

Government for the people, not by the people

Populism and parliamentary governance
under Stephen Harper

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(O)ur recent Speech from the Throne set out our vision for the future. And, friends, when we say “vision,” we don’t mean some ivory tower theory. That’s what passes for vision among elites in Ottawa. For something to be called “visionary” in Ottawa, it has to be a new government program with a billion-dollar price tag. And, usually, completely impractical to boot, with no benefits for ordinary taxpayers or working Canadian families. No, friends, our government’s vision is about securing real prosperity for real people.... So that Canadian families who work hard, pay their taxes, and play by the rules, so they can benefit, so they can get ahead...

That’s why Laureen and I first left our home here in Calgary. We didn’t go to Ottawa to join private clubs or become part of some “elite.” That’s not who you are; it’s not who we are. We are in Ottawa only so the government of Canada can serve you...To secure a prosperous Canada, for our generation, for our children’s...For those unsung Canadians...The cab drivers, the small business owners, the farmers and foresters and fishermen, the factory and office workers, the seniors who have spent their lives contributing...Those honest, decent, hard-working Canadians, old

and new. These are the Canadians for whom we strive, and we in this party won't ever forget it.

— *From Stephen Harper's address to the Conservative Party of Canada convention, November 1, 2013*²

STEPHEN HARPER'S ADDRESS to the 2013 Conservative Party convention was laced with a clear populist message that called out "elites" in various incarnations for continually hampering the party's efforts to secure "real prosperity for real people.... Canadian families who work hard, pay their taxes, and play by the rules." *Globe and Mail* columnist Lawrence Martin immediately charged Harper with hypocrisy, suggesting that his penchant for siding with large corporations over unions, appointing judges ill-disposed to the Charter, and, above all, centralizing and expanding executive power "at a rate heretofore unseen," reeks of a government that is, at root, no friend of "the little guy."³ This chapter seeks to make sense of this alleged hypocrisy, focusing especially on Harper's use of populist democratic rhetoric, on one hand, while consistently centralizing executive political power on the other. There is a logic behind Harper's behaviour in this regard, but it only becomes apparent when one grasps the manner by which his ideological worldview interacts with his populist conception of society. Once this interaction comes into view, so too does a version of technocratic populism that understands the bypassing of parliamentary deliberation as an *enhancement* of democracy rather than a *curtailment*.

Many observers have pointed to the irony inherent in the use of such populist democratic language given the Harper government's clear contempt for the House of Commons, the institution that sits at the centre of our representative democracy. The consistent utilization of ironclad party discipline (controlled largely by an unelected Prime Minister's Office), tactics to stonewall both legislative committees and the parliamentary press gallery, massive omnibus bills, empty answers in Question Period, and even repeated prorogations to stall parliamentary inquiry and delay a confidence vote, are some of the most glaring offences committed by this government against Canada's parliamentary system. Such behaviour is especially peculiar given the party's strong links to the now defunct Reform Party of Canada, whose populist founder Preston Manning promised to greatly enhance democracy in Canada by loosening the grip of party discipline within Parliament and employ various mechanisms of direct democracy to restore "the common sense of the common people' to a more central position in federal politics."⁴

Given the Harper government's record on such matters, Martin's general charge of hypocrisy against Harper for "playing the populist card" while simultaneously displaying blatant contempt for the House of Commons seems quite legitimate. Academics have also observed this trend. James Farney notes that Harper has aban-

done traditional populist talk of ensuring “the people” have more say in political decision-making, but continues to speak of protecting “the people’s” interests by clamping down on the entitlements claimed by “elites and special interests.”⁵ In addition, David Snow and Benjamin Moffitt have offered an impressive consideration of the broader sociocultural dimensions of Harper’s populist rhetoric.⁶ Yet most academics tend to conclude that the use of such rhetoric is simply a cynical gimmick aimed at broadening their electoral base while ensuring unity between the fiscal and social conservative wings of the party.

