

# REVIVING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

## THE NEAR DEATH AND SURPRISING RISE OF THE FEDERAL NDP

Edited by David Laycock  
and Lynda Erickson



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# Introduction

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LYNDA ERICKSON and DAVID LAYCOCK

With the general election of 2 May 2011, the Canadian political landscape shifted dramatically. This shift was especially remarkable for the New Democratic Party (NDP). After fifty years as a third party, it almost tripled its previous legislative contingent and became the Official Opposition in the House of Commons. Having triumphed in 103 seats, compared to the 37 it won in the 2008 general election, was indeed a significant accomplishment, but the NDP's performance in Quebec was the most astonishing development. The party went from having just a single Member of Parliament (MP) from that province to winning 59 of its 75 seats and more than tripling its share of the popular vote. In the country as a whole, the NDP popular vote rose from 18 to 31 percent, and its share of second-place finishes in constituency contests grew from 67 to 121. By contrast, its main rival in the opposition, the Liberal Party, dropped from 77 seats in 2008 to just 34 seats in 2011 as its popular vote declined from 26 to 19 percent, and its second-place finishes dropped from 123 to 76.

The extraordinary electoral results for the NDP in 2011 followed almost two decades of instability for the party. From its creation in 1961 until the early 1990s, the NDP had held a respectable, albeit minority, niche in the electorate in several regions of the country and had provided considerable policy innovation both provincially and federally. After a period of relative success in the 1980s with a federal popular vote averaging 20 percent, the party came close to electoral annihilation in the 1993 election. Its

vote share dropped by two-thirds, and its 9 seats were not even sufficient to give the NDP official party status in the House of Commons. Although the 1993 election rearranged Canada's federal party system in other dramatic ways, the collapse in NDP support raised the question of both the party's future and the relevance of the political left in federal politics.

Faced with virtual extinction, the party was forced into self-examination and into deliberating about its political role and ideological direction. The Reform Party had taken on much of the western populist mantle previously held by the NDP, thus depriving the latter of a historic regional stronghold. Meanwhile, the Liberal Party was especially successful in Ontario and urban Canada, campaigning on the NDP's touchstone issues (such as medicare) and contending that only it could prevent a more extreme political right from forming the government.

In the decade that followed, federal New Democrats struggled to establish their relevance and regain support in this challenging political environment. Led by Jack Layton in the 2004 election, the federal NDP achieved a modest electoral recovery. Better results in the 2006 and 2008 elections suggested that the party had regained its position as a politically consequential third-party competitor in federal politics. Its success in 2011 confounded election prognosticators unaccustomed to NDP success, created new potentials for a continued rise in NDP support at the expense of the once-dominant Liberal Party, and allowed Canadian social democrats to think seriously about forming a federal government within several elections.

This revival from dramatic near death to Official Opposition has occurred in a context of tremendous challenge to parties of the left across the globe. Social democratic parties in particular have been under siege in recent times. The set of competitive, ideological, and support-sustaining challenges faced by these parties has led many insiders to re-examine their ideological directions, to question their parties' core programmatic commitments, and to implement policies of restraint and market friendliness unimaginable to their activist predecessors (Kitschelt 1994; Gamble and Wright 1999; Callaghan 2000; Bonoli and Powell 2004; Fishman, Jackson, and McIvor 2007; Meyer 2007; Merkel et al. 2008; Cronin, Ross, and Shoch 2011; Cramme and Diamond 2012). Some social democratic parties have re-emerged electorally successful, occasionally after a considerable make-over, while others have continued to struggle even, in some cases, after transforming themselves.

As the NDP experienced near disaster following the 1993 election, several internal efforts were mounted to redirect the party either to the centre or to the left. However, all appeared to fail. Prior to the 2004 election, from the outside the party seldom seemed capable of laying foundations for a recovery. Since then, however, the NDP has closed the gap between itself and its major rivals as its competitive party organization benefitted from a very popular leader and established a truly national presence.

As a result of this revitalization the NDP has established itself as an especially noteworthy subject of study for Canadian political scientists. But is the NDP experience of any relevance outside of Canada? In some respects the party may look too unique to be a fit subject for comparative analysis with other social democratic parties. Before 2011, unlike social democratic parties across Western Europe and in Australia and New Zealand, it had never been a major party capable of forming government. It has had the bad fortune of being the only Western social democratic party that, throughout its history, has had to compete in a system dominated by a centrist liberal party (Johnston 2008). The NDP's supportive trade unions have had less economic power than almost all of its European and Antipodean partners in the Socialist International, thus providing the party with fewer resources and less social legitimacy. The electoral success of the NDP in Canada's industrial heartland paled in comparison to that of other social democratic parties in their respective industrial centres. And the NDP's predecessor, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), became nationally relevant primarily because it had stronger roots in agrarian and cooperative movements than any major social democratic party in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

While seemingly distinctive, these features – and the NDP's recent success in Quebec – do, we believe, make the party interesting to students of comparative parties and politics. Students of party systems and social democratic parties should want to know how a social democratic party can remain a relevant player and source of key policy ideas in a multi-party system when, unlike social democratic parties in Europe, it is not a dominant player in frequent coalition governments. When the CCF and then the NDP failed to displace their centre-left competitor, why did this competitor – the Liberal Party of Canada – not eventually push the NDP off the stage? Understanding how a social democratic party can survive with such variable national success, in a famously diverse country with socially progressive public opinions, should be especially useful to party scholars at a

time when social democratic parties are struggling and/or remaking themselves across the globe. Should the NDP move from opposition to government benches in Canada's next federal election, of course, the case for its comparative relevance will be easier to make.

The distinctive features and unusual challenges facing the NDP initially led us to undertake a major investigation of its background, experiences, and characteristics. We began our research shortly after the NDP's disastrous election results in 1993 occasioned widespread reflection on the party's long-term prospects. Parties of the social democratic left had shifted from disappointing to impressive electoral results in much of the rest of the Western world by the mid- to late-1990s, so initially we wondered why the Canadian variant had lurched in the opposite direction. As the 1990s and our research proceeded, we wondered whether we might end up witnessing the federal NDP's demise. Would we end up providing an academic gloss to this party's epitaph?

Our 1997 survey of party members provided a good start for our research, identifying key aspects of the party's self-understanding, confirming its distinctive ideological profile within Canada, and suggesting a variety of potential questions to pursue. However, with each of us busy on other fronts, we only began to devote sustained attention to studying the federal party in 2008.<sup>1</sup> A second member survey in 2009 allowed us to determine whether member and activist attitudes had changed as the NDP slowly re-established its political presence and relevance, and raised further questions regarding which aspects of party ideology, campaigning, and organizational practice might be undergoing transformation. When the NDP broke through to the "big leagues" in the 2011 federal election, we realized that we needed to quickly obtain assistance from colleagues in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of this newly relevant party.

