

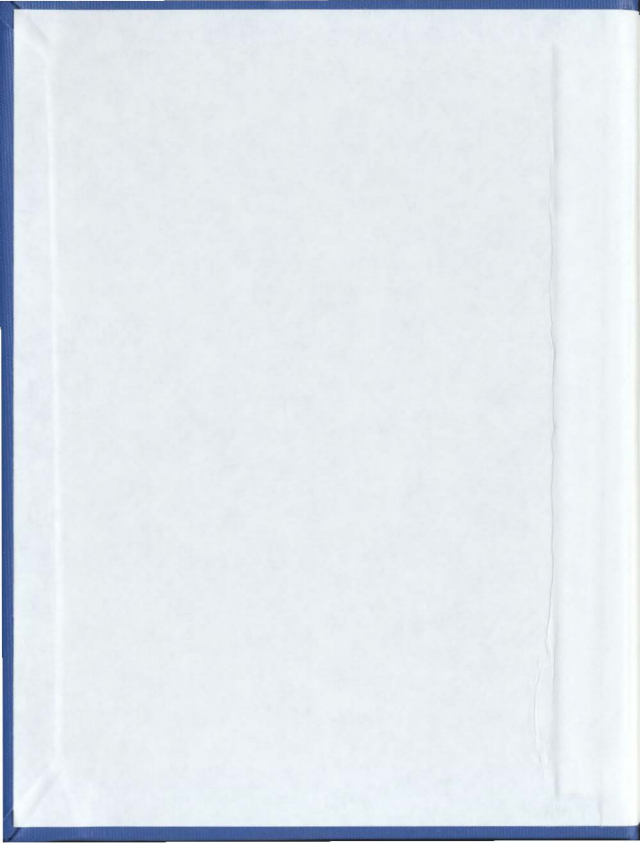
THE CONFEDERATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND WITH CANADA,
1946-1949

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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JOHN EDWARD FITZGERALD



**THE CONFEDERATION OF
NEWFOUNDLAND WITH CANADA,
1946-1949**

By

© John Edward FitzGerald, B.A., B.Ed.

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Abstract

Following political scandal and facing economic collapse, in 1933 Newfoundland abdicated self-government in favour of an appointed Commission of Government. World War II brought an American presence and wartime activities to Newfoundland. This, and the colony's resources spurred Canadian interest in the island. By war's end, the British had determined that Newfoundland would elect a National Convention, to recommend forms of government for inclusion in a constitutional referendum. By this time, local interest had developed in some quarters in confederation with Canada. J.R. Smallwood was elected to the Convention and became its leading advocate of confederation, but the Convention was dominated by advocates of a return to self-rule. In December 1946, a Responsible Government League (RGL) was formed by leading citizens. With ties with the Roman Catholic Church, the RGL proposed that Newfoundland return to responsible government before considering union with Canada. But while Smallwood and a Convention delegation were in Ottawa in the summer of 1947 getting proposed terms of union, the RGL failed to campaign. In January 1948 the Convention closed after defeating Smallwood's motion to include confederation with Canada on the ballot. The public was immediately asked to send telegrams demanding that confederation be included on the ballot, and the response was overwhelming.

But before the confederates delivered their telegrams to the governor, the British had decided to put confederation on the ballot. RGL thunder was stolen when a party formed advocating economic union with the United States (EUP). Both groups fought confederate promises of the Canadian social welfare state. Smallwood campaigned with an intimate knowledge of the proposed Canadian terms of union, and received Canadian money and information, but the EUP's promises of a higher standard of living, and its "slick" campaign threatened to win. But because *Commission of Government* was

included with confederation and responsible government on the ballot paper, the first referendum was indecisive. Confederation was dropped, and a run-off vote was held.

In the second referendum campaign the confederates attempted to capture the Commission vote by working in concert with the governor, Commissioners, and the Loyal Orange Association in a sectarian appeal to outport Protestant voters. Protestants were numerically dominant but they had hitherto lacked political cohesion, a situation the confederates had to overcome. While many factors entered into the decision of 22 July 1948, the second campaign was predominantly sectarian, personal, and not without electoral irregularities. Confederation narrowly passed responsible government, and the Government of Canada quickly accepted the decision. Despite RGL protests, final terms of union were negotiated between Canada and a confederate-dominated appointed Newfoundland delegation. Newfoundland joined the Canadian confederation on 31 March 1949, and the political dynasty of J.R. Smallwood was launched.

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Preface

The benchmark of modern Newfoundland history is its confederation with the Dominion of Canada, which occurred at midnight on 31 March 1949. An extensive historiography exists on the subject, dominated by the triumphal accounts of how confederate leader Joseph R. Smallwood "got" confederation. But there has been little scholarly critical examination of the political motives, activities, and methods of the participants in the confederation campaigns, from their earliest involvements, through the second referendum on 22 July 1948, and into the early months of 1949. When confederation was being debated in the late 1940s, few Newfoundlanders missed the nightly broadcasts of the National Convention.¹ They were held spellbound by the orations of Smallwood, Major Peter Cashin, and others, and they participated in the referenda of June and July 1948 with a zeal hitherto unequalled in any poll in the country's history.² Yet when those who remember, or those who have read about the period, are asked how confederation was brought about, or are asked specific questions about the campaigns between the dissolution of the Convention on 30 January and the second poll on 22 July, many answer predictably: the political climate was personal and bitter; religion was a nebulous but important factor; and even if confederation was good for Newfoundland, it was "done wrong". Most will also credit Smallwood with the idea of confederation, and its "victory", even if they are unsure of exactly what the victory was, or how it was achieved.

Beginning in the Canadian centennial year of 1967, a variety of accounts began to appear dealing with Newfoundland's confederation. Smallwood's official "Story of Confederation" was set down that year in his *Book of Newfoundland*, volume 3, along with other paeans of unbridled praise to the union, like "Happy Province", "Let Us Draw

¹ For an analysis of the National Convention and its importance see Jeff Webb, "Newfoundland's National Convention, 1946-1948" (M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987).

² 88.36% of the population voted in the first referendum on 3 June, and 84.89% of the population voted in the second on 22 July.

Close to Canada", and "The Gospel of Confederation: Book One".³ *"The Book"* - its title replete with epic Biblical connotations - contained contributions by confederates and those who had supported responsible government, but all gave the credit for confederation to Smallwood alone: even his die-hard opponents William J. Browne and Peter J. Cashin⁴ dared not question the statement that Newfoundlanders "marvel endlessly at it, and their hearts are full of the wonder" of confederation.⁵ In many of the accounts in "The Book", the reader was given a sense of the personal politics of the battles from a Newfoundland perspective, in which Smallwood was portrayed as a benevolent crusader for confederation against a St. John's alliance of Church and merchantocracy. Only one significant anti-confederate article was allowed, by recently-turned-Liberal Donald Jamieson,⁶ but this carefully skated away from antagonizing believers of the Smallwood account. The confederate establishment accounts were crowned in 1973 with *I Chose Canada*,⁷ Smallwood's response to the dictum that "History will treat me well: I will write it." Pro-responsible government accounts up to that time were few, and consisted of short deferential items like newspaper articles,⁸ and edited transcripts of panel interviews with Smallwood's old arch-enemy, Peter Cashin, placed in proper perspective by zealous confederate Harold Horwood, and historian Leslie Harris, who immediately

³ *The Book of Newfoundland*, Vol. 3, ed. Joseph R. Smallwood (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1967) (hereafter *BNF*): "Happy Province", pp. 1-3; "The Story of Confederation", pp. 4-34; "Let Us Draw Close to Canada", pp. 35-7; and "The Gospel of Confederation: Book One", pp. 38-62.

⁴ Peter J. Cashin, "My Fight For Responsible Government", *BNF*, pp. 105-118; William J. Browne, "The Case for: the Restoration of Responsible Government", *BNF*, pp. 119-130.

⁵ Smallwood, "Happy Province", *BNF*, p. 1.

⁶ Donald Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight for Confederation", *BNF*, pp. 70-104.

⁷ Joseph R. Smallwood, *I Chose Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan and Company Limited, 1973).

⁸ For example see Wickford L. Collins, "Responsible Government League outclassed from the beginning", in *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 36.

admitted that, not being a first hand observer, he "could add very little" to the debate.⁹ It was not until the records of the Canadian and the British governments for this period became available that their parts in the events in Newfoundland could be examined.

In the early 1970s, before documents were released, several scholars made attempts at analyzing the events of the late 1940s, but these only offered re-prints of contemporary documents,¹⁰ and incomplete analyses,¹¹ and bore little fruit. In 1974, Paul Bridle, a Canadian official in Newfoundland before confederation, edited a collection of relevant documents from the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa for the Department of External Affairs. A second volume in two parts was issued in 1984.¹² These revealed some of the workings and involvements of the Canadian government in the period, and further work by Bridle explored some hitherto obscure Canadian and American sources.¹³ In 1982, with newly-opened British government documents, Peter Neary and Philip McCann challenged the popular theory that the British conspired to put Newfoundland into confederation. They analyzed British policy towards the government

⁹ See "Newfoundland and Confederation 1948-1949", *Regionalism in the Canadian Community 1867-1967*, ed. Mason Wade (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969).

¹⁰ For example see Peter Neary, *The Political Economy of Newfoundland 1929-1972* (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1973).

¹¹ See S.J.R. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), pp. 257-9. For an attempt at a history of this period, written without access to private papers or government documents, see Hugh Alexander Huck, "Newfoundland's Entry Into Confederation With Canada, 1949" (M.A. thesis, St. Louis University, 1970).

¹² *Documents on Relations Between Canada and Newfoundland*, Vol. 1, 1935-1949, ed. Paul Bridle (Ottawa: Department of External Affairs, 1974), and *Documents on Relations Between Canada and Newfoundland*, Vol. 2, Parts I and II, 1940-1949, ed. Paul Bridle (Ottawa: Department of External Affairs, 1984). Hereafter cited as Bridle, *Documents*, with volume as indicated.

¹³ Paul Bridle, "Canada, the US and Newfoundland, 1946-48", *International Perspectives*, (November-December 1983): 20-3; Bridle, Letters to the Editor, *International Perspectives*, (September-October 1984): 31-2.

of the colony.¹⁴ This approach was elaborated upon by David MacKenzie, who used Canadian and American documents to explain Canadian and American connections and interests in post-war Newfoundland.¹⁵ In 1987, Jeff Webb indicated in his M.A. thesis on the National Convention that both Neary and McCann, and Bridle and MacKenzie, had a similar chronology and made few original contributions to the knowledge of events in Newfoundland.¹⁶ A year later, Neary's landmark *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World* tackled the history of the Commission of Government,¹⁷ and the confederation campaigns. While Neary's book has already become the standard text on the period, his perspectives on events were from Whitehall and Government House in St. John's, and the book lacked a local non-governmental perspective of the events of the referenda campaigns.

Despite the professional historians' accounts of events in Newfoundland, "Joeymania" flourished in the late 1960s and the late 1980s, with volume after volume of pro-confederate prose. In 1968, Richard Gwyn's *Smallwood the unlikely revolutionary* appeared as a popular biography of Smallwood, who told his life story to Gwyn.¹⁸ The

¹⁴ Peter Neary, "Newfoundland's Union with Canada, 1949: Conspiracy or Choice?", *Acadiensis*, Vol. XII, No. 2, 1983: 110-119; Neary, "Clement Attlee's visit to Newfoundland September 1942", *Acadiensis*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 1984: 101-109; Neary, "Great Britain and the Future of Newfoundland, 1939-1945", *Newfoundland Studies* (hereafter *NFS*), Vol. I, No. 1 (Spring 1985): 29-56; Philip McCann, "Confederation Revisited: New Light on British Policy", typescript of a lecture delivered to the Newfoundland Historical Society, January 1983, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University Library.

¹⁵ David MacKenzie, *Inside the Atlantic Triangle: Canada and the Entrance of Newfoundland Into Confederation, 1939-1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), and MacKenzie, "Economic Union and the 1948 Referendum Campaigns: The View From Washington", *Newfoundland Quarterly* (hereafter *NQ*), Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 24-31.

¹⁶ Webb, "Convention", pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ Peter Neary, *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).

¹⁸ Richard Gwyn, *Smallwood: the unlikely revolutionary* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1968; reprinted 1972).

next year, *Call Me Joey* (a name by which Smallwood was never known among his friends) appeared, an edited volume of reminiscences by friends and foes. In 1985, there appeared the uninformative *The Smallwood Era* by F.W. Rowe, a cabinet colleague of Smallwood's. This was chased by an unauthorized but celebratory biography of Smallwood, entitled *Joey*, written by erstwhile confederate Harold Horwood, who wrote himself into history and unabashedly mixed some truths with repeated portions of rhetoric from *I Chose Canada*.¹⁹ Horwood told many tales, but offered few new insights into the inter-relationships between the confederates, the Canadian High Commissioner, the Commission of Government, and the governments of the United Kingdom and Canada.

Along with confederate accounts came several "lay" anti-confederate accounts. In 1985, Bren Walsh's *More Than A Poor Majority* attempted, without footnotes, index, bibliography, or argued thesis statement, to convince readers that there had been "a plot to manoeuvre Newfoundland into Confederation by fair means or foul".²⁰ Walsh's text sprawled over the events of two centuries. Where he discovered government planning, he saw conspiracy, and where he set out to correct "a major historical untruth",²¹ he only succeeded in spreading confusion. In contrast, Donald Jamieson's posthumously published (1989) *No Place For Fools*,²² the first volume of his memoirs, furnished readers with a thorough anti-confederate account of events in Newfoundland during the late 1940s. While some stories and facts were repeated from Smallwood, Jamieson added a balance to the available accounts, and his knowledge and appraisal of the events was

¹⁹ Frederick W. Rowe, *The smallwood Era* (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1985), and Harold Horwood, *Joey* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Company Limited, 1989).

²⁰ Bren Walsh, *More Than a Poor Majority* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1985), p. 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²² Donald Jamieson, *No Place For Fools - The Political Memoirs of Don Jamieson*, Vol. 1. ed. Carmelita McGrath (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1989).

important,²³ even if he lacked knowledge of the relationship and cooperation between the confederates and the various governments.

In recent years, Webb and J.K. Hiller have explored the political events in Newfoundland in the mid and late 1940s from the viewpoints of internal political activities and the involvements of individuals. Webb's thesis tackled MacKenzie's assertion that the National Convention was ineffective. He showed that, coupled with Canadian and British plans, the Convention played "an indispensable part" in the campaigns.²⁴ Hiller's biographical work and article on F. Gordon Bradley also criticized the useful myths established by and about Smallwood that he was the "Only Living Father",²⁵ while Bradley had played a "sleepy second fiddle".²⁶ But while Hiller illustrated Bradley's roles and thinking at a variety of crucial points in Newfoundland political history, he provided several clues to the inside workings of the campaign for confederation. Webb replied with an article examining the Responsible Government League, and concluded that "the League should have been able to put forward an excellent campaign", but didn't.²⁷ It lost because it offered "a return to economic uncertainty and the St. John's dominated political system", while confederation won because it was an attempt to "break the St. John's domination of the state", and because

²³ To date the only other published discussion of the role of religion in the referenda campaigns was George Perlin, "The Constitutional Referendum of 1948 and the Revival of Sectarianism in Newfoundland Politics", *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. 75 (Spring 1968): 155-160.

²⁴ Webb, "Convention", p. 3.

²⁵ James K. Hiller, "Frederick Gordon Bradley, 1888-1966. A Political Biography" (unpublished report for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Historic Resources Division, 1988), 81 pp., and Hiller, "The Career of F. Gordon Bradley", *NFS*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 163-180.

²⁶ Hiller, "Career of F. Gordon Bradley", *NFS*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 163.

²⁷ Jeff Webb, "The Responsible Government League and the Confederation Campaigns of 1948", *NFS*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1989): 216.

the outports did not share in the city's sense of nationality.²⁸ But Webb's article treated the League in isolation, and if the League lost it must be admitted that the confederates won. So the question remains: how did they win?

In 1989, Hiller called for a history which in part would examine the events of the two referenda and provide a explanation of why confederation was as widely supported as it was, and of "how Smallwood did his 'pretty good job of engineering'".²⁹ This thesis will challenge what Hiller called the "confederate orthodoxy",³⁰ which at its apotheosis held that Smallwood personally "chose Canada" for Newfoundland. It will also show that the union of Newfoundland with Canada was the result of a process of constitutional determination spanning the years 1941 to 1949. Private British and Canadian governmental policy-making preceded the public popularization of confederation by the National Convention and the referenda campaigns of 1946-1948, which were again framed by a process of British, Canadian, Commission of Government, and confederate policy planning. In the vein of Hiller and Webb, "what went on in Newfoundland" is re-visited. The involvements and interests of Smallwood, Bradley, and other individuals in pressing for confederation will be examined, as will their co-operation with Canadian and British officials in working towards that goal. The nature and importance of the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to confederation will be examined in relation to British and Canadian policy-making, and the Church's ties to and support of the anti-confederate movement will be discussed. This thesis is a micro-history of the events, issues, and nature of the campaigns, illustrating the formation and the campaigns of the political coalitions which were active, as well the reasons for the

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 216-218.

²⁹ James K. Hiller, "Twentieth Century Newfoundland Politics: Some Recent Literature", *Acadiensis*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1989): 191.

³⁰ On the "orthodoxy" see *ibid.*, p. 187.

success of the confederates, the failure of the Responsible Government League, and the threat posed by the Economic Union party. It will be shown how the confederates used sectarianism in the second campaign in the hope of converting many voters to confederation. This thesis will convey perceptions of the day on how the narrow majority for confederation was gained, and illustrate the beginnings of the political settlement which the British, Commission, and Canadian governments and Smallwood forged from the referenda campaigns.

Chapter 1

Policy Objectives

The referenda of June and July 1948, in which Newfoundlanders chose Canada, were the culmination of a long and extensive process of constitutional determination and policy-making by the governments of Newfoundland, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Because Newfoundland was not self-governing, policy on Newfoundland's constitutional future was quietly arranged by civil servants away from the glare of public scrutiny. Even before Newfoundland politicians became publicly involved, it had been decided that union with Canada was Newfoundland's ultimate destiny, and political plans and structures were put in place to facilitate the union.

In 1934, the governments of Newfoundland and Britain accepted the 1933 *Royal Commission Report* by Lord Amulree, which examined the country's failing economic and political state and recommended that the island voluntarily abdicate self-government in favour of a British appointed Commission of Government.¹ The report also recommended that "as soon as the island's difficulties are overcome and Newfoundland is again self-supporting, responsible government, on the request of the people of Newfoundland, would be restored".² Under the supervision of a British governor, three British Commissioners, three Newfoundland Commissioners, and the Dominions Office, on 16 February 1934 Newfoundland was constitutionally reduced to an uncertain and ambiguous colonial status, and the Commission of Government was inaugurated.

The Commission of Government benevolently attempted to guide Newfoundland through the Depression and World War II, though there were skirmishes along the way.

¹ *Newfoundland Royal Commission 1933 Report* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1933) (hereafter *Amulree Report*). The best overview of this period is Neary, *North Atlantic World*.

² *Amulree Report*, p. 197.

In 1936 the British government began to finance the construction of Gander airport to serve as a cornerstone for North Atlantic commercial air transport. Gander became operational in 1938; by late 1940, it and the Botwood seaplane base had cost £900,000, and when Gander was finished it was the largest airport in the world.³ For Newfoundland, the first line in the defense of North America, wartime brought untold prosperity, and with the arrival of thousands of American and Canadian troops came American money and jobs for an impoverished people. War brought the September 1940 Anglo-American bases for destroyers agreement between the United States and Great Britain, and saw the ferrying of American and Canadian men and materiel to Europe to aid the war effort. Gander was defended, and airports were built at St. John's, Stephenville, and Goose Bay; army and naval bases were built at St. John's, and in 1941 extensive American installations were built at Argentia, Placentia Bay, which eventually cost \$52,000,000.⁴

In 1937 the Commission had spent \$1,646,545 on able-bodied relief;⁵ with the onslaught of war, almost overnight Newfoundland became a sentinel of great strategic importance, a veritable "Boomtown USA". Airports and bases bustled, and commerce expanded to the tune of American coin in the till. Americans were no strangers to Newfoundlanders, as the United States had been the destination of thousands of migratory

³ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 170, "Memorandum of a Meeting at St. John's to Discuss Bilateral Defence Questions, 1 December 1940."

⁴ On Argentia see Peter Neary, "Alexander Bishop's Account of the Exhumation of the Argentia Cemeteries, August 1942", *NFS*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 181-6; and Eileen (Hunt) Houlihan, "Eileen (Hunt) Houlihan's Family Memoirs" ;.ed. Peter Neary), *NFS*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring 1991): 48-54.

⁵ R.A. MacKay, *Newfoundland - Economic, Diplomatic, and Strategic Studies*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), Appendix A (Statistics), Table 16.

Newfoundlanders at the end of the 19th and in the early part of the 20th century,⁶ and during the war over 25,000 Newfoundland women married American servicemen.⁷ The war brought many millions of dollars into the Newfoundland economy, and America into the homes and hearts of islanders. By 1943-1944, expenditures on able-bodied relief had been reduced to \$14,826,⁸ and revenues had so risen during the war that Newfoundland provided financial aid to Britain.⁹ War saw the declaration of the Atlantic Charter by Churchill and Roosevelt in Placentia Bay in August of 1941. The Charter's third article affirmed the right of all peoples to self-government, and the existence of Commission of Government in Newfoundland stood as an egregious exception to the principles for which the war was being fought and the Charter stood.¹⁰ But removed from their poverty, Newfoundlanders were distracted by the war and by the American presence on their shores, and for many, constitutional determination and the political future of their country was the furthest thought from their minds. Politics would wait: there was money to be made, and a war to be fought.

⁶ On American-Newfoundland connections, see William G. Reeves, "Our Yankee Cousins": Modernization and the Newfoundland-American Relationship, 1898-1910* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Maine at Orono, 1987).

⁷ John N. Cardoulis, *A Friendly Invasion - The American Military in Newfoundland: 1940-1990* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1990), p. 7.

⁸ MacKay, *Newfoundland*, Appendix A (Statistics), Table 16: Expenditures - Department of Public Health and Welfare, 1933-1944.

⁹ By the end of the 1945-1946 fiscal year, Newfoundland had loaned \$12,300,000 to the United Kingdom. See Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 186.

¹⁰ "The President of the United States, and the Prime Minister...respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them." On the Atlantic Charter see Theodore A. Wilson, *The First Summit - Roosevelt and Churchill at Placentia Bay, 1941*, (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1991), and H.V. Morton, *Atlantic Meeting*, (London: Methuen and Company, 1943).

The Canadian government was the first to begin considering its policy towards the constitutional future of Newfoundland. With the outbreak of war, for defensive reasons the Commission wanted temporarily to transfer control of Gander and the Botwood base to Canada; but the Canadians were outsiders in Newfoundland, and the Dominions Office balked at their suggestion.¹¹ But by late 1940 Canada wanted "security of tenure of the sites" it had built at Gander,¹² and soon thereafter began to consider its long-term relationship with Newfoundland. On 27 March 1941, Hugh L. Keenleyside, the Canadian member of the Permanent Joint Board of Defence,¹³ wrote to Norman Robertson, Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, suggesting that a Canadian representative be sent to Newfoundland, and be designated a "High Commissioner".¹⁴ Robertson, who was himself concerned that Canada's influence in Newfoundland would be compromised by the construction of American bases there, wrote to Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King on 15 July, recommending that Charles J. Burchell, a Canadian lawyer and the current Canadian High Commissioner in Australia, be sent to Newfoundland.¹⁵ No stranger to the idea of the union of Newfoundland with Canada, King agreed,¹⁶ and Burchell was appointed on 23 July.¹⁷

¹¹ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 53, Governor of Newfoundland to Dominions Secretary, 31 October 1939; Dominions Secretary to Governor of Newfoundland, 6 November 1939.

¹² Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 170, "Memorandum of a Meeting at St. John's to Discuss Bilateral Defence Questions, 1 December 1940."

¹³ This board was established to co-ordinate the war effort in Newfoundland.

¹⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 193, Keenleyside to Robertson, 27 March 1941.

¹⁵ Raymond B. Blake, "WLMK's Attitude Towards Newfoundland's Entry Into Confederation", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXII, No. 4 (Spring 1987): 27, and Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 197, "Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, 15 July 1941."

¹⁶ Among those who may have had some influence on King were Sir A.B. Morine, a Newfoundland/Canadian lawyer who in 1937 suggested the idea to him (see Malcolm MacLeod, "Confederation, 1937", *NFS*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Fall 1985): 201-210); King's friend Sir Wilfred Grenfell, who looked favourably on such a union; and Norman Duncan, King's roommate at the University of Toronto (See Blake, "WLMK's Attitude", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXII, No. 4 (Spring 1987): 27).

By September Burchell was established and reporting to Ottawa, already suggesting that more news, publicity, and radio broadcasts about Canada would be desirable for public consumption in Newfoundland.¹⁸ His mandate was also to sound out and report local opinion about confederation.¹⁹ In an 18 October memorandum on the future relations between Canada and Newfoundland, Keenleyside observed that

Canada must prepare eventually to accept Newfoundland[and] as a tenth partner in Confederation. This being the case would it not be wise for the Canadian Government, without trying in any way to hasten the ultimate union, to take its present decisions in regard to the practical problems arising in Newfoundland in accordance with this assumption? We could then have a simple and consistent rule upon which to base our day to day decisions.²⁰

With a High Commissioner in place, the Canadians could react and quickly make decisions on local issues. Policy was thus to make policy on-the-fly, as events warranted, and generally to promote the concept of "friendly neighbour Canada". But some Newfoundlanders were immediately suspicious. "What the hell's Charlie Burchell doing in Newfoundland!?" exclaimed the observant Dr. John Sparkes to his wife, Grace.²¹ Sparkes had been educated at McGill, and he knew Burchell "from of old". When Burchell arrived, the Sparkeses wondered why Canada would send a High Commissioner to Newfoundland.²² Grace Sparkes recalled that they felt that Burchell's position "was

¹⁷ MacKenzie, *North Atlantic Triangle*, p. 64.

¹⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. 2, Part I, p. 3, Burchell to Robertson, 19 September 1941. Further citations of Bridle will be from this volume unless noted.

¹⁹ For Burchell's reports on this see *ibid.*, pp. 3 and 7, Burchell to Robertson, 19 September and 11 December 1941. On Canadian reasons for sending Burchell to Newfoundland, and the position and function of the High Commissioner see Kathryn E. Hayman, "The Origins and Functions of the Canadian High Commissioner to Newfoundland" (M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1979).

²⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 115, Keenleyside to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 18 October 1941.

²¹ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

²² *Ibid.*

a place for somebody with authority to have a foothold to negotiate with people in Newfoundland".²³ Shortly after Burchell's arrival, Sparkes and her husband noticed that one Joseph R. Smallwood, a popular local broadcaster and journalist, became a frequent visitor to Burchell's office at Canada House.²⁴

Indeed, Burchell was very interested in confederation for Newfoundland. Soon after his arrival, he visited the law firm of John B. McEvoy and Charles Hunt, with whom Burchell's Halifax-based practice of Burchell, Smith, Parker, and Fogo exchanged legal business.²⁵ Burchell privately began sounding out McEvoy on his willingness to lead a confederate party in Newfoundland,²⁶ and later in 1942 or 43, he arranged for McEvoy to address the Canadian Club in New York on the topic of confederation with Canada.²⁷ While he was at Dalhousie Law School from 1930-1935, McEvoy had been a political science student of Dr. Robert Alexander MacKay.²⁸ In Ottawa in 1943, MacKay became intimately involved with the Newfoundland question as a Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, and as a friend and advisor

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ James Halley to the author, 11 May 1992, and *Who's Who In Canada 1943-44*, ed. B.M. Greene (Toronto: International Press Limited, 1944), pp. 833-4.

²⁶ Smallwood later admitted that the Canadians continued to canvass about for a confederate leader until mid to late 1946. He noted that "...they must have wondered if I was really the right one, from their point of view, to launch and lead a Confederate movement." See Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 11.

²⁷ Halley to the author, 11 May 1992. McEvoy was a member of the Canadian Club of New York. See J.B. McEvoy Papers, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, (auto)biographical sketch, p. 4.

²⁸ Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa (hereafter PAC) MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: J.B. McEvoy, MacKay to P.A. Bridle, 9 June 1948.

to McEvoy.²⁹ McEvoy had the largest and "most lucrative" law practice in the colony, was the lawyer for the companies which operated the paper mills, and remained at the top of the Canadian list to lead a Newfoundland confederate party as late as the end of June 1945, when Paul Bridle of External Affairs reported to Ottawa on McEvoy's suitability and his plans to secure funding and begin a confederate newspaper.³⁰ McEvoy's interest in confederation had been stimulated by Burchell, and thus was planted and left to germinate one of several seeds of confederate support.³¹

While Burchell and officials in the Canadian Department of External Affairs stirred interest in confederation in the likes of lawyer McEvoy and broadcaster Smallwood, few others in the colony had much concern for the constitutional future. Significant but sporadic efforts before the war had been made at protesting against the Commission of Government, but these were made by the poor and unemployed, and unions, who were "disillusioned with a government that they perceived as remote and indifferent",³² and upset with a foreign-dominated system which disregarded the pleas of a people used to political patronage freely distributed by their local member of the House. In 1936 a secret society, "The Crusaders", whose leading light was ex-cabinet minister Peter Cashin, made its appearance and criticized the Commission, as did the public and more successful Newfoundland Independence Association in 1937, which saw Joseph R. Smallwood, among others, advocate a return to responsible government.³³

²⁹ See Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, p. XLIV, List of Persons, "R.A. MacKay"; and J.B. McEvoy Papers, Biographical Sketch of McEvoy.

³⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 152-4, Bridle to J.E. Read, 29 June 1945.

³¹ Walsh, *More than a Poor Majority*, p. 98, noted that at one point McEvoy and Smallwood addressed the 1942 Board of Trade meetings and advocated the return of self-government. But this would not preclude their investigations or interests in confederation.

³² Webb, "Convention", p. 11.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

In 1938 the Newfoundland Public Welfare League under entrepreneur Chesley Crosbie took up where the NIA left off, but it soon disbanded. But with the arrival of the war, the American bases, and money, the vocal minority which was dissatisfied with the suspension of self-government increased its agitation for the return of self-rule,³⁴ and a number and variety of organizations emerged and criticized the Commission.

In February 1942, Clement Attlee, leader of the British Labour party and deputy Prime Minister, became Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. Soon after this, he had his Under-Secretary, P.V. Emrys-Evans, compile a memorandum on Newfoundland. Evans identified what he believed were the causes of the collapse of self-government in 1933, namely "Poverty, semi-starvation, lack of education, and a narrow sectarianism",³⁵ and suggested that

Our immediate aim should be the improvement of the condition of the people and the development of the natural resources of the country so that it may be able to manage its own affairs again as soon as possible. We should moreover do everything in our power to improve the relations between Canada and Newfoundland. If close and sympathetic co-operation in the development of the Island and of Labrador came from Canada, the possibility of union might come into the realm of practical politics. The ultimate aim of our policy should be to bring Newfoundland into the Confederation.³⁶

In 1942 the Newfoundland Board of Trade held a series of meetings at which the Commission's tax plans were stridently opposed, and at which it resolved to press Whitehall for the return of self-rule.³⁷ In September Attlee visited Newfoundland with his Assistant Under-Secretary, P. Alexander Clutterbuck, "to inform himself of

³⁴ See Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 278-9 and ff., and Webb, "Convention", p. 21 and ff.

³⁵ The Amulree Report saw sectarianism as a problem so significant that one of the maps appended to its report showed the geographic locations of religious denominations in three colours.

³⁶ Public Record Office, Kew, United Kingdom (hereafter PRO), Dominions Office files (hereafter DO) 35/723/N2/73/X/J7827, P. J. Emrys-Evans to Attlee, 10 June 1942.

³⁷ On the Board of Trade see Walsh, *More Than a Poor Majority*, pp. 96-7.

conditions in the Island",³⁸ and to garner first-hand evidence with which to modify British policy.³⁹ Attlee had always been critical of the Commission of Government, which he believed had been a mistake and had failed "to prepare Newfoundlanders to resume self-government", and likened it to keeping a "football team all the season in the dressing room without even a punt about and expect them to be fit to win a match at the end".⁴⁰ Having met with Newfoundland officials and citizens, Attlee confidentially concluded that "the proximate destiny of Newfoundland was union with Canada",⁴¹ even though it was immediately impossible and quietly returned home. During the last week of June 1943 Attlee sent a three-man Parliamentary Goodwill Mission to Newfoundland, comprised of the Independent MP for Oxford, Sir Alan P. Herbert, Labour MP Charles Ammon, and Conservative MP Sir Derrick Gunston.⁴² The delegation stayed the summer, and although each member submitted his own report that fall, the general conclusion was that Newfoundland should remain independent, yet have continued financial aid from Britain.⁴³ In particular, Herbert suggested that a plebiscite on the country's future be announced after the war and held two years later. A year after the war, the three Newfoundland seats on the Commission would be elected, while a

³⁸ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 176.

³⁹ On British policy also see Neary, "Great Britain and the Future of Newfoundland, 1939-45", *NFS*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1985): 29-56.

⁴⁰ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 177.

⁴¹ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 163-2, J.S. Macdonald to Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 August 45. Macdonald related that P.D.H. Dunn, the Commissioner for Natural Resources, told him Attlee's views. On Attlee's visit and other of his conclusions see Neary, "Attlee's Visit", *Acadiensis*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (1984): 101-9.

⁴² Ammon chaired the mission, and G.W. St. John Chadwick was the secretary. Ammon favoured confederation with Canada as an eventual solution to Newfoundland's problems, while Herbert found that Newfoundland was "most extraordinarily British" and thought that it should continue its association with Britain. See McCann, "New Light", p. 5.

⁴³ McCann, p. 5, and Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 217-8.

"citizens' council" would be appointed to consider "alternate forms of future government".⁴⁴ Of all the recommendations, Herbert's "citizens' council" intrigued the Dominions Office the most.

On the evening of 18 August 1943, Norman Robertson wrote to Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King, noting that at lunch earlier that day he had discussed Newfoundland with Malcolm Macdonald, the British High Commissioner, who

...asked me if I thought this Conference⁴⁵ might provide an opportunity for him to talk with us in a preliminary way about the general question of Newfoundland.

Mr. MacDonald thought it would be helpful if there could be some preliminary exchange of views with the Canadian Government about the future of the Island before the United Kingdom was compelled to take specific steps which might be found to have determined the future of Newfoundland, including its relationship to Canada.

My own feeling is that "somehow, sometime" Newfoundland should become part of the Canadian Confederation. I think that, in the long run, both political and strategic considerations make this inevitable. I believe that President Roosevelt has expressed the same opinion to you on one or two occasions.⁴⁶

While the war facilitated closer relations between allied countries, the Canadians took the opportunity to cultivate stronger bonds with Newfoundland. But Newfoundlanders were enthralled with America, not Canada, and the British recognized this. Governor Sir Humphrey Walwyn wrote:

Little or no interest is taken on the question of Confederation, and it is hardly discussed at all. If anything, they are so dazzled by American dollars, hygiene and efficiency that many of the public rather play up to America in

⁴⁴ See PRO DO 35 1335/N402/1/9 for a useful table comparing the reports of the members of the Goodwill Mission.

⁴⁵ Churchill, Roosevelt, and Mackenzie King attended the Quebec Conference from 19 to 24 August 1943.

⁴⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 77-8, Robertson to Mackenzie King, 16 July 1943.

preference to Canada. However, they universally want to be on their own, with a comfortable grant-in-aid, and little responsibility.⁴⁷

Indeed, there was no better time than the present to craft post-war policy on Newfoundland, without the pressures of political friction from Newfoundland or Britain being brought to bear on Dominions Office decisions.

That fall, the new Secretary of State for Dominions Affairs, Lord Cranbourne, weighed the Goodwill Mission reports, and drafted a statement to Parliament, made on 2 December, assuring Newfoundland that opportunities to consider its constitutional status would be provided after the war.⁴⁸ During the winter, Cranbourne also requested that the Commission develop and submit a reconstruction plan for the economic and social development and reconstruction of Newfoundland, and a modified version of Herbert's "citizens' council", a national convention, was also floated with the Commission. Consideration was also given to mechanisms by which this could be done, and various draft documents were contemplated. "A Convention on the lines of (b)," wrote a patronizing but astute Walwyn to Clutterbuck in February 1944,

modified as we suggest might, I feel, be the best means of obtaining public opinion, but it would be a long drawn out fight. A referendum on two specific questions only would give a false result as the majority might want an intermediate course and they are so illiterate that they wouldn't know what they were being asked to vote for.⁴⁹

Thus the mechanism - a national assembly or "convention" - was considered for the purposes of political education and obtaining public opinion, and the idea of three referendum choices was planted. Corner Brook magistrate Nehemiah Short was directed to study how a convention might be called, and he recommended to the Commission that

⁴⁷ Bridle, Documents, p. 79, Walwyn to Sir Eric Machtig, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 31 August 1943.

⁴⁸ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 218-220.

⁴⁹ PRO DO 35/1338, Walwyn to Clutterbuck, 13 February 1944.

the old House of Assembly electoral districts be used, that the voting age be 21 years, and that Convention delegates be residents of their districts.⁵⁰

After summertime discussions on economic and constitutional matters with a delegation from the Commission, Whitehall received the Commission's reconstruction plan, with its \$100,000,000 price tag.⁵¹ Cranbourne sent this to the Treasury, along with a note stating that if responsible government were returned the same financial problems would recur, and that the island would have to continue to be underwritten for a transitional period.⁵² But when Lord Keynes of the British Treasury observed that "after this signal mark of our favour, the Newfoundlanders would still be more reluctant to part company with us", the scheme was rejected.⁵³ With Keynes' further suggestion that "it is agreed that the right long-term solution is for Newfoundland to be taken over by Canada",⁵⁴ the Dominions Office began quietly to co-operate with the Canadians while publicly remaining neutral on the question of Newfoundland's future.

In July 1945 Attlee formed a Labour government. The new Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, Lord Addison, sent Clutterbuck to meet his Canadian counterparts in Ottawa on 17 September. Clutterbuck informed them that union with Canada was Newfoundland's "natural destiny", and several meetings took place between Clutterbuck and R.A. MacKay on the finances of a confederation.⁵⁵ According to Peter Neary,

⁵⁰ Webb, "Convention", pp. 40-1.

⁵¹ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 223-6.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

Clutterbuck's "triumph" occurred when Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King told the British High Commissioner that the union of the two countries was "natural, desirable, and inevitable".⁵⁶ But as David MacKenzie and J.K. Hiller indicated, confederation was not a new concept to the Canadians.⁵⁷ However, on 18 October 1945 Addison was able to write to his cabinet colleagues that

We should arrange to set up in the spring of 1946 an elected National Convention of Newfoundlanders, whose duty would be to review the alternative courses open to the island and to make recommendations to His Majesty's Government as a basis for a national referendum...

...it will be necessary for the Island to be guaranteed financial assistance for reconstruction and development. Unfortunately, however, there is no prospect, the Chancellor's view, of our being able to find the dollars for this purpose, nor in fact, would the Canadians welcome our doing so. It has been further established that the Canadians would not be prepared under the present conditions to finance reconstruction in the Island themselves.

