

Chapter 7: Confederation

Terms/People to Know

Confederation	Charlottetown Conference
Delegates	Quebec Conference
Charles Tupper	Reciprocity Treaty
Leonard Tilley	Resolution
John Gray	Referendum
John A. MacDonald	

- In 1867 some of the colonies joined together to form the country of Canada.
- This union was known as Confederation.
- The three province that joined were:
 - i) the province of Canada (Canada East and West)
 - ii) Nova Scotia
 - iii) New Brunswick

This chapter looks at:

- 1) events that lead to Confederation
- 2) how Canada's present form of gov't came from Confederation

How it all started

By 1864 representative government had been in place in the colonies.

Things were not going well for the colonies: they had lost their trade preference and Britain no longer wanted to spend money on military protection for the colonies.

Colonies started to consider two points:

i) if they stayed separate and would they have more political and economic power?

OR

ii) would the colonies do better if they worked together?

This chapter looks at union of the following areas:

- ❖ the Maritimes
- ❖ the Province of Canada
- ❖ Newfoundland

The Maritime Colonies

The first talks of union started with:

- Charles Tupper- premier of NS
- Leonard Tilley - premier of New Brunswick
- John Gray - wasn't so sure
- John A. MacDonald- premier of Province of Canada

The Province Of Canada

The Province of Canada were interested in a talks of a union for several different reasons

- ❖ There were constant disagreements between the English (Canada west) and the French (Canada west). As a result no work could get done such as passing bills or just running the colony. They hoped by joining Canada, they would be separated but still be part of a larger political union.
- ❖ This colony also had large debts fro trying to build railways and canals to improve transportation of goods. They were hoping that by joining other colonies the cost might be shared.

Newfoundland

Newfoundland was not first invited because of how far away were from other colonies/ the mainland. When people in Newfoundland heard about it they expressed interested but they didn't have enough time to select people to go to the meetings and arrange transportation.

Charlottetown Conferences

- what happened in 1864 in PEI??
- well what happened is why PEI is known as the birthplace of Confederation.
- the meeting between the colonies were scheduled for Sept. 1-9th, 1864.
- in the conferences, each delegate gave a speech explaining how they viewed Confederation and the benefits it would bring
- John A. MacDonald gave very powerful speeches.
- there was so much work to do before a final decision they decided to meet again

**Photoanalysis - figure 121.

The Quebec Conference

All colonies attended the Quebec conference.

For over two weeks delegates discussed how the union would work and who would share the power.

By the end of the conference they had created a list called the "72 resolutions" that the colonies agreed upon. They then had to go back to the colonies to see if the people agreed.

It was from these meetings that our present system of government was developed.

Main ideas in the 72 Resolutions

- ❖ **The new country would still be loyal to Britain.**
- ❖ **Each colony would become a province.**
- ❖ **There would be a federal system of government with a central government in charge of the country and looked after items such as defense and the economy. Each province would have a government that took care of local issues and things such as health and culture.**
- ❖ **The federal government would be made of an elected House of Commons and an appointed Legislative Council (now the Senate)**
- ❖ **There would be representation by population meaning the province with the most people would have the most members in both the Commons and the Council.**
- ❖ **PEI - smallest population : 5 members in the House of Commons**
- ❖ **Canada West- largest population: 83 members in the House of Commons.**

Threat from the United States

BNA had already been at war with the U.S. In the 1860s, some Americans started talking about taking over our prairies and the gold-mines (in B.C.). People here felt that we would be better able to defend ourselves if united together.

Trade

At one point BNA had a reciprocity treaty with the US. They didn't tax one another's goods. However in the 1860s, the US started to talk about ending this reciprocity. It looked like we could no longer depend on this free trade so it was felt it might be better to have free trade between the colonies and share the same currency.



Why Join Together as a country???



Railway

Railways were seen as a solution to the transportation problems in the colonies. N.S., N.B. and the Province of Canada had railways but they were not joined. as well the St. Lawrence was frozen over during the winter so goods couldn't be transported between colonies. Railways were expensive so if the colonies joined, they could share the cost to connect them all up.

Demand for Land

Many new people moved to BNA and many wanted to farm. Much of this good farmland was in Rupert's Land- this is where the First Nation's lived. The HBC said they owned the land. It was thought that if the colonies joined they could get enough \$\$ to buy the land, people could move there and farm. Farmed goods could be sold to the rest of Canada.

