

BELGIUM'S NEW REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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In August 1980, the Belgian parliament passed a series of laws and constitutional amendments completing an earlier revision begun in 1970 and establishing a new, regional level of government. The new institutions, to be put in place over the next seven years, constitute, at least on paper, a major change in the organization of the Belgian political system. They will transform a unitary state centralized on the Napoleonic model, if not with Napoleonic rigor, into a state more closely approximating the federal type of organization familiar to Canadians. Although it is too early to discuss the operation and full implications of the new institutions, some ideas about what they will look like in practice can be gathered from a discussion of the reasons for their establishment and the form given them by the laws and constitutional revisions.

"LA BELGIQUE DE PAPA"

Pre-1970 Belgium, or "la Belgique de Papa," as Gaston Eyskens, Prime Minister of the government responsible for the 1970 revision called it, was a unitary state tempered by certain modifications. Although local, or communal, governments were under the direct authority of the central government, Belgium's communal traditions were sufficiently strong that the establishment of a prefectural system on the French model was averted when the state was established in 1832. As a result, communal governments enjoyed a certain freedom from excessive central government control. A more significant departure from the unitary model was the existence of a provincial level of government with elected assemblies and politically responsible executives. However, the provinces were also under the authority of the central government which named the provincial governor, ratified the acts of provincial legislatures and executives, and provided the bulk of provincial budgets. Their degree of political autonomy in no way corresponded to that of a Canadian province.

Finally, and in the end fatally, the country's population was composed of two distinct language groups, Dutch-speaking and French-speaking, concentrated on either side of what was known as the language frontier. This frontier was formally traced by legislation in 1932, and permanently fixed in 1961-3. This frontier did not, at the time, divide the country into political units, but determined the language of education, administration, etc. North of the frontier in

Flanders, only Dutch had official status; south of it, in Wallonia, only French. Exceptions were constituted by Brussels, where nineteen communes were bilingual, by six suburban communes around Brussels and a few communes along the frontier itself where some facilities were available in the language of the other region, and by the "Eastern Cantons" of Wallonia in which German as well as French enjoyed official status.

LA BELGIQUE DE PAPA EST MORTE

Quarrels between the two language groups had been a recurrent feature of Belgian political life since the nineteenth century and had led to several attempts to regulate their relationships through government action. By the early 1960's, political activists on both sides of the language frontier had become convinced that some form of political autonomy was necessary for the prosperity of their language group. They demanded changes in the unitary form of the Belgian state to adapt it to the ethnic composition of its population. Finally, in 1968, a government committed to regionalization, and able to amass the legislative majority of two-thirds required to pass constitutional revisions, was installed. However, the task of the government was greatly complicated not only by disagreements between unitarists and regionalists over how much power should be delegated to the new institutions but also by quarrels between Flemish and Francophone negotiators over the form the "new" Belgium should take and the role to be accorded to Brussels.

Flemish demands for autonomy arose from the difficulties their language and its speakers had encountered in Belgian social, economic and political life. Their main demand, therefore, was for cultural autonomy: the granting to each language group of control over its own education and other aspects of cultural development. They wanted a future Belgium composed of two language groups and resisted attempts to introduce Brussels as a third element in the equation. The predominance of French in the capital city of a country whose majority is Dutch speaking, and which is, moreover, located in Flemish territory, was one of the major grievances of the Flemish movement. Their goals in the 1970 constitutional negotiations were to stop the expansion of the bilingual region of the capital and to retain enough national control over the city's life to prevent its Francophone majority from reducing the

importance of Dutch still further. Francophone bargainers rejected the Flemish vision of a two-community Belgium. Their demands for autonomy arose from the economic decline of their regions, particularly Wallonia. Cultural autonomy was of no interest to them: they wanted control over economic policy shifted from the national level, where Flemish interests could be expected to predominate, to the regional level. They wanted the new Belgium to be composed of three geographically defined regions with an enlarged Brussels the equal in powers of the two other regions.

