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# Foreign Scholars, Canadian Content: Symbolic politics and the Symons Report

## Abstract

*Little is known about Canadian higher educational commissions. To help fill the gap this paper analyzes the Symons Report of the AUCC Commission on Canadian Studies in terms drawn from material and status politics theory. It inspects the origins, method, and responses to the Symons Report. Overall, it interprets the report as a cultural defense of managerial authority in the face of popular attack. It argues that both the managerial defenders and the popular attackers win and consolidate symbolic victories at somewhat different levels. Some limits of the arguments are noted.*

Commissions obviously play a part in the shaping of higher educational policy. Yet, they remain something of a mystery. For example, Pilkington notes that the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has a "puzzling" record of "...launching large studies... and then either not ensuring their completion, or ignoring them when they were tabled..." (1981, p 186).

To move a few steps towards a fuller understanding of such commissions in Canadian higher education, a tentative analysis of one of the AUCC studies mentioned by Pilkington (The Commission on Canadian Studies), chaired by Thomas H.B. Symons, is offered. First, the theoretical position is sketched briefly. Second, the Commission and its reports are discussed within these theoretical terms. Finally, some of the limits of this frankly explorative effort are noted.

### *Understanding commissions: A socio-political framework*

Louis and Perlman (1985, p. 59) suggest that commissions have a socio-political dimension. Commissions are quite extraordinary interventions between some sponsoring organization and its constituencies. As such, they are clearly intended to signal a serious willingness by the sponsor to spend scarce material and symbolic resources to study some topic of considerable interest to that group. This resource allocation in itself tokens the importance of the concerned constituency. And, finally, there is a clearly implied promise that the recommendations brought forth by the study will be seriously advocated by the sponsors, despite the commission's lack of enforcement powers.

How is any particular commission within this vision to be understood? First, a sociopolitical framework that addresses material and symbolic dynamics is needed so that what is at issue for the organization sponsoring the commission, its constituencies and even the public at large can be seen better. Second, an analysis of the commission's report is desirable. What were its method and findings, especially as seen from the viewpoint of its sponsors and its constituencies? Third, some idea of the reception given the report upon its publication, and in its later implementation, is useful.

Suppose that commissions, and their sponsors, are implicated in two main types of socio-political struggle which often overlap and intermingle. On the one hand, there is an essentially material politic. This is the well-known, more or less continuous fight among better or worse organized interest groups and social classes. Here each seeks to use state policy, and all other means, to maximize its own ends (e.g., Miliband, 1968).

Symbolic politics, on the other hand, is less widely appreciated. Its dynamics arise from cultural differences. It involves the more or less continuous struggle among better and worse organized "status groups" seeking to use all the means at their disposal to maximize their social honour in the wider community (Collins, 1979). Status groups in Canada include the French and English charter groups since they are populations sharing a common culture. They therefore have the potential to give rise to all sorts of expressive associations rooted in reality defining symbols. For example, the English-speaking status group has given rise to both *Canadian Forum* (Mills, 1978) and the Orange Order (Houston & Smythe, 1980).

Symbolic political struggles are likely to intensify in times of rapid social change since status group positions in the community's prestige hierarchy are likely to be changing. A series of possibilities occurs at such times. Declining (or rising) status groups may give rise to expressive

associations which may mount (or defend against) ameliorative (or coercive) symbolic crusades. Such crusades may be lost (or won). If won, victory may be consolidated (or frittered away) when the victors (or their opponents) follow up (or neglect) their expressive gains (e.g., Gusfield, 1963).

It is thought that status group politics have a special significance in Canadian policy formation. On the one hand, the officially multicultural Canadian mosaic is potentially a fountain head of status group pressures on all levels of public policy. On the other hand, Canadians are arguably costive ("up-tight") on questions of authority (Friedenberg, 1980). If this is so, then, in times of rapid social change, sustained symbolic movements contesting social policy will tend to defrock authority from its cloak of legitimacy. Eventually, authority without legitimacy will beget its own demise (Gerth & Mills, 1946). Accordingly, in Canada many sustained symbolic crusades occur, during which policy makers experience their authority being attacked. When this happens, they will reasonably meet such challenges by creating expressive associations of their own, such as study commissions without enforcement powers.

