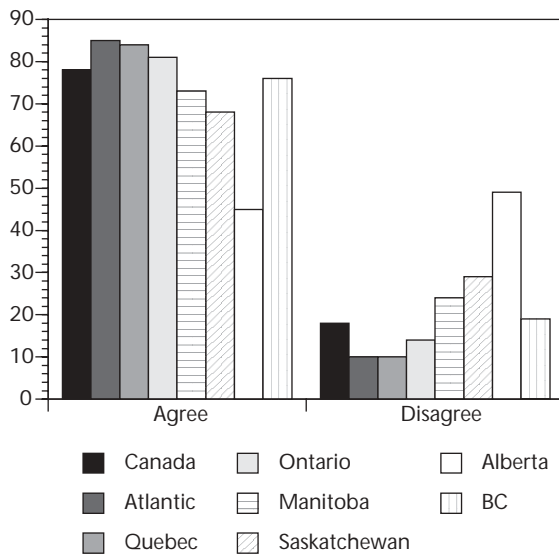


In the absence of pessimism about the economy, Canadians have become more inclined to say that environmental concerns should take priority over economic growth.

Figure 1
Kyoto: Support for Ratification



Canada-US free trade for labour, meaning that workers could move freely between the two countries in search of employment.

A second factor informing views about Kyoto is the relatively high level of confidence that Canadians have in leaders of environmental groups. In fact, of the six types of leaders mentioned in the survey, environmental leaders fared the best: 69 percent of Canadians said they had a great deal or some confidence in them. Business leaders were a close second at 62 percent, but political leaders were well behind with 42 percent.

Also important is the sense, shared by many, that the state of the environment is worsening. Nationally, 48 percent of Canadians think pollution is becoming more of a problem in their community today, compared with 10 percent who say it is less of a problem, and 40 percent who say that things have stayed about the same. In Toronto, Canada's largest city, 58 percent say pollution in their community is getting worse.

The environment is not the only issue on people's minds. Many Canadians are also concerned about poverty and homelessness. Forty-five percent say this problem is getting worse, compared with 8 percent who say it is getting better, and 44 percent who say it is staying the same. This is perhaps one reason why there is increasing public support for spending government surpluses on social programs as opposed to tax cuts or debt repayment. Thirty-eight percent say governments should use surpluses to put

more money into social programs—a six-point increase since 2000. Thirty-four percent favour repaying the debt—a five-point drop in the same period. Twenty-seven percent prefer tax cuts, virtually the same proportion as in previous years. Whereas a plurality favoured debt repayment in 2000, a plurality now favours spending the surplus on social programs.

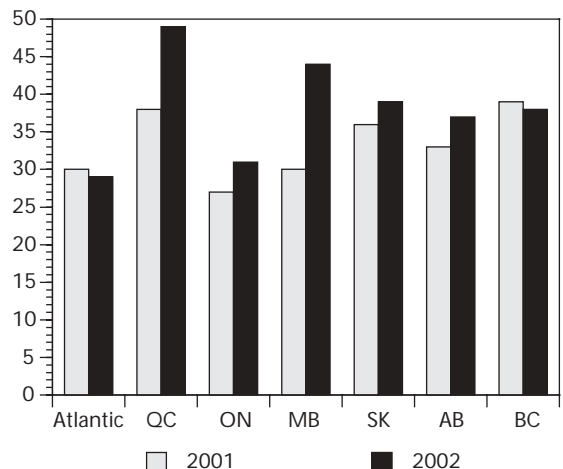
The social program that Canadians value most, of course, is health care. On the eve of the final report of the Romanow Commission, a majority of Canadians (52 percent) remained convinced that the best way for governments to deal with the rising cost of health care is to significantly increase their spending, as opposed to limiting services (an option supported by only 8 percent) or allowing the private sector to provide some services to people who can afford to pay (38 percent).

This national result, however, masks an important difference of opinion in the country. In Quebec, 49 percent now say that the best way to deal with the rising costs of health care is to allow the private sector to provide some services to people who can afford to pay. This is an 11-point jump from a year ago. Outside Quebec, however, the figure this year is 33 percent, up only 2 percent from 2001. Thus, while there was only a seven-point gap between the Quebecers and other Canadians on this choice a year ago, there is now a 16-point gap.

Fifty-seven percent of Canadians outside Quebec want governments to significantly increase their health-care spending, compared with 39 percent of Quebecers.