Evidence is, however, beginning to accumulate that there is now a growing movement of opinion in the Island towards union with Canada. It has always been felt here that Newfoundland is too small a unit to be able to stand successfully on its own feet, except at the price of a standard of living and of administrative and social services much lower than those on the mainland. Union with Canada is its natural destiny. We know too, that this is recognized by Mr. Mackenzie King, who has indicated privately that he would warmly welcome a decision by Newfoundlanders to enter the Canadian fold and do his best to assure them generous terms.

In these circumstances, we must, I feel, adapt our policy to the changed conditions, and since we cannot look ourselves to helping Newfoundland financially, we should now regard union with Canada as the objective to be aimed at. It would, of course, be most important that no hint that this is the solution which we envisage should be allowed to come out either here or in Newfoundland. The initiative must be entirely left to the Newfoundlanders, and we must take care to avoid any appearance of seeking to influence them in any

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁵⁷ Hiller, "Twentieth Century Newfoundland Politics", *Acadiensis*, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (1989): 189.

way. At the same time, we must say or do nothing which would conflict with this objective or make it harder to achieve.⁵⁸

A week later, Addison informed the cabinet that once Newfoundlanders in remote settlements found out the full implications of the Canadian family allowance program, "a rapid swing of opinion towards Canada" might occur.⁵⁹ Policy was set, and it remained for the formal statements to be made, and the Canadians to be brought into the picture.

On 11 December 1945 Attlee made a carefully-worded statement to the House of Commons, announcing the decision to establish a National Convention, an elected body which would

...consider and discuss amongst themselves, as elected representatives of the Newfoundland people, the changes that have taken place in the financial and economic situation of the island since 1934, and bearing in mind the extent to which the high revenues of recent years have been due to wartime conditions, to examine the position of the country and to make recommendations to His Majesty's Government as to possible forms of future government to be put before the people at a national referendum.⁶⁰

Addison made a simultaneous but more lengthy announcement of the government's plans to the House of Lords. The issue of whether simply to have a plebiscite on the return of responsible government was skilfully avoided, and with the masterful stroke of establishing a Newfoundland National Convention, the Dominions Office created an unlimited opportunity for the discussion of any and all options for the political future, not whether Newfoundland would just return to self-government. Of crucial importance was that the Convention was not a legislative body; instead it existed to make recommendations to the Dominions Office, which would retain the final say over the

⁵⁸ DO 35/1347, "Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 18 October 1945," pp. 1-2.

⁵⁹ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 233.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

choices to be included on a ballot. But the Convention was a marvellous Fabian tool for Attlee: the politically-indifferent Newfoundland electorate could be politically re-educated, even if it were on the merits of confederation, and a new crop of colonial politicians could be trained to collaborate with post-war British colonial policy. The Convention was even easily defensible: who could disagree with giving Newfoundlanders an opportunity to speak on their political future? But there was one flaw: there were no plans announced for who would lead it. To this opportunity of educating an apathetic public sprang two old political acquaintances: Joseph Roberts Smallwood, and Frederick Gordon Bradley.

Chapter 2

Interested Parties

In late 1945 when the National Convention was announced, political activities in Newfoundland were inchoate, and no political parties existed. But there were a few persons interested in confederation: Smallwood, McEvoy, and Bradley, as well as the Canadian High Commissioner, and officials of the British government. There was also considerable opposition to confederation, led by the Roman Catholic Church, which had historically opposed it. But the opposition had no indications of the planning for confederation which was going on in this period. Few Newfoundlanders had thought of confederation, or even of what the National Convention was or meant, but when public politics resumed, it was not in a vacuum. The germs of the political movements had already existed. In order to examine what the Convention did and accomplished, it is first necessary to examine the state of political opinion and activity into which the Convention came.

The man who became Newfoundland's foremost advocate of confederation with Canada, Joseph Roberts Smallwood, later claimed that he was in Montreal reading a newspaper when he first learned that Newfoundland was to have a National Convention.¹ He discussed the announcement that night with his friend and fellow-confederate Ewart Young, the young editor of *The Atlantic Guardian*, a Montreal-based Newfoundland magazine.² Smallwood was born in Gambo on 24 December 1900, and grew up in St. John's, the grandson of David Smallwood, a staunch confederate and one of the first

¹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 228.

² *Ibid.*, p. 228. For alternate accounts of this see Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 58, and Horwood, *Joey*, p. 67.

Orangemen and Freemasons in Newfoundland.³ Smallwood was nominally a Methodist, and from about 1930 he was also a member of the Loyal Orange Lodge,⁴ a Protestant fraternal organization which had historically played an important part in Newfoundland politics, although his membership was probably for political reasons.⁵ As a young man he adopted socialism, although he did not understand its finer points; he became involved in politics, and successively worked for the St. John's *Evening Telegram*, *The Daily News*, and wrote for *The Fishermen's Advocate*, the organ of William F. Coaker's Fishermen's Protective Union (FPU).⁶ He then went to Canada and New York, working as a reporter for the socialist paper, *The Call*,⁷ and where he spoke at public meetings on behalf of the American Socialist Party.⁸

Back in Newfoundland, in 1925 Smallwood organized a Newfoundland Federation of Labour, edited the St. John's *Daily Mail*, became a union organizer for the Fishermen's Co-Operative Union, and re-embarked upon his role as a political pundit, in 1928 campaigning and working for Prime Minister Sir Richard Squires.⁹ Through the

³ In 1869 Smallwood's grandfather staunchly defended his flagpole in Greenspond with the confederate flag flying, despite threats against him if he would not remove it. See Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 9. Ironically, Smallwood's mother, Mary Ellen DeVanna, was a Roman Catholic.

⁴ See J.R. Smallwood Papers, Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 3.29.138, Loyal Orange Association, Address of Smallwood to the opening of the LOA Cancer Hostel, 25 August 1965, wherein he claimed to have been an Orangeman for 35 years.

⁵ Mr. Albert Whelan, an honorary life-member of the LOA of Cupia's, Conception Bay, suggested this to the author on 9 June 1992, and noted that he, and many of his fellow Orangemen, thought that Smallwood only joined and used the Lodge to get votes.

⁶ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 99.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁸ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 33.

⁹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 189, 190, 239.

House of Assembly, some years earlier, he would have met F. Gordon Bradley, an experienced MHA and soon-to-be close associate. In 1930, he and Bradley walked around Quidi Vidi Lake in St. John's and discussed the possibility of Newfoundland's confederation with Canada,¹⁰ and Smallwood later wondered whether the idea which was planted there had not grown into the "fact of confederation".¹¹ Moving temporarily to Bonavista to organize co-operatives, in 1936 Smallwood returned to St. John's to work at a sporadic publishing career, beginning the first of several volumes of the *Book of Newfoundland* in 1937 with the assistance of St. John's businessman Chesley Crosbie. That same year Smallwood became a household name because of his popular radio show, *The Barrelman*, sponsored by St. John's businessman and manufacturer's agent Francis M. O'Leary. For six nights a week for almost seven years, Smallwood made "Newfoundland better known to Newfoundlanders".¹² Even the visiting Goodwill Mission took careful note of him as "An outstanding example to take pattern by... an enterprising salesman who collects all the small gossip and local news from towns and villages throughout the island...."¹³ Smallwood also edited O'Leary's advertising newspaper, *The Barrelman*, which had a circulation of 42,000 outside St. John's.¹⁴ These publicity endeavours repaid him greatly during the confederation campaigns.

In addition to his broadcasting and editing work, in 1939 Smallwood took up poultry farming and then pig farming on forty acres of land in the Kenmount valley

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 227, and Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8.

¹¹ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8.

¹² Leo Moakler, "The Barrelman: Making Newfoundland Better Known to Newfoundlanders", in *Call Me Joey*, ed. James R. Thoms (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications Limited, 1990): 19-28, and Genevieve Lehr, "The Barrelman", *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (hereafter *ENL*) Vol. I (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1967), p. 134.

¹³ PRO DO 35 1336/N402/1/10, Individual Reports by members of Goodwill Mission, p. 4.

¹⁴ Moakler, "Barrelman", *Call Me Joey*, p. 24.

outside St. John's, establishing contact with the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph for technical advice.¹⁵ In 1941 Smallwood edited *The Express*, a newspaper which took umbrage with the Anglo-American leased bases deal.¹⁶ The newspaper was backed by O'Leary, lawyers Gordon Higgins and Eric Cook (all of whom were members of the Newfoundland National Association, a patriotic businessmen's club), Memorial University College professor Allan Fraser, and St. John's businessman R. Gordon Winter.¹⁷ Though a sometime socialist who had fought for the fishermen, at this point Smallwood apparently had no qualms about associating with the ruling classes of Water Street.

On 9 January 1943 Smallwood mortgaged his Kenmount Road pig farm for \$9,000 to his lawyer Leslie R. Curtis.¹⁸ Retaining his farm in St. John's, later that year Smallwood set up another pig farm in Gander.¹⁹ Smallwood maintained that the move to Gander was made at the encouragement of and in partnership with Captain David Anderson, the Commanding Officer of the Royal Air Force Transport Command at Gander, so that the swill from the mess halls might be effectively disposed of. But he

¹⁵ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 215.

¹⁶ The expropriation of Newfoundland lands for the Anglo-American bases-for-destroyers deal, and the seeming unconcern of the Commission of Government about doing this, reinforced many Newfoundlanders' misgivings about the existence of the Commission of Government.

¹⁷ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 283; Moskler, "Barrelman", *Call Me Joey*, p. 24, and John J. Murphy, "He Never Held a Grudge", *ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁸ Registry of Deeds, Confederation Building, St. John's (hereafter RDⁿ) Vol. 182, folio 604, Smallwood to Curtis. The extensive securities exacted by Curtis in the indenture (ranging from a slaughterhouse down to one wheelbarrow and two bucksaws) would seem to indicate Curtis's lack of confidence in Smallwood's credit rating.

¹⁹ Smallwood maintained that he later sold the Kenmount farm at a profit of \$125,000 (see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 233). On 11 December 1944 the St. John's Housing Corporation expropriated a small portion of the farm's land from Smallwood and Curtis, for an undisclosed fee (RD Vol. 185, folio 3, 11 December 1944). On 4 October 1945 Curtis partially released Smallwood from the mortgage for \$1 and "other good and valuable consideration" (RD Vol. 182, folio 604).

also noted that the scheme was financed by Ches Crosbie, and that Anderson was personally wealthy.²⁰ James Halley, a clerk in McEvoy's office, later noted that when Smallwood left town for Gander in the fall of 1943, he did so without paying a bill he owed to O'Leary. O'Leary went to McEvoy, who had Halley write up a writ against Smallwood.²¹ While Smallwood left the impression that Anderson brought him to Gander and kept him there, and thus that it was pure serendipity that he was qualified to run for the Convention,²² Halley claims that he had evidence that Smallwood had prior knowledge through Burchell of the two-year residency qualification requirement for election to the Convention.²³

While Smallwood later maintained that at that period he "really didn't know Canada", this is difficult to believe. From Gander he had access to free flights to Canada,²⁴ where he went to obtain advice and supplies for the Gander piggery.²⁵ More

²⁰ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 216-7.

²¹ James Halley to the author, 11 May 1992. Although it is unknown how Smallwood spent his money, he had and spent a considerable amount of it, and had a reputation for financial unreliability. PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file N-19-2, Memorandum on Newfoundland, author and date unknown, Personalities - Joseph R. Smallwood, indicates that by late summer 1948 the Canadian Government observed that "...it is spoken quite freely in St. John's that his credit is no good in the business section of the city."

²² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 220.

²³ James Halley to the author, 11 May 1992. After the second referendum in 1948, the Canadian government observed of Smallwood and Bradley: "To add conviction to this opinion ["that the country was railroaded into the Dominion"] as far as many people are concerned, is that fact that both Mr. Gordon Bradley and Mr. Smallwood...whose activities normally made them residents of St. John's, for several years prior to the National Convention resided in obscure outlying districts, which in fact made them eligible for election to the National Convention. It being fairly obvious that if they had remained in St. John's neither of them would have had a chance of being elected as delegates." PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file N-19-2, "Public Sentiment", in "Memorandum on Newfoundland."

²⁴ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 229 and 225, and Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 4.

²⁵ Smallwood spent more time in Guelph and some in Toronto and Montreal. See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 219 and 225.

importantly, according to Leo Moakler, his Barrelman assistant, he "learned the facts of confederation", which included financial information about Canada.²⁶ In Gander he befriended Anthony Mallowney, the Superintendent of Works and Buildings for the R.A.F.. Mallowney provided funding for Smallwood's Newfoundland and Canadian endeavours, and was a strong confederate supporter,²⁷ as was his brother Fr. Francis, and Fr. Philip McCarthy, both Roman Catholic priests.²⁸ Information poured into Gander about confederation, and Smallwood even had assistance from Monsignor Finn of Grand Falls, who provided him with evidence of previous Canadian terms offered to Newfoundland around 1919, and who seems to have set Smallwood thinking about Canadian "terms".²⁹ Most conveniently, though, when the National Convention was announced with the qualification that elected delegates were to have resided in their districts for at least two years before nomination day, Smallwood was both well-informed about Canada and met the residency qualification. He ran for Bonavista Centre and was returned.

F. Gordon Bradley spent his early youth in St. John's, but at age six had an attack of scarlet fever, so he moved to Bonavista for the climate and rest, where he eventually became headmaster of the Methodist high school.³⁰ A reader and a thinker, Bradley explored the ideas of socialism, but was less taken with it than Smallwood, and thought

²⁶ Moakler, "The Barrelman", *Call Me Joey*, p. 27; Leo Moakler to the author, 18 May 1992, and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 224-228.

²⁷ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 230-1, and 242.

²⁸ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8

²⁹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 229-30.

³⁰ For background on Bradley the author has drawn on Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 4, and also on Hiller, "The Career of F. Gordon Bradley", *NFS*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 163-80.

that it was perfect in theory but "impossible in practice".³¹ Independent of mind, he decided to become a lawyer. He finished his training at Dalhousie Law School, during which time he "came to the conclusion that Newfoundland had made a mistake in rejecting confederation sixty years before".³² Around 1915 Bradley became a Mason, and also around that time an Orangeman. In 1918 he went into practice with A.B. Morine, a Canadian lawyer in St. John's who personally advocated confederation, and in 1922 Bradley set up his own practice.³³ The next year he ran as a Liberal in Trinity Bay for the House of Assembly, interrupting the campaign to run and get elected Grand Master of the Loyal Orange Association at the Lodge's convention in Grand Falls. Ironically, though the Lodge was largely Liberal, he lost the election in Trinity.³⁴

In 1924 Bradley was elected to the House for Port-de-Grave, and in 1929 he became Solicitor General in the ill-fated Squires administration. A member of the last Newfoundland House of Assembly, in 1933 he advocated default on Newfoundland's loans, blaming the Alderdice government for being at the beck and call of "a mercantile aristocracy intent on recouping what the government owed it".³⁵ In 1934 he wrote a report on the conditions of logging operations in Newfoundland, condemning the conditions of the workers and the paper companies' profiteering. For this he fell out of favour with the Commission, which suppressed his report,³⁶ and after a disheartening spell in Grand Falls as a magistrate, he returned to Bonavista where he immersed himself

³¹ Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 5.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁶ On this report see Peter Neary, "The Bradley Report On Logging Operations in Newfoundland, 1934: A Suppressed Document", *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 16 (1985): 193-232.

in the life of his community. From there in 1941 he began writing a series of articles to the *Fishermen's Advocate*, advocating confederation. In these he lamented that confederation had "never been fully discussed" in Newfoundland, citing the need to "discard ancient prejudices". He thought that an independent Newfoundland, "small and insignificant", would never do, because "the ordinary Newfoundlander should be given the chance of a decent livelihood, to escape from the conditions in which he had been living for the past decade"; otherwise the country would become "the plaything of monopoly capitalism".³⁷ He lambasted the British government and British capitalism, imperialism and conservatism and its Newfoundland manifestation, the Commission of Government, which he held responsible for the concession of bases to the Americans (which undermined Newfoundland's bargaining power), and for saving "capital at the expense of humanity".³⁸ According to Hiller, Bradley was no Newfoundland nationalist; he once wrote "I do not care two straws for Newfoundland as an abstraction", and he had "long been a believer in non-denominational schools".³⁹ Bradley lamented Newfoundland's reliance on British texts, and the deferential attitude towards all things British:

It was sad, he wrote, that "At the singing of God Save the King, a Newfoundland audience stiffens into a grotesque and stonelike rigidity, and makes a rush for the nearest exit at the first strains of 'We Love Thee Newfoundland'".⁴⁰

Canadian High Commissioner Burchell had been keeping an eye on political developments in Newfoundland, and in 1942 he sent an article by Bradley to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Prime Minister King, and reported that Bradley's

³⁷ Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 28.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-1.

...actions and writings have earned for him the description of being what is called in Newfoundland "communistic". I think a better description of him is anti-Capitalistic, although I understand he is a bit of a Capitalist himself.⁴¹

Bradley clearly had his own ideas on the place of Newfoundland in the world and on the future for his country, and they were about to be brought to bear on Newfoundland's political life.

From February 1946 and most likely earlier, Smallwood and Bradley were corresponding about plans for advancing the cause of confederation. Smallwood informed Bradley that he was secretly forming a confederate party under the leadership of the Commissioner for Public Health and Welfare, Sir John Puddester, although Bradley was surprised at and questioned the wisdom of this.⁴² Having decided to get themselves elected to the Convention, they also discussed the course the Convention would take, the necessity of keeping the Commission of Government out of negotiations of terms of union, and the sectarian implications in the possible election of Smallwood's friend Mullaowney to the Convention.⁴³ Noting an exchange of ideas between Smallwood, himself, and J.S. Macdonald, the new Canadian High Commissioner to Newfoundland, who that month replaced Charles Burchell,⁴⁴ on 11 May 1946 Bradley wrote to Smallwood, conceding that

McDonald's [sic] idea is perhaps better than mine. He at least ought to know more of his government than either of us.

⁴¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 12, Burchell to Mackenzie King, 20 March 1942.

⁴² F. Gordon Bradley Papers, privately held. Correspondence with J.R. Smallwood, Bradley to Smallwood, 28 February 1946; Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 35; Webb, "Convention", pp. 53-4.

⁴³ On Mullaowney's desire to be elected to the Convention for Bonavista South see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 231.

⁴⁴ Burchell left Newfoundland in January 1944.

...My own idea was for the Convention delegation to approach Canada first with a view to enlisting their sympathetic approval (unofficial of course) of our sending a delegation to London for the purpose of getting rid of a part at least and possibly the whole of the national debt. Such approval might also involve Canadian pressure on London to go as far as possible in the matter of our debt. All this of course would be quite unofficial and off the record, but it could be exceedingly valuable. Next a delegation to London to get Britain's concessions if any. Then another delegation to Ottawa to get all terms but minor details, then the recommendation to the British Govt. and a ballot having appended thereto the terms agreed upon. I note also that McDonald's [sic] view is that Canada will not want to have anything to do with Commission of Government. I have told you pretty clearly that is my view. Don't you realize that association with Commission introduces a jarring element. There are thousands of people in this country who hate Commission, and their entry into any negotiations will immediately cast suspicion upon the whole thing and give the opponents of Confederation a powerful weapon against it.

...A carefully prepared campaign of information is essential. A very small slip will give the vested interests and their satellites an opportunity to damn the whole thing, and I don't have to tell you what ignorance and mass hysteria can do. The closer this is kept for the present the better and unless you have any one in mind upon whom we can rely absolutely I suggest that we keep the whole thing to ourselves until we get things lined up in the Convention.

Re Maloney: [sic] Do you think he can beat B.⁴⁵ I am not so sure. It is by no means certain that he will get the R.C. vote solid. You must remember that those people do not vote for individuals.

And you must not forget that our people do not like the idea of being represented anywhere (as between R.Cs and Prots.) by one of the smaller section. And it is easy to start the sectarian whisper. Once it is started it spreads like a prairie fire.

Then again there is another consideration. Three months ago this district was bitterly anti-confederate,⁴⁶ and they are a people with strong feelings. I have to go cautiously and try to kill the prejudice, and am beginning to see results, but

⁴⁵ "B" was Kenneth M. Brown, who was elected to the Convention by acclamation for Bonavista South (see Bertram G. Riggs, "Elections", *ENL* I, p. 720). Smallwood maintained that Muldowney "changed his mind" (see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 231).

⁴⁶ Bradley referred to the district of Bonavista East, for which he was eventually elected to the National Convention.

to tag me as a confederate just now would be to ruin me. My position is that I am hostile to Commission as at present conducted but have no opinion as between the alternatives until I get the facts.⁴⁷

Bradley's letter to Smallwood illustrates the extent of secret political planning which took place prior to the Convention. More than Smallwood would have his readers believe in later years, the Bradley-Smallwood relationship was one of a seasoned elder statesman advising, tempering, and counselling an impetuous activist.⁴⁸

Smallwood and Bradley were not the only confederate correspondents by February 1946. From 1944, J.B. McEvoy and R.A. MacKay had been communicating about Newfoundland's constitutional status.⁴⁹ McEvoy was not enamoured with the idea of a Convention, but MacKay was. On 19 February 1946 MacKay wrote that he was "rather perturbed that you and your friends feel the constitutional convention is the wrong procedure and, indeed, almost alarmed that you all seemed unanimous against taking any part in it".⁵⁰ MacKay then played to McEvoy, and noted that he thought that

...those who may show up as political leaders in the Constitutional Convention will in all probability be the leaders of Newfoundland under any new regime. I think it would be a great pity if the wrong people get the lead in the Convention, not only because the Convention might lead to the wrong results under these circumstances but because the wrong leadership might be riveted on the country for the next generation.⁵¹

MacKay encouraged McEvoy, as one of "the best people", not to boycott the Convention, and enclosed a memorandum on the Convention in which he noted that

⁴⁷ F. Gordon Bradley Papers, Correspondence with J.R. Smallwood, Bradley to Smallwood, 11 May 1946.

⁴⁸ For Smallwood's characterization of Bradley see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 271; for an alternate view of this see Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 35-6.

⁴⁹ For some of this correspondence see the J.B. McEvoy Papers.

⁵⁰ J.B. McEvoy Papers, MacKay to McEvoy, 19 February 1946.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

...if care is taken to see that some, even two or three, wise men are elected, it should be a success. Although it might seem desirable to organize a party in advance in order to control the convention, the disadvantages would be that elected representatives might be prematurely committed in advance and that a snap and ill-considered decision might be taken by the people. The best course would appear to be to make certain of the election of one or two people of judgement and capacity for leadership.⁵²

MacKay may or may not have been aware of the advanced plans of Bradley and Smallwood, but his support was placed behind McEvoy, and not behind the two political hopefuls.

On 1 March 1946 Smallwood began his public campaign for confederation, writing a series of articles to the St. John's *Daily News*, which the paper's anti-confederate editor, the Hon. J.S. Currie, agreed to print provided that Smallwood sign them, lest the paper's editorial position be called into question.⁵³ Four days later, Smallwood wrote to the research adviser of the Bank of Canada, noting that

I have been making as close a study of the question of Confederation as possible with the information I have. I obtained some data from the Office of the Prime Minister, and from the Maritimes I obtained their estimates for ten years....⁵⁴

and asking for information about the financial success of the Maritimes under confederation. Largely because of his newspaper letters, by the end of the month Smallwood was recognized by J.S. Macdonald as the propagandist *par excellence* for confederation.⁵⁵ McEvoy, who had been the choice of Burchell and MacKay to lead a

⁵² Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 212-3, Memorandum of MacKay, enclosed in MacKay to McEvoy, 19 February 1946.

⁵³ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 237; for the letters see Smallwood, "The Gospel of Confederation: Book One", *BNF*, pp. 38-62.

⁵⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 219, Smallwood to D.A. Skelton, Research Adviser, Bank of Canada, 5 March 1946.

⁵⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 233, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 30 March 1946.

confederate party, seems to have fallen from favour with J.S. Macdonald after delivering an address to the Rotary Club of St. John's, after which Macdonald reported that he spoke "timidly and vaguely" of confederation.⁵⁶ But McEvoy had the continued encouragement of MacKay, and after a meeting that summer with the new governor, he began to think that he was to play a pivotal part in the National Convention, intimating this to the staff of his St. John's law office.⁵⁷

In April Smallwood undertook a speaking tour of Bonavista Bay, speaking in Orange or Society of United Fishermen halls, and he was generally well-received.⁵⁸ Smallwood received support from Protestant clergy,⁵⁹ while Bradley carefully avoided showing his favour of confederation.⁶⁰ Like Bradley and the Newfoundland politicians of old, Smallwood carefully cultivated a knowledge of each community he visited, and working his way around a community, met with as many of its inhabitants as he could and learned their feelings, a technique which was to serve him extremely well in the campaigns to come.⁶¹ In early May he had an extensive meeting in Gander with J.S. Macdonald, who was there attending a conference on navigation facilities. The two discussed Smallwood's correspondence with Canadian government departments, about

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁵⁷ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

⁵⁸ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 238-9. The S.U.F. was an Anglican-oriented fraternal society.

⁵⁹ At Greenspond on 7 May 1946, Smallwood was assisted in his presentation to a packed hall by an Anglican clergyman, who "put some very sympathetic questions to me after my speech". Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 238.

⁶⁰ F. Gordon Bradley Papers, Correspondence With J.R. Smallwood, Bradley to Smallwood, 18 April 1946, and Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 37.

⁶¹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 238-9.

which Macdonald "had a good deal of misgiving", and Smallwood's suggestion that Canada buy Labrador to help finance Newfoundland's provincial services.⁶²

On 25 April 1946, Sir Gordon Macdonald left Britain to replace Sir Humphrey Walwyn as governor. Macdonald was a Welshman, deeply religious, a teetotaler (which caused the regulars at Government House to resort to one of the estate's lodges for drink) who had been a Labour M.P. from 1929 to 1942, and at one time party Whip.⁶³ Macdonald was a good friend of Clement Attlee, with whom he was in regular communication. In June 1946, shortly after his arrival, Macdonald wrote Attlee, noting a growing trend towards responsible government and the appearance of some strong advocates in favour of confederation, "...though at the moment they are no doubt in a minority".⁶⁴ According to Peter Neary, Macdonald "...came to Newfoundland to carry out the policy of promoting Confederation which the United Kingdom had now embarked and about which an understanding had been reached with the Canadians".⁶⁵ Macdonald did that and more, for he not only was Attlee's officer in Newfoundland, but he would provide continual advice to the confederates and the Canadians and work with them for the realization of confederation. He chose as his secretary his son Kenneth, perhaps for the sake of secrecy, and Kenneth himself became a political broker,

⁶² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 242, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 8 May 1946.

⁶³ Brian Cahill, "Newfoundland's Labor Governor," *Atlantic Advocate*, January 1948, p. 21.

⁶⁴ Attlee Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Deposit 38, folio 381, Gordon Macdonald to "Dear Clem", 29 June 1946. Macdonald may have been referring to confederates Smallwood and Bradley.

⁶⁵ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 243. Despite Macdonald's mission, he kept matters quiet, and in August even told the Canadian High Commissioner that the constitutional issue "would be between Responsible Government and the maintenance of Commission." See Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1965, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 17 August 1946.

"leaking" information from Government House to the confederates,⁶⁶ and forming friendships and alliances with significant people.⁶⁷

The Canadian government had continued to monitor the political atmosphere of Newfoundland, and all developments which might even remotely affect the chances of confederation were reported to Ottawa. On 28 February 1946, J.S. Macdonald wrote to Mackenzie King, informing him that opinion around the island on future forms of government was still "in the formative stage".⁶⁸ King circulated this despatch to Cabinet members Louis St. Laurent (Justice), Frank Bridges (Fisheries), Brooke Claxton (Health and Welfare), D.C. Abbott (Defence), and J.L. Ilesley (Finance), who in November were to become members of the Interdepartmental Committee on Canadian-Newfoundland Relations.⁶⁹ Claxton pressed King to consider Newfoundland: "I still feel that we should take a definite stand on this question - We can't afford to lose Nfld."⁷⁰ In March Canadian attention was drawn to the opposition of the Newfoundland Roman Catholic Church to confederation, and to the effect this could have on the Roman Catholic portion of the electorate. J.S. Macdonald reported to Norman Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, that he had a conversation with Mr. Justice Cyril Fox of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland about the forthcoming National Convention. Macdonald noted that Fox was "well disposed towards Canada", and because he was a Catholic and

⁶⁶ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 102, footnote.

⁶⁷ At one point Kenneth Macdonald dated the daughter of J.T. Swyers, a Bonavista merchant and Orangeman, whose lawyer was F. Gordon Bradley (Wallace Furlong to the author, 24 February 1992). Swyers' company was listed in the confederates' list of suppliers of goods and services (J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Newfoundland Confederate Association, untitled list).

⁶⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 217, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 February 1946.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

had "many friends and acquaintances, particularly in Roman Catholic circles...his opinion is worth recording".⁷¹ Canada was familiar with Church involvements in the politics of previous attempts at confederation in Newfoundland, and was taking no chances in having to deal with unknown factors. The Church was the single strongest opponent to confederation faced by those who wished to see Newfoundland become a part of Canada. Of all the long-term interests which were taken into account through the entire period, from the time of the earliest constitutional policy-making and implementation to the referenda and the settlement of the issue, concern over the Church's opposition to confederation permeated and preoccupied External Affairs and the Dominions Office.

Roman Catholic reasons for opposing confederation in the mid-1940s were complex, and some went back to the early nineteenth century. In 1832 under Bishop Michael A. Fleming, the Church took part in the fight for representative government, and eventually won the right to a share of legislative funds with which to run a denominational education system.⁷² Fleming's successor, Bishop John T. Mullock played a significant part in the fight for responsible government, which was won by a Catholic-supported Liberal party in 1855. In 1861 Mullock took a most active part in the politics of the Liberal party and in quelling the riots of that year,⁷³ from which was

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 227, J.S. Macdonald to Norman Robertson, March 15, 1946. As early as 1942 Robertson was told by Scott Macdonald's predecessor, Charles J. Burchell, that "Mr. Justice Dunfield is a very strong advocate of confederation, so also is Cyril Fox..." *ibid.*, p. 10, Burchell to Robertson, 21 February 1942.

⁷² On Fleming and the politics of the day see Raymond J. Lahey, "Religion and Politics in Newfoundland: the Antecedents of the General Election of 1832", in *Newfoundland History Readings*, ed. Melvin Baker (St. John's: Department of History, Memorial University, 1987), pp. 249-263; Lahey, "Michael Anthony Fleming", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. VII, ed. Frances Halpenny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), pp. 292-300.

⁷³ On Mullock and the politics of his time see Frederick Jones, "John Thomas Mullock", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. IX, ed. Frances Halpenny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), pp. 581-586; Jones, "Bishops in Politics: Roman Catholic v. Protestant in Newfoundland, 1860-2", *Canadian Historical Review* (December 1974): 408-421; and John Pius Greene, "The Influence of Religion in the Politics of Newfoundland, 1850-1861" (M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1970).

born the Newfoundland system of equal sectarian division of jobs and public offices which continued into the 1940s.⁷⁴ In 1869 when an election was fought over confederation, "the antis carried the day" when the Church's laity and clergy opposed confederation along with the prominent merchants of St. John's and Conception Bay, and when merchant ranks were divided making it impossible for the confederates to carry the an overwhelming anti-confederate vote in Catholic districts.⁷⁵ According to J.K. Hiller, "To the Catholic mind, union spelled ruin, and its advocates were traitors".⁷⁶ Bishop Mullock thought that if confederation came, "the education of our people [might] be taken out of the hands of the local clergy and transferred to a Board in a remote Province notorious for its anti-Catholic spirit...."⁷⁷ Following the defeat of confederation, key anti-confederate Catholic MHAs Peter Brennan and Thomas Talbot were revered by the Church as Catholic heroes for preserving responsible government,⁷⁸ while confederate Catholics such as John Kent and Ambrose and Edward Shea were allowed to fade into oblivion.

By the time Edward Patrick Roche became Archbishop of St. John's in 1915, the Church had much experience with both politics and confederation, and to these issues the archbishop was to prove the most alert of all the bishops of the diocese of St. John's. Roche was born in Placentia on 19 February 1874, the eldest son of Edward and Mary

⁷⁴ Even Water Street merchants showed preferences when hiring and to employees and customers of their own religious persuasion. Edward FitzGerald to the author, 21 March 1989.

⁷⁵ James K. Hiller, "Confederation Defeated: the Election of 1869", *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, eds. James K. Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 82.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷⁷ Mullock's Lenten pastoral sermon, in *The Newfoundlanders*, 6 March 1867.

⁷⁸ Brennan and Talbot were posthumously memorialized by huge stained glass windows in the Roman Catholic Cathedral at St. John's.

Roche,⁷⁹ the latter of whom was a staunch confederate in 1869, and saved Ambrose Shea from being stoned to death by anti-confederates.⁸⁰ Orphaned at age ten, Edward was sent to St. John's to live with an aunt and to receive his early education. He was a pupil of the thorough and disciplined Irish Christian Brothers at St. Patrick's Hall, and later at St. Bonaventure's College.⁸¹ Like most of the Newfoundland priests of his day, he studied at All Hallows' College, Dublin, and was ordained on 24 June 1897.⁸² A shy and quiet man with a certain humility, a scholar with a mastery of English and Latin, and an adept administrator with an eye for detail, he quickly rose through Church ranks to become the pastor of the Cathedral, and Vicar General of the St. John's Archdiocese within ten years of his ordination. As a priest and later as a bishop, he was respected by Roman Catholics,⁸³ and by people of all denominations. His word was as good as law, and so were his considered opinions.

When Archbishop Howley died on 15 October 1914, Monsignor Roche became the administrator of the diocese; on 18 February 1915 he was named Archbishop-Elect; and on 29 June he was consecrated Archbishop, the youngest in the British Empire. Presiding over 100,000 lay Catholics, and 200 priests, nuns, and brothers, he was a

⁷⁹ Roche's father was from St. John's and managed the Anglo-American telegraph cable station at Placentia; his mother was an O'Reilly from Placentia. See Presentation Convent Archives, Cathedral Square, St. John's, files on Archbishop Edward P. Roche.

⁸⁰ See "'Power of the Pen' recalls battle for Confederation", *The Sunday Telegram*, 31 March 1991, p. 6.

⁸¹ George Alain Frecker, "Most Reverend Edward Patrick Roche 1874-1950, Archbishop of St. John's (1914-1950)", *The Centenary of the Basilica Cathedral of St. John the Baptist* (St. John's: Robinson and Company, 1955), p. 187.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁸³ Fr. Thomas Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989.

"Newfoundland patriot",⁸⁴ a "Prince of the Church" who played the part of the successor to Bishops Fleming, Mullock, and Howley, all of whom were not only staunch defenders of the faith, but prelates unafraid to take a public political stand when they believed it warranted.⁸⁵ Roche was unshakable once he made up his mind, and a firm believer in making his personal views known, disliking both open disobedience and any conduct of affairs behind his back.⁸⁶ Roche was the Metropolitan of Newfoundland, and disliked dealing with the Ottawa-based Apostolic (papal) Delegate to Canada and Newfoundland, Archbishop Ildebrando Antonutti,⁸⁷ and throughout his episcopacy he avoided contact with him. Most Roman Catholics respected Roche's insight and authority, and he was held in the same esteem in which the Newfoundland Catholic clergy of previous centuries were held by their spiritual charges.

The exact extent to which the influence of Archbishop Roche was wielded in the 1940s confederation debate remains unknown. But ample evidence exists of his previous role in Newfoundland politics, and in the words of one observer, Newfoundland traditionally had three centres of power: "This office [the governor's], the police chief of St. John's, and, the "Man on the Hill" - the bishop or archbishop. Nothing could ever be done without his consent".⁸⁸ But if the partnership between Church and state under responsible government was traditionally hand-in-glove, there were also occasions when church and state conflicted. In 1913 Archbishop Howley condemned William Ford

⁸⁴ As indicated by Roche's memorial tablet in the Basilica of St. John the Baptist, in St. John's.

⁸⁵ "Prince of the Church" is an informal title given by Catholics to senior bishops in the Catholic Church.

⁸⁶ Fr. Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989.

⁸⁷ Hon. Robert S. Furlong to the author, 30 April 1992; William J. Ryan to the author, 13 September 1991, and Myles Furlong to the author, 21 March 1989.

⁸⁸ Hon. James A. McGrath to the author, 27 August 1991.

Coaker's Fishermen's Protective Union because it opposed denominational education and had overtly Orange connections, and because Howley perceived it as a socialist organization and a secret society.⁸⁹ After Howley's death and before Roche's installation, Roche complained to Prime Minister Edward Morris about the status of Catholic civil servants, and after his consecration he was an even more vehement opponent of Coaker than Howley, becoming known as the "Placentia Machiavel" and "The Borgia From Branch".⁹⁰ But Roche enjoyed the staunch support of two important men's associations which had been involved in Newfoundland's political life: the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic secret society, and the Benevolent Irish Society, an Irish fraternal organization dating from 1806.⁹¹ Aware of the advantages conferred by support from the bishop or archbishop of St. John's, prior to 1933 political hopefuls and even seasoned politicians like Sir Robert Bond and Sir Richard Squires sought the archbishop's approval and advice for their candidacy at election time. In exchange the archbishop had their ear and they his advice throughout their terms of office.⁹² Squires' blustery Finance Minister, Major Peter Cashin, regularly went to 11 a.m. Sunday Mass at the Cathedral, and afterwards to the Palace for an informal chat with the archbishop about

⁸⁹ See Ian MacDonald, "To Each His Own" *William Coaker and the Fishermen's Protective Union in Newfoundland Politics, 1908-1925*, ed. J.K. Hiller (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1987), pp. 38-41. Coaker later had to deal with Roche (whom MacDonald categorized as "profoundly reactionary") during his 1917 election campaign.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.

⁹¹ Roche was instrumental in obtaining the tacit approval of a wary Archbishop Howley in 1909 for the establishment of the K of C in Newfoundland see Kathryn Pike, *The Knights of Columbus in Newfoundland*, Newfoundland Historical Society Pamphlet Number 9 (St. John's: The Newfoundland Historical Society, 1985), p. 8. On the history of the B.I.S. see Noel Veitch, "The Contribution of the Benevolent Irish Society to Education in Newfoundland From 1823 to 1875" (M.A. thesis, St. Francis Xavier University, 1965), and *Centenary Volume Benevolent Irish Society* (Cork: Guy and Company, 1906).