There is little doubt that the Conservatives employ such populist rhetoric to aid in their quest for re-election. Recent research in the field of political psychology has confirmed populist discourse that sets up a simple “Us vs. Them/Good vs. Evil” mentality is incredibly effective at stimulating the emotional sides of our brains and subsequently motivating our electoral behavior in ways that do not always coincide with our rational self-interest.⁷ This is a truth that the Harper Conservatives are surely aware of.

Yet, it is an oversimplification to assume Harper’s tendency toward populist discourse is *solely* an inauthentic electoral ploy. Similarly, it is a mistake to declare Harper’s efforts toward this centralization as being *solely* the product of an authoritarian personality. Harper may very well be a “controlling” fellow but a closer consideration of his ideological position reveals a deeper populist democratic logic at work. This logic is tied up in a broader neoliberal worldview that subsequently colours his approach to parliamentary governance. In its simplest formation, neoliberalism is an ideology that suggests individuals are best-off living under a retrenched state that allows the market to operate largely unregulated. As his comments above suggest, Harper essentially conceives of society as being divided between the “real people” and those left-leaning “special interests” that seek to block the advance of neoliberalism by enhancing the welfare state. This conception generates a technocratic populist outlook wherein preventing such “special interests” from hampering a neoliberal agenda that benefits “the people” becomes a central political goal. Because such “special interests” can potentially capture the House of Commons, it becomes an institution that should be legitimately bypassed in the interests of “the people.”

The remainder of this chapter will expand on this argument by first using three political movements from Canadian history to explore the meaning of the term populism and its ambivalent relationship with representative democracy. I will then sketch the manner by which the Harper government is operating from a distinct neoliberal populist foundation from which a particular democratic logic flows. It is in unpacking this logic that we can begin to make better sense of the party’s behaviour with respect to Canada’s Parliament.

Populism and representative democracy

Populism has become a contested concept among academics whose efforts to provide a comprehensive definition inevitably encounter an array of distinct political movements or popular political leaders that share little in common beyond the label “populist.” Much of what has been written about populism recently, especially by journalists thinking about the Harper government, tends to equate populism with either: (a) attempts to present the leader in a “folksy” way; (b) opportunistic campaign promises meant to garner the support of “the ordinary citizen” (seeking to lower cell phone and cable bills, for instance); or (c) grassroots movements that demand reduced party discipline and enhanced mechanisms of direct democracy capable of extending decision-making powers to the masses. Certainly a good number of populist campaigns have been built upon one or all of these elements. But writers focusing solely on grassroots movements or a “folksy” appeal to the electorate miss the real essence of populism as a particular strand of democratic thought.

Peter Wiles has suggested that populism refers to any creed or movement founded upon the belief that “virtue resides in the simple people...and in their collective traditions.”⁸ Yet, such a definition fails to get to the heart of the overt and active political nature of populism. Following Francisco Panizza, I suggest a complete definition of populism must also allude to the constitution of such “simple people” as a single political actor driven by “an anti–status quo discourse that simplifies the political space by symbolically dividing society between “the people” and its “*other*.”⁹ Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser agree. They define populism as “a thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ and the ‘corrupt elite.’”¹⁰ And, as David Laycock has noted, this outlook generates an anti-establishment sentiment built upon a “democratic morality according to which the stifling of the people’s will...is a normatively unacceptable political practice.”¹¹ Although there are variations among divergent populist movements regarding who constitutes “the people” and “the elites,” they share at their foundation the overarching goal of radically altering the existing political reality. Their aim is to prevent “the elites” (however constituted) from continually ignoring the interests of “the people” (however constituted).

Despite this shared “democratic morality” that underlies all populist thought and action, distinct populist movements have put forth very different solutions to the problem of “elite” control. Each of these solutions has varied in terms of how well they coincide with widely accepted standards of contemporary representative democracy.¹² A quick review of the approaches to solving this problem by three dif-

ferent movements identified by Laycock in his various studies of populist movements in Canada illustrates this point nicely. Indeed, each of the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), who ruled Alberta from 1921–1935, the Alberta Social Credit League, who governed from 1935–1971, and the federal Reform Party of Canada, which roamed the federal opposition benches throughout the 1990s, was built upon the simple notion that the ordinary people were being exploited in some way by a cadre of elites. More fundamentally, they each shared a sense that this problem arose because political institutions traditionally relied upon to translate citizen preferences into public policies (such as legislatures or political parties) had been compromised by such elites.