This difference of opinion, while important, does not necessarily mean that there is a diver-

Figure 2
Health Care Reform: Support for "Private Services for Those Who Can Afford Them"



gence in the thinking of Canadians and Quebecers regarding fundamental social values. Quebecers are no less committed to the principles that underpin public health care. They are, however, more worried about their health-care system and more eager to experiment with policies that promise to relieve pressure on it. Most importantly, they have before them a credible political party (the ADQ) that has made the expansion of private sector health care one of the central elements of its platform.

To sum up, against the background of a mood of relative confidence about the economy, a majority of Canadians want the Kyoto Protocol ratified, a growing number favour spending the surplus on social programs, and a majority across the country as a whole favour raising spending on health care as opposed to privatization. Unfortunately, fewer Canadians than before are confident that their governments will be able to live up to these expectations.

Action in these areas requires cooperation between federal and provincial governments. Yet the number of Canadians who say that the two levels of government have been working well together is 13 points lower today than it was in 1998, the last year in which the questions was asked (the current figure is 50 percent, down from 63 percent).

Similarly, when asked which level of government Canadians trust more to protect the programs they care about, the most likely response this year is "neither," whereas two years ago, it was "both governments equally."

Currently, 34 percent trust neither government, up 14 points since 2000. Notably, in 2000, the survey was conducted just after the first ministers came to an agreement to increase health-care funding, which explains why there was an increase that year in the number saying they trusted both levels of government to protect cherished programs.

There are important provincial variations in responses to this question. Quebecers are more likely than average to say they trust both the federal government and their provincial government equally. Albertans are much more likely to trust their provincial government. British Columbians stand out as the most frustrated with government as a whole, with 51 percent saying they trust neither the feds nor the government in Victoria.

Many Canadians are also increasingly dissatisfied with the status of their province within confederation. In fact, with the exceptions of Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick, majorities in all provinces think that their province is not treated with the respect that it deserves in Canada. The strongest feelings are in the eastern-most and western-most provinces. Only 30 percent of British Columbians, 22 percent of Saskatchewan residents and 16 percent of Newfoundlanders say their province is treated with the respect it deserves in Canada. In contrast, 76 percent of Ontarians say their province is treated with the respect it deserves.

Most importantly, in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, the percentage saying their province is treated with respect is

A majority of Canadians want the Kyoto Protocol ratified, a growing number favour spending the surplus on social programs, and a majority across the country as a whole favour raising spending on health care as opposed to privatization. But, fewer Canadians are confident that their governments will be able to live up to these expectations.

Figure 3
 Which Level of Government do you Trust More to Protect the Programs You Care About?

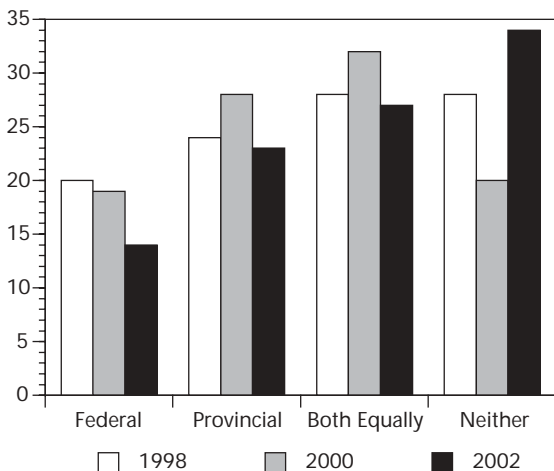


Figure 4
 Is Your Province Treated with the Respect it Deserves?

