

Article

"Advancing the Liberal Order in British Columbia: The Role Played by Lieutenant-Governor Sir Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, 1900–1906"

J. I. Little

Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada, vol. 19, n° 1, 2008, p. 83-113.

Pour citer cet article, utiliser l'information suivante :

URI: <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/037427ar>

DOI: 10.7202/037427ar

Note : les règles d'écriture des références bibliographiques peuvent varier selon les différents domaines du savoir.

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter à l'URI <https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche. Érudit offre des services d'édition numérique de documents scientifiques depuis 1998.

Pour communiquer avec les responsables d'Érudit : info@erudit.org

Advancing the Liberal Order in British Columbia: The Role Played by Lieutenant-Governor Sir Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, 1900–1906

J.I. LITTLE

Abstract

This essay focuses on the role of Lieutenant-Governor Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière in bringing political stability to British Columbia after the turn of the twentieth century. As well as ensuring that the composition of the executive council was based on federal party lines, he worked to ease federal-provincial tensions and exercised a significant influence on the McBride government's highly effective economic reform programme. Joly has been largely ignored by historians, aside from his short term as Quebec premier, but his socially conservative liberalism made him an ideal promoter of Canada's liberal order on the west coast.

Résumé

La présente étude porte sur le rôle du lieutenant-gouverneur Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière dans l'avènement de la stabilité politique en Colombie-Britannique après le tournant du XX^e siècle. En plus de veiller à ce que la composition du Conseil exécutif respecte les lignes de partis fédérales, il a cherché à atténuer les tensions fédérales-provinciales et a exercé une influence significative sur le programme très réussi de réforme économique du gouvernement McBride. À l'exception de sa courte période à titre de premier ministre au Québec, les historiens ont tendance à ignorer les activités de Joly, mais son libéralisme empreint de conservatisme social en a fait un agent idéal de l'ordre libéral canadien sur la côte Ouest.

In her classic history of British Columbia, Margaret Ormsby states that “a terrible *malaise*” had the province’s population in its grip in 1903, largely caused by the industrial dispute that had brought the operations of the Canadian Pacific Railway to a standstill, causing sailors in Victoria and longshoremen in

I wish to acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the skilful research assistance of Laura Ishiguro, the expert advice of Bob McDonald, and the helpful critiques of *The Journal's* three anonymous reviewers.

Vancouver to wage sympathy strikes. The federal royal commission investigating the labour situation warned that society on the west coast was threatened with a breakdown in morality: "Business men had been dejected; English investors had indicated that they would transfer their money elsewhere; and even the Canadian Manufacturers' Association had threatened to withdraw its travelers from the province."¹ This labour unrest was considered symptomatic of a political system in crisis, one in which elected members of the legislature tended to ally themselves to whichever ministry could offer them and their constituency the most lucrative railway contract. The solution promoted in the province's major newspapers was to adopt the discipline of the federal party system in the provincial legislature. The lieutenant-governor would work to put such a system in place in 1903, a year that proved to be a significant turning point in the province's political history.

Indeed, it was because of shifting political alliances and increasing government instability in British Columbia that three years earlier Prime Minister Laurier had appointed his trusted colleague, Sir Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, to be the first (and, as it proved, the last) lieutenant-governor from outside the province. The federal government's interest in the internal politics of the distant, thinly-populated province was heightened by the fact that during the late 1890s central Canadian capital had finally begun forging the first strong transcontinental links to the west coast.² Joly's mission, in short, was to stabilize the state in order to restore the investor confidence that would ensure the continued economic growth of British Columbia as a satellite economy of central Canada. Joly can therefore be seen as an agent of what Ian McKay refers to as Canada's project of liberal order or rule, a project whose affirmation of liberty, equality, and, most particularly, property rights or acquisitive individualism, was promoted by both the Liberal and Conservative parties.³

McKay does not include the implementation of the party system as one of his seven "arresting moments" in the development of the "Canadian Liberal Revolution," at least once responsible government was established in the eastern colonies (moment number two), but party discipline is a central feature of the executive dominance that characterizes both levels of government in Canada.⁴ From this perspective, Joly's mission also contributed to what McKay

1 Margaret Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (n.p.: Macmillan, 1958), 336; Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800–1980* (Toronto and Vancouver: Butterworth, 1983), 155–6.

2 See Robert A.J. McDonald, "Victoria, Vancouver, and the Economic Development of British Columbia, 1886–1914," in *British Columbia: Historical Readings*, eds. W. Peter Ward and Robert A.J. McDonald (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981), 369–95.

3 Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (December 2000): 617–45.

4 See David E. Smith, *The Invisible Crown: The First Principle of Canadian Government* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 11.

refers to as the “liberalization” of the West (moment number four).⁵ We should not assume that this reform was imposed by the central government on an unwilling province, however, because British Columbia’s press and leading politicians had been advocating it long before 1900. As Robert McDonald has noted, McKay’s assumption that “the process advanced outward from a small part of central Canada to the nation as a whole” overlooks the fact that liberalism already “constituted BC society’s broad ideological foundation.”⁶ But the fact remains that the authority and influence of the federal government, acting through the lieutenant-governor, played a key role in instilling the “order” required for the efficient operation of a “liberal” form of government in a distant, geographically and socially fractured province.

Lieutenant-governors had ambiguous status in the early years of Canada’s history. Because they were not direct appointees of the Crown, they tended to be regarded as officers subordinate to the governors-general.⁷ But, even though the role of the country’s governor-general was increasingly symbolic (except when the administration lost the confidence of the legislature), the provinces’ lieutenant-governors could be quite interventionist for the very reason that they were appointed by the level of government that held the ultimate authority within Confederation. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council found in 1892 that provincial governments were sovereign within their own sphere, with the result that the Crown was effectively federalized,⁸ but this ruling did not prevent Laurier from advising lieutenant-governors in British Columbia how to manage political issues. Not only did lieutenant-governors continue to have considerable discretionary power in accepting or rejecting provincial legislation and appointments,⁹ they also continued to exercise the power to make and break provincial governments in British Columbia, as they had earlier in Québec. In fact, Laurier’s first west coast appointee, Thomas R. McInnes, added to the instability of an already volatile political situation by high-handedly dismissing two administrations. His successor, Joly, would act more patiently and diplomatically in exercising the same prerogative in 1903.

Joly’s success in overcoming some of the divisive forces within British Columbia can be attributed in good measure to his ability to project a dignified

5 McKay, 632–3.

6 McDonald’s main argument is that McKay overlooks more popular varieties of liberalism that found expression in resistance to monopolistic abuses of power. Robert A.J. McDonald, “‘Variants of Liberalism’ and the Liberal Order Framework,” in *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution*, eds. Jean-François Constant and Michel Ducharme (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming 2009).

7 Jacques Monet, S.J., *The Canadian Crown* (Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin, 1979), 40–2.

8 See Smith, 9.

9 Monet, 42–5, 64–5.

non-partisan image as Queen Victoria's local representative at a time when the mother country was at war in South Africa. Although McKay's liberal order framework pays little attention to the fostering of loyalty to sovereign and country, nationalism was one of the key features of nineteenth-century liberalism. Joly's many public appearances throughout the province contributed to the popular legitimization of the state at all three levels: provincial, national, and imperial. More specifically, he also played a key role in the establishment and direction of a political regime that facilitated unprecedented economic expansion in the province. The fact that this government was Conservative in affiliation simply indicates that Joly was willing to subordinate his own party's interests to the country's liberal order imperative.

Appointment

It was first rumoured that Joly de Lotbinière would be appointed lieutenant-governor of British Columbia when the position became available in 1897,¹⁰ but the province's Liberal Senator, T.R. McInnes, was chosen instead. Only when McInnes was dismissed in 1900 did Joly take up the position. The 71 year old federal minister of inland revenue may have been impressed with the coastal climate on his brief visit a year earlier, and he was certainly never comfortable with his federal portfolio's patronage-dispensing function, but, given the turbulent nature of British Columbia politics, it is doubtful that he looked upon the new posting as a sinecure. Still, despite rumours that Laurier was under pressure by Québec politicians to remove the troublesomely scrupulous Joly from the cabinet,¹¹ nothing in his personal correspondence suggests that he accepted the appointment begrudgingly. The fact is, Joly's patrician background had instilled in him a strong sense of *noblesse oblige* — a commitment to serving the dominion as well as the empire.

No one appears to have brought up the fact that Joly had roundly criticized the terms of union with British Columbia in 1871 as being too generous,¹² but Laurier's choice of lieutenant-governors left him open to attack from opposition newspapers such as the *Hamilton Spectator*. It declared that there were many good Liberals in British Columbia well qualified for the post, yet "Sir Wilfrid must needs send a French-man from Quebec to govern the British Canadians of the Pacific Province."¹³ What made Laurier so inclined towards

10 Vancouver *Province* (19 June 1897).

11 The Victoria *Colonist's* Ottawa correspondent reported, "the Tarte faction here has long been anxious to crowd Sir Henri out of the cabinet." Victoria *Colonist* (21 June 1900).

12 Forrest D. Pass, "Agrarian Commonwealth, or Entrepôt of the Orient? Competing Conceptions of Canada and the BC Terms of Union Debate of 1871," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 17, no. 1 (2006): 36–7.

