



POLICY *Brief*



JOHNSON
SHOYAMA

Quebec as a Model for Provincial Autonomy in Alberta and Beyond

November 2023

Policy Brief: Context

- Quebec nationalism has long been a crucial factor in Canadian federalism
- Assertion of Quebec as a “nation” has led to it gaining special status
- Economic “regionalism” has been central to western alienation
- Alberta has been the focal point in growth of a regional identity
- Sentiment has grown in recent years in opposition to federal policies
- Clash of climate and energy policy central to the regional tension
- Rise in Alberta demands for treatment equal with Quebec
- *Alberta’s Fair Deal Panel* used Quebec as basis for demands on Ottawa

Policy Brief: Considerations

- Nationalism and regionalism are different political sentiments
- Underlying nationalism is the notion of “nationhood” and autonomy
- Often linked to cultural and linguistic differences
- In Quebec it has manifested at times in demands for sovereignty
- The Canadian federation has made concessions to Quebec nationalism
- Regionalism tends not to express feelings of national identity
- Sentiment is rooted in sense of economic grievance
- Alberta regionalism sees Quebec as model for greater autonomy

Policy Brief: Discussion Questions

- What policy issues/sentiments are at the heart of western alienation?
- Is “regionalism” as important as “nationalism” for policymakers?
- Are Alberta’s demands for greater autonomy well-founded?
- How are they similar/different from those of Quebec?
- What concessions have been made to Quebec over the years?
- What levers do governments have to address federal-provincial tensions?