

# Party Detachment and Voting Patterns in a Provincial Two-Member Constituency: Victoria, 1972

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This study is an attempt to explore the strength of party attachments and the effect of cross-party preference in a two-member provincial constituency, based upon an examination of the various ballot configurations in Victoria, 1972. In 1946, Norman Ward first noted the opportunity afforded by an examination of the results of two-member constituencies to reveal the influence of non-party considerations on election outcomes.<sup>1</sup> In closing his discussion of the variations in support for a party's candidates in the ten federal two-member constituencies which existed between 1887 and 1945, he noted that,

It seems difficult, however, to escape the conclusion that there are circumstances in which considerations other than party affiliation have significant influence on election results, even though most elections in two-member constituencies tend to bear out the general proposition that a party's candidate should receive virtually the same number of votes.

Some sixteen years later, Morris Davis extended this utilization of election results in such constituencies in an extensive study of balloting in the 1962 federal election in Halifax which was one of the two remaining two-member constituencies at the federal level. He replicated his study for the 1963 federal election and for a third and final time in 1965.<sup>2</sup> Ward had observed that the variation in the total number of votes received by a candidate of a particular party could at best provide "a measure of minimum variation in party support."<sup>3</sup> Variations in support among the

<sup>1</sup> Norman Ward, "Voting in Canadian Two-Member Constituencies," *Public Affairs*, IX, No. 4 (September 1946), 220-223; reprinted in John C. Courtney, ed., *Voting in Canada* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1967), 125-129.

<sup>2</sup> Morris Davis, "Did They Vote for Candidate or Party in Halifax?" in John Meisel, ed., *Papers on the 1962 Election* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 19-32; "Ballot Behaviour in Halifax Revisited," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XXX, No. 4 (November 1964), 538-558; and "A Last Look at Ballot Behaviour in the Dual Constituency of Halifax," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XXXII, No. 3 (August 1966), pp. 366-371. Both Halifax and the other two-member federal constituency of Queens, P.E.I., disappeared following the 1966 redistribution.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

candidates are of course averaged out in aggregate constituency vote totals. Calculations by poll provide a higher estimate of this variation but such a figure is still subject to averaging. In the three Halifax studies, Davis therefore moved to a sampling of individual ballots in order to examine the relative influences of party and candidate in voting behaviour.

Perhaps the most painfully simple observation one may make about voting behaviour in a single member constituency electoral system is that a registered voter has two basic options: to vote or not to vote. Extending this to a two-member constituency, there are four possible options: a) to vote a straight party ballot (two candidates from the same party); b) to plump for only one candidate; c) to split the ballot (two candidates from two different parties); or d) not to vote. Thus, whereas under a plurality voting system in a four way single-member contest there are only four possible forms of valid ballots, in a four-way two-member contest — with four parties each offering two candidates — there are some 36 possible valid ballot configurations. For Davis, straight party ballots were attributable primarily to party appeal, split ballots to candidate appeal and plumper ballots to an intermediate level of weak party loyalty. From a comparison of the "ballot profile," he argued it was possible to develop "indices of the comparative influence of party and candidate on the vote decision."<sup>4</sup> In 1962, Davis found that 11.2 per cent of the electorate did not cast straight party ballots, in 1963, 7.8 per cent, and in 1965, 16.1 per cent. Approximately equal numbers plumped and split their vote.<sup>5</sup> Of the three parties contesting the three elections, the N.D.P., as the minor third party, proved the most dependent on a non-party oriented support.

This method of estimating the strength of party and candidate appeal provides only a rough approximation of their relative influence and the level of plumping and splitting only an indication of the relative impact of a local candidate. A straight party ballot may itself be a product of the comparatively strong appeal of both, if not just one, of the candidates of a single party. If this is the case, Davis' calculations underestimate candidate appeal. Plumping may also reflect an ignorance of the availability of two votes on the part of the elector or a deliberate party motivated vote for one candidate and a discriminatory anti-candidate moti-

<sup>4</sup> Morris Davis, "Did They Vote for Party or Candidate in Halifax?", *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20. It should be noted that these are percentages of the total ballots including rejected ballots.

<sup>5</sup> Morris Davis, "A Last Look at Ballot Behaviour in the Dual Constituency of Halifax," *op. cit.*, p. 367.

vated abstention. It may be further argued that the two votes on a split ballot may be part party and part candidate oriented or, indeed, due to pure indifference. As it is a repudiation of at least one party's candidate, a split vote appears, however, to be a clearer expression of candidate preference than plumping. Still more significantly, no account can be taken in the examination of the ballots of the impact of such influences as leadership, socio-economic bases of voting behaviour, or indeed campaign issues which also lie outside the underlying influence of strict party identification. If one injects consideration of whether the splitter is motivated by considerations of the party's constituency or broader national or provincial interests, the picture becomes still more complex. In a multi-party system, for example, where a party is weak in a particular constituency, a party identifier may rationally cast one or two votes for another stronger party locally in order to contribute to the party's national or provincial advantage through the defeat of a second, more major, adversary. Thus, what appears to be party disloyalty at the local level may be, in fact, strategic loyalty at another level.