The constitutional revision of 1970 did little to resolve this difference of opinion and was, in fact, only possible because it did not try to choose between a two-community or a three-region Belgium. It tried, in effect, to give each group what it wanted in the areas it was most interested in. The revisions decentralized control over both cultural and economic policy, with a separate set of institutions for each topic. Control over cultural matters was to be vested in **two** cultural councils composed of members of the national parliament. Flemish members from Brussels would sit on the Flemish Cultural Council and Francophone members from Brussels on the French Council. The articles transferring power in economic councils to be directly elected by the inhabitants of each region.

The revised articles set out only a general framework for the new institutions, leaving their completion to a set of laws, some requiring a two-thirds majority for passage, others a simple majority only. Laws establishing the two cultural councils were enacted in 1971, since Flemish insistence and Francophone indifference on the issue made their passage a relatively simple matter. Passage of the laws setting up the institutions for economic regionalization was much more difficult. Francophones were not as united on the desirability of economic regionalization as the Flemish had been on the need for cultural autonomy and the Flemish were far from indifferent on the issue since it involved determining the powers and composition of the Brussels region. Moreover, the constitutional articles setting up the economic regions were extremely vague, reflecting the lack of agreement among the people who had negotiated them. According to the articles, there were to be three economic regions, with directly elected councils and executives responsible to those councils. Such "details" as the boundaries of the regions, the exact powers to be transferred, and the way in which councils and executives were to be chosen were not specified, a vagueness that allowed many different arrangements to be put forth by the con-

tending parties. Their disagreements delayed passage of the laws making economic regionalization a reality until August 1980. By this time, relations between Flemish and Francophone Belgians had evolved considerably, and the new laws give the regions even more powers and greater autonomy than had been envisaged in 1970.

THE 1980 REVISIONS

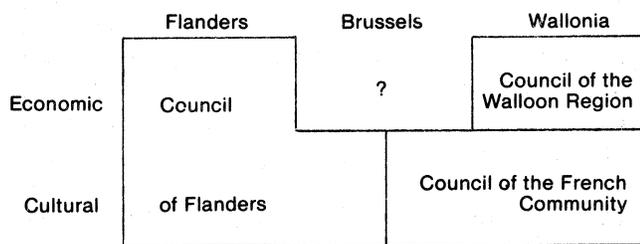
The result of the 1980 revision is well-captured in Jacques Brassine's introduction to his "Dossier" describing the new institutions: "La complexité de nos institutions est à l'image du pays, et nul ne peut plus l'ignorer. Elle ne résulte pas d'un manque d'esprit de synthèse de la part de ses auteurs mais bien d'une absence de consensus sur certaines notions qui, de ce fait, pourront être interprétées différemment suivant les intérêts en cause." The laws and revision began in 1970; but they are themselves incomplete, they do not settle the fate of Brussels, and, most important, they do not choose between the option of two communities or three regions, or, rather, they complicate matters by choosing both options.

The institutions which result from the revision attempt to satisfy all parties (except the French-speaking inhabitants of Brussels). The Flemish emphasis on cultural autonomy and on a Belgium of communities rather than regions is reflected in changes in the nature and function of the old cultural councils, now renamed community councils. The affairs to be dealt with by these councils have been enlarged to include personalisable matters such as health care and social security, an increase that matches the increase in matters to be treated by the regional councils. The community councils will now have politically responsible executives, directly elected members, and independent legislative and fiscal powers, making them the institutional equals of the regional councils. In a sense, then, the new sub-national level of government in Belgium is composed of two sets of institutions: one based on the two communities, the other on the three regions. However, the picture is complicated by the attempts of Flemish and Walloon negotiators to push the situation in one or the other direction, and by their failure to agree on the nature of the Brussels region.