⁹² MacDonald, *To Each His Own*, pp. 76-8, 79-80, 84.

the week's political events.⁹³ When a riot ransacked the House of Assembly in 1932, Roche's clergy were instrumental in saving Squires from a mob bent on lynching him. Monsignor McDermott was sent from the Cathedral to try and quiet the mob, while Fathers Pippy and St. John spirited Squires out of the Colonial Building to safety.⁹⁴

One of the first experiences of the Commission of Government with the customary rights of the churches occurred in March 1935, when the Commission attempted to interfere with denominational education. With the tacit support of the Dominions Office, the Commission wished to abolish the Church-controlled denominational superintendents of education, who "were a law unto themselves",⁹⁵ and bring them into the civil service, and it also wished to impose auditing standards for the system, and to establish minimum qualifications for teachers.⁹⁶ An acrimonious battle ensued with Archbishop Roche and Anglican Bishop William C. White, who both quietly but deftly fought the proposals, and the Commission, especially British Commissioners E.N.R. Trentham and Thomas Lodge. Commissioner John Hope Simpson later noted:

It was a most anxious day. It was clear that we could not continue to administer effectively if two-thirds of the population - the Catholics and the Anglicans - were definitely hostile. There were all sorts of threats. ... in fact the R.C. Archbishop had threatened that if we passed the bill, he would order the R.C. Commissioner [W.R. Howley] to resign, and would not allow an R.C. to replace him - that the action of the Commission should be formally condemned from the altar of every R.C. church in the Island - that no R.C. should be allowed to take part in the Jubilee celebrations or to accept the King's Jubilee Medal. The Anglican Bishop

⁹³ Thomas Cahill to the author, 26 May 1992.

⁹⁴ William J. Browne, *Eighty-Four Years a Newfoundlander* (St. John's: W.J. Browne, 1981), pp. 199-200. Browne noted that he called the archbishop asking for help.

⁹⁵ Phillip McCann, "The Educational Policy of the Commission of Government", *NFS*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Fall 1987): 203 and ff.

⁹⁶ See Peter Neary, "J.B. Hope Simpson's Account of Sir John Hope Simpson's Newfoundland Career, 1934-6", *NFS*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1990): 90, 102, endnotes 101 and 102.

was equally hostile, but evidently has not similar dictatorial and disciplinary power. In the outports we should have had all the Anglicans against us.⁹⁷

Whether Roche actually made these threats, and whether he could have carried them out remains uncertain.⁹⁸ The Commission eventually prevailed when Roche and White met Howley and agreed to a set of modified measures, but denominational education was not dismantled. Clutterbuck of the Dominions Office thought that actions of Trentham and Lodge in pressing the issue were "wholly indefensible", and that as a result, "the denominational system is now more firmly established than ever".⁹⁹ The Commission and the Dominions Office had received quite a scare. Following this confrontation with the Church's historical hold on government and education, they learned to take much greater care when engaging the archbishop in future dealings.

Concern over the preservation of Catholic education fuelled Archbishop Roche's first known statement in opposition to confederation in 1916, when he made his first address to the priests of his archdiocese. The speech was a milestone in clerical speeches, and set the religious, social, and political outlook of the Newfoundland Catholic Church for the next 35 years. Strongly emphasizing the need for unity among the clergy, the archbishop clearly linked the confederation issue with Catholic educational rights, and stated the Church's responsibility and policy to protect them:

If we are to put forth our greatest endeavours, ... it can only be by working together in harmony, unity and co-operation. Hitherto we have, it must be admitted, suffered and suffered severely through lack of concentrated action.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 102 endnote 102.

⁹⁸ For the Roche-Howley correspondence see *Exhibits for Policy Grievance - Newfoundland Teachers' Association vs. the Roman Catholic School Board for Exploits-White Bay*, Vol. E2, pp. 122-4; 135-6, 137, Roche to Howley, 23 February 1935, 29 April 1935, and 20 August 1935. I thank Mr. James L. Greene, Q.C., of St. John's for letting me see this document in his possession. Roche's 23 February letter reserved "the right to communicate this letter to the Catholic people of Newfoundland".

⁹⁹ McCann, "Educational Policy", *NFS*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Fall 1987): 205-6.

The ancient policy of "divide et impera" is as powerful and effective in this age of the world as it was in the days of old.

There is no part of the British Empire, in fact, I may say there is no part of the world where the Catholic Church as a social and civic force can exercise greater influence or wield greater power, if properly directed, than it can in this ancient colony of Newfoundland.

... I hardly need say that power and influence should never be used for political purposes. If the Church stands aside and aloof from all political parties, then in all matters where Catholic rights and Catholic interests are concerned it will practically be in a position to dictate the policy of any government.

The preservation of our denominational system of education rests entirely with ourselves.

Of recent years there have been rumours, persistent rumours...of Confederation with Canada. Of the truth or otherwise of these rumours I know no more than the man in the street. I have no inside information, and I know as much and as little about the possibilities in that direction as anyone listening to me. It is a large question involving vital interests of our country, involving very grave financial and economic issues upon which I do not wish to pronounce any opinion. I have no doubt, however, that if ever such a question should arise the people will get an opportunity of passing upon it. It will then be our duty as citizens, as Newfoundlanders, as lovers of our country, to examine every phase of the question minutely...it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that it may be incumbent upon us to tender our advice to the Catholic people...should the issue ever become a real and vital one unless our educational terms are acceded to, no matter how attractive the other aspects of the question may be, we will be forced to give it our most pronounced and uncompromising opposition.¹⁰⁰

In the archbishop's mind, the issues of confederation and the Church's ability to maintain the educational status quo were inextricably linked. Confederation was acceptable to Catholics only if Catholic educational terms were accepted and funded by a state in which they had a say. Furthermore, the status quo could only be preserved by a united clergy. While in 1968 Richard Gwyn thought that Roche's motive for opposing

¹⁰⁰ Edward Patrick Roche, "Address to the Clergy of the Province" given to the annual priests' retreat in 1916", St. John's: Newfoundland Quarterly Print, 1916. pp. 4, 5, 9-10.

confederation was "one of the enigmas of the Confederation battle",¹⁰¹ and then speculated that it could have been because Roche answered only to Rome but in confederation, he would be a lesser personage than the two Canadian cardinals.¹⁰² But throughout his entire episcopacy Roche consistently opposed it on the grounds of its threat to Church-sponsored education. It was a position from which he never retreated, and with Roche's extensive social, familial and cultural ties to the Newfoundland political community, the Church's position was rarely challenged.¹⁰³

By the 1940s, Roche was experiencing health problems, and there may have been a certain health-enforced reticence,¹⁰⁴ but true to his intentions of 1916, he maintained an influence on government policy, for both the British and the Canadians sought his views on the constitutional status of Newfoundland. In September 1942 during the visit of Clement Attlee, Clutterbuck had met for three hours with Roche and had come away with the definite impression "that the Hierarchy was strongly opposed to any move towards closer union with Canada".¹⁰⁵ In the summer of 1943 Roche reportedly told

¹⁰¹ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 107.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 108. Gwyn also erroneously observed that Roche became archbishop in 1917; it was in 1914.

¹⁰³ Roche was a good friend of Captain Thomas Bonia, M.H.A., of Placentia who was Sir Richard Squires' Minister of Finance from April to June 1923. In 1524 Roche's second cousin Mary became the second wife of William J. Browne, who at one time was the archbishop's solicitor. Browne himself was related to Roche: both their mothers were O'Reillys from Placentia. See Browne, *Eighty-Four Years*, pp. 1, 96, 128.

¹⁰⁴ Roche suffered from tuberculosis from his days as a priest. To alleviate this he made an annual trip for treatment to Saranac in New York. As his health worsened, he took up residence in a large house, Beaconsfield, outside St. John's close to the sanatorium (Fr. Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989, and Richard Furlong to the author, 20 March 1989). Yet Robert S. Furlong, the Church's solicitor, and William J. Ryan, a church architect, maintained that Roche was still very accessible (R.S. Furlong to the author, 21 November 1991, and W.J. Ryan to the author, 13 September 1991).

¹⁰⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 165, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 August 1945.

the Goodwill Mission that responsible government should be restored, or as an alternative, Newfoundland "should have a form of government like Northern Ireland with representatives in the House of Commons in London".¹⁰⁶ But on 15 November 1943, Burchell met Roche at the Palace in St. John's, where Roche told him that "...the idea of Newfoundland getting back its dominion status should not be considered, as a community of 300,000 people should not ask for Dominion status", and that "the future of Newfoundland was either with England or Canada".¹⁰⁷ It seems that policy was not firmly set in Roche's mind, for he later changed and expanded his views on why Newfoundland should oppose confederation. As far as the British and Canadian governments were concerned, it was necessary to estimate his influence and seek his counsel in order to make future plans for the island, and his remarks to Burchell must have provided some temporary relief that the Church would not oppose confederation. But this would not last long.

In the summer of 1946, the archbishop made a statement on confederation to the priests' retreat. After commenting that the American bases were established on Newfoundland soil "by prescription" and "without the knowledge or consent of the people", and that there was

...reason to fear that what happened during the war may happen again, and that Newfoundland's future is likely to be determined, unless we are on our guard, by power politics from without rather than by the wishes of the people from within,¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ William J. Browne, *Eighty-Seven Years a Newfoundlander* (St. John's: W.J. Browne, 1984), p. 44.

¹⁰⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 86, Burchell to Robertson, 16 November 1943.

¹⁰⁸ 'Address of His Grace the Archbishop', given at the close of the Priests' Retreat, 1946, p. 2. My thanks to Msgr. David O'Keefe for this.

the archbishop then turned his attention to education. He noted that the Commission of Government showed an "intelligent appreciation of the Education situation in Newfoundland", and that

If... the people of this country should decide to become a province of Canada - I hope that contingency will never arise, because it would become an ill-advised and unfortunate decision - immediately the education issue would become a live issue. It is true that in theory in Canada each Province decides its own educational policy, but it had to provide the funds. Newfoundland's economy being what it is, we could never from direct taxation provide the necessary grants, and education would at once become a Federal question with results and consequences that anyone would foresee.¹⁰⁹

Thus, dependence on an unknown quantity of transfer payments from Ottawa was unacceptable, because it would impinge on the Church's ability to control education. Then, emphasizing the need for "informed public opinion among our Catholic people", and the responsibility of the Church to promote Catholic literature, he noted the "unaccountable,almost suspicious irregularities in the mails" in the delivery of the Catholic newspaper, *The Monitor*,¹¹⁰ and the need to keep *The Monitor* in press as a vehicle for the Church's concerns.¹¹¹

As prominent as Archbishop Roche was in St. John's, he did not directly represent the views of the whole Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland, and his clergy were divided over the issue of confederation. The predominantly rural and very poor people of the Diocese of St. George's, stretching along the old French Shore, were led by Irish-born Bishop Michael O'Reilly, while the bishop of the Diocese of Harbour

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ *The Monitor* began in 1934 as the newsletter of St. Patrick's parish in St. John's, but grew to become the newspaper for the Archdiocese of St. John's.

¹¹¹ "Address of His Grace the Archbishop," 1946, pp. 3-4. All parties had intermittent newspaper distribution later during the confederation campaigns, perhaps because of the practice of tossing the papers of political opponents into ponds and rivers, or of the postmaster not delivering papers if he disagreed with the contents.

Grace was John M. O'Neill, a Newfoundlander. Both deferred to Roche in matters of faith and morals, and in most matters as protocol required, they tried to present a unified appearance behind their archbishop. But O'Reilly was an advocate of confederation, and would later support the election to the National Convention of his pro-confederate bridge partner William J. Keough, a co-operative movement organizer around Port-au-Port.¹¹² O'Neill remained silently against confederation and loyal to his superior, despite attempts by Smallwood to "convert him".¹¹³ While letting Roche handle the issue from St. John's, O'Neill quietly spoke of his views to his priests.¹¹⁴ But because of Roche's infirmity, in the spring of 1945 Fr. Thomas Flynn, the pastor of St. Patrick's parish (and founder of *The Monitor*), was appointed as co-adjutor archbishop,¹¹⁵ and Flynn favoured confederation. J.S. Macdonald reported to Ottawa that soon after the governor's arrival, Flynn, who was regarded as the "acting head" of the Church, and several of the clergy, visited Government House. At that time Flynn "spoke favourably of Confederation with Canada" to Governor Macdonald.¹¹⁶ The High Commissioner and the governor may have believed then that Flynn was in command, but in reality he was not, and seems to have had a penchant for disagreeing with his superior.¹¹⁷

By the reckoning of any politician forced to deal with the reality of sectarian politics in Newfoundland, the political views of the Roman Catholic people had to be

¹¹² Dr. Hans Rollmann to the author, 23 March 1989. Keough was a Roman Catholic, and active in the co-operative movement around the Port-au-Port Peninsula of Newfoundland.

¹¹³ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8.

¹¹⁴ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 March 1989. O'Neill was considerably younger than Roche, having just graduated from St. Bon's in 1921, when Roche was already archbishop.

¹¹⁵ A co-adjutor archbishop assists another archbishop in the performance of his clerical duties.

¹¹⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 243, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 May 1946.

¹¹⁷ William J. Ryan to the author, 13 September 1991. Ryan noted that Roche and Flynn disagreed over the design during the construction of a portion of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in 1946-7.

considered. In later ages in Newfoundland the Church may have lost a measure of its influence, but during the 1930s and 1940s it was embraced by the people as not only a religious but a cultural and social institution. Roman Catholics were of Irish and French extraction, and were concentrated in St. John's, the Southern Shore, and Placentia, with some adherents on the west coast of the island.¹¹⁸ They constituted a good portion of Newfoundland's working class in these districts and had some representation in the professional and mercantile class. In 1948 they constituted one-third of the population of Newfoundland (106,006 out of 321,819), and were the dominant denomination in seven electoral districts.¹¹⁹ The remaining eighteen districts were predominantly comprised of fishermen and workers in small towns, were primarily Protestant (but had some Catholic enclaves), and accounted for the remaining two-thirds of the population. Culturally and politically, Catholics strongly supported their Church,¹²⁰ and became quite sensitive when they perceived it to be under attack. After 1936 with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, it was well known that Catholics in St. John's liked Franco and were appalled at the atrocities which occurred against the churches.¹²¹ With memories of Attlee's support of the British volunteers, and of the International Brigade against Franco,¹²² the accession of the Attlee government in the United Kingdom was a bitter pill to swallow. With confederation in the offing, and the Attlee government involved with the constitutional question, Newfoundland Roman Catholics were a political force with which to be reckoned.

¹¹⁸ See map of Religious Denominations, *Amulree Report*, 1933.

¹¹⁹ See Appendix I, Table I.

¹²⁰ Edward FitzGerald to the author, 21 March 1989; Wallace Furlong to the author, 24 February 1992; and Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

¹²¹ Dr. George Story to the author, 9 January 1991.

¹²² On Attlee see Alan Palmer, "Clement Richard Attlee" *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century History* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 32-3.

In contrast with Roman Catholics, Newfoundland Methodists were quite receptive to Canada, as were some Anglicans and members of the Salvation Army. On 10 June 1925 the Newfoundland Methodist Church had undergone its own union, and become part of the United Church of Canada.¹²³ Religious books and materials were standardized, and the United Church hymnal and religious materials in use in Newfoundland came from Canada, not England.¹²⁴ Many residents of predominantly Methodist communities on the south coast and the north east coast had family connections and friends in Canada, who occasionally returned to Newfoundland with evidence of Canadian wealth,¹²⁵ and those who could afford an education were often trained at Canadian universities like Mount Allison, in New Brunswick.¹²⁶ Furthermore, in St. John's, the Methodist College Literary Institute, one of Newfoundland's most respected debating societies, arranged debates on confederation, which were widely attended, widely reported, and avidly followed.¹²⁷ Smallwood and Bradley were Methodists, and their advocacy of confederation would not have been lost on their fellow churchmen.

Like the Methodists, since 1945 the Church of England in Newfoundland under Bishop Philip Abraham had been discussing the union with the Anglican Church of

¹²³ David G. Pitt, "Methodism", *ENL* III, p. 525.

¹²⁴ On this see Frederick W. Rowe, *Into the Breach - Memoirs of a Newfoundland Senator* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1988), p. 108.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹²⁶ On the strength of Methodism on the south coast and its ties with Canada see Eugene Forsey, *A Life on the Fringe - The Memoirs of Eugene Forsey* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 2-4, 10-11, 15.

¹²⁷ See Rowe, *Into the Breach*, p. 109, and James Wade, "Literary Institute, Methodist College", *ENL* III, pp. 319-320.

Canada.¹²⁸ Newfoundland Anglican clergy were interested in participating in the Canadian Church's retirement fund, which provided better pensions than their own fund.¹²⁹ In 1948 the Newfoundland Church of England synod decided to become part of the Anglican Church of Canada, and the two were united on 7 September 1949.¹³⁰ Brigadier Clarence D. Wiseman, Territorial Commander of the Salvation Army, was a friend of Smallwood's, and the Army later provided assistance to the confederates.¹³¹ It must be stressed that denominational persuasions did not universally equate with political persuasions. But if the Roman Catholic Church in St. John's opposed confederation in part because of its historic involvements in the Newfoundland state; the Church of England, the United Church, and the Salvation Army outside the city favoured confederation in part because of the ties their churches had with their sister churches in Canada.

The election of delegates to the National Convention took place on 21 June 1946. Forty-five members were returned for 38 districts, among them Bradley and Smallwood.¹³² Labradorians voted for the first time and elected Rev. Lester Leeland Burry, a United Church minister, while fellow confederate William J. Keough was elected for Port au Port. For the anti-confederates, from St. John's came lawyer Gordon

¹²⁸ See Hans Rollmann, *Religious Studies 3901 - Religion in Newfoundland and Labrador: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1990), p. 4.5.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.5.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.5.

¹³¹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.001, Port de Grave Pre-Confederation, J. Dawe, Coley's Point, to Smallwood, 4 May 1948; Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114.

¹³² Smallwood later claimed that on nomination day, no opponent appeared to challenge him for his district, so he had one nominated. When he was elected to the Convention with the largest majority of any member, having campaigned on a confederate ticket, this fact allowed him to avoid the embarrassment of being elected unopposed, and the dignity of it being said that the electorate had a choice. See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 241 (footnote).

Higgins (St. John's City East) and Frank Fogwill (St. John's East Extern), both Labour party candidates, while ex-Finance Minister Major Peter Cashin, the son of former Prime Minister Sir Michael P. Cashin and brother-in-law of Justice Cyril Fox, was elected for St. John's West. For the same district were returned businessman Ches Crosbie, and writer-broadcaster Michael Harrington, who had become *The Barrelman* after Smallwood moved to Gander. Cashin, who was quite unpredictable and no stranger to flip-flop politics from his Squires days, vigorously campaigned against the Commission of Government and even against the idea of a Convention.¹³³ But he had been in Montreal two years previously, and his time there infringed by a short period on the residency qualification for a candidate to the Convention,¹³⁴ two years before nomination day, 31 May.¹³⁵ Another potential delegate, businessman Calvert C. Pratt, lived just outside the district he wished to contest and was also disqualified, but Cashin had his lawyer J.B. McEvoy go to Government House and plead his case with Governor Macdonald, who quietly waived the requirement and permitted Cashin to run, fearing that the exclusion of Cashin from the Convention could cause political trouble.¹³⁶ Cashin ran and got elected.

Others members elected to the Convention included Captain Charles L. Bailey, a fisherman and schooner-master from New Chelsea who was returned for Trinity South; Pierce Fudge, President of the Newfoundland Labourers Union, for Humber, and Samuel F. Vincent, a small businessman, for Bonavista North. The Convention had four other

¹³³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 215, J.S. Macdonald, Canadian High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 23 February 1946. On Cashin's previous political career see Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, p. 197, and *passim*. Cashin was well known for his bluster and mood swings.

¹³⁴ Thomas Cahill to the author, 11 May 1992.

¹³⁵ See 1946 National Convention Act, *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government 1946* (St. John's: King's Printer, 1946), p. 120.

¹³⁶ Thomas Cahill and James Halley to the author, 11 May 1992.

union men elected in addition to Fudge, and only five members out of forty-five had previous experience as members in Newfoundland Houses of Assembly.¹³⁷ According to Jeff Webb, it was "the most broadly based assembly the colony had seen in terms of class and rural representation".¹³⁸ But there was little interest in the colony's political future among Newfoundlanders. Eight delegates were elected by acclamation, and only one-third of Newfoundlanders voted in the election.¹³⁹ The American Consul General observed that participation in the voting had been "disappointingly low".¹⁴⁰ With no political parties and no issues, the low turnout and popular indifference were hardly surprising. On the other hand, this low turnout could have indicated Newfoundlanders' relative satisfaction with the Commission of Government, but more evidence exists to suggest that this electoral behaviour was apathy and ignorance, and not approval. Some candidates even proved their ignorance of the what the Convention was by making promises they would fulfil if elected.¹⁴¹ But as Peter Neary noted, satisfied that the delegates had been chosen, and that "the Convention's legitimacy was accepted",¹⁴² the Dominions Office and the Commission pressed on with their plans.

¹³⁷ See Bertram G. Riggs, "Elections", *ENL I*, p. 720. These were Bradley, Cashin, Thomas Ashbourne, Ken Brown, and Roland Starkes.

¹³⁸ Webb, "Convention", p. 57.

¹³⁹ Riggs, "Elections", *ENL I*, pp. 720-1. These were P. Wellington Crummey, S.F. Vincent, Ken Brown, Alfred Watton, Jr., W.J. Banfield, J.T. Spencer, Edgar Roberts, and John J. MacCormack. *Ibid.* indicates that 107,378 votes were cast in the National Convention elections, out of a total population (See Appendix I, Table I) of 321,819.

¹⁴⁰ G.K. Donald, U.S. Consul General in Newfoundland, to Secretary of State, Washington, 17 July 1946, as cited in Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 280.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

Since it had been established by law that the Chairman of the Convention would be a Justice of the Supreme Court,¹⁴³ Mr. Justice Cyril Fox was chosen. He was presented with a "note of guidance" from Lord Addison which set forth the procedures, rights, and topics of discussion correctly within the Convention's purview. It assumed that the Convention would discuss

(a) the return of responsible government (b) the retention of the system of Commission government for a definite period, with or without some indication of the steps to be taken at the end of that period, (c) confederation with Canada,¹⁴⁴ and suggested that the Convention send a delegation to Canada for the purpose of obtaining information when the question of confederation was discussed. It also noted that

It should not be presumed that no course for which there is a substantial backing would be excluded from the proposals recommended for submission to a referendum merely because it was not favoured by an actual majority of the members of the Convention.¹⁴⁵

Nothing was left to chance, and even when the fall sitting began and some Convention members attempted to call Commissioners publicly to testify and answer questions, this was overruled.¹⁴⁶

Prior to the calling of the National Convention, both those in favour of confederation and those against it were largely operating from set positions, policies and ideas, but there was no focal point. Opposition to confederation was disorganized, but the advocates of confederation, particularly Bradley and Smallwood, were quite organized. They had the advantages of the early support of the Dominions Office and the

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

¹⁴⁴ PRO DO 35/1346/N.402/48, Addison to Newfoundland government, 17 June 1946.

¹⁴⁵ PRO DO 35/1346, "Terms of Reference for Convention and Plebiscite".

¹⁴⁶ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 286.

Government of Canada, a definite plan for proceeding with confederation, and the blossoming leadership of the ardent, if impetuous, Smallwood. The seeds of the political movements were also present in the Convention: the confederates were Smallwood and Bradley, with the supporting cast of Keough, Burry, and Vincent; while the anti-confederates included Cashin, Higgins, Crosbie, Bailey, Fudge, and Harrington. The election and meeting of the National Convention marked a turning point. Dormant since 1933, public partisan politics re-awakened in Newfoundland, and public hopes and antagonisms were focused away from the Commission of Government and onto the politicians who were to emerge as leaders in the new political creation of the Dominions Office.

Chapter 3

The National Convention, 1946-1948

Just after the Convention elections in the summer of 1946, Smallwood took Bradley to meet Canadian High Commissioner J.S. Macdonald at Canada House on Circular Road in St. John's, and Smallwood later noted that the three were quite "anxious for anonymity".¹ At the meeting they discussed confederation. It seems that soon thereafter, Smallwood and Bradley had an extensive meeting at Bradley's house in Bonavista, where the two divided up the political posts they would take should confederation occur: Bradley chose to become Newfoundland's minister in Ottawa, and Smallwood wished to become premier.² Just before the Convention opened, Smallwood went to Ottawa, where he met McEvoy's friend R.A. MacKay, and Norman Robertson, and was introduced to Mackenzie King through his assistant John W. Pickersgill. Smallwood met cabinet ministers Brooke Claxton, Clarence Decatur Howe, and Louis St. Laurent, from whom and from whose staffs he received considerable assistance in gathering information about Canada. He also had discussions about the six senatorships and the Newfoundland representative in the federal cabinet which would be required under confederation.³ But by the end of September, when Bradley informed J.S. Macdonald that he would support confederation if acceptable terms of union were extracted from Ottawa by a Convention delegation, Macdonald deemed Bradley to be "the most promising man" to lead a confederate party.⁴

¹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 244-5. It would be unlikely that this was Bradley's first meeting with Macdonald, as Smallwood implied. If it were, then the "McDonald" written of by Bradley earlier was Governor Sir Gordon Macdonald.

² See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 244-5; Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8, Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 78; and Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 35.

³ R.A. MacKay, "When he Was Unknown in Ottawa", *Call Me Joey*, pp. 37-9.

⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 291, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 30 September 1946.

Once the National Convention was summoned, Smallwood and Bradley seized the opportunity to assess the extent of support among delegates for a motion to include confederation on the ballot paper. On the train to St. John's with other Convention delegates, Smallwood assiduously sounded out the opinions of all delegates on confederation, and as Don Jamieson later wrote,

Smallwood was everywhere. He button-holed prospects in diner, smoker, and pullman, wherever he could find them. When flattery was called for, he was shamelessly lavish with his compliments. If an appeal to ambition might produce the desired response, he hinted broadly at great rewards to come. One result of this technique was that three delegates left the train to St. John's each convinced that he was assured the job of Minister of Finance if Confederation triumphed and Smallwood came into his own!⁵

When members arrived at the Newfoundland Hotel, Smallwood continued the squeeze, reporting each success or failure to Bradley.⁶ In the summer of 1946, there also coalesced an informal working group of confederates, consisting of Smallwood, poet-writer Gregory J. Power (from Dunville, a cousin of Archbishop Roche,⁷ and the only Roman Catholic in the group), labour organizer Harold Horwood (whom Smallwood met through a mutual friend, civil servant and antiquarian Nimshi Crewe), and Philip Forsey, a Grand Bank-born teacher. They were later joined by Irving Fogwill, the brother of Convention delegate Frank Fogwill.⁸ Significantly, Fogwill and Horwood edited, and Forsey contributed articles to *Protocol*, a Newfoundland poetry and prose journal which in May 1946 criticized Smallwood's "Confederationist propaganda-rhapsodies" and took

⁵ Donald Jamieson, "An Account of the Events leading Up to the Entry of Newfoundland into the Canadian Confederation", typescript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, prepared for the Department of Regional and Economic Expansion, Ottawa, 1974, p. 4; also see Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 72.

⁶ William J. Banfield, "He Had What It Takes", *Call Me Joey*, p. 50.

⁷ On Power see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 75. Power's cousin Blanche FitzPatrick of Placentia, was Peter Cashin's wife (Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992).

⁸ On the confederate organization which was extant before the Convention, see Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 73-6.

an anti-confederate stand.⁹ At one point Horwood and his brother Charles had a brief flirtation with the supporters of responsible government.¹⁰ But by the end of the summer, they were working under Smallwood from his Devon Row apartment in St. John's. This inner group, which had a strong socialist cast, eventually became known among their opponents as the "Bolsheviks".¹¹

The Convention opened on 11 September 1946, and the ceremonies were broadcast over the government-controlled radio station VONF.¹² Soon after this, a move was made to arrange for the broadcast of all the proceedings. Judge F.J. Morris wrote Commissioner Albert Walsh, suggesting that the Convention be broadcast "to make the people aware of the issues".¹³ Governor Macdonald was also intent on broadcasting the Convention proceedings, and requested the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland to do this.¹⁴ But the BCN's board of governors thought that Macdonald's intervention would infringe on their autonomous control of the network, and they replied that they would only comply with a direct order from the government. Fearing a confrontation which would reveal his hand, Governor Macdonald met with the BCN Chairman, George Williams, and they arranged for the Convention Chairman Justice Cyril Fox to write the

⁹ *Protocol*, Vol 4 (May-June 1946): 1-2, and Robert H. Cuff, "W. Irving Fogwill", *ENL* I, p. 242.

¹⁰ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 21 November 1991.

¹¹ See Horwood, *Joey*, p. 103, and Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 75. Both writers disagree over who was in the inner group, and who and how many the "Bolsheviks" were.

¹² VONF was supervised by the Board of Governors of the Broadcast Corporation of Newfoundland, which answered to the Commissioner of Finance.

¹³ Webb, "Convention", pp. 62-3.

¹⁴ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 48.

governors requesting that the proceedings be broadcast.¹⁵ According to Jamieson, the BCN was thus "responding to the Convention Chairman rather than to the government".¹⁶ According to Webb, the effect of the broadcasting of the Convention was tremendous, and gave the clear opportunity to Smallwood, who was to dominate the Convention.¹⁷ The microphones re-appeared on 28 October in time for the first reports of the Convention's Forestry and Education committees. Smallwood was fortunate enough to have had one microphone placed just in front of him in the chamber,¹⁸ and according to Convention delegate Michael Harrington, Smallwood had prior knowledge of the return of the microphones.¹⁹ Smallwood later admitted that from the outset of the Convention he had closed his mind to all options but confederation,²⁰ and that "the only hope" from the beginning was to go over the delegates' heads "in a direct appeal to the Newfoundland people".²¹ This he proceeded to do, and he soon became Newfoundland's prophet of confederation.

Courtesy of the Dominions Office the Convention was furnished with an expert advisor on government, Professor Kenneth C. Wheare, a Fellow of All Souls' College,

¹⁵ Fox's aunt-in-law married former Prime Minister Sir E.P. Morris, whose brother was Judge Frank Morris. The author thanks Mr. David Fox for this information. Fox may have suggested that Morris write the letter in the first place.

¹⁶ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 48.

¹⁷ Webb, "Convention", p. 150. Webb notes that in 1945 there were 37,676 radios in Newfoundland, and that from anecdotal evidence these were unfailingly tuned in to the Convention proceedings each evening.

¹⁸ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 14.

¹⁹ Michael F. Harrington to the author, 16 July 1992; also see Harrington, "A Matter of Memory", *The Evening Telegram*, n.p., 5 April 1968.

²⁰ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Oxford, whose newly-published *Federal Government* became a favourite text on the topic.²² The Convention divided itself into a variety of committees which would make inquiries and report back to the larger body, and the chairman of each committee sat on a Steering Committee; among its members were Bradley and Peter Cashin. In early October 1946 the Committee held a secret meeting, at which Chairman Fox proposed that a delegation be sent to Ottawa to enquire about terms of union. Cashin opposed this, but Bradley thought it was a good idea. Bradley reported the idea to Smallwood, who had been itching for just the occasion for such publicity, and who on 25 October moved the resolution,²³ which was seconded by Gordon F. Higgins. At virtually at the same time, on 30 October, Mackenzie King in Ottawa agreed to receive a delegation should the Convention wish to send one.²⁴ In response to Smallwood's speech moving the resolution, which glorified the benefits of confederation, Cashin called Smallwood a Quisling and a Judas Iscariot, and Michael Harrington launched an acrimonious debate, challenging the correctness of sending delegations when the convention's primary task was to determine Newfoundland's self-sufficiency.²⁵ Harrington also charged Smallwood with bribery, accusing Smallwood of offering him a position on the Ottawa delegation in exchange for support for the motion.²⁶ If this was true, it would not be the first nor the last attempt by Smallwood to gain support through questionable means. Other opposition followed, including a dramatic address by Ken Brown, during which he charged that in his hand was a document which, if revealed, would convince the

²² Kenneth C. Wheare, *Federal Government* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946). Wheare had been advised by the Dominions Office not to encourage the Convention to look to Britain for financial assistance. See Webb, "Convention" p. 51.

²³ Webb, "Convention", p. 66.

²⁴ Blake, "WLMK's Attitude", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXII, No. 4, (Spring 1987): 29.

²⁵ Webb, "Convention", p. 67.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67, and Michael F. Harrington to the author, 16 July 1992.

Convention and Newfoundland to reject confederation.²⁷ At that moment Brown had a stroke, from which he never recovered, and the document was lost.²⁸ Even though Smallwood's motion was defeated on 5 November, it was significant, for it drew the support of Bradley, who openly declared his sympathies for the first time.²⁹ Smallwood's motion may have been judged "ill timed" by Wheare, writing to the Dominions Office, but like Wheare, Smallwood most likely knew of the Dominions Office's timetable for events in Newfoundland, which had to be again revised, and of Canadian willingness to meet a delegation. The Dominions Office was content to let events take their course in Newfoundland.³⁰

On 16 November the Convention's chairman, Mr. Justice Cyril Fox, died. Following this, the Steering Committee met and Cashin nominated Bradley,³¹ who was approved for the post after Wheare went to London³² and suggested Bradley because of his experience.³³ As Webb noted, perhaps the anti-confederates were glad to see the

²⁷ Bertram G. Riggs, "Kenneth McKenzie Brown", *ENL* I, p. 276.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

²⁹ Webb, "Convention", p. 67.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68 notes that the date for the referendum had to be pushed back from May to October 1947, while PRO DO 35/1344 contains a "Provisional Timetable", compiled in 1944, and indicates the original intention of having the referendum in October 1946.

³¹ Webb, "Convention", p. 70.

³² By the next summer the Dominion Office observed that Wheare had "taken much of the onus for "managing" and reporting on the National Convention off the shoulders of the Commission". His role seems to have been much more important than previously indicated. See PRO DO 35/1351, Commission Government - Official Comments on National Convention Proceedings.

³³ Webb, "Convention", p. 70. Also see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 337, "Memorandum by Second Political Division, 20 November 1946", which indicated that the Interdepartmental Committee on Canada-Newfoundland Relations observed that Fox was a Catholic and that a Catholic Chairman of the Convention would be desirable, but that Judge Dunfield, the best choice, was a Protestant, and that "his appointment might cause undesirable repercussions".

confederate Bradley removed from the immediacy of debate, but the confederates inside the Convention were perhaps just as pleased to see him take the chair. Debate was acrimonious, but Bradley was widely acknowledged as the most experienced member of the Convention, and for the time being he commanded the respect of all delegates.

The report of the Fisheries Committee, submitted in October, reflected the view of its chairman, Robert B. Job, that Newfoundland access to the American market should be considered in a *quid pro quo* for the 99-year leases granted to the American bases.³⁴ In January 1947 Job published *A Pamphlet on the idea of a "Partly Internationalized Newfoundland"*, and on 4 February he moved that the Convention investigate whether measures might be taken to improve economic relations between Newfoundland and the United States, as well as investigate the financial relationship of Newfoundland with the United Kingdom, and on what basis union with Canada might occur. Job's motion was indicative of the pro-American sentiments of many Newfoundlanders. But when a Convention committee approached the Commission to discuss the motion, the Commission ruled out the possibility of sending a delegation to the United States, noting that this was not within the terms of reference of the Convention.³⁵ Any mention of union with the United States was precisely what the Commission and the confederates wished to avoid. For the confederates, advocates of responsible government could be easily dismissed as wishing a return to the bitter past and "merchant rule", but advocates of economic union with the United States, making promises of more of the prosperity experienced after the arrival of the American bases, would be much harder to counter. A delegation to Washington was also a chance the Dominions Office was not willing to take. Late in February, the British Embassy in Washington was warned that if the

³⁴ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 290, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 30 September 1946.

³⁵ Webb, "Convention", p. 76.

sending of a delegation got past the governor, "the services of the Embassy should be invoked".³⁶ Job was approached to consider making a resolution that delegations be sent to London and Ottawa, but he refused. Bradley urged the Commission to permit a delegation to Washington, but it also refused.³⁷ As it turned out, the issue of economic union with the United States was to become the bane of the confederate campaign.

The combined effects of Smallwood's motion to send a delegation to Ottawa, Bradley's assumption of the chairmanship, and Job's motion, caused concern among a number of opponents of confederation outside the Convention, who became more strident. By mid-December a working group in favour of the restoration of responsible government was in existence,³⁸ and on 31 December J.C. Britton, the Canadian Trade Commissioner in St. John's, reported to R.A. MacKay that the group consisted of leading citizens like

Charles Hunt, the Ayres, Bairds, Bowings, MacPhersons of Royal Stores, Hickman, Ches Crosbie, Job, H.M.S. Lewin, David I. Jackman, President of the Mine workers Union at Bell Island; [and] Pierce Fudge, President of the Newfoundland Labourers Protective Union in Corner Brook.³⁹

A.M. Duffy, State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus for Newfoundland, also told Britton that he was taking an active part in the group, which was actively supported by all of Water Street (many of whom were the leading lights of Protestant Newfoundland), Archbishop Roche, and some other religious leaders.⁴⁰ Britton noted that presiding over

³⁶ PRO DO 35/3445, H.N. Tait, Dominions Office, London, to B. Cockram, Washington, 26 February 1947.

³⁷ Webb, "Convention", p. 77. By advocating a Washington delegation, Bradley may have wished to maintain an impression among the Convention delegates that he was open to all possibilities.

³⁸ This was reported to Washington by the U.S. Consul General to Newfoundland. See Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 292 and 413, footnote 85.

³⁹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Britton to MacKay, 31 December 1946.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

the tentative group was F.M. O'Leary, and that the group appeared to be the "final authority" with respect to Newfoundland affairs, but that he was unsure how they would be affected by a proposed "commission to enquire into profits and mark-ups".⁴¹

On 8 January J.S. Macdonald reported that in accordance with St. Laurent's instructions, he had met with Smallwood and Bradley on the evening of 7 January. They knew that the executive of the responsible government group had met the previous evening, and feared that the new group would soon sponsor a resolution in the Convention requesting that the restoration of responsible government be the only question put to the electorate.⁴² On 11 February, the first public meeting of what was to become the Responsible Government League (RGL) was held at the Newfoundland Hotel, its aim being to "secure Responsible Government for Newfoundland and encourage the people of Newfoundland to accept their full, personal, and collective responsibilities for the good government of our country".⁴³ The League declared itself to be "non-sectarian and of no party", but this may have been a deliberate attempt to dissociate the group from what not a few observers perceived as its liabilities: the fact that it was largely composed of merchants and St. John's businessmen, that at first many of its executive members were Roman Catholics, and that a Roman Catholic party would not be elected in Protestant districts.⁴⁴ F.M. O'Leary was elected President, J.T. Cheeseman was Vice-President, Joseph ("Jos") O'Driscoll was Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair. The

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 377-8, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 January 1947.

⁴³ Responsible Government League Papers, in the John G. Higgins Collection, Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, 3.01.002, Executive Committee Minutes 11.2.47-10.9.48, 11 February 1947. Future citations from Higgins' personal papers will be designated with his name, while Responsible Government League papers will be RGLP.

⁴⁴ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

remaining members of the League's executive were divided into a constitutional committee with members R.B.C. Mercer, R.S. Furlong, J.J. Maddigan, and W.R. Dwyer; a policy committee of members A.B. Perlin, Furlong, Professor Allan Fraser, and the Hon. J.S. Currie; a membership committee with members J. Tucker, B. Norris, and G. Bemister; and an information committee headed by O'Leary.⁴⁵ As one participant later wrote, the League was operated "like a well-run business", and "guided by gentlemanly principles of conduct and behaviour".⁴⁶ It was a civilized foil to Smallwood's "Bolsheviks", who kept the League on its toes.