Survey based studies have shown candidate appeal to be the lesser influence in Canadian voting behaviour. From his analysis of the 1964 Waterloo South by-election, John Wilson concluded that the proportion of the electorate which was "genuinely motivated by candidate partisanship" lay between 4 and 26 per cent. The lower figure was based upon candidate oriented responses, the higher on reported voting patterns in the 1963 and 1964 elections and an alternate ballot devised so as to test the actual influence of the candidates. Combining both sets of data, Wilson settled on 10 per cent as a single, rough estimate.<sup>6</sup> The national 1968 post-election survey by John Meisel found that 16 per cent of the respondents identified the local candidate as the most important factor in their electoral decision compared to 35 per cent influenced by the party, 42 per cent by the leaders and 8 per cent by their M.P.'s work. While there was little variation in this finding by region, there was considerable variation by party. Fifty-one per cent of the Liberals, for example, were influenced by party leadership, and only 9 per cent by the local candidates. Conservatives, however, showed a high candidate orientation at 25 per cent with 20 and 22 per cent levels for the N.D.P. and Social Credit/Creditistes respectively.<sup>7</sup> Such results, however, may

<sup>6</sup> John Wilson, "The Myth of Candidate Partisanship: The Case of Waterloo South," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, III, No. 4 (November 1968), pp. 21-31.

<sup>7</sup> John Meisel, *Working Papers on Canadian Politics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), Appendix, Table IX.

mask the spillover of a party attachment on candidate appeal. A third study by Robert Cunningham also conducted in 1968, in Hamilton, for example, placed the level of candidate influence at a high of 25 per cent, but when party identifiers supporting their own party's candidates were removed from the sample this was reduced to close to Wilson's estimate at 9.6 per cent.<sup>8</sup>

Although the levels of candidate appeal found by Davis are not inconsistent with the above findings, if one disregards plumping as the most ambiguous form of non-party oriented voting behaviour, the levels of split voting of 4.3, 6.1 and 7.9 per cent underestimate the average levels derived from surveys. Given the various motivations which may underlie non-straight party ballots the indices derived by the Davis technique may be more precisely defined as measures of *party detachment* rather than candidate appeal. Whether party or candidate oriented or fresh inter-party migrations, straight party voting in a two-member constituency represents a double attachment to a party. Both plumping and split voting, on the other hand, whether due to indifference, part candidate, part party, or any other form of orientation show less attachment to a party within the constituency. To attribute them to pure candidate appeal or even more generally to party disloyalty is to ignore other possible motivations in voting behaviour.

Norman Ward's and Morris Davis' interest in two-member constituencies lay in the possibility of extrapolating some general considerations with respect to the presence of non-party influences in voting behaviour. Since the disappearance of the remaining two federal two-member constituencies in 1965, analysis of contemporary balloting is no longer possible at the federal level. Current techniques of survey research also permit an exploration of the underlying social and psychological correlates of voting behaviour which remain conjecture in the Halifax studies. There are, however, very good reasons for retaining the Davis approach to derive insights into patterns of voting. Double-member ridings are still found at the provincial level and it is clear that what is termed here as party detachment can have a decisive effect on election outcomes. In British Columbia, for example, over the last six provincial elections, 1956 to 1972, four multi-member provincial constituencies have returned representatives from different parties. In Vancouver Point Grey,<sup>9</sup> two

<sup>8</sup> Robert Cunningham, "The Impact of the Local Candidate in Canadian Federal Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, IV, No. 2 (June 1971), 287-290.

<sup>9</sup> Vancouver Point Grey also had mixed representation in 1952 and 1953. Under the alternative voting system, however, separate ballots were used for each seat in multi-member constituencies.

Social Crediters and one Liberal were elected in 1963. In 1956 in Victoria, two Social Crediters and one Liberal were returned; also in 1956, in Vancouver East, one Social Crediter and one CCF were returned; in 1963 in Burnaby, one Social Crediter and one N.D.P.; and finally in 1972 one Social Crediter and one Liberal were returned in Victoria. Thus, quite apart from any possible relevance of the findings with respect to voting behaviour in general, the phenomenon of split voting and plumping is in itself an important dimension to political behaviour among the B.C. electorate. In addition, although an examination of ballot configurations provides no information on the opinions of the individual voter, it does result in a direct measurement of the level of party attachment and a more accurate identification of the inter-relationship and cross basis of support among candidates and parties than is attainable from other research techniques.

### *The Victoria Context*

This study is based on an examination of a sample of ballots taken in the August 30, 1972 provincial general election in Victoria. The electoral experience in Victoria in the elections held between 1963 and 1969 was such that by 1972 the constituency could be regarded as providing the Social Credit government with two safe seats.<sup>10</sup> The two sitting Social Credit members had both been elected in four successive provincial general elections with a substantial margin separating the bottom candidate from the nearest challenger (see Table I below). Victoria had

TABLE I

MARGIN OF VOTES BETWEEN LOWEST SOCIAL CREDIT CANDIDATE AND  
HIGHEST OPPOSITION CANDIDATE 1960-69

	<i>Election Year</i>			
	<i>1960</i>	<i>1963</i>	<i>1966</i>	<i>1969</i>
Difference in votes	1,393	4,678	6,852	6,926
Difference as percentage of registered voters who voted	6.22	22.56	28.44	25.53

been represented as a double member constituency since 1966, by William N. Chant, appointed Minister of Public Works 1955, and Waldo T. Skillings, appointed Minister of Industrial Development, Trade and Com-

<sup>10</sup> Prior to 1941, it had been a four-member constituency, between 1941 and 1963 three-member, and since 1966 a double-member constituency.

merce in 1968. Defeated in Esquimalt in 1952, Chant was first elected for Victoria in the 1953 general election when the three Social Credit candidates defeated the sitting Liberal members who had jointly held the three seats since 1949.<sup>11</sup> One seat was immediately lost in the by-election held November 24, 1953 in an attempt to find a place for the finance minister Einar Gunderson, defeated in Oak Bay in the June provincial general election. Percy Wright resigned his seat to make way for Gunderson, but the latter was defeated by a margin of 90 votes by the Liberal candidate George Gregory, a Victoria lawyer. Gregory retained his seat by 581 votes in the 1956 general election, but in 1960 was defeated by 1393 votes by Waldo Skillings.