Confederation in the Colonies

<u>Colony</u>	<u>Reason for Confederation</u>	<u>Reason against Confederation</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>
Canada East (Quebec)	X	-afraid of losing their language and culture. - thought the decision should be made by the people.	
Canada West (Ontario)	-thought they could get work done under one large political organization. - they had large debts and were hoping the costs would be shared.	X	
New Brunswick	-they thought they could get business by shipping to the colonies -they could sell coal. -better protection from the U.S.	-they would not have power to make decisions. -they would have to help pay the Province of Canada's debt. -already had good trade with the US.	
Prince Edward Island	X	-there was no plan to deal with absentee landlords - didn't want to be governed from a central location -didn't want to pay for a railway (island)	
Nova Scotia	-they thought the coal and steel industry would benefit. -they also liked the idea of the railway.	- they would not have power to make decisions. -they would have to pay off the P of C debt. -already had trade with Europe.	
Newfoundland	X	-they thought they would not benefit from trade with the colonies -didn't want to pay taxes on a railway that wouldn't reach them. -wanted to keep ties Great Britain	

*N.S.- thought decision was too important to leave to politicians

The Confederation Debates

- ❖ **When the delegates who attended the Quebec Conferences came back to their colonies, their governments decided for or against confederation either by:**
 - i) **making a decision on its own by having the politicians vote on it**

OR

- ii) **have an election so that people could vote for or against the political party that wanted Confederation.**
- ❖ **In some cases the people in the colony would not have had a voice in the decision making process. Today most provinces would hold a referendum.**
 - ❖ **Referendum: people give their opinion on a matter directly by either voting for or against.**
 - ❖ **Each colony had it's reasons for being either for Confederation or against it.**

Confederation

Province of Canada - the French minority had more doubts about the union than the English. Overall 90 were for it and 33 against it. Of the French Canadians however 27 were for and 21 against. Why? Fear of losing their culture and language. In this colony they debated it in the assembly and voted on it themselves (the politicians made the decision).

New Brunswick – Premier Tilley was in favour of Confederation. His argument for it was that if there was a railway link, Saint John would get a lot of shipping business from the other colonies as it's port was virtually ice free all year long. As well since they shared a border with the US, if the US attacked they would probably be the first hit. The opposition led by AJ Smith had strong arguments it. He said 1) New Brunswick would have so few representatives, NB wouldn't have a voice and effect decisions. 2) NB would have to help to pay off the province of Canada's debt. 3) NB already had a good trading relationship with the US so they should just keep this. 4) There was no guarantee that the railway would be built and if it was built, only those parts that it ran through would get any benefit. It was decided in an election and in 1865 Tilley lost and the anti-confederates took over.

PEI- The people of PEI were against Confederation for two main reasons: 1) there was no plan in the Confederation or any money provided to deal with the problem of landowners who did not live in the colony. As well being governed by a central government seemed like what they already had with absentee landlords. 2) the railways would not reach PEI because it was an island so they didn't want to pay \$\$ for a system that would not benefit them. Premier John Gray was for Confederation but many others weren't so his government resigned and the new premier J.C. Pope (anti confederate) took over.

Nova Scotia- Premier Charles Tupper was for Confederation and had the support of people involved in the steel and coal industry as these business people would benefit from trade with central Canada. However many people were against it such as Joseph Howe who by that time was no longer a member of gov't. His reasons against were like New Brunswick's 1) Nova Scotia would have so few representatives that they wouldn't have a voice in decision making 2) NS would have to pay off the Province of Canada's huge debt 3) Most of Nova Scotia's wealth came from the sea (fishing/shipping /trade) and it would be better off to continue this economic activity than to

build new trade partnerships. 4) Howe felt it was wrong for the Assembly to make this decision and that it should be the people. Charles Tupper and the assembly made the decision quickly to go with Confederation as he was sure he would not win the next election.

Newfoundland: The two NL delegates were in favour of Confederation: Ambrose Shea (Liberal Roman Catholic) and Frederic Carter (Conservative Protestant). Premier Hoyles was also in favour. However the people didn't see it this way. The main trade of NI was fish and people figured that it would be easier for the colonies to get this from NS (whose main export was also fish). As well because of the remoteness of NL, many figured it didn't make sense to pay taxes for a railway they'd never use. NFLDers wanted to stay independent and keep strong connections to Britain.