Smallwood later told his outport audiences that the League was composed largely of the fishermen's enemies, the "Water Street Merchants". While this analysis was partially true and damaged the League's outport support, it was well known among the people of St. John's that a number of the League's members were former business associates and close friends of a number of confederates, and of Smallwood, the Barrelman and pig-farmer, in particular. All the members of the executive were well-connected - socially, politically, economically, and religiously. O'Leary was well-known as the sponsor of Smallwood's Barrelman programme, was a close friend of the archbishop, and a member of both the Terra Nova Council of the Knights of Columbus, and the Benevolent Irish Society. Cheeseman was a businessman and former MHA, and like O'Leary, O'Driscoll was a manufacturer's agent. Currie had been an MHA and owned *The Daily News*, which was edited by Perlin, who was married to Ches Crosbie's sister, Vera.⁴⁷ Perlin wrote the *Daily News*' "Wayfarer" column, and also edited the *Observer's Weekly*, both of which kept up a torrent of criticism against confederation.

⁴⁵ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Committee Minutes, 11 February 1947.

⁴⁶ Collins, "League outclassed", *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 36.

⁴⁷ See Albert B. Perlin, *A Clear Head In Tempestuous Times - Albert B. Perlin: The Wayfarer*, eds. Francis Hollohan and Melvin Baker (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1986), "Biography", p. 1.

Allan Fraser was a professor of history at Memorial University College. One of the most significant of all the members was R.S. Furlong, a well-known lawyer, the solicitor and an advisor of the archbishop, an aide-de-camp to Governor Macdonald, a governor of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, and Peter Cashin's second cousin, with whom he often had disagreements.⁴⁸ Through Cashin, Furlong was related to Justice Cyril Fox, the Convention's first chairman. Many members of the League were prominent businessmen, and were members of the Rotary and City clubs; the latter was known to lesser Water Street merchants as "The Skunk-Hole".⁴⁹ A number of League members, particularly O'Leary, Fraser, Furlong, O'Driscoll, and Cashin (who later joined the League), were of Irish Catholic extraction, had gone to the same schools, and advocated "home rule" or self-government for Newfoundland,⁵⁰ a slogan which they employed and which the confederates ruthlessly played upon in the referenda campaigns. Not surprisingly, the League was initially funded out of the pockets of executive members,⁵¹ but it later made successful appeals to many merchants through business and social connections.⁵²

The organization of the RGL was initially intended to be quite flexible, and it followed the practice of soliciting prospective members to join the executive if they were deemed appropriate. As a result the executive expanded almost continually. But at first,

⁴⁸ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992. Furlong was a classmate with Bishop John O'Neill at St. Bon's in 1921.

⁴⁹ Edward FitzGerald to author, 21 March 1989.

⁵⁰ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992; Bridle, *Documents*, p. 473, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 20 May 1947; and *ibid.*, p. 755; J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 10 December 1947.

⁵¹ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 21 November 1991.

⁵² For lists of donors and donations see RGLP3.01.015, Donors and Donations, Approximate Amounts Received For First Referendum By Both Parties (the RGL and the Economic Union Party), 4 pp.

the executive was largely comprised of members of the St. John's professional class, and this left the League open to the confederates' criticism that it was an elite merchants' party.⁵³ In mentality the League initially seemed bound by the divisions of town and outport, for at its second meeting it resolved to "send a letter to all outport members informing them of the League's progress"⁵⁴ (as opposed to actively soliciting their involvement), but it later overcame these obstacles, and with the publication of its constitution in early March it attempted to attract many members of various classes in Newfoundland outports and towns.

As well, there were external membership divisions which the League tried to minimize, but which caused considerable difficulty. Cashin, Crosbie, Hollett, and Harrington, the prime advocates of responsible government in the Convention, were not invited to join the League's executive until later in the campaigns. Consequently, what they said in the Convention and what the League said publicly were often two different things, and tended to reflect more of the latest scuttlebutt than a single party line when one was needed. Crosbie was a good friend of Smallwood, and Smallwood had encouraged him to run for election to the Convention.⁵⁵ For the duration of the Convention, and during the campaigns, Smallwood had a standing offer to Crosbie of the premiership in turn for supporting confederation.⁵⁶ Cashin, whose own behaviour in the Convention and outside was erratic and unpredictable, was looked upon with disdain by

⁵³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 481-2, MacKay to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 27 May 1947.

⁵⁴ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Committee Minutes, 6 May 1947.

⁵⁵ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 250.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

League members,⁵⁷ and a personality conflict between O'Leary and Cashin⁵⁸ seems to have kept the latter from being invited to join the League until late summer 1947. As well, Cashin did not see eye to eye with Furlong or Crosbie,⁵⁹ but personality clashes between Cashin and others were the rule, not the exception.⁶⁰ Crosbie was known to "enjoy a sleepless night of revelry",⁶¹ and Cashin and Hollett had problems with alcohol,⁶² and this would have kept them from favour until the League felt forced to deal with them.

Even with Cashin outside the League, it had more than its fair share of internal disagreements and strongly-held assumptions. At the 30 May 1947 meeting of the executive, R.S. Furlong tendered his resignation despite strenuous protests.⁶³ Furlong was a capable lawyer, and this was a strong blow to the RGL, which could ill-afford to let it happen. Furlong later noted that he disagreed with some of the methods, policies, and approaches taken by the executive in the summer of 1947, and thought them to be ineffective.⁶⁴ Harrington later claimed that he thought that the League's leaders had no

⁵⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 482, MacKay to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 27 May, 1947; Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 251.

⁵⁸ In January 1947 O'Leary commented to U.S. Consul General G.K. Donald that the League had "not got around to approaching" Cashin to join, and Donald later thought it "hardly ... plausible." See Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 292-293.

⁵⁹ Webb, "Convention", p. 86.

⁶⁰ It is also possible that the cantankerous Cashin may not have wished to join the League.

⁶¹ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 42.

⁶² The confederates later highlighted this in their campaigns. See Gregory J. Power, "The Sacred Cow is Sick", in *The Power of the Pen*, ed. Harold Horwood (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications Limited, 1989), pp. 36 and 38.

⁶³ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Committee Minutes, 30 May 1947.

⁶⁴ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 30 April 1992.

knowledge of politics,⁶⁵ but the League's ineffectuality seems to have been endemic. Before the Convention was announced, the individuals who became the RGL's executive had assumed that as a matter of principle, responsible government would be returned. Then when the Convention was established, the lawyer-dominated executive assumed that the Convention would run its course, and that "British Justice"⁶⁶ would prevail when the Convention disposed of the confederation movement. In a fit of self-assuredness, it committed the fatal error of remaining relatively silent while the Convention sat. It also had too many chiefs, who sat on the executive by invitation only, and very few indians.⁶⁷ Its assumptions and approach were perhaps best captured in the questions of one executive member: "Well, what were we to do? Get the garbagemen to run the League"?⁶⁸ As long as personality conflicts and disagreements dominated, and were exacerbated by the assumptions of what appeared to be an abandoned colonial elite which had previously run the country under responsible government, and still expected preferential treatment by the British, the League would continue to be ineffective. These problems continued for some months, and they crippled the campaign for responsible government when a comprehensive and cogent approach was most needed.

Following the demise of the Job motion, Smallwood intended to move that delegations visit the United Kingdom and Canada, before Malcolm Hollett could move that a delegation go to London. But Smallwood consulted J.S. Macdonald, and agreed to let Hollett make his motion first, and "to delete from his own all reference to the United Kingdom and to strike out [the] requirement that reports of both delegations" be

⁶⁵ Michael F. Harrington to the author, 16 July 1992.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

⁶⁸ From an unnamed executive member, as reported by R.S. Furlong to the author, 21 November 1991.

tabled simultaneously.⁶⁹ J.S. Macdonald was pleased, and observed that "we can now be assured [that the] matter is coming up for decision under the most favourable conditions that can be brought about in the circumstances".⁷⁰ On 26 February Hollett moved that the Convention send a delegation to London to enquire as to the financial prospects of continued British support for Newfoundland, and Smallwood proposed that a delegation be sent to Ottawa on the return of the London delegation, to investigate possible terms of union. Smallwood's motion provoked a storm of protest from the responsible government advocates, and especially Cashin, who railed against the confederates for giving the country away, the Commission for having been created by bribery, and Justice Harry Winter and Chief Justice Sir L. Edward Emerson for having been bribed to vote to suspend responsible government.⁷¹ But because the Convention was not a legislature and did not have parliamentary immunity, Cashin was charged with libel. In the ensuing trial, which was attended by many members of the Convention, he faced his cousin R.S. Furlong, counsel for the plaintiffs. For the three hours that the jury was out, Cashin noted that Smallwood himself "kept up his spirits with encouragement".⁷² The jury could not reach a unanimous verdict, and when neither side could agree whether to accept a majority verdict, the case was dismissed. A triumphant Cashin emerged from the Courthouse to a cheering crowd.⁷³ The trial was important, though, and Smallwood may have done well to encourage Cashin, for if Cashin had been curtailed in his speaking in the Convention, Smallwood might have been too. But

⁶⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 401, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 February 1947.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

⁷¹ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 298-9.

⁷² Peter J. Cashin, "My Fight for Responsible Government", *BNF*, p. 116.

⁷³ See Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 299, and Cashin, "My Fight", *BNF*, p. 115-6.

Smallwood kept up his friendship, counselling, and "assiduous cultivation" of Cashin, and made a number of attempts to convert him to confederation.⁷⁴

On 27 February Hollett's motion passed, and the next day so did Smallwood's. In April a motion was made by David I. "Nish" Jackman, the delegate for Bell Island and president of the Wabana Mine Workers' Union, that the Convention also send a delegation to the United States, but true to policy, the motion was eventually overruled by the Commission. Some officials in the Dominions Office were ambivalent about a London delegation,⁷⁵ but had suggested that it be accompanied by Commissioner Walsh, which it eventually was, and hoped that the same delegates would proceed to both London and Ottawa,⁷⁶ which the Convention decided against.⁷⁷ Instead, different members were elected to each delegation, and Bradley informed the Commission that the London delegation would go first.⁷⁸ While the London delegation was away, the rest of the Convention members prepared the committee reports.⁷⁹ On 21 March 1947, Smallwood wrote to get St. Laurent to impress upon the British that the London delegation had to return with "a clear cut official statement by the British Government

⁷⁴ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 251, and Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 15.

⁷⁵ For example see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 404, Memorandum of Second Political Division, wherein Clutterbuck voiced his qualms about a London Delegation, and also p. 406, Robertson (High Commissioner in Great Britain) to Lester B. Pearson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 11 March 1947, wherein Sir Eric Machtig was noted to be in favour of the move.

⁷⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 406, Robertson to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 11 March 1947.

⁷⁷ Webb, "Convention", p. 79, and PRO DO 35/3446/N4005/13, Dominions Office to Commission of Government, 7 March 1947.

⁷⁸ Webb, "Convention", p. 80. MacKay, Robertson and others in the Canadian government would have preferred to see an Ottawa delegation go first. See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 406-411.

⁷⁹ Webb, "Convention", p. 84.

of exactly what they are prepared to do for Newfoundland".⁸⁰ Otherwise, if a commitment were given to continue Commission of Government, it would win on a ballot.⁸¹ Smallwood noted that if the British government could not help Newfoundland, it would be doubtful whether the National Convention would recommend that Commission be placed on the ballot. In those circumstances, if the Ottawa delegation obtained satisfactory terms, Smallwood felt sure confederation would win against responsible government.⁸² In order to put confederation in the best possible light, the other options had to appear undesirable, and the worst scenario would be if the British indicated that they would countenance further financial support for Newfoundland. The trip to London would have to be a failure.

The London delegation included Cashin, Keough, Crosbie, Fudge, Hollett, Bradley as Chairman, and the governor and Walsh. Upon arrival in London, it received a lukewarm reception from the British, but began meetings on 29 March. Among other things, Lord Addison intimated that if three options were on the ballot paper and there was no majority in the referendum, there would be a run-off referendum.⁸³ Tempered by Bradley and Walsh, Cashin pressed Addison for a financial commitment to Newfoundland, but British policy was that Newfoundland should become a part of Canada, and not be a financial ward of the United Kingdom. Addison closed the meetings with a paternal "God bless you", Cashin responded with a characteristic "God help us!", Addison replied with a deft Oxbridge "God helps those who help themselves", and the

⁸⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 414, Smallwood to St. Laurent, 21 March 1947.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 414.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 415.

⁸³ Webb, "Convention", p. 90.

London delegation returned disappointed.⁸⁴ On 12 May, just before the delegation arrived home, London announced that if Commission of Government was abandoned, Newfoundland would receive no further financial assistance from the United Kingdom.

While Job's motion had been rejected, interest in economic union with the United States was growing, and did not go unnoticed by the Americans. In May, United States Consul G.K. Donald reported to Washington that he thought "a substantial majority of the people would vote for union with us",⁸⁵ and in June, the Convention delegate for Trinity North, Reuben Vardy, approached the American Consulate seeking a letter of introduction to anyone in the State Department who could discuss economic union between the United States and Newfoundland. Vardy was refused such a letter by the Consul, who argued that any such assistance would look like "the Department of State had been secretly negotiating with members of the Convention".⁸⁶ Vardy's request was not the first time America would be approached, nor did his letter occasion the only reply the Americans would give to requests for information from Newfoundland.

The Ottawa delegation, which included Smallwood, Rev. Lester Burry, Charles Ballam, Chairman F. Gordon Bradley, Gordon Higgins, P. Wellington Crummey, T.W.G. Ashbourne, and R.B. Job, did much more than the London delegation was able to, for the Canadians were well prepared. In April, Pickersgill wrote a memo to Mackenzie King, stressing his belief that "the whole future of Canada" depended on Newfoundland, and that its union with Canada would have a vital effect on Canada's

⁸⁴ See PRO DO 35/3448, Transcript of London Delegation meeting with Lord Addison.

⁸⁵ Bridle, "Canada, the US and Newfoundland, 1946-48", *International Perspectives*, (November-December 1983): 21.

⁸⁶ Cited in MacFenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 25.

"national outlook and national psychology".⁸⁷ "With Newfoundland in American hands", Pickersgill feverishly continued, "our international importance would be reduced; our responsibilities in world affairs would inevitably decline; and, with that decline, our voice in determining our national destiny".⁸⁸ On 30 May, Bradley and Smallwood met J.S. Macdonald in St. John's and requested as much favourable publicity as the Canadians could give, and in his report to Ottawa, Macdonald noted that Smallwood and Bradley recognized that the reply of the British government to the London delegation placed

...the projected campaign for Confederation under a tremendous handicap. They feel that it is now essential for them to delay the referendum and that, instead of trying to finish the discussions quickly and meet the timetable the Governor prefers, they should proceed with the discussions as leisurely as possible, adjourning from time to time to permit full exploration of particular subjects. They inform me that they will be assisted in this procedure by the fact that a number of influential members of the Convention, having private business interests to attend to during the summer, are not at all anxious to have it reconvene in the middle of July or August. The general objective would be, without appearing to do so, to postpone the referendum till next year.⁸⁹

Prior to leaving for Ottawa, Bradley told the Convention that the delegation intended to return within two weeks,⁹⁰ but this was clearly a ploy, for the confederates had every intention of getting "all terms but minor details", which indeed they did, and of having the referendum at their preferred time.⁹¹ Soon after the meeting, J.S. Macdonald told Mackenzie King that he and the confederates hoped to "...manoeuvre things so as not to

⁸⁷ J.W. Pickersgill to Mackenzie King, 25 April 1947, cited in Bridle, *Letters to the Editor, International Perspectives*, (September-October 1984): 31.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 484, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 30 May 1947.

⁹⁰ Webb, "Convention", p. 93.

⁹¹ The Dominions Office also concluded that Bradley and Smallwood wanted to delay the referendum until the spring of 1948. See PRO DO 35/3447, British High Commissioner in Canada to Commonwealth Relations Office, 4 July 1948.

make their recommendations to the British Government until October, when it will be too late to have a referendum this year, and it might come some time next year".⁹² By early the next month Sir Alexander Clutterbuck had been influenced by King to think the same way, and the British tacitly approved of the Ottawa Delegation staying the summer and delaying the referendum.⁹³

Arriving in Ottawa on 24 June, the Newfoundlanders received a warm reception. They stayed not for the promised two weeks, but for the summer. With the Canadians they divided themselves into eleven committees, with Smallwood as a member of all,⁹⁴ and they proceeded towards negotiating draft terms of union.⁹⁵ While the Canadians at first did not wish to negotiate terms, they assisted the confederates as much as they could, and the Interdepartmental Committee on Canada-Newfoundland Relations provided the delegation with much useful information.⁹⁶ But according to Jeff Webb, the confederates in the Newfoundland delegation pressed the Canadians, who got the impression that the Newfoundlanders were "spinning out their time" in Ottawa, and in late July, work finally began on preparing terms.⁹⁷ For their part the British gave every

⁹² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 519-20, extract from *The Mackenzie King Record*.

⁹³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 553, E. Reid to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 July 1947, Memorandum of Conversation With Sir Alexander Clutterbuck on July 4th.

⁹⁴ Alec G. Stacey, "1000 Days That Changed Our Destiny", *BNF*, p. 135.

⁹⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 571-2, text of telegram to Bradley sent 16 July 1947, enclosed in Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland to External Affairs, 17 July 1947, and Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", pp. 43-6.

⁹⁶ For examples of the information this committee had been collecting since late 1946 see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 392 and ff.

⁹⁷ See Webb, "Convention", p. 94, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 560, E. Reid to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 July 1947, in which Reid noted that the Newfoundlanders had to that time only been asking tentative questions.

encouragement to the Canadians to be as "concrete as possible" in the terms of union offered.⁹⁸

Even though work proceeded in Ottawa, the confederates and Canadians met considerable difficulties. Higgins and Crummey, the responsible government delegates, were displeased by the length of time the delegation was spending in Ottawa, and thought that the confederates were attempting to get a set of terms they could "railroad" through the Convention.⁹⁹ Throughout the summer Higgins was in contact with his law partner Charles Hunt, who on 20 June became a member of the R.C.L.¹⁰⁰ But Higgins seems to have been much less convinced about the merits of self-rule. He was castigated in mid July by Convention members back in Newfoundland, who were upset at the "bartering" going on in Ottawa, and who threatened wrath unless the delegation came home.¹⁰¹ In response, Higgins told one of the Ottawa secretaries, Miss Muriel Mosley, that he and Crummey wished to see the conference adjourn, and asked her advice on how this should be done. The matter was quickly brought to the attention of Pearson and then Bradley,¹⁰² who encouraged Higgins to stay the path. Apparently approving of the negotiations, Higgins agreed to stay. The next day, Bradley also received communications from Convention members in Newfoundland demanding that the delegation return home, and claiming that Governor Macdonald would hold the Ottawa delegation responsible if an effort were being made "to deprive the country of a

⁹⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 404-5, "Memorandum on Conversation with Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, by P.A. Bridle, 8 March 1947."

⁹⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 570, Bridle to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 16 July 1947.

¹⁰⁰ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 20 June 1947.

¹⁰¹ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 570-1, Bridle to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 16 July 1947.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 570.

referendum this fall".¹⁰³ Bradley contacted Macdonald for confirmation of this,¹⁰⁴ but Macdonald denied having made the statement, and emphasized his wish to remain neutral in the matter.¹⁰⁵ As well, the negotiations were made politically difficult for the Canadians by agitation from Premiers Duplessis and Macdonald of Quebec and Nova Scotia, who pressed for a reopening of the Labrador Boundary dispute and a say in the Ottawa deliberations.¹⁰⁶ The delegation's stay in Ottawa was also lengthened by the death of Fisheries Minister Frank Bridges of New Brunswick. Fearing the political implications of negotiating without full Maritime cabinet representation, the Canadians called and concluded a fall by-election in New Brunswick before sending a proposed terms of union to Newfoundland.¹⁰⁷

During the meetings in Ottawa, discussions were held concerning education and divorce, about which the confederates knew Archbishop Roche and the Roman Catholic Church would be concerned. To his "disgust" Smallwood discovered that Gordon Higgins, as the "prominent and respected" Catholic member of the delegation, had not called on Roche before he left for Ottawa.¹⁰⁸ In an attempt to circumvent Roche's

¹⁰³ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 571-2, Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 July 1947.

¹⁰⁴ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 572, "Memorandum from High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 July 1947."

¹⁰⁵ See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 577-8, "Memorandum from High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 18 July 1947."

¹⁰⁶ According to Paul Bridle, Mackenzie King seems to have been constantly concerned "about the effect on the Maritime Provinces of Newfoundland's entry on terms that would satisfy it." See Bridle, Letters to the Editor, *International Perspectives*, (September-October 1984): 31.

¹⁰⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 621, extract from the Mackenzie King Record; and Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 307.

¹⁰⁸ This may have occurred because Higgins was not an intimate friend of Roche's, and the latter was "not an admirer" of Higgins (Robert S. Furlong to the author, 21 November 1991).

opposition, make up for Higgins' shortcomings, and get re-assurances from Canadian churchman that confederation would not be harmful to Catholics, Smallwood had Bradley meet with Apostolic Delegate Antonutti to ask for his opinion on the issues.¹⁰⁹ Apparently unaware of (or unconcerned about) Roche's desire to see the *status quo* maintained, Antonutti warmly welcomed Bradley and told him that divorce would not be a problem (even though it was in Newfoundland, because the Church had always opposed divorce legislation), but that the Church would be concerned with the financing of Catholic schools.¹¹⁰ Bradley emerged from the meeting delighted, and told Smallwood that Antonutti, "though a Roman Catholic and an Italian at that", had completely placed him at ease.¹¹¹

The Convention's decision to send a delegation to Canada had caused great concern among the advocates of responsible government, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, that "underhanded methods" were being used to further the cause of confederation. As a result, both the Church and the anti-confederates increased their own political activity. On 24 June Archbishop Roche celebrated his fiftieth anniversary as a priest, an event which drew considerable public attention to the Church and its leadership. Neither Roche's anniversary nor the constitutional issue escaped the notice of Smallwood's Montreal friend Ewart Young. His July *Atlantic Guardian* featured a photo of Roche on its front cover with the caption "What Would Confederation Mean to Newfoundland", and the smaller caption "His Grace Archbishop Roche Fifty Years of

¹⁰⁹ Smallwood later noted that Bradley "was a vigorous Protestant" and a former Grand Master of the Loyal Orange Lodge of Newfoundland, with "a strong antipathy to any possibility of domination of Newfoundland by the Roman Catholic Church." See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 307.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 307-8.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

Devoted Service".¹¹² Young's cover, while perhaps unintentionally mixing matters of Church and State, was a harbinger of things to come.

During the summer, the RGL approached the Church through F.M. O'Leary, encouraging it to comment on confederation.¹¹³ On 20 July 1947, a written address from Archbishop Roche was read by Archbishop Flynn to a reunion breakfast of the St. Bonaventure's College Old Boys' Alumni Club. Roche suggested that the youth of the country should awaken from their apathy, which had been caused by growing up in an "undemocratic atmosphere", in order to avert a "national disaster". He saw the youth as "the trustees for posterity in a sense that no previous generation could claim to be", and stated that "the fate of Newfoundland will be irrevocably determined for weal or woe in the very near future".¹¹⁴ The July-August issue of *The Monitor* reprinted Roche's address, and reflected on the Convention and the delegations, which many felt should never have occurred, and on Bradley and Smallwood's characterization of Newfoundland life in terms of class division. Referring to the confederation campaign and the propaganda being spread about, it said that

It would surely be the supreme tragedy of our history, if by apathy, indifference, lack of enlightened leadership, or the influence of sinister propaganda we were to alienate irrevocably the inheritance which was won for us by our patriotic forbears, which is a sacred heritage from the past.¹¹⁵

In seeming response to this, on 7 August, the British *Manchester Guardian* predicted that the Catholic vote would be "instructed" to vote for responsible government. Commissioner Albert Walsh, who was a Roman Catholic, also interpreted the address

¹¹² *Atlantic Guardian*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1947), front cover.

¹¹³ Frank O'Leary to the author, 12 May 1992, and William J. Ryan to the author, 13 September 1991.

¹¹⁴ The address was printed in the July-August issue of *The Monitor*, and may also be found in PAC MG 27 III B20, Vol. 58, 26 British Government, file 1.

¹¹⁵ *The Monitor*, July-August 1947, p. 1.

as anti-confederate, but J.C. Britton noted that Roche made no mention of how his listeners should vote, and that the archbishop was

...regarded as a diplomat of the highest order and, whatever his private views may be, [he was] unlikely to commit himself openly as favouring one form of Government. The letter has had quite wide circulation and as the Archbishop is held in such high regard by members of all denominations, his opinions carry considerable weight.¹¹⁶

Britton's appraisal was accurate, and even when the sectarian campaigns began, the archbishop carefully avoided telling anyone how to vote, even though all knew his views. Some members of the Catholic clergy, however, had no such reservations, and became personally active in the political campaigns.

By late July 1947 the League's executive had increased to 43 members.¹¹⁷ Of these, 19 out of 43 were from St. John's, and 26 out of 43 lived on the Avalon Peninsula. All were prominent in their communities, and the St. John's element was entirely comprised of members of the business and professional class. But publicly, the League was still an unknown quantity. It was also fighting a yet unknown enemy, for it lacked Smallwood and Bradley's advantage of inside knowledge, and co-operation with the British, Canadian, and Commission governments, who made policy, controlled the timing of political events, and the flow of information. The extent of the League's lack of influence may be measured by the fact that it was not until July that Gordon Macdonald saw cause to report the League's existence to Attlee, along with other routine political observations.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ PAC MG 27 III 520, Vol. 58, 26 British Government, file 1, Britton to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 August 1947.

¹¹⁷ Enclosed in Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 582-4, Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 July 1947.

¹¹⁸ Attlee Papers, Deposit 58, folios 101-2, Gordon Macdonald to Attlee, 28 July 1947. In the same letter, Macdonald also added a hopeful note that the "individuals favourable to Confederation with Canada are eagerly awaiting the return of the delegation from Ottawa."

In August the League sponsored more radio broadcasts and launched a public campaign. On 1 August, broadcasts began over commercial radio station VOCM for fifteen minutes on Saturday nights.¹¹⁹ Recognizing the importance of the role women played in society, on 11 August the League decided to sponsor a morning broadcast, a women's talk show, which would begin 10 September.¹²⁰ Its programmes featured a number of "Lady Speakers", often wives of League executive members,¹²¹ but which came to include women "more representative of the various classes and not of one group only".¹²² These programmes were audible only in St. John's and the northeast Avalon Peninsula, but when linked up with VONF and its repeater stations in an "island-wide hookup", the broadcasts may indeed have had some effect. On 5 August the Longshoremen's Protective Union in Botwood wrote A.B. Perlin, congratulating him on a fine recent broadcast, and pledging the Botwood LSPU's support.¹²³ Broadcasting gave the League a public presence, and brought its political message into over 37,000 radio sets around the island.¹²⁴

Interestingly enough, one criticism of the League's broadcasting on VONF provides an indication of one of the difficulties which plagued the League's executive. On 2 August the Managing Director and owner of radio station VOCM, Joseph L. Butler, wrote to Finance Commissioner R.L.M. James complaining that

¹¹⁹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 11 August 1947.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 18 August 1947.

¹²² RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 8 September 1947.

¹²³ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, September-December 1947, W. Thompson and F.H. Antle to Perlin, 5 August 1947.

¹²⁴ Webb, "Convention", p. 150.

The recent endorsement by some of the Governors of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, viz. Hon. J.S. Currie, R.S. Furlong, K.C., and C.E. Hunt, K.C., of a political programme for Newfoundland, prior to and in anticipation of the completion of the National Convention of the work assigned to it, would suggest that the attitude of the B.C.N. during the coming referendum may not be entirely free and unbiased. In these circumstances, a powerful and free and independent station, which VOCM has demonstrated itself to be since its inception, may be considered a must if a full and intelligent educational campaign is to be permitted.¹²⁵

In addition to being governors of the BCN, Currie, Furlong, and Hunt were leading members of the RGL at the time of Butler's letter. Furlong was also an aide-de-camp at Government House. The BCN and the RGL had very different attitudes on the return of self-government: the League endorsed it, but the BCN's VONF was the censored information organ of the Commission, which had confederation as its goal, and provided the radio platform for Smallwood to lead the movement. Butler's letter illustrates one of the brilliant tactics of the Commission. What better way to help the confederates than to keep three of the best leaders of the RGL as governors of the BCN, requiring their public silence on political issues, lest a conflict of interest be perceived? Significantly, because of who its executive members were, and how their loyalties were kept divided by the Commission, the League may have been prevented from being as effective as it could have become.

In August the League attempted to gain more momentum with its pamphlet "The Case For Responsible Government",¹²⁶ but for this it came under harsh criticism from within. M.F. Blackmore, the publisher of *The Grand Falls Advertiser*, accepted a directorship on the League's executive, but scathingly observed that "the League, as at

¹²⁵ W.F. Galgay Papers, Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, file # 18, Correspondence 1947, J.L. Butler to Hon. R.L.M. James, Commissioner for Finance, 2 August 1947, enclosed memorandum, p. 4.

¹²⁶ The pamphlet was published on 21 July (see Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 316); for extracts from it see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 584 and ff.

present set up, lacks the force, drive, energy and colour, if you like, necessary to accomplish anything at all.... It should proceed like a steam-roller instead of the kitten it resembles at present".¹²⁷ The pamphlet, Blackmore complained, "should have the signature of every lawyer in St. John's and every doctor and businessman throughout the country, who favours the return of Responsible Government". And even at that, the pamphlet

...does not tell half the story.... It glides over the surface and evades the real root of the whole issue--the monstrous fraud that has been and is being perpetrated against the Newfoundland people.... it has adopted the wrong attitude and takes the wrong line of attack: it addresses the people as if they had something to do with the helpless position, and state of political ignorance, in which they now find themselves. And instead of attacking the conspirators whom it knows to exist, and exposing their trickery,... the League...hopes, without denouncing the wrong-doers from start to finish, to persuade the people to avoid the danger. ...the British Government let a generation grow up in political ignorance. But [the League] makes no attempt to stress the seriousness, the injustice, the scandal outrage of this act on Britain's part.¹²⁸

The League was thus condemned as weak and ineffectual when it should have been fighting not the attitudes of Newfoundlanders, but British manipulation of the Newfoundland constitutional situation. The League's failure to deal effectively with this manipulation was its greatest deficiency.

The League needed management and policy direction, and in September, Wickford Collins arrived as a paid full-time secretary,¹²⁹ replacing Herbert B. Morgan, who left for England to take up a Rhodes Scholarship.¹³⁰ In August, there seems to

¹²⁷ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, M.F. Blackmore to O'Leary, 21 August 1947.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 11 August 1947.

¹³⁰ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 15 September 1947, and 3.01.020, Collins to H.B. Morgan, 29 December 1947.

have been a movement towards bridging the gap between the League and responsible government supporters in the Convention. Executive member Edmund J. Phelan proposed that the League invite Cashin to join - which must have taken some convincing of F.M. O'Leary by Phelan - and at its 8 September meeting, A.B. Perlin reported that Cashin "would co-operate".¹³¹ At the same meeting Phelan proposed that the League make a "clear-cut statement of its policy on constructive lines so that there should be no misunderstanding as to the future aims of the League".¹³² It was noted that the League had the support of many people, but that many others had reservations as to what would happen if responsible government were restored. "Will the League then retire from the political field", asked Phelan, "or will it produce a platform of financial, moral, and physical advancement towards a happier way of life for the common man"?¹³³ To solve this problem, Malcolm Hollett, another new executive member, was set the task of drafting a policy and tactics statement. In an early draft he noted that the League's main objectives were to condemn the constitutional impropriety of the process in which Newfoundland was engaged, to ensure close co-operation with the R.G. members in the Convention, and ensure that confederation be defeated in the Convention.¹³⁴ The plan also called for attention to be called to the fact that Canadian taxes would be stifling. Hollett also suggested that the League strike a committee, with members from the National Convention, to plan the "form which a Responsible Government is to take", and to discuss reform of the political system.¹³⁵

¹³¹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 8 September 1947.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ RGLP 3.01.004, Policy, Aims, Tactics, "Some Thoughts on a Plan of Action Relative to a Campaign for Responsible Government," (no date), p. 1.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

At the 15 September meeting, the League established press, radio, and other committees to deal with Hollet's recommendations, but one of the best opportunities of its existence was missed. O'Leary raised a question from the absent R.S. Furlong for the League's consideration. Furlong suggested that the League obtain a legal opinion "as to the legality of the Dominions Office inserting Confederation on the ballot paper, if it receives a minority vote in the Convention".¹³⁶ Without a second thought, the League casually decided to "leave the matter until the time of the Referendum".¹³⁷ Whether Furlong, in his capacity as an aide-de-camp at Government House, had heard any rumours of Dominions Office intentions remains a question. But when the League decided to ignore the possibility, it was a decision it would regret bitterly. In many ways, it was yet another missed opportunity.

The League continued its radio broadcasts through the fall, with speakers like A.B. Perlin, Wick Collins, J.T. Cheeseman, and Mrs. Frances Holmes, but Canadian High Commissioner J.S. Macdonald reported that

The League is considered a moribund organization with little hope of influencing the electorate either one way or the other. The speeches have all lacked fire and the speakers themselves, as well as the sponsors of the League - all leading citizens in the community - suffer from the handicap that they have avoided committing themselves to either taking an active part in politics or running for office in the event of the restoration of Responsible Government.¹³⁸

The League's refusal to become a political party, perhaps a psychological remnant of the political troubles of the 1930s, effectively emasculated it when it could have been most effective: while the confederates were in Ottawa. In fact, this was recognized by A.E.L.

¹³⁶ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 15 September 1947. Furlong seems to have been in an awkward position to do this himself and go public with it, for impartiality was expected from him in his roles as a governor of BCN, an aide-de-camp at Government House, and as solicitor to the archbishop.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 722-3, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 7 November 1947.

Cannon, the Acting Canadian High Commissioner, who commented that he doubted whether the League would "ever take an active part in politics, as its leaders shy away from the thought of active participation in public affairs".¹³⁹ When the Convention resumed, the confederates had gotten proposed terms, and made much political capital on the social and business character of the League's leadership. Even though the RGL subscribed to the Canadian Press clipping service, and solicited financial information from the governments of all Canadian provinces,¹⁴⁰ it had fallen behind in the battle because of a lack of information, organization, and ruthlessness, and never regained its opportunity.

By September 1947, the Commission of Government wished to have more information on political opinion around Newfoundland, so it requested its magistrates outside St. John's to begin assessing public opinion on confederation, and instructed Chief Ranger E.L. Martin to have the Newfoundland Ranger Force submit regular confidential reports on Newfoundlanders' "attitudes towards various forms of government".¹⁴¹ Even in late 1947, the public attitude towards politics was quite ambivalent outside of St. John's, and not a few residents listened to the National Convention for entertainment rather than for information.¹⁴² The rangers were perhaps not an unbiased source of information, for some feared the loss of their jobs if Commission of Government was eliminated, but one of their most frequent observations

¹³⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 582, A.E.L. Cannon to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 July 1947.

¹⁴⁰ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins September-December 1947, Collins to Canadian Press, 17 September 1947; and various letters from Collins to provincial governments.

¹⁴¹ See Marilyn Tuck, "The Newfoundland Ranger Force, 1935-1950" (M.A. thesis, Memorial University, 1983), p. 99.

¹⁴² For example see Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (hereafter PANL) GN 38/S-2-5-2, C. Matthews, Englee, to Chief Ranger, 13 December 1947, wherein Matthews reported that "I would say that at the present time the Convention is equal to the programme of "Can You Top This" as far as laughs are concerned."

was that outport Newfoundlanders were illiterate and politically indifferent.¹⁴³ At this period, 15.52% of Newfoundlanders were illiterate, and illiteracy rose the farther one went from St. John's.¹⁴⁴ Smallwood later observed that

Our people had no notion at all of what Confederation was or what it meant. They had no conception of a federal system of government. Their only experience of government was what they had before the coming of the Commission system.¹⁴⁵

These characteristics were recognized and exploited by the confederates in their campaigns.

By the fall of 1947, the Commission of Government had accumulated a considerable amount of valuable political information. It had not only the Ranger reports, with their detailed information on the opinions of the Newfoundland electorate; it also had Magistrate Short's voters list, compiled for the election of the National Convention.¹⁴⁶ At the end of September, the League asked for a copy of the voters list, but on 30 September, the Secretary of the Commission, W.J. Carew, replied that the list would not be available to the League because an insufficient number of copies were on hand, and the present ones were being used to prepare for the referendum.¹⁴⁷ In order to create its own list, the RGL then resorted to canvassing its supporters in outlying

¹⁴³ Tuck, "Ranger Force," p. 102, and especially p. 113, footnote 23.

¹⁴⁴ See William Wartz, "A Methodological Consideration of Some Geographic Aspects of the Newfoundland Referendum on Confederation With Canada, 1948", *Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 6 (1955): 39-49. For illiteracy rates, taken from Wartz, in the various political districts of Newfoundland in 1948, see Appendix III.

¹⁴⁵ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 235.

¹⁴⁶ Webb, "Convention", p. 49.

¹⁴⁷ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, September-December 1947, Carew to Collins, 30 September 1947.

districts.¹⁴⁸ It is unknown whether the confederates asked for or got a list during that fall, but perhaps this point is insignificant. Unlike the League, the confederates had spent the fall profitably arranging matters in Ottawa and in the National Convention. When lists were required, theirs would be more than adequate.

When the National Convention met again on Friday 10 October, Smallwood tabled the "black books" of information on Canada (the proposed terms, the "grey books", were sent later), but Bradley faced a storm of criticism from the responsible government members who had demanded the return of the Ottawa delegation. From mid-September, Mackenzie King had known of a plan to oust Bradley as chairman, and to press for an immediate referendum on the return of responsible government.¹⁴⁹ Presumably Bradley was informed of this soon after it was known. Before the delegates could attack, he resigned and left the chamber. The Convention recessed in an uproar.¹⁵⁰ On Saturday morning, Bradley saw Governor Macdonald to tender his resignation.¹⁵¹ That evening the Commission met, and chose McEvoy to replace him. McEvoy was neither a judge (as the original statute required) nor an elected member of the Convention, but he was a pro-confederate,¹⁵² and the choice of the governor and

¹⁴⁸ For examples of this see 3.01.020, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, September-December 1947, Collins to E.P. Henley, 29 September 1947, and Fr. FitzGerald to Collins, undated.

¹⁴⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 631, J.C. Britton (Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland) to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 13 September 1947.

¹⁵⁰ Alec G. Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 135.

¹⁵¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 672, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 11 October 1947.

¹⁵² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 672, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 13 October 1947.

the confederates, who seem to have pressed for his appointment.¹⁵³ McEvoy was sworn in as Chairman on Monday morning, and on Wednesday 15 October the Convention resumed sitting.