Yet the three movements diverged sharply when it came to implementing reforms aimed at overcoming this problem. For Henry Wise Wood, president of the UFA, the people's interests were consistently overlooked because traditional political parties were strongly susceptible to elite control. Thus, reasoned Wood, political parties had to be replaced in the legislature with occupationally based groups that answered directly to citizens active in locally organized deliberative and educational forums.¹³ In other words, Wood's response to the problem of "elite" control was not to abandon or bypass representative government but to transform it by ensuring meaningful local control over the people's representatives by ordinary engaged citizens.

William Aberhart, founder of the Alberta Social Credit League that won power from the UFA in the midst of the Great Depression in 1935, exhibited a similar populist concern with the power held by elites at the expense of the people. However, Aberhart abandoned the UFA's insistence on intense grassroots deliberation in favour of a top-heavy technocratic populism built around his faith in the complex workings of social credit economic theory. The movement continued to rely upon thousands of grassroots supporters who helped to spread the message of social credit economics to the unconverted. However, as Laycock demonstrates, that participation was restricted to mass education and organizational tasks. Supporters were not encouraged to participate in more meaningful avenues wherein they could "critically assess their problems, or develop their own solutions."¹⁴ In fact, Aberhart also relegated "the people's" representatives within the legislature, his own MLAs, to the sidelines. He preferred instead to allow non-elected social credit "experts" to install social credit legislation and thereby solve the Depression that was harming regular citizens.¹⁵

Aberhart did strive to maintain an ongoing connection with "the people," but this was done not through the legislature, wherein he rarely spoke, or through the mainstream press, with which he bitterly feuded, but rather through his popular weekly religious-based radio program. This overall approach to democracy implied that the deliberative political life stressed by the UFA was largely unnecessary.

Rather, Aberhart's actions suggested, "the people's" desire that the Depression's end could be answered simply with the implementation of social credit economic reforms. The result was a "model of benevolent technocracy," delivering a form of populism far different from the participatory model advanced by the UFA.¹⁶

At first glance, Aberhart's version of populism seems far removed from the approach to democratic governance offered by federal Reform Party founder Preston Manning. Indeed, his efforts in the 1990s to bring the "common sense of the common people" to bear on political decision-making forums seemed to resemble the participatory hopes of the UFA. Throughout his tenure, Manning advocated reforms meant to ensure that MPs were beholden to local interests thereby preventing "elites" from capturing the legislature. Yet, a strong skepticism about the capacity of Parliament to ever become fully "democratized" also permeated the Reform Party. Thus, the party demanded an additional round of structural reforms meant to cut out the parliamentary "middle men" all together. These were the direct democracy tools of recall, initiative, and referenda that would allow ordinary people a significant voice in the decision-making process without being mediated by traditional political parties. Parties were, after all, too easily captured by "special interests."¹⁷

Yet, at the heart of Reform's "populist" conception of the political power structure in Canada was a unique neoliberal conceptualization of political reality. In their view, a newly articulated cadre of "elites" were harming "the people." The Reform party did not single out the political influence of Central Canadian grain buyers, industry tycoons, or wealthy bankers, as had the UFA and Social Credit. As Laycock demonstrates, Reform's contemporary brand of "new-right" conservatism ensured that the enemies of "the people" were now defined as those "special interests" that "support the welfare state, oppose major tax cuts, and propose that social resources should be allocated on the basis on non-market principles."¹⁸ Direct democracy was therefore meant to construct a direct connection between "the people" and the "results" they seek by curtailing any potential distortion of "the people's" preferences by intermediary political institutions. Reform opposed any effort to place non-market-based impediments between individuals and their basic political desire for a smaller, less intrusive state.

