

**THIRTY SECOND ANNUAL REPORT
of the
PARLIAMENTARY CENTRE**

For the Year Ending September 30, 2000

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PART I: MESSAGES

Message from the Chairman

The past year was marked by some unexpected difficulties both in Canada and in several areas where the Centre has programs overseas. Under the circumstances, the financial results, while unsatisfactory, are acceptable.

In this environment, the members of our small staff have displayed their versatility and adaptability. Both of these traits are essential these days for the survivability of small not-for-profit organizations.

The current year presents its own challenges, the response to which will require renewed efforts by all.

Message from the Executive Director

The year 1999-2000 was a successful one for the Parliamentary Centre, although we did not quite break even on the balance sheet. Making money is not the mission of the Centre (a statement that will come as no surprise to our staff) but breaking even is a precondition for continuing to do what we care about – working with our partners in Canada and around the world to strengthen parliaments.

In November 1999, the Centre carried out the inception mission for its 5 year CIDA funded project to strengthen the Parliament of Ethiopia and then last summer we were chosen as the executing agency for another multi-year CIDA

contract to strengthen the National Assembly of Cambodia. These projects are significant because they, together with our program in Russia, allow us to move beyond the reactive “one-off” projects that once made up most of our international programming. These larger projects require the Centre to have an office on the ground headed by a Canadian Field Manager. In the case of Ethiopia, the Hon. John Bosley, former Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, is the Resident Project Director. Having a person of that calibre on the ground throughout the life of a project permits us to build close relationships with our partners and to generate a high quality of project information. Longer-term projects also facilitate institutional learning, a precondition for achieving results. Clearly, the development process benefits when organizations shift their resources from many, small projects to fewer big ones.

On the other hand, large projects also carry risks for small organizations like the Parliamentary Centre. Developing project proposals and conducting contract negotiations with funders are complex, time consuming activities, the costs of which organizations have to bear up front. This can make the difference between earning a small surplus or, as we did last year, running slightly into the red. It can have another effect as well, that of unduly shifting our attention from legislative development to project management. Eventually, this can result in a situation where

the organization knows more and more about management and less and less about development, a classic case of the tail wagging the dog. This is a dilemma to which there is no very satisfactory solution except trying to strike a balance between ensuring good management on the one hand and encouraging passionate interest in development on the other.

In closing this message, I want to express my deep appreciation to my colleagues on the staff of the Parliamentary Centre for their support during the illness and death of my wife Delores. Their support made it possible for me to focus my attention on her care and treatment which, I bitterly regret to say, were finally to no avail. I also want to express my thanks for the many messages of condolences that I received from friends in Canada and around the world. This support has reminded me of why Delores was so proud of what I did for a living, and why she liked the people with whom I did it.

Message from Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Senate of the Philippines

Each year the Centre invites one of its international collaborators to prepare a message on some aspect of legislative development for inclusion in the Annual Report. Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel is the Chair of the Senate "Blue Ribbon" Committee on Public Accountability and Investigations, and played a leading role in the events surrounding the removal of President Estrada from office. The Senator participated in a workshop on "Parliament and Strengthening Accountability in South East Asia" organized jointly by the Parliamentary Centre and the King Prajhipok's Institute of Thailand. He was also a participant in the 1999 Laurentian Seminar on "Parliamentary

Accountability and the control of Corruption: The Challenge of Globalization".

The recent ouster of Philippine President Joseph Estrada from office by the so-called People Power II demonstrations demands a re-examination of the efficacy of traditional government institutions to respond to demands of people for good governance.

In November, 2000, the House of Representatives impeached Mr. Estrada for bribery, corruption and other high crimes. And the Senate was still trying him when on January 20 of this year, massive people power demonstrations in Metro-Manila caused the installation of Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as his constitutional successor.

