, and international conditions; media coverage; and perceptions of leaders and individual candidates. I was able to pay little attention to these factors, beyond incorporating them into the environment facing parties, because I was concerned not with forecasting how elections turn out but in how parties behave in seeking to affect those outcomes.

In general, the preceding analysis highlights the strength of inertial forces and the difficulties in bringing about the kinds of changes that make a difference to a party's fortunes. This remains true even though, of the six parties surveyed, two in Canada and

two in the United States did demonstrate responsiveness to past failures and the ability to innovate in ways that brought them electoral success. But innovation produces its own hazards by developing a trajectory that may take a party in unanticipated directions. The concluding summary assessment of each party then raises the possibilities of such hazards.

The PCs' repudiation by the electorate in 1993 led them to remake themselves into the Conservative Party by merging with the offshoot of the Reform Party, the Canadian Alliance. This took place even as the Conservatives continued to deal with contending interests among new and old associates and allies. In the period covered, they emerge as the most innovative party, rising from an electoral debacle to mobilize new resources, find a reasonably acceptable and coherent message, adapt structurally, and rely on an entrepreneurial leader. Flanagan (2011) predicts that the coalition of supporters that have emerged, now including ethnic voters, should have long-term stability. But the Conservatives, having benefitted the most from professionalization and centralization, may find that these same attributes make them less adaptable to inevitably changing conditions. Their search for a message that is both broadly appealing and unifying for their core constituencies must still contend with the unresolved internal tensions between economic and social conservatism.

The Republican Party today, with its long history of strong organization and its firm institutionalization of innovations, has created a successful model of a coordinated organization. At the same time, it demonstrates its own tension between continuity and change as ideology becomes an increasingly important driver of action. The content of its ideology is now more manifestly anti-immigrant, undermining its ability to mobilize support from the foreign-born and particularly Hispanic voters.[20] Its positions have hardened on taxation, deficit reduction, and the role of government generally, especially as articulated by the Tea Party movement. With the prospect of increasing difficulty in mobilizing support and keeping its ideological expression broadly attractive, problems in coordination are likely to grow with the prospect of conflict over the character and identity of new centers of power. Although this analysis was initially written before the primary season, more recent writings confirm its predictions (Bai 2011; Skocpol 2012).

The Democrats, historically, have preferred less emphasis on ideology and more on the loose integration among their components. It took great effort in the mid-2000s to overcome those propensities and turn into a professionalized party with a degree of centralization and a relatively modest ideological appeal. In these moves they were helped by the hard work done by DNC Chairman Dean and the energizing appeal of their presidential candidate. But those organizational changes were insufficient to overcome the influence of persisting financial and international crises and a political system designed to resist major policy shifts. The party now faces an impatient and dissatisfied electorate that leaves it vulnerable to loss of support. Dissatisfactions are easily translated into criticism of party leaders, from the President down, and by responses that seek to reshuffle administrative and other positions (Hulse 2010a; 2010b). The Democratic Party demonstrates the difficulty of carrying out organizational changes that can override long-standing procedures and beliefs.

Like the PCs, the NDP demonstrated the need for change after 1993. But, like the Liberals and the U.S. Democrats, they found it difficult to break away from past procedures and alliances and to recruit entrepreneurial leaders. Breakthroughs eventually did occur in the middle of the past decade with changing approaches to mobilizing resources, professionalization, and leadership selection. But the vitality of those changes remains uncertain. One factor is associated with the death of its leader, Jack Layton. While no individual can singlehandedly turn around a party organization, clearly Layton's entrepreneurial skills and connections with critical constituencies made him an outsize factor in his party's changes. The choice of a new leader will then be critical. The second uncertainty stems from the geographic distribution of the party's support. With its largest concentration of MPs in Quebec, the NDP is virtually destined to have serious problems in integrating them into its caucus and organization. With respect to leadership, Dominic Cardy (2012), leader of the NDP in New Brunswick, sees only one viable candidate, Thomas Mulcair, a former minister in the Quebec Liberal government and the only NDP member elected from Quebec in 2008. But to assume a new role, Mulcair, Cardy argues, will have to overcome the culture of "a very tribal party." Stevenson (2012) sees the integration of Quebec tied to the need for major changes in the NDP's policy outlook, most prominently with re-

spect to taxation. How the party will deal with these uncertainties remains to be seen.

The Bloc demonstrated first the strengths and ultimately the weaknesses of a provincially-bounded niche party. Although, initially, it could count on support from disgruntled voters, that dissatisfaction was itself unstable, affected mainly by what was going on in the province. As a subsidiary player in events centered in the province, it remained constrained in its ability to mobilize resources and recruit leaders who could translate the initiating charisma into a more durable organizational presence. The Bloc's possibility of comeback is limited and, if it happens, it will likely be in the form of another party.