Until the Canadian terms arrived, the Convention considered the remaining committee reports. On 16 October Cashin tabled the report of the Finance Committee which argued that Newfoundland could remain solvent. With this responsible government volley the Convention began to divide bitterly, and the political atmosphere soured. On 6 November the "grey book" arrived, outlining in twenty-three detailed sections the proposed terms of union.¹⁵⁴ Because Bradley's attendance at the Convention following his resignation had been sporadic because of illness, the next day McEvoy appointed Smallwood to lead the discussion,¹⁵⁵ and he proceeded methodically through them, term by term. Having the terms gave the confederates and Smallwood an outstanding advantage, for they were able to make campaign promises to the electorate and invoke a confederate imagery of the great wealth which would come to Newfoundland as a result of union. This was a device which the League could only attack, but not match. Cognizant that they desperately needed information about Canada, at the 12 November meeting it was suggested that J.S. Currie get the *Daily News'* Ottawa correspondent Gerald Waring, who had covered the Ottawa meetings, to send information or secure a source.¹⁵⁶ Perlin moved that liaisons be formed with the responsible government bloc

¹⁵³ See Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1561, Hon. C.D. Howe to Senator A.N. McLean, 29 March 1949, in which Howe reminds McLean that the confederates turned to McEvoy to head the Convention after Bradley resigned. Presumably, the Canadians were informed by the confederates that this was the case.

¹⁵⁴ Bridle delivered these to J.S. Macdonald for "transmission" to Governor Macdonald. See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 681, E. Reid to J.S. Macdonald, 3 November 1947.

¹⁵⁵ Webb, "Convention". p. 120.

¹⁵⁶ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 12 November 1947.

in the Convention, and in seconding this R.B. Mercer noted that "such a liaison should have been made earlier", but noted that this situation occurred at the advice of the Convention members.¹⁵⁷ Lacking information and alliances with Convention delegates, the League was powerless to counter the confederates' campaign, and by November the confederates were setting the agenda, and the constitutional debate became the confederation debate.

On 8 November, Premier Maurice Duplessis of Quebec denounced the proposed terms of union, questioning the right of the Canadian government to negotiate without consulting the provinces,¹⁵⁸ and on 29 November he repudiated the 1927 Privy Council Decision, asserting that Quebec owned Labrador.¹⁵⁹ This had been a persistent claim made by Quebec that fall,¹⁶⁰ and rumours of its interest in Labrador gave the advocates of responsible government, and particularly Cashin, a useful source of ammunition against the confederates. But beginning on 20 November, Smallwood effectively countered the Quebec threats with his elucidation of Canadian social services, family allowances, and old age pensions which would be available under confederation.¹⁶¹ The effect of Smallwood's promises was remarkable, and when these were coupled with a prediction of dire consequences should "Water Street" regain political control, more interest was stirred in confederation than through any other method.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 732, extract from telegram from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Ambassador in France.

¹⁵⁹ Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 135.

¹⁶⁰ On Quebec's interest in Labrador see PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, file: NF - Despatches and Memos, Bridle to External Affairs, 20 October 1947; *ibid.*, Britton to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 16 September 1947; and *The Daily News*, 16 September 1947.

¹⁶¹ See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 736-9, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 and 26 November 1947.

Soon after the Ottawa delegation returned, Smallwood informed J.S. Macdonald that he had discussed the draft terms on education and divorce with the leaders of the Anglican and United Churches, and the Salvation Army, all of whom had no objection to the wording. Smallwood sent Higgins to the archbishop's palace with the proposed terms, but later noted that Roche did not receive Higgins.¹⁶² In fact, Roche was out of town, and Higgins left the terms with Roche's secretary, Fr. O'Mara.¹⁶³ While Higgins had been quite concerned while in Ottawa to press the point that Catholics expected a Canadian undertaking that under confederation, Newfoundland courts would not be able to grant divorces,¹⁶⁴ Higgins made little issue of it that fall, and no special clause on divorce was drafted or included in the terms.¹⁶⁵ If Roche or Higgins contacted each other afterwards, no record of this exists. They made no further representations to the Canadians, and later that fall when J.S. Macdonald reported that Chief Justice Sir Edward Emerson, a Catholic, remarked that he thought that the Canadian terms were excellent, and that he "saw no need for any particular safeguard on the question of divorce",¹⁶⁶ the issue seems to have died. As a result, no provision was made for divorce in the final terms.¹⁶⁷ A year later, Bishop John M. O'Neill addressed the Catholic Women's League of Windsor, Ontario, and explained that the Church had apprehensions over confederation because with union, it would not be long before a "two-to-one Protestant majority" would "demand and get a Provincial law legalizing

¹⁶² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 309.

¹⁶³ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 675-6, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 October 1947.

¹⁶⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 675-6, footnote 168, "Memorandum of MacKay to J.R. Baldwin, 30 September 1947."

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 675-6, footnote 168.

¹⁶⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 733, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 8 November 1947.

¹⁶⁷ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 308.

divorce in Newfoundland".¹⁶⁸ As well, mixed Catholic-Protestant marriages would present problems in passing on the faith, immoral literature would flood into Newfoundland, and union would bring untold wealth and secularism into the island and create "a new environment where pleasure was unlimited and joy unconfined".¹⁶⁹ For their part, some Newfoundland Catholics also keenly felt that Canada was a Protestant nation, and would not understand either their history or culture, in which their Church played a pivotal role.¹⁷⁰

In November, *The Monitor* continued its campaign against confederation. In "Newfoundland at the Parting of the Ways", it adopted the arguments of the Responsible Government League. Its tone was nationalistic, and it exhorted Catholics to "...consider what is best for the country...", and recognize that "...there has grown up with us during the past four and a half centuries a simple God-fearing way of life which our forebearers have handed down to us and which we must pass on untarnished to posterity".¹⁷¹ The only proper group to consider confederation was an elected Newfoundland parliament, and *The Monitor* noted that

...a referendum may very often bring about the results desired by the promoters of it and may not actually represent the real view of the voter. This notorious fact has been highlighted too often in recent years for us to accept a referendum as being a truly worthwhile test of public opinion.¹⁷²

The next month *The Monitor* warned that Confederation was irrevocable, and that "a great deal of the information upon which the so-called "terms" are based is at best well-

¹⁶⁸ *The Evening Telegram*, 13 October 1949, p. 3.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Edward FitzGerald to the author, 21 March 1989.

¹⁷¹ *The Monitor*, November 1947, p. 1.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 1. Possibly *The Monitor* was referring to the National Convention elections, and the subsequent domination of that body by the confederates.

informed guess-work, and the danger of a hasty decision becomes apparent".¹⁷³ Reflecting concerns of the Cold War world, by its late 1947 issues *The Monitor* also began to print brief articles from the United States press dealing with Communism and the dangers of its advancement. To the politically-attuned in Newfoundland, though, this was a preliminary warning about associating with anyone of socialist tendencies, especially Smallwood's "Bolsheviks", whose "communistic methods" were later condemned by both the RGL and the Church.

On 9 December, R.A. MacKay sent a telegram to St. John's instructing J.S. Macdonald to refer the Convention's requests for information on Canada to answers in available sources before referring to Ottawa, because many of the Convention's questions were "tententious" and involved matters of Canadian policy and procedure.¹⁷⁴ "This would leave the Convention members to dig up the information and interpret it as they see fit", remarked MacKay, and he concluded that "Delay might be the best solution".¹⁷⁵ This had been a successful tactic when the Commission had denied the RGL the voters lists, but the next day Macdonald replied that if laconic replies were given, he feared that the "Home Rule" element might feel strong enough to express concerns that Newfoundland was being asked to make an irrevocable decision for confederation on the basis of insufficient information.¹⁷⁶ Macdonald's observations were perceptive, for the RGL and the Church later made these claims, but he perhaps overestimated the strength of the League. The RGL's campaign was not as active as was Smallwood's, and dissatisfaction with the League was growing among some who desired the return of self government.

¹⁷³ *The Monitor*, December 1947, p. 10.

¹⁷⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 752, MacKay to J.S. Macdonald, 9 December 1947.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 752.

¹⁷⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 755, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 10 December 1947.

Capitalising on the lacklustre performance of the League, and fearing the confederate propaganda machine, a new political movement emerged on 25 November. On that day, a series of advertisements began in *The Daily News*, announcing the imminent formation of the "Union with America Party".¹⁷⁷ Demanding American terms and claiming allegiance to the American Republican Party, the advertisement noted that "15 local leaders with 112 group heads in various Newfoundland outports are now forming plans", and provided a post office box address to which prospective members could write.¹⁷⁸ James Halley, who had become McEvoy's law partner, later noted that he thought economic union with America would be good after responsible government were returned, but because McEvoy was a confederate, he secretly ran and paid for the first "Union with America" newspaper ads out of his own funds.¹⁷⁹ He then approached Geoff Stirling, the young pro-American owner of the St. John's *Sunday Herald*,¹⁸⁰ suggesting that a party for economic union be formed. This proposal was not acted upon until the close of the National Convention, but the ads continued, and in the New Year they even drew the attention of Attlee's Private Secretary, T.J. O'Brien, who commented that "The party front put up by the Union with America Party reads like an ad for Coca-Cola".¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 740, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 November 1947, enclosure; also see Neary, *North Atlantic World*, pp. 317 and 418, footnote 25, and *The Daily News*, 25 November 1947, p. 5.

¹⁷⁸ *The Daily News*, 25 November 1947, p. 5.

¹⁷⁹ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992, and Walsh, *More Than a Poor Majority*, p. 193.

¹⁸⁰ Stirling's family owned the Stirling Restaurant on Water Street, and he had been a student at the University of Tampa in Florida, where he was a correspondent for both *Time* and *The Chicago Tribune*. He returned to St. John's where in May 1946 he started the gossip-filled, lucrative *The Sunday Herald*.

¹⁸¹ PRO DO 35/3487, T.J. O'Brien to United Kingdom Embassy in Washington, 26 January 1948.

When the Convention rose on 13 December 1947 for Christmas, J.S. Macdonald informed St. Laurent that bickering had broken out over procedure, but thought that this behaviour was useful, noting that "Newfoundland is accustomed to violent, personal abuse of the kind common in Canadian politics half a century ago and such attacks still appear to be good tactics here".¹⁸² Just before adjournment, Cashin and several other delegates damaged the cause of the "Home Rule" group and added to the credibility of the confederates when they left the chamber in disgust over not having had the last word.¹⁸³ Whenever any attacks or slights were made to the confederates, Smallwood the broadcaster provided a play-by-play to the electorate over VONF, and the confederate cause was furthered.

But the cause of responsible government was not dead. The day before the Convention adjourned, J.S. Macdonald had lunch with the Honourable Harold Mitchell, a business partner of H.M.S. Lewin, the General Manager of the Bonavater's Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Mills in Corner Brook. In confidence, Macdonald was told of Lewin's plans to oppose confederation.¹⁸⁴ Lewin, who "ran Corner Brook, and virtually everything and everyone in it",¹⁸⁵ had hired a Canadian firm to study the proposed terms of union, and planned to have it printed in the paper company's *The Western Star*,¹⁸⁶ which was edited by F. Burnham Gill, a nominal member of the RGL

¹⁸² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 759, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 13 December 1947.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 760, and pp. 761-2, "Memorandum by Second Political Division."

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 760-1.

¹⁸⁵ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 95.

¹⁸⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 761, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 13 December 1947.

executive.¹⁸⁷ Like Bowater's, the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company ran a paper mill in Grand Falls, and it also stood to lose money if taxes and stumpage fees were imposed under confederation. The AND Company kept Grand Falls in rein as a "small British town," and combined with the efforts of *The Grand Falls Advertiser*, and the anti-confederate views of the Roman Catholic Church there, many Grand Falls residents were convinced of the dangers of confederation.¹⁸⁸ The same situation may have prevailed in the company towns of Bell Island, where the Dominion Steel Corporation mined iron ore, and in Buchans, where the American Smelting and Refining Company mined copper, lead and zinc. Fearing Canadian taxes and regulations, the maintenance of the *status quo* or a return to responsible government was better for business than confederation.

While Lewin was becoming active in the campaign, the RGL intensified its quiet activities during the late fall and into the Christmas season, still cautiously surveying the field. At the 16 December executive meeting, a policy change was evidenced when a committee of the League was directed to approach C.E. Hunt, C.C. Pratt, Raymond Gushue, Sir Leonard Outerbridge, and Edgar Hickman and request that they publicly lead a political party under responsible government.¹⁸⁹ However, the response only netted members, not leaders, and the League decided to abandon the idea.¹⁹⁰ On 19 December, corresponding with the League's agent in Gander, American Overseas Airlines manager Ted Henley, Collins noted that F.M. O'Leary thought "it would be

¹⁸⁷ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence Collins/O'Leary, September-December 1947, B. Gill to O'Leary, 12 December 1947. The report by the Montreal firm McDonald, Currie and Company was published in *The Western Star* in the late spring of 1948.

¹⁸⁸ Mrs. Teresa Kennedy to the author, 9 February 1991.

¹⁸⁹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 16 December 1947.

¹⁹⁰ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 30 December 1947.

fatal to tackle Smallwood" in public "and lose out through lack of information". Smallwood had

...about a three (3) years head start on us, and is fully prepared with the most detailed information to speak in public. I personally feel that when we are ready we will be able to give him a good roasting over the air, on the hustings, or any where we meet him or his associates. It is a bit binding to have to sit back, and watch him sweep all before him, but our turn will come, and I hope it comes soon.¹⁹¹

In the most honest appraisal of the political situation to date, at the end of the month Collins commented on the progress of the campaign:

Reports from the outport districts would indicate that Confederation is high liner at the moment, with Commission Government second in the field. A great deal of bitterness has been stirred up against Responsible Government by the use of class hatred against the merchant classes. Our radio talks and pamphlet have been in the nature of academic discussion, on our political affairs. However we know our weak points and are well prepared to put on a first class show in 1948. We have six months to go before the Referendum, which is a long time to maintain an active political campaign.

A new party has come into the field, known as "The Union with America Party". The leaders are unknown, as also the strength of their movement. They will without [sic] doubt cause that much more confusion in the minds of people.

I am quite optimistic about the future and feel that the six months ahead of us will allow us time to put the true facts before the people. We realise that we have a hard fight ahead of us, but I am certain that our efforts will be crowned with success.¹⁹²

The League was obviously feeling the effects of Smallwood's anti-merchant propaganda. But its members did not see that the arrival of the Union with America Party was a sign of its own inadequacies, even though it recognized that confusion was beginning to become the hallmark of the campaign. By early 1948 many outport Newfoundlanders had

¹⁹¹ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence Collins/O'Leary, September-December 1947, Collins to Henley, 19 December 1947.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, Collins to H.B. Morgan, 29 December 1947.

come to favour either the continuation of Commission, or confederation with Canada,¹⁹³ and responsible government was becoming a hard sell. As C.J. Burchell told R.A. MacKay in Ottawa, "The Responsible government people" were "up against a stone wall, and it is probable that their effort from here on will be to retain as much popular support as possible with an eye on post-Confederation political campaigns".¹⁹⁴

The 1 January 1948 levee at Canada House in St. John's saw visitors greet the New Year with the congenial toast of "Canada Ever, Confederation Never",¹⁹⁵ yet four days later when the Convention re-opened, the acrimonious debate continued. The feisty Smallwood challenged responsible government delegate Pierce Fudge to a showdown outside the chamber, but Fudge was verbally reprimanded by the chairman before both men could leave.¹⁹⁶ The confederates subsequently mocked Fudge, a large man, as "Fierce Fudge", even though Smallwood later claimed that Fudge was one of his friends.¹⁹⁷ Smallwood was also reprimanded by the chairman for repeating himself, whereupon he told Convention members that he was not speaking to them, but rather to the people of Newfoundland.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ See PANL GN 38/S-2-5-2, C. Matthews to Chief Ranger, 20 January 1948, wherein Matthews related that while one man in Englee had to "turn off his radio every time he hears Mr. SMALLWOOD or one of his associates speak of Confederation because he was afraid he would unconsciously find that he had broken it into a thousand pieces"; "last week practically the whole population of... [Roddickton] was in favour of Confederation with CANADA."

¹⁹⁴ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-50, Burchell to MacKay, 5 January 1948.

¹⁹⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 789, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 January 1948.

¹⁹⁶ Webb, "Convention", p. 127.

¹⁹⁷ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 11.

¹⁹⁸ Webb, "Convention", p. 124.

Speaking in response to Smallwood's campaign, Cashin blasted confederation on the grounds of the devastating taxation which would be imposed,¹⁹⁹ and on 8 January the Commission made a significant reply to a query made by Cashin two days earlier regarding the date of the proposed referendum. The British government would need a month to consider whatever options the Convention recommended. It was planned that the referendum would be held in late May, because it would "be impracticable to hold a poll during the period from early June to late September as so many people are away from their homes and may be disenfranchised".²⁰⁰ Furthermore, it was tersely noted that "The matters preliminary to the voting" would take place "in the following order":

- delivery of recommendations by the National Convention, consideration by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, communication of decision as to forms of Government to be submitted to the people, final draft and publication of legislation for comment, passing of legislation, printing of ballots and other forms, setting up of polling stations, and distribution of election material.²⁰¹

The Convention was pressed to conclude its work, because the Commission felt "unable to give any assurance that the referendum will be possible this spring if the recommendations of the Convention are not received by the end of the present month".²⁰² This was exactly what the confederates wanted, and the RGL was summarily denied two months of their projected campaign. It was a possibility the League should have anticipated, but had not. The crisis was recognized by responsible government supporters inside and outside the Convention, and on 10 January a committee

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

²⁰⁰ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, Newfoundland-Despatches-Memos, Secretary of the Commission of Government to Secretary of the Convention, 8 January 1948.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*

of the League met several responsible government members of the Convention.²⁰³ Deciding that productivity could be enhanced with a smaller coordinating committee, the meeting elected Currie, Cashin, Crosbie, and Cheeseman.²⁰⁴ Since "it was decided that the meeting and the matters discussed there would be secret and confidential", no records were kept,²⁰⁵ but an attempt seems to have been made to bring the ever-wayward Cashin further into the fold, and the autonomous Crosbie in line, and strategy must have been plotted.

In early January 1948, Charles S. Burchell revisited St. John's after several years' absence. Perhaps mindful of Cashin's abilities to whip up crowds, and of his part in the debacle of 1932,²⁰⁶ Burchell voiced concerns that Cashin would "make an effort to upset the political apple-cart by staging a demonstration of some sort" and that "it is always possible that, if this were to occur, some sort of violence might develop".²⁰⁷ He also noted that there were 2000 unemployed in St. John's, and that a number of St. John's firms had taken out riot insurance. Even the governor had thought of the possibility of serious rioting, and Burchell noted that Macdonald had

...considered the advisability of having a British warship stand off St. John's within an hour's call, if he should receive information that would warrant such a step. I know, however, that he is reluctant to do this and that the only

²⁰³ RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of Secret Meeting, 10 January 1948. Present from the League were O'Leary, Cheeseman, Currie, Phelan, and Fraser, with secretary Collins; present from the Convention were Cashin, Crosbie, Fudge, Butt, and Northcott.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Cashin played a hazy role in the demonstration of early April 1932 which quickly became the House of Assembly riot. On this period see James Overton, "Economic Crisis and the End of Democracy: Politics in Newfoundland During the Great Depression", *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 26 (Fall 1990): 85-124; Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 14; and Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, pp. 198-202.

²⁰⁷ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Burchell to MacKay, 5 January 1948.

alternative he has in mind, were the police to need assistance, would be to call on the Americans at Fort Pepperell.²⁰⁸

Aware of the difficulties this would cause, Burchell noted that "This would be most undesirable".²⁰⁹ Shortly thereafter, on 8 January, MacKay heard from Sir Alexander Clutterbuck in Ottawa that Philip Noel-Baker, the British Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations,²¹⁰ "might come to Ottawa from New York for a day or so".²¹¹ MacKay suggested that if Noel-Baker came, the opportunity should be taken to discuss the Newfoundland situation with him, particularly Canadian concerns over "the form in which the question concerning continuance of Commission of Government would be put on the ballot paper" (because "the form might influence the result"), and the procedure for admitting Newfoundland if there was a favourable vote in the referendum.²¹² MacKay also suggested that Noel-Baker have the Canadian views before Governor Macdonald could meet with him.²¹³ But because matters required his presence in New York, Noel-Baker could not visit Ottawa.

On the first of a series of overseas trips he would make in 1948, on 10 January, Governor Sir Gordon Macdonald arrived in London and met with Commonwealth Relations Office officials and with Attlee.²¹⁴ Because he wished to see Noel-Baker

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ In 1947 the portfolio of Dominion Affairs in the Attlee government became Commonwealth Relations; Noel-Baker succeeded Addison in this post.

²¹¹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, MacKay to Pearson, 8 January 1948.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Attlee Papers, Deposit 65, folio 141, Gordon Macdonald to Attlee, 30 December 1947, noting Macdonald's pending visit to London.

when he returned from New York, Macdonald stayed until mid-February, missing the close of the Convention.²¹⁵ J.S. Macdonald thought the governor's visit was made at an inopportune time, because of the imminent close of the Convention with no recommendations in sight, and because McEvoy, who was "a rather temperamental individual not in the best of health", looked "to the governor constantly... for advice and guidance".²¹⁶ But Gordon Macdonald's London visit was important. While he did not get to see Noel-Baker, he did press for the inclusion of confederation on the ballot paper,²¹⁷ and discussed policy arrangements for the campaign and the possible confederation of Newfoundland with Canada.²¹⁸

On 19 January, Gordon Higgins moved that Commission of Government and responsible government as it existed in 1933 be placed on the ballot paper. Webb maintains that by this time Higgins had "unreservedly recommended" responsible government despite his earlier flirtation with confederation,²¹⁹ but if he had tried, Higgins could not have given the confederates a greater advantage. The wording of his motion was pivotal, for it gave the confederates concrete grounds to claim what they had hitherto only alleged; that responsible government (which, in effect, the confederates

²¹⁵ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, "Memorandum of MacKay to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 January 1948."

²¹⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 768, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 7 January 1948.

²¹⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 804, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 2 February 1948.

²¹⁸ Macdonald had expressed his preference since 1946 that the wording on the ballot simply present three choices: responsible government, confederation and commission of government. In September 1946 he was concerned that the Dominions Office would "cook" the wording on the ballot, and it was noted that he opposed this. See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 273, "Memorandum of a Conversation with the Governor, by P.A. Bridle, 7 September 1946."

²¹⁹ Webb, "Convention", p. 129.

were themselves advocating) was associated with memories of corrupt merchant rule as it existed in 1933. As a responsible government advocate, Higgins must have had either some sympathy for confederation, or been incredibly shortsighted. The wording of his resolution was pregnant with meaning, and meant different things to each group. To the RGL and the British it meant the return of self government, "the adoption by Newfoundland of the Statute of Westminster" or "assuming full Dominion status on the Canadian model".²²⁰ But to the confederates, it was a nugget of gold. Smallwood brilliantly supported Higgins' motion, and was thus enabled to state that at no time did he deny the right of the people to choose one form of government over another.²²¹ Surprisingly, Higgins' motion was passed without criticism of the wording from the responsible government group in the Convention, and another vital opportunity to limit the confederates' propaganda was lost.

In March 1946 Bradley had written to Smallwood, asking whether there was "some way of stripping the party mask off both advocates and opponents thus forcing them to appear in their true characters?"²²² On 21 January 1948, McEvoy did just that when he informed the Convention that it would recommend the options to be placed on the ballot by conducting three polls: responsible government versus Commission of Government; Commission versus confederation, and confederation versus responsible government.²²³ As Webb pointed out, "surprisingly, none of the members objected to this",²²⁴ but perhaps what was not surprising was that McEvoy recommended it. The next day, all delegates voted unanimously that responsible government and Commission

²²⁰ PRO DO 35/3456, Addison to Attlee, 3 February 1948.

²²¹ Webb, "Convention" p. 130.

²²² Bradley Papers, J.R. Smallwood Correspondence, Bradley to Smallwood, 19 March 1946.

²²³ Webb, "Convention", p. 131.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

of Government would appear on the ballot paper in the forthcoming referendum, and on 23 January, Smallwood moved that confederation, "on the basis submitted to the National Convention on November 6 1947 by the Prime Minister of Canada" be placed on the ballot paper, and assured the people of Newfoundland that

...although the confederates in the Convention are outnumbered almost two to one, although we are a minority in the Convention, our recommendations will be respected by the British government. There is no doubt about it, confederation will be on the ballot paper in the referendum. Our people will get their chance to vote for confederation this spring....the British government will protect the democratic rights of our people against all attempts of a mere majority of this Convention.²²⁵

It was obvious that the motion would be defeated, but an open question whether Smallwood had prior knowledge of the Commonwealth Office intention to place confederation on the ballot.²²⁶ But Smallwood must have had a sense that confederation would be placed on the ballot paper, given the regularity of consultation between himself, Bradley, J.S. Macdonald, and the governor; given Bradley's original tacit assumption in May 1946 that confederation would be a choice upon which people would vote; and given Lord Addison's indication during the visit of the London delegation that the people would have a choice.²²⁷

In his speech Smallwood again spoke out against the merchants, and particularly vilified manufacturer's agents (of which the League had more than its fair share) for their profiteering at the expense of the people. In his closing argument, Higgins attacked

²²⁵ PANL GN 10, National Convention Proceedings, 23 January 1948.

²²⁶ Webb, "Convention", p. 132.

²²⁷ During the London visit, when Bradley asked Addison about his possible attitude towards the "recommendations of a substantial minority" in the Convention, Addison replied "...we want to let the people have a choice." PRO DO 35/3448, Transcript of London Delegation Meeting with Lord Addison, p. 12.

confederation, and accused Smallwood of making misleading statements about divorce. Higgins stated that

...in the event of Federal Union with Canada the sole right and authority to pass divorce laws and set up Divorce Courts in Newfoundland rests with the Federal Government at Ottawa and with that government alone. With union of the two countries the Provincial Legislature of Newfoundland would have no right to say "yes" or "no" in this matter, unless a clause was included in the terms of union clearly stating that the Federal Parliament at Ottawa would forego for all time the right to legislate for divorce in Newfoundland and undertake to have the British North America Act amended immediately. Without such provision such terms would not be acceptable to the Catholic people of Newfoundland. Mr. Chairman, as no such provision is made in the terms received from the Right Honourable the Prime Minister of Canada, I must inform you, Sir, that the proposals cannot be accepted by our Catholic people.²²⁸

For better or worse, Higgins had entered the sectarian domain, and J.S. Macdonald later characterized his speech as a "deliberately planned attempt to stir up sectarian feeling".²²⁹ Smallwood later told Macdonald that Higgins' assertion hurt the confederates, and it would be particularly difficult to counter propaganda which would result from Higgins' statements.

The conclusion of debate in the Convention was not without a further sectarian element. The only Roman Catholics in the Convention who had supported confederation were William Keough of St. George's and Michael J. McCarthy, a co-operative field worker from Port-au-Port; both were from Bishop O'Reilly's diocese. Keough later related that he "...received a message through an intermediary from the head of my church in Newfoundland that I could not vote to have Confederation placed upon the

²²⁸ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, Newfoundland-Despatches-Memos, Partial Text of Speech by Mr. Gordon Higgins, 24 January 1948, enclosed in J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 February 1948.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 January 1948.

Referendum Paper".²³⁰ Keough had serious misgivings about opposing Archbishop Roche, and paced the floor of his house the night before the vote.²³¹ In the Convention at two in the morning of the night before the final vote was taken, Keough stood to speak, and "the intermediary in question came up behind me and said 'remember what I told you!'"²³² But Bishop O'Reilly held more sway over Keough than did Archbishop Roche.

Following a vigorous all-night debate which concluded at five in the morning on 28 January, Smallwood's confederation motion was defeated twenty-nine to sixteen.²³³ But in fact, the confederates had won. The anti-confederates had fallen into the trap of "denying the people the right to choose", and they were subsequently condemned by confederate propaganda. Two days later, on 30 January, the Convention dissolved, and the occasion was marked by the presentation of the Convention's recommendations, and a short speech given by the Administrator, Sir L.E. Emerson, in the absence of Governor Macdonald. Emerson noted that "a great deal more information" had been broadcast by the Convention "to a greater number of people by the means adopted, than would have resulted from the limited circulation and publicity given a lengthy report of a Royal Commission".²³⁴ Then reflecting Dominions Office policy, and using the trademark religious metaphor of Governor Macdonald, Emerson declared that the

²³⁰ Keough, "We Knew What We Wanted", *BNF*, p. 64.

²³¹ Mrs. Gertrude Keough to the author, 19 February 1911.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²³³ Placing a sectarian emphasis on the Convention's conclusion, J.S. Macdonald noted to Ottawa that eleven of the thirteen Roman Catholics in the Convention had voted against the inclusion of confederation on the ballot (see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 788, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 January 1948).

²³⁴ PANL GN 10, National Convention Proceedings, 30 January 1948.

...Commission of Government, excellent as it is as a temporary stopgap in the case of an emergency, does not provide the proper spiritual outlet for the development of the political soul of a free people. Their ultimate goal must be democratic government either alone or as a partner in a greater democratic union. Whether democratic government is to come now or later, it is only by the exercise of the right to vote that the people can demand it, as it is only by similar action that they can control it.²³⁵

With that statement concluded a tumultuous chapter in Newfoundland's political history. The National Convention had been the preliminary public forum for the political campaign for confederation, which had proceeded behind-the-scenes for some time. It provided the confederates, the Canadians, and the British with an elected political body through which to publicize confederation. It took much of the attention off the political arranging which had proceeded in Whitehall, Ottawa, and St. John's, and provided a means to recommend that confederation be included on the ballot paper. Since the Convention had not done this, it thus became a body against which public opinion could be turned to justify the inclusion of confederation on the ballot paper. While the term of the Convention saw the birth of the Responsible Government League, over a two-year period it nevertheless achieved the aim of publicizing the unknown option of confederation and giving it legitimacy. The Convention placed the confederates on the brink of their campaign, and this was facilitated by publicizing Smallwood, whose rhetorical *tour-de-force* captured the minds of Newfoundlanders. Indeed, the custom-made National Convention was almost the ideal vehicle for transporting the message of that seasoned broadcaster-wordsmith to the outports, and for advancing British and Canadian political goals. With the war over, the economic boom beginning to subside, and uncertainty in sectors of the fishery,²³⁶ the audience was receptive to the

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ For these trends see David Alexander, *The Decay of Trade - An Economic History of the Newfoundland Salt Fish Trade, 1935-1965* (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1977), pp. 39 and ff.

confederate message, as conjured up by Smallwood. He offered a bright and secure future, in contrast with the uncertain images of a return to merchant-ridden self-government. For its part, the Responsible Government League did little throughout this period to help themselves or their cause by countering those images, and the League remained disorganized. But by the close of the Convention, the public political lethargy of 1946 had become interest in Newfoundland's political future, and the Convention had primed the Newfoundland electorate well for the confederation campaigns which were about to be launched.

Chapter 4

"Clarified Minds":

The First Referendum Campaign, January-March 1948

From the time of the closure of the National Convention at the end of January 1948, to the announcement of the wording of the referendum ballot by the British in early March, all parties engaged in political maneuvering. During this first phase of the post-Convention campaigns, a "phony war" ensued until the issues of the struggle were made known. The confederates consolidated their support, and took every opportunity to create the impressions that confederation had momentum, that it was going to be on the ballot, and that it would win. While the RGL also organized, it was not as well-prepared as the confederates, and its earlier failure to organize and commit to the fight took its toll during this period. As a result, a pro-American party was re-born, advocating economic union with the United States under the banner of responsible government.

When the Convention ended, Governor Macdonald had already been in England for three weeks discussing the ballot paper wording with the Commonwealth Relations Office. On 3 February 1948, Lord Addison noted that he had met with Macdonald and Sir Eric Machtig, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, and that both they and the Commonwealth Relations Office agreed that Commission of Government and responsible government should be on the ballot with confederation, unless the Canadian government preferred that confederation should not be included.¹ Attlee, who had discussed the matter with Macdonald, agreed that confederation should be on the ballot, but directed that Noel-Baker's views be heard before the matter was

¹ PRO PREM 8/1043, Addison to Attlee, 3 February 1948.

finalized.² On 5 February the Canadian government stated through J.S. Macdonald that it would have no part in determining the wording of the ballot paper, and that the matter would be left entirely for British determination.³

On 6 February, London sent the Convention's recommendations to Noel-Baker at Lake Success, New York,⁴ where he was preparing to deal with the Palestine question before the United Nations' Security Council, and the "India-Pakistan business".⁵ Noel-Baker had wanted to visit Ottawa, a trip which the Canadians also proposed, but he received Gordon Macdonald's views through Machtig that a visit to Ottawa would be useless and could be seen by the RGL "...as an attempt by the United Kingdom to force Confederation on Newfoundland... such a development would be damaging to the objective which we have in view".⁶ Attlee similarly instructed Noel-Baker the next day.⁷ Instead, Gordon Macdonald would meet Noel-Baker in New York to exchange views on the ballot wording, and discuss the anti-confederate campaigns.⁸ Machtig informed Norman Robertson, now the Canadian High Commissioner in London, of the impending meeting.⁹

² See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 810, Assistant Private Secretary to Prime Minister of Great Britain to Assistant Secretary, Commonwealth Relations Office, 4 February 1948.

³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 811, "Memorandum by Department of External Affairs, 5 February 1948."

⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 814, Machtig to Noel-Baker, 6 February 1948.

⁵ PRO DO 35/3456, Attlee to Noel-Baker, 7 February 1948.

⁶ PRO DO 35/3456, Machtig to Noel-Baker, 6 February 1948.

⁷ PRO DO 35/3456, Attlee to Noel-Baker, 7 February 1948.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Noted in PRO DO 35/3456, Machtig to Clutterbuck, 9 February 1948.

While Macdonald was away, the National Convention had closed and the confederate campaign shifted gears. The Convention had recommended that only responsible government and Commission of Government appear on the ballot, but even before the Convention closed, Smallwood announced that hundreds of telegrams from around Newfoundland requesting confederation on the ballot paper had begun to arrive at his Devon Row flat.¹⁰ While the telegrams and petitions may have arrived unsolicited at first, they did embody the first national public expression of political opinion on a single issue in years. The confederates soon realized their potential: they could be an excellent propaganda tool for criticizing the Convention and creating interest in confederation, and more importantly, if they were solicited in large numbers, they could provide an updated operating list of confederate supporters in every settlement in Newfoundland.¹¹ As well, any campaign for confederation would be useless until the wording of the ballot was known, and so the best use of the time until then would be to gather support. On the evening of Saturday 31 January, Bradley took to the airwaves of VONF and appealed to the people of outport Newfoundland to flood the confederates with telegrams "demanding" that confederation be placed on the ballot by the Dominions Office, and Smallwood later made the same appeal over VOCM.¹²

For a moment, Bradley the elder statesman was back in the political saddle with a vengeance. With a masterful, carefully-planned ten-minute speech (the authorship of which Smallwood later claimed)¹³ calculated at evoking the widest possible public

¹⁰ *The Evening Telegram*, 31 January 1948, p. 3, and Horwood, *Joey*, p. 98.

¹¹ The confederates already had a list of the names and addresses of potential supporters: Smallwood had kept F.M. O'Leary's *Barrelemain* newspaper mailing list. See Horwood, *Joey*, p. 65.

¹² Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 85, and Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 135. Under the rules set for VONF by the BCN, only former ministers of Newfoundland governments could broadcast political statements.

¹³ See Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 26; and Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight". *BNF*, p. 85.

support, and "spelling the doom" of the opposition,¹⁴ Bradley went on VONF and told listeners that he had been "besieged" by citizens who had expressed "indignation" and "urgent protests", and that he had been approached to "offer advice as to whether there are any steps that the citizens can now take, and if so what those steps are".¹⁵ "Let me make it perfectly plain" he said,

that I share fully the popular indignation over the action of the majority in the Convention. I think that their action is completely undemocratic, completely in the spirit of pure Hitlerism. By their vote they have done their utmost to cheat you of your undoubted right to decide for yourselves whether you will have confederation.¹⁶

Then, defining the enemy by deliberately over-playing the strength and unity of the proponents for responsible government (which in fact was never the case), he noted that

...this attempt is not a calm judicial decision of impartial men, but one of an organized political party which used its membership in the Convention to promote the only form of government with which it agreed - responsible government.¹⁷

The vote of 29 to 16 was thus the "inevitable, the pre-determined decision" of those whose minds were closed to all but responsible government. But the British were not bound to accept the majority of the Convention, because Lord Addison said that "a minority in the Convention might well represent a majority of the people".¹⁸ Bradley then advised his "fellow citizens" that they could

clarify the British Government's mind, you can clear up any doubt they may have, and I will tell you how to do it.

My first thought was to advise you to send cables in thousands to the British Government, but after some reflection I have rejected that idea. It would be too expensive. It costs probably too much money to send cable messages

¹⁴ Hiller, "Career of F. Gordon Bradley", *NFS*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 1988): 174.

¹⁵ Bradley Papers, Speeches-Confederation, 31 January 1948, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3. Emphasis included in original document.

across the Atlantic, and the expense might cause many of you to hesitate, and some of you would take no further action in the matter.

But there is no need to send expensive cables to England. You can send them here to St. John's by Postal-Telegraph, at very much less cost.

If you want Confederation to be on the ballot paper in the Referendum; if you think that you should decide the question of Confederation in the referendum, you only have to send your telegrams saying that you demand to have Confederation placed on the ballot.

...if you believe in fair play, if you believe that the people of Newfoundland should not be cheated out of their right to decide their own destiny, you will flood me with telegrams within the next few days, demanding that confederation be placed on the ballot.

I will guarantee that your telegrams will be forwarded quickly to His Majesty's Government in England through His Excellency the Governor.¹⁹

Having ensured that the confederates would get the names of supporters of confederation, instead of the Commission or the British, Bradley then enjoined his listeners to "show these 29 dictators that the people are determined not to be trampled upon".²⁰ Having created the perception that the rights of the people had been violated,²¹ Bradley returned to his beloved Bonavista,²² where he remained throughout much of the campaign.

The years that the Barrelman had spent telling his audience to "write in" served the confederates well, and the response to their plea was overwhelming. On 3 February J.S. Macdonald informed Ottawa that five hundred telegrams had been received, bearing eleven thousand signatures.²³ This trend continued, and Harold Horwood recounted that the telegrams continued to flood into Devon Row, where they were counted by

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²¹ As observed by MacKay in PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, MacKay to Smallwood, 26 March 1948.

²² On Bradley's anxiety to return to Bonavista see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 100.

²³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 807, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 February 1948.

Smallwood, Fogwill and his wife, the Smallwood family, Forsey, Horwood, Irene Ebsary, and Roy Pike.²⁴ Spontaneously, Newfoundlanders organized petition-signing meetings in rural communities like St. Anthony, Lawn, Grand Bank, and in the west coast Catholic community of Lourdes where 375 signatures were obtained.²⁵ On the night of 2 February Cashin went on the radio to try to "stem the tide", but to no avail,²⁶ and soon after he returned to Montreal to visit his family.²⁷ Starting on the evening of 4 February, the confederates canvassed large parts of St. John's,²⁸ and while Bradley's "next few days" stretched into two weeks, the number of names received reached 49,769,²⁹ with about 20,000 coming from areas with convention delegates who voted against the inclusion of confederation on the ballot.³⁰

On 12 February Noel-Baker wrote Gordon Macdonald, noting that he had read the Newfoundland file Macdonald had loaned him, and that in view of the Convention's recommendations, he agreed with Macdonald, Attlee and Addison that Confederation should go on the ballot.³¹ "It would be, I am sure, wrong that this choice should be

²⁴ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 100.