Of the two members, Chant had consistently proved the most popular at the polls (see Table II), and in the general election in 1969 had received 456 votes more than Skillings. As a former member of the

TABLE II  
SOCIAL CREDIT CANDIDATES' SHARE OF TOTAL VOTES  
1960-1969

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1963</i>	<i>1966</i>	<i>1969</i>
Chant	9,864	9,736	13,068	15,899
Skillings	8,671	9,347	12,156	15,443
Smith	8,855	9,118	—	—
Percentage of Total Votes	41.93	48.07	55.66	54.08

Aberhart cabinet, his roots went back deep within the Social Credit movement. Approaching 77 years of age, however, Chant announced his retirement from political life prior to the August 30, 1972 provincial election. A confidant of W. A. C. Bennett, Waldo Skillings was a former provincial candidate for the Conservatives in 1941 and had joined Social Credit in August 1952. Active in local city politics, he also ran as a federal Social Credit candidate in Victoria in 1953 and 1957. Unsuccessful in previous bids for a provincial Social Credit nomination, Skillings narrowly captured a Victoria provincial nomination on the sixth ballot in 1960.<sup>12</sup> At the nomination meeting held on the change to a double-member constituency in 1966, Skillings defeated Donald Smith,

<sup>11</sup> Of the defeated Liberals, Nancy Hodges, Speaker of the House 1949-52, had been first elected in 1941, William T. Straith, Minister of Education and Provincial Secretary, in the Johnson Cabinet, in 1937 and Daniel Proudfoot in 1949.

also a former Victoria alderman, and an M.L.A. since 1956 who had proved a restless Social Credit backbencher.<sup>13</sup> Skillings was once again nominated for the 1972 provincial election on July 25 and was joined in place of Chant by a political newcomer, Newell Morrison, a Victoria businessman known chiefly as a former owner-manager of a local automobile dealership.

The most prominent 1972 candidate from the opposition was David Anderson. Elected as the federal M.P. for Esquimalt-Saanich in 1968, he had assumed the leadership of the provincial Liberals on May 21, 1972. Of the Greater Victoria constituencies he was rumoured to be considering for his provincial candidature, he opted for Victoria and was nominated July 18, together with Dr. Carron Jameson, a city dentist and ten year member of the Greater Victoria School Board. Anderson formally tendered his resignation from the federal House of Commons on July 24.<sup>14</sup> The Progressive Conservatives also presented two widely known and well-established candidates, both aldermen of some seven years standing: Edith Gunning from Saanich, a former schoolteacher, and Clyde Savage from Victoria, a pharmacist who owned two local pharmacies. While the two Conservative candidates were the last to be nominated for Victoria on July 28, the New Democrats had nominated their candidates on April 18, four months prior to the issue of the election writ. Unlike all of the other candidates, with the possible exception of Morrison, neither could claim a long background of any prominence in the community. David Hobson, a former community college instructor and Kathleen Ruff, a former university lecturer known as a status of women spokesperson, were the youngest and least prestigious of the eight.

As the former M.P. for the adjoining federal constituency, well-known for his association with the campaign against U.S. oil shipments down the coast, and now leader of the provincial Liberals, David Anderson was by far the most prestigious candidate. The entire provincial Liberal campaign centered around Anderson. Campaign materials, for example, contained such themes as: "David Anderson for Premier," "The Anderson Campaign," "British Columbia's Future with David Anderson" and "The Anderson Team." To be a creditable political force, it was imperative that Anderson be elected in Victoria. Local literature, of course,

<sup>12</sup> "City Soecreds Pick Waldo Skillings to Team Up with Chant and Smith," *Daily Colonist*, July 26, 1960, p. 13.

<sup>13</sup> Ted Pulford, "Smith Dumped," *Daily Colonist* (August 19, 1966), p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Journals*, CXVIII, 4th Session, 28th Parliament (August 31, 1972), p. 507.

included appeals on behalf of both Liberal candidates. One open letter, for example, read "we can provide B.C. with its next Premier — and an effective M.L.A. for a New British Columbia Government." Both Anderson and Jameson were endorsed by the Teachers' Political Action Committee which had been formed by the B.C. Teachers' Federation in June 1972 to secure the defeat of the Social Credit government by lending support to those candidates deemed most likely to successfully defeat Social Crediters.<sup>15</sup> The Liberal candidates were, however, the only two in Victoria to also distribute entirely separate pamphlets for each local candidate. In contrast, while distributing one local issues-candidates oriented pamphlet, the less salient New Democratic Party candidates relied more on a general party appeal and were essentially presented as "your N.D.P. Candidates."

If part of the optimum strategy in a Liberal campaign was clearly to secure the election of the party leader by drawing on support from split voting, the intelligent Social Credit response was to appeal for two and urge against split votes. Quite apart from the possible appeal of the revival of the provincial Progressive Conservatives and the appeal of David Anderson, Social Credit was also likely to encounter some split votes due to the retirement of William Chant. Provincial Social Credit campaign committee advertisements urged the voter, "Don't Turn 'Left' . . . and don't split your vote." Local candidates distributed post cards which read, "You have two votes. Your Social Credit candidates are Morrison, Newell R. . . . Skillings, Waldo D. Vote for both of them." A Conservative leaflet similarly urged "Vote for Both" Gunning and Savage.