We and our readers are extremely fortunate that colleagues Éric Bélanger, Amanda Bittner, Jean-François Godbout, Frédéric Mérand, François Pétry, Mark Pickup, Steven Weldon, Colin Whelan, and Maria Zakharova answered our call for assistance. Their diverse expertise and analytical contributions to this volume first emerged in draft form in a workshop in April 2012, and the first iteration of the complete manuscript was ready several months later. After a demanding but ultimately rewarding review and revision process, we had our final volume ready.

Our book focuses on key dimensions of NDP experience over the past two decades; the changing character of the party's discourse, policy instrument

choice, and ideology; member and leader attitudes and impacts; and the NDP's changing status and challenges as a competitor in Canadian federal politics. In the analyses that follow, we break new ground on several fronts.

First, we have collectively taken advantage of a broad range of relevant survey and other datasets, with analysis of our two NDP member surveys (1997 and 2009), Canadian Election Study (CES) survey data from elections dating back to 1984, and Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) data from 1993 to 2011. Second, we have employed qualitative analysis of party documents, campaign platforms, and responses to parliamentary throne and budget speeches, along with elite interviews regarding party strategy and policy issues. Finally, we attempt to understand a novel shift in the federal NDP's standing, from its imperilled third-party status during the 1990s to its position as the Official Opposition in 2011. This transition has taken place against the backdrop of a reconfigured federal party system in which Conservative dominance has replaced Liberal dominance and the NDP has become much more than an also-ran.

In our efforts to understand the contemporary NDP, we use as broad a range of empirical foci and analytical methods as possible. Our hope is that, by adopting this more comprehensive and varied approach, we can offer a multifaceted analysis of value not just for those interested in the NDP but also for those wishing to learn more about the competitive dynamics in the modern Canadian party system and for students of comparative social democratic politics.

Part 1 sets the stage for our subsequent analyses of the party. The first chapter (Erickson and Laycock) explores the party's history from its 1961 origins until 2003, when the NDP selected Jack Layton as leader. The emphasis is on the period following the 1988 election – then the party's electoral high point – until the 2001 election, when the party engaged in a renewal exercise following disappointing election results in 2000. Chapter 2 (Erickson and Laycock) continues the historical account with an examination of the Layton years and the party's growing electoral success from 2004 to 2011. It focuses on Layton's leadership, electoral campaigns, the party's support base, and strategic struggles in the context of a series of minority governments. It concludes with a brief discussion of the successful 2011 election. Chapter 3 (Erickson and Laycock) takes a closer look at the NDP's experience in Quebec, where the party moved from years of frustration and political irrelevance to being the dominant vehicle for representing Quebec in the House of Commons. This first part of the book concludes with

Chapter 4 (Laycock and Erickson), which analyzes party modernization, focusing on matters of party organization, communications, fundraising, and campaign management.

Part 2 is concerned with party ideology, in particular the issue of evolution and change in NDP ideas and principles. Drawing on a variety of party documents, Chapter 5 (Laycock) assesses the key underlying normative commitments and social vision in the party's ideology since 1961. Chapter 6 (Pétry) uses a quantitative approach to look at the party's ideological evolution from 1988 to 2011 through the lens of its election campaign platforms.

Part 3 examines party opinion, issue priorities, and party appeal among members, supporters, and potential supporters. Drawing on data from 1997 and 2009 surveys of NDP members, Chapter 7 (Erickson and Zakharova) explores the demographic characteristics of party members, their ideological positions, their opinions on social democratic issues, and their views on strategic and organizational issues. They look at change over time with regard to these issues as well as at differences between the most active members and the rest. Turning to voter responses over time, Chapter 8 (Bittner) examines voter perceptions of NDP leaders, looking at the relationship between voters and the NDP from its earliest years and the role of leadership in the party's surprising success in 2011. Chapter 9 (Zakharova) examines whether the importance of policy distance versus valence factors, including voter perceptions of leaders, has been different over time for NDP voters than it has for voters for other major parties. Finally, Chapter 10 (Pickup and Whelan), in keeping with a focus on voters, looks at the dynamics of issue importance among those voters who compose the NDP's core demographic constituency. It examines whether the priorities for this constituency are different from those for other parties as well as how these priorities and differences have changed over time.

Part 4 looks ahead. It begins at Chapter 11, with Godbout, Bélanger, and Mérand's analysis of the potential for a merger between the NDP and the Liberal Party, drawing on their earlier work on the 2003 merger between the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative parties. Then Chapter 12 (Weldon) considers whether the NDP's 2011 success was a short-term phenomenon or whether it might herald a long-term change in Canadian federal politics. It does this by examining evidence from the 2011 CES to identify long-term and short-term sources of support among NDP voters.

*Reviving Social Democracy* concludes with an examination of shared themes and a discussion of the NDP's strategic challenges in the evolving

Canadian federal party system. These shared themes do not always lead to shared interpretive outcomes; however, providing both our complementary and our competing conclusions is the appropriate response to the plurality of methods and perspectives we employ. As for the NDP's strategic challenges – which, less than a decade ago, focused on mere survival but now deal with the prospect of real power – we are under no illusion that they will remain as we have sketched them after the 2015 election. But future strategic challenges have to come from somewhere, and it is our hope that, with this volume, we have provided important groundwork for whoever wishes to understand where the federal New Democratic Party might go next and why.

### Note

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PART 1

## SETTING THE STAGE

# 1

## Party History and Electoral Fortunes, 1961-2003

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LYNDA ERICKSON and DAVID LAYCOCK

Understanding the contemporary form and place of the New Democratic Party in the Canadian party system requires some knowledge of its historical background and the organizational modernization that it has undertaken. In this chapter, in order to assist in the appreciation of key internal and external pressures that currently shape the party, we trace its history prior to the leadership of Jack Layton. In the following chapter, we examine the party's history under Layton's leadership and the changes that led to its important breakthrough election of 2011. In Chapter 3, we consider the more specific history of the party in Quebec, and in Chapter 4, we look at the modernization of the party's infrastructure and its approach to election campaigns.

We begin this chapter by looking at the roots of the NDP and its early decades as a party and then tracing its electoral record to its high point in the 1988 federal election. We then discuss the background and results of the disastrous election of 1993 and conclude with an account of the decade of struggle that preceded Layton's 2003 leadership victory.

### **The Roots of the NDP: The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation**

The NDP was formed in 1961 in response to the electoral decline of its social democratic predecessor, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. The new party was designed to give social democracy a more solid electoral footing by reconstituting the old CCF and anchoring it more

firmly in the support of organized labour (Archer 1990). The origins of the CCF itself were in the Great Depression and in socialist principles that opposed the capitalist system (Young 1969). Created in 1932 as a federal socialist party, the CCF incorporated labour and agrarian interests, both of which suffered particularly severe economic hardship during the Depression. The party won 7 seats (with 9 percent of the popular vote) in the first general election it contested in 1935, and, by the 1945 general election, it had increased its winnings to 28 seats (and 16 percent of the popular vote).<sup>1</sup> Considering the party founders' high hopes and the far more impressive electoral endeavours of socialist parties in many other Western democracies between 1930 and 1945 (Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Berman 2006), these were disappointing results.