13 Quoted in Vancouver *World* (30 June 1900).

what on the surface appeared to be a rather puzzling choice? After all, his practice had been to consult the provincial party and even to delegate the selection of lieutenant-governors to the provincial representatives in his cabinet. Moreover, local residents had been chosen for British Columbia, as for eastern Canada, ever since 1867.¹⁴

After having served 22 years in the provincial legislature and 11 years in the House of Commons, Joly may have been considered a political anachronism in his home province; but Laurier clearly had considerable faith in his abilities. He explained in a private letter to a resident of New Westminster that the situation required

...a man of national reputation and whose record for honesty, fairness and impartiality is well known. We found such a man in the person of Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière. Sir Henri is a French Canadian of Huguenot descent and a protestant by faith. There is no more honest man living. I have great hopes that he will prove a great success."¹⁵

Laurier might have added that, apart from his personal attributes, Joly had acquired a thorough knowledge of constitutional law, and had served for many years as a diplomatic broker between French- and English-speaking Canada. He had also taken an active role in railway expansion while he was Québec premier from 1878 to 1879, and he continued to be involved in the lumber industry.¹⁶ Promoting railway construction and exploitation of the forest resource were, coincidentally or not, the two main preoccupations of the British Columbia government.

In contrast to Ontario's *Spectator*, no British Columbia newspaper appears to have complained about Joly's cultural origins. More relevant was the fact that an easterner was being assigned to a western province that took considerable pride in its rapid development and felt considerable resentment towards what it perceived to be Ottawa's indifference, if not hostility. The Conservative *Victoria Colonist*, while praising Joly's credentials, objected to the principle of appointing an easterner, declaring,

If dissension in the Liberal ranks rendered it injudicious, from a party point of view, to select a supporter of the Laurier ministry, there are gentlemen in the Conservative party who are in every way available The people of this province are in all respects the equals of their fellow Canadians elsewhere,

14 John T. Saywell, *The Office of Lieutenant-Governor: A Study in Canadian Government and Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 24–5, 28.

15 Laurier to D.J. Munn, Esq., Ottawa, 25 June 1900. My thanks to John Moreau of Calgary, who owns this letter.

16 For a good brief account of Joly's career, see Marcel Hamelin, "Joly de Lotbinière, Sir Henri-Gustave," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*.

and, while they are always glad to see new-comers, would prefer that they should not arrive with federal commissions in their pockets.

The *Colonist's* sense of grievance was aggravated by the fact that Laurier did not take advantage of the opportunity to replace Joly in the federal cabinet with what would have been the first member from British Columbia.¹⁷

Liberal though it was, the *Victoria Times* agreed on the latter point, but it did not criticize Joly's appointment, claiming that he would ensure that "no pranks will be played; under him the province will re-enter on the constitutional path."¹⁸ The *Liberal Vancouver World* was also diplomatic, proclaiming that,

with the possible exception of several well-known gentlemen in this province whose long and faithful service deserved recognition, a better man than Sir Henri Joly could not have been found for the position The people of British Columbia can look forward with some confidence to a regime which will serve to smooth away the angry passions that have been aroused, and will introduce here something of the grand old seigniorial hospitality which gave to Quebec, aforetime, a distinction all its own.¹⁹

Even an organization known as the Provincial Rights Association of British Columbia, based in Rossland, declared that it fully approved of Joly's appointment, claiming that it was "a happy solution to the many perplexing problems which disturbed [the province] in the past and seriously menaced its future."²⁰ Nor did the Conservative *Colonist* utter any further complaints after Joly arrived in the province. On 29 June, the newspaper "extended a very cordial welcome," noting, "A reputation for a true conception of constitutional duty as well as for tastes and instincts of an elevated order has preceded him, and we feel every confidence that his career amongst us will more than justify the policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in selecting him for his new and responsible position."²¹ Certainly, it would have been difficult to find any sense of resentment among the people of Victoria when Joly arrived on board the *Islander*, accompanied by the mayor and aldermen, a guard of honour from the Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles, and the regimental band. According to the *Colonist*, "a great throng had assembled at the outer wharf, and despite the rather unpleasant wind which blew from the West, making everyone turn up their coat

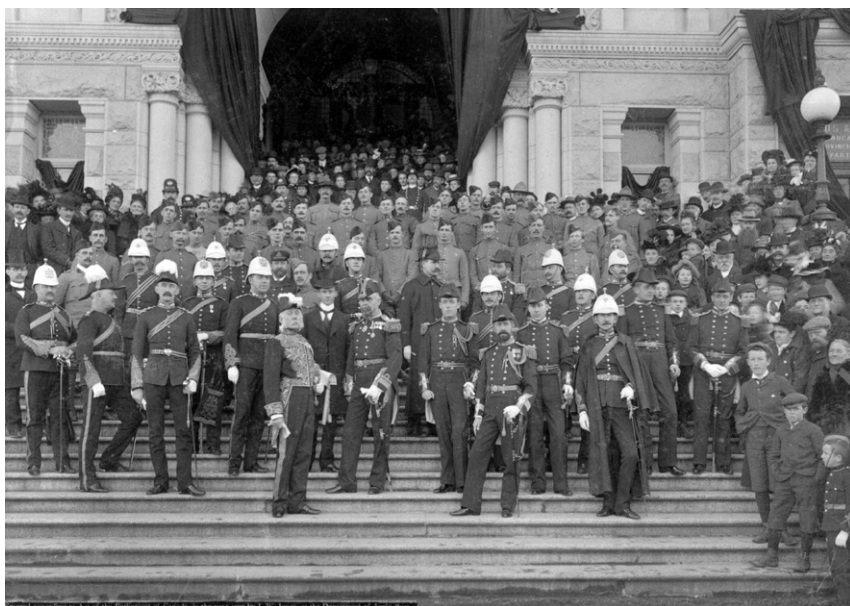
17 *Victoria Colonist* (23 June 1900).

18 *Victoria Times* (23 June 1900 and 11 July 1900).

19 *Vancouver World* (21 June 1900).

20 British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCA), Premiers' Papers, GR441, Correspondence Inward, Private, box 15, Horace F. Evans to James Dunsmuir, Rossland, 4 July 1900.

21 The column from the Ottawa correspondent in the same issue of the *Colonist* stated that Joly's appointment "is considered as a wise step on the government's part" because the appointment of a local Liberal would have accentuated the province's political confusion.



LAC, PA-30903, 'Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia about to enter Parliament with South African Volunteers as a body guard, [1900]: Joly de Lotbinière is the white-haired man with the scroll under his left arm.

collars, the wharf presented a handsome appearance, the brilliant uniforms of the officers of the army and navy ... contrasting pleasingly with the black frock-attired gentlemen representing the government, the bench, and the clergy." The carriage carrying the premier and the new lieutenant-governor then made its way through "streets thronged with people" to the hotel where an informal reception took place. The *Colonist* was immediately impressed by Joly, describing him as "Of rather more than average height, slightly built, with silver gray hair, moustache and whiskers, and a charming ease and grace of manner"; in short, he "looked a fit occupant of the important post to which he has been assigned."²²

Joly quickly became very popular in British Columbia. His fluency in English, the fact that it was the mother tongue of his wife, his membership in the Church of England, his public split with the Québec Liberals over the Riel issue, and his active support for British imperialism crowned by his knighthood in 1895, all ensured his warm embrace by Victoria's still very British social

22 Victoria *Colonist* (30 June 1900). Saywell clearly exaggerates, therefore, in stating that Joly's appointment caused widespread criticism in British Columbia, 28.

élite.²³ Joly's Paris education and descent from one of New France's most influential military and land holding families, as well as his self identification as the seigneur of Lotbinière, only added to his distinguished image at a time when English Canadians were attracted to the romance of old Québec.²⁴ Ideally suited as he was for the pomp and circumstance associated with the role of lieutenant-governor, however, Joly needed considerable skill to survive without controversy a five-year term during an era when the province's politics were exceptionally unstable and corrupt. Before examining how he managed this feat, and the impact he had on British Columbia, I will turn to a brief survey of the situation in the west coast province prior to his appointment.

The McInnes Prelude

By the time Joly replaced McInnes as lieutenant-governor, British Columbia was being governed by its third administration in two years. A fully elected Legislative Assembly had been granted only with Confederation in 1871, and, rather than adhere to party discipline, provincial politicians formed unstable coalitions of local interests, with a major cleavage dividing Vancouver Island and the mainland.²⁵ Following the depressed decade of the 1870s, with politics focused on forcing Ottawa to live up to its promise to build a transcontinental railway, the 1880s brought what Margaret Ormsby referred to as the "great potlatch," with immense acreages of Crown land alienated to speculative railway ventures and other public works.²⁶ By the late 1890s, Martin Robin notes, public sentiment turned against "the mounting public debt, extravagance, reckless favouritism, give-aways and kick-backs."²⁷ Opposition forces, including a growing labour movement, found an articulate spokesman in 1898 with the election of the populist firebrand, Joseph Martin, who had recently served as the controversial attorney-general of Manitoba. After the votes were counted in 1898, there were so many newcomers that it was unclear whether Premier John Turner had enough supporters to remain in office. Without waiting for the recounts in 29 contested seats, Lieutenant-Governor McInnes dismissed the

23 See Terry Reksten, *"More English than the English": A Very Social History of Victoria* (Victoria: Orca Publishing, 1986) and Valerie Green, *Above Stairs: Social Life in Upper Class Victoria, 1843-1918* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1995).

24 See Carole Gerson, *A Purer Taste: The Writing and Reading of Fiction in English in 19th Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), chap. 8.

25 See Daniel Marshall, "An Early Rural Revolt: The Introduction of the Canadian System of Tariffs to British Columbia, 1871-4," in *Beyond the City Limits: Rural History in British Columbia*, ed. R.W. Sandwell (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 47-61.

26 Ormsby, chap. 11.

27 Martin Robin, *The Rush for Spoils: The Company Province, 1871-1933* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 69.