I have left to the end the dramatic collapse of the Liberal Party. Initially, the 1993 election kept the Liberals assured of their traditional sources of strength as a national party with a message of economic growth and national unity. Yet they were also impeded by their past success from coming to terms with a changing environment. More immediately, they were internally torn by deep-rooted personal rivalries. The results made them slow to change organizational responses. None of the turmoil they faced once they lost office has created conditions in which new and effective leadership has been able to emerge. Now left with only a faint claim to be a national party, the Liberals face the most difficult prospects of all, when only a complete makeover will move them forward. Will it be through the creation of a new party, merging it with the NDP? Or will it find new energy and new rationale to remake itself as a true national party of the center (Whitaker 2012)?

What organizational theories have taught us is that there is no perfect organization and this is nowhere more evident than in the organizations of the six parties surveyed. Those theories teach us, as well, that neither continuity nor change exists independently of the other. For party organizations to thrive and serve as engines of electoral success they must continuously be alert to the appeal of innovation against the stability that comes from sticking with existing patterns of behavior.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Population ecologists build their generalizations from analyses of populations of organizations, not from individual cases. To a lesser extent, other theories cited here also rely on organizational populations. The fact that this paper is confined to only six parties in two countries does not, however, diminish the general applicability of these theories.

[2] The thesis is that unused resources provide organizational slack, protecting an organization from environmental fluctuations and allowing resources to be shifted to where they can do the most good (Cyert and March 1963; Cheng and Kesner 1997).

[3] Rumelt (1995) elaborates on multiple internal factors that allow inertia to prevail.

[4] For Lowi (1963), earlier periods when party change could be expected include those leading to the elections of 1896, 1912, 1920, and 1932. He characterizes the period 1946-62 as static because the parties were alternating as majorities.

[5] The Commission of Inquiry into the Sponsorship Program and Advertising Activities examined allegations that the Quebec wing of the Liberal Party had solicited contributions from advertising agencies in exchange for contracts to be used to bolster the image of Canada and counter the appeals of separatism (Gomery Commission 2005).

[6] The national-local constituency distinction is in reference only to federal politics. In Canada, there are institutional barriers to comingling provincial and national party funding (Carty and Eagles 2004).

[7] This is a term used for non-whites of African or Caribbean origin and south and east Asians.

[8] In 2008, turnout was at a historic low of 59 percent (LeDuc et al. 2010: 544-45).

[9] Both Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau had assembled such thinkers' conferences to invigorate debate on party positions that could be formulated into a comprehensive platform, some of which have been presented in pre-election Red Books.

[10] Prior to its registration as an official party, its first candidate, Gilles Duceppe, was elected as an Independent in a 1990 by-election.

[11] Although I present this characteristic as obvious, given the Bloc's explicit ideology, there might have been alternative routes to the party's emergence. According to Pinard's thesis (1975), new parties are more likely to emerge in the absence of a viable alternative, occurring when the second of the established parties has become too weak to mount an effective opposition. But Bélanger (2004) feels that this is not a strong argument here because initial support for the Bloc was so closely linked to specific political grievances and the sense of common interests.

[12] It has not been easy to obtain information about the Bloc's organization, confirmed by several researchers I spoke to.

[13] The latter reasons were suggested to me in a private communication from Brooke Jeffrey.

[14] This is similar to what the population ecology approach to organizations considers narrow niches. In effect, based on that perspective, all parties occupy niches but they are normally of wider width than what was true for the Bloc (Freeman and Hannan 1983).

[15] For a brief period, in the early 1980s, the PQ had registered as a federal party (Crête and Lachapelle 1996: 422-3).

[16] The NDP's aspirations to be a national party have been thwarted to a considerable extent by the Canadian electoral system of first past the post, where the proportion of the popular vote does not always translate into a comparable share of seats. Under this system, a regionally-based party, like the Bloc, has a better chance of gaining seats.

[17] According to Milkis and Rhodes (2009), there are also limits to political leaders' importance in party-building. These arise when too much power comes to be concentrated in the President, conflating

the administration's program with that of the party. While a strong connection between Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party was helpful to both, it proved to be disastrous in the case of George W. Bush.

[18] This is comparable to processes of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1991b).

[19] Jones's (2009) survey of U.S. presidents makes a convincing case for the electoral appeal and subsequent legitimacy of presidents with little prior political experience when they succeed poorly performing presidents.

[20] Wroe (2008) demonstrates how California's Proposition 187 advocacy of punitive actions against illegal aliens affected the position of the national Republican Party. It continues to influence similar positions by other Republican-dominated state legislatures.

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