CCF support was highly regionalized from the outset, with its success largely concentrated in western Canada.<sup>2</sup> Its relationship with organized labour was not as strong as was that enjoyed by socialist parties in Britain and Western Europe, and CCF support from unionized workers was not very high at the polls.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, support among agrarian voters, while solid in some areas, did not constitute a growing constituency in the post-war period. With its electoral base narrow in regional terms, and its limited appeal to unionized workers, in the decade following the 1945 election the party's popular vote gradually declined.

The CCF began as an explicitly socialist party committed to wholesale economic change (including extensive nationalization of economic enterprises and economic planning on a broad scale) as well as generous social programs (including a universal health care system) (Young 1969). However, by the 1950s the party's focus turned more towards generous social programs, extensive business regulation, and progressive taxation and away from the eradication of capitalism. Yet, notwithstanding the CCF's shifting policy instrument choice, success at the polls was elusive.

The CCF officially recast its party principles in 1956 to emphasize the moderate character of its social democratic agenda and to expand its popular appeal. Entitled the Winnipeg Declaration of Principles of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, this reformation of the party's principles had little apparent effect at the polls (Morton 1977). By 1958, the party was reduced to 8 seats in the House of Commons as its vote dropped below 10 percent. Shortly after, a newly reconstituted central labour organization, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), proposed to the CCF that they jointly create a new political formation for the advancement of social reform. The

CCF accepted the invitation and undertook the organizational work to create a new party (Archer 1990; Knowles 1961; Morton 1977). In 1961, the founding convention of the new party adopted a name (the New Democratic Party) and a constitution that has stayed largely intact ever since.

### **The New Party, 1961-88**

Two major objectives drove the formation of the new party. The first was to create a more contemporary image of the party, portraying it as no longer mired in the context of the 1930s but, rather, as prepared to confront the issues posed by postwar economic development and prosperity. The second objective was to intensify the party's embrace of organized labour and, thereby, to attract the votes of more union members.<sup>4</sup> To boost the party's connection to organized labour, the NDP Constitution provides for the direct affiliation of labour unions, giving them a powerful direct voice in party decision-making structures.<sup>5</sup> Such affiliation was also offered by the CCF, and, like the CCF's, the NDP's constitution includes provisions to prevent union domination. However, while the CCF made affiliation possible, the NDP directed much more energy towards encouraging it. The party did not meet its early expectations in this regard, but it was more successful than the CCF (Archer 1990). Still, even though the party was designed to provide special status to unions, as Jansen and Young (2009, 662) observe, unions have "never dominated the New Democrats to the extent that was the case in the UK or Australia."

Programmatically, the NDP continued the social democratic direction set by the CCF. Following the pattern of social democratic parties in other countries, it rejected the widespread nationalization of industry and a centrally planned economy in favour of a Keynesian welfare state that would promote employment, establish redistributive tax policies, and create a strong social safety net (Carroll 2005). As described in Chapter 5 (Laycock, this volume), the NDP's ideological core was very similar to that of the CCF, with priority given to the concepts of equality, democracy, and solidarity, along with an evolving conception of an activist state.

The 1961 transition from a rurally oriented to a more labour-oriented party would have been much harder for the NDP had its founding convention not selected T.C. Douglas as its first leader. Douglas had been Saskatchewan's premier from 1944 until 1961, when he stepped down to run for the federal party's leadership. As a premier from Saskatchewan he knew rural Canada well, but he also had an unusually strong – and social

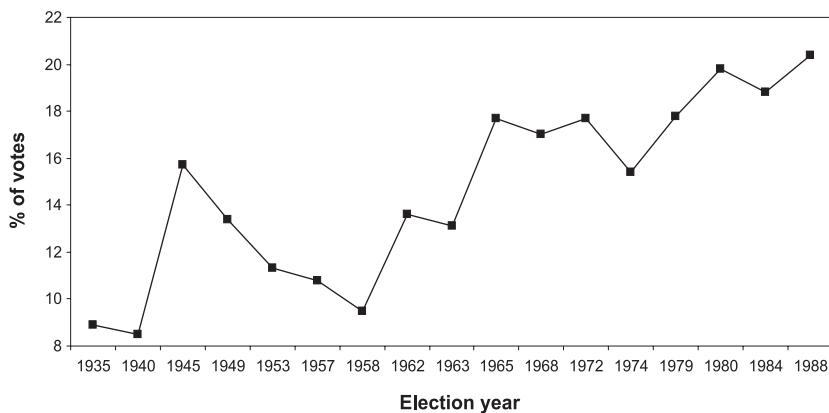
democratic – appreciation of labour issues. In Saskatchewan, his imported senior bureaucratic corps implemented what was, in the late 1940s, North America's most union-friendly labour legislation (Brennan 1984). Douglas was also a gifted orator, brought a reputation for good governance, and, despite his background as a Baptist preacher, was widely respected by the party's intellectual and industrial union wings as well as by those from the social gospel movement.

Although no major electoral breakthrough materialized in the years immediately following its creation, the NDP did appear to benefit from the exercise of reformation. It gained increasing organizational and financial support from unions and reversed the trend of declining popularity faced by its predecessor. However, as with affiliation, the party's appeal to union members was a disappointment. As Archer (1990) points out, the level of support at the polls from individual union members was not much more than it had been in the old CCF days.

Before the end of its first decade, the party faced a major internal ideological challenge. A strong left-wing faction surfaced to advocate a more radical agenda for the party, which, it believed, had to address the threat that American investment posed to the Canadian economy. This faction, which adopted the moniker "Waffle Movement," called for an independent socialist Canada and nominated its own candidate, James Laxer, for the party leadership in 1971. Laxer survived on the leadership ballot until the fourth (and final) round, when he was defeated by David Lewis. Considered too radical by the leadership of the party, the Waffle was ordered by a vote of the Ontario Provincial Council to disband as an organization within the Ontario NDP. The group decided to leave the NDP altogether to form its own socialist party (Bakan and Murton 2006).

Notwithstanding the internal dissension posed by the Waffle and the disappointing levels of support from individual union members, the NDP vote remained robust compared to that of its predecessor. By the 1980s, the party had increased its share of the popular vote by half, and for the three elections held during that decade it attracted 20 percent of the national popular vote (see Figure 1.1). Yet, given how the single-member district plurality (SMDP), or first-past-the-post, electoral system tends to over-reward front-running parties and to penalize third parties whose votes are not sufficiently concentrated, the NDP struggled to win seats. From 1962 to 1988, the ratio of seats it gained to the proportion of votes it won averaged just over 50 percent.

