



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
on the CPA UK Branch Seminar**

**Canadian Branch of the
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)**

**United Kingdom and the European Union
June 8 - 20, 2008**

Report

Charlottetown Senator Percy E. Downe represented the Canadian (Federal) Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at the *International Parliamentary Governance Seminar* June 8 – 20, 2008.

The *International Parliamentary Governance Seminar* consisted of meetings and discussion with Commonwealth parliamentarians and other international observers. Commonwealth participants included delegates from Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Ghana, India, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and other countries. Observers from non-Commonwealth countries were from Brunei, Hong Kong, Oman and Rwanda.

The aim of the Seminar was to enhance understanding of supranational and national governance issues, to explore the challenges of governance arising out of devolution, to learn more about the relationship between the European Union (EU) and Commonwealth countries and to discuss governance issues.

The Seminar expanded the delegates' knowledge and understanding of the Westminster parliamentary model. Fittingly, it took place at the Houses of Parliament in London and included working sessions at the European Parliament in Brussels, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and also in Liverpool.

Sessions on the first day included: one entitled *Governance- What it is and Why is it Important*, delivered by Professor Rodney Barker from the London School of Economics; UK and the EU discussions regarding governance at a supranational level with Ms. Vaughne Miller the Head of the International Affairs and Defence Section in the House of Commons Library and Lord Harrison of the Labour Party; a central and local government relations discussion with speaker Mr. Carl Wright, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and Mr. Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, a Conservative Member of Parliament. The last session on devolution was presented by MPs Andrew MacKinlay and Elfyn Llwyd, and Lord Rogan.

During the first day in Brussels, delegates received an overview on the work of the European Union regarding development, trade and world issues from Mr. Martin Reynolds, a Counsellor at the United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the European Union (UKREP). Delegates also learned about engagement with the European Parliament with Mr. Paul Heardman, First Secretary Constitutional Affairs with UKREP; the EU approach to governance in development policy and partnerships with Mr. Phillippe Darmuzey, Head of Pan African issues and institutions; EU trade politics and policy with Mr. Stephen Adams, the speechwriter for Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson; and lastly, governance and EU politics of education, culture and youth with Mr. Adam Tyson, Head of Policy and Inter-institutional Coordination (Education and Culture).

The second day in Brussels, delegates discussed the role of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) with Mr. Martin Callanan, a Conservative and Unionist MEP, and Mrs. Fiona Hall, a Liberal Democrat MEP. There was a session on foreign affairs, development and international trade including presentations by Mr. Francis Cole from

the Committee on Development of the European Parliament, Mr. John Bowis (MEP), Mr. Syed Kamall (MEP) and Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne.

Sessions were held on climate change, the environment and agriculture, allowing delegates the unique opportunity to hear the perspectives of many other MEPs representing various political parties. Delegates were also addressed by the President of European Parliament, Mr. Hans-Gert Pöttering in a speech regarding the role of the European Parliament in the world today.

In Belfast, Northern Ireland, delegates heard from the Right Honourable Jeffrey Donaldson, MP, MLA, and Mr. Basil McCrea, MLA, about power sharing and learned about the role of committees in the development of policy and legislation from the following MLAs: Mr. Danny Kennedy, Mr. Mervyn Storey, Ms. Dawn Purvis, and Mr. Sean Neeson.

Regarding devolution and local government, Ms. Heather Moorhead, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, made an interesting presentation regarding devolution and the local government. Another related session on the benefits of devolution on civil society was delivered by Ms. Eileen Chan-Hu, Chief Executive of the Chinese Welfare Association and Dr. Yvonne Galligan, Director for the Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics.

Other sessions of the day included:

A Fair and Equal Society - From Division to a Shared Future

Mr. Duncan Morrow, Chief Executive, Community Relations Council

Ensuring Equality in the New Northern Ireland

Ms. Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive, Equality Commission Northern Ireland

A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland

Mr. Trevor Reaney, Chief Executive, Policing Board for Northern Ireland

In Liverpool, delegates attended a session on the European capital of culture with Mr. Neil Peterson, the Head of Liverpool Welcome, Liverpool Culture Company, Liverpool City Council. Other sessions for the day were focused on municipal affairs. There was a session on city leadership and governance with Liverpool City Councillors Warren Bradley and Colin Hilton; and a session on city finance with Mr. Robert Corbett, Assistant Executive Director of Resources, Liverpool City Council.

Back in Westminster, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat representatives Mr. Andrew Imlach, Director of Communications and Research and Ms. Meenakshi Dhar, Assistant Director of Programmes presented about the association, and delegates heard from Commonwealth Scholarship recipients.

Other sessions that related to parliamentary affairs included:

The Role of A Second Chamber

Rt. Hon Baroness Hayman, Lord Speaker

Mr. David Beamish, Clerk Assistant, House of Lords

Legislation and Scrutiny: The Work of Committees Mr. Andrew Dismore MP (Labour)
Mr. John Grogan MP (Labour)

Making Parliament Work

Rt. Hon Thomas McAvoy MP (Labour/Cooperative), Government Whip
Mr. Simon Burns MP (Conservative) Opposition Whip

Delegates attended sessions that related to broader representation issues such as gender representation and public engagement. The specific sessions included:

Gender and Governance

Dr. Roberta Blackman-Woods MP (Labour)
Ms. Madeleine Moon MP (Labour)

Representation: The Electoral Commission

Mr. Sam Younger, Chairman, Electoral Commission

Connecting Parliament and the People

Mrs. Helen Goodman MP (Labour), Deputy Leader of the House of Commons
Mr. Alex Brazier, Director, Parliament and Government Programme, Hansard Society
Mr. Peter Facey, Director, Unlock Democracy

Beyond Parliament: Engaging Business and Civil Society

Lord McNally (Liberal Democrat)
Mr. Ian Pellow FCIS, Chief Executive Officer, Throgmorton

Regarding accountability issues, delegates attended the following sessions:

Holding Parliament to Account: The Role of the Media

Ms. Julie Kirkbride MP (Conservative)
Mr. Peter Knowles, Controller, BBC Parliament

Freedom of Information (FOI): The Implications for Governance

Mr. Bob Castle, FOI and Data Protection Officer Department of Resources, House of Commons
Mr. Maurice Frankel, Director, The Campaign for Freedom of Information

Accountability: The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

Mr. John Lyon CB, Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
Dr. Christopher Ward, Clerk, Standards and Privileges Committee

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association of the United Kingdom produced a 137 page report which outlines in greater detail the activities of the International Parliamentary Governance Seminar.

The report, organized by day, outlines each session and the main points of discussion, including questions asked by delegates.

Please see the following link for a copy of the full report:

<http://www.cpaukbranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/ipgs-2008-seminar-report.pdf>.

A copy of the final itinerary is also available at the following link:

<http://www.cpaukbranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/ipgs-flyer.pdf>.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Russ Hiebert, M.P. for
Senator Percy E. Downe,
Canadian Branch of the
Commonwealth Parliamentary
Association (CPA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
ACTIVITY	International Parliamentary Governance Seminar
DESTINATION	London, United Kingdom Brussels, Belgium Belfast, Northern Ireland Liverpool, United Kingdom
DATES	8-20 June 2008
DELEGATION	Canadian (Federal) Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
SENATE	Senator Percy E. Downe
HOUSE OF COMMONS	-
STAFF	-
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 5,848.75
ACCOMMODATION	
HOSPITALITY	
PER DIEMS	\$ 513.58
OFFICIAL GIFTS	
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	
TOTAL	\$ 6,362.33