People Power II pre-empted the Senate acting as an Impeachment Court from arriving at a final conclusion on the charges against Mr. Estrada. People Power II also pragmatically forestalled any future legal challenges against the accession of the Vice President to the presidency by having the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court administer the oath of office to her at the very site of the demonstrations.

The events underlined the inability of the present governmental processes to provide a flexible, fast and adequate redress for the grievances of the people against a widely perceived corrupt and inept president. The events also exposed the broad elasticity of the manner by which other institutions of government, like the judiciary and the military, could interpret their respective mandates under the Constitution to suit "the political reality" of the moment.



PART II: PROGRAMMING DURING THE PAST YEAR

Over the course of the past decade the Centre has developed its programs in support of the Parliament of Canada while greatly expanding international programming. Initially, most of the international activities took the form of projects in support of national or provincial legislatures in single countries. Many of these programs have been supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). During the past few years, primarily through the Laurentian Seminar, the Centre has also developed global and regional programs that address policy issues common to many countries. These programs have been supported by the World Bank Institute (WBI) and CIDA. The report of the Centre's programming for the past year is organized according to this distinction between country and global programs.

a) COUNTRY PROGRAMS

Parliament of Canada

On May 10, 2000 the Centre organized a meeting on the Hill to seek the reactions of MPs to a number of proposals for strengthening their role. A paper circulated in advance of the meeting made the case, inter alia, for extending the term in office of committee chairs and parliamentary secretaries (in order to give them time to enhance their competence), as well as paying supplementary compensation to committee chairs.

Apart from the views expressed by the 30-odd MPs who attended the meeting, Members were also asked to respond to a questionnaire. One third of MPs responded.

Drawing on this material, Peter Dobell prepared an analysis of the views of the Members who had responded. The article was published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy immediately following the last election and raised widespread interest.

Now in its fifteenth year, the *Parliament, Business and Labour Trust* is continuing its efforts to enhance Members of Parliament's knowledge of the business world and trade unions. During 2000, the government's slight majority as well as major changes in the corporate world contributed to a downturn in PBLT activities. Adding to the downturn in activities was the Canadian Alliance leadership convention and the November election. Nevertheless, interest in the program remained high and we were able to plan for fifteen visits during the year.

The *Centre for Legislative Exchange* (CLE) continued to provide opportunities for exchanges between parliamentarians and legislative staff from Canada and the United States. With the financial support of the Donner Canadian Foundation and the Starr Foundation, CLE continued the US Legislative

Visits pilot program. During the year visits to Washington were organized on the following topics: The Role of Federal Governments in Child Care; Women in Politics: Getting Funded, Getting Elected; and, International Security: Long Term Challenges. CLE has been assisted in its programming efforts by the sponsorship of two prominent Congressmen, Jim Oberstar, a Democrat and Amo Houghton, a Republican and the support of the participating Canadian Members of Parliament.

The Parliamentary Centre acts as the Secretariat to the *Canada-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group* (CHPFG). During the year, activities included a ten day visit to Hungary for Canadian members of the CHPFG to meet colleagues in the Hungarian National Parliament to discuss issues of concern. In addition, the Centre arranged for the assignment of a Canadian intern to the Hungarian-Canadian Friendship Group of the Hungarian National Parliament to undertake research on Canada-Hungary relations and to assist in the planning of CHPFG activities. The internship was supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The Centre publishes studies on parliamentary operations and the work of Members of Parliament in *Occasional Papers on Parliamentary Government*. During the year two issues were published, one on Stress and the MP and the other on Managing Staff. Both issues were written to be especially helpful to newly elected members.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Since the establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of OSCE in 1991 the Centre has provided research support and advisory services to the Canadian parliamentary delegations attending the annual meetings. During the fiscal year 1999-2000 the annual meeting was held in Bucharest in early July.

The Trilateral Commission

The Centre provides the secretariat for the Canadian Group of the Trilateral Commission. The Commission is a non-governmental policy-

oriented discussion group composed of distinguished citizens from Western Europe, North America and Asia drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Its purpose is to encourage mutual understanding and closer cooperation among the three regions. The Annual Meeting of the Trilateral Commission was held in Tokyo in April 2000.