Within this framework, the AUCC's Commission on Canadian Studies is seen as a successful interest group response to a potentially coercive symbolic crusade. It will be argued that during the 1960s both the public sector and higher education grew rapidly. A rising wave of nationalism fostered an expressive campaign against non-Canadians hired to staff the expanding university system. This campaign symbolically criticized those managing Canada's higher learning and threatened to undermine their authority.

Accordingly, the AUCC, as the nation's university managers' common interests association, appointed its own expressive association (the Commission) in response to this symbolic crusade. Eventually, its Commission affirmed the nationalists' symbolic claims against immigrant scholars. However, in declaring the nationalists victorious, the Commission's report advanced ameliorative rather than coercive recommendations. The report also ignored its sponsor's managerial responsibility for hiring non-resident faculty. In so doing, it is argued, the commission defused a potentially coercive symbolic threat and laid the basis for a consolidation of its creators' authority.

### *In the beginning: A sponsor and its Commission*

Founded in 1911, the AUCC is an interest group which brings together the top management of Canada's higher educational institutions to confront problems and issues of common concern (Pilkington, 1974). Thus, a commission "to study, report and make recommendations upon the state

of teaching and research in various fields of study relating to Canada at Canadian Universities" was only one of several AUCC inquiries mandated at its 1970 annual meeting.

However, the issue addressed by this Commission on Canadian Studies was somewhat less routine and more politicized than most AUCC inquiries. During the 1950s and 1960s, the public sector expanded very rapidly (Armstrong, 1979). This expansion was important for the Commission in several ways. In Quebec, the rapid expansion of the state sector was one important policy element of the "Quiet Revolution." In turn, workers in the expanded public sector in Quebec provided one social base for the perhaps less quiet French-Canadian cultural revitalization of the 1960s and 1970s. The importance of this Quebec experience for the rest of Canada lies in its example. It showed that increasingly articulate cultural revivalists largely based in the expanding state sector could successfully advance claims for a greater share of the community's social honour both politically (Milner, 1977) and educationally (Postgate & McRoberts, 1976). Similarly across the nation, an English-Canadian nationalism arose, one rooted in the new professionals employed to staff the rapidly expanding state from coast-to-coast (Resnick, 1977). Encouraged perhaps by the accomplishments of the French-Canadian cultural revitalization, English-Canadian nationalities increasingly advanced their own status group's claims for social honour. These two cultural revitalization movements, arising out of several decades of state expansion, provided the Commission with its general setting of rapid social change and mobilized status groups advancing new claims on the community's hierarchies of social honour.

Rapid state expansion also provided the particular setting for the Commission's work. State spending on schooling at all levels increased greatly. For example, the proportion of GNP spent on education was 4.4% in 1960. In 1970, it was 9.0% (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1975). Such increases in educational expenditures produced policy strains at all levels. One of the most pronounced involved post-secondary personnel. A very significantly expanded higher educational system required a matching enlarged professoriate. Several possibilities existed. On the one hand, this enlargement could be made by hiring non-Canadian academics on "temporary" contractually limited appointments to set up and staff, for a short while, the expanding system. Then, a new generation of "Canadian produced" professors could continue the expanded enterprise and the foreign academics could go elsewhere. Alternatively, one could hire the best and brightest available non-Canadian professors to staff on a more permanent basis the growing graduate and undergraduate facilities.

