

CANADA • DEMOCRACY • CIVIC LIFE

Democracy, Republic or Democratic Republic?

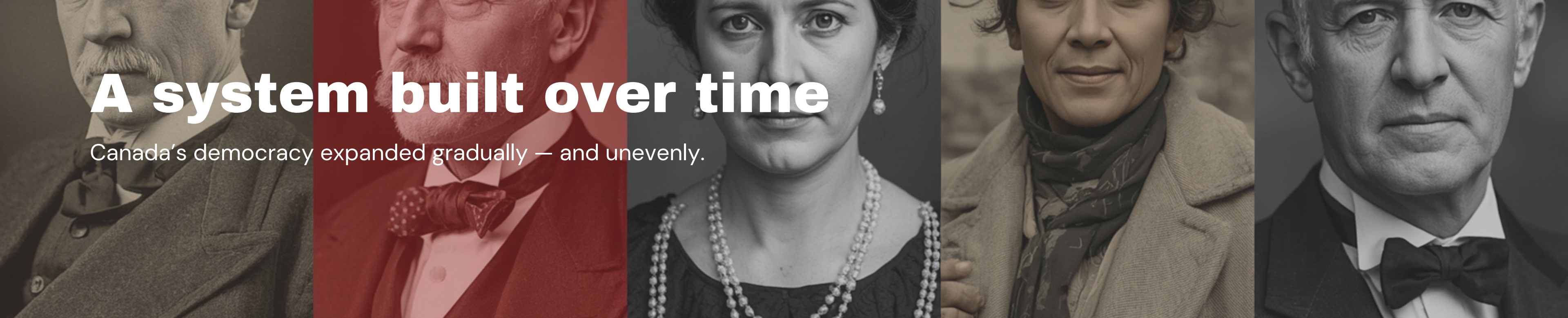
The Pros and Cons of Democracy from a Canadian High
School Perspective

Bereket Yohannes
York Memorial Collegiate Institute • Toronto, Canada
Class of 2027

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

Has democracy worked well for Canada?





A system built over time

Canada's democracy expanded gradually — and unevenly.

1840s

RESPONSIBLE
GOVERNMENT

1867

CONFEDERATION

1918

WOMEN WIN THE
FEDERAL VOTE

1960

UNRESTRICTED
INDIGENOUS FEDERAL
VOTE

1982

CHARTER OF RIGHTS &
FREEDOMS



FREEDOM

Expression. Religion. Peaceful Assembly.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms • Section 2

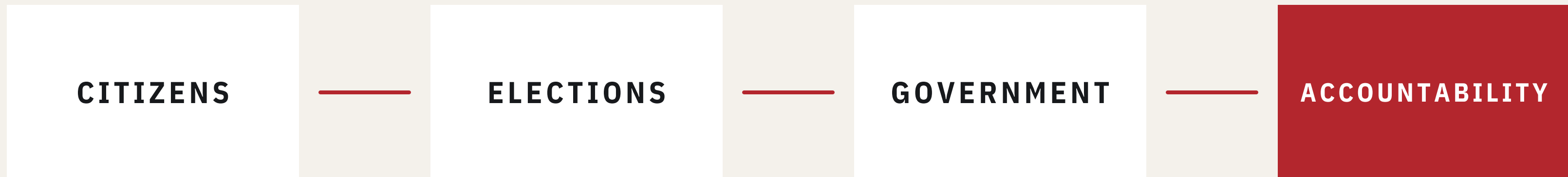
STABILITY



Governments change.
Institutions remain.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Democratic power moves in a loop — not a straight line.



PARLIAMENT • COURTS • JOURNALISM • PUBLIC SCRUTINY

THE TRADE-OFF

**Freedom and
accountability often
come at the cost
of speed.**



WEAKNESS #1

Slow decision-making

SPEED

VERSUS

**CHECKS
ON POWER**

Debate → negotiation → voting → legal review

Delay can be a safeguard against abuse.

WEAKNESS #2

Is the majority always right?

51%

49%



“The tyranny of the majority” — John Stuart Mill



DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON CITIZENS

A voice is not enough.

Education.
Critical Thinking.
Civil Discourse.

Citizens must use their voice responsibly.

CONCLUSION

*“Democracy gives us a voice.
Civil discourse decides
how we use it.”*

STRENGTHS

Freedom • Stability • Accountability

CHALLENGES

Slow decisions • Majority rule • Informed citizenship

BEREKET YOHANNES • TORONTO, CANADA