



Recent Publications and Documents

REPORT ON ALBERTA ELECTIONS 1905-1982, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Edmonton, Alberta, 1983, 204p. LEGISLATORS AND LEGISLATURES OF ONTARIO 1792-1984, compiled and edited by Debra Forman, Research and Information Services, Legislative Library, Ontario Legislative Assembly, Toronto, 1984, 3 volumes.

These are both reference books intended to provide authoritative information on various aspects of provincial legislative history. The Ontario study is a much more ambitious project in part because the province has twice as long a legislative history. The three volumes contain chronological lists of the legislatures of Upper Canada, Canada West and the Province of Ontario. For each legislature there is an alphabetical list of both members and constituencies. The guide is supplemented by numerous appendices including a chronological list of all legislative officers, Premiers and Executive Councillors, over a period of 192 years.

This project constitutes the Research and Information Services' contribution to the Bicentennial of Ontario (which for reasons not explained in the book is being celebrated in 1984 rather than 1992!).

The only criticism of this project is that it gives too much information rather than risk omitting any fact. Thus the same basic information is presented two or three different ways. Too much emphasis went into the collection of information and not enough thought was given to questions of format, presentation and readability. Although these volumes will overwhelm all but the most dedicated researchers they will provide a great service to serious students of Ontario history and politics.

This criticism certainly does not apply to the book on Alberta elections which, admittedly, does not have the same objectives. Nevertheless, it does provide much of the same information (albeit for a shorter period) and it does so in a simpler and more attractive format. Indeed the handsome, hard cover book produced by the Chief Electoral officer would make an ideal gift to anyone even slightly interested in Alberta politics. It contains a mine of information about provincial elections, by-elections and major plebiscites since Alberta

became a province in 1905. For each election a map or maps show the constituencies while an accompanying table gives the name of candidates, their political affiliation, the number of votes received and, in later years, the percent voting.

The book contains other interesting information for those who study elections. For example it shows the cost of elections in each electoral division for every election. The total cost of holding a general election

has risen from \$25,023.06 in 1905 to \$3,190,468.00 in 1982. The book also reveals that more than thirty parties have contested elections at various times in Alberta history; that there have been only eighteen acclamations in all the general elections since 1905; that in 1913 one MLA (C.W. Cross) ran as a candidate in both Edmonton and Edson, won both and represented both in the legislature; that the \$100.00 deposit required when nomination papers are filed has remained the same since 1905.

No book on Alberta elections would be complete without some explanation of the system of proportional representation used for several years in that province. This is done by reprinting a document prepared by John D. Hunt in 1924 to explain the transferable Ballot and Proportional Representation adopted in the *Alberta Election Act*. In contrast to many recent studies written on the subject, Hunt provides a succinct explanation of this rather complicated procedure.

The Editor