Africa

In *South Africa*, the Centre advanced its work with the support of the Canadian Partnership Branch of CIDA. Building on linkages established earlier with the nine South African provincial legislatures, the Centre's projects concentrated on strengthening the research and information services of the provincial parliaments. The Centre continued its work with the Library and Research Cluster (RIC), which acts as a network for legislative research and information staff to improve their support services to the provincial and national parliaments.

In *Eastern and Southern Africa*, with the support of the Partnership Branch of CIDA, the Centre increased its support for the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Eastern And Southern Africa (APLESA). The Centre has been working with the Association to strengthen its capacity to facilitate information exchange among its member parliaments. Activities included support for the design and hosting of a website and directory.

In *Kenya*, the Centre has been contracted by the World Bank Institute to help strengthen the accountability and oversight functions of the Public Accounts, Public Investment and Finance Committees of the National Assembly. This initiative is closely linked to the Centre's work with the African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (see Global Programs).

CIDA chose the Centre as the Canadian Executing Agency to implement a \$4 million capacity development project with the House of People's Representatives of *Ethiopia*. The 5-year project is focussed on increasing the capacity of committees to fulfil their oversight functions; strengthening the Research and Consultancy

Department of the House of the People's Representatives; and establishing a Human Rights Commission and Office of Ombudsman. The project also aimed to develop relations between Parliament and civil society and strengthen gender equity policies. A former Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, the Hon. John Bosley, P.C., is based in Addis Ababa as the Resident Project Director. During the year the Centre carried out an inception mission to launch the project but activities were then delayed due to the Ethiopia-Eritrea war and parliamentary elections.

Working with the Public Accounts and Finance Committees, the Centre began implementation of the Ghana Parliamentary Support Project. This CIDA-sponsored project has four main components: committee workshops; an information resource co-ordinator position to assist the committees; a social outreach initiative in the north of Ghana; and linkages with counterpart committees in Africa and with the Laurentian Seminar. Dr. Steven Langdon, a former Member of the Canadian House of Commons, is the Project Director.

Asia

In Asia, the Centre continued to work with the National Assembly of Vietnam through the CIDA funded Policy Implementation Assistance Project. In partnership with Experco-Stikeman Elliott, the Centre arranged for Canadian parliamentarians, proceduralists and other experts to participate in two workshops in Vietnam. It also arranged two study tours to Canada by senior Deputies of the National Assembly. The Centre's work with the Social Affairs Commission and the Law Commission focused on legislative processes, the supervisory powers of legislative assemblies as well as policy development in the areas of social security, gender and family and marriage legislation.

The Centre also advanced its work with the National People's Congress of China (NPC). Working with the Legislative Affairs Commission and the Research Office of the Standing Committee, the Centre co-ordinated 4 study missions to Canada for NPC staff focused

on the policy development and legislative processes, public participation, property and taxation law. The Centre also initiated activities with the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress and hosted the professional attachment of an NPC official to the Parliamentary Centre.

During the year the Centre was chosen by CIDA to implement a \$5 million capacity development project with the Parliament of Cambodia. This 5-year project aims to increase the capacity of the Parliament to function as an effective democratic legislature. The project will concentrate on strengthening 3 aspects of the Parliament: the secretariats, parliamentary review of legislation and the responsiveness of deputies to the people. The project will take place in the spring of 2001.

Eastern and Central Europe

The CIDA funded Canada-Russia Parliamentary Program (CRPP) is now in its seventh year. CRPP's work with the federal parliament (the State Duma and Federation Council) consisted of a study mission to Canada by the Duma Committee on the north and a study mission by the Federation Council Committee on Federal Affairs, Federative Agreement and Regional Policy. The project component, involving regional northern legislatures, consisted of visits to Canada by Yamalo Nenets and Khanty Mansiy Autonomous Okrugs to study natural resource development and visits by Krasnoyarsk Krai and the Komi Republic to study local government.