²⁵ PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file: 26 British government, file 1, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 February 1948.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 2 February 1948.

²⁷ On Cashin's absence see PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 March 1948.

²⁸ See Horwood, *Joey*, p. 100, and PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file: 26 British government, file 1, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 February 1948.

²⁹ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 101.

³⁰ PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file: 26 British government, file 1, Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 February 1948; and J.R. Smallwood Papers 7.01.002, J.R.S. Correspondence, Smallwood to Carew, 14 February 1948.

³¹ PRO DO 35/3456, Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 12 February 1948.

closed to those who desire to make it", said Noel-Baker, "I am also in agreement that a time limit of five years should be added to the proposal for the continuation of Commission of Government...."³² With that observation the decision was made, with the added agreement that Noel-Baker and Macdonald would later craft the text of the official statement between London and St. John's during February, when Canadian input and reaction could be gained and considered.³³ Macdonald had achieved his personal objectives of placing confederation on the ballot with responsible government and Commission (which had been suggested to Attlee's cabinet in October 1945), and of making Commission of Government look enticing on the ballot paper by adding the condition that it be continued for five years.³⁴

On 12 February, before he left New York, Macdonald addressed a group of Newfoundlanders living in Brooklyn, and told them that "the people themselves" must share in the blame for Newfoundland's situation, and that Newfoundlanders "lacked confidence in themselves, and in one another, and in their own ability to surmount difficulties".³⁵ Presumably, this attitude towards Newfoundland partly explained why the British felt justified in over-riding the Convention's recommendations. But, continued the governor, "if every man put his shoulder to the wheel," there was "no reason why the standard of living and the way of life of the large masses of our people could not be

³² *Ibid.*

³³ That this occurred is evident in Bridle, *Documents*, p. 827, Machtig to Gordon Macdonald, 24 February 1948.

³⁴ That Macdonald had made the Commission look quite favourable on the ballot, and, as far as J.S. Macdonald was concerned, had thus put confederation on the ballot "in the most unfavourable circumstances," see PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, J.S. Macdonald to Mackay, 27 February 1948.

³⁵ *The Evening Telegram*, 19 February 1948, p. 11.

raised to a more satisfactory and comfortable level".³⁶ With that pronouncement, Macdonald returned home.

When Smallwood finally delivered the telegrams to Government House on 14 February, he enclosed a covering letter addressed to W.J. Carew, the Secretary of the Commission, with whom Smallwood seems to have dealt instead of the governor.³⁷ "I deliver to you herewith", began Smallwood in his most eloquent, florid, and unusually deferential prose,

in behalf [sic] of F. Gordon Bradley, K.C., telegrams, letters and petitions containing the names of approximately 50,000 voters who request that Confederation be placed on the ballot-paper in the forthcoming referendum.

These requests have resulted from a ten-minute talk made by Mr. Bradley on the radio two weeks ago today, in which he declared that the people, by this means, could clear up any doubt the British Government might have as to whether it was publicly desired in Newfoundland that Confederation be placed on the ballot. Mr. Bradley stated in his broadcast talk that he would endeavour to have the requests forwarded, through His Excellency the Governor, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations [sic].³⁸

While it is hard to question the statement of support embodied by the telegrams, there were never fifty thousand telegrams. There were fifty thousand names,³⁹ for it would have been most unlikely if fifty thousand voters had actually signed a piece of paper. Wick Collins of the RGL later noted that the petition was never scrutinized, and that many of the names on it were unqualified signatures.⁴⁰ Given the high illiteracy levels

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁷ Although Smallwood implied that a meeting with the governor took place. See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 283.

³⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 7.01.002, J.R.S. Correspondence, 1948, Smallwood to Carew, 14 February 1948.

³⁹ See Horwood, *Joey*, p. 101, and Smallwood *I Chose Canada*, p. 283.

⁴⁰ RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence Collins September 1948, "Memorandum of Wickford L. Collins, RGL, to the Empire Prime Ministers in Conference in London, 16 October 1948."

in Newfoundland outposts, and the accepted custom of the head of the household speaking for the whole family in matters electoral,⁴¹ regardless of individual views or electoral eligibility, the fifty thousand names most likely came from considerably fewer than fifty thousand people, and some probably came from tombstones.

Smallwood later maintained that his heart stopped beating when he discovered from Kenneth Macdonald that the governor did not send the telegrams and petitions to London;⁴² in Horwood's account, Smallwood swore on the governor in anguish when he found out that a description of the telegrams was sent instead of the telegrams themselves.⁴³ But on 14 February Governor Macdonald had just arrived back home from New York, suffering from a severe cold.⁴⁴ It would have been unlikely if he had received visitors. He intimated to Machtig later that day that "the skirmishing" had already started in St. John's and that "It is thought that the sooner the better such decision is made known" and that he was satisfied "that the course we agreed upon is the right one".⁴⁵ Macdonald made no mention of having met or knowing of an imminent meeting with Smallwood bearing fifty thousand petitions. It seems likely that if he had, this also would have been noted to Machtig. It would also have been most unlikely if the confederates did not have some sense that confederation would be discussed during the governor's visit to England. By the time Smallwood delivered the telegrams, it mattered

⁴¹ This may have been the case when J.S. Macdonald noted to the Secretary of State for External Affairs that the St. Anthony meeting saw the turnout of "two hundred citizens - practically the whole adult male population." See PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file: 26 British Government, file 1, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State, 2 February 1948.

⁴² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 283-4.

⁴³ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 101-2.

⁴⁴ PRO DO 35/3456, telegram of Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in New York to Machtig, no date, and *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 14 February 1948.

⁴⁵ PRO DO 35/3456, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 14 February 1948.

not whether Macdonald or anyone else saw them, for the decision had already been made, and the timing of events had been long decided.⁴⁶ The only functions the petition had were to encourage to British in their intentions, give credence to Noel-Baker's announcement when it was finally made,⁴⁷ and to stimulate confederate support and indicate the extent of it.

With Bradley's broadcast a propaganda campaign had been launched which saw the confederates out-manoeuvre and vilify their opposition. But this could only be done with considerable Canadian financial assistance. On 31 January, the evening of the radio appeal, Smallwood's friend Ewart Young met with Paul Bridle in his Ottawa office, where the two discussed the plans and finances for Smallwood's campaign.⁴⁸ Young relayed to Bridle that Smallwood had

...engaged a business manager to look after the financial aspects of the campaign and that this business manager was in Ottawa in the course of a tour during which he has been endeavouring to secure campaign funds from business people in Canada.⁴⁹

The travelling manager was Ray Petten,⁵⁰ who with the assistance of cabinet minister C.D. Howe and Nova Scotian Senator A.N. McLean, the Liberal Party treasurer for the

⁴⁶ As an observer who participated in the time, G.W. St. John Chadwick believed that the British were convinced by the telegrams. See Gerard William St. John Chadwick, *Newfoundland - Island Into Province* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 203.

⁴⁷ Webb, "Convention", p. 141.

⁴⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 810, "Memorandum by British Commonwealth Division (P.A. Bridle), 4 February 1948." On 20 January 1948 the Second Political Division of the Department of External Affairs was divided into the European Division, and the British Commonwealth Division, the latter of which was headed by R.A. MacKay, and assigned the case of Newfoundland. See *ibid.*, p. 789, footnote 25.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 810.

⁵⁰ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 113, and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 288.

Maritimes,⁵¹ was linked up with Senator Gordon Fogo, who was Charles Burchell's former law partner, Chairman of the National Liberal Federation, and chief fund-raiser for the party.⁵² According to Greg Power, Petten was given the "run around" at first, but when Smallwood threatened MacKenzie King that he would cancel the campaign, within twenty-four hours Fogo shared the party's list of donors with Petten.⁵³ But Petten found that at first donations were few and contingent on confederation being on the ballot,⁵⁴ so fundraising from Canada had to wait just a little longer. But when the telegrams came in, the names of possible campaign workers in the outports were culled and copied, and 101 of these were contacted to become "vice presidents".⁵⁵ These officials ran the confederate branch associations and campaigns in the outports and towns, occasionally collected funding from what few Newfoundland donors there were, and were reliable campaigners and informants for Smallwood on political sentiment and events around the island.⁵⁶ As titular seconds only to Bradley, and later as officers who paid campaign workers on behalf of the association, if they were not already, they became quite influential in their communities.

⁵¹ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 100. McLean had previously observed to Prime Minister Mackenzie King that Newfoundland was rich in natural resources but that importers and exporters supplied the major portion of the island's revenue from duties. He also admitted to King that he had a personal interest in Newfoundland because he wished to build a "very large and modern fish cannery" there. McLean offered to obtain all the information he could about the island for King. See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 425-7, Senator A. N. McLean to Mackenzie King, 26 March 1947.

⁵² On McLean see *Who's Who in Canada 1949-1950*, ed. B.M. Greene (Toronto: International Press Ltd., 1950), p. 1503; on Fogo see *ibid.*, p. 600.

⁵³ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992; and Horwood, *Jocj*, p. 113.

⁵⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 810, Memorandum by Bridle, 4 February 1948.

⁵⁵ For a list of these by district and community see Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Newfoundland Confederate Association.

⁵⁶ For an example of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.33.001, St. Barbe Pre-Confederation, H. Genge, J.P., to Smallwood, 18 March 1948.

While the confederates were the first out of the starting blocks, the supporters of the Union with America Party were also canvassing for support and information for their campaign. They hoped either to get union with America put on the ballot, or to prevent the British from including confederation, which "would close the door to all their hopes".⁵⁷ Joining Halley and Stirling were Halley's father, Thomas, also a lawyer, D.I. Jackman, and William B. Perlin, the brother of A.B. Perlin.⁵⁸ Having received many telegrams indicating support for union with the United States, and recognizing the need to begin a campaign, Halley first contacted the U.S. Consulate in St. John's for encouragement.⁵⁹ But he found none, so he proceeded to the United States where his efforts met with a similar lack of success.⁶⁰ Wishing to avoid looking as if "the Department of State had been secretly negotiating with members of the Convention", American officialdom viewed the Union With America Party with a certain detachment.⁶¹ It was also sympathetic to the confederate hopes of Canada.⁶²

On 9 February a damaging blow was dealt to the confederate cause when J.B. McEvoy spoke on confederation. Since his meetings with Charles Burchell in the early 1940s, McEvoy had envisioned himself as the confederate leader, but he disliked

⁵⁷ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, file: NFLD - Despatches - Memos, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 5 February 1948.

⁵⁸ James Halley to the author, and PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, file: NFLD - Despatches - Memos, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 5 February 1948. W.B. Perlin had offered his services to the RGL the previous August (see RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings, Planning Committee meeting, 6 August 1948), but by this time seems to have become disillusioned with the League.

⁵⁹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, file: NFLD - Despatches - Memos, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 5 February 1948.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, and MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 25 and 30, footnote 13.

⁶¹ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 25.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Smallwood and had kept his distance from the "little man from Gambo".⁶³ He also maintained close ties with the governor,⁶⁴ a privilege which Smallwood seems not to have enjoyed. But in a surprising statement, McEvoy told the *Evening Telegram* that confederation should only go on the ballot paper in principle, and "not on the basis of the present terms" which were not negotiated and had been received by a "delegation hampered by their lack of power".⁶⁵ McEvoy further noted that "before the people are asked to make a decision for or against union with Canada the terms must be negotiated between governments".⁶⁶ McEvoy's statement seemed to parallel the arguments of the RGL, but the next day in a letter to R.A. MacKay, McEvoy regretted that he "had been indiscreet enough to verbally state my views which, under no circumstances, should I have done," and vowed that he would see the governor and disassociate himself from the statement.⁶⁷ He then told MacKay that he hoped soon to go to Ottawa and have a conference with him on how he might speak out in favour of Confederation.⁶⁸ MacKay welcomed the proposal.⁶⁹

Upon reading McEvoy's statement, the confederates must have been thunderstruck. "I think on balance", Smallwood later wrote to R.A. MacKay, that
 after careful consideration, I regard him as the greatest fool I ever met. He is a fool, but his impenetrable vanity makes a fool of him every time. The old

⁶³ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992.

⁶⁴ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

⁶⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 9 February 1948, p. 3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁷ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, McEvoy to MacKay, 10 February 1948.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, MacKay to McEvoy, 13 February 1948.

Governor made a veritable fool of him, and he wasn't bright enough to see it. He's lusting visibly after a knighthood.⁷⁰

It is unknown whether McEvoy's momentary lapse and *Telegram* statement were caused by stupidity, his hypoglycemia or his fondness for spirits,⁷¹ but his actions indicate both his own instability and the divisions among confederates over the fitness of Smallwood to lead the party. These divisions surfaced again during the following month when McEvoy embarked on a personal crusade to promote confederation.

On 10 February, Currie's *Daily News* published a petition which some members of the Newfoundland Law Society had sent to the British government and to Noel-Baker at Lake Success.⁷² It affirmed the National Convention's recommendation that only two forms of government should be placed on the ballot, and offered the considered opinion of 32 members of the Newfoundland Bar that confederation should only be decided upon after responsible government had been restored, and "in the usual constitutional manner at a general election".⁷³ Instigated by John G. Higgins, the Society's Treasurer, and C.E. Hunt and E.J. Phelan, it was signed by all but three St. John's members, and five members outside the city.⁷⁴ It was the most damning of all assaults the confederate movement had received to date, but many must have thought that it was seven months

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Smallwood to MacKay, 15 March 1948.

⁷¹ James Halley later noted that because of McEvoy's hypoglycemia and mood swings, every day at about 10.30 a.m. he would get McEvoy a milkshake (James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992).

⁷² *The Daily News*, 10 February 1948.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 818, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 February 1948. The petition was signed by Charles E. Hunt, John G. Higgins, R.A. Parsons, Richard Cramm, E.S. Pinsent, R.S. Furlong, Harold Knight, John A. Barron, Thomas P. Halley, Eric Cook, E.J. Phelan, Rupert Bartlett, James Halley, Leslie R. Curtis, Gordon Higgins, James D. Higgins, Frederick Emerson, James Gibbs, Arthur Mifflin, Douglas Pinsent, Rex Renouf, Alex Kelly, Eric Jerrett, James Bradshaw, Gerald Tessier, Derek Lewis, Gordon Stirling, Isaac Mercer, Francis Ryan, Samuel Hawkins, Pauline Howlett, and Louise Saunders.

too late. The same day, the RGL emerged from its preoccupation with the Convention. R.S. Furlong re-joined the League, and suggested that the Law Society petition be circulated to the *Western Star* and the *Grand Falls Advertiser*.⁷⁵ J.G. Higgins, Wilf McGrath, Clayton Puddester, and Frank Fogwill were invited to join the League and came a week later,⁷⁶ and on 25 February former Convention members Michael Harrington and Edward P. Reddy accepted directorships.⁷⁷ But at the 16 February meeting, Fogwill, an electrician with the Railway and a former Labour member of the Convention, told the League of the "strong anti-merchant feeling that exists in labouring classes", and added that he felt he could "better serve the cause of self-government by not being publicly associated with the League", although he would attend meetings, act on committees, and act as a liaison with Labour forces.⁷⁸ The League wished to exploit the potential of radio, for this was the first general campaign in Newfoundland history which had the advantage of the use of mass media. It attempted to purchase all the available radio time on both VONF and VOCM on the day before the referendum, but was informed that the time had to be shared.⁷⁹ At the same meeting A.B. Perlin was assigned to investigate the publication of a newspaper. On 7 February the Union with America Party had reorganized itself as the Economic Union Party,⁸⁰ and on 16 February O'Leary informed the League that during that past week he had a meeting with Geoff Stirling and Bill Perlin who represented the "well organized" Economic Union with America group. They had stated that "eventually they aim to work with the Responsible

⁷⁵ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 10 February 1948.

⁷⁶ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 10 and 16 February 1948.

⁷⁷ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 25 February 1948.

⁷⁸ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 16 February 1948.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 135.

Government League" because they "know the only way to get Economic Union with the USA is through Responsible Government".⁸¹

While O'Leary promoted a positive perception of the new pro-American group, the Economic Union Party struck out on its own, and in fact had no intention of allying itself with the faltering League. According to James Halley, he, Stirling, and Perlin reorganized the group, changed its name (so as not to offend conservative outpost supporters who were wary of republicanism, and to win support for having more American money in Newfoundland), and began advocating economic union.⁸² Borrowing confederate methods, on 7 February, Nish Jackman appealed over VONF for signatures to a "monster petition" requesting that union with the United States be placed on the ballot.⁸³ Halley and the group met O'Leary and Collins, and told them about the organization, which O'Leary later described as "47 keymen, 15 group leaders, and 200 contact men".⁸⁴ According to Halley, the EUP had also received several thousand telegrams of support - O'Leary noted that there were two thousand⁸⁵ - which Halley had assiduously collected since the opening of the old Union With America party's postal box. O'Leary told Halley that the League had no members at all, and suggested that the League should join with the EUP.⁸⁶ Halley downplayed the suggestion, later claiming that he thought that if O'Leary, a St. John's Roman Catholic merchant, headed up a

⁸¹ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 16 February 1948.

⁸² James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

⁸³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 718, "Memorandum from L.B. Pearson to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 February 1948."

⁸⁴ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 16 February 1948; and with minor variations in numbers and terminology, Halley to author, 20 May 1992.

⁸⁵ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992; RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 16 February 1948.

⁸⁶ James Halley to author, 20 May 1992.

united RGL-EUP group, support from Protestant outports would be politically unobtainable.⁸⁷ As a result, Halley and Stirling concluded that the EUP leader should be Ches Crosbie, a Protestant who had good connections, was liked by many in the outports, and electable.⁸⁸ His recruitment was their next goal. Of all the threats with which Smallwood and the confederates had to contend, the EUP was by far the most potent, and uncontrollable, for it was designed to cut across class, religion, and regional interest, and according to Halley, to be a group which Smallwood and the governor could not control.⁸⁹ J.S. Macdonald also realised the appeal of the EUP, and told Lester B. Pearson that if interest was stirred up by the party, "sentiment in favour of [the] idea of union with the United States... would be quite irresistible".⁹⁰ Pearson informed St. Laurent, and conveyed Macdonald's suggestion that the movement be "nipped in the bud" by pressing Noel-Baker to announce immediately the ballot options.⁹¹

While the EUP was constituting its leadership with a view to sectarian considerations, Archbishop Roche lived up to the predictions of the Dominions Office and the hopes of the Quebec Catholic newspaper, *L'Action Catholique*,⁹² and gave his imprimatur⁹³ to the February 1948 *Monitor*, which was a harbinger of things to come.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 818, Pearson to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 February 1948.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 718.

⁹² PRO DO 35/3455, [Noel-Baker] to H.N. Tait, 9 February 1948, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 858, "Memorandum by Department of External Affairs, Summary of Opinions in the French-Language Press on Recent Developments in Newfoundland", in which the 5 February *L'Action Catholique* was noted to have supported the stand taken by *The Monitor*.

⁹³ In the Roman Catholic Church, an imprimatur is the official license to print or publish, granted under the authority of a bishop.

Compared with the November issue, the February *Monitor* was more authoritative in its views on confederation and stated its position in depth:

- 1) The MONITOR does not propose to become a journal of political opinion.
- 2) The MONITOR believes that the question of the ultimate form of government which the people of Newfoundland should enjoy is a question which can only be decided by the people themselves, and no coercive influence should be permitted or encouraged to influence the electorate.
- 3) The MONITOR believes, however, that the people should have all the information possible placed before them before they are asked to decide for themselves as to the future government of the country.
- 4) The MONITOR believes that to invite the people to declare themselves to be in favour or opposed to a political union with Canada, which can never be dissolved, on the basis of the incomplete information now available to them is not in the best interests of this country.
- 5) The MONITOR believes that constitutionally the people of this country should determine only one question at the present time, and that is whether they desire to return to Responsible Government or to retain Commission of Government.
- 6) If the people of this country desire to enter into an irrevocable political union with the Dominion of Canada, then this can be best carried out, and should only be carried out, after suitable negotiations between a full people's Government of Newfoundland and the Government of the Dominion of Canada.⁵⁴

Responsible government was thus the only logical, fair and just choice, and the proper position from which Newfoundland would be able to conduct equal negotiations with Canada.

As well, the first in a series of patriotic articles appeared in the February *Monitor*, entitled "Newfoundland At The Parting Of The Ways". This series was a

⁵⁴ *The Monitor*, February 1948, p. 2.

comprehensive effort at documenting the historic struggles of Newfoundland Roman Catholics for self-rule, and its dominant themes were Newfoundlanders' desire for independence and self-government, and the value of a pure, simple lifestyle.⁹⁵ *The Monitor* noted that divorce was a growing evil in Canada, but its editorial "Where Once They Stood We Stand" (a patriotic title taken from the Newfoundland national anthem) was the most significant item in the paper. It expressed outrage at the identification by the previous August's *Manchester Guardian* of "the position of the Catholic people" regarding confederation, and its insinuation that the Catholic vote would be instructed. Thus, the "bigoted and insulting reference" to the Newfoundland Catholic Church by the "Liberal English daily" had rendered it necessary for *The Monitor*, which disclaimed any presumption to direct or instruct people how to vote, to make clear its position on the constitutional issue, which it held to be the only course "consistent with our dignity as a people and with our traditions and history".⁹⁶ Perceiving itself to be the butt of English Protestant criticism, *The Monitor* became militant, and increasingly on the offensive. Ostensibly to coincide with Catholic Press month and inform its readers about the function of the Catholic press, *The Monitor's* circulation was increased for the next four months to 20,000 copies per issue, to be distributed across the island to every Catholic home, free of charge.⁹⁷

While the Church took up the cause of responsible government and carefully elucidated its own position, Smallwood organized the confederate campaign machine. He identified the 100 or so vice presidents from the petitions before his organization was formed, and in many cases informed people that they were vice presidents before they

⁹⁵ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 109.

⁹⁶ *The Monitor*, February 1948, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

had in fact accepted.⁹⁸ By 19 February the confederates had set up a small suite of offices at 158 Water Street, and with secretary Muriel Templeman and a trickle of funds, the association was in business.⁹⁹ On the evening of 21 February there was a meeting of the Newfoundland Confederate Association in the ballroom of the Newfoundland Hotel.¹⁰⁰ Bradley came to St. John's and spoke, and was elected President, while Smallwood was applauded and elected as General Secretary and Campaign Manager.¹⁰¹ Greg Power was elected Assistant Campaign Manager, and Charlie Garland Financial Secretary-Treasurer. A variety of committees and other offices were established,¹⁰² but none of these met or operated subsequently in official capacities.¹⁰³ All members "coalesced" around Smallwood, who by his own admission exercised an "iron-dictatorship" over the party's affairs.¹⁰⁴ Also on 21 February, Chief Electoral Officer Nehemiah Short (himself a confederate¹⁰⁵) published the polling divisions for the

⁹⁸ For an example of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.14.006, Grand Falls S-Z 1949, Smallwood to R.G. Starks, 19 February 1948, in which Smallwood informed Starks that he would be elected as a vice president at the upcoming Confederate Association meeting; and Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 87, in which Jamieson notes that several vice presidents who were named claimed their names were used without authorization. Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 101 and 114, claimed there were 101 vice presidents, but 102 are listed in the Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Vice Presidents in Referenda.

⁹⁹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 287, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 825-6, Britton to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 February 1948.

¹⁰⁰ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 102; *Evening Telegram*, 21 February 1948, p. 31. Strangely, Webb, "Con:ntion", p. 143; Diane P. Janes, "Newfoundland Confederate Association", *ENL* 1, p. 496, and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 286 indicate that the meeting was on 26 March, but the absence of references to such a meeting in documents around this date calls this into question, and it would be most unlikely that any public political meetings would be held on Good Friday.

¹⁰¹ Diane P. Janes, "Confederate Association, Newfoundland", *ENL* 1, pp. 496-7.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 497.

¹⁰³ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁴ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁵ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.39.001, St. John's East, includes "N. Short, Colonial Building" on a list of confederate supporters.

referendum, each of which contained about 300 voters.¹⁰⁶ Armed with this information, with a knowledge of the total number of voters in each community, and with lists of supporters in each community compiled from the telegrams they received, the confederates knew exactly their areas of support, and where their support was weak.¹⁰⁷ Their opposition was never as organized.

In comparison, the RGL had prepared more radio broadcasts, and was preparing to launch a newspaper. At the 2 March executive meeting, O'Leary stated that his firm would own the 10 to 10.30 pm. time slot over VONF from 13 March onward, and that he would donate this radio time to the League.¹⁰⁸ But as Collins later observed, the radio broadcasts sported speakers "with educated English accents using words not understandable to those with less than a grade five education", and their value must have been variable.¹⁰⁹ Planning continued for a newspaper, but this too was done with hesitancy. R.S. Furlong cautiously suggested the formation of a limited liability publishing company for the paper in case libel actions were initiated against the League executive, and Malcolm Hollett noted that if the forces of government to appear on the ballot were not soon known, the League would not be able to publish the first issue of

¹⁰⁶ Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136.

¹⁰⁷ For lists compiled before the referenda of key confederate supporters in various districts, and occasional listings of the number of voters in various communities, see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.06.001, Burin Pre-Confed.; 1.08.001, Carbonear-Bay-de-Verde Pre-Confed.; 1.09.001, Ferryland Pre-Confed.; 1.12.001, Fortune Bay Pre-Confed.; 1.14.001, Grand Falls Pre-Confed.; 1.15.001, Green Bay Pre-Confed.; 1.16.001, Harbour Grace Pre-Confed.; 1.18.001, Hr. Main-Bell Island Pre-Confed.; 1.28.001, Placentia-St. Mary's Pre-Confed.; 1.23.001, Labrador Pre-Confed.; 1.30.001, Placentia West Pre-Confed.; 1.32.001, Port-de-Grave Pre-Confed.; 1.37.001, St. George's-Port-au-Port Pre-Confed.; 1.39.001, St. John's East Pre-Confed.; 1.45.001, Trinity North Pre-Confed.; 1.33.001, St. Barbe Pre-Confed.; 1.48.001, White Bay Pre-Confed.

¹⁰⁸ RGLP 3.01.002, Executive Minutes, 2 March 1948.

¹⁰⁹ Collins, "League outclassed", *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1965, p. 36.

its paper on 15 March.¹¹⁰ Compared with the confederates, the League was a rank amateur, and was no match for the mixture of well-planned and on-the-spot operations of the confederates.

When Noel-Baker announced the wording of the ballot paper on 11 March, it appeared as if the decision had been only his. The inclusion of confederation greatly upset many members of the RGL, who thought that the British government had violated the unwritten code of British fair play and justice.¹¹¹ The EUP, however, seemed not to be concerned. But contrary to the belief that it was Noel-Baker's announcement, the wording had been arranged between Gordon Macdonald, Noel-Baker, Sir Eric Machtig, Norman Robertson, Louis St. Laurent, R.A. MacKay, and Paul Bridle, with final say reserved for the British,¹¹² and Gordon Macdonald, who was later described as "having won his point".¹¹³ Canadian influence in the decision was not insignificant, and the British carried out the negotiations with a view to allowing the broadest powers for the Commission of Government to authorise a Newfoundland delegation to "negotiate terms", while relying heavily on those already sent by the Canadians.¹¹⁴ At several points the Canadians were displeased with the wording of the announcement, and remained so even after its announcement.¹¹⁵ At one point on the morning of 2 March, R.A. MacKay in Ottawa contacted Norman Robertson in London, suggesting that "the Commonwealth

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹¹¹ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992.

¹¹² See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 827-833, for various instances of this consultative process.

¹¹³ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 846-7, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 25 March 1948.

¹¹⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 828, High Commissioner of Great Britain in Ottawa to Machtig, 27 February 1948.

¹¹⁵ For R.A. MacKay's disappointment with the wording see PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol 6, file: 1944-1950, MacKay to Smallwood, 26 March 1948.

Relations Office be asked to delay [the] despatch to Newfoundland until tomorrow".¹¹⁶ But the despatch had already been sent to Gordon Macdonald in St. John's, with the justification that Britain felt that the issues and implications of confederation had been "sufficiently clarified" for Newfoundlanders to make a choice on confederation.¹¹⁷ The next day the governor discussed the despatch with J.S. Macdonald, to whom it was explained that with regard to the inclusion of confederation on the ballot, "the electorate would be asked to vote merely on the question of principle, leaving the terms to be discussed between the Commission of Government and the Government of Canada".¹¹⁸

It is unknown whether the confederates already knew that confederation would be on the ballot, but given J.S. Macdonald's discussion with the governor, they must have had some indication. While Smallwood kept up a public air of confidence¹¹⁹ during the "interminable, intolerable, maddening wait for word from London",¹²⁰ Gordon Bradley made a series of discreet but reportedly unsuccessful trips to Government House to determine from the governor whether confederation "on the terms secured by the delegation from the Canadian Government would be on the ballot".¹²¹ On the morning of 11 March, VONF announcer Dick O'Brien received Noel-Baker's despatch dated 2 March in a sealed envelope from Kenneth Macdonald, and it was read on the noon-hour

¹¹⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 830, MacKay to Robertson, 2 March 1948.

¹¹⁷ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 314.

¹¹⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 831, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 March 1948.

¹¹⁹ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 85.

¹²⁰ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 27.

¹²¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 832, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 March 1948.

newscast,¹²² with representatives of all parties, Smallwood included, in the station. The questions on the ballot paper were to be "Commission of Government for a further period of five years; Responsible Government as it existed in 1933 prior to the establishment of Commission of Government; and Confederation with Canada".¹²³ Smallwood was elated, but when Bradley heard the wording of the confederation option he was privately disheartened, feeling that voters would be in doubt as to whether they would be voting for confederation "on the terms offered by the Canadian government or in principle only".¹²⁴ Significantly, no one seemed to notice that Noel-Baker made no reference to the receipt of any telegrams from the governor, although on 11 March, Mackenzie King implied to the Canadian House of Commons that the telegrams had an effect on the decision.¹²⁵

Gordon Macdonald was pleased that confederation would be on the ballot. Peter Neary may have thought that "The five year time limit ... placed on the continuation of Commission of Government was designed to make this choice as unappetizing as possible",¹²⁶ but J.S. Macdonald observed that the governor had succeeded in

...securing a form of ballot that gives maximum advantage to the Commission of Government. The provision limiting the term of Office to five years will appeal powerfully to the large body of Newfoundlanders who hesitate to take so irrevocable step as Confederation, with all the uncertainties and readjustments that it would involve, when presented with so favourable an opportunity to put off the decision. Moreover, omission of any reference to Britain's inability to continue

¹²² For conflicting accounts of this see Smallwood, *I Chose*, p. 284, and Horwood, *Joey*, p. 102.

¹²³ Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 2 March 1948, cited in Chadwick, *Island Into Province*, pp. 203-4.

¹²⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 848-9, "Memorandum by P.A. Bridle, 19 March 1948."

¹²⁵ For King's comments see Extract from Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1948 Vol. 3, pp. 2095-6, in Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 836 and ff.

¹²⁶ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 314.

financial assistance - the *raison d'être* of the Commission's appointment - contrives to leave the impression that retention of the Commission, for a further period, will carry with it the undertaking to maintain Newfoundland's financial stability as in the past.¹²⁷

Despite Macdonald's concerns over the strength with which Commission appeared on the ballot, the governor's idea was brilliant. What better way to give the advantage to confederation than to capitalize on the known support for the Commission in a referendum, and in the likely event that the decision was inconclusive, create the alternate avenue of a runoff referendum in which support for Commission could be switched to support for confederation? From the Ranger reports, Gordon Macdonald must have had a sense of the strength of support the Commission had in the Protestant outposts on the north-east coast. By "splitting the vote" in the first referendum, confederation would have a second chance. All that remained was to make legal provision for a second referendum if needed, and then to provide encouragement for Commission supporters to switch to confederation.

Among the anti-confederates, and particularly in the press, there was considerable outrage over the decision to include confederation on the ballot.¹²⁸ Currie's *Daily News* was disgusted by the move, while Perlin's *Observer's Weekly* became suspicious of the intentions of the British.¹²⁹ The *Evening Telegram*, which subtly supported confederation, thought that the inclusion of confederation showed British foresight, while the *Grand Falls Advertiser* decried the British as being outside the law for overruling the Convention on the basis of "some unverifiable signatures telegraphed to a private

¹²⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 838-9, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 11 March 1948.

¹²⁸ On press reaction see Geoff C. Knight, "Newfoundland Newspaper Reaction to the Confederation Issue: 1946-1948" (B.A. dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1984).

¹²⁹ *The Daily News*, 12 March 1948, p. 4; *The Observer's Weekly*, 16 March 1948, p. 1.

individual over a long-distance line", and encouraged the Newfoundland Bar to pursue the matter "to the highest court in the Commonwealth".¹³⁰

By the middle of March the confederate campaign was in full flight, and on the 15th Smallwood wrote R.A. MacKay inquiring if under confederation the federal or provincial governments had a lien on the properties of an old age pensioner following the person's death, and if the supply of bait facilities for fishermen would be a federal or provincial responsibility.¹³¹ MacKay replied that no lien existed and that federal financial assistance would be available for provincial programmes, but commenting on the campaign, he observed that "Ches Crosby's [sic] campaign for Union with the U.S. after responsible government may do a lot of damage. It looks as if you were right in prophesying a dirty campaign".¹³² MacKay concluded with a spirited "All power to your arms!",¹³³ and with confederation successfully on the ballot paper, the volume of Canadian diplomatic correspondence between Ottawa and St. John's dropped off. As far as the Canadians were concerned, the diplomats would now back away from involvements in the campaign which Smallwood was delivering, perhaps fearing that to be involved would provide ammunition to the anti-confederates. Instead, the Government of Canada advised its High Commissioner to content himself with reporting significant happenings while events took their course. Future confederate dealings between St. John's and Ottawa were supposed to be on a more clandestine and higher political plane.

In many ways, the announcement that confederation would be placed on the ballot paper delimited the conclusion of a *sitzkrieg* of words and jockeying for position and

¹³⁰ *The Evening Telegram*, 12 March 1948, p. 4; *The Grand Falls Advertiser*, 13 March 1948, p. 2.

¹³¹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Smallwood to MacKay, 15 March 1948.

¹³² *Ibid.*, MacKay to Smallwood, 26 March 1948.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

support by the parties, and the beginning of the public political campaigns in earnest, based on the actual choices Newfoundlanders would make. Just after the close of the Convention the confederates quickly started their campaign, and set about creating the impression that telegrams from Newfoundland would "clarify" British minds enough to have confederation placed on the ballot. Even before the telegram campaign the minds of Whitehall had been clarified and policy set, but they publicly claimed satisfaction that the political issue of confederation had been "clarified" by the Convention, and that in turn Newfoundlanders had been educated enough in politics to be capable of a choice on confederation. The Roman Catholic Church had unequivocally reiterated its stand against confederation, but the RGL had not yet completed its organization, nor seriously begun its campaign. When its issues and policy should have been clear, the League had again hedged, and the opportunity for campaigning during the interval between the close of the Convention and Noel-Baker's announcement had been lost. The greatest threat to emerge against the confederates was the EUP, not the League, and the EUP would provide most of the impetus, energy, and issues for the responsible government movement during the rest of the first campaign.

Chapter 5

American Hands: The First Referendum Campaign, March-May 1948

With the announcement of the ballot options by Noel-Baker, the political campaigns took off in earnest. From mid March to early May, the second stage of the campaign, the confederates fought off the Economic Union party. It had quickly become the greatest threat to the confederate movement, and provided many of the issues and much of the impetus to the responsible government campaign. Sparing no efforts to further preach their gospels, all parties issued political newspapers, but foreshadowing events to come, all parties had trouble with their delivery. While the Roman Catholic Church reiterated its position against confederation, the Canadians quietly provided the confederates with political money, campaign information, and increased assistance.

Once it was known that confederation would be on the ballot paper, the Economic Union party began its campaign in earnest. From the start, it operated as a family affair. Stirling was a friend of Bill Crosbie (Ches's brother), so Ches was brought in to lead the group, and they decided to get W.S. "Bill" Perlin (A.B. Perlin's brother) to contact broadcaster-publicist Don Jamieson, an employee of Ches's.¹ Perlin called Jamieson, who was in Gander, and invited him to join the group. Jamieson returned to St. John's, and met Perlin, Stirling, and Bill Crosbie at Crosbie's house.² Ches Crosbie was a good choice to lead the party, since his first wife was the daughter of St. John's Mayor

¹ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 89; and James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992. Halley noted that at the time, Jamieson had been writing a column for Stirling's *Sunday Herald*, and worked for Ches Crosbie at Gaden's Aerated Water Ltd.

² On this point Jamieson's story diverges from other versions, for he claimed that he began the organization of the group (which was not true) and arranged its first broadcast. See Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 89.

Andrew Carnell,³ and several of Crosbie's sisters were well married: one to St. John's businessman Lewis Ayre,⁴ and another to A.B. Perlin, the writer of the "Wayfarer" column in Currie's *Daily News*. In his column Perlin supported the formation of the EUP as "a constructive move", and defended Crosbie from the vagaries of Smallwood's anti-merchant rhetoric.⁵ Canadian High Commissioner J.S. Macdonald had previously described Crosbie as "an aggressive and rather uncouth individual prominent in local manufacturing enterprises", though in the same breath noted that he had been invited to the wedding of Crosbie's daughter.⁶ In March he described Crosbie as "a man of means, willing to spend it in the pursuit of political power".⁷ Even though economic union was not on the ballot, the party countered this by encouraging voters to vote for responsible government, after which economic union could be investigated, which would lead to "full employment at high wages",⁸ as opposed to hand-outs from Ottawa.⁹

After Crosbie took the helm of the EUP, the party began receiving excellent publicity. The official organ of the EUP became Stirling's *Sunday Herald*, which eagerly promoted the cause. Campaign manager Jamieson came up with a jaunty musical theme for the party, and invented the campaign slogan "For a Brighter Tomorrow".¹⁰ Crosbie

³ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992. Carnell was the Mayor of St. John's from 1932-1949, and as the only elected leader of any elected body in the country, was often known as the "Mayor of Newfoundland". Both Bell and Carnell supported the return of responsible government.

⁴ Wallace Furlong to the author, 30 May 1992.

⁵ See Perlin, *A Clear Head*, pp. 109-110, for extracts from his 23 March 1948 column.

⁶ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 January 1948.

⁷ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 March 1948.

⁸ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, pp. 89-90.

⁹ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 26.

¹⁰ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 89.

was a director on the board of Beverage Sales Ltd., the suppliers of Coca-Cola, and brought their powerful marketing organisation skills to the campaign.¹¹ Despite his poor oratorical skills, Crosbie announced the new EUP on the radio on 20 March,¹² and a full page advertisement was taken out in *The Evening Telegram*.¹³ The next day the party headquarters at the Movie Chat Cafe on Henry Street in St. John's were mobbed by supporters wishing to sign up, and a flood of telegrams poured in from around the island.¹⁴ A week after the group started up, Halley withdrew, preferring to let Stirling and Jamieson run the party. McEvoy learned about Halley's involvement from the governor, who "had his spies".¹⁵ McEvoy and Halley fell out, and Halley withdrew from their firm to set up his own practice.¹⁶ Around this time, the EUP began a rumour campaign around St. John's that the governor would come out publicly for confederation.¹⁷

The EUP again approached the American Consulate in St. John's requesting support and assistance. The new Consul General, Wainwright Abbott, retained his predecessor's distance, but on 25 March reported to the State Department that an indication of American support for the EUP could mean victory for responsible

¹¹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Britton to MacKay, 19 April 1948.