**FIGURE 1.1**  
**CCF-NDP popular vote, 1935-88**



Reminiscent of its predecessor's experience, the NDP's electoral successes were not uniform across the country. By the late 1980s, the NDP, like the CCF, still attracted relatively few votes in Quebec and Atlantic Canada and was especially strong in western provinces.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, in voter-rich Ontario, the NDP improved considerably on the record of the CCF, averaging 20 percent of the popular vote – double that achieved by the CCF over its lifetime. This gave the party a visible Ontario presence in the House of Commons and a more national image. Moreover, given the proportionate size of the Ontario electorate, the party's national vote was now considerably improved by its success in Ontario. Yet the NDP was still disproportionately a western party. The electoral system's tendency to exacerbate regionalism in party support meant that the NDP caucus in the House of Commons had a distinctly western Canadian image, despite its having only one leader from the west. In the three federal elections held in the 1980s, while the party received just 41 percent of its votes from western Canada, 71 percent of its seats were in western constituencies.

For much of the period prior to the 1993 election, the party's programmatic direction positioned the NDP in a relatively discrete place on the left of the federal party spectrum (see Chapter 5). The Liberals and Progressive Conservatives tended to converge at the centre, as is widely expected of major parties in SMDP systems (Downs 1957; Grofman 2004). The Liberal Party, which governed for twenty-two of the thirty-one years between 1962

and 1993, was often characterized as adopting popular policies that had been initiated by the NDP (Pétry 1995). The strategic problem that this created for the NDP was only partly solved by the party's regional strength in western Canada and its populist appeal to "ordinary Canadians."

By the 1980s, a set of more general challenges had emerged for social democratic parties (Cronin, Ross, and Shoch 2011; Merkel et al. 2008; Kitschelt 1994; Sassen 2000), Western governments were registering persistent deficits and accumulating large debts while their economies faced mounting international competition as a result of globalization. In this context, criticisms of the expense of welfare state social programs gained political traction. As political discourse across many Western democracies shifted to the right, the commitment of social democratic parties to social protection and generous welfare state policies led to their being particular targets of criticism.

In Canada, there were some quarters in which the rhetoric of welfare state crisis was evident;<sup>7</sup> however, on the electoral stage, attacks on social programs had not yet become prominent in party discourse. Even Brian Mulroney, whose Progressive Conservative (PC) Party harboured more conservative instincts than did the Liberal Party, described social spending as a "sacred trust" in the 1984 election campaign (Bashevkin 2002).<sup>8</sup> And, during the debate about the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, which dominated the 1988 election, Mulroney worked hard to dispel the argument that the FTA threatened social programs (Johnston et al. 1992). Moreover, while the PC Party won that election, the NDP won more MPs and popular vote than ever before.

### **From Boom to Bust, 1988-93**

While the 1988 election marked a high point in the federal NDP's history as a competitive party, its results were both a success and a disappointment. The party attracted proportionately more voters (20.4 percent) and won more seats (43) than ever before, but it had begun its campaign with considerably higher expectations. In 1987, the party had topped the polls for a number of months. Its popularity had declined by the time the election was called, but it still continued to record strong showings in the polls (see Figure 1.2).

With a weakened and unpopular leader at the helm of the Liberal Party,<sup>9</sup> when the 1988 election writ was dropped the NDP's prospects for becoming the Official Opposition did not seem unrealistic (Johnston et al. 1992). Moreover, the election was primarily fought over the PC government's Free

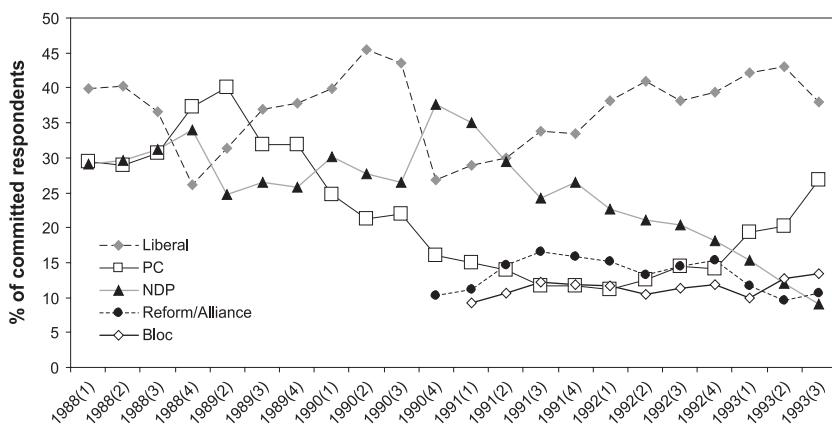
Trade Agreement with the United States, an issue with regard to which the NDP might be seen as a natural beneficiary. Historically, the party had been identified with opposition to Canada's economic dependency on the United States, and high-profile party supporters were among the most vocal opponents of the FTA. The agreement was vulnerable to a variety of criticisms, and, by the end of the campaign, opinion opposing it was in a clear majority (*ibid.*).

However, the Liberals had made this a free-trade election by using their Senate majority to oppose ratification of the FTA, thus forcing the government to go to the polls on the issue. And, while the NDP clearly opposed the agreement during the election campaign, the Liberals placed even more emphasis on their anti-FTA position. In the end it was the Liberals, not the NDP, who reaped the greatest benefit from public opposition to the agreement (Johnston et al. 1992). The governing PCs profited from the split opposition and formed a majority government with 43 percent of the popular vote. The NDP's efforts to bolster its own support by focusing on social policy and its popular leader, Ed Broadbent, were only partly successful. The Liberals outpolled the NDP by 12 percentage points and won almost twice as many seats.<sup>10</sup>

Shortly after the 1988 election, a disappointed Ed Broadbent resigned as leader. In December 1989, at a closely fought leadership convention, Audrey McLaughlin became the first woman to lead a national party in Canada. Following the convention the party rebounded in popularity, and, by the end of 1990, it again topped the opinion polls, with over 35 percent of decided respondents supporting the NDP (Environics Institute 1990-99). Its new leader attracted more positive ratings for her leadership than did either Prime Minister Brian Mulroney or the newly elected leader of the Liberal Party, Jean Chrétien. For the first time ever, the party won a federal seat in Quebec in Chambly in a 1990 by-election.<sup>11</sup> Once more, however, the party's popularity faded as an election approached. Indeed, as Figure 1.2 dramatically illustrates, by the summer of 1993, the party was headed into single-digit territory.