A Parliamentary Centre project in Bulgaria has worked with the National Assembly to raise awareness about the role and functions of an ombudsman institution. Activities during the year included in-country seminars with government officials, members and staff of the National Assembly and NGO actors as well as testimony before the National Assembly. In addition, a delegation of Bulgarian parliamentarians (and one NGO representative) visited Canada to study ombudsman institutions at the provincial level. Subsequently ombudsman legislation was introduced and discussed currently before the Bulgaria National Assembly.

International Internships

During the year, fifteen young Canadian university graduates were assigned to national and provincial legislatures with which the Centre works. Interns were posted to the nine provincial legislatures of South Africa and to the Parliaments of Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda and Hungary. In addition, an intern was posted to the Contact Trust, a parliamentary watchdog organization in South Africa, and another intern was assigned to support the creation of a Global Network of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). The interns provide practical support services to the legislatures and strengthen the relationship between the Parliamentary Centre and the partner legislatures.

b) GLOBAL/REGIONAL PROGRAMS **Parliamentarians and** **Policies to Control Corruption**

The African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (APNAC). The Centre continued to support the work of APNAC in increasing political awareness about the role of parliament in ensuring accountability and transparency in the governance process. The network supports parliamentarians in undertaking concrete actions to control corruption. APNAC organized a Workshop at the 9th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Durban, South Africa on "The Role of Parliamentarians in Curbing Corruption" in October 1999. The workshop served to raise the profile of APNAC and build contacts with the parliamentary community in Africa. Over the year, the APNAC constitution was drafted, a permanent Secretariat was put in place in Kampala, housed within the Parliament of Uganda, local chapters of APNAC were initiated in Kenya, Uganda, Benin, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa and Zimbabwe and an APNAC Web Page was created (<http://www.apnac.org>). The APNAC secretariat produced its second newsletter in July 2000 highlighting objectives of the network, media reaction to its creation, reports by members on activities and upcoming international anti-corruption initiatives. APNAC held its Second

Annual Meeting where a proposed work plan for 2000-2001 was developed.

Under the leadership of John Williams, MP and Chair of the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts and with the support of the World Bank Institute, planning began to create a Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC).

The parliamentary Centre will serve as the interim Secretariat for GOPAC until, the founding meeting in September 2002.

In Asia, the Centre organized workshops on controlling corruption for parliamentarians in Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia. The project was funded by CIDA; South East Asian Fund for Institutional and Legal Development (SEAFILD). In carrying out the project, the Centre worked with the King Prajadhipok Institute in Thailand, Indonesia Corruption Watch and the Center for Social Development in Cambodia. As part of this initiative, over 400 copies of the Handbook for parliamentarians on combating corruption and a related article were translated into Thai, and Khmer and distributed to MPs and civil society members in the three countries.

Parliamentarians and **Policies to Reduce Poverty**

The Laurentian Seminar, a one-week global, face to face meeting in Canada provides the research base and launch for the Parliamentary Centre's Global Programs. Undertaken in partnership with the World Bank Institute and CIDA, the seminar strengthens the capacity of parliamentarians in key areas of public policy. This year's topic, Parliamentarians and Policies to Reduce Poverty, was launched in April 2000 with an on-line Parliamentary Discussion Forum. 15 participants from around the world then met at the Laurentian Seminar in Cornwall for one week to discuss practical ways in which Parliamentarians can assist in the development and effective implementation of poverty reduction policies. The seminar included policy briefings, small group discussions, information technology capacity building sessions, and videoconferences

connecting the seminar to parliamentarians in Washington, Addis Ababa and Accra. The Centre will publish a handbook in spring 2001 and use it to develop and deliver professional development courses for parliamentarians.

PART III: FINANCIAL REPORT

**FINANCIAL REPORT
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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