The result was a model of governance wherein direct democracy mechanisms would be utilized to ascertain the people's preferences and bring them to bear on national policy debates. But this would be done, Laycock notes, in a way that bypassed "the social processes and political institutions that serve to moderate individual interests in light of community needs." Such deliberative institutions, whether they be community groups, larger social movement organizations, trad-

itional political parties, or Parliament itself, are too easily captured by the welfare-state apologist “special interests.”¹⁹

This is not to say that Manning was insincere in his desires to engage citizens in the democratic process in meaningful ways. However, underlying the party’s simultaneous commitment to both follow the will of “the people” and work toward reducing the size and scope of the welfare state was the implicit assumption that the latter goal was something clearly desired by “the people.” Anyone who was opposed to such an ideological position was understood as being either the victim of “special interest” manipulation or, worse, a “special interest” themselves. Thus, despite a deeper initial commitment to citizen engagement than one finds in Alberta Social Credit, the Reform party maintained an overarching ideological or “technocratic” assumption that drastically reduced the need for the kind of deliberation that the UFA sought to nourish at the grassroots level, or of the kind that is meant to occur in Parliament. It was simply assumed that a neoliberal-inspired attack on the welfare state was unquestionably the path best suited to meet the needs of “the people.”

This desire to circumvent traditional political institutions arises because the debate they house is seen to be at best redundant or at worst easily manipulated by the forces that harm “the people.” It is in precisely this strain of technocratic populism where one finds the central link between Alberta Social Credit, Reform, and now the Harper Conservatives. What binds all three parties together is their shared interest in ascertaining the general will of “the people” directly, whether it be by interacting within citizens in Bible study groups (Social Credit), holding a referendum (Reform), or simply abiding by results of the general election (Harper Conservatives), then attempting to prevent this “will” from being manipulated or overshadowed within traditional institutions such as the legislature. In other words, traditional representative democracy becomes an arena that must be bypassed to a large degree to prevent “the people’s” will from being distorted by “special interests.”

Technocratic populism and contempt for Parliament

Originally a Reform MP, Harper became leader of the Conservative Party in 2004 shortly after the merger between the Progressive Conservative and Canadian Alliance (formerly Reform) parties. Although talk of direct democracy faded quickly under his leadership, Harper promised enhanced government transparency, increased freedom for MPs to represent constituents, and significant policy influence for party members. Yet, as numerous critics have noted, traditional forms of party

discipline and executive control have remained intact. Indeed, Richard Johnston notes the Conservatives have clearly shed any of the Reform party's "anti-system" leanings. They can now be classified as a "pro-system" party that is "willing to work with the Westminster model" by running candidates across the country and employing strict party discipline thereby "signaling that it is serious about seeking power."²⁰ Similarly, Tom Flanagan's organizational comparison of the former Reform Party and the current federal Conservatives demonstrates that, while certain "populist" elements remain (such as a focus on grassroots fundraising, a "flat" party organization, and the efforts to display Harper as a man of simple and common tastes), the Conservatives have abandoned those aspects that provide members meaningful power to dictate policy.²¹

It is certainly true that the Harper Conservatives are not a pure populist party in the sense of Reform, a party whose central appeal was built primarily upon their demands that "ordinary people" should be given more voice in the policy process. But most comparisons between the two parties largely overlook the manner in which the Harper government is operating by way of a familiar neoliberal populist foundation, what Sawyer and Laycock have labeled a "market populism," from which a particular democratic logic flows.²²

In essence, the Harper Conservatives abide by a particular technocratic or ideological conception of political life that rests on two central and interrelated assumptions. First, the Harper government sees a clear and unmistakable solution to the problems that hamper the economic well-being of ordinary citizens in the form of neoliberal economic orthodoxy.²³ That is, "the people" will best be served by a re-trenched state that allows the market to operate free of the regulation called for by such anti-market "elites." Second, political reality is authentically divided between "ordinary people" and a particular sect of "elites" who continually work to impede the well-being of "the people" from being realized. In fact, as Harper's address to the 2013 Conservative convention suggests, he employs a clear neoliberal definition, initially employed by the Reform Party. He conceives of "the people" as the hard-working and ordinary middle class, those "honest, decent, hardworking Canadians" who "pay their taxes and play by the rules." The "elites," on the other hand, are those same left-wing, welfare state-proponent "special interests" found within the academy, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, the unions, the environmental groups, and so on.²⁴