Decline in party support at the federal level was coincident with dropping support at the provincial level, especially in Ontario, where the NDP government was under siege. Having been elected unexpectedly in September 1990,<sup>12</sup> Bob Rae's NDP government soon had to deal with the effects that a major recession was having on provincial finances (Tanguay 1997; Walkom 1994). Following an initial series of government missteps and embarrassments, the NDP presented its first ever provincial budget in 1991.

**FIGURE 1.2**  
Party popularity, 1988-93



Source: Environics Institute, Focus Canada surveys, 1988-93.

With its aggressively Keynesian approach and substantial deficit, the budget was very controversial. By 1992, the increasing provincial deficit, a growing government debt, deepening criticism of its economic policies from the financial community and in the media, and sliding public support turned the government's focus towards budget cutbacks (McBride 2005; Tanguay 1997; Schwartz 1994).<sup>13</sup> Its controversial Social Contract, adopted in 1993, imposed a public-sector wage freeze.<sup>14</sup> This caused further internal party conflict and alienated major constituencies of the party, especially elements of organized labour (Jenson and Mahon 1995; Schwartz 1994). In July 1993, the provincial party's support in the polls had dropped to a mere 15 percent (Environics Institute 1990-99).

### The Constitutional Conundrum

At the federal level, the situation the NDP faced was further complicated by two other factors: constitutional politics and the appearance of the new, western-based Reform Party. The constitutional politics were fought in two rounds, each of which created internal schisms in the NDP. The first round concerned the Meech Lake Accord. This accord was negotiated by the PC government and the provinces in 1987 in an attempt to meet Quebec's concerns about the constitutional changes of 1982. It proposed a number of

changes to the Constitution, including recognition of Quebec as a distinct society and a revised constitutional amending formula. The Meech Lake Accord was agreed to by all provincial premiers, including the only NDP premier at the time, Howard Pawley from Manitoba. It was subsequently endorsed by the federal NDP. Partly stimulated by Quebec's support for the agreement, this endorsement reflected the party's recognition, ratified at its 1987 convention, of Quebec's "distinct status" (Cooke 2004). Initially, the accord aroused little public attention or animosity (Reid 1991); however, after the 1988 election, serious opposition began to develop. This opposition was reflected within the NDP, and one of those opposed was the soon-to-be elected leader, Audrey McLaughlin (Whitehorn 1992).<sup>15</sup> By the time the accord died in 1990, the NDP, during its convention, had called for a reopening of the deal, albeit while still supporting Quebec's demands for constitutional change (McLeod 1994).

A key ramification of the Meech Lake Accord's failure, with regard to the party system, was the formation of a separatist party for Quebec – the Bloc Québécois (BQ). Led by former Conservative cabinet minister Lucien Bouchard, the BQ was formed by a small group of Conservative and Liberal Quebec MPs who left their parties to promote Quebec sovereignty and Quebec interests at the federal level. Although the BQ initially refrained from calling itself a political party, in 1991 its founding convention created an official party, with an organizational infrastructure and a party creed.

The politics of the Meech Lake Accord created serious internal differences for the federal NDP. But the next round of constitutional politics resulted in even worse consequences for the party's public support.<sup>16</sup> This second round focused on the Charlottetown Accord, which was designed to replace the Meech Lake Accord in an attempt to appease anger in Quebec at the failure of the latter. The Charlottetown Accord was a complicated document that combined recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society" with a number of institutional changes, a social charter, limits on federal spending power, and a statement on Canada's fundamental values. The involvement of three NDP provincial premiers – Bob Rae from Ontario, Mike Harcourt from British Columbia, and Roy Romanow from Saskatchewan – meant that the negotiations that led to the Charlottetown Accord were more sensitive to NDP concerns. The role of NDP premiers in the constitutional process placed pressure on the federal party to approve the deal. Both the party's Federal Council and its federal caucus endorsed the agreement soon after it was concluded.

As with the Meech Lake Accord, public opinion initially supported the Charlottetown Accord, but this was not sustained. Right after the signing of the latter, opinion polls registered public support for the agreement at close to 60 percent (Environics Institute 1990-99).<sup>17</sup> However, an intense national debate on the accord ensued during the referendum campaign (Johnston et al. 1996b), and, ultimately, the Charlottetown Accord was defeated by a national vote of 55 to 45 percent. During the referendum campaign, the NDP was in the uncomfortable position of being on the same side as its two (larger) competitors from the 1988 election, most especially the governing PCs, led by the then highly unpopular Mulroney.<sup>18</sup> This was the side that came to be characterized as representing the “establishment” position. Some of the NDP’s social movement supporters, most notably in the women’s movement, became vocal opponents of the accord and were particularly disappointed in the party’s position.<sup>19</sup> For some, the populist and protest bona fides of the party were put into question by the whole referendum experience. As Howard Pawley (1994, 181) describes it: “The rejection by the Canadian public of the Charlottetown Accord harmed the NDP more than any other party because we were seen as part of the elite of political, business, media and labour leaders.”

### **The Reform Party Challenge**

The formation of the Reform Party in 1987 posed another challenge for the NDP. The Reform Party combined regional grievances, including demands for a stronger federal voice for western Canada and resentment towards any special arrangements for Quebec, with a set of populist proposals for national institutions, a neoconservative economic agenda, and moral conservatism (Laycock 2001; Harrison 1995; Flanagan 1995). Reform contested its first election in 1988; however, having run candidates in fewer than a quarter of the constituencies in the country, and with the free-trade issue deflecting attention away from the regional alienation issue, Reform barely registered on the electoral rolls. Nationally, it won just 2 percent of the overall popular vote and no seats. Even in the west, the party only received 7 percent of the vote. Shortly after the election, however, it won a federal by-election in Alberta and its popularity in western Canada grew quickly.

The Reform Party was particularly attractive to disillusioned western supporters of the PCs. They had previously supported the PC Party because it seemed more sensitive to western concerns than the Liberals and more willing to reduce the scope of state intervention in the economy. These western PC supporters had become disenchanted by what they saw

as the PC government's increasing preoccupation with Quebec and central Canadian concerns and its unwillingness to shrink the state and lower taxes (Erickson 1995). But western grievances were not limited to voters on the right. For the NDP, with much of its voter base and three-quarters of its MPs from the west, Reform's regional appeal was a real concern. In addition, Reform's populism represented an electoral threat. Based on a critique of traditional politics and traditional parties, this populism was yet another means by which Reform could draw support away from the NDP even though Reform's ideological location on socio-economic issues might otherwise seem to have little attraction for potential NDP voters. During the referendum campaign, Reform was the only party outside Quebec to oppose the Charlottetown Accord. Party leader Preston Manning was persuaded by policy advisors Stephen Harper and Tom Flanagan to break with the consensus among the "old parties" and to contend that the accord was too ambiguous on some key issues, too willing to grant "unequal" status and powers to Quebec, and left too many issues for further negotiation. Reform argued that a vote for the accord was a vote for an unknown set of future arrangements and a federal system tilted towards Quebec interests.<sup>20</sup> Initially, the party's position in opposition to the accord made it look as though Reform were "swimming against the stream." However, by the end of the referendum campaign, public distrust of the agreement had grown, in no small part because Reform had successfully characterized it as a bargain of the elite. This experience in the referendum campaign gained Reform visibility on the national stage and cemented its image as a populist party prepared to stand up to the establishment.