Turner government on dubious constitutional grounds. His ultimate aim, Peter Brock argues, was to forge a strong anti-CPR Liberal government under Martin's leadership. Because it would have been premature to appoint the controversial Martin, an unstable coalition was patched together under the weak leadership of the Cache Creek cattle rancher, Charles A. Semlin.²⁸

The erratic behaviour of Martin led to his dismissal as attorney-general in July 1899. When the Assembly met again in January, he led the attack against the government, accusing it of robbing public assets by granting 611,000 acres of coal-bearing land to a subsidiary of the CPR. Upon defeat in the House, Semlin convinced some of the Conservative opposition members to accept portfolios in a reformed administration, but Lieutenant-Governor McInnes insisted on immediate dismissal.²⁹ Fearing that McInnes would call on Martin to form the new ministry, federal Secretary of State R.W. Scott wired him from Ottawa stating that Semlin should be given more time to reconstruct, but the message arrived too late. McInnes had already turned to Martin, claiming that he was the strongest political figure in the province, and the only leader who had not been given a chance to form a government.³⁰

Unable to find any supporters in the House, and in the face of the provincial Liberal executive's refusal to recognize him as leader, Martin defiantly created a cabinet of political non-entities, only one of whom could claim any previous legislative experience. He managed to delay an election for three months, despite the fact that Laurier had urged McInnes to force an immediate dissolution. Martin drafted a progressive platform, but the day before the election the press announced that he had accepted \$100,000 from J.J. Hill of the Great Northern Railway, clearly on the understanding that Hill would be given control of the proposed rail line from the Kootenays to the coast. As a result, only six or seven of the men elected could be counted on by Martin for support. The end of the short-lived Martin regime also spelled the end for McInnes as lieutenant-governor.

Laurier had resisted earlier pressures to dismiss McInnes on the grounds that Ottawa would interfere only when the lieutenant-governor's new advisers were not sustained by the people in the subsequent election.³¹ Although the Vancouver and Victoria Liberal associations defended McInnes,³² Laurier

28 Peter Jeffrey Brock, "Fighting Joe Martin in British Columbia" (M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1976), 18; Saywell, 132–3. Details of McInnes' record as lieutenant-governor can also be found in George F.G. Stanley, "A 'Constitutional Crisis' in British Columbia," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 21, no. 3 (1955): 281–92.

29 See Brock, 23–30, 37–9; Saywell, 134–6.

30 Saywell, 136–7; Brock, 39–42.

31 See Saywell, 136–7, 251–6; Robin, 69–74; Brock, 44–55; and *Victoria Colonist* (26 June 1900).

32 *Victoria Times* (19 June 1900); *Vancouver World* (29 June 1900).

argued that by choosing Martin as premier McInnes had contributed to the political and economic instability of the province. Martin and McInnes had been thorns in Laurier's side because they repeatedly complained about what they felt was eastern indifference, an indifference reflected in particular by Sir Clifford Sifton's role as the sole western spokesman in the federal cabinet.³³ John Saywell notes as well that "these 'kickers' in British Columbia openly attacked the repeated disallowance of legislation designed to prevent Oriental immigration; ... denounced the railway monopoly and the industrial monopoly that it supported; ... complained of the tariff and the inequity of Dominion-Provincial financial relations; and criticized the operation of the federal administrative system in the west." In short, Martin and McInnes "were in a state of suspended rebellion against the Liberal party to which they nominally belonged."³⁴

In protesting his dismissal, McInnes gave vent to the same sentiments in no uncertain terms when he wrote:

A Chinese chicken thief is accorded a fair trial by us, and is given a chance to speak in his own behalf. Is it going to be said that the people of British Columbia, or their elected representatives, have descended to the level of the nigger-roasting lynchers of the Southern States — and that against a pioneer of the province, who, for over a quarter of a century, has filled the highest representative positions in the country? If so, British Columbia is no fit home for a Briton now."³⁵

In turning to Sir Hector-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, Laurier was not only selecting someone who would be above the internecine factionalism of west coast politics, but who would also bring a more pronounced degree of sophistication and decorum to the office of the Queen's representative.

Setting the House in Order

There is a certain irony in the fact that the constitutional precedent for McInnes' ouster by Laurier was set by Sir John A. Macdonald's dismissal in 1879 of Québec's Letellier de Saint-Just, despite the vociferous protests and appeals of Hector-Gustave Joly as premier of that province. Being new to British Columbia, and having had his own premiership sabotaged by the obstructionist lieutenant-governor who succeeded Letellier, Joly was unlikely to emulate McInnes' interventionist policies. As a Canadian nationalist and constitutional monarchist, he firmly believed that the lieutenant-governor was considerably

33 For example, see the correspondence printed in *Victoria Times* (5 July 1900).

34 Saywell, 139, 249.

35 *Victoria Times* (22 June 1900).

more than a figurehead; but he would have to work carefully and slowly behind the scenes while British Columbians continued to endure political instability during his first three years in office.

Serving as premier during much of this time was Joseph Martin's successor, the uncharismatic Vancouver Island coal baron, James Dunsmuir. Able to please neither the mine owners nor organized labour at a time of economic decline in the industry, and beset by numerous railway promoters, Dunsmuir finally embraced his predecessor's ambitious policy of tightening the rail links between the coast and the interior of the province. Although Dunsmuir's administration was originally largely Conservative in composition, he had to rely on the support of Martin and his two colleagues to pass the Railway Aid Act of 1901 because members of his own government opposed any challenge to the CPR monopoly. The upshot was the resignation of Minister of Mines Richard McBride, who then moved to replace Martin as the official leader of the opposition.³⁶

Increasingly disillusioned with politics, Dunsmuir tendered his resignation as premier. As a result, Laurier — who had recently been in the province with the royal tour of the Duke and Duchess of York — remained concerned about the province's political instability. Despite the fact that British Columbians were sensitive about federal interference in provincial affairs and that Dunsmuir was a political opponent, Laurier asked the lieutenant-governor to refuse to accept the premier's resignation "in order to prevent another crisis and possibly another general election."³⁷ Joly had, in fact, already done so, informing Dunsmuir that he would have to remain at his post until a hostile vote of the province's representatives gave him the right to step down.³⁸ Although Martin remained officially in the opposition, he and Dunsmuir then co-operated in a grand scheme to have J.J. Hill and Mackenzie and Mann each build a railway across the province that would connect with Vancouver Island from the south and north, respectively. Dunsmuir's own Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway would be the obvious connecting link between the two proposed rail lines, and his resignation from office was finally accepted at the end of 1902 when he was accused of corruption for negotiating to sell his unprofitable railway to the Canadian Northern.³⁹

Joly wrote to his son in March, "*Avec notre système Parlementaire Anglais, il faut absolument la Discipline de partis. C'est une utopie que de rêver un gou-*

36 Brock, 61–8.

37 Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Laurier Papers, C788, 59505-7, Laurier to HGJ, Ottawa, 25 October 1901.

38 Saywell, 140–1; LAC, Laurier Papers, C788, HGJ to Laurier, Victoria, 30 October 1901.

39 LAC, Fonds Henry-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière Papers (hereafter HGJ Papers), MG27 II C2, Henri-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière Correspondence, M-795, pp. 7694-8, D.W. Higgins to HGJ, Victoria, 8 March 1902; Robin, 74–80; Brock, 75–86.

vernement parlementaire stable, là où ceux qui le supportent refusent de prendre la responsabilité de ses actes.” He added, however, “Mais c’est un terrain trop délicat pour un Lieutenant Gouverneur, & je m’arrête.”⁴⁰ Obviously not convinced that the situation was yet ripe to press openly for a party-based government, Joly accepted Dunsmuir’s recommendation that he be replaced by Colonel E.G. Prior, the owner of a hardware and construction business who espoused the same pro-business policies as the former premier. Most of the same men remained in the cabinet,⁴¹ but the railway activities that some of the ministers had engaged in during the Dunsmuir regime would return to haunt them.

It was discovered in May 1903 that two of Dunsmuir’s ministers in particular had taken advantage of his absence in England to pass an order-in-council reversing his cancellation of the grant of two oil-and-coal-rich land blocks to the Columbia and Western Railway, a subsidiary of the CPR. Implicated were the House leader at the time, D.M. Eberts, who subsequently became Prior’s attorney-general, and W.C. Wells, his commissioner of lands and works.⁴² Anticipating the judgment of the select committee inquiring into the situation, Prior rather desperately dismissed both Wells and Eberts the day before its report was tabled.⁴³ Fearing that Joly might choose a Liberal to lead the next government, the *Victoria Colonist*’s editor asked Richard McBride, leader of the opposition despite being a Conservative, if he and his co-conspirators were “for spite going to be the catspaws of a Liberal intrigue.”⁴⁴

The *Colonist*’s fulminations against the “aimless rabble of cutthroat politicians” did not save Prior from the revelation of yet another impropriety, this one involving him personally. Joly quickly rescinded his promise to grant dissolution of the legislature when it was disclosed that Prior’s company had submitted a successful bid to provide cable for a bridge on the Cariboo Road. The premier admitted that he had seen the competing bids, but he denied that he had passed the information on to his company, and he argued that the public had benefited from the lower charge to the government purse. Prior further defended his company’s right to submit a bid on the same basis as a member who was attorney-general might have his partner take charge “of looking after a private bill for anybody and lobbying it through the House.”⁴⁵

40 BCA, Letters of His Honour Sir Joly de Lotbinière, 1901-6 (hereafter HGJ Letters), Mf11A, HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, 13 March 1902.

41 Prior had replaced McBride in the Cabinet. See Peter Robert Hunt, “The Political Career of Sir Richard McBride” (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1953), 16–17.

42 *Victoria Times* (14 May 1903, 15 May 1903, 18 May 1903, 19 May 1903, and 28 May 1903), *Vancouver World* (26 May 1903), *Victoria Colonist* (28 May 1903).

43 Saywell, 140–1; Robin, 80–4; *Victoria Times* (27 May 1903); *Victoria Colonist* (28 May 1903).

44 *Victoria Colonist* (29 May 1903).