As Figure One shows (p.89), the new institutions that have been set up have a distinctly asymmetrical character. The Council of the Flemish Community, which includes the Flemish of Brussels, and the Flemish Regional Council,

which does not, have been merged and given a single executive. The members from Brussels can speak but not vote on questions falling under the jurisdiction of the Regional Council. However, in response to Walloon (and Francophone Bruxellois) insistence, the Council and Executive of the Walloon Region and the French Community have been maintained as separate institutions, thereby preserving the institutional space for a separate Brussels Regional Council. (There is a certain amount of political self interest in all this. The main negotiators on the Francophone side have been the Socialist party, which easily dominates the Walloon Regional Council with 48 of 106 seats but which has only 53 of 137 seats on the Community Council.) The Brussels Regional Council has not yet been established. The government responsible for the 1980 revisions promised to settle the question of the status of Brussels "within a reasonable period", but two years and three governments later the matter is still unresolved, and no-one predicts an early, or even any, settlement. In the meantime, the "Brussels Regional Executive" remains a ministry of the national government and does not have a separate assembly attached to it.

FIGURE 1: The New Regional Institutions



TIMING

The 1980 revision also provided for a three-phase transition period between the 1980 status quo and complete regionalization. The first phase was to last until the next general election, which took place in November 1981. The country is now – more or less – in phase two of the transition. Under this phase, the Regional and Community Councils are composed of members of the Chamber of Representatives and directly elected senators from the regions and communities. (The Belgian Senate is composed of three types of senators: those elected directly by the population, those elected by the provincial assemblies, and those co-opted by the members of the first two groups. The heir to the throne is also a senator.) Each senator and representative is therefore a member of a community assembly and, except for those from Brussels, of a regional assembly as well

as of the national legislature. For the councils, phase two will last until the Belgian Senate is reformed into a body composed only of directly elected Senators and solely concerned with regional and community matters. At this point members of the Chamber of Representatives will drop their regional responsibilities, and the Chamber will be the only legislative body at the national level.

For the executives, phase two has a definite time period, four years. The phase is to be marked by their separation from the national government, the establishment of partial political responsibility to the regional and community assemblies, and the acquisition of their own bureaucracies, formed by transferring civil servants from the national bureaucracy. During this period, the executive is chosen on the basis of proportional representation of all parties in the assembly (provided, of course, that they have enough members to qualify.) Ironically, the party which insisted most strongly on this provision, the Liberals, has lost the most from it. Although the government which passed the regionalization plan was a tripartite coalition of Social Christians, Socialists and Liberals, the Liberals feared that succeeding national governments would return to a Social Christian-Socialist formula, and that this coalition would be repeated at the regional level. The requirement of proportional representation in the first regional governments was therefore designed to give the Liberals some voice in the formative stage of regionalization. The tripartite government was in fact succeeded by a Social Christian-Socialist coalition in 1980, but in the November 1981 elections the Liberals gained enough votes to displace the Socialists as the second party in Flanders and the Social Christians as the second party in Wallonia. Their electoral successes and the reluctance of the Socialists to be part of a government dedicated to economic austerity led to the formation of a Social Christian-Liberal coalition at the national level, who have benefitted from the measure the liberals designed, in part, to dilute Socialist power.

The executives are also supposed to be politically responsible to the regional assemblies. However, the requirement for proportional representation of all parties on the executive has effectively delayed the acquisition of one of the components of responsible government, the dependence of the executive on a political majority in the assembly for its survival. Although the assemblies can, technically, vote non-confidence either in the executive as a whole, or in individual members of the executive, the fact that all major parties are represented on the executive makes at least the first action improbable. As the situation stands now, the members of the executive are named by their

respective parties and are, in practice, responsible to them rather than to the assembly as a whole. Although the executive must defend its policies before the assemblies, full political responsibility will not exist until 1985. Even then it will be modified by the provision (which does not operate at the national level) that an executive can only be overthrown by a "positive" vote of non-confidence. This rule, borrowed from the West German constitution, requires that those proposing a vote of non-confidence also propose an alternate executive. If this executive cannot demonstrate that it has the support of a majority of the assembly, the old executive remains in power, even though it may lose the vote of confidence on the specific issue in question. The executive itself can also ask for a vote of confidence and is not required to propose an alternative executive when it does so.