Historically, the permanent foreign option had been chosen. Canada's higher education managers have long relied on other university

systems to supply much of its staff (e.g., Falconer, 1928). During the expansionary 1960s, this tradition was maintained. As a result, Canada soon found its academic new-hire lists filled with foreigners. As such hiring accelerated, questions emerged. First, if foreigners held permanent academic posts, where would the Canadians with new doctorates work once the expansion had reached its limits? Was the assumption that newly graduated Canadians would find work outside the academy (or the country) via the same impersonal international labour market forces that traditionally had brought academics to and from Canada (Evans, 1976)? Second, could the newly hired expatriate professors adequately instruct their students in the details of English-Canadian culture? Responding to such questions, English-Canadian nationalists successfully mobilized much of the English language media in a campaign to save "Canadian culture" from the immigrant – particularly American – professoriate taking up the new university posts (Resnick, 1977).

The substance underneath the nationalists' concern is seen in citizenship data reported on the 20,952 full-time staff at 111 Canadian universities and colleges in 1970, the year the AUCC sponsored its commission (*University Affairs*, 1971). Inspection of these data yield three generalities. First, overall, some 61.5% of the staff were Canadian. Further, the Canadian presence in six broad academic specializations – humanities, languages, and the pure, biological, physical, and social sciences – was relatively constant at roughly the six-out-of-ten proportion in the overall sample.

Second, the proportion of American citizens, while significant, was relatively small. It was 15.3% over all. Thus, they were not even a majority of the 38.5% non-Canadian staff. However, American faculty were somewhat above their 15.3% "share" in three areas of symbolic concern: the humanities (24.0%), languages (17.4%), and the social sciences (20.2%). Third, if scores of non-nationals had been hired to meet the university's rapid expansion in the 1960s, they had been hired by faculty administrations who themselves were overwhelmingly Canadian (87.8%). From these somewhat slender roots emerged the expressive anti-Americanism that surfaced so frequently during the debate over staffing the rapidly expanding higher educational system. Moreover, the vulnerability of the system's largely Canadian managers to claims of mismanagement on the basis of symbolically unacceptable hirings may also be noted.

### *The Commission report*

In the midst of the staffing debate, the university managers' authority and their handling of considerable public resources to expand higher education came under closer than usual public scrutiny. The AUCC's

essential response to these pressures is suggested by the Commission's view of its own route:

While some people clearly felt that the Commission should begin its activities with the ceremonial burning of the American flag on the steps of the Parliament Buildings, others...denied the need to give any serious attention at all to the question.... However, most members of the academic community and of the general public who spoke out on the subject indicated their wish for a thoughtful and thorough inquiry into these questions, rather than an exercise in either flag-waving or in cultural amnesia, and this is the path the Commission has endeavoured to follow throughout its work. (p.2)

To chart this middle way between American flag-burning and Canadian cultural amnesia, the AUCC chose one of its own: Thomas H.B. Symons, founding President (1960-72) of Trent University (*Canadian Who's Who*, 1980, p. 959). With \$250,000, the one-member commission was launched in 1972. For three years, Symons and a staff of 19 sifted and winnowed its harvest "[e]ssentially... looking for... sensitivity to the Canadian context or perspective" (p. 5) in the nation's higher learning.

In 1975, the Commission issued its first two volumes packed into a densely printed 350 page book. The Report began with a multifaceted rationale for an academic sensitivity to things Canadian. From a policy perspective, the most central was its titular theme ("To Know Ourselves"), arguing that greater self-knowledge is necessary for more effective societal problem solving. Then, the Report inventoried the Canadian content that fosters such self-awareness in five areas: 1) the curriculum, particularly in 21 social-cultural disciplines ranging from art history to women's studies; 2) teaching and research in science and technology; 3) professional education programmes in 10 areas from agriculture to social work; 4) Canadian Studies at community colleges and abroad; and 5) a support infrastructure of archives, audio-visual media, and private donors.

With overwhelming regularity, the Commission found a substantial and deplorable insensitivity to Canadian materials in all areas. In this way, the Commission's Report upheld the symbolic claims made by the English-Canadian nationalists. But it did so while de-emphasizing both managerial responsibility and coercive reforms.