¹² Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136.

¹³ *The Evening Telegram*, 20 March 1948, p. 19.

¹⁴ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 850, "Memorandum by P.A. Bridle, British Commonwealth Division, 22 March 1948."

¹⁵ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

government, while rejection of support could play into the confederates' hands.¹⁸ Abbott also astutely observed that "There is no doubt that one of the first acts of any Responsible Government party returned to power would be an endeavour to obtain a review of the Bases Agreement".¹⁹ But despite a pledge by Crosbie to the Consulate that if he came to power, the bases deal would remain intact,²⁰ many responsible government supporters realised that the prospect of more American money in Newfoundland could be the most deadly salvo against the confederates, even if J.S. Macdonald thought that such a campaign would be "flagrant dishonesty".²¹ At the end of March, Stirling was encouraged by Crosbie's friend Raymond Gushue, Chairman of the Newfoundland Fisheries Board, who had just returned from the United States and told Crosbie that "the Americans would welcome economic union".²² Stirling took off to New York, Montreal, and Ottawa, where he met with government officials in an attempt to garner support. In Ottawa he warned Terry Sanders, the second Secretary in the American Embassy, that Smallwood had approached Ottawa "to put pressure on Washington to oppose economic union" and noted that Smallwood was in the pay of Canada, and "had been promised the Premiership of Newfoundland if confederation won".²³ While in America, through his friends Colonel "Bertie" McCormack, the anti-British owner of the *Chicago Tribune* (for which Stirling had worked), and Eugene Griffin, the *Tribune's* Ottawa correspondent, Stirling met U.S. Senator C. Wayland

¹⁸ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 26.

¹⁹ Abbott to Secretary of State, Washington, 30 March 1948, as cited in Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 319.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

²¹ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 March 1948.

²² MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 27.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 27. MacKenzie noted that Smallwood's approaches to and arrangements with Ottawa had been confirmed by Ottawa to the American Embassy (see p. 31, footnote 28).

("Curley") Brooks,²⁴ from whom he collected a statement which endorsed the economic union movement in Newfoundland. Stirling had it read and recorded by a professional announcer for later use.²⁵ In early April, Paul Bridle in Ottawa noted an impending trip to Boston and Washington by Crosbie to determine if Economic Union would be worth supporting,²⁶ but it is not known if Crosbie actually went.²⁷

Though the Responsible Government League must have been shocked when it heard of the formation of the EUP, it continued to deny the existence of any divisions between the two groups.²⁸ The League continued to concentrate on its paper and radio campaigns, and on organizing outside St. John's, but with mixed results. On 9 March the League received a donation of meeting rooms from the Mount Cashel Old Boys' Association, the support of Labour leaders R.J. Fahey and James Ryall, and was informed by Jos O'Driscoll that Don Jamieson was willing to do a news broadcast for the League "if the directors of his firm" were satisfied.²⁹ The League also wanted to swap airtime owned by the unpredictable Cashin, who was about to return from Montreal.³⁰ But when Cashin got back early the following week, he approached

²⁴ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 94.

²⁵ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 119.

²⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 855, "Memorandum on Despatch of 8 April by Canadian High Commissioner in St. John's, by P.A. Bridle, British Commonwealth Division."

²⁷ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988) does not mention a visit by Crosbie to the USA.

²⁸ On 25 March to a meeting of the newly-formed Young Voters Association F.M. O'Leary denied that there were any conflicts between the EUP and the RGL (RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings, Meeting of Young Voters, 25 March 1948).

²⁹ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 9 March 1948.

³⁰ On Cashin's return see DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 March 1948, and RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 9 March 1948.

Jamieson and the EUP suggesting that both groups share radio airtime.³¹ Jamieson refused, on the grounds that the League "continued to treat us as meddling interlopers".³² Cashin's offer was probably made without the League's approval, and the response was predictable. At one point during the campaigns, the League denied Cashin the use of its Wednesday evening time slot on VONF, and informed VONF manager Bill Galgay that the League had no intention of swapping radio times with the EUP.³³ It precipitated a minor crisis, and highlighted the still-shaky alliance between Cashin and the League. On the 19th a re-vitalized radio committee was established,³⁴ and on the 22nd a Young Voters Association (YVA) was set up.³⁵ Comprised of young men and chaired by Geoffrey C. Carnell, the son of the mayor of St. John's, it held a form of social gathering called a "smoker", at which League executive members spoke, and at which the theme-song of the RGL, "The Hero of '48", was sung.³⁶ It also delivered the League's newspaper,³⁷ and in a certain way, seemed to be the League's answer to the Church's argument that youth should become involved in the constitutional issue.

By the end of the month, Cashin was happily operating hand-in-glove with the YVA on his weekly radio programme. J.S. Macdonald reported that a young person

³¹ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 90.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 90.

³³ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 29, Political Broadcasts, Galgay to Board of Governors, undated.

³⁴ RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings and Committees and Secret Meeting, Minutes of Planning Meeting 19 March 1945.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Minutes of Young Voters Meeting, 22 March 1948.

³⁶ For example see RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 6 April 1948.

³⁷ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 30 March and 6 April 1948.

would cleverly ask Cashin to "clarify our minds" on issues like taxation.³⁸ Cashin would then hold forth on the perils of double taxation imposed by both federal and provincial governments, or on the possibility of losing the American bases under confederation, and then observe that the taxation would be "well nigh ruinous", or that Newfoundlanders would lose their jobs if the bases closed. Macdonald condemned Cashin's pronouncements as "flagrant falsehood and reckless statements", and warned that "in the absence of an effective organization to answer them, however, they are undoubtedly very potent in building up sentiment against Confederation".³⁹

Back in February the RGL had received estimates of the publication cost of a weekly eight-page campaign paper with a circulation of sixty thousand,⁴⁰ and on 22 March *The Independent* appeared, published by Currie's *Daily News*.⁴¹ A masterpiece of reasoned argument and lucid prose, under the nationalistic masthead of "Where Once Our Fathers Stood We Stand", *The Independent* rebutted all confederate arguments, listed the names of several hundred RGL supporters,⁴² and tackled the confederate machine. Its circulation was island-wide, and the League even wanted to deliver the paper to the offshore seal fishery on the seal spotting plane.⁴³ But the League was broadcasting, planning, organizing committees, debating, and holding social events when it should have been on the hustings fighting the confederates. It was only on 2 April that the colourful

³⁸ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 1 April 1948.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings and Committees and Secret Meeting, enclosed report in Minutes of Planning Committee, 20 February 1948.

⁴¹ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 30 March 1948; and 3.01.003, Planning Meeting, 17 April 1948. Currie later absorbed the costs of publishing two issues of *The Independent*.

⁴² *The Independent*, 22 March 1948, p. 5.

⁴³ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 30 March 1948.

former Convention member Captain Charlie Bailey began an extensive campaign for the League in the outports of the northeast coast.⁴⁴

By mid March, newspapers began to detect sectarian concerns in the political atmosphere. Identifying a mixture of religious and political feelings at work in the population, the March 14 edition of Stirling's *Sunday Herald* published a poll of 300 people of voting age indicating that 45 percent "would vote the way their churches wanted them to vote".⁴⁵ At the end of March *The Monitor* responded to Noel-Baker's announcement and claimed that

We cannot accept the reasons which have been advanced by the Secretary of State for including Confederation on the ballot paper.... to ask the people to go to the polls with such scanty information as they presently possess is indefensible. We have not sufficient information on the many financial and economic aspects of Confederation; and we have no information on any of the important social and spiritual aspects of it. This fact seems to have been lost sight of by the apologists for Confederation, and it must be borne in mind that there may be far more serious ills in prospect than purely economic ones.⁴⁶

The Monitor then compared confederation to a marriage between a couple, arranged by their parents without their consultation, and characterized the confederates as "opportunists who would have Confederation now at any price".⁴⁷ Continuing with the theme of Archbishop Roche's letter to the St. Bon's Association, *The Monitor* then reminded young people of their responsibility to vote, bearing in mind that the union the confederates proposed should only be the result of negotiations between elected parliaments of Newfoundland and Canada.⁴⁸ J.S. Macdonald noted that

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *The Sunday Herald*, 14 March 1948, p. 2.

⁴⁶ *The Monitor*, March 1948, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

...the priests of St. Patrick's Deanery, who edit *The Monitor*, could not take so strong a stand on an important public question without the consent of the Archbishop. It cannot be doubted, therefore, that the views that they expound in the editorial under reference will have a considerable effect on the development of opinion among the Roman Catholic section of the electorate.⁴⁹

Macdonald also pointed out that *The Monitor* ignored the point that if Newfoundland returned to responsible government, there would be no negotiations with Canada, a point central to the confederate wish to have a referendum, and that "both parties would be controlled by Water Street and would see to it that Confederation proposals were not brought forward".⁵⁰ Both the EUP and *The Monitor* also came to the attention of Attlee's secretary, T.J. O'Brien, who sardonically asked "has Catholic opinion always been so averse to marriages arranged by the heads of the family?"⁵¹ Most observers had already accepted that the clandestine rumblings of religious discontent could potentially come to the fore.

The Monitor's complaint about the lack of information being presented to the electorate by the confederates was well-founded. Smallwood's campaign was intensely personal (compared with the dry campaign of the League), and in the traditional Squires style of Newfoundland politics, his appeal was based on an informed knowledge of what people in the outports wanted, not on what the finer points of constitutional law and procedure should be. The message was kept simple, the grab was always for the emotions, and a few basic topics were always dealt with. These included the personal financial benefits all would reap from confederation, the personal attacks on EUP and RGL members, the "fact" that "everyone" was voting for confederation, the "lies" which

⁴⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 851, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 March 1948.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 851.

⁵¹ PRO DO 35/3455, 20/Ref.Canada, 22/4/48, T.J. O'Brien, 29 April 1948.

were being spread about confederation by its opponents, and the role religion would play in the vote.

On 7 April, sixty thousand copies of the first issue of *The Confederate*, the organ of the Newfoundland Confederate Association, raised the campaign pitch even higher.⁵² Mainly written by Smallwood, with satire by Power and articles by Horwood, *The Confederate* featured cartoons by the *Toronto Globe and Mail's* Jack Boothe, which completely outclassed those by W.J. Groves in *The Independent*. The first issue of *The Confederate* was paid for by teacher and writer Phil Forsey,⁵³ who was later repaid with Canadian money.⁵⁴ The paper was printed by *The Evening Telegram* and sent around the island using the old mailing list from O'Leary's *Barrelman* newspaper.⁵⁵ With the appearance of *The Confederate*, financial, regional, and sectarian issues were first injected into the fray, and where *The Independent* "was determined not to descend to guttersnipe invective", *The Confederate* "shouted and bellowed, whooped and hollered, and used whatever tactic the situation called for".⁵⁶ Utilising "bandwagon psychology", *The Confederate* was filled with propaganda and made its appeal to the outports, promising "baby bonuses" and "family allowance cheques", the cornerstone of Smallwood's entire campaign. A table was published listing the 35 electoral districts,⁵⁷ with the number of names from each who had "demanded" to have confederation put on

⁵² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 853, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 6 April 1948.

⁵³ James Halley noted that during his days at Memorial University College, Forsey had a reputation for a "vicious pen". James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992. Also see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114.

⁵⁴ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 288; and Horwood, *Joey*, p. 110.

⁵⁵ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 65.

⁵⁶ Collins, "League outclassed", *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 36.

⁵⁷ The electoral boundaries of Newfoundland had been changed since the Convention was elected, and Smallwood's table used 35 districts.

the ballot. Any outport Newfoundlander with even a remote sense of geography could tell that the seven least enthusiastic districts listed were predominantly Roman Catholic, and close to St. John's, while the rest of the island was projected to vote for Confederation.⁵⁸ As Smallwood later observed, "All people were conscious of their denomination, and they watched each other's activities narrowly. The sectarian spirit saturated all society in Newfoundland".⁵⁹ The RGL was condemned, and an article listing "great Newfoundlanders who were strong Confederates" included Archbishop Howley.⁶⁰ Courtesy of Greg Power, Roman Catholic political history had been resurrected and turned against the policy of his cousin, Archbishop Roche.⁶¹

Presumably because *The Confederate* delighted in attacking Water Street, it was notably devoid of commercial advertising. This was significant. With later sources of funding, advertisers were probably not needed to sustain the paper, but the absence of advertisements seems to indicate that either the confederates could not get business support because few dared advertise in the paper, or that no advertising was included as a tactic to convince the outports that a St. John's-based paper was not supported by St. John's merchants, who once again were out to trounce the confederates and the outports.⁶² While the RGL weakly put forth the "Tax Song" in its 12 April *Independent*,⁶³ and spent the next day haggling over the weight of the paper to be used

⁵⁸ *The Confederate*, 7 April 1948, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 312-313.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶¹ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

⁶² Fr. Thomas Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989.

⁶³ The popular "Tax Song" played up the "poll-taxes, school taxes, excise tax and super-tax; French Canadians taking all the jobs in Labrador" which would be imposed on Newfoundland after confederation.

for publishing *The Independent*,⁶⁴ the 14 April edition of *The Confederate* again brazenly listed districts which supported confederation, and claimed that confederation was "very strong" in 18 out of 24 of them. St. John's East and West, Ferryland, Harbour Main-Bell Island, Harbour Grace and Placentia-St. Mary's were all "weak", while St. George's-Port-au-Port and Placentia West were "very strong".⁶⁵ It also noted that confederation could win "without getting one vote in St. John's".⁶⁶ On the whole, *The Confederate* went "for the jugular", while *The Independent* plodded on in its own academic way.

In response to *The Confederate*, *The Monitor's* 17 April edition accused the confederates of spreading "sinister propaganda".⁶⁷ In the continuation of the article entitled "Newfoundland At The Parting Of The Ways", "fear and timidity" were identified as "the death of self-government", and it lamented that "We alone are measuring the issue in dollars and cents. We alone are prepared to become a nation of shop-keepers, bartering autonomy and self-competence for a political and economic mirage".⁶⁸ Readers were told that "you have a vote....For the first time in a decade and a half that conviction of yours counts for something. For the first time since 1933 you can express it where it will do most good, at the polling booth".⁶⁹ *The Monitor* then pledged itself as the national journal of Catholic opinion, and borrowing from the

⁶⁴ *The Independent*, 12 April 1948, p. 7; RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 13 April 1948.

⁶⁵ *The Confederate*, 14 April 1948, p. 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁶⁷ *The Monitor*, April 1948, pp. 3 and 7.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

writings of Fr. Henry Davis, a Jesuit moral theologian, it carefully instructed its readers that

...we would like to make it perfectly clear to all Catholics that when they vote, they are completely free to cast their ballot according to **their own personal convictions**. The only thing that we would add is that you must vote. You are free to vote how you will, but you are not free not to vote. **YOU MUST VOTE.**⁷⁰

Aware of the Church's stand on this issue, Catholics were thus told to vote, but not how to vote, and they were free to vote as their consciences dictated. Continuing the attack, under an article on Communism in the United States, *The Monitor* generalized "Once again a new generation can sow its wild oats. Let's not let it become Electioneering".⁷¹ In contrast, the April edition of the Anglican *Diocesan Magazine* published an injunction from Bishop Abraham stressing "the personal responsibility of each citizen" to vote "at the coming referendum".⁷² But it also hinted broadly at the advisability of confederation:

It surely is not too difficult a question for a Christian to answer: first whether he wishes to be governed by a majority of his fellow-citizens or not; and second whether he wishes to share his citizenship with Canadians or to "paddle his own canoe".⁷³

This was the only expression of Anglican interest in the constitutional issue. But the *April Monitor* blasted the Commission and its methods:

For surely the common good of this state demands that after fifteen years in which the people were not the rulers of their own country, some stable and permanent form of government in which **the people themselves have a final or at least a limited say** should be established.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁷² *The Diocesan Magazine*, Vol. LVIII, No. 4 (April 1948): 116.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁷⁴ *The Monitor*, April 1948, p. 4.

The Monitor reflected widespread sentiments which even Governor Macdonald, despite his abiding sympathy for Commission of Government,⁷⁵ was powerless to stem, and both he and J.S. Macdonald noted that Commission was losing support.⁷⁶ But the greater threat to confederation was noted by Paul Bridle, who feared that "virtually all the Roman Catholic voters" would take *The Monitor's* advice, and vote against confederation.⁷⁷ For Smallwood though, whose campaign motto would eventually become "British Union", to have the Church casting aspersions on British rule must have been useful. At the hands of the confederates, *The Monitor's* opinions were to do much more damage to the RGL cause than good.

The confederates' campaign activities, which were many and varied, cost money, as did the secretaries, the 102 vice presidents' expense accounts, the hall rentals and equipment purchases, and the campaign materials.⁷⁸ According to Harold Horwood, airplanes were the most expensive single items; one, a Norseman, was chartered for \$50 an hour.⁷⁹ The confederates paid their campaign workers, drivers, and canvassers, a practice which the opposition were unable to match. After it was known that confederation would be on the ballot, Smallwood sent Ray Petten back to Canada for

⁷⁵ On this see Bridle, *Documents*, p. 868, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1948.

⁷⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 857, "Memorandum by British Commonwealth Division, Minute on Despatch No. 167 of April 15th, by P.A. Bridle."

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 857.

⁷⁸ On the payment of vice-presidential expenses see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114. For arrangements for payment of van drivers and crews to distribute *The Confederate* newspaper, and for companies and/or persons from which goods and/or services had been obtained see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Newfoundland Confederate Association.

⁷⁹ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114. Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 290, maintains that there was only one aircraft, piloted by Captain Eric Blackwood. On 26 June Smallwood chartered Blackwood's plane for \$ 3000 for the remainder of the campaigns (see J.R. Smallwood Papers 4.01.006, Telegram of Smallwood to Blackwood, 26 June 1948).

more money,⁸⁰ and it seems that the confederates began to receive infusions around mid April.⁸¹ On 7 April (the day the first issue appeared), Smallwood issued an open letter asking expatriate Newfoundlanders in Canada to sign a confederate petition of support and write back to Newfoundlanders encouraging them to vote for confederation.⁸² All names would be published, and were to be put with the names garnered on a similar letter being carried around Canada by a "representative now travelling in Canada",⁸³ Charley Penney, who collected names and solicited money for the cause.⁸⁴

Back in Newfoundland, Canadian money was augmented by donations from a number of local businessmen, particularly the largesse of St. John's businessman Alexander B. Baird and former Fisheries and Marine Minister H.B. Clyde Lake, once it became known that seats in the Canadian Senate were for sale.⁸⁵ Horwood later estimated that by the end of the campaigns about a quarter of a million dollars came to the confederate cause from Canada,⁸⁶ much of it from the liquor industry, and this did not include Newfoundland fundraising. In St. John's, all deals were consummated with

⁸⁰ Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 112-13.

⁸¹ The confederates needed Forsey to pay for the first issue, but neither Smallwood nor Horwood noted who paid for the second. However, around 15 April, Bridle wrote to Ottawa observing that the Confederate association suffered from "a serious lack of funds". See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 857, Minute on Despatch of 15 April, by P.A. Bridle.

⁸² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.002, Petitions, Smallwood to "Fellow-Newfoundlander", 7 April 1948.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 111.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 110 and 288. Baird, Petten, and the father of Lake's daughter-in-law, George J. Penney, later became the first three Newfoundland senators.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 113. Greg Power maintains that Petten brought in \$280,000 (Gregory J. Power to the author, 17 January 1992).

a handshake, and at Smallwood's orders, no receipts were issued.⁸⁷ By comparison, before the first referendum the Responsible Government League had collected around \$30,000, and the Economic Union Party around \$20,000.⁸⁸ None of the parties had all the money they would have liked, but the anti-confederates were no match for the foreign-funded confederates, who had the motivation, means, and several times the financial backing of their opposition.

The front page of the 5 April *Independent* gleefully sported a cartoon which showed Bradley and Smallwood piling Canadian bags of taxes in the cart of a worried Newfoundland dog.⁸⁹ The confederates were outwardly confident and relatively wealthy, but it was the formation of the EUP, not the cartoons of the RGL, which hit them precisely where it hurt their cause the most. They fought back with a variety of tactics. In a bid to get every possible vote, on 5 April Smallwood wrote Chief Electoral Officer Nehemiah Short, asking whether polling booths could be put on board bankers, druggers, and trawlers.⁹⁰ In preparation for their campaign and newspaper, the confederates made a number of contacts with the Canadian High Commissioner for information from Canada with which to counter the Economic Union Party. On 5 April Lester B. Pearson replied to Macdonald's enquiry:

I appreciate the emergence of a party for economic union with the United States is a serious threat to confederation, and I can quite understand that, as a result, the confederation group may be in something of a funk.

⁸⁷ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 111. However, the confederates in Corner Brook did issue receipts. See George P. Hobbs, "We Had to Have a Driver", *Call Me Joey*, p. 72.

⁸⁸ See RGLP 3.01.015, Donors and Donations, Approximate Amounts Received (4 pp.). From these figures, which are approximate and did not include donations of below \$20, the League received \$25,950, and the EUP received \$17,340, from which, being generous with the addition of petty donations, the cited figures were estimated.

⁸⁹ *The Independent*, 5 April 1948, p. 1.

⁹⁰ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.39.001, St. John's East Pre-Confed., Smallwood to Short, 5 April 1948.

At the same time I am very doubtful about your taking any part in providing the confederation group with special material to meet the issue. The issue, after all, is not immediately union with Canada or union with the United States, but rather union with Canada or restoration of responsible government. The Canadian Government has committed itself to complete abstention from influencing the election in any way. Care should therefore be taken to provide the confederation group with only such material as would be available to anyone requesting it.⁹¹

Despite having been warned about interfering, on 15 April J.S. Macdonald brought up Pearson's point about "available material" to R.A. MacKay, and noted that Smallwood and Bradley had expressed great disappointment that information was not quickly forthcoming from Ottawa with which they could counter gross misrepresentations about terms, and "puncture" the "widespread yearning in this country for free trade with the United States".⁹² Having been limited to "available materials", Smallwood also kept up his attempts to "convert" Crosbie, and at one point had a secret meeting with him. But Smallwood recoiled in horror when the EUP later alleged that they had recorded a secret meeting between the two leaders, and threatened to broadcast it over Jamieson's EUP radio show *For A Brighter Tomorrow*.⁹³ Crosbie later denied that a tape existed.⁹⁴ At one point, Smallwood wrote and Bradley recorded a speech designed to "take apart" the EUP movement, but the EUP obtained a copy, and obtaining airtime just after the speech was played, they rebutted every argument.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 852, Pearson to J.S. Macdonald, 5 April 1948.

⁹² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 856, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 15 April 1948. There had been a longstanding fixation in Newfoundland with free trade as a panacea for the island's economic problems.

⁹³ Jamieson, "I Saw The Fight", *BNF*, p. 93; Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 104; and Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 117-8.

⁹⁴ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 93.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

In another radio address on the evening of 5 April, Smallwood introduced Bradley, who re-launched the confederate campaign, but J.S. Macdonald reported that Bradley was lacklustre, and did not "turn his devastating logic" on the Economic Union movement, much to the dismay of his listeners.⁹⁶ Even the British were worried, and Attlee's secretary, T.J. O'Brien, proffered that "the less said about the slick tempo of the "Take a Chance with Ches" campaign, the better".⁹⁷ Beginning on 7 April, *The Confederate* aimed the satire of Greg Power at the EUP and the RGL. Crosbie became "Sitting Bull"; Don Jamieson became "Donald Duck", and later "His Master's Voice", a jab at Crosbie's poor oratorical abilities on radio and Jamieson's practice of repeating Crosbie's ideas. Power eventually wrote:

Said Donald Duck to Sitting Bull
 "I Know 'twill take an awful pull,
 But if you'll just consent to wait,
 I, Donald Duck, will make you great."
 "Well, Duck, you'd better make it soon;
 You have until the month of June
 And if by then I'm still not great,
 Why - maybe I'll confederate!"⁹⁸

The RGL was similarly dealt with in a column called "In the Stable of the Sacred Cow". Too much serious public effort given to countering the EUP, whose object after all, would not be on the ballot, would be counterproductive for the confederates.⁹⁹ Along with satire, there were other better ways of dealing with the opposition.

⁹⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 853, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 6 April 1948.

⁹⁷ PRO DO 35/3455, 20/.Ref.Canada, 22/4/48, T.J. O'B[rien], 29 April 1948.

⁹⁸ "Sitting Bull and Donald Duck", in Power, *The Power of the Pen*, p. 35.

⁹⁹ For this conclusion see MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 27.

Three weeks after the EUP was founded, McEvoy secretly visited the United States, most likely after encouragement by R.A. MacKay.¹⁰⁰ Travelling with Arthur S. Monroe, a Newfoundland fish exporter, his goal was effectively to discredit the Economic Union Party, by discovering whether "Economic Union with the United States is practically possible".¹⁰¹ Through Monroe, McEvoy was put in contact with Judge Manley O. Hudson, a Professor of Law at Harvard University and Judge of the World Court.¹⁰² On 20 and 28 April McEvoy and Monroe met with Hudson and his assistant, Richard Young.¹⁰³ At some point during his visit McEvoy also met with an Assistant Secretary of State and one of President Truman's private secretaries, and as J.S. Macdonald later observed, McEvoy was

given to understand that the United States, before getting involved in negotiations with Newfoundland for economic union, would have to be sure that Newfoundland was acting, not only with the consent, but at the request, of the United Kingdom and Canada.¹⁰⁴

Important as this was, it was not the most useful information McEvoy obtained. On 29 April, Hudson sent McEvoy the memorandum he had been hired to prepare, in which he concluded that there was "no prospect" for "establishing any enduring liens which would be of advantage to Newfoundland", that "the possibility of any political or economic union with the United States is remote and its achievement may be fraught with many hazards...", and that "I am unable to hold out much hope of finding a permanent solution of Newfoundland's present problems in any special relations with the United

¹⁰⁰ In a letter to R.A. MacKay, J.S. Macdonald assumed that MacKay did not know of McEvoy's plans - which may have been the case - for he outlined McEvoy's itinerary. See *Bridle, Documents*, p. 859, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 19 April 1948.

¹⁰¹ J.B. McEvoy Papers, McEvoy to Maurice Saval, 13 April 1948.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Hudson to McEvoy, 29 April 1948.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: Memoranda on Newfoundland 1947-1949, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 6 May 1948.

States".¹⁰⁵ As far as McEvoy was concerned, this was just what was needed to discredit the EUP.

While McEvoy was away, news of his trip was conveyed to Bradley in a confidential letter of 18 April, signed by "A 100% Confederate, of the Civil Service (Dept. of Natural Resources)", a government informant for the confederate cause.¹⁰⁶ On the premise that Bradley did not know of McEvoy's trip - although he probably did - his correspondent noted that before McEvoy's departure, Ches Crosbie visited him from Harbour Grace and "attempted to talk over McEvoy to his way of thinking", because McEvoy had "quite a large following in the country", and carried a "great deal of influence".¹⁰⁷ Fearing McEvoy's vanity, his "weakness of character", and that he was "very easily influenced", Bradley's correspondent then warned that "His vanity must be catered for"; otherwise, "the influence which he undoubtedly possesses, with the general public, and in particular the Roman Catholics whom he would encourage, would be lost to the other party".¹⁰⁸ On his return McEvoy intended to "make mince-meat [sic] of Crosbie's farce and the so-called Responsible Government League", and to do this via radio broadcasts. "Such an eventuality must be avoided at all costs", continued the informant, because "it would represent to our people a division in policy as presented by the confederate party.... Contact him immediately on his return, and use all the influence you possess to win him over before it is too late".¹⁰⁹ J.S. Macdonald informed R.A. MacKay of McEvoy's trip - most likely having been informed of it by Bradley himself -

¹⁰⁵ J.B. McEvoy Papers, Hudson to McEvoy, 29 April 1948, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ F. Gordon Bradley Papers, Confederation Miscellaneous Correspondence, "100% Confederate" to Bradley, 18 April 1948.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

and noted that McEvoy "claimed to be on the fence... but sentimentally attached to the Confederate solution, although not in the present terms".¹¹⁰ McEvoy had promised to speak for confederation on two occasions, but "never carried the matter any further", and since he had met Crosbie before leaving, he could be "undertaking the job on Crosbie's behalf".¹¹¹ Macdonald's letter is significant, for it indicates McEvoy's ambivalence toward the Confederate Association (or perhaps Bradley's opinion of McEvoy's attitude), and that McEvoy was distrusted by Macdonald, Smallwood, and Bradley. But he was needed on the confederate side, and could not be ignored.

For the present, though, the confederates were more concerned with their campaign than with McEvoy. *The Confederate* was not the only medium by which the campaign was delivered. Radio broadcasts, hundreds of community meetings, the printing of thousands of posters and photographs, airplane fly-overs and community visits, and the mails were all used. The building-block of the campaigns of all the parties was the town or community meeting, which was usually held in a fraternal or parish hall. The confederates got an early start on these in early April, and had Samuel F. Vincent and R.G. Starkes make tours of the various bays.¹¹² Unlike the antis, confederate meetings were only held in receptive communities, ensuring that only a positive impression would be left.¹¹³ In Protestant outposts, meetings were were often chaired by clergymen, and usually held in Orange Halls. The "gospel of confederation" was thus given cultural, social and sectarian associations. In a different sense the same occurred on the west

¹¹⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 859, J.S. Macdonald to MacKay, 19 April 1948.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 859.

¹¹² *The Confederate*, 7 April 1948, p. 1.

¹¹³ On this approach see Smallwood, *I Cfose Canada*, p. 289.

coast, where Fr. Ronald Jones and Michael McCarthy of Lourdes,¹¹⁴ W.J. Keough, and Kevin Barry¹¹⁵ encouraged the west coast and the Port-au-Port Peninsula to vote for confederation because it would end poverty and forge closer ties to French Canada and to friends and family in Cape Breton. At all confederate meetings, the speakers and their topics were carefully selected and arranged, and the message was kept simple.¹¹⁶ Guided by the maxim that "too many cooks spoil the broth", Smallwood approved and controlled all confederate propaganda, and like his anonymous "100% Confederate" supporter, he insisted on "a unified story from beginning to end, without contradiction, and following a single theme".¹¹⁷ Throughout the campaign, the theme was the great boon that confederation would be to Newfoundland instead of returning to St. John's-dominated merchant rule.

While the EUP's campaign was better organized than that of the RGL, it also operated under the confederate shadow. While many EUP meetings went well, at an April 23 (St. George's Day) meeting at the Orange Hall in Spaniard's Bay, the EUP had a particularly difficult time convincing the crowd. When the meeting grew hostile, Stirling, Jamieson, and Bill Crosbie cut the meeting short and headed for their cars.¹¹⁸ On their way home, within half an hour they heard Smallwood on the radio describing their meeting as a fiasco.¹¹⁹ Most likely because of Smallwood's desire to defeat the

¹¹⁴ Jones was included on Smallwood's list of campaign workers and supporters (see J.R. Smallwood Papers, I.37.001, St. George's Port-au-Port).

¹¹⁵ Barry was one of Smallwood's vice presidents, and a leading Roman Catholic lawyer in Corner Brook.

¹¹⁶ For examples of this see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 291.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹¹⁸ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, pp. 92-3.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

EUP, during April the EUP received more confederate attention than the RGL. The League did not employ the media saturation techniques which Smallwood could afford, so its campaign was started in St. John's, where meetings were held at the Church Lad's Brigade Armoury and the Star Hall. "Key men" from St. John's were soon sent out to hold meetings in Buchans, Grand Falls, Bell Island, and Corner Brook.¹²⁰ Apart from the work of Pierce Fudge in Corner Brook,¹²¹ who began chairing a Corner Brook branch of the League in late April,¹²² and the itinerant Captain Charlie Bailey, who managed to hold some of his meetings in Orange Halls and make an impression,¹²³ the League planned to campaign outside the major centres starting in early May,¹²⁴ but this was comparatively late, and by then the confederates had the upper hand.

By mid-April, all parties began having sporadic difficulties with the delivery of their papers. The confederates received complaints that *The Confederate* was not arriving in the mail, and Smallwood requested that he be kept informed.¹²⁵ Similarly, for several weeks in early April *The Independent* did not arrive in Gander. As a result, the only paper which arrived was *The Confederate*, and RGL campaigner Captain Charlie

¹²⁰ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 30 March 1948.

¹²¹ RGLP 3.01.022, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins January-April 1948, Cashin to Fudge, 12 April 1948.

¹²² RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 27 April 1948.

¹²³ RGLP 3.01.023, Mrs. A.H. Matthews to Collins, 28 April 1948, noted that Bailey was well received in the LOA Hall at Brownsdale, Trinity Bay.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* The public meetings were to begin on 1 May in Bay Roberts, Carbonear, Harbour Grace, Bell Island, and Harbour Main.

¹²⁵ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.08.001, Carbonear-Bay-de-Verde, Smallwood to E. Avery, 19 April 1948; Smallwood to W. Frances, 3 May 1948; 1.15.001, Smallwood to R. May, 4 May 1948.

Bailey was told that it was "doing a lot of damage".¹²⁶ All parties suspected that partisan postal officials were involved, and on 13 April the League engaged a truck to deliver *The Independent* to Conception and Trinity bays, and the Southern Shore.¹²⁷ Significantly, Smallwood's supporters often included postal officials,¹²⁸ whose delivery of *The Confederate* seemed to be under party control.¹²⁹ They informed him whether they had delivered the paper, and as O'Leary was told, they may have also made sure that their opponents' papers were not.¹³⁰ Because of the non-arrival of *The Independent* in many settlements, and its banal and legalistic tone and content, the League's campaign suffered. As Bailey reported from Whiteway, Trinity Bay, "A small strong body using the right kind of Propaganda would have Put her into Res. Gov. but the cleavage is very wide it's a breach that must be healed".¹³¹ The referenda campaigns were the most media-intensive campaigns in Newfoundland's history. Delivering the propaganda was uppermost in every politician's mind. But because of the RGL's other problems, matters of propaganda distribution seem to have arrived in confederate minds first, and after that, the breach between the campaigns of the two organizations was never quite closed.

¹²⁶ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, L. Harris to C. Bailey, 20 April 1948.

¹²⁷ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 13 April 1948.

¹²⁸ For an example of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.37.001, St. George's-Port-au-Port, Pre-Confederation, list of supporters.

¹²⁹ See J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.08.001, Carbonear-Bay de Verde, W. Clarke, Victoria, to Smallwood, 15 April 1948.

¹³⁰ RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, J. Seymour, Seal Cove to O'Leary, 21 June 1948 noted that "The postmistress is a confederate and that's why the people do not get them [*The Independent*]."

¹³¹ RGLP 3.01.022, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins January-April 1948, Bailey to Collins, 25 April 1948.

On 19 April J.C. Britton reported that many believed that Crosbie and the EUP had launched their appeal too early in the campaign, and that outport Newfoundlanders "are beginning to see the flaws and will realise before the referendum that he has nothing definite or tangible to offer".¹³² Though Ray Gushue was reticent about coming out publicly in favour of Economic Union, his "very close" friend Patrick Halley¹³³ thought that Gushue believed that economic union was possible.¹³⁴ Britton then noted that

The consensus of opinion in St. John's is that Confederation would make much better progress under different leaders... It is of course wishful thinking but under the aegis of Ray Gushue, Charlie Hunt, and possibly Ches. Crosbie there would be no question but confederation would carry.¹³⁵

Britton also reported that there was a "present lull in business" which could have a "decided effect on the final choice".¹³⁶ Businesses were uncertain about the effects confederation would have on taxes, and a general tension seemed to have settled over the economy. But Britton's observations on the confederate leadership were important. In St. John's there would come to exist a "replace Smallwood" movement, and his observation about the respectability which Crosbie would bring to confederation had occurred to Smallwood, who redoubled his efforts to convert Crosbie. But for the time being, Crosbie remained with the EUP, and pulled "some further surprises" before the voting took place, "in an effort to get an overall majority for responsible government in the first ballot".¹³⁷

¹³² PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Britton to MacKay, 19 April 1948, p. 1.

¹³³ Patrick Halley was James Halley's uncle, and had contributed \$1000 to Crosbie's campaign (see *ibid.*, p. 1).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³⁵ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Britton to MacKay, 19 April 1948, p. 2.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Britton obviously did not know the degree of closeness between Crosbie and Gushue. On 20 April, Ray Gushue arrived back in Washington, determined to find support for the idea of economic union. However, he was told by his friend Jack Hickerson of the State Department that Canada was more important than Newfoundland, and that there were major obstacles to linking the Newfoundland and American economies.¹³⁸ After becoming convinced that Gloucester fishing interests would stop any Newfoundland attempt to obtain free trade with the United States, Gushue returned to Newfoundland. Several RGL and EUP supporters were part of NAFEL, the Newfoundland Associated Fish Exporters Limited, and arranged for him to speak on the prospects for economic union on the radio. Gushue privately "had no wish to align himself with Crosbie's cause, or risk becoming the laughing stock of his fellow professionals in the diplomatic field".¹³⁹ Perhaps out of respect for Crosbie, Gushue waffled through the speech, giving little encouragement to the EUP. As a result, his words became ammunition for the confederates, confirming "the evils of NAFEL".¹⁴⁰

On 21 April, *The Confederate* obliquely equated region and sectarian affiliation with how people could be expected to vote. A map of Newfoundland was inset on page three showing confederate areas in black, marginal areas in shades, and weak areas in white.¹⁴¹ From this map which showed "How Confederation Stands around the Island", it was obvious that white and shaded areas almost coincided with the areas of predominantly Roman Catholic habitation in Newfoundland, with black areas coinciding

¹³⁸ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 28. Ironically, Canadian Ambassador H.H. Wrong later noted that after meeting with Gushue's friend Hickerson, he was inclined to believe that Manley Hudson had also gotten his information for McEvoy from Hickerson (See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 872, Wrong to Pearson, 19 May 1948).

¹³⁹ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, pp. 95-6.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁴¹ *The Confederate*, 21 April 1948, p. 3.

with Protestant areas.¹⁴² But even areas which were not confederate were claimed to be so, and this angered Wick Collins of the RGL:

When the Confederates say that St. Brendan's [Bonavista Bay] is solid for confederation, they are using a cheap political trick and trying to convince people from other parts of the country that St. Brendan's is all confederate and that everybody here should follow them.¹⁴³

Collins may have had one response to the paper, but one resident of St. Brendan's noted another: "There wasn't much notice took of it here it seemed to be too dirty to read. The majority of the people burned it".¹⁴⁴

When the confederates staked their claim, and created sectarian overtones, the effect of this was reinforced when the RGL announced its areas of support over the radio. According to Jamieson, "It was an inept performance," since it had the effect of "contributing to the public conception of a religious division over the referendum issue", and of affirming Smallwood's sectarian "claims about the nature of the opposition he faced".¹⁴⁵ Smallwood's broadcasts often gave reports on how confederation was doing around the island:

Smallwood would forecast: "Confederation won't get a vote in St. Mary's, or St. Bride's," or so on through a long list of R.C. settlements. Then, he would say, "Confederation will get over 90% of the votes in Wesleyville, and Bonavista," following up with an even longer list of Protestant communities. Though he never

¹⁴² It was only after confederation that the cultural and religious isolation of communities began to break down. In 1948 the religious persuasion of settlements was easily correlated by a reader with a preference for or against confederation.