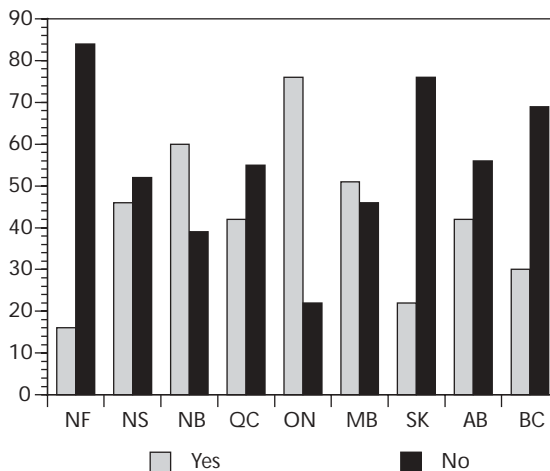
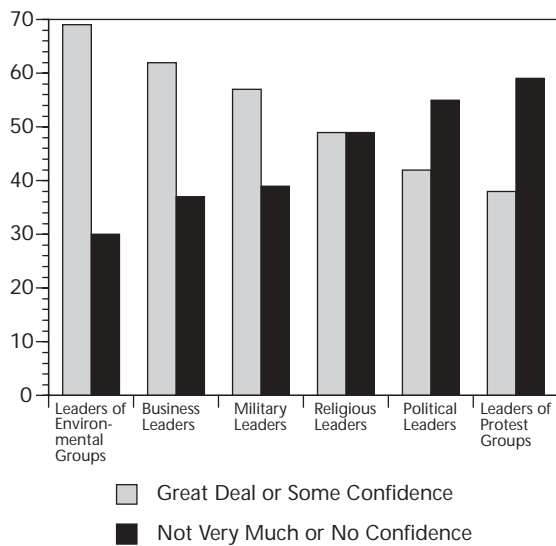


Figure 5
Confidence in Leaders



Canadians' confidence in the economy and in their own abilities to adapt to change stands in contrast with the lower levels of confidence they have in their political leaders and institutions.

not only very low, it is declining. It is down seven points in BC and Newfoundland since last year and down 11 points in Saskatchewan.

A final indicator of the frustrations that Canadians have with government is their attitudes towards political leaders and parties. As mentioned, only a minority of Canadians say they have confidence in their political leaders (although confidence is not as low as it was in the early 1990s, a time of economic recession and constitutional crisis). What's more, two-thirds say that the traditional political parties are more disconnected from the concerns of average voters today than they used to be.

All this dramatically shifts the portrait that the survey paints of the mood of Canadians in 2002. The relative confidence that they have in the economy and in their own abilities to adapt to change stands in contrast with the lower levels of confidence they have in their political leaders and institutions. It appears that there is a widening gap between what citizens expect from government and what they see government delivering.

Arguably, then, the survey provides some warning signs that all governments would do well take into account as they formulate their responses to the key issues of the day. The Kyoto Protocol and the Romanow Commission report, among many other items, pose challenges to the federal and provincial governments, but they also provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate that they can in fact be trusted to work cooperatively together to deliver the

results that Canadians seek. Whether or not they choose to make the most of this opportunity will play a large part in determining if citizens' frustration with government will continue to grow.

Andrew Parkin is Assistant Director of the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC). Portraits of Canada is a CRIC survey conducted by Environics Research Group and CROP. 2,939 adult Canadians were surveyed by telephone between September 27 and October 16, 2002. Results of a survey of this size can be considered accurate to within plus or minus 1.8 percent, nineteen times out of twenty. The complete survey can be found on CRIC's website: www.cric.ca

Le cynisme et la fonction publique

Dans les grands textes managériels, l'accent est mis sur la primauté de l'intelligence collective des fonctionnaires et sur sa valeur instrumentale pour la modernisation de l'administration publique. Toutefois, même si on insiste sur ce que la valeur ajoutée du secteur public ne peut venir que de cette intelligence collective, le nouveau management public lie, à travers les valeurs auxquelles il renvoie, cette intelligence collective à une émulation continue aux pratiques du secteur privé. N'est-il pas pour le moins contradictoire de participer à la construction et à la valorisation d'une identité collective spécifique au secteur public, alors même que ses éléments de définition renvoient à ceux du secteur privé ? La valorisation de cette spécificité du secteur public ne renvoie-t-elle pas vraiment, au bout du compte, à celle du secteur privé ? Puisque la frontière entre les deux secteurs est implicitement amenuisée, sinon gommée par le nouveau management public, on réduit la véritable spécificité du secteur public, c'est-à-dire les éléments de définition qu'il ne partage pas avec le secteur privé, à une identité collective négative, de laquelle il faut s'affranchir pour mieux participer à la modernisation de l'administration publique.

Tiré de : Christian Rouillard, « Du cynisme au désabusement organisationnel : le nouveau management public en tant que facteur de confusion endémique » / "From Organizational Cynicism to Disillusion: The New Public Management as a Perennial Factor of Confusion." Choix/Choices, à paraître.