This conceptualization clearly goes beyond the level of rhetoric for the Harper Conservatives. Harper's policies and practices all speak to a clear pattern of demonizing and attempting to render impotent the same kinds of left-wing "special interests" that were targeted by Reform. For example, government funding cuts to the CBC, the National Film Board, various arts groups and women's organizations,

in addition to the government's ongoing attack on both organized labour and the Canadian Wheat Board, its insistence that the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA, now folded into the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development) tie international aid to Canadian economic interests abroad, its silencing of government scientists who challenge the government's official line on climate change, and, of course, its vilification of environmentalists, Aboriginals, and concerned citizens who dare question the safety of oil pipelines all speak to this agenda.

To argue that Harper is a neoliberal who utilizes "people vs. elite" rhetoric is certainly not new. However, most observers tend to focus their analysis at the negative implications of the neoliberal policies implemented by Harper on various groups within society. They overlook the manner by which these tenets work together to produce a technocratic democratic logic that helps to explain the Harper Conservative's continual dismissal of Parliament as a legitimate and worthwhile institution.

This logic is clearly evident in the party's actions. Indeed, as has been documented by a number of his critics, Harper insists on rigid discipline from his MPs while relying upon a highly partisan public relations team to produce speaking points for them on all matters, large or small. In addition, the Conservatives routinely stonewall Parliament and parliamentary committees that request information on government decision-making. They even stooped to the level of producing a secret guidebook, later leaked to journalists, which instructed MPs on a variety of tactics that could subvert or derail the work of parliamentary committees that raised uncomfortable questions for the government.²⁵ Harper also employs impressively lengthy omnibus bills containing a whole host of measures that traditionally would proceed through the House of Commons individually thereby limiting the capacity of MPs and their committees to investigate and debate them. More recently, word leaked of an "enemies list" meant to warn incoming Conservative cabinet ministers of troublesome bureaucrats who push left-leaning "pet projects" rather than tow the government's neoliberal line.²⁶

Of course, such a list of parliamentary transgressions remains incomplete without briefly alluding to Harper's notorious penchant for proroguing the House of Commons. Surely the most egregious offence occurred in late 2008 when Harper requested a prorogation of Parliament from the Governor General in order to delay a confidence vote and buy time to persuade the public such a move was democratically illegitimate. That a prime minister would grasp at an opportunity to retain power is not surprising, but the arguments Harper used during this parliamentary "time-out" clearly spoke to his suspicion of parliamentary democracy in general. Harper, alongside prominent Conservative cabinet ministers and supportive academics, took to the airwaves to directly question the democratic nature of the

responsible government system that would allow “party leaders” rather than “the people” to choose the government.²⁷ And, after being found to be in “contempt of Parliament” in 2011 by a special parliamentary committee after repeatedly refusing to hand over government documents related to the cost estimates of a controversial purchase of fighter jets, Harper brushed off the historic ruling with a quip about it representing “parliamentary games that regular people outside Ottawa did not care about.”²⁸

Although these represent only the most obvious of many offences, it is clear that supporters of parliamentary democracy have something to complain about when it comes to the behaviour of Harper’s Conservatives. Surely they are not the first party to use the opportunities available to governments, especially majority governments, to largely bypass Parliament on certain issues. Nor have such efforts been without controversy within the Conservative caucus itself (which retains elements still loyal to Reform Party ideals related to enhancing the power of back-bench MPs to represent their constituents).²⁹ Yet it is too simplistic to suggest that Harper’s “authoritarian” personality or his “nastiness” leads to such outcomes.³⁰ This misses the deeper way in which this pattern of “anti-parliament” behaviour fits into the technocratic and populist logic of Harper’s overall worldview.