A province-wide poll sponsored by the *Vancouver Province* in the spring 1972 showed that unemployment, labour, pollution, Bennett, inflation and hospitals and schools were regarded as the top six most frequently mentioned problems facing British Columbia.<sup>16</sup> Local community oriented issues stressed by the opposition parties in the Victoria campaign also included an improved transit system, an improved ferry service, urban planning and renewal, environmental controls and increased assistance to the aged.<sup>17</sup> There is no evidence to suggest, however, that any of these issues specifically dominated the campaign. Indeed, there is some unanimity of opinion among Victoria party workers that, if any single local issue of any electoral impact emerged, it arose in the

<sup>15</sup> Al Forrest, "Teachers Back Grits, Tory," *Victoria Times* (July 31, 1972), p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> "Jobless Problem No. 1", *The Province* (May 19, 1972) p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Of special importance in a city where 23 per cent of the total population is aged 65 and over.



closing 24 hours of the campaign as the result of what was termed a "small scuffle" between Waldo Skillings and Edith Gunning at the conclusion of an all-candidates radio forum.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately for Skillings, interpretations of this incident were consistent with a reputation for some turbulence<sup>19</sup> and added further to the probability that a high level of party detachment would shape the outcome of the election.

The results of the 1972 election are shown in Table III below. While Social Credit support in Victoria was close to the provincial average of 31.16 per cent, the 31.36 per cent obtained by the two candidates was 22.72 percentage points below that in 1969, compared to a province wide drop of 15.63. The two Victoria Conservatives obtained nearly 21 per

TABLE III  
RESULTS OF PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTIONS  
VICTORIA, 1969 AND 1972

	1972			1969	
	Total Votes	Per Cent		Total Votes	Per Cent
Morrison (SC)	10,840	16.14	Chant (SC)	15,899	27.43
Skillings (SC)	10,227	15.22	Skillings (SC)	15,443	26.65
TOTAL SC	21,067	31.36	TOTAL SC	31,342	54.08
Hobson (NDP)	6,887	10.25	Bunn (NDP)	8,517	14.70
Ruff (NDP)	6,981	10.39	Fawcett (NDP)	8,006	13.81
TOTAL NDP	13,868	20.64	TOTAL NDP	16,523	28.51
Anderson (LIB)	10,750	16.00	Couvelier (LIB)	4,497	7.76
Jameson (LIB)	7,436	11.07	Stewart (LIB)	5,334	9.20
TOTAL LIB	18,186	27.07	TOTAL LIB	9,831	16.96
Gunning (PC)	7,843	11.67	Scott (IND)	259	0.45
Savage (PC)	6,218	9.26			
TOTAL PC	14,061	20.93			
TOTAL	67,182	100.0	TOTAL	57,955	100.0

<sup>18</sup> "Candidates Make Waves on Air," *Daily Colonist*, August 29, 1972, p. 11 and "Waldo's Wallop Shakes Edith," *Victoria Times* (August 29, 1972), pp. 1-2.

<sup>19</sup> See for example the description by Ronald B. Worley, *The Wonderful World of W. A. C. Bennett* [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1971], p. 53. In 1949, Skillings had also been fined \$5.00 for a technical assault in a Victoria cafe.

cent of the vote compared to the 12 per cent they obtained the last time they had fielded candidates in 1963. The Liberals gained a total of 9 percentage points over 1969 and the N.D.P. sustained a loss of eight.

Although this study was carried out in anticipation of a relatively high number of split ballots, the final results showed a startlingly high proportion. Substantial differences were shown in the votes obtained by the two Liberal candidates and to a lesser extent by the Conservatives and Social Credit. Indeed, the large number of non straight party ballots were sufficient for Anderson to oust Skillings, who trailed his inexperienced running-mate by 613 votes and lost his seat by a margin of 523 votes. Victoria was thus once again, for the second time following a provincial general election since 1953, to be represented by a Liberal M.L.A. as well as Social Credit.

### *Methodology*

The data for this study was obtained in the same manner as the Davis studies by tabulating the specific combination of votes shown on each ballot as they were counted after the close of the polls by the deputy returning officers. The tabulations were made at a random sample of divisions in selected polling stations. Accurate tabulations were obtained from a total of 12 polling divisions.<sup>20</sup> Two included residents in the vicinity of James Bay (2 A-L and 2 Mc-Z); two, north and south of Simcoe Street (6 A-Z and 10 A-Z); two, north and south of Rockland Avenue (27 L-Z and 33 A-Ke); two in the vicinity of Quadra and Douglas Streets (61 A-Z and 62 A-Z); two in the vicinity of Cook and Quadra (63 A-Z and 64 A-Z); one in the Douglas Street and Burnside Road area (86 A-Z); and one in the northern sector in the vicinity of Cook Street and Cedar Hill Golf Course (96 Mc-Z). This wide geographical coverage was further supplemented by tabulations obtained at the final count by the Returning Officer on September 12 from ballot envelopes under section 80 of the Provincial Elections Act, which provides for voting by persons claiming to be registered whose names do not appear on the voters list, and under section 117, by persons absent from their own polling division in the electoral district on the day of the poll.

The sample obtained in this manner included 4,058 votes cast by 2,086 voters. There was a close correspondence between each candidate's share of the vote and that in the actual returns. As can be calculated from Table IV, the sum of the deviations in the percentage of votes shown for

<sup>20</sup> All tabulations were checked against the Statement of Votes, form U prepared by the Victoria Returning Officer.