***The Report's internal logic: Methodological issues***

The Report offered impressive rhetorical support for the English Canadians' symbolic crusade, but methodological problems deeply flawed its

internal logic. The Commission's judgment of massive insensitivity to Canadian content was based on specialists' briefs and discipline data that were neither systematic nor conclusive. The Report's usual method of establishing scholarly neglect was, first, to assert the need for a Canadian perspective in a discipline, and then to marshal negative evidence, often in the form of quotations from briefs by subject-matter specialists, along with some descriptive statistics, such as the proportion of non-Canadians teaching (or even studying) the subject.

Such evidence is problematic. The brief quotations offered neither systematic nor scientific proof. They functioned instead to highlight documents which were rather self-serving and one-sided. Stating the proportions of non-Canadians involved in higher education alone did not provide direct evidence for a lack of sensitivity to Canadian content or context. In fact, the Commission offered little solid documentation of the thesis that non-Canadians were substantially different from Canadians in their teaching or research. Without systematic data showing such a correlation between faculty citizenship and Canadian content, the issue remained uncertain. Moreover, it is a faulty assumption that Canadians study and teach Canadian issues. As a result of such methodological matters, it was impossible to estimate the precise amount of self-awareness present (or absent) in the many areas inspected.

Indeed, the Report's unsystematic methodology suggests its essentially rhetorical posture. Between flag-burning and cultural amnesia, the Symons Report repeatedly upheld a symbolic correlation between citizenship and curriculum, between nationality and instruction. It thus seems to have responded to the public pressures which brought about its creation. Interestingly, the Report did not reflect upon the possibility that foreign faculty were hired by administrations with a significantly higher proportion of Canadians than the staff at large. In stressing the rhetorical correlation between content and citizenship while neglecting the analytic link between administration and hiring, the Report seems to be symbolically supporting the stewardship of higher education's top management – the very group mounting the Commission itself. In this way, the Symons Report may be seen as having served the vested collective interests of its sponsoring association's membership. It seems to have defended the decisions made by constituted academic authority in the teeth of the nationalists' potentially coercive symbolic crusade.

#### *The Report's internal logic: Analytical and managerial issues*

Along with the methodologically flawed correlation between nationality and instruction, the Report assumed a questionable analytical correlation between instruction and learning. The Report did not analyze

how such learning "about ourselves" will effect societal problem-solving nor did it question the limits and impact of this learning.

The Report overlooked the main sociological reasons students participate somewhat "inefficiently" in higher education in Canada; for example, status affirmation and labour market certification (e.g., Lennards, 1980). As a result, the Report seemed to adhere quite unrealistically to something of an "absorption" theory of instruction – roughly, that the students efficiently soak up the content poured upon them. Assuming such "efficient absorption," the Report insisted that increasing the Canadian content of instruction would lead to a more self-knowledgeable public. The Report then further assumed that with a heightened Canadian consciousness, graduates would, in turn, crystallize public opinion to guide governments toward "more informed" public policy positions.

Even if all these assumptions within this model are granted, the crucial questions remain. On the one hand, how much Canadian content is necessary to increase national awareness to a level sufficient for the most effective societal problem-solving? On this matter, the Report was silent. Further, given that only a small proportion of the Canadian population attends post-secondary schooling, it seems that a very long time would be required to increase national awareness very much in this way.

On the other hand, questions may also be raised regarding the Report's implicit liberal-democratic position. The uses of citizen self-knowledge in the public policy process may, in fact, be structurally limited (Clement & Drache, 1978; Porter, 1965). The alternative Canadian elite-pluralist model holds that established political and economic vested interests affect critical policy input, thereby pre-empting very meaningful citizen participation, except perhaps at election times. Put in the Report's titular terms, "knowing ourselves" as liberal-democratic when in fact this may not be the case, leads, perhaps, to a false understanding of present needs and problem-solving possibilities.