45 Quoted in Robin, 84. See also Saywell, 141–3, and *Victoria Colonist* (29 May 1903 and 30 May 1903).

This rationalization was too much for Joly, who wrote to Prior that the views he expressed to justify his action “are so incompatible with, and so completely at variance with what I have always understood to be the true principles of Parliamentary Independence of Members and, above all, of Ministers of the Crown, that, while admitting that you must have honestly considered that you were doing no wrong, I am to my sincere regret unable to continue feeling that confidence in your judgment which would justify me in acting any longer on your advice.”⁴⁶ Ignoring the advice of Liberal newspapers, such as the *Vancouver World*,⁴⁷ Joly called upon the leader of the opposition in the Assembly, Richard McBride. The Liberal lieutenant-governor clearly also advised McBride to select only individuals who belonged to his Conservative party, just as the recent provincial Conservative convention had called for.⁴⁸

Reflecting the sectional divisions within the province, the *Victoria Colonist* warned McBride, whom it had not forgiven for deserting Dunsmuir, “that if he plays fast and loose with the Conservative party, that party will drown him a thousand fathoms deep.”⁴⁹ Even after McBride announced that he would form a strictly Conservative government, the *Colonist* declared that, should the new premier wish “to show his loyalty” to the party, he would make it clear that

he does not pose as a leader, but merely as an expedient to facilitate an election upon party lines, and that he will leave it to the Conservative members elected to the next legislature to choose the leader of the party If that course is followed, the success of the party at the polls is practically certain. If it is not followed, the success of the party is doubtful in the extreme.⁵⁰

Not only had Joly chosen a Conservative to introduce party lines, but also a man whose potential for success was limited by the hostility of the Victoria-based Conservative élite, and his failure to win the party leadership at the convention held in Revelstoke a year earlier.

Risky as Joly’s choice of McBride was, however, the fact was that he had little choice because the leader of the Liberal party was Martin, whose re-appointment was obviously out of the question. McBride had a strong claim as the opposition House leader, and Joly must have felt some confidence in his skills at building consensus. After all, he too was the son of a Catholic mother and

46 Quoted in Saywell, 142.

47 The *World* supported the claims of W.W.B. McInnes, a former member of the Prior government who was also the son of the former lieutenant-governor, to form a new ministry. *Vancouver World* (30 May 1903).

48 There is no direct evidence that McBride was following Joly’s instructions, but the premier’s secretary, R.E. Gosnell, later wrote that McBride had succumbed to pressure from Joly. Hunt rejects Gosnell’s claim, though without providing solid evidence to the contrary, 24–6.

49 *Victoria Colonist* (2 June 1903).

50 *Ibid.* (3 June 1903).

Protestant father. Finally, the lieutenant-governor may have felt that McBride's relative youthfulness and inexperience, combined with his great ambition, made him amenable to advice and pressure from an experienced mentor such as himself.⁵¹ Joly confided to his own son, "Our Prime Minister is the youngest member in the House, and I think he is well disposed to do what is right. I treat him as if he were my son, so far as advice and encouragement can do it, and he trusts me."⁵²

The Liberal Vancouver *World* accepted McBride's appointment with surprising equanimity, taking pride in the fact that he was the first native-born incumbent of the office, and noting that he had "many admirable traits that are characteristic of the typical Westerner, and not the least of which is that of playing an open game consistently and well."⁵³ The *Victoria Times*, though it had quite naturally hoped Joly would choose a Liberal to be premier, admitted that he had adhered strictly to the constitution in choosing the leader of the parliamentary opposition.⁵⁴ While the *World* was willing to accept a strictly Conservative cabinet, however, the *Times* was critical of McBride's decision to abandon his erstwhile Liberal allies by summoning only Conservatives to his ministry. The *Times* denied being opposed to party rule, yet it commented sardonically that it was the Liberal members, particularly John Oliver and Smith Curtis, who had brought down the government. As for McBride, he "is as unstable as water. He has been bending to every wind that blows." The fact that the province was "to be blessed with the inestimable boon of a straight Conservative government" would be nothing new: "We have had nothing else for a dozen or fifteen years, and we have obtained the reward we deserved. British Columbia is where she is to-day because of the firmness of her adherence to Conservative 'principles' as exemplified in the policy of a too long line of grafters."⁵⁵

The formation of an all-Conservative government in British Columbia was not without controversy, then, but — as Robin notes — the opening of new areas by railways had balkanized the province, weakening the forces for political cohesion by increasing the power of mining and railway companies over individual MLAs. At the same time, the political spokesmen of the labour movement "flourished in a fluid legislature of contesting groups." Not surprisingly, party lines and federal labels were favoured by both Liberals and Conservatives, not only as a means of increasing parliamentary discipline and

51 McBride was 32 years old in 1903, the youngest premier in the country. Brian Ray Douglas Smith, "Sir Richard McBride: A Study in the Conservative Party of British Columbia, 1903–1916" (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1959), 1, 18–19.

52 BCA, HGT Letters, Mf11A, HGT to Edmond, Victoria, 12 October 1903.

53 Vancouver *World* (2 June 1903).

54 *Victoria Times* (1 June 1903).

55 Ibid. (2 June 1903 and 5 June 1903). The Vancouver *Province* also referred to McBride's "regrettable display of bad faith towards ... old associates." Quoted in Hunt, 27.

executive control, but also as a way to avoid the prospect of “a powerful conflict along labour union and anti-labour union lines.”⁵⁶ From this perspective, and keeping McKay’s liberal order imperative in mind, it was entirely logical that Joly would set the particular interests of his own political party aside in order to facilitate the development of a province that promised to make a great contribution to the wealth of the country and its leading capitalists.

Advising the Government

Once the supply bill to cover necessary expenses had been passed, Joly granted McBride the dissolution he had denied Prior, setting the stage for the first provincial election in British Columbia history to be fought under federal party labels. Even though the Liberals found themselves without a leader after the resignation of the demoralized Joseph Martin, McBride managed to win by only a narrow majority due to the hostility of his old-guard Conservative critics on Vancouver Island and in the interior.⁵⁷ Once in office, he remained there for a remarkable 12 years, but the province did not achieve political stability overnight. Analysis of the votes for the first two sessions under McBride’s premiership reveals that he obtained no more loyalty from his official supporters than did his predecessors and that there was a very high absentee rate.⁵⁸

Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that, as Saywell notes, Lieutenant-Governor Joly “pursued a policy of benevolent paternalism” with McBride.⁵⁹ For example, soon after McBride became premier, Joly refused to sanction the appointment of John Houston of Nelson as a member of his cabinet on the grounds that Houston’s rowdy conduct (which had not been exceptional in the provincial legislature) made him unfit to be a minister of the Crown. Rather than resenting this rather unusual intervention on the part of a lieutenant-governor, it appears that McBride was more than willing to have Joly relieve him of a colleague he had felt obliged to put forward for political reasons.⁶⁰ Joly also did McBride a political favour by allowing the provincial government to catch the opposition off guard by holding the 1903 election on 3 October rather than 31 October, as had been officially forecast when the legislature was dissolved in June.⁶¹

56 Robin, 85–6.

57 Brock, 88. The *Victoria Times* finally admitted that even if a Liberal had been chosen to form a ministry, the breach in the party “would have remained as wide as ever.” *Victoria Times* (3 June 1903 and 5 June 1903). Elected in 1903 were 22 Conservatives, 17 Liberals, two Socialists, and one Labour supporter. Robin, 90.

58 Brock, 121–5.

59 Saywell, 38.

60 Hunt, 30–1; Smith, 35. Joly kept an extensive newspaper file on this minor crisis. See LAC, HGJ Papers, M-796, 9247–63.

61 McBride would pull the same trick three years later under Joly’s successor. Saywell, 159.

There are few surviving letters between Joly and McBride, in part because their offices were in the same building. But the fact that confidential correspondence between McBride and Joly in 1901 and 1905–1907 was later found in the basement of Victoria’s Strathcona Hotel suggests that much of the record was somehow not preserved. For the most part, Joly simply passed on the letters he received concerning public matters to the appropriate department head, but, when individuals complained about actions taken by the government, McBride was careful to provide the lieutenant-governor with detailed justifications.⁶² The premiers’ papers reveal that Joly offered strong advice on at least one railway issue in 1903 and made suggestions as to how to approach Ottawa in connection with a federal government bill that British Columbia considered to be purely a provincial matter.⁶³

Despite such interventions, Joly’s influence over McBride appears to have been largely informal in nature. Joly wrote to his son early in 1904 concerning the government’s austerity measures: “I do my best to encourage them and do feel more hopeful for the future than I have ever felt since I came here.”⁶⁴ Contemplating his retirement two years later, Joly informed his son, “I am sad to leave B.C. our friends here, the daily work of my office, the responsibility of my position, as adviser to my advisers!!!!”⁶⁵ The flow of his advice did not entirely end upon retirement; Joly wrote to McBride from Quebec in August 1906:

I am glad to see, by your letter, that your views and mine, exchanged so often between us, agree so well, on those questions with which the welfare of B.C. is so closely connected: preservation of our timber, manufacturing it here instead of exporting it to be manufactured abroad, agriculture, dairying, preserving your wild lands for *bonâ fide* settlers, not speculators, classifying them carefully, firm railway policy and firm resistance against the speculators and railway charter mongers, etc.⁶⁶

A year later, McBride wrote to Joly that he “still felt that an important part of my work is to account to you for what is going on.”⁶⁷ The two principal issues during the last three years of Joly’s tenure, and for many years thereafter, were

62 See the correspondence in BCA, Premiers’ Papers, GR441, Series IX: Letterbooks (official), 1883–1916, vol. 389.

63 Ibid., Series IV: Private correspondence, 1903–15, box 74, HGJ to McBride, Victoria, 9 July 1893; box 76, vol. 365, no. 133, HGJ to McBride, 30 June 1903.