The Harper Conservatives, in subscribing to the notion that neoliberalism is the panacea for what ails “the people,” assume the central interests of “the people” are clear-cut and pre-political and therefore beyond the realm of deliberation meant to occur in Parliament. Surely Harper understands that society is made up of a plurality of groups with distinct hopes and dreams. But according to the logic of neoliberalism it is only by working to ensure authentic market freedom that the government can provide each individual the best possible chance to pursue these distinct hopes.

Transposing such a worldview onto Parliament generates something akin to what David Pond coined a “neoliberal theory of representation.” At its root is a familiar right-wing conception of the “legitimation crisis” currently faced by representative democracies. This crisis is understood to arise due to the enhanced power anti-market “special interests” hold over the public sector. This prevents “the government from acting effectively in response to the popular will, as expressed in the ballot box on election day.” Thus, Pond continues, the government must reconnect directly with taxpayers in a way that bypasses such “special interests” in order to restore democratic legitimacy to the system.³¹ It is precisely this logic that lies at the root of the Harper government’s approach to parliamentary democracy. From the Harper Conservatives’ perspective, “the people” have consented to the Conservative platform in the general election. Parliament itself is an institution inherently susceptible to being captured by “special interests” by way of the vari-

ous mechanisms available to MPs to challenge the plans of the government. It is therefore justifiably bypassed.

A further illustration of this outlook is seen in the way the Harper Conservatives bypass much of the mainstream press. It is argued the media's left-leaning sympathies ensure a particular "filter" on coverage that plays into the hands of the "special interests" and therefore against the interests of "the people."³² The Harper Conservatives therefore attempt to take their message directly to "the people" by seeking out local journalists and Internet bloggers. This is reminiscent of Aberhart's attempts to bypass not only parliament but also the mainstream media by way of his radio program in the 1930s.

Taken together, the Harper government's approach to parliamentary governance is nearly a carbon copy of the model of "benevolent technocracy" Laycock identified in the populist actions of Aberhart's Social Credit. In both cases it is understood that the needs of the "people" can clearly be answered through the implementation of a particular economic program (social credit for Aberhart, neoliberalism for Harper) and thus deliberation, whether it occurs between individual citizens in the public sphere or elected representatives within a parliament, is simply not required. Moreover, given the very real possibility that "elites" ("big-shot" bankers for Aberhart, the welfare proponent "special interests" for Harper) may "capture" such deliberations, it is best to avoid them altogether for the sake of "the people."

Rather, the democratic legitimacy required to implement the appropriate economic theory is assured by regularly held elections that generate a clear "general will" that approves such action. The democratic legitimacy of such action is further enhanced through efforts to bypass the mainstream press, which is also easily captured by "the elite," and establish a direct connection between the leader and "the people" (maintained by Aberhart through his radio program, Harper by his connection with local presses). The parliamentary principle of "responsible government," which demands MPs within the House of Commons hold the government to account in between elections, is treated as an outdated and undemocratic convention that interferes with "the will of the people." Thus, bypassing Parliament is, in the end, a method employed to enhance rather than curtail authentic democracy, or so the logic goes.

Conclusion

There is little doubt the Harper Conservatives routinely employ populist rhetoric. This is a strategy that helps the party gain supporters and maintain party unity in a time wherein broad structural changes in the economy have left large swaths of

the middle class feeling insecure and often unheard. Of course, other parties offer electoral platforms, built atop distinct ideological foundations, that reach out to the same voters with promises to implement policies that will better meet their needs. However, the Conservatives stand alone among current federal parties in tying their distinct ideological position (neoliberal) to a broader theory of democratic renewal that addresses the legitimization crisis present in so many contemporary representative democracies.

For “Canadian families who work hard, pay their taxes, and play by the rules,” only the Conservatives’ dedicated efforts to head-off the “special interests,” the argument goes, can truly ensure “the people’s” needs are being given the highest priority. In other words, the Harper Conservatives offer a clear ideological package that appeals to what Laycock has labeled “the democratic imaginary” of potential supporters. They do this just as the Reform Party, Alberta Social Credit, and the UFA did before them.³³

However, Reform and the UFA sought to employ distinct reforms that increased the avenues of access open to ordinary Canadians. The Harper Conservatives have instead followed the model of Aberhart and embraced a strategy of simply representing the needs of “the people” in a way that does not rely upon direct democracy or parliamentary deliberation. Rather, in an extension of the democratic logic that was often blurred within Reform, the Harper Conservatives have fully embraced a technocratic faith in neoliberalism as the panacea for ordinary Canadians’ economic insecurities. Direct democracy, therefore, is simply not needed.