TABLE IV  
COMPARISON OF SAMPLE WITH ACTUAL RETURNS  
(RANK ORDER)

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Actual Returns</i>		<i>Sample</i>		
	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>	<i>Z Values</i>
Morrison (SC)	10,840	16.14	665	16.39	.433
Anderson (LIB)	10,750	16.00	652	16.07	.122
Skillings (SC)	10,227	15.22	629	15.50	.497
Gunning (PC)	7,843	11.67	468	11.53	-.278
Jameson (LIB)	7,436	11.07	450	11.09	.041
Ruff (NDP)	6,981	10.39	428	10.55	.334
Hobson (NDP)	6,887	10.25	408	10.05	-.420
Savage (PC)	6,218	9.26	358	8.82	-.967
TOTAL VOTES	67,182	100.00	4,058	100.00	
NO. OF VOTERS	33,085	—	2,086	—	

each candidate (ignoring negative and positive values) was only 1.56. Although a number of candidates were separated by a relatively small number of votes in the actual returns, the sample placed the candidates in the same rank order. Jameson's total showed the smallest deviation at 0.02 and Savage the highest at 0.44. The differences in the proportion of the vote for each candidate in the returns and the sample vote were also examined by the calculation of Z scores to measure the probability that the differences could have occurred by chance in sampling. With the single exception of Savage, the probability of finding such differences above or below their actual share of vote in a sample by chance was extremely high and ranged between 61.70 per cent in the case of Skillings to 96.82 per cent for Anderson. Even while the relative under-representation of Savage suggests that some caution might be required in the examination of his particular pattern of support, the difference of 0.44 was not regarded as statistically significant as there was a 33.20 per cent chance of such variation in a sample.

#### *Voting Patterns*

It is quite evident from the differences in the total votes obtained by the candidates for each party that there was a high level of party detach-

ment in Victoria. Assuming that the vote for the bottom candidate for each party represents a hard core of party attachment, a comparison of the difference between this vote and that for the top candidate of the same party indicates an extremely high percentage of the ballots were split. Whereas the total estimated minimum number of split ballots calculated from the aggregate constituency results in 1972 was 18.35 of the core party votes (see Table V), in the same two-member constituency in 1966 it was 5.55 per cent and in 1969 8.99 per cent.

TABLE V  
AGGREGATE RESULTS  
ESTIMATED MINIMUM LEVEL OF PARTY DETACHMENT  
VICTORIA, 1972

<i>Party</i>	<i>Attachment*</i>	<i>Detachment**</i>	<i>Percentage Ratio of 2/1</i>
Liberal	7,436	3,314	44.57
N.D.P.	6,887	94	1.36
P.C.	6,218	1,625	26.13
Social Credit	10,227	613	5.99
TOTAL	30,768	5,646	18.35

\* Votes obtained by the bottom candidate of each party (assumed by Davis to be straight ballots).

\*\* Difference between above and votes of the top candidate for that party.

The same rough indicator was also used to compare the Victoria 1972 experience with that in the other six two-member provincial constituencies in Vancouver (see Table VI). This comparison shows party attachment in Victoria to have been at a uniquely low level.

TABLE VI  
AGGREGATE RESULTS IN TWO-MEMBER PROVINCIAL CONSTITUENCIES 1972  
ESTIMATED MINIMUM TOTAL LEVEL OF PARTY DETACHMENT

(Votes separating each party's leading candidates and second candidates as percentage of second's total\*)

<i>Burrard</i>	<i>Vancouver Two-Member Constituencies</i>					<i>South</i>	<i>Victoria</i>
	<i>Centre</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>Little Mountain</i>	<i>Point Grey</i>			
5.03	2.34	3.10	0.88	5.90	1.62	18.35	

\* Excludes Communists and Independents.

Unless the bottom candidate for each party is consistently the least popular of the two on every ballot, as was observed earlier, the averaging out of variations in candidate support contained in the constituency totals may grossly underestimate the number of split ballots. If the results are examined for each of the polls, the estimated number of split ballots increases by 7 per cent. As is shown in Table VII, there is no change in the ratio for the Liberals as Anderson ran ahead of Jameson in every poll. There is, however, a relatively significant increase in the ratio for the N.D.P. from 1.36 to 6.37 which reflects the variation in the degree of support between the two N.D.P. candidates among the polling divisions.

TABLE VII

RETURNS BY POLLING DIVISION, VICTORIA 1972  
ESTIMATED MINIMUM LEVEL OF PARTY DETACHMENT

<i>Party</i>	<i>Attachment</i>	<i>Detachment</i>	<i>Percentage Ratio 2/1</i>
Liberal	7,436	3,314	44.57
N.D.P.	6,720	428	6.37
P.C.	6,206	1,649	26.57
Social Credit	10,203	661	6.48
TOTAL	30,565	6,052	19.80

As the number of polling divisions are also sub-divided alphabetically, the amount of averaging can be reduced further by examining the returns shown on the returning officer's final statement of votes. The result shown in Table VIII increases the estimated number of split ballots by

TABLE VIII

RETURNS BY POLLING DIVISION-ALPHABETIC, VICTORIA 1972  
ESTIMATED MINIMUM LEVEL OF PARTY DETACHMENT BY PARTY

<i>Party</i>	<i>Attachment</i>	<i>Detachment</i>	<i>Percentage Ratio 2/1</i>
Liberal	7,436	3,314	44.57
N.D.P.	6,671	526	7.88
P.C.	6,205	1,651	26.61
Social Credit	10,169	729	7.17
TOTAL	30,481	6,220	20.41

10 per cent over the original estimate and shows a further significant increase in the ratio of level of split voting among the N.D.P. and Social Credit. The ratios for both of these two parties, however, still remain far below those for the Conservatives and Liberals.