64 BCA, HGJ Letters, Mf11A, HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, 17 January 1904.

65 Ibid., 22 March 1906.

66 BCA, Joly de Lotbinière, Sir Henri Gustave, 1829–1908, E/D/J68, Correspondence Outward, 1901, 1905–7 (hereafter HGJ, Correspondence Outward), HGJ to McBride, Pointe-Platon, 22 August 1906.

67 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 8338, McBride to HGJ, Victoria, 8 August 1907.

the province's relations with Ottawa, and its Crown forest policy. I will examine each in turn in an attempt to gain some insight into the effectiveness of Joly as a mediator between the two levels of government, and into the impact that he had upon the fashioning and implementation of provincial policy.

Federal-Provincial Relations

Any sense of gratitude McBride may have felt towards the federal government for facilitating his rise to power was short-lived because Victoria's longstanding sense of grievance against Ottawa only intensified during the early years of his regime. The two chief bones of contention were the federal government's continuing interference in British Columbia's attempts to limit Asian immigration, and Victoria's persistent claim that it was not receiving as much federal transfer money as it was entitled to. Federal appointee and strong Canadian nationalist though he was, Joly tended to support the province in both these causes. Perhaps it was natural that a former provincial premier would sympathize with the campaign to redress what is today called the nation's "fiscal imbalance," but Joly's public defense of the Chinese had caused some concern in British Columbia when he was appointed lieutenant-governor, a concern that some Conservatives had attempted to exploit for political purposes.

Shortly before Joly's departure for his post in Victoria, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper referred to him as "the minister who sported the Chinese order of the Imperial Dragon." Joly quickly reassured Laurier that he had never received such an offer, though "There may have been some talk of it at one time which misled the Parliamentary Guide." He added that he would not have accepted the order in any case because it "would have interfered with my freedom in dealing with the Chinese immigration question."⁶⁸ Joly had, however, hosted the powerful Chinese viceroy Li Hung-chang on the Canadian leg of his North American tour in 1896.⁶⁹ Tupper was not the only one to mention Joly's diplomatic effort. The Hamilton *Spectator* proclaimed that he was "the sworn bosom friend and blood-brother of Li Hung Chang," and that "the sending of the champion of the moon-eyed lepers to govern them has made the British Columbians wild."⁷⁰ The Ontario newspaper was wide of the mark in the latter respect, but, prior to Joly's arrival in British Columbia, the Nelson *Tribune* commented sardonically:

Sir Henri Joly, and his old friend Li Hung Chang, are again dividing public attention between themselves, much as they did some years before, when Li

68 Ibid., Laurier Papers, C777, 46717, HGJ to Laurier, Ottawa, 21 June 1900.

69 See *Memoirs of the Viceroy Li Hung Chang* (London: Constable, 1913) and Samuel C. Chu and Kwang-Ching Liu, eds., *Li Hung-chang and China's Early Modernization* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994).

70 Quoted in Vancouver *World* (30 June 1900).

allowed himself to be booked as an attraction for Toronto's big show [the provincial exhibition], and Sir Henri was making his celebrated pro-Chinese speeches. Sir Henri is now speeding to Victoria, while Li Hung Chang jogs along on the road to Peking, and the rest of the world stands waiting.⁷¹

Ottawa had imposed a \$50 head tax on Chinese immigrants in 1886, but it soon proved ineffective in slowing the influx, and the province began to demand a much more prohibitive \$500 levy. Despite Laurier's promises in 1896 to bow to provincial will, his government continued to stall, concerned as it was that a higher levy would interfere with the expansion of Canadian trade with China.⁷² In 1897, Joly was one of two eastern Liberals to criticize the attack against the Chinese "race" voiced in the House of Commons by the Liberal MP for Burrard, G.R. Maxwell.⁷³ He reminded Maxwell that the Chinese were an ancient culture, that the British had forced their opium habit upon them, and that their labour on the railways had opened British Columbia to development much earlier than would otherwise have been possible. The Chinese workers might only be "poor heathens," Joly declared, but "Is it possible that where they are surrounded by churches and Christians, and such excellent examples as are presented by those who live around them, there is no chance of converting them? Then what is the use of sending missionaries all over the world to seek the heathen and to attempt to convert them in the wilder regions where they live?"⁷⁴

Laurier finally announced in June 1900 that the head tax would be increased to \$100, and that a royal commission would investigate Chinese and Japanese immigration; but this concession failed to mollify the province's Liberals.⁷⁵ Although the Asian population was still only 11 percent of the provincial total, the number of Chinese and Japanese immigrants had been increasing dramatically, and white workers felt more threatened than ever by their impact on the labour market. The Japanese, who were concentrated in Vancouver, the lower Fraser valley, and along the Skeena River, were considered more capable of assimilation, as well as being more protected by treaties between Britain and Japan. Nevertheless, the Dunsmuir government passed an act (generally known as the Natal Act) requiring Japanese immigrants to pass a

71 Ibid. (28 June 1900).

72 Patricia E. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858–1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 66–9, 87, 96.

73 Roy, 97.

74 *House of Commons Debates*, First Session — Eighth Parliament, Speech of Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière on Chinese Immigration, 16 September 1896.

75 Roy, 100–2; Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Towards Orientals in British Columbia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978, reprint 2002), 59–60.

test demonstrating that they were proficient in a European language. Joly's opinion of this act is not known, but it was disallowed by Ottawa in 1901, as was each reincarnation during the following ten years. In fact, the passage and disallowance of acts related to the employment of Chinese and Japanese workers became routine exercises during the years that Joly was lieutenant-governor.⁷⁶

Even though McBride intensified the “fight Ottawa” rhetoric, his government did not develop a sustained attack on the immigration issue. Joly may well have been a moderating influence, and he certainly would have reminded McBride that Britain was backing Japan during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the royal commission of 1901 had assisted in defusing the agitation against Asian immigration, as had the failure of that immigration to recover with the improving economic situation, largely because of the \$500 Chinese head tax introduced by Laurier in 1903.⁷⁸ Dependent as he was on support from the two Socialist members, McBride introduced legislation in 1905 banning Asians from holding “positions of trust” in the mines.⁷⁹ But only in 1907, with the increase of Asian immigration — particularly from India — did the issue come to a head, culminating in the Vancouver riots.⁸⁰

By this time, Joly was enjoying his retirement in Québec, but how did he reconcile his pro-Chinese position with the provincial government's attacks on Asian immigration and civil liberties? According to Senator Templeman, the province's federal Liberal leader, Joly's sympathetic outlook had changed as a result of a visit to Vancouver's Chinatown in 1899.⁸¹ This visit may have had an impact on him, but the fact is that even in his sympathetic speech three years earlier Joly had suggested that gradual restriction of Chinese immigration might be necessary. Although he defended Chinese culture, Joly was clearly concerned that popular intolerance on the west coast, combined with the distinctive nature of Asian cultures, impeded or even prevented integration and assimilation into the province's mainstream society. He counseled McBride, however, to allow London or Ottawa to settle the Japanese question, and cautioned that “Hindous” were British subjects, “and, as such, cannot be treated as foreigners.”⁸²

76 But Ottawa generally allowed the Natal Act to remain in force each year until the last possible minute. Roy, 92–3, 98, 103–6, 133, 163; Ward, 55–9.

77 Roy, 159–64, 181–2.

78 This tax had been recommended by the 1901 royal commission. Roy, 109, 118–19, 150, 153–6, 172; Ward, 61.

79 Smith, 37, 44.

80 Roy, 164.

81 *Ibid.*, 100.

82 BCA, HGJ, Correspondence Outward, E/D/J68, HGJ to McBride, Pointe-Platon, 22 August 1906; HGJ to McBride, Québec, 14 December 1907.

Nor was Joly's concern about suitability limited to those of another skin colour. When a group of Doukhobors asked to settle in the province, advising that they did not recognize the authority of the state, an indignant Joly replied on his own authority, "Le Gouvernement, tout en étant prêt à recevoir avec plaisir les immigrants d'une classe désirable, refuse absolument d'entrer en négociation avec une classe d'emigrant [*sic*] qui débutent par déclarer qu'ils ne se conforment pas aux lois du pays."⁸³ To the premier, Joly fulminated: "They call themselves the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood and they ignore the teaching of Christ when He said: — 'Render unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar's And unto God the things that are God's'."⁸⁴ In following a communal way of life, while explicitly rejecting loyalty to the state, the Doukhobors had declared their intention to remain outside the liberal order that Joly clearly felt Asians would contribute to if rapid growth of their numbers did not prevent assimilation. From Joly's ideological perspective, then, race was a less important criterion of settler desirability than a willingness to adhere to the ascendant liberal values of nationalism and acquisitive individualism.

Though he had been a trusted colleague of the Canadian prime minister, Joly had also been a provincial premier and he strongly supported British Columbia's demand for better terms.⁸⁵ He wrote bluntly to Laurier in October 1901, after having refused to accept Dunsmuir's first resignation, that the premier's task "serait bien facile, si votre Gouvernement voulait accorder à cette Province la part de l'aide dont elle a plus besoin qu'aucune autre Province, et à laquelle, elle a droit, mais qui lui est refusée. Les résultats de ce refus sont faciles à prévoir."⁸⁶ To Laurier's rather annoyed request to be more specific, Joly replied that it was a well-known fact that federal governments favoured provinces that were represented by the same political party. Joly added that he sympathized in particular with Dunsmuir's published report concerning financial relations, subsidies for railway development, the fisheries, and the uneven way the tax on Chinese immigrants was divided between the two governments. He concluded by stating that the best means of attaching British Columbia to Canada and to the Liberal government would be to demonstrate that "malgré l'opposition que vous y rencontrez, elle peut compter que ses réclamations

83 BCA, Lieutenant-Governors' Papers, GR443, Miscellaneous Correspondence Inward, HGJ to Ivan Ponomareff et autres, Victoria, 23 October 1902 (typescript draft, accents as in original).