### **The Nearly Dead Party: The 1993 Election and the Politics of Bewilderment**

The election of 1993 was held in the aftermath of the highly divisive Charlottetown Accord referendum campaign and in the context of a weak economy. Following a severe recession in 1990-91, economic recovery was slow, and even by 1993 unemployment levels remained above 11 percent through most of that election year (Gower 1996). Following their 1988 election victory, the governing Progressive Conservatives had imposed a highly visible and unpopular goods and services tax to replace a manufacturers' tax, and they expanded the FTA to include Mexico. And, although they implemented a number of conservative economic policies (including the privatization of select government corporations) and expanded the deregulation of business activity, they had presided over a growing government

debt. As a result, the party was vulnerable to many-sided attacks on its economic record. The PCs' past claims that they would produce jobs and reduce the deficit now rang hollow for many voters (Frizzell, Pammet, and Westell 1994).

In the wake of disastrous polling numbers that put his personal and his party's popularity at historic lows, Brian Mulroney stepped down as PC leader in early 1993. The PCs chose a relative newcomer to federal politics from western Canada, Kim Campbell, to lead it into an imminent election. She had only been in Parliament since 1988 but had held three different cabinet posts and, given her breezy and articulate style, was seen as a potentially charismatic leader. Shortly after her selection, PC popularity increased and the party decided to focus its election campaign on her leadership and her "different way of doing politics" (Woolstencroft 1994).

In the 1993 election campaign, much of the rhetoric and debate focused on the economy and government deficit and debt. The Reform Party struck a hard line on the debt and deficits, promising to cut back social programs and taxes while reducing the deficit in three years. The PCs now faced a convincing challenge from the right. They also focused on deficit reduction but set a five-year target for deficit elimination. The Liberals took a classically centrist position, proposing a more moderate pace for deficit reduction and emphasizing job creation as key features of their economic agenda. Even the NDP felt obliged to address the deficit in its campaign (Gidengil 1994). But, while the party's campaign literature described the debt as "a real problem for Canada" and encouraged elimination of government waste, it identified "getting more Canadians working" as the primary solution to the debt problem (NDP 1993). Its election campaign focused on job creation strategies, protection of social programs, and the cancellation of the North American Free Trade Agreement as a means of attacking deindustrialization in Canada.

Within Quebec, the national question dominated much of the campaign as the BQ presented the electorate with an explicitly separatist party that was, for the first time, a credible federal political force that placed the nationalist project in the forefront of its agenda (Bernard 1994). Given the strong separatist sentiments generated by the failure of the Meech Lake Accord and the subsequent negative response in Quebec to the Charlottetown Accord, the BQ was campaigning under favourable circumstances. The popularity of leader Lucien Bouchard in Quebec was crucial to the BQ's popularity (Blais et al. 1995). The NDP had received its highest vote percentage ever in the province in the 1988 election (14 percent) and had

been buoyed by its by-election success in Chambly in 1989. But, by the 1993 campaign, the NDP was back in a virtual electoral wilderness in Quebec. The election results in the province confirmed its weakness: only 1.5 percent of Quebec voters cast a ballot for the NDP.

The 1993 election campaign was characterized by a high degree of regionalism. The BQ only contested seats in Quebec, creating a distinct election dynamic in that province, while the Reform Party, although it had nominated candidates in 70 percent of the ridings in the country, ran no candidates in Quebec and did not run a full slate in three of the four Atlantic provinces (Ellis and Archer 1994).<sup>21</sup>

The election produced dramatic results for the party system. The governing PC Party went from holding 153 seats to winning just 2. The NDP was reduced from 43 to a mere 9 seats, three short of the 12 required for official party status in the House of Commons. While the Liberal Party was the overall victor, winning 60 percent of the seats and majority government, it did so with just 41 percent of the popular vote and a regionally narrow base of support. The most dramatic and system-restructuring inroads were made by the two new parties: Reform and the Bloc Québécois. By taking 54 out of 75 seats in Quebec, the Bloc became the Official Opposition in the House of Commons. The Reform Party's capture of most of the previous PC and some previous NDP votes in western Canada gave it 52 seats, all but 1 in the West.

In popular vote, the NDP dropped from 20 percent to just under 7 percent and to fifth place among the parties. In most ridings, the party failed to achieve the 15 percent of the popular vote required for local party associations to receive financial reimbursement from Elections Canada (Whitehorn 1994). The party's 9 seats were all in the west: 5 in Saskatchewan, 2 in British Columbia, and 1 each in Manitoba and Yukon. For the first time in its history, the NDP won no seats east of Manitoba. In its western heartland, the Reform Party had successfully wrested away the populist label once identified with the CCF/NDP (see Laycock, Chapter 5, this volume; Laycock 2001).

Analyses of the vote movements from 1988 to 1993 indicate that former NDP supporters were most likely to move to the Liberal Party. Using data from the 1993 Canadian Election Study, Johnston et al. (1994) find that 29 percent of those who voted NDP in 1988 voted Liberal in 1993. Surprisingly, given their distance from each other on the left-right spectrum, 13 percent of those who voted NDP in 1988 voted Reform in 1993.<sup>22</sup> Gidengil (1994) examines potential NDP voters outside Quebec – that is, survey

respondents who identified with the NDP or leaned towards it, who had previously voted for it, or who had indicated an intention to vote NDP federally or provincially. She finds that, although Liberals were more likely than Reform to attract potential NDP voters, Reform attracted “as many potential NDP voters as did the NDP itself” (14). Still, the NDP was certainly not the largest source of Reform votes: “Reformers were mainly old Conservatives” (Johnston et al. 1996a, 5).

Such a dramatic decline in NDP vote meant that the party lost support in all quarters, including its core. Regionally, the party’s proportion of the popular vote dropped most dramatically in British Columbia and Ontario. In British Columbia, its vote fell from 37 percent of the provincial vote to under 16 percent, a loss of more than half its proportion of the popular vote (see Table 1.1). In Ontario, which had contributed more than 35 percent of the party’s overall vote in 1988, the NDP lost 70 percent of its proportion of the popular vote, dropping to 6 percent. In issue terms, the swing away from the NDP was greatest among those who showed the most support for some of the major NDP positions: anti-continentalism, being less concerned about the deficit, and being less opposed to union power (Johnston et al. 1994). Part of the reason that the party’s greatest drop was among these regional and issue groups is, of course, that these were where its previous support was highest. However, this huge overall vote decline meant that the NDP’s core had been hollowed out and that it faced an enormous rebuilding task.