High as these estimates of party detachment are, they still fall below the actual levels found in the sample of ballots (see Table IX). The overall percentage of non straight ballots was, in fact, 1.8 times the level of detachment shown in the best estimate based on the alphabetic sub-

TABLE IX  
1972 VICTORIA BALLOT SAMPLE  
PLUMP AND SPLIT BALLOTS AS PERCENTAGE OF  
STRAIGHT BALLOTS BY PARTY

<i>Party</i>	<i>Plump As a Percentage of Straight Ballots</i>	<i>Split</i>	<i>Total Non-Straight as Percentage of Straight Ballots</i>
Liberal	8.51	44.83	53.34
N.D.P.	5.45	22.34	27.79
P.C.	6.13	47.24	53.37
Social Credit	6.32	14.87	21.19
TOTAL	6.65	30.24	36.89

division of the polling divisions. The proportion of non-straight ballot support for the Liberals was just 20 per cent above the estimate, but it was found to be equalled by the Conservatives whose proportion was double that shown in the estimate. Although the other two parties continued to show relatively higher levels of party attachment, the proportions for the N.D.P. and Social Credit were also respectively 3.5 and 3 times the estimated levels of detachment.

In the ballot sample, 82.12 per cent of the ballots were straight, 5.47 per cent plump ballots and 12.42 per cent, split. By their failure to support the two candidates nominated by any single party, nearly 18 per cent of the Victoria electorate can be said to have displayed a detachment from all parties within the constituency. A comparison of the sources of party support by the three forms of balloting shows the Liberals and Conservatives to have had the lowest level of party attachment in the form of straight ballots and to have been the most reliant on the detachment of one vote from another party through split voting (see Table X). Only 79 per cent of their total votes came from straight ballots

TABLE X  
1972 VICTORIA BALLOT SAMPLE  
SOURCES OF PARTY SUPPORT BY BALLOT

<i>Party</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Votes for the Party</i>			<i>Total</i>	<i>N</i>
	<i>Straight Ballots</i>	<i>Plump Ballots</i>	<i>Split Ballots</i>		
Liberal	78.95	3.36	17.70	100	1102
N.D.P.	87.80	2.39	9.81	100	836
P.C.	78.93	2.42	18.64	100	826
Social Credit	90.42	2.86	6.72	100	1294
TOTAL	84.43	2.81	12.76	100	4058

compared to 88 per cent for the N.D.P. and 90 per cent for Social Credit. There was little difference in the level of plumping. The Liberals drew just slightly above the constituency average and the New Democrats and Conservatives slightly below. Although both the New Democrats and Social Credit showed a far lesser reliance on split ballots than the other parties in their total vote, Social Credit emerged with the strongest party base with only approximately 7 per cent of its vote obtained from split voting compared to 10 per cent for the New Democrats.

An examination of the split ballots provides a valuable profile of the cross basis of support enjoyed by each party (Table XI). The Liberals and Conservatives drew the most heavily from a shared cross basis of support, but differed significantly in the proportions of their support shared with the N.D.P. and Social Credit.

TABLE XI  
SOURCES OF SPLIT BALLOT SUPPORT BY PARTY

	<i>Percentage of Ballots Shared with Other Party</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>N.D.P.</i>	<i>P.C.</i>	<i>Social Credit</i>	
Liberal		28.72	53.33	17.95	100
N.D.P.	68.29		14.63	17.07	100
P.C.	67.53	7.79		24.68	100
Social Credit	40.23	16.09	43.68		100
N	195	82	154	87	518

The gulf between the New Democrats and Conservatives appears to have been far wider than that between the New Democrats and Liberals. Approximately the same proportion of the split ballots that carried support for a Social Credit candidate also supported either a Liberal or Conservative, but the majority of N.D.P. split balloting was shared with a Liberal. Not ignoring their limited shared support on the split ballots, the most fundamental cleavage found in this pattern of voting was that between the New Democrats and Social Credit. Whether due to candidate appeal, party-orientation or any other factor, it is clear that the Liberals and Conservatives took up essentially intermediary positions by enjoying a substantial joint overlap in support supplemented to some extent by a further overlap with Social Credit and, in the case of the Liberals, some overlap with the N.D.P.

#### *Sources of Candidate Support*

It is evident from an examination of the cross patterns of voting in the sample by candidate that the variations in the levels of party attachment through straight voting, were primarily due to the appeal of David Anderson (Liberal) and Edith Gunning (Conservative) among the party detached split voters.<sup>21</sup> Shown in the same order as their appearance on the Victoria ballot in Table XII, there were significant differences in the sources of the ballot support among the candidates. David Anderson obtained a higher percentage of his vote from plumping and split ballots than any other candidate. In contrast, his running mate, Carron Jameson, received the lowest proportion of votes from this source with nearly 97 per cent of his vote obtained from party attached straight votes. Twelve per cent of Anderson's votes, the largest proportion of his party detached vote, were shared with Gunning, an additional 5 per cent with Kathleen Ruff, and approximately 3 per cent with each of Newell Morrison, David Hobson and Clyde Savage. Of his party detached ballot combinations, Anderson shared the least support from a Skillings split vote. Gunning's share of the total vote depended still more strongly on the Anderson-Gunning combination. She shared 17 per cent of her vote with Anderson, but drew to a far lesser extent from support shared with either of the two N.D.P. candidates. To the limited extent that the two Social Crediters shared support with non-Social Credit candidates, they did so primarily with Gunning and Anderson. As in the case of the Liberal, the weaker Conservative candidate was heavily dependent on a straight party

<sup>21</sup> As party labels appeared on the ballot, split voters voted in the knowledge they were crossing party lines.