84 BCA, Premiers' Papers, GR441, Correspondence Inward, Private, box 19, file 95, HGJ to James Dunsmuir, Victoria [1902]. Joly, not surprisingly, did approve of the project to settle a group of Alsatians in the province, claiming that they were "well deserving of the good reputation which they have earned, for their industry, their perseverance, and high moral qualities." Ibid., Box 21, file 1, HGJ to Col. Prior, Victoria, 4 April 1903; *ibid.*, Series IX: Letterbooks (official), 1883–1916, vol. 385, 661, Premier to HGJ, 6 April 1903.

85 Saywell observes that this was true of many lieutenant-governors, 188–9.

86 LAC, Laurier Papers, C788, 59638, Victoria, 30 October 1901.

seront considérées par vous avec impartialité et jugées sur leur mérite.”⁸⁷ From Joly’s perspective, then, there was no contradiction between his sympathy for provincial rights and his Canadian nationalism, for his overriding concern was for national unity.

When McBride assumed office, the province was in debt over \$13,500,000 (with a deficit of over \$1,500,000), the mining industry was in recession, and the banks were threatening not to carry the province any longer. In advising McBride how to extract better terms from Ottawa, Joly suggested a radical constitutional amendment that would follow the Australian system of returning to the provinces all moneys that were surplus to fixed expenditures by Ottawa. He also put forward an argument that would be stressed by McBride in future negotiations, namely, that “the great extent of the Province (which is much larger than any other in the Dominion) and the physical character of the Country, ... to a great extent accounts for the expenditure so far exceeding that of any other Province in proportion to population.”⁸⁸ It could be argued that Joly was only exacerbating federal-provincial tensions by proffering such advice, but he may well have helped to weaken the sense of western alienation while he was in office by playing the role of broker between Victoria and Ottawa.

Due to the McBride government’s programme of strict economy (reminiscent of Joly’s own policy as premier of a debt-ridden Quebec), and its unbridled approach to selling Crown land and timber licenses (examined below), the provincial treasurer was able to announce a small surplus for 1904–1905. And, fortunately for the province, the economy began to turn around, the boom being stimulated in part by the consolidation that was taking place in the mining, forest, and salmon canning industries.⁸⁹ As a result, McBride was finally able to return to the old policy of promoting railway expansion in order to solidify his political support base; but that policy remained fraught with political dangers, as the Columbia and Western land grant issue had already demonstrated. The province’s sale to the Grand Trunk Pacific of land on Kaien Island, where the railway’s terminus of Prince Rupert was to be located, led to corruption charges by the Liberals and a divided commission of inquiry in 1906. The ever scrupulous Joly had insisted on that inquiry, and he had forwarded to McBride a news clipping, “To Hoodwink Lt.-Governor,” adding: “Of course, you will insist on having the Report of the Committee in time to lay it before the House, and get

87 Ibid., 59639–40, Laurier to HGJ, Ottawa, 8 November 1901; C789, 60023–6, HGJ to Laurier, Victoria, 18 November 1901.

88 BCA, Premiers’ Papers, GR441, Correspondence Inward, Private, box 78, unnumbered file, HGJ to McBride, Victoria [n.d.]; Harold Percival Johns, “British Columbia’s Campaign for Better Terms, 1871–1907” (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1935), 123–6.

89 Smith, 35–6, 39–45; Hunt, 45–54; Robin, 90–2.

a vote from the House on the subject.”⁹⁰ This polite command was a reminder that the lieutenant-governor still had the authority to dismiss a ministry that was tainted by corruption, but Joly was gone before being faced with such a decision.

With his position as premier challenged from within his own party, McBride resorted to the well-tested diversionary tactic of intensifying his province’s demand for better terms from Ottawa. He walked out of the 1906 federal-provincial conference in protest even though Ottawa had agreed to grant the province a special \$100,000 per year subsidy for ten years, in addition to the substantial increase that all the provinces were to receive.⁹¹ Joly was no longer in office to act as a restraining influence, but McBride attempted to visit him at his Lotbinière estate after he made his theatrical exit. The premier spent a fruitless day in Portneuf trying to find someone who would ferry him across the stormy waters of the St. Lawrence River to Pointe-Platon, but he had to write Joly, “Had it not been for the Fernie strike — which was then assuming alarming proportions and giving me a great deal of worry and anxiety — I should never have thought of leaving Quebec without first seeing you.”⁹²

McBride took comfort in his mentor’s communication that he approved of the position he had taken at the conference, though he found fault with the proposal that the extra allowance continue until the population of British Columbia reached 2,500,000:

“If we consider the ratio of increase in Provinces like Ontario and Quebec, which are so much better suited to profit by European immigration (which is the only one to be expected as long as B.C. keeps out Chinese and perhaps before long Japanese immigration) if we consider the said rate of increase, and even double or treble it for B.C. — how many years will it take before the Province reaches the two and a half million?”⁹³ This was a fair question given that the province’s population would be only 235,000 in 1911, and the answer — mathematical calculations aside — was not until 1976, long after British Columbia ceased being a “have not” province. In the meantime, after returning from Ottawa to a hero’s welcome, McBride called an election that saw his government returned with a comfortable majority.

It is, perhaps, less likely that Joly directly influenced McBride’s views on immigration and the federal-provincial fiscal arrangement than that he provided moral support and practical advice. It may have been simply coincidental that

90 BCA, HGJ, Correspondence Outward, E/D/J68, HGJ to McBride, Government House, 5 March 1906.

91 Ormsby, 345–6; Smith, 55–80; Hunt, 54–66, 81–103; Robin, 99–104.

92 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 7862-9, McBride to HGJ, Victoria [1906].

93 BCA, HGJ, Correspondence Outward, E/D/J68, HGJ to McBride, Québec, 6 November 1906. Joly later wrote to McBride, 10 December 1906, concerning the conference, “As to separation fight to the death against those who mention the word.”

race relations deteriorated rapidly after Joly's retirement, and it was probably inevitable that economic recovery would lead to a less prudent economic policy that soon aggravated McBride's relationship with Ottawa. But the fact remains that during Joly's term as lieutenant-governor complaints about Ottawa's high-handedness were relatively muted. From Ottawa's perspective, then, liberal order had been restored in a wider political sense than simply in the stabilizing of the provincial administration.

Crown Forest Policy

If Joly was identified as sympathetic to Asian immigration prior to his appointment as lieutenant-governor, he was much better known as one of the country's most active proponents of forest conservation. He had, for example, played a leading role in the founding of the American Forestry Congress in 1882. He had also convinced the Québec government to make Arbour Day a school holiday so that students could be introduced to the principles of silviculture.⁹⁴ Soon after he became lieutenant-governor, Joly forwarded two resolutions of the Canadian Forestry Association executive — of which he was president — to the province's acting provincial secretary, noting, "The matters in question are of such vital importance to British Columbia, that they deserve the earnest consideration of the Government and of the Legislature." In fact, they called for "immediate action" all over the continent "before it is too late."⁹⁵ Three years later, in 1894, Joly asked the secretary of the Canadian Forestry Association to forward four dozen copies of its annual report, "which contains much useful information touching our forests and their preservation and management," so that he could distribute them to the members of the Legislative Assembly.⁹⁶ Aside from ensuring that the legislators were well informed about the latest conservationist ideas, Joly also forwarded to Ottawa unofficial documents requesting the establishment of a national park in British Columbia, adding that

94 R. Peter Gillis and Thomas R. Roach, *Lost Initiatives: Canada's Forest Industries, Forest Policy and Forest Conservation* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 39–42; René Hardy, "Exploitation forestière et environnement au Québec, 1850–1920," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien* 27, no. 15 (1995): 70–2. For a detailed study of Joly's forest conservation activities in Québec, see Marc Gadoury, "Sir Henri Gustave Joly de Lotbinière: Visionnaire et promoteur de la conservation des forêts, au Québec, à la fin du XIX^e siècle" (M.A. thesis, Université Laval, 1998).

95 BCA, Lieutenant-Governor Papers, 1896–1919, GR443, Letterbook Copies of Correspondence Outward, vol. 4, 416, HGJ to Acting Provincial Secretary, October 1901. The resolutions appear to have been principally concerned with the prevention of forest fires. *Ibid.*, Miscellaneous Correspondence Inward, box 61, file 5, H. Bostock to HGJ, Vancouver, 28 October 1901.

96 *Ibid.*, Letterbook Copies of Correspondence Outward, vol. 7, 270, acting private secretary to R.H. Campbell, [n.d.]; *ibid.*, 295, 21 December 1904.

it was in the urgent interest not only of the province but of the entire dominion that one or more parks be set aside “where Game is still abundant.”⁹⁷

Even while Joly was lieutenant-governor, however, the McBride government did not hesitate to take advantage of the rapidly growing Prairie market for lumber, putting the aim of generating revenue well ahead of any concerns about the long-term viability of the resource.⁹⁸ Joly was admittedly somewhat constrained by his official position. As he wrote to his son in 1902, “La position que j’occupe m’empêche de prendre une part active à la lutte pour la protection de nos forêts contre les spéculateurs qui, ici, comme à Québec et autre part, trouvent leur compte dans l’exportation de notre bois non manufacturé.”⁹⁹ But Joly undoubtedly influenced the Dunsmuir administration’s passage of an order-in-council that, following the example of Ontario, prohibited the export of non-manufactured wood by holders of timber licenses on public lands. Joly wrote to his son in the fall of 1902, for example, that Dunsmuir’s Deputy Minister of Agriculture, J.R. Anderson, “is a great friend of mine, his devotion to Forestry being a strong bond of sympathy.”¹⁰⁰ The question that arises, then, is how was Joly’s conservationist ethos reconciled with the revenue-oriented policy of the McBride regime?