Beyond such analytical issues are some managerial matters. While the Report suggested that curricular content be somewhat re-focussed to include Canadian and local content, it did not encourage any formal monitoring of teaching nor did it address the issue of staffing. The recommendations did not urge any coercive action against immigrant academics. There were no suggestions, for example, to require recently landed immigrants to apply for Canadian citizenship as a condition of continued academic employment. Neither was it required that funding agencies buy out the employment contracts of foreign senior professors, nor that junior immigrant academics be offered termination and relocation incentives.



Significantly, the recommendations made no mention of revising the authority arrangements that granted work to so many non-Canadians in the nation's higher educational system. The Report accepted the essential legitimacy of the university managers' decisions to staff the universities with immigrant scholars. There were no suggested plans of affirmative action or compensatory curriculum to bring Canadians and Canadian content in higher education up to a more "acceptable" standard. Rather than such coercive sticks, the Report favoured ameliorative carrots – tens, hundreds of recommendations to the professoriate – and assumed that rational and well-intentioned academics would be persuaded by the reasonableness of the Report itself.

In sum, the Report did not answer several important questions: 1) how increased faculty attention to Canadian content would increase Canadian consciousness among students; 2) how much of an increase in such awareness would be necessary to shape public policy; 3) how increased awareness would enter the public policy process; 4) how Canadian and local content in the classroom would be monitored; and 5) how staffing issues or imbalances would be met. Why did such substantive questions remain unasked? It is suggested that the Report's occasion required symbolic answers to convert a potentially delegitimizing nationalist campaign into a consolidation of authority for the managers of Canada's higher education.

### *Responses to the report*

Two levels of responses to the Commission's report are especially interesting, given the proposed framework. First, what did the public-at-large and the significant constituencies think of the report at the time of its publication? Second, what was the fate of the report's recommendations?

Some sense of public sentiment can be gained from the treatment of the report in the mass media. In the words of *Canadian Forum* (1976, p. 15), "Newspaper, radio and television commentaries . . . generally expressed shock and surprise at the report's account of the state of Canadian studies, and sympathy for the report's positive recommendations . . ." Thus, in the means of mass communication that had been mobilized in the nationalists' campaign, the report was seen as a great success. It was viewed as authoritatively affirming the correctness of their symbolic crusade to save their culture from mistreatment by the newly hired foreign professors. Nor did interest in the report subside. In 1978, an abridged paperback edition was published to disseminate the Commission's analysis to its concerned constituencies.

The professoriate itself, in a sense the object of the Commission's work, responded remarkably positively to the report. Academic reviewers

usually saw the study's results as correctly affirming the nationalists' efforts, and they found much to support in the recommendations (e.g., Gibson, 1977; Horn, 1976; Masleck, 1976; McDougall, 1976; Sullivan, 1976; and, generally, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 1976, 1977). Significantly, almost no academic reviewer seemed to find methodological flaws in the report's analysis, a surprisingly uncharacteristic response (for an exception, see Blishen, 1977).

Only a very small section of published academic opinion failed to see the report as a symbolic victory. These very much minority views saw university managers as the nub of whatever problems might exist in the nation's higher learning (e.g., Evans, 1976; Miller, 1977). The most extreme of these views, in fact, rejected the Commission's middle path between burning the American flag and cultural amnesia. Rather than accept the ameliorative cast of the report's recommendations, they suggested all sorts of coercive remedies, such as terminating contracts (*Canadian Forum*, 1976).

What then was the fate of the Commission's recommendations? Pilkington has noted the AUCC's record of launching large studies without following up on their findings. She points toward "parochial attitudes" (for example, "a reluctance . . . to accept national solutions") and academic defensiveness as major barriers to widespread implementation of such findings (1981, p. 186). To this, of course, must be added the lack of enforcement powers usual to Commissions. Further, in the case of the Symons Report, the inherent difficulties in precisely pinpointing the repercussions of the nearly 1,000 general and 300 specific recommendations should be noticed, particularly in a time of continuing fiscal restraints (Skolnik & Rowen, 1984).