TABLE XII

## SOURCES OF CANDIDATE SUPPORT BY BALLOT COMBINATIONS

<i>Ballot Pairing</i>	<i>Percentage of Candidates Vote</i>							
	<i>Morrison</i>	<i>Skillings</i>	<i>Hobson</i>	<i>Ruff</i>	<i>Anderson</i>	<i>Jameson</i>	<i>Gunning</i>	<i>Savage</i>
Morrison (SC)	3.16*	93.00**	.74	1.17	3.07	.89	5.13	.84
Skillings (SC)	87.97**	2.54*	.74	.70	1.38	.44	2.14	.28
Hobson (NDP)	.45	.48	1.96*	85.75**	3.22	.22	1.07	—
Ruff (NDP)	.75	.48	89.95**	2.80*	5.06	.22	1.07	.56
Anderson (LIB)	3.01	1.43	5.15	7.71	5.37*	96.67**	17.31	5.03
Jameson (LIB)	.60	.32	.25	.23	66.72**	.44*	1.07	—
Gunning (PC)	3.61	1.59	1.23	1.17	12.42	1.11	2.56*	91.06**
Savage (PC)	.45	.16	—	.47	2.76	—	69.66**	2.23*
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
<b>N</b>	665	629	408.	428	652	450	468	358

\*\* = Straight Party Vote

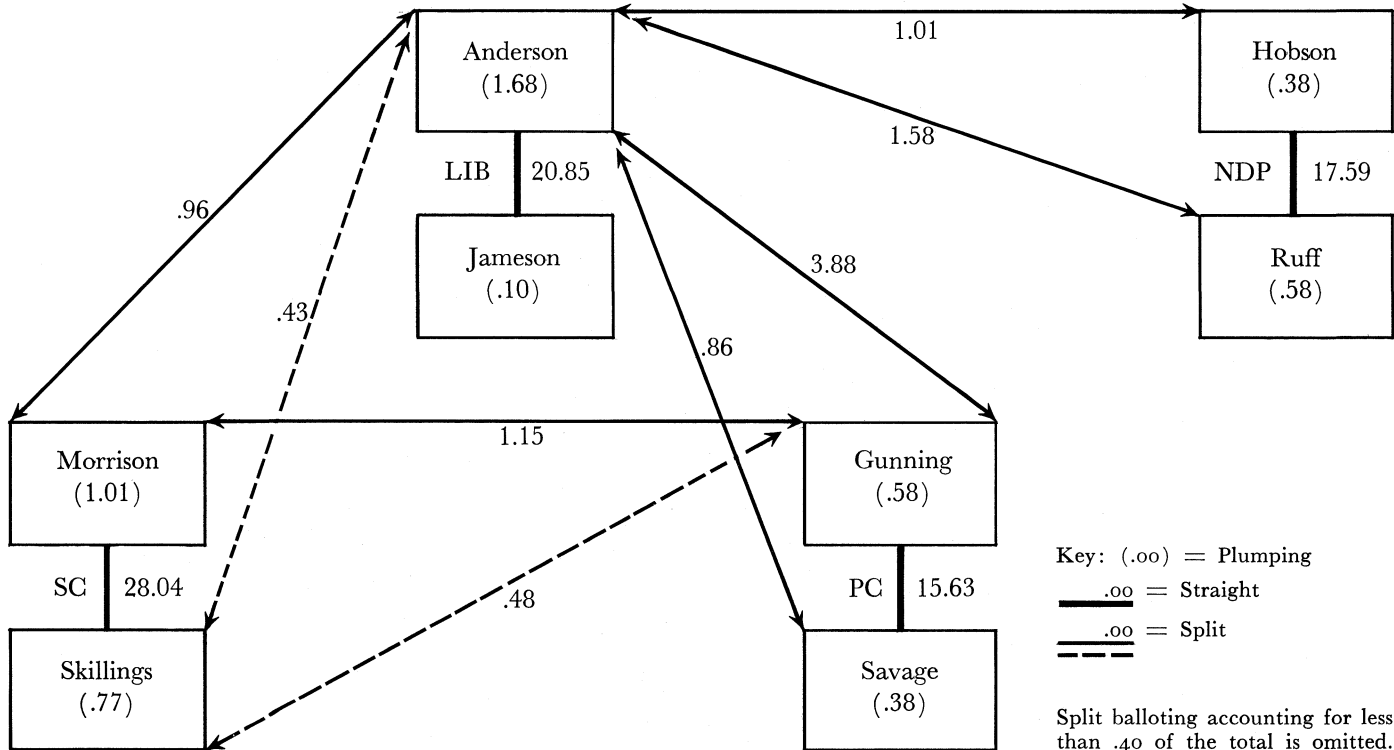
\* = Plumping for the Candidate

attached vote, but unlike Jameson, Savage also drew (from a Liberal-Conservative, Anderson-Savage ballot split) on some relatively significant party detached support. While the votes for the two Social Credit candidates followed similar patterns, Waldo Skillings obtained a higher proportion of straight votes than Morrison. The latter was slightly higher in the proportion of his vote obtained from plumping and shared more of his support with Anderson and Gunning. As with the two Social Crediters, the New Democrats showed considerably less variation in the bases of their support than the Liberals and Conservatives. The difference in their levels of support is accounted for by a slightly higher level of party detached support for Ruff through plumping and Anderson-Ruff split balloting.

The total effect of the high level of party detachment shown in the constituency on the election outcome is graphically depicted in Figure I. Straight party ballots for the two Social Crediters comprised the single largest group of ballots (28.04 per cent of the total). Supplemented by plumping and some shared support with Anderson and Gunning, this high level of party support was sufficient to secure Morrison's election. Skillings, however, was unable to supplement this base to the same degree. Building upon the second largest group of ballots (20.85 per cent of the total), Anderson was the prime beneficiary of party detached votes. Drawing special strength from a shared Anderson-Gunning vote, he was also the only candidate to share a significant number of ballots with all six of his opponents. His high degree of electoral appeal was also shown in the highest number of ballots derived from plumping. The broad basis of his support proved to be just sufficiently strong enough to defeat the incumbent Social Credit cabinet minister. The base of straight balloting for the two Conservatives (15.63 per cent) was the lowest level of party support of all four parties. Gunning, however, also proved to have an exceptionally high level of appeal. She drew not only upon a strong Anderson-Gunning vote, but also to some significant extent, upon a Morrison-Gunning vote which together propelled her into fourth position in the total vote. Although Savage did share some relatively significant support with Anderson, like Jameson he did not derive any substantial support either from split ballots or from plumping. As the bottom placed and fifth placed candidates respectively, their votes reflect a party attached straight vote. The N.D.P. share of the vote was basically composed of straight ballots plus a shared Ruff-Anderson, Hobson-Anderson vote, with Ruff running slightly ahead of Hobson as noted earlier due to plumping and a slightly higher split vote shared with Anderson.