Even though the Canadian principle of Crown retention of forest land was introduced to British Columbia with Confederation, the province did not begin to tackle the problem of treating forest land differently from agricultural land until 1887. The Land Act passed that year prohibited the sale of Crown land that was “chiefly valuable for timber.” Legislation passed the following year made a sharp distinction between leases and licenses, the former being designed for mill owners and the latter for small logging contractors who paid an annual fee. The length of leases was set at 30 years, on provision that a suitable saw mill was constructed, while the term for licenses was set at one year, though they could be renewed. The annual rent for lease holders was ten cents per acre, plus a royalty of 50 cents per thousand board feet (Mfbm), but license holders paid only five cents per acre and a royalty of 25 to 50 cents per Mfbm. The main disadvantage for license holders was that they could hold only one license covering 1,000 acres (later reduced to 640 acres) for a maximum of five years, and it was not transferable.¹⁰¹

By 1903, these terms had been modified somewhat to increase Crown revenue, but the major revision came in 1905, after which no more timber leases

97 Ibid., vol. 6, 80, HGJ to Secretary of State in Ottawa, [1903].

98 See Robert Howard Marris, “‘Pretty Sleek and Fat’: The Genesis of Forest Policy in British Columbia, 1903–1914” (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1979), 5–9; and McDonald, 381–3.

99 BCA, HGJ Letters, Mf11A HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, 11 November 1902. On Joly’s support for the manufacturing condition, see also HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, 16 February 1902.

100 Ibid., 22 November 1902.

101 Marris, 20–4, 28; Gillis and Roach, 135.

— only licenses — were to be granted. The main aim of the government was obviously to increase its revenue for by this time licenses brought the same royalty and generally a higher ground rent than leases. Logging companies benefited, in turn, from the fact that licenses would henceforth be renewable annually for a period of 21 years. Furthermore, to avoid large numbers of timber licenses being surrendered during market downturns, thereby lowering government revenue, they were made into commodities. Not only did they become transferable, but there was also no longer any limit on the number of licenses any individual interest might acquire. The result was that from 1904 to 1907, the year timber prices started to collapse, the amount of land licensed in British Columbia multiplied by a factor of ten to approximately 9,600,000 acres, much of it quickly passing into the hands of American investors and lumbermen for use when their own stocks were depleted. Another result was that forest revenue increased from 17 percent of the provincial budget in 1905 to 41 percent in 1908.¹⁰²

Retrospective as the new system might appear to be, the main reason for granting leases rather than licenses — which was to promote the construction of saw mills — became somewhat redundant with the requirement imposed by the Dunsmuir government that all timber cut on Crown land had to be manufactured within the province.¹⁰³ Given this restriction, and the fact that there was no longer any requirement to cut the timber under license, there was no exponential increase in the cutting of logs after 1905.¹⁰⁴ Stephen Gray argues that, with the local lumber market already well supplied by lands in the Dominion railway belt, as well as by timberland that had been granted by the Crown in earlier years, the McBride administration had little choice but to license millions of acres at low prices if it wished to capture any significant immediate revenue from those lands.¹⁰⁵ Subsequently, there would be tremendous pressure on the government to allow the unrestricted export of saw logs from coastal districts, but the 1905 legislation did conform to the conservationist rhetoric of the lumbermen who insisted that long-term security of licenses was necessary to ensure responsible management of the forests.¹⁰⁶ As Gray has pointed out, tenure stability and long-term fixed charges were also seen by the

102 Ibid., 24–31, 111–12; Robin, 92–3; Gillis and Roach, 140–1; Stephen Gray, “Forest Policy and Administration in British Columbia, 1912–1928” (M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1982), 20–1.

103 In addition, the McBride government had in 1903 quadrupled the tax on all timber cut on lands not subject to royalty, with this amount to be rebated if the logs were processed within the province. Gray, 120.

104 Marris, 26, 28. Timber cut from provincial lands as well as the extensive dominion lands in the province increased from 318,531 Mfbm in 1900 to 533,306 Mfbm in 1905, and 872,217 Mfbm in 1910. Marris, 5.

105 Gray, 20.

106 Ibid., 118–20, 151; Marris, 31–2, 112–14.

government as true conservation measures in the American Progressive tradition because they stimulated efficient, large-scale industrial development.¹⁰⁷

How direct Joly's role was in fashioning the forestry reforms introduced by the British Columbia government is difficult to say, but McBride made it clear that he listened to Joly's advice in drafting the reform legislation of 1905.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, some of the reforms passed by McBride resembled those of Québec, including the elimination of the requirement for a minimum annual cut, the 21 year limit on timber licenses, and the hiring of government forest rangers and log scalers.¹⁰⁹ Finally, McBride wrote to Joly in his retirement: "The people of British Columbia will not forget the many good services you rendered them when Lieutenant Governor. In the splendid revenues which we are getting from our woods today, I can see the fruit of your timely advice to my colleagues and self."¹¹⁰ From his manor house at Pointe-Platon, Joly replied:

I feel a glow of pleasure at the good news of the financial result of your forestry policy, and earnestly hope that you will *persevere* in your determination to secure to your province the full and complete benefits & returns it is your duty to obtain from such an asset as Providence as [sic] placed in your hands, your forests, without any other work, on your part, than collecting your Dividends. You have *inherited* that wealth. Spend the *interest* wisely and take care of the *capital* for those who will come after you.¹¹¹

Unfortunately, the latter was one piece of advice McBride and his successors failed to heed.

The Long Goodbye

Despite Joly's great popularity in British Columbia and his willingness to remain for another term, Laurier would not hear of it.¹¹² When the Anglican Bishop of

107 Ibid., 2–5.

108 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 8082-3, McBride to HGJ, Victoria, 16 August 1906.

109 Québec was arguably more of a model than Ontario because it generally took a more active approach to forestry and forest reserve management, one inspired to some extent by Europe. Gillis and Roach, 107–18, 139, 145; René Hardy and Normand Séguin, *Forêt et société en Mauricie* (Montreal: Boréal Express, 1984), 22–3; Gray, 55.

110 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 7868-9, McBride to HGJ, Victoria [1906].

111 BCA, HGJ, Correspondence Outward, E/D/J68, HGJ to McBride, Québec, 10 December 1906.

112 Edmond Joly wrote to Laurier in confidence that his father was "deeply interested in his work & all that concerns the welfare of the Province & would be happy to continue in office for a few years more." Five months later Joly wrote to Edmond, "Of course, you understand that it is out of the question for me to communicate with Sir Wilfrid, or to allow any one to communicate with him, on my behalf. I am here, and wait." LAC, Laurier Papers, C823, 98075, Edmond Joly to Laurier, Pointe-Platon, 1 June 1905; 98078, reply, 3 June 1905; BCA, HGJ Letters, Mf11A, HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, HGJ to Edmond, 8 November 1905. While John A. Macdonald always refused to renew lieutenant-governors' commissions, Laurier re-appointed three. Saywell, 232.

the Columbia Diocese wrote in February 1905 that a petition begging for Joly's re-appointment was about to be signed by a large number of people throughout the province, and that "no appointment could possibly be made that would tend more to the moral and social good of British Columbia," Laurier replied testily that "such a petition seems to be most unseemly. The office of Lieutenant-Governor is of such a character that I question the wisdom of putting it on the same rank as that of messengers, customs house officers and so on."¹¹³ Perhaps Laurier's stance resulted from Senator Templeman's observation that Joly had "popularized himself with the Conservatives; the reverse with the Liberals who think they have been ostracized by him." Templeman did add, however, that this was largely because "few of our friends are in that circle."¹¹⁴

Paradoxically, perhaps, Joly's popularity as lieutenant-governor reflected the fact that he was a member of the traditional *élite* rather than the *nouveau riche* bourgeoisie, as in the case of his successor, James Dunsmuir. Joly hosted with great success Governor-General Minto and family in 1900, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George and Queen Mary) in 1901, and Prince Arthur in 1905.¹¹⁵ Historians such as William M. Kuhn have examined how during this period in England ceremonies of monarchy were devised that reinforced class hierarchies as well as a sense of national community.¹¹⁶ Similarly, Phillip Buckner argues that the Canadian royal tours served as national unifying forces in this era of imperial enthusiasm.¹¹⁷ Not only did Joly play a leading role in such imperialist ceremonies, but, assisted by his wife Margaretta prior to her death in 1904, he was a much-sought-after patron of scores of public societies and events. As a representative of the British monarchy and symbol of a hierarchical social order who pushed forward modernizing political reforms, Joly can be said to have embodied the paradoxes that McKay insists are intrinsic to the Canadian liberal order.

113 LAC, Laurier Papers, C819, 94605, W.W. Columbia to Laurier, Victoria, 9 February 1905; 94606, Laurier to My dear Lord Bishop, Ottawa, 18 February 1905.

114 Ibid., C808, 81833, W.T. to Laurier, n.d. Laurier gave the same reply to Templeman as to the bishop. Ibid., 81834, Ottawa, 18 February 1905.

115 See S.W. Jackman, *The Men at Cary Castle: A Series of Portrait Sketches of the Lieutenant-Governors of British Columbia from 1871 to 1971* (Victoria: Morriss Printing, 1972), 79–82; and Joseph Pope, *The Tour of the Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York Through the Dominion of Canada in the Year 1901* (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1903), chap. 5.