Nonetheless, in a close study of the overall response to these recommendations after five years, Page (1981) found a positive, if slow, effort. In a detailed examination of 48 institutions, he reports a very wide variety of formal and informal responses. More courses contain Canadian content. More professors hold Canadian citizenship. More Canadian Studies programmes are underway. Overall, the climate for a continuing Canadianization of higher education seems "more positive than before" (p. 127), despite the chill of continuing financial cutbacks.

In sum, then, the immediate responses from the Commission's significant constituencies were quite positive. On the one hand, both the mass media and academic reviewers saw the report as verifying English-Canadian symbolic claims on what should be taught and researched in the nation's newly expanded post-secondary schooling. Further, they generally seemed to accept the report's essentially ameliorative recommendations. In

so doing, the media and the professoriate publicly affirmed, and thus renewed, the authority of those managing the nation's higher education. On the other hand, the Commission's recommendations seem to have avoided the limbo usual to such items. Page's findings of a slow, but broad, implementation signal the possibility of a growing and substantial victory for the nationalists. Taken together, we see in these two levels of responses both a symbolic consolidation of the managerial authority as well as a symbolic victory and consolidation for the English-Canadian nationalists.

### *The Commission's third volume*

In 1984, fourteen years after receiving its sponsor's mandate, the Commission published its third and final volume (Symons and Page, 1984). In it, the Commission both struck some old themes and ventured into some new territory.

Continuing with the themes of the relatively successful nationalist crusade, Symons and Page reiterated the need for a significantly Canadian curriculum. For example, they continued to assert that a correlation existed between faculty citizenship and course content. They also held that too many non-Canadians were still being hired to fill the posts available. Responding to fiscal restraints, they stressed that underfunding would endanger the full development of Canadian studies in all areas.

The bulk of this third volume, however, moved beyond such older themes into a new area: higher educational planning. Here the Commission explored post-secondary enrollment projections and employment demands. On the one hand, it projected a decline in the number of students in the 1980s, followed by an increase in the 1990s. On the other hand, it pointed to a potentially lost generation of highly qualified labour power in the 1980s (as, for example, doctoral graduates who fail to find academic employment), followed by yet another round of foreign hirings to meet labour shortages in academe and elsewhere in the 1990s.

To avoid these problems, the Commission recommended a national higher educational planning strategy in three parts. First, a public relations effort would regain popular and decision-maker commitment to higher education. From such commitment would flow the funds necessary to solve these problems. Second, new non-traditional students would be found to firm up declining enrollments (for example, attracting more adults). Third, financial supports and placement services would be developed to ensure both broader recruitment and more effective employment opportunities for degree holders. Interestingly, while each of these parts would require considerable public funding for their design and implementation, Symons and Page saw no need for governments to participate in the actual planning itself. Public

funds were thereby to support the private planning capacities of higher educational managers.

The essence of the Commission's third volume, then, is quite consistent with its first two volumes. On the one hand, it affirms the continuing Canadianization of the nation's higher learning. On the other hand, it continues to urge a consolidation of managerial authority. It offers a new way (planning) to avoid the pitfalls of the past (the hiring of foreigners), centreing that process in a significant expansion of its sponsor's functions.

The public and constituency responses to the Commission's third volume were much more muted and less wide-spread than the responses to its earlier publication. While duly and positively noted in the mass media, little public debate and few follow-up stories appeared. Academic response was usually positive (e.g., Savage, 1984), with some minority negativity (e.g., Mathews, 1984). The faculty also reasserted its critical spirit, noting technical and statistical problems (e.g., Black, 1984; Lamay, 1984; Monahan, 1984).

How is the less intense and more critical response of the Commission's constituencies to the third volume to be understood? Perhaps the first volumes of the Commission's Report were sufficient to their task of giving serious attention to the concerns of its constituencies, especially if Page (1981) has correctly traced an increasingly positive climate for Canadian studies in the higher learning. In this way, perhaps the affirmation found in the third volume was belated "icing on the nationalists' cake" of symbolic consolidation. There is, after all, something anti-climactical about a Commission reporting its finding fourteen years after its birth, and nine years after the initial symbolic victories of both its sponsors and their constituencies.