COMPETENCES

The list of powers handed over to the regional and community levels appears, at first, quite extensive (see Appendix). However, there are several provisions that maintain the preponderance of the national level of government. First, the list limits as well as specifies the powers of the regional and community councils. Residual powers, that is, all powers not listed in the revised articles, remain at the national level. Moreover, the revision gives the national government the power to set standards and determine broad policy choices in several areas, most notably in social policy. For example, the revision gives the communities power over old age assistance, but reserves to the national government the right to determine "la fixation du montant minimum, (1)es conditions d'octroi et (le) financement du revenu légalement garanti aux personnes âgées": that is, the whole area of old age pensions. Similar provisions are attached to health care. Major areas of social assistance, such as unemployment insurance, remain at the national level. The economic powers given to the regions are limited by the retention of national control over several major areas of economic activity: these include coal mining, the steel and naval construction industries, and the textile industry. The economic powers of the regions are further limited, of course, by the rules and regulations of the European Economic Community. However, although the powers handed over to the communities and regions fall short of the demands of many Belgian regionalists, they represent a considerable modification of the unitary "Belgique de papa" and a much greater degree of decen-

tralization than the original revision of 1970 provided for.

The financial powers granted to the regions and communities are also more extensive than those envisaged in 1970. They have the power to impose taxes in certain areas, and to borrow money, subject to co-ordination with the national level. For the immediate future, however, most of their budget will come in the form of a grant from the national government. The total grant was set at 91.65 billion Belgian francs for 1981 and will increase automatically according to a formula based on the cost of living index. It cannot otherwise be increased. Although the allocation must be passed by the national legislature every year, the national government does not appear to have the option of refusing to pass it. (How this will work in practice is another question!). Fifty billion francs are allocated to the communities, with 55% going to the Flemish community and 45% to the French community. The remaining 41.3 billion francs are allocated to the regions, whose shares can be expected to vary slightly from year to year, since they are determined by the classically Belgian "objective criteria" (also known as the system of three thirds). One third of the share is determined by population, a criterion which "objectively favours Wallonia; and one third Brussels. In 1980 Flanders received 52.14% of the total, Wallonia 39.27% and Brussels 8.49%. The Flemish council receives both community and regional allocations and is not obliged to keep them separate, but can divide its own budget between community and regional matters as it sees fit.

CONFLICT AND COOPERATION

One of the non-political causes of the ten-year delay in the revision of the Belgian constitution lay in the difficulty of separating the functions of a modern government. National policy inevitably affects the regions while regional policy decisions affect the environment the national government must work in; social policy has economic consequences and economic policy choices affect the social environment. As a result, life in a federal or quasi-federal system involves not only the separate exercise of autonomous powers, but also frequent interaction to settle conflicts and coordinate policies. Several features of the Belgian system make this interaction among both communities and regions rather than a single intermediate level of jurisdiction in areas such as health care. The revision therefore also establishes an abundant and complicated set of institutions to ensure

co-operation and prevent or settle conflicts.

At the level of the new institutions themselves there are commissions charged with promoting cooperation between communities, between regions and between the Walloon region and the French Community. (Cooperation between the Flemish region and community is an internal matter for the Council of Flanders and the Flemish Executive.) The constitution also requires a whole dictionary of different types of co-operation between national and regional levels. United action (**concertation**) is required on economic decisions which will affect other regions as well as on public borrowing. Association is required for international treaties undertaken by the regions or communities. The agreement (**accord**) of regional and national levels is required for changes in the list of national economic sectors. The state is to be informed by the regions about the management of communal organizations for the distribution of gas and electricity. Finally, the opinion (**avis**) of the region concerned must be followed in national decisions about the amalgamation of communes.

