



The PATRIATION MINUTES

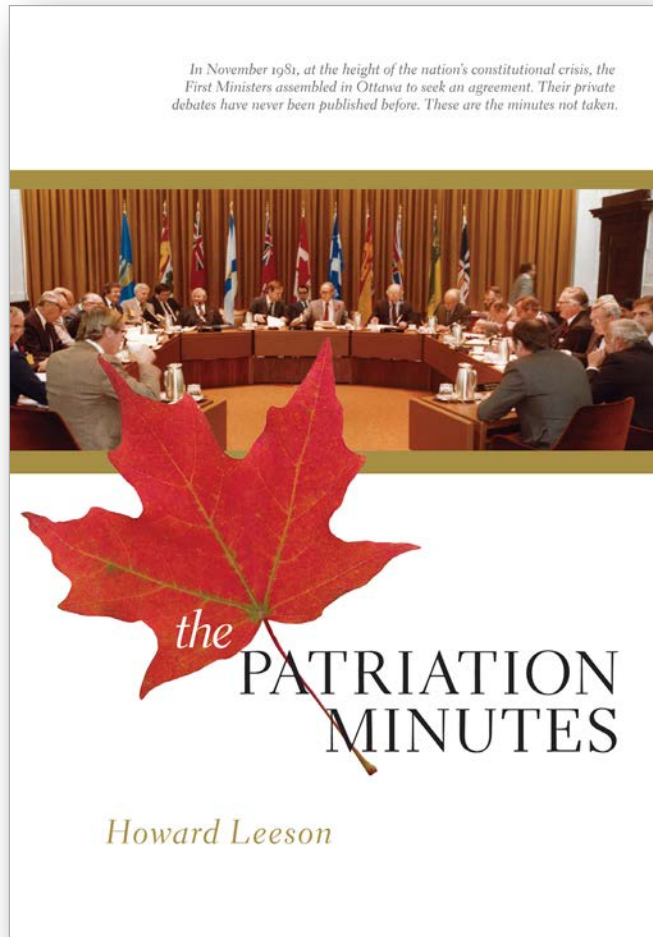
by *Howard Leeson*

In November 1981, at the height of the nation's constitutional crisis, the First Ministers assembled in Ottawa to seek an agreement. These are the minutes not taken. For three days in November of 1981 Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and the other First Ministers met in private in Ottawa to try and get a deal on a new constitution for Canada. No official minutes or recordings were made of their discussions. However, Dr. Howard Leeson, now a Professor of Political Science at the University of Regina, was then the Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs for Saskatchewan and sat in on the private meetings. He took extensive minutes of the actual discussions of the First Ministers and wrote comprehensive memos on other important meetings that happened away from the conference meetings themselves. Now for the first time these documents are being made public.

“In my judgement, (*The Patriation Minutes*) may be the most important document made public in Canada for many, many years...”. —*Peter Lougheed, former Premier of Alberta*

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