¹⁴³ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, Collins to D. Ryan, 7 May 1948.

¹⁴⁴ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, J. Hennessey to RGL, 22 April 1948.

¹⁴⁵ Jamieson, "Entry of Newfoundland into Confederation", pp. 29-30.

elaborated, the message was perfectly clear; it was not lost on thousands of voters.¹⁴⁶

Smallwood also had *The Confederate* publish these lists, which had the same effect.

While Smallwood was dividing up the island into areas of black and white, Bradley again tackled the EUP. In a radio speech during the week of 17-24 April, he first observed that the American fishing industry would never allow free trade with Newfoundland, and that Canada was more important to the United States than Newfoundland. He then disparaged the EUP and the RGL:

The people are sick of bluff and slogans.... Isn't the whole idea just economic buncombe? ... These are facts we would do well to remember, when an attempt is made to sweep us off our feet into the very Responsible Government that we don't want. There are those in this country who want Responsible Government, and who want it desperately; and are determined to get it if they can. Some of them will stop at nothing to get it. Money is no object....

Can you hear the voices of the dead past in those catch cries and slogans - don't you recognize the antics and stunts and appeals to prejudice and vague promises of a new jerusalem? Of course you do. They bear the hallmark of that old discredited system - Responsible Government. They reek of it. They are of its every body and bones. They are a part and parcel of the tactics used in the Convention.

Spurn these red herrings and promises - Grasp the substance and let the shadow go. Give confederation a thundering majority on polling day. Let this be your answer to this contemptible campaign to delude you into voting for the thing you hate and fear.¹⁴⁷

The confederate speechmaking strategy was simple. Issues were attacked, colourful and visceral metaphors were presented, and then the people were told that they hated and feared the opposition and its platforms. It was ruthless, but a brilliant tactic.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁴⁷ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Newfoundland Confederate Association, undated Bradley speech, pp. 8, 10-11, 13 and 15. Emphasis included in original document.

On 22 April J.S. Macdonald reported on the activities of the EUP, and on Crosbie's campaigning in Harbour Grace. Macdonald feared that economic union was very appealing, and observed that

The Newfoundland elector is a particularly gullible individual and the yearning for free trade with the United States is so deep-seated and offers such overwhelming advantages if it could be secured, that there is no doubt at all that the idea sponsored by Mr. Crosbie's party will gain many adherents among the fisherfolk if it cannot be shown conclusively to be wishful thinking without any possibility of being achieved.¹⁴⁸

Macdonald praised Bradley's speech as "the best ... that has been delivered on the subject thus far".¹⁴⁹ Macdonald also noted that in response to attacks on the Commission of Government, and "with no one to champion their cause" in the campaign, within that past week Commissioner Herbert Pottle had spoken to the Elks' Club, and Commissioner Herman Quinton at the Rotary Club. Both defended the Commission's record and accomplishments, and the High Commissioner noted that their efforts were "the most clear-cut effort to champion the cause of Commission that has been made yet".¹⁵⁰

Since mid-March the Commission had been quietly sitting on a referendum bill, aiming at a late May referendum date with a run-off, if necessary, within ten days of the first.¹⁵¹ On 24 April the *Evening Telegram* announced that the referendum would be held on 3 June.¹⁵² On the 27th the Commission's referendum bill became law, and set the referendum date with provision for a run-off referendum if there was not clear

¹⁴⁸ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 April 1948, p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵¹ PRO DO 35/3455, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 March 1948.

¹⁵² *The Evening Telegram*, 24 April 1948.

majority.¹⁵³ On 26 April, J.S. Macdonald, Smallwood and Bradley met, and according to Macdonald,

They stated that opponents of Confederation are conducting a whispering campaign among Newfoundland civilians employed on the United States military bases. The campaign is designed to persuade the employees that union with Canada would mean that the bases will come under Canadian control and they would lose their jobs.... Altogether Mr. Smallwood computes that, with dependents, about 10,000 votes would be affected out of a total electoral roll of approximately 173,000. It will be, therefore, one of the most important groups of opinion in the referendum.

They also pointed out that the opposition groups are making statements, and twisting statements... to convey the impression that Family Allowances are merely a wartime enactments and that there is a strong probability that they will shortly be abolished.

As the campaign is working up into its final stage, statements on both of these matters, to be fully effective, would have to be made by the middle of May at the latest, in order that time may be allowed to give them publicity in all parts of Newfoundland.¹⁵⁴

In addition to the renewed request for help, Smallwood and Bradley were apparently quite aware of their opponents' tactics. Another method of campaigning - "whispering" - had emerged, and it was to become a principal tactic of the confederates.

J.S. Macdonald's response to his meeting with Bradley and Smallwood was also significant. Though Pearson had stated that Canada wished to "avoid being used as an information bureau by the confederates",¹⁵⁵ Macdonald again pressed Ottawa for information with which to help the confederates, and advocated active Canadian involvement in the campaign. His unwillingness to stop helping the confederates, and his

¹⁵³ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 315.

¹⁵⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 862-3, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 April 1948.

¹⁵⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 861, Pearson to J.S. Macdonald, 24 April 1948. The Canadians were concerned that the RGL would discover their intervention in the confederate campaign.

endowment with a certain "loose tongue and lack of discretion"¹⁵⁶ seem to have resulted in the announcement of his transfer to Brazil. Pearson observed that it was not only a "promotion" for Macdonald, but would serve "to stress Canadian determination to stand entirely aloof from Newfoundland[']s referendum, and to make no attempt whatever to influence its result".¹⁵⁷ But Attlee's secretary, T.J. O'Brien, lamented that

The departure of Scott Macdonald, who for our purposes has almost replaced the Governor as reporter on current affairs, will be a great blow to the punctiliousness of the Canadian Government, far from producing the effect....¹⁵⁸

Macdonald had become useful to the British as a well-connected observer, and the British recognized this and his usefulness to the Canadians, even if the latter themselves did not. Macdonald had been the conduit for Canadian information and assistance for the governor and the confederates, and he had ably conducted these operations, since he knew the system, had the contacts, and worked well with Smallwood and Bradley. With Macdonald gone, and no one in the offing as competent as he was, the British predicted that the Canadians would be drawn into Newfoundland affairs much more than they had been when Macdonald was their representative.

Macdonald left Newfoundland in mid-May, at the height of the first referendum campaign, and was replaced by the more tight-lipped Paul Bridle, who remained acting High Commissioner until September. Before he went to Brazil, Macdonald met in Ottawa on 19 May with Mackenzie King, who noted that Macdonald thought Newfoundland was ...almost certain to come into Confederation but agrees with me [that] it is going to be a source of trouble for some time to come. The only thing to do [is] to save

¹⁵⁶ Walsh, *More Than A Poor Majority*, p. 304, endnote 2.

¹⁵⁷ PRO DO 35/3455, United Kingdom High Commissioner in Canada to Machtig, 28 April 1948.

¹⁵⁸ PRO DO 35/3455, 21/.Ref.Canada, Tel. 380, 28/4/48, in the handwriting of T.J. O'Brien. This sentence ends in the original document as cited, for the following page is missing from the file.

the Island from drifting into the hands of [the] Americans. Specially important to Canada.¹⁵⁹

With the departure of J.S. Macdonald, the Canadians attempted to take more of a quiet role in political events in Newfoundland.

By early May, the confederates had emerged as leaders in the campaign. With Canadian assistance, their campaign was better informed, organized, and funded, but their greatest threat was the powerful appeal of the EUP. It had a strong party organization, a plethora of business know-how and advertising acumen, and captured the attention of many voters. Since the EUP advocated more ties with America after the return of responsible government, the confederates realized that the EUP platform had to be decimated if confederation were to win. For the last stage of the first campaign, Smallwood's finely-tuned confederate campaign shifted into high gear.

¹⁵⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 872, Extract from *The Mackenzie King Record*.

Chapter 6

"I Have Come to You Out of the Clouds": The Conclusion of the First Campaign, May-June 1948

Once the date of the referendum was known, the campaigns became more vigorous. Even before a definite date towards which to work was known, the propaganda campaigns of all parties had begun. In May, the Roman Catholic Church made its strongest appeal for the return of responsible government. The EUP countered the confederate message with its own propaganda. The confederates became zealous in their attempts to discredit the EUP, and to this end attempted to forge an alliance with J.B. McEvoy, who had obtained Judge Manley Hudson's analysis of the prospects of economic union. In response, the EUP countered with its own news and encouragement from America, and this strengthened the support for responsible government. But the confederate campaign was extremely well-organized and highly personal. Smallwood and his campaign agents visited many of the communities of Newfoundland, and as a result, their messages were dominant in the outports, where the RGL and EUP were not as organized.

On Saturday 1 May, McEvoy arrived back in St. John's with the Hudson memorandum. On the 6th he wrote Hudson requesting that he not communicate any other opinions to persons in Newfoundland "who may be adversely affected by your Opinions", until McEvoy supplied Hudson with "additional information as would be necessary in forming a true perspective" on these people.² McEvoy then spent a week preparing to release his information,³ and requested airtime on VONF.⁴ But Bradley seems to have

¹ The words of Smallwood, as cited by Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

² J.B. McEvoy Papers, McEvoy to Hudson, 6 May 1948.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ W.F. Galgay papers, file # 35, J.B. McEvoy, McEvoy to Galgay, 6 May 1948.

taken his "100% Confederate" informant's views into account, and gone to the Commission seeking to restrict McEvoy. McEvoy was refused permission to broadcast because he was not formally allied with any political organization. Galgay suggested that he arrange to present the material during the airtime of one of the three parties.⁵

While McEvoy prepared to decimate the EUP, the responsible government advocates fought the confederates. The *Sunday Herald* stepped up its attacks on the confederates and the Commission of Government, and made as many insinuations as it could hope to get away with. On 2 May it said that Gordon Bradley was "Afraid He May Not Be Prime Minister".⁶ It noted that the previous week's *Pravda* had indicated that the Russians contemplated establishing a consulate in St. John's with a staff of 14, and in an oblique poke at the confederates it claimed that "to allow 14 Russians to calmly walk into this country with the Communistic activity which is already taking place here is nothing short of madness".⁷ On 9 May *The Herald* asked why the confederates had made \$100 worth of phone calls to Ottawa, and related that "Many wondered if the local Confederates were phoning for instructions".⁸ One week later it noted that a "Communist group" met on Thursdays evenings in a house on the Higher Levels of St. John's; among its members was a former member of the Commission of Government. *The Herald* also asked whether the petitions Smallwood collected had ever been sent to England, and put about the rumour that they had not.⁹ *The Independent* satisfied itself

⁵ *Ibid.*, Galgay to McEvoy, 7 May 1948.

⁶ *The Sunday Herald*, 2 May 1948, p. 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁸ *The Sunday Herald*, 9 May 1948, p. 5.

⁹ *The Sunday Herald*, 16 May 1948, pp. 3 and 5.

with cautioning that the American bases in Newfoundland would be lost under confederation.¹⁰

But Smallwood was occupied with more important concerns. He wrote to Captain Leonard T. Stick, his vice-president in Bay Roberts, enclosing a cheque for \$300 and instructing him that "This, together with the \$100 you have already received, ought [sic] to go a considerable distance toward meeting the Association's local expenses in your area".¹¹ Smallwood confided that "Johnnie McEvoy is back from Washington with ten times as much documents and other evidence as he needs to smash Economic Union to splinters. He will be going on the air to do so".¹² For his part, Bradley had been in Bonavista during the previous two weeks, and was due to arrive the next day in St. John's, where Smallwood was "going to try and get legs under him to get out and hold some meetings".¹³ Smallwood did get Bradley to speak, and he was sent around the north-east coast, while Smallwood headed off on a campaign visit to the Burin Peninsula.¹⁴

On 8 May, the Hudson memorandum appeared in *The Evening Telegram* along with a letter from Monroe to McEvoy discouraging the pursuit of economic union because it would endanger the fishing industry's existing concessions, and a letter from the Gloucester Fisheries Association to McEvoy threatening to lobby Congress for full

¹⁰ *The Independent*, 3 May 1948, p. 1.

¹¹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.001, Port de Grave Pre-Confederation, Smallwood to Stick, 3 May 1948. Stick had formerly been the Chief Ranger of the Newfoundland Ranger Force.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 866-7, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1948.

protection if further concessions were made to outside interests.¹⁵ The *Telegram* blasted the BCN for refusing to broadcast this information.¹⁶ If the confederates had been previously chafing at the bit, there was now no shortage of political capital. Smallwood could have cared less for McEvoy's message or news about industry concessions: the immediate value was the sensational, and he quickly distilled McEvoy's message and turned it into a stick with which to beat economic union. In his last despatch to Ottawa, J.S. Macdonald noted that Smallwood quickly went on an "Island-wide" radio hook-up, "spreading the information brought back by Mr. McEvoy.... He spoke very well, and was markedly superior to Mr. Crosbie who followed him".¹⁷ Smallwood told his listeners: "It's over and done with. ...a farce, a sham, a complete impossibility. Forget about it".¹⁸ Then neatly turning a trick, Smallwood "castigated" the BCN for not allowing McEvoy to speak, and with the offer of airtime, the confederates "adroitly invited McEvoy to make use of as much of the Association's time as he might need" to spread the gospel.¹⁹ Apart from his *Telegram* statement McEvoy avoided entering the arena, but Smallwood's broadcasts had the desired effect, even if it was not appreciated everywhere. One listener in the Cashin stronghold of Renew's commented that "people are now taking in all he [Smallwood] says", but "sometimes I get down in the dumps

¹⁵ Noted in PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6. Memoranda on Newfoundland, 1947-1949, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 May 1948; also see Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 319.

¹⁶ *The Evening Telegram*, 8 May 1948.

¹⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 866-7, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1948.

¹⁸ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 96.

¹⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 864-5, J.S. Macdonald to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 May 1948.

over it I cannot listen to Smallwood afraid that I would get so bad that the radio would end up in the Harbour".²⁰

In a symbolic event carefully calculated to increase confederate support among outport fishermen, upon Bradley's return from his speaking tour he was made an honorary member of the Fishermen's Protective Union.²¹ Meanwhile, on 11 May, Smallwood left on another tour of Trinity, Bonavista, and Notre Dame bays in a small seaplane.²² The use of aircraft by the confederates, and later by the League, was arguably the most innovative, glamorous, and effective tactic which could be employed. The confederates had purchased the most powerful amplifier and speaker systems available and attached them to the planes.²³ Campaigning by aircraft allowed them to visit areas not accessible by road and eliminated time wasted in travelling by boat or car. Smallwood rented a plane with pontoons, and had it land in harbours, where he addressed crowds (and often whole communities) assembled on the shores.²⁴ Sometimes the plane flew over the settlements, and Smallwood addressed people from the air.²⁵ Either way, the effect was biblical, and like the voice of God over the waters or out of the skies, Smallwood told people to vote for confederation.²⁶ According to Greg Power,

²⁰ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, F. Goodridge to Cashin, 11 May 1948.

²¹ As early as April 30 the RGL had been warned that Bradley would be made a member of the FPU. See RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, G.F. Hennebury to O'Leary, 30 April 1948.

²² Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136.

²³ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114.

²⁴ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 290.

²⁵ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 115.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 114; Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992, and Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

who occasionally went on these trips, on several occasions Smallwood even began his addresses with "My dear friends, I have come to you out of the clouds".²⁷

The confederates continued milking the apparent EUP fiasco for all it was worth. On 12 May *The Confederate* appeared with the huge headline, "Comic Union Blows Up!", and with this catchy slogan for the EUP, the confederates rededicated themselves to the decimation of the remainder of Crosbie's campaign.²⁸ In the same issue another theme was class, wealth, and the anti-confederate feeling prevalent in St. John's. Stealing a leaf from Smallwood's National Convention performances, an article entitled "The 21 Millionaires" indicated how the wealthy of St. John's would suffer under confederation, and that eighteen were "definitely known to be opposed to confederation".²⁹ While the truth of Smallwood's statement may never be known, it stirred up a hornet's nest of opposition in anti-confederate strongholds.

Eager to counter the confederate coup, EUP members began a personal attack, denouncing the motives of McEvoy and Monroe, who "because of their business connections" had personal interests in preventing free trade, and who were "traitors" for obtaining "a statement from the Gloucester fishing interests, the "traditional enemies" of Newfoundland's fisheries".³⁰ Crosbie and Jamieson took to the airwaves on Saturday night, 15 May, and announced that they had the names of, and received messages from "a large majority of the United States Senate" who supported economic union; among them, Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, a presidential hopeful, who stated "Yes, I will be

²⁷ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

²⁸ *The Confederate*, 12 May 1948, p. 1.

²⁹ *The Confederate*, 20 May 1948, p. 2.

³⁰ PRO DO 35/3455, Bridle, Acting Canadian High Commissioner in Newfoundland, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 May 1948.

glad to see your delegation".³¹ The EUP also tried to play the recorded words of Senator Brooks.³² However, at the last moment in the VONF studio they were stopped, and handed a cryptic note which read "Because of diplomatic implications beyond the control of the BCN the playing of the record has been postponed. [It] May be read".³³ The senator's message was introduced by Jamieson as "the Words of Senator Brooks", and instead a transcript was read.³⁴ The Commission of Government ultimately controlled the BCN, and had no intention of giving credibility to the EUP.³⁵ Undaunted, *The Sunday Herald* published a list of senators who responded to the Stirling's question whether they would meet a delegation from Newfoundland to discuss economic union.³⁶ With Brook's statement that Newfoundland was important to America "because of its strategic position as an air traffic centre",³⁷ and further encouragement from Senators Taft, Wagner, Ball, and Bridges, "THE PROOF" was provided that economic union was viable. In contrast, the Hudson memorandum was "a glorified report from a senile school teacher".³⁸ Stirling shot the paper around the island via airplane.

³¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 870, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 15 May 1948.

³² Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 120, places this event in the second referendum campaign, but in "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 94, Jamieson places it in the first.

³³ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 29, Political Broadcasts, undated, unsigned handwritten note, possibly a studio instruction.

³⁴ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 120.

³⁵ For other reasons why the recording was disallowed, including that the EUP were perceived to be mis-representing a public figure, see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 119.

³⁶ *The Sunday Herald*, 23 May 1948, p. 2, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 871, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 16 May 1948.

³⁷ *The Sunday Herald*, 23 May 1948, p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

While confederates and the EUP fought each other, the RGL was not entirely artless. At the 29 April meeting of the executive, it was announced that the EUP would co-operate with the RGL in providing polling day transportation for voters.³⁹ Furthermore, Railway union boss and League member James Ryall immediately began a trip across the island to hold meetings at railway stations.⁴⁰ The League's public meetings continued in and around the St. John's area, and on 6 May it met in Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Parish Hall in Torbay.⁴¹ Like Smallwood's confederate party, it stuck to the areas in which it had support, but because of the sectarian connotations which were being drawn by all parties, this may have been a mistake. At its 13 May meeting, the League decided to "effect a liaison" with the EUP. Each group would divide up the campaign to avoid duplication of effort.⁴² But given the demonstrated difficulties the EUP had in holding meetings in hostile territory, this may not have been a good idea. With the sectarian nature of settlements in mind, the League tried to assign appropriate speakers to visit its various districts. Thus at the 13 May meeting, Hunt and Cashin were assigned to go to Grand Falls; R. Cramm and P. Oliver were to work the north side of Conception Bay; Bay Roberts and Port de Grave were the domain of W.R. Dawson and Ted Sparkes; Cashin and Harrington were to visit Bell Island; R.J. Fahey and Major Marshall were to cover Gander; Fogwill, Marshall, and Higgins were to canvass Comer Brook and Stephenville; and Butt, Hollett, and A. George were to canvass Trinity South, with Currie to be sent to Bay Roberts if possible.⁴³ On the whole it sent many speakers out, but unlike the confederates, whose grassroots speakers and organizers came from

³⁹ RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings, 29 April 1948.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins May 1948, Collins to Rev. Dr. Greene, 14 May 1948, enclosing \$10 payment of rental for the hall.

⁴² RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 13 May 1948.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

the communities in which they campaigned, with few exceptions the League exported its campaign from St. John's.

The League was aware that damage to the EUP's claims would mean a smaller vote for responsible government. In the 13 May *Independent*, an attempt was made to refute the Hudson memorandum, and the full front page bore the headline "Trade Agreements With United States Definitely Possible states Judge Hudson American lawyer, Other Concessions Assured".⁴⁴ In the same issue *The Independent* told "The Truth" about a failed meeting the confederates had held in Spaniard's Bay around 24 April, and recorded that the assembled crowd had delivered a weak "3 Cheers for Gordon Bradley".⁴⁵ But in reality, the confederates' meetings in the outports were much more successful - almost suspiciously so - in comparison to those of the League and the EUP. So while trying to diminish the confederate campaign, the RGL prepared a multi-media presentation to appeal to the electorate.

At the end of April, Marshall Studios prepared and donated advertising slides to the League, co-ordinated to match the League's first two campaign posters. It was intended that these would be shown in all movie theatres and meeting-halls which would display them.⁴⁶ During late April and early May the League approached various organizations across the island, but the slides were given a mixed reception. They were

⁴⁴ *The Independent*, 13 May 1948, p. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁶ RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings, Minutes of Joint Planning Committee Meeting, 21 April 1948; and 3.01.022, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, January-April 1948, Collins to Fr. Meaney, 24 April 1948.

shown in Corner Brook,⁴⁷ but at the Prince's Theatre on Bell Island, it was a different story. On 17 May theatre manager Eric Luffman wrote to Collins:

Your letter of April 24th. regarding advertisement through the medium of the screen. I have taken the matter before the Board of Trustees of the Loyal Orange Association, who own and control the Prince's Theatre. After much discussion they decided that they could not advertise for any party. as the Orange constitution forbids anything of a political nature to be brought in its lodge room. There are a great many members of our lodge on Bell Island who favour Responsible Government but still there are a few who lean otherwise and we are afraid it may cause some split amongst our members.⁴⁸

Luffman's letter was significant. Apart from the Lodge's refusal to show the slides, it indicated the fractured nature of political opinion in the Bell Island Orange Lodge. It is unknown whether the Bell Island Lodge's policy of keeping politics out of the Lodge was a standard policy followed in all Newfoundland Lodges. But the Bell Island Lodge's affinity for political non-alignment was not shared by all members of the Loyal Orange Association.

While John G. Higgins confidently dismissed McEvoy's "incident" of the Hudson memorandum as a "boomerang", a "piece of impertinence", and observed that "to use the words of Bradley, it stinks",⁴⁹ the League was eager to defeat the McEvoy-Hudson propaganda. On 17 May, *The Daily News* commented on the extensive political affiliations of the senators, with Perlin as "The Wayfarer" observing that the list included many Republicans, and that "it is well to have in mind that the Republicans were always, in the past, the high-tariff party".⁵⁰ Paul Bridle reported the press comments to Ottawa

⁴⁷ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, J.W. Basha to Collins, 15 May 1948.

⁴⁸ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, E. Luffman to Collins, 17 May 1948.

⁴⁹ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.027, Correspondence J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to G. Hicks, Grand Falls, 13 May 1948.

⁵⁰ PRO DO 35/3455, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 May 1948.

and London, but when he noted that there was local speculation (presumably among the confederates) over who addressed the question of supporting economic union to the senators, and over how long Crosbie had kept the senators' statements before releasing them,⁵¹ he betrayed the confusion which Crosbie's announcement momentarily brought upon the confederate camp. Likewise, the RGL marshalled all its efforts towards discrediting the McEvoy bombshell. On 17 May Charles Hunt and Cashin spoke in Grand Falls on their way back to St. John's,⁵² and five days later the *Grand Falls Advertiser* reported their speeches and noted that Hunt favoured a "closer union" with the United States.⁵³

Meanwhile, Smallwood and Bradley launched a virulent reply to Crosbie. Bradley took to the airwaves, and dismissed Crosbie's announcement of senatorial support as "a development without any real significance".⁵⁴ Smallwood also attacked the EUP. In a speech dated 20 May,⁵⁵ Smallwood first denied a rumour that he had been physically attacked by Cashin, but accused the anti-confederates of being "great hands at cooking up rumours and spreading them about".⁵⁶ He then elucidated for his audience:

... That's what['s] known as a whispering campaign. The whispering campaign is, of course, the cheapest, meanest, dirtiest form of political campaigning. What you

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 883, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 27 May 1948.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 883.

⁵⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 875, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 20 May 1948.

⁵⁵ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.007, Smallwood Speeches 1948-1949, 20 May 1948. Smallwood's speech began by giving reasons why he was "on the air tonight", but it unclear whether this speech was ever broadcast, or if so, on which station. Given the accusations it made, it would not likely have been broadcast on VONF, which censored libellous content. On BCN censorship policy see W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 29, Political Broadcasts, Galgay to RGL, undated, re: consulting Richard Cramm, the BCN's lawyer regarding libellous material.

⁵⁶ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.007, Smallwood Speeches 1948-1949, 20 May 1948, p. 1.

say in a public meeting, or on the air, is heard by your opponents. They can check you and contradict you and show you up. But a whispering campaign is a pretty hard thing to check and to deal with. You can never say exactly who cooked up the rumor, and it's almost impossible to track it down to its original source.⁵⁷

No doubt speaking from the knowledge of how a whispering campaign was used, Smallwood then shared his views on how the campaign had begun:

Our opponents have around two hundred men hired at this present minute to travel about the country spreading poison against us....Most of those heelers are supposed to be travelling on business selling insurance, buying vegetables, or anything else that covers up their real business -- their real business being to spread anti-Confederate lies amongst the people.⁵⁸

Then, after telling his audience of how the anti-confederates were in "deadly fear" of the family allowance, the cornerstone of the confederate appeal - "They fear and hate it" - he asked his audience whether

...those two hundred Newfoundland fishermen along the south coast fishing in Canada right now would be so strong for Confederation if Confederation would hurt our fisheries? Or maybe they're about to be numbered amongst the Quislings and Traitors that Mr. Cashin is always talking about....And by the way, talking of traitors, our little friend Mr. Wickford Collins, the secretary of the Responsible Government league, has been throwing his weight about quite a bit lately. According to him, everybody in Newfoundland is a traitor except the handful who are for Responsible Government.⁵⁹

Next came an attack on *The Western Star* for its pending publication of a report on union which Lewin commissioned.⁶⁰ Voters were then encouraged to use the advance polls to vote, and the time, date, and location of these was then broadcast. Finally with a sweep around the island and Labrador, Smallwood named all the strong confederate communities he had visited, and noted that at Pound Cove he had the pleasure, "not to

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3 and 6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.

say embarrassment, of walking under the first arch ever built for me". He concluded by citing the good example of the high school students of Wesleyville, who had contacted him that afternoon to say that "Sunday Herald's dropped by Ches were immediately burnt by school pupils".⁶¹

On 21 May, Lewin had *The Western Star* publish the "Report on the Proposed Arrangements for the Entry of Newfoundland into Confederation", prepared by McDonald, Currie and Company of Montreal.⁶² The report observed that under confederation, Canada would spend more on Newfoundland than it received: taxes would increase, the new province would have a deficit of \$4,468,000 from the outset, and the per capita debt would rise from \$160 to \$1,340.⁶³ The document concluded by asking a number of questions "of an intangible nature", such as whether confederation would provide Newfoundland with a more stable economy, or if there would be adequate provincial revenue "to maintain and improve natural resources, roads, educational facilities, health and other services".⁶⁴ Bridle noted that the report contained information which both opponents and advocates of confederation could use, but that in St. John's, only *The Daily News* and the League latched onto the report and highlighted the projected provincial deficit.⁶⁵ Instead of disputing specific points in the report, Smallwood opted for the more profitable activity of attempting to discredit Lewin for having a personal interest in seeing the return of responsible government (so that Bowaters could continue

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 877, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 May 1948.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 878.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 878.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 879.

operating with tax concessions), and the confederates avoided speaking on the report.⁶⁶ As a campaign tactic, instead of addressing issues which many people wished to hear addressed, Smallwood often chose to make personal denunciations and use class hatred (even if, in some cases, his observations were true) to incite a dislike of responsible government.

After J.S. Macdonald left Newfoundland, the confederates enjoyed the assistance of Paul Bridle, and true to British predictions, the Canadians became more involved than ever in the confederate campaign. Bridle became the conduit through which MacKay sent hundreds of copies of Canadian Hansard, reports of the meetings between the Canadians and the Newfoundland Convention Delegation, the "Black" and "Grey Books", and "further copies of really basic uncoloured material on Confederation", with full intentions to supply more if there were a second referendum campaign.⁶⁷ The printing presses churned out copies in Ottawa, and the confederates distributed the material and waved the books at public meetings. Concerned that it not be known that the materials came through the High Commissioner's office, Bridle encouraged MacKay to "refrain from writing the words "St. John's" on the copies".⁶⁸

In the last of its special series of four issues before the vote, the *May Monitor* published a huge editorial entitled "God Guard Thee Newfoundland", in which it stated the belief that

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 879-80.

⁶⁷ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Bridle to MacKay, 14, 20, and especially 17 May 1948.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Bridle to MacKay, 20 May 1948.

the merits or demerits of Confederation with the Dominion of Canada are completely foreign to the problem to be decided at the present moment.... the question should not have been admitted to the ballot paper as a third choice.⁶⁹

Confederation had been placed on the ballot by "outside influences", and unfortunately this was irrevocable.⁷⁰ It roundly condemned the British government, and noted that "to ask our people to decide the question of a union on the basis of the present meagre and indefinite information available, is to commit a political crime against this country".⁷¹ Then, giving a historical background to its claim against confederation, it noted that

The faith and courage of the Newfoundlander no one has ever doubted.... It was that faith and courage which, over a hundred years ago, inspired a small group of patriots to fight for and win that political freedom which we have long treasured as our proud heritage and which today is in jeopardy.⁷²

In another article *The Monitor* reviewed each of the choices. The period of Commission of Government was a "wild era of limitless spending", and "could no longer be accepted as a possible form of government".⁷³ And since "no enquiry whatsoever has been put on foot to find out what the social and religious implications" of confederation were, *The Monitor* concluded that there was "not sufficient information at present available to the people to enable them wisely to determine whether or not Newfoundland should become a province of Canada".⁷⁴ In contrast, the "positive advantage of Responsible Government" would ensure "the maximum efficiency in the business of government", based on "a complete and thorough knowledge of local affairs and local conditions; of

⁶⁹ *The Monitor*, May 1948, p. 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1. The confederates' information on Canada was not shared with their opponents.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

the business of government being operated to the full by Newfoundlanders within Newfoundland".⁷⁵

In another twist, *The Monitor* compared the Newfoundland referendum with the April election in the Republic of Italy, in which ninety-four percent of the people voted for Christian Democrat Alcide de Gasperi "with the avowed determination that the evil and anti-religious influences of Communism would be halted...."⁷⁶ Newfoundland could thus be like Italy, a place where the people could "virtually and thoroughly defeat all the evil efforts of noisy and subversive minorities to undermine the moral structure of a nation".⁷⁷ With a final plea for the women of Newfoundland to exercise their obligations, and make sure that everyone in the household voted, *The Monitor* ended with the prayer "May God defend the right".⁷⁸ The confederates were thus a "noisy and subversive minority", and confederation was equated with Communism, both of which were to be despised and defeated.

While *The Monitor* had condemned confederation, other Roman Catholics outside the city disagreed. On 12 May Bridle noted that the "Irish Catholic element" on the west coast spearheaded the confederate movement there. Bishop O'Reilly was "certainly not opposed to it", William J. Keough had brought the co-operative movement on-side, and two of Smallwood's vice presidents, Kevin Barry and Loyola Whelan, were leading Roman Catholic lawyers and spoke at meetings.⁷⁹ Barry was also responsible for the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 866, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 May 1948. O'Reilly's independence was also noted in Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 310.

confederate pamphlet *Outport Opinion*, which "became the Corner Brook equivalent of *The Confederate*".⁸⁰ As well, Father Ronald Jones of Lourdes Parish openly campaigned for confederation,⁸¹ and Fr. S. St. Croix of St. Benedict's Parish, Cape St. George, also seems to have been a supporter.⁸² But when Bridle mistakenly assumed that west coast Roman Catholics were Irish, he may have identified one of the reasons for the Church's support. Bishop O'Reilly was a native Irishman, not of Newfoundland-Irish extraction, and had little sense of the history of the Irish on the east coast. Newfoundlanders living on what was the old French Shore were from varied backgrounds: some were French-Acadian, especially on the Port-au-Port Peninsula, as well as Highland Scots and some Scots and Irish from Cape Breton, with some older settlers from St. Pierre and northern France.⁸³ Together they had more affinity with their families in eastern Canada and in their communities than they did with either an unknown Newfoundland Irish stock in St. John's, or their particular brand of nationalism. Like many thousands of other Newfoundlanders, those on the west coast were very poor and lived in scattered communities. Isolationism and nationalism would not feed their families, but confederation would.

⁸⁰ George P. Hobbs, "We Had to Have a Driver", *Call Me Joey*, p. 73.

⁸¹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.37.001, St. George's-Port-au-Port, Pre-Confed., list of key supporters, and Smallwood to Fr. Jones, 3 June 1948; and PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file N-19-2, Fr. Jones to St. Laurent, 9 March 1949.

⁸² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.37.002, St. George's-Port-au-Port 1949, Fr. S. St. Croix to Smallwood, 4 June 1949.

⁸³ On the population of the west coast see Rosemary Ommer, "Highland Scots Migration to Southwestern Newfoundland: A Study of Kinship", *The Peopling of Newfoundland*, Ed. John Mannion (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), pp. 212-233; and John J. Mannion, "Settlers and Traders in Western Newfoundland", *Ibid.*, pp. 234-275.

Even off the west coast, there were independently-minded Roman Catholic clergy. Fr. Philip McCarthy of Gander was a confederate,⁸⁴ and so were Fr. Francis Muldowney,⁸⁵ Fr. William Collins of Fox Harbour,⁸⁶ and Fr. Gregory Battcock of St. Vincent's.⁸⁷ Smallwood's greatest clerical supporter was Monsignor Michael F. Dinn, the parish priest of North River, Conception Bay, and Vicar-General of the Diocese of Harbour Grace.⁸⁸ The activities of Dinn and Collins greatly displeased Archbishop Roche, who wished to have Dinn removed, and who called Fr. Collins in for a lecture.⁸⁹ On the other hand, the anti-confederates enjoyed the support of most R.C. clergy. Fr. Hinchey, in Fortune Harbour, Green Bay, was a League supporter,⁹⁰ while newly-ordained Fr. James O'Dwyer made a modest contribution to the EUP.⁹¹ The League also received the support of Monsignor Bartlett of Bell Island, Fr. Randall J. Greene of St. John's,⁹² Rev. Dr. Greene in Torbay, and Fr. Meaney in Grand Falls.⁹³

⁸⁴ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8; J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.14.004, Grand Falls I-N 1949, Fr. McCarthy to Smallwood, 2 April 1949, and Smallwood to Fr. McCarthy, 4 April 1949.

⁸⁵ Fr. Thomas Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989; Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Fr. Thomas Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989; Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992; and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 309.

⁸⁷ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*; J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.002, Port de Grave 1949, Msgr. Dinn to Smallwood, 31 May 1949.

⁸⁹ Gregory Power to the author, 27 January 1992, and Fr. Moakler to the author, 2 April 1989.

⁹⁰ RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins May-June 1948, Cashin to Fr. Hinchey, 5 June 1948.

⁹¹ See RGLP 3.01.015, Donors and Donations.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Fr. Meaney was approached by the League to show slides (RGLP 3.01.022), so presumably he had been identified to them as a supporter; the same most likely applied to the rental of the Church hall to the RGL by Rev. Dr. J.J. Greene of Torbay (RGLP 3.01.023).

In reply to the League's request for names in late 1947, Fr. L. FitzGerald of Buchans had sent a list of supporters, identifying two "key men who can if they will swing it here", and promising to do all he could behind the scenes for responsible government.⁹⁴ In St. John's, people in St. Teresa's Parish in Mundy Pond who displayed confederate signs were told by the pastor, Monsignor Harold Summers, to remove them.⁹⁵ Gregory Power maintains that while he was in church in Placentia, Monsignor Edward P. Maher mounted the pulpit and denounced him as a "Communist among us, pouring out his poison".⁹⁶

On the other hand, the confederates did not lack support among Protestant clergy or other influential persons. Rev. F.W. Peacock, Superintendent of the Moravian Mission at Nain, Labrador, eagerly solicited information from Bradley on "confederation terms re eskimo and mission" with which to spread the gospel of confederation among his congregation, and sent grateful regards to the campaign.⁹⁷ Harold Horwood noted that in the outports, Salvation Army bands often provided musical support at campaign meetings,⁹⁸ and Smallwood later received official congratulations from Brigadier C.D. Wiseman,⁹⁹ who during the campaign was suggested to Smallwood as a forceful and

⁹⁴ RGLP 3.01.020, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, September-December 1947, Fr. L. FitzGerald to RGL, n.d.

⁹⁵ The author's maternal grandmother was one of the few proud confederates of the Ropewalk Range who defiantly displayed the confederate sign. She was also one of the parish rectory's housekeepers.

⁹⁶ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992; also see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 120.

⁹⁷ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.23.001, Labrador, Rev. F.W. Peacock to Bradley, 30 April 1948.

⁹⁸ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 114.

⁹⁹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.43.003, St. John's West H-Z 1949, Brigadier C.D. Wiseman, Salvation Army, to Smallwood, 4 April 1949.

influential speaker for confederation,¹⁰⁰ and whom Smallwood noted was a "good Confederate".¹⁰¹ Rev. W.B. Perry, Minister of Memorial United Church in Grand Falls later supported Smallwood, and suggested acceptable political candidates,¹⁰² and Rev. Lester Burry, the Convention delegate from Labrador, also openly supported confederation in his pastoral charge in Labrador.¹⁰³ Even though it was deemed improper for magistrates and justices of the peace to take part in political activities,¹⁰⁴ the confederates also enjoyed the support of a number of them, including Magistrate George Trickett of Glovertown,¹⁰⁵ Henry Genge, J.P. of Flower's Cove,¹⁰⁶ Cecil Hann, J.P. of Cape Freels, and Solomon Gosse, J.P. of Spaniard's Bay.¹⁰⁷ In 1947, when he went to Ottawa, Smallwood himself was a justice of the peace,¹⁰⁸ and his

¹⁰⁰ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.001, Port de Grave Pre-Confed., J. Dawe, Coley's Point, to Smallwood, 4 May 1948.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Smallwood to J. Dawe, 5 May 1948.

¹⁰² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.14.005, Grand Falls O-R 1949, Rev. Perry to Smallwood, 1 June 1949. Perry was at the Grand Falls pastoral charge in 1948, and was most likely a supporter. In 1949 he was familiar with and strongly disapproved of Cashin.

¹⁰³ Hector Swain, *Lester Leeland