116 William M. Kuhn, *Democratic Royalism: The Transformation of the British Monarchy, 1861–1914* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

117 Phillip Buckner, "Casting Daylight upon Magic: Deconstructing the Royal Tour of 1901 to Canada," in *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, eds. Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 158–89. See also Robert M. Stamp, *Kings, Queens and Canadians: A Celebration of Canada's Infatuation with the British Royal Family* (Markham, ON: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1987).

In *The English Constitution*, which Joly had undoubtedly read, Walter Bagehot wrote that English royalty “seems to order, but it never seems to struggle. It is commonly hidden like a mystery, and sometimes paraded like a pageant, but in neither case is it contentious.”¹¹⁸ The monarchy was particularly useful as a “visible symbol of unity” during Joly’s term of office when loyalty to party and therefore respect for the premier’s office were still on shaky ground. As the Queen’s local representative, Joly’s official openings of fall exhibitions throughout the province provided especially important opportunities for disseminating the message of economic progress, and for legitimizing the state.¹¹⁹ Indeed, even though Laurier was adamantly opposed to Joly’s reappointment, he asked him to remain in office until September 1905 in order to open the dominion exhibition in New Westminster.¹²⁰ Joly was still in Victoria in February 1906 when the prime minister asked him to carry on again until the fall, this time to open the provincial exhibition. Laurier added that Joly might even remain until the end of winter in 1907, as his friends had requested. He should resign immediately, however, if he felt that there would be dissolution of the Legislature before the termination of the spring session, as it would be advisable that his successor take on this responsibility. His pride evidently injured and his health in decline, Joly replied to the federal secretary of state that he did not foresee an early dissolution, but “considering his [Laurier’s] last letter I think due him to ask to be replaced at once.”¹²¹

Newspapers on both sides of the political divide praised Joly’s urbanity, kindness, accessibility, and devotion to the interests of British Columbia.¹²² In sending his regrets that he could not attend Joly’s farewell dinner, his old political rival, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, wrote: “I do not know of any of His Majesty’s representatives who has so generally earned the respect & admiration of all classes of the district over which he carries on the King’s Government, as yourself.”¹²³ The

118 Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, republication of 1915 edition (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963), 90.

119 In the fall of 1902, for example, Joly opened exhibitions in Kamloops, Ashcroft, New Westminster, and Victoria. BCA, HGJ Letters, Mf11A, HGJ to Edmond, Victoria, 28 September 1902. For one of many studies that point to the influence of the British landed élite in British Columbia, see Mary-Ellen Kelm, “Touring With Trouncer: Community, Adaptation, and Identities,” *BC Studies* 131 (Autumn 2001): 63–70.

120 Laurier mistakenly assumed that the exhibition was to be in Victoria. LAC, Laurier Papers, C823, 98074, Laurier to HGJ, Ottawa, 8 June 1905; *ibid.*, C824, 98753-4, HGJ to Laurier, 20 June 1905.

121 *Ibid.*, C831, 106755, Laurier to HGJ, Ottawa, 1 February 1906; *ibid.*, 106928-9, HGJ to R.W. Scott, Victoria, 8 February 1906 (coded telegram). Joly was not replaced by James Dunsmuir until late May.

122 For example, see *Victoria Colonist* (12 May 1906) and its excerpt from the *Vancouver News-Advertiser* (17 May 1906).

123 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 7878-81, Charles Hibbert Tupper to HGJ, [10 Jan. 1906].

mayor of Victoria wrote later in the year: “I must tell without any disloyalty to our present Lieutenant Governor [James Dunsmuir] that at times you have been sadly missed, especially during the visit of His Excellency the Governor General when your natural aptitude and easy presence would have made matters go off much less stiffly and awkwardly for some of us.”¹²⁴

When Joly died two years later, in November 1908, the *Vancouver World* observed:

for some five years he and Lady Joly dispensed a gracious and elegant hospitality at the capital. He came, it will be remembered at a time of political turmoil, when steadiness of purpose, knowledge of constitutional usages and great tact were absolutely indispensable. It is the best tribute to the success of his term of office that its conclusion was anticipated with a regret which caused the expression of a widespread wish that he should be continued here.¹²⁵

Joly’s role in easing British Columbia into the twentieth century would, however, soon be forgotten. Plans were discussed in 1906 to transfer some of the trees he had planted at Government House to an avenue or park to be named in his honour, but they had failed to be implemented apparently for the want of a parks board to take on the responsibility.¹²⁶

Conclusion

No Canadian ministry has ever been dismissed by a governor-general, but lieutenant-governors have unseated premiers on five occasions, three of those being in British Columbia between 1898 and 1903. Joly’s dismissal of Prior and appointment of McBride marked the last time such a step was taken not only in British Columbia but in any Canadian province.¹²⁷ Clearly, the key to government stability was the party system, which had been late to develop on the west coast where fixation on railway construction meant that even at the federal level no candidates opposed the governing party prior to the 1891 election.¹²⁸

Robert McDonald argues, nonetheless, that 1903 was not a major turning point in the province’s political history, as generally assumed, because “the shared interests and commonly held goals of the settler community were a more important part of British Columbia’s political culture than was partisan attach-

¹²⁴ Ibid., 8097–8, Mayor Morley to HGJ, Victoria, 8 November 1906.

¹²⁵ *Vancouver World* (16 November 1908).

¹²⁶ *Victoria Times* (16 November 1908); *Victoria Colonist* 17 November 1908.

¹²⁷ The other two occasions were in Québec in 1878 and 1891. Monet, 55–6.

¹²⁸ Escott M. Reid, “The Rise of National Parties in Canada,” in *Party Politics in Canada*, ed. Hugh G. Thorburn (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1967), 21.

ment to the newly established provincial Liberal and Conservative parties.”¹²⁹ According to McDonald, liberalism — with its defense of liberty, property, and equality — had from the start formed the “common sense” foundation of British Columbia’s political culture, as it did that of Britain and the rest of Canada.¹³⁰ As Gordon Stewart has pointed out, however, the party-based patronage system was fundamental to the emergence of the statist type of government that has long been characteristic of Canada.¹³¹ In the physically fragmented province of British Columbia, with its economically unstable resource base, the party system of government instituted in 1903 provided large-scale railway, mining, and logging companies with the means to exercise control over the state through the provincial Cabinet rather than having to purchase the support of individual politicians.

Just as the absence of community bonds ensured that the enforcement of state-enacted property regulations through the court system was considered perfectly compatible with individualist liberal values on the pre-Confederation gold rush frontier,¹³² so did proponents of those values see no contradiction in imposing a party discipline that would subordinate local community pressures and demands to government stability. An added bonus, from the liberal perspective, was that the Socialists would lose their influence once McBride was able to consolidate his position, a development that Joly anticipated with some eagerness. He wrote to the premier in the fall of 1906:

I take too much interest in British Columbia to be indifferent to her future. Let her be ruled by a Liberal or a Conservative Government, as may be decided by the majority, but do not let her fall in the hands of the Socialists. Stand up against Socialism, whatever you and your party may risk in doing so.¹³³

In short, Joly’s record as lieutenant-governor of the Pacific province conforms nicely to what Ian McKay suggests is the dominant underlying theme in Canadian history, namely “the extensive projection of liberal rule across a large territory” in a process whereby liberal assumptions, particularly the sanctity of individual property rights, were “intensified and normalized within the dominion’s subjects.”¹³⁴ British Columbia’s historians have written as if the party governance system simply emerged automatically in 1903 out of the political

129 Robert A.J. McDonald, “Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper and the Political Culture of British Columbia, 1903–1924,” *BC Studies* no. 149 (Spring 2006): 65–6.

130 McDonald, “Variants of Liberalism.”

131 Gordon T. Stewart, *The Origins of Canadian Politics: A Comparative Approach* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986).

132 See Tina Loo, *Making Law, Order, and Authority in British Columbia, 1821–1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 3–17.

133 LAC, HGJ Papers, M-795, 8091-2, HGJ to Captain Tatlow, Pointe-Platon, 23 September 1906.

134 McKay, 624.

chaos of that era,¹³⁵ but the fact is that its introduction and early nurturance required the skills of an experienced and capable public figure who was close to the central seat of power rather than identified with any of the province's rival interest groups. Rather ironically, Joly de Lotbinière's genteel background, diplomatic skills, and patrician sense of duty made him an ideal agent for the implementation of a less personal and paternalist (and therefore more liberal and efficient) political system, one that facilitated capitalist expansion during the era that McKay sees as the apex of the liberal project.¹³⁶

* * *

JACK LITTLE is a member of the History Department at Simon Fraser University. His most recent books are *The Other Quebec: Microhistorical Essays on Nineteenth-Century Religion and Society* (University of Toronto Press, 2006), and *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840* (University of Toronto Press, 2008).

JACK LITTLE est membre du Département d'histoire de l'Université Simon-Fraser. Ses livres les plus récents sont *The Other Quebec: Microhistorical Essays on Nineteenth-Century Religion and Society* (University of Toronto Press, 2006), et *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840* (University of Toronto Press, 2008).

135 For example, see John Douglas Belshaw, "Provincial Politics, 1871–1916," in *The Pacific Province: A History of British Columbia*, ed. Hugh J.M. Johnston (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996), 137–8, 145, 149–50, which completely ignores Joly.

136 McKay, 640. Monet argues that Lord Sydenham and Lord Metcalfe were unable to win the popular support of the French Canadians during the 1840s in large part because — in contrast to the more successful Sir Charles Bagot and Lord Elgin — they "sprang from a bourgeois liberal milieu, and neither had married." Jacques Monet, "The Personal and Living Bond, 1839–1849," in *The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age*, ed. W.L. Morton (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), 91.