**TABLE 1.1**  
**Change in NDP popular vote, 1988-93, by province**

Province	% of vote (1998)	% of vote (1993)	% change (1988-93)
British Columbia	37.9	15.5	-21.5
Alberta	17.4	4.1	-13.3
Saskatchewan	44.2	26.6	-17.6
Manitoba	21.3	16.7	-4.6
Ontario	20.1	6.0	-14.1
Quebec	14.4	1.5	-12.9
New Brunswick	9.3	4.9	-4.4
Nova Scotia	11.4	6.8	-4.2
Prince Edward Island	7.5	5.2	-2.3
Newfoundland	12.4	3.5	-8.9

### **Regional Breakthrough, 1996-2000**

The 1993 election substantially altered the dynamic of the party system and, with it, the competitive environment faced by the NDP. Regionalism had long been a characteristic of Canadian federal politics. However, with the Reform Party trumpeting the demands of western Canada and displaying an anti-Quebec bias (Laycock 2001), with the BQ focusing only on the interests and grievances of Quebec, and with the Liberal Party having 55 percent of its seats in Ontario, regionalism intensified dramatically (Carty, Cross, and Young 2000). In ideological terms, the Reform Party's success and the collapse of a moderate centre-right party meant that much of the momentum in the system had shifted to the right. Reform now posed the major challenge to the Liberal Party outside Quebec.

Confronted with virtual annihilation, the NDP began a process of internal examination and debate about its future directions. It would have been bad enough if the party had only to face regaining populist credentials from the Reform Party in its western Canadian stronghold; however, it also had to increase somehow its appeal relative to an ideologically centrist Liberal Party that campaigned on many of the NDP's natural issues, especially support for medicare. The party faced a struggle for recognition and support in a crowded electoral field (Carty, Cross, and Young 2000; Blais et al. 2000).

An early response to the party's circumstances came with the 1994 resignation of its leader, Audrey McLaughlin. In the past, NDP leaders had remained in office for long periods of time and, unlike those of the Liberals and Conservatives, were not replaced on the heels of electoral failure. However, the 1993 results soon drew strong criticism of the leader and her staff (Whitehorn 1997), prompting McLaughlin's decision to resign. In choosing her replacement, the party adopted a variant of a new and apparently more democratic method of leadership selection – direct primaries – with which some provincial parties had experimented. Direct primaries, in which party members vote directly for leadership candidates, had first been used by the Parti Québécois in the 1980s and then by provincial Liberal and/or PC parties in seven provinces (Carty and Blake 1999; Cross 1996).

After the NDP's 1989 federal leadership convention, the party had explored the possibility of changing its leadership selection process but had opted to retain its traditional convention system, with delegates elected from constituency associations and affiliated unions (Whitehorn 1995). After its 1993 electoral debacle, the party's need to recruit more members and to refresh its public image gave it an increased incentive to add more

direct democracy to its selection process, as did its need to challenge Reform for populist credentials. Accordingly, the federal council of the party added a new dimension to the leadership contest in the form of non-binding regional and labour primaries that were to limit which leadership candidates would be placed on the convention ballot.<sup>23</sup>

This system was in place for the party's 1995 leadership contest. The primaries eliminated one of the four initial candidates, but, ultimately, the primary vote bore little resemblance to the final outcome. In the primaries, Lorne Nystrom, a Saskatchewan MP from 1968 to 1993, won 45 percent of the votes. Svend Robinson, a BC MP since 1979, won 32 percent. And Alexa McDonough, a former long-time leader of the Nova Scotia New Democrats with no federal legislative experience, won 18 percent (Funke n.d.). Nevertheless, at the convention the party selected McDonough. On the first and only ballot, McDonough won 33 percent of the vote, and Nystrom, with just 30 percent, was forced to drop out. Robinson had come first with 38 percent of the vote but decided McDonough would prevail on a second ballot and conceded the leadership before the next and final ballot could be held.

Beyond replacing the leadership, other demands for "renewal" and change came from all sides of the party spectrum. These were accompanied by explorations inside and outside the party for possible programmatic and organizational responses to the disastrous electoral decline (Berlin and Aster 2001; Langdon and Cross 1994; McLeod 1994; Rebick 2001; Whitehorn 1997; Laxer 1997). In late 1993, the party struck a renewal committee. It was co-chaired by Dawn Black, a former BC NDP MP and long-time party activist, and François Côté, a party activist from Chambly, Quebec. Regional renewal conferences throughout 1994 and early 1995 attracted many activists and party notables, and wide-ranging debate about policy and strategy ensued. Discussion papers were circulated, discussed at regional conferences, and debated at three major party events in Edmonton, Halifax, and Winnipeg, respectively.

The renewal committee produced three documents from this process, all presented to the October 1995 federal party convention. A short principles and mission statement stressed the party's continuing commitment to the core values of equality, democracy, community, cooperation, and (a more recent entry) sustainability.<sup>24</sup> It affirmed the NDP's membership in a "greater national and international movement that seeks to challenge the dominant political agenda of market globalization and resulting environmental, social and economic problems" (Martin and Riche 1996, 110).<sup>25</sup>

Another document proposed new internal party governance, policy development processes, and financial structures. It sought to “renew [the NDP’s] founding partnership with Labour and build alliances and friendships with organizations who share [its] principles and [its] goals” (111). Changes to party policy development were to be guided by “the concepts of accountability and grass-roots control” (113), with enhanced roles for both riding associations and a national policy committee that would circulate new policy initiatives back to riding associations and build consensus across the party prior to its conventions (115-18).<sup>26</sup> The review committee also recommended that the federal party retain existing revenue-sharing agreements with provincial sections while allowing the federal party to raise funds directly from all members who had joined through provincial sections.<sup>27</sup> Finally, a policy document emphasized new initiatives in economic and social policy that could respond to what the party identified as new challenges resulting from globalization.

While the latter document provided a kind of framework for the 1997 election platform, the “mission statement” and party governance proposal had little impact on the party’s regular operations, despite being adopted at the 1995 convention. The selection of a new leader at this convention effectively overshadowed the renewal committee reports and issues (NDP 1995; Dawn Black, personal communication, 9 August 2012). A major CLC/NDP review committee report in May 1996 reaffirmed the trade union federation’s support for the party and its principles. It recommended more regular meetings between the federal NDP leadership and the CLC executive council as well as continuing liaisons with provincial New Democrat parties and governments. The report insisted on the trade union movement’s status as “one of the founding partners” of the NDP, and it proposed a variety of other means through which labour could assert its political voice through interaction with the NDP (Martin and Riche 1996, 6-21).

In the elections that followed McDonough’s selection, the NDP experienced a regional breakthrough in Atlantic Canada and regained official status in the House of Commons. However, it continued to struggle for national visibility (Nevitte et al. 2000) and votes. Just prior to the 1997 election, conditions seemed ripe for a substantial improvement in NDP fortunes. Unemployment had declined 2 percentage points since the 1993 election, but at 9 percent it remained close to double digits. The Liberals seemed vulnerable to critiques from the left (*ibid.*), having made cuts to unemployment benefits and restrained transfers to the provinces (which affected a number of social programs) (Maslove and Moore 1997). This gave rise to

**TABLE 1.2**  
**NDP votes and seats in the 1997 and 2000 elections, by province and territory**

Province/Territory	1997		2000	
	% of vote	No. of seats	% of vote	No. of seats
British Columbia	18	3	11	2
Alberta	6	—	5	—
Saskatchewan	31	5	26	2
Manitoba	23	4	21	4
Ontario	11	—	8	1
Quebec	2	—	2	—
New Brunswick	18	2	12	1
Nova Scotia	30	6	24	3
PEI	15	—	9	—
Newfoundland	22	—	13	—
NWT	21	—	27	—
Yukon	29	1	32	—
Nunavut	—	—	32	—
TOTAL	11	21	9	13

criticisms that the Liberals had not protected social programs as promised in their 1993 campaign. Between 1993 and 1997, the Liberal government had prioritized deficit reduction to a remarkable degree, thereby defusing the effectiveness of the deficit critique from the right.

Despite the apparent vulnerability of the Liberals to the left and the NDP focus on jobs and cuts to social programs (Whitehorn 1997), growth in NDP support was modest in most of the country, with the exception of Atlantic Canada. In Atlantic Canada, the party vote grew to 24 percent, yielding 8 seats in a region that had theretofore been no more than single-digit territory for the NDP. In the rest of the country, however, the party vote did not quite reach 10 percent of the popular vote. Nationally, the party won just 11 percent of the vote and 24 seats (see Table 1.2).

In 1997, the NDP had been unable to take advantage of Liberal vulnerabilities. Analyses of data on voter responses to the Liberals led Nevitte et al. (2000, 103) to conclude that “voters who were dissatisfied with the Liberals’ performance in office were no more likely to turn to the NDP than those who were satisfied.” Moreover, although the NDP did gain an additional 4 seats in the west, it was not able to challenge Reform’s considerable

success in that region.<sup>28</sup> In seat-rich Ontario, the NDP's 11 percent of the popular vote yielded no seats.

### **Still Struggling, 2000-03**

The NDP's slight electoral improvement in 1997 was reversed in the 2000 election. Its proportion of the overall vote fell to 8.5 percent, and its seat count dropped to 13, barely providing it with official party status. The configuration of the party system had been altered just prior to the 2000 election, when the Canadian Alliance was formed through the Reform Party's attempt to unite the right by attracting PC votes (Ellis 2001). While the Alliance did attract some former PC members, the PC Party itself shunned this effort at union and mounted its own national campaign for the 2000 election. The Alliance was successful in winning more support than the Reform Party had in 1997, gaining in both the west and Ontario, although its overall seat gain was only 6.

In this crowded electoral context, the NDP struggled yet again for attention during the election campaign. Its regional appeal had disappeared, and its efforts to build on the gains of 1997 failed. The party lost support in every province, but its losses were highest in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan (3 seats in each province). The NDP campaign's strong focus on health care had been forced to compete with the Liberal campaign's emphasis on keeping the public system from being privatized by the Alliance (Nadeau, Pétry, and Bélanger 2010), and, in the end, the Liberals succeeded in attracting much of the health care vote at the NDP's expense (Blais et al. 2002). The party was concerned that progressive voters, fearing an Alliance breakthrough, would vote strategically for the Liberals. However, the apparent effects of strategic voting on the NDP were not significant. In their analysis of strategic voting in the 2000 election, Blais et al. (2002) conclude that, outside Quebec, the NDP's overall popular vote would have been only 1 percentage point higher had strategic considerations not been at issue.

Having regained party status in the House of Commons in 1997, the NDP barely retained it in 2000. So, after the 2000 election, McDonough launched a second renewal exercise, summarized in a volume that aired the party's various perspectives (Berlin and Aster 2001). This renewal process culminated in the national convention in November 2001. Once again, discussion about internal alterations to party structure and decision-making processes were overshadowed, this time by the New Politics Initiative (NPI) from the party's left. The NPI proposed disbanding the existing party and creating a new one to be driven by closer ties to social movement activists.

The NPI was intended to provide a more outspoken critique of capitalist globalization, give greater attention to environmental issues, and place more emphasis on socialist organizing and education than electoral strategy and efforts (Rebick 2001; Stanford 2011; Stanford and Robinson 2001).<sup>29</sup>

As an alternative to the NPI, McDonough championed a “revitalized federal party” that would pursue both a serious electoral mandate and social change. It would be a stand-alone federal party, with a new relationship with organized labour based on “one member, one vote” and intent on creating a broadened tent for progressive forces under NDP leadership (McDonough 2001). Some voices on the party’s centre-right championed the “Third Way” approach, popular among many social democratic strategists elsewhere (Bastow and Martin 2003; Giddens 1999; Hale, Leggett, and Martel 2004; Pierson 2001). In the end, the party officially rejected both NPI and Third Way options at the November 2001 convention. Despite 40 percent delegate support for the NPI option, the party carried on much as before until it replaced Alexa McDonough with Jack Layton in 2003.

### **Notes**

- 1 An additional seat was won by Agnes MacPhail, who was a member of the party but who won her seat under the banner of the United Farmers of Ontario-Labour.
- 2 Of the forty-three constituency contests the party won in the 1935, 1940, and 1945 elections, only two were outside the west. These were in the riding of Cape Breton South, Nova Scotia.
- 3 The close relationship between unions and the British Labour Party was a model in this regard for many Canadian socialists. The level of electoral support that Labour had received from unionized workers since the First World War was well beyond what the CCF ever gained from their counterparts in Canada.
- 4 Ever since the mid-1930s, the Liberal Party had harvested more union and working-class votes than the CCF.
- 5 The Constitution also provided for the affiliation of other groups, such as farmers’ organizations and cooperatives that agree to abide by the Constitution and principles of the party.
- 6 The exception here was Alberta, where neither the CCF nor the NDP gained much support. The party waited until 1988 to win one seat there, in the constituency of Edmonton East, and did not gain another until 2008.
- 7 The Fraser Institute, created in 1974, was an early voice for the neoliberal critique of the welfare state in Canada.
- 8 For evidence that PC activists were less supportive of social policy issues than their counterparts among the other parties, see Blake (1988).
- 9 John Turner, the Liberal leader, had faced internal challenges to his party leadership, including one that occurred just six months before the election campaign started.