

# Reply to Rejoinders: On Frogs and Worms - A Reply to Professors Black and Robin

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"...the patriotic Archbishop of Canterbury, found it advisable — —."

"Found *what*?" said the Duck.

"Found *it*," the Mouse replied, rather crossly: "of course you know what 'it' means."

"I know what 'it' means well enough, when *I* find a thing," said the Duck: "it's generally a frog or a worm."

Lewis Carrol's Duck is well aware that people have a tendency to look at the world from their own particular viewpoint. This, too, is the way in which students of politics have examined the electoral success of the Socreds in B.C. It would at least be less confusing, if not helpful, if a common perspective could be agreed upon.

One way might be to examine the evidence. In electoral behaviour research, this usually takes the form of, at a minimum, an analysis of the actual opinions of voters over a number of elections. Unfortunately, in B.C., such electoral surveys do not exist. Moreover, they are probably illegal (RSBC, 1960, Chap. 306, Sec. 166).

The next best solution is usually to find some aggregate data on voters. At least the federal government produces the decennial census. Perhaps some of the information they provide can be matched with the returns of the election closest to the compilation of the census? Professor Black is doubtful, although much of his scepticism could have been resolved had he bothered to read footnote 9. It would, anyway, not be counter-productive to see what relationships emerge. (On the technical level, it is worth reminding Professor Robin that the statistical problem of multicollinearity, of interaction among the independent variables, has yet to be resolved and, indeed, may be incapable of resolution with current techniques. Nevertheless, the standard errors of the partial regression coefficients in the study are small enough for the reader to place some confidence in the size and direction of the partials themselves.)

The relationships found by Mr. Hindle, and described in the text, still remain. As was stated previously, "the current 'class cleavage' and 'anti-elitist' interpretations have a number of limitations and remain of controversial status." This second best solution of matching aggregate data with election returns, albeit for a single election, casts enough doubt on the prevailing wisdom to warrant, if Professors Black and Robin will pardon the phrase, a second look.

What should this second look consist of? The alternative interpretation suggested in the text is useful in accounting for some of the voting patterns elsewhere. It seems, at least to this duck, also to offer a plausible explanation in the B.C. case. Unless, of course, one wishes to argue that B.C. is ontologically unique — that really would indicate a pipeline!

One final point must be reiterated, at least for Professor Robin. A further and much more extensive empirical analysis of B.C. voting behaviour is required. Whether the alternative interpretation is examined, or whether some other theoretical perspective is tested, some definite indications of the concepts to be used are imperative. We must know to what we are referring by such terms as "class" or "vote interchange" so that we can tell when we find an instance of them and, more important, when we have not. Otherwise we would all do better to stick to our frogs and worms.