

Political Science

120



Assignment: Canadian Federalism

1. Events affecting Canadian Federalism

For each of the following, state **how and why** the event might have helped move Canadian federalism either toward or away from strong centralized government.

- a) Alberta Oil Discovery (1950s)
- b) World War I and Conscription (1914 – 1918)
- c) Quebec's Quiet Revolution (1960s)
- d) Pro-provincial Judgments by Judicial Committee of Privy Council (1910 -1920)
- e) Great Depression (1930s)
- f) Rowell - Siros Report on Federal - Provincial Relations (1940s)
- g) Constitution Act, 1982
- h) Cuts to Provincial Transfers (1990s)
- i) Quebec Referenda (1980s - 1990s)
- j) Rise of Oliver Mowat and Provincial Rights Movement (1880s - 1890s)

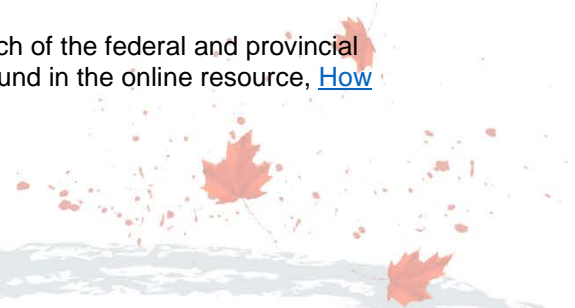
2. Quebec Separatism

There are many issues in Canadian Federalism, but the one issue that has dominated our focus almost continually in the last three decades has been that of Quebec Separatism. Research and answer the following:

- a) Why do some Quebecois want their own separate state?
- b) Are the grievances of Quebec substantial and justified?
- c) What success has the sovereignty movement had in Quebec?
- d) How has the federal government responded since 1980?
- e) What is contained in the Clarity Act?
- f) What role should the other provinces play in this issue?
- g) Do you believe Quebec has the right to separate? Why or why not? Under what circumstances?

3. Federal and Provincial Powers

According to the Constitution Act, 1980, what powers belong to each of the federal and provincial governments? Note: further information about this issue can be found in the online resource, [How Canadians Govern Themselves](#).



4. Federal – Provincial Relations

The principle of equalization has become an important concept in Canadian federalism.

Premier Richard Hatfield (New Brunswick, 1970 - 1987), at the First Ministers' Conference on the Constitution in 1979, urged that the principle of equalization be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution:

"I think it is important to understand that I lead a have-not province. What that means is that I do not have the capacity to raise within the province the kind of revenues that are needed to provide a standard of services that are equal to those of Alberta, for example. That is the only thing I do not have as leader of the government of New Brunswick. New Brunswick is not poor in hospitality, it is not poor in good food, it is not poor in a number of other things. It is a very wealthy province and . . . happy to be within Canada, especially because of this principle that evolved in our country which I think is an example to the whole world - that is, that the assets of the country shall accrue to those who live in the country regardless of where they live . . . We (in New Brunswick) have got a lot of things. We have got tradition, we have got history, we have got two great cultures, we are very, very proud people, make no mistake about it. But we cannot provide to the people . . . the standards of service that all Canadians believe we should have. . . . That is the great principle of equalization. It is not a matter of your cheque book being out on the table; it is not a matter of giving money. . . . You give us tax points, you give us one tax point, it is worth, we will say, \$5 million. That same tax point in Alberta is worth \$100 million; in Ontario, because they have more people, it is worth a lot of money, but in New Brunswick, it is not worth as much. We devised a way, a brilliant way, a unique way, an example to the whole world of getting around this problem, and it seems to me it is so great it should be enshrined not only in the constitution but in the front of the constitution as being one of the great things we need in this country. It is for that reason that I don't care how you phrase it as long as that principle is enshrined. I don't want dollar bills put in the constitution; I just want the principle, a statement that we in this country have done something really great."

Richard Hatfield,
Premier of New Brunswick,
in a speech in Ottawa,
06 February 1979

1. What is the principle of equalization and how does it work?
2. What is the origin of the equalization principle?
3. What provinces are considered "have-not"? Is this changing?
4. This principle became part of the Constitution Act, 1982 Section 36 (1) and (2). Do you agree with Premier Hatfield that a constitutional guarantee is necessary? Why or why not?

Additional Resource: [EQUALIZATION: IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT CHANGES](#)