### *Summary conclusions*

Since little seems to be said about the impact of commissions on Canadian higher educational policy-making (and perhaps because fools rush in where angels fear to tread), material and symbolic elements were combined into a framework for understanding such effects.

Looking at the AUCC's Commission on Canadian Studies, it was argued that it emerged in the midst of a symbolic crusade. English-Canadian nationalists seeing an expanding higher learning increasingly staffed by non-Canadians felt their social honour threatened. They found their voice in the mass media and became recognized as a force undermining educational authority. To protect managerial interests and authority, the AUCC moved

to blunt criticism of decisions in staffing the expanding post-secondary system. It created a Commission to judge the cultural nationalists' vision. Over fourteen years and in three volumes, the Commission's report upheld the essential citizenship-equals-curriculum correlation suggested by the nationalists. Here the cultural nationalists gained a symbolic victory for their crusade. And, from the available evidence, it appears that this triumph has been followed up with something of a symbolic consolidation as the climate for Canadian studies improved.

Further, it is believed that since the Commission's report satisfied the nationalists' symbolic demands, higher learning's top managers accomplished something of a re-legitimization of their authority. Their power was renewed as authority. This occurred when the wider nationalist public, its media spokespersons, and academic reviewers all generally accepted the report's ameliorative recommendations. This acceptance affirmed the recommendations as normatively sufficient points of departure for managerial decisions, as in the case of future hiring and curriculum. Indeed, the planning scheme, belatedly proposed by the report's last volume, projects such normatively renewed power into new areas of authority.

Since these views are offered quite tentatively and in an exploratory spirit, it is important to notice some limits of this analysis. First, it is in no way believed that this analysis of the Symons Commission will fit all other AUCC sponsored studies. In particular, it raises a question as to whether or not symbolic constituencies and status groups were mobilized before the commissioning of the Pike Report (on accessibility), the Bonneau-Corry Report (on the rationalization of research), and the Carrother-Trotter Report (on university planning), all mentioned by Pilkington (1981, pp. xii, 186). If such mobilization did not occur, then there would be little reason to anticipate the symbolic defenses of authority that were found in this analysis. However, given the very great emphasis placed on cultural identity and hierarchy in Canadian society, it would be difficult to believe that status group dynamics were absent in all other higher educational commissions – whether those of the AUCC or others. For example, it is conjectured that commissions with legislative origins would be vulnerable to the same status group dynamics influencing parliamentary elections (as, for example, at the provincial level).

Second, although a particular mix of material and symbolic dynamics has been stressed in the present analysis, in no way is the validity of other "mixes" of symbolic and material dynamics in Canadian higher educational policy contested. Rather, the utility of all frameworks which permit both material and symbolic elements to enter into policy analysis is emphasized. Accordingly, it is expected that other analysts will find other "mixes" useful for similar material and symbolic studies of

Canadian education (see, e.g., Schechter, 1979). The question of the relative validity of theoretical traditions is left open to another occasion. What is important at the present moment is to see the importance of symbolic as well as material dynamics in higher education commissions and policy formation in Canada.

Finally, it is not in any way believed that any sort of conspiracy or cabal existed within the AUCC (or the Symons Commission) to plan the Report, or to consciously manage its effects, or, out of self interest, manipulate responses along the lines of this analysis. Indeed, it is thought that Canada's university managers and its Commission were faced with many, many other issues and problems which must have seemed much more pressing and fundamental than responding in detail to the nationalists' symbolic crusade. In fact, it is precisely in this context, this analysis has its virtue. It taps essentially unthought through assumptions and values deeply embedded in both the multicultural and managerial symbolic worlds of Canadian Higher Education. Here the essential point is to urge that these symbolic worlds be brought more fully into this analysis of commissions and their dynamics.

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