In general, this co-ordination is to be carried out by each level of government. However, there are also specific institutions to handle conflicts between this level and the national level. These include the already existing legislative section of the **Conseil d'Etat**, which has been given the power to decide whether proposed legislation is within the competence of the level of government promulgating it. Conflicts between existing laws and decrees will be settled, for the time being, by another section of the **Conseil d'Etat**: in the final stage of regionalization a Court of Arbitration is to be established to deal with these cases. Another new institution has been established to handle the political aspects of possible conflicts ("conflicts of interest" rather than "conflicts of competence", in Belgian political parlance). This is the **Comité de Concertation**, which in the final stage of regionalization will consist of the Prime Minister and three other members of the national government, the President and one another member of the Flemish executive, and the Presidents of the executives of the French Community and the Walloon region. It will handle disputes referred to it by the **Conseil d'Etat**, and complaints by regional, community and national governments against each other.

BUT WILL IT WORK?

A written constitution is, of course, only an incomplete guide to the way a political system

in which the actual division of functions and balance of power between national and intermediate levels of government is not fixed, but varies over time in response to changing political and economic circumstances. There are several features of the Belgian political system that suggest that there will be limits to the degree of regionalization that will, in fact, take place. First, the full regional system has not yet been set up. No agreement has been reached on the status and powers of the Brussels region. Given the long history of unsuccessful attempts to resolve the Brussels issue, it is likely that this part of the regionalization programme will remain incomplete for the foreseeable future. Three other major components of the revision have not yet been passed because of opposition from already existing institutions whose powers will be affected by the proposed changes. The first is the revision establishing a court of arbitration to deal with disputes among communities and regions and between this level and the national government. The opposition of Belgium's two existing courts of appeal, the **Conseil d'Etat** and the **Cour de Cassation**, to the creation of a rival court has been intense, equalled only by the opposition of each court to seeing the other given a prestigious set of new powers. The second is the revision turning the current Senate into a body of regional representatives. At the moment, the cultural and economic councils are composed of national level parliamentarians from both the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives. The regionalization plan proposes to divide national and regional responsibilities between the two bodies, with the Chamber retaining sole responsibility for national matters and the Senate, which will be elected separately from the Chamber, to be given control of community and regional affairs. So far the resistance of the Senators to what they regard as a demotion of their institution (and themselves) has blocked the passage of the amendment. Thirdly and finally, the place of the provinces in the new system has yet to be decided.

The three-phase nature of the regionalization plan also creates possibilities for obstruction, since the plan will not implement itself. Continuing political pressure over the next several years will be required to secure the resources needed to enable the new institutions to exercise the powers they have been given. One of the major political forces behind regionalization, the Walloon Socialists, is now in opposition. The Liberals have never been strong partisans of regionalization. They have argued that the current economic crisis calls for national unity rather than decentralization and that the central

government cannot afford the cost of setting up a new level of government. There is also resistance to regionalization by those parts of the national bureaucracy who will lose personnel and functions to the new institutions.¹⁶ Finally, there is the centralized nature of the Belgian party system. Although Belgium's political parties have split into independent Flemish and Francophone branches, in a sense anticipating regionalization, each has remained organized around the national political level. A group of politicians specializing in politics at the regional and community level is only beginning to emerge and the amount of autonomy they will enjoy within their parties has not yet been established. If they do not achieve a degree of autonomy, regional politics will merely reflect the alliances and quarrels at the national level.

In spite of the opportunities that exist for delaying the establishment of the regional and community institutions, the Flemish-Francophone tensions that led to their creation remain an important part of the Belgian political system. They provide an argument for those who favor even more decentralization than is provided under the current revisions. This counterbalance of pressures for limiting and extending the scope of the new regional institutions makes their future operations difficult to predict. If "la Belgique de papa" is dead, the identity of its successor is not yet clearly established.