FIGURE I: MAJOR VOTING PATTERNS BY CANDIDATE

(Percentages of total ballots in sample)



### *Conclusions*

In the opening discussion, a note of caution was expressed with respect to the interpretation of both plumping and split ballots as purely reflections of relative candidate appeal. The strikingly high level of party detached support received by Anderson and Gunning, however, make it difficult to avoid the conclusion that candidate appeal was of primary importance in the determination of the election outcome in Victoria. Both appear to have run far ahead of their party's other candidate. This was not only due to a joint appeal for the same voter, but also for the Morrison and, to some extent Skillings, voter. Anderson had the further advantage of sharing votes with both of the New Democrats.

The higher level of plumping and split voting for the more junior Social Credit candidate also lends a degree of credibility to the belief shared by both Morrison and Skillings that the latter's defeat was due to the pre-election radio-forum scuffle.<sup>22</sup> Morrison's plump and split ballots could thus be said to represent anti-Skillings protest vote. The proportions of each candidate's vote calculated in Table XII show that the outcome could have been easily altered in Skillings favour by the absence of plumping for Morrison and only marginal shifts in the combinations of split ballots. Extrapolating from the bases of support shown in the sample to the actual results, one finds, however, that approximately half of Anderson's margin of 523 votes over Skillings can be accounted for in split ballots containing a Skillings-Anderson vote. This combination suggests that the strength of Anderson's appeal over that of Morrison as a Social Credit newcomer is as much part of the explanation of the election outcome as the colourful "anti-Skillings" one.

Notwithstanding the amount of circumstantial evidence that may be derived from the ballots to support a candidate appeal explanation of the Victoria results, there is good reason to retain the broader concept of party detachment. The shared support on the split ballots between the two New Democrats is, for example, distinctively Anderson oriented. This partly reflects the strength of an ideological division among the four parties, partly the relative weakness of the two N.D.P. candidates and, above all, the very strong overall appeal of the Liberal leader. This pattern of cross support is, however, also perfectly consistent with the

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 18 above. Immediately following the election, both condemned the coverage of this incident by the *Victoria Times* as the major contributing factor to Skillings' defeat. Morrison attributed his own victory simply to a Social Credit oriented vote. See: Clement Chapple, "Liberal Chief, Sacred Splits Victoria Seats," *Victoria Times* (August 31, 1972), p. 11.

kind of electoral strategy in which a party in a weak position within a particular riding may derive an overall advantage from the local success of a third party should it lead to the defeat of its major provincial opponent. Thus in Victoria it was to the provincial advantage of the New Democrats to secure the defeat of a Social Credit member through the election of Anderson. Rather than pure candidate appeal, a split N.D.P.-Anderson ballot could be equally due to party strategy. If another candidate such as Gunning was also seen as a strong contender among the opposition candidates, it would have been equally logical to split one's ballot in her favour or indeed to vote for both Anderson and Gunning. All of these options appear candidate oriented, but their essence is rather one of detachment from a party within the local constituency.

From this perspective, Anderson's success lay in his ability to detach support from the other opposition parties on the basis that he was the most likely candidate to secure the defeat of a Social Credit member. Whereas in a single member constituency one must entirely switch from one party to another to lend such support to another party's candidate, in a two-member constituency one need not become totally attached to another party by splitting one's vote. If the latter requires considerably less commitment from the voter, it is unlikely that the 12 per cent of the electorate who split their ballots in Victoria would have detached themselves as readily by switching under single-member conditions. If the 1972 results are retabulated following the boundaries proposed by the 1966 Angus Commission on Electoral Districts<sup>23</sup> for two single member constituencies of Victoria-North and Victoria-South, there is no change in the rank order of the top three candidates. The two Conservatives had stronger support in Victoria-South and the two New Democrats in Victoria-North, but these differences would not have effected the actual outcome. In both areas, however, the total vote for the two Social Crediters exceeded that for the two Liberals. If it is assumed that the Liberals gained the maximum level of party detached voting from the two member situation then it follows that even if their strongest candidate had run against the weakest Social Crediter, both North and South Victoria would have very probably remained Social Credit seats. While party detached voters can determine election outcomes in both provincial single and multi-member constituencies, their influence is potentially far greater in the latter.

In its review of the case against multiple ridings, the Angus Commis-

<sup>23</sup> British Columbia, Commission of Inquiry into Redefinition of Electoral Districts, *Report* (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1966), pp. 114-116.

sion held that it "may extinguish an important minority, that could easily win a portion of the riding, and may be suspected of having been designed to do so."<sup>24</sup> This view presupposes not only a geographical variation in the distribution of party support within a constituency, but also a high degree of party attachment displayed in straight party ballots. In Victoria, neither conditions were obtained. Even if a unique experience, the 1972 results demonstrate that the level of party attachment is not always sufficient to win all the seats in a multi-member constituency. A party which ignores the potential effects of party detached voting neglects the possibility that a majority "party vote" may be a losing vote — at least for one of its candidates.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47. T. H. Qualter reiterated this point with special reference to three or more multi-member districts in his study, *The Election Process in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw Hill, 1970), p. 123.