Nor, it appears, is parliamentary deliberation. In fact, such deliberation is often deliberately bypassed in the hopes of *enhancing* not curtailing democracy in Canada. Political observers concerned with the representation of diverse voices in this country — the very voices that often speak for the victims of neoliberal policies — may find such “bypassing” troubling. It is, however, the logical extension of the unique ideological and populist worldview adhered to by the Harper Conservatives. It is “government for the people” but it is surely not “government by the people.”

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Endnotes

- 1** The author would like to thank all those who commented on earlier versions of this paper, especially Morgan Boyco and Teresa Healy. Also, the title “Government for the People, not by the People,” was shamelessly lifted from a conversation on this topic with Roger Epp.
- 2** Stephen Harper’s address to the Conservative Party of Canada convention on November 1, 2013 was accessed through iPolitics. <http://www.ipolitics.ca/2013/11/01/verbatim-stephen-harpers-speech-to-the-calgary-convention/>. Accessed Nov 9, 2013
- 3** Lawrence Martin, “As a Populist, Harper is no Chretien,” in *Globe and Mail*, November 5, 2013. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/as-a-populist-harper-is-no-chretien/article15246438/#dashboard/follows/>. Accessed November 6, 2013.
- 4** Preston Manning, *The New Canada*, (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1992), 26.
- 5** James Farney, “Canadian Populism in the era of the United Right,” in *Conservatism in Canada*, edited by James Farney and David Rayside, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 43–58.
- 6** David Snow and Benjamin Moffitt, “Straddling the Divide: Mainstream Populism and Conservatism in Howard’s Australia and Harper’s Canada,” in *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (July 2012), 271–292.
- 7** See, for instance, Drew Weston, *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation*, (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2008) and George Akerlof and Rachel Kranton, *Identity Economics: How Our Identities Shape Our Work, Wages, and Well-Being*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011).
- 8** Peter Wiles, “A Syndrome, Not A Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism,” in G. Ionescu and E. Gellner ed., *Populism; Its Meaning and National Characteristics*, (London: The Macmillan Company: 1969), 166–179.
- 9** Francisco Panizza, “Introduction: Populism and the Mirror of Democracy,” in F. Panizza ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, (London: Verso, 2005), 3.
- 10** Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, “Populism and (liberal) democracy: a framework for analysis,” in C. Mudde and C. Rovira Kaltwasser ed., *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or Corrective for Democracy*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 8.
- 11** David Laycock, “Populism and the New Right in English Canada,” in F. Panizza ed., *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, (London: Verso, 2005), 173.
- 12** The ambivalent nature of the relationship between populist political thought and the concrete practices of liberal democracy is explored at length in Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, “Populism and (liberal) democracy: a framework for analysis.”
- 13** Henry Wise Wood lays out his conception of “Group Government” in a series of articles initially published in *The UFA*. See: H. W. Wood, “The Significance of Democratic Group Organization — Part One” in *The UFA*, March 1, 1922, 5, H. W. Wood, “The Significance of Democratic Group Organization — Part Two,” in *The UFA*, March 15, 1922, 5, H.W. Wood, “The Significance of Democratic Group Organization — Part Three,” in *The UFA*, April 1, 1922, 5, and H.W. Wood, “The Significance of Democratic Group Organization — Part Four,” in *The UFA*, April 15, 1922, 25, 27. Laycock provides an excellent analysis of Wood’s thought in this regard in chapter 3 of: David Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910 to 1945*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).
- 14** Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies*, 218.
- 15** Aberhart’s treatment of his Cabinet Ministers and MLAs is examined in: C.B. Macpherson, *Democracy in Alberta*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), 169–173, 194–198.

16 Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies*, 258.

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