Appendix

COMMUNITY POWERS*

*apply in French and Dutch language regions and to establishments in the bilingual Brussels region whose activities exclusively concern one or the other of the language communities.

A. CULTURAL MATTERS

1. defense of the language
2. support for training of researchers
3. fine arts
4. cultural institutions (museums, libraries, etc.)
5. radio and television except for communications by the national government and advertising policy
6. continuing education, physical education
7. tourism
8. artistic, intellectual, moral and social training
9. research in these subjects

B. EDUCATION

except for

1. matters related to the Schools Pact (an agreement on the distribution of state subsidies to church-run and state-run teaching systems)
2. diplomas, subsidies, salaries, norms for student population

C. PERSONISABLE MATTERS

1. HEALTH

- (a) health care except for
 - i) matters covered by the basic (national) law on health care
 - ii) health insurance
 - iii) basic policy for planning and finance
 - iv) national standards for licensing
- (b) health education and preventive medicine except for
 - i) national measures

2. SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

- (a) family policy
- (b) social welfare except for
 - i) setting of minimum level and conditions for receiving it
- (c) aid to immigrants
- (d) aid to handicapped except for
 - i) rules and financing of payments to handicapped
 - ii) aid to employers hiring handicapped workers
- (e) senior citizens except for
 - i) rules, amount and financing of old age pensions
- (f) juvenile protection except for
 - i) matters related to civil or criminal law

3. APPLIED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

- a) in matters under exclusive authority of communities except for
 - i) establishments in the bilingual region of Brussels

D. REGULATION OF LANGUAGE USE

1. in administration
2. in teaching establishments run, subsidized or licensed by the state
3. between employer and employee
4. in official notices by enterprises

REGIONAL POWERS

A. LAND USE PLANNING

1. urban planning
2. local roads
3. acquisition and equipment of industrial zones
4. urban renewal
5. reclamation of abandoned sites of economic activity
6. zoning

B. ENVIRONMENT

1. protection of environment
2. waste removal and treatment
3. inspection of dangerous or unhealthy sites

C. RURAL REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION

1. reorganization of agricultural resources
2. conservation, except for
 - i) non-indigenous flora and fauna
3. parks and green belts
4. forests
5. hunting, except for
 - i) manufacture, sale and regulation of hunting weapons
6. riverine fishing
7. aquaculture
8. irrigation and non-navigable waterways
9. removal of flood waters
10. polders and drainage works, except for
 - i) dikes

D. HOUSING

E. WATER

1. provision and distribution of water, except for
 - i) large-scale projects of national interest
 - ii) drinking water standards
2. waste treatment, except for
 - i) establishment of conditions for disposal of waste water
 - ii) calculation of charges for treatment of industrial waste water
 - iii) subsidies for purification of industrial waste water
3. sewage

F. ECONOMIC POLICY

1. natural resources
2. regional economic planning and public industrial activity
3. regional aspects of monetary policy, taking account of national monetary policy
4. regional economic expansion, including aid to industries, support for investment, except for
 - i) national economic sectors (coal, naval construction, container glass, textiles, steel, coke)
 - ii) fiscal concessions must be approved by national authorities
 - iii) state guarantees require national approval
 - iv) national level controls Interprofessional Credit Fund
 - v) national level determines maximum amount and length of contingency assistance
 - vi) price policy and professional licensing remain at national level

G. ENERGY

1. distribution of electricity on networks of less than 30,000 volts
2. gas
3. new sources of energy of local interest
4. energy reconversion, except for
 - i) energy use planning
 - ii) national electrical installation planning
 - iii) nuclear energy
 - iv) major infrastructure for production and storage
 - v) rates

H. LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

1. associations of communes
2. allocation of regional share of Communal Fund, determination of criteria for distribution of funds to provinces
3. subsidies to local and provincial projects falling under regional competence
4. administrative supervision of communes and provinces

I. EMPLOYMENT

1. relocation of workers
2. execution of national measures for job creation and relocation
3. application of employment standards for foreign workers

J. RESEARCH IN REGIONAL MATTERS

FOOTNOTES

¹This paper is based on documentary research carried out in Brussels in 1977 and 1978 and on a series of interviews with participants in the events described, conducted from September to December, 1979 and June to July, 1981. The research was supported by grants from the President's Research Fund, Simon Fraser University; the SSHRCC Small Grants Fund, Simon Fraser University; and an SSHRCC Grant to Facilitate International Collaborative Research.

²According to the latest figures, the population of Flanders is approximately 5,477,700 (56% of the total population of Belgium), that of Wallonia, 3,117,200 (32%); and that of Brussels, 1,069,000 (11%). There has been no language census since 1947: everyone in Flanders is assumed to be Dutch-speaking, and everyone in Wallonia, French-speaking. The ratio of the two language groups in Brussels is a matter of considerable debate, but 80 per cent French-speaking, 20 per cent Dutch-speaking is the figure most often cited.

³For an excellent discussion of the language laws and their genesis see Arthur E. Curtis, **New Perspectives on the History of the Language Problem in Belgium**, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1971.

⁴For histories of the conflict, see Shepard B. Clough, **A History of the Flemish Movement** (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1930); Carl-Henrik Höjer, **Le régime parlementaire beige de 1918 à 1940** (Brussels: Centre de

recherche et d'information socio-politiques, 1975); Aristide Zolberg, "Splitting the Difference: Federalization without Federalism in Belgium" in Milton J. Esman, ed., **Ethnic Conflict in the Western World** (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977); and Hervé Hasquin, **Historiographie et politique: Essai sur l'histoire de la Belgique et la Wallonie** (Charleroi: Institut Jules Destrée, 1981).

⁵For a contemporary view of the debate on Brussels, see the report of a colloquium including both Flemish and Francophone participants in Georges Goriely, "Rapport introductif sur Bruxelles et le fédéralisme", **Res Publica XIII** (1971) 3-4, pp. 397-422.

⁶For descriptions of the debate, see, as well as the sources listed in Footnote 4, Robert Sennelle, "The revision of the Belgian constitution, 1967-70", **Memo from Belgium** (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade) Nos. 128-9 (1970) and 132-3 (1971), and Pierre Wigny, **La troisième révision de la constitution belge** (Brussels: Emile Bruylant, 1972).

⁷See Maureen Covell, "Agreeing to Disagree: Elite Bargaining and the Revision of the Belgian Constitution", **Canadian Journal of Political Science XV** (1982) pp. 451-469.

⁸Jacques Brassine, "Les institutions de la Flandre, de la Communauté française, de la Région wallonne" (Brussels: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, Dossier No. 14, 1981).

⁹For the complete text of the revisions, see Andre Alen, **La Réforme de l'état: la nouvelle constitution et ses lois d'exécution** (Brussels: Centre d'Etudes Politiques, Economiques et Sociales, 1980).

¹⁰Jacques Brassine, "L'après-8 novembre 1981: la mise en oeuvre de la deuxième phase de la réforme des institutions", **CRISP, Courrier Hebdomadaire No. 940, 13 Novembre 1981**, p. 8. With the support of three small left-wing parties, the Socialists have an absolute majority on the Regional Council.

¹¹Alen, **op.cit.**, p. 47.

¹²Brassine, **op.cit.**, p. 24.

¹³Brassine, **op.cit.**, p.33.

¹⁴Alen, **op.cit.**, pp. 97-105.

¹⁵Brassine, p. 34.

¹⁶For the proposed transfers see Philippe Moureaux, **L'administration à l'heure de la réforme de l'Etat** (Brussels: Ministry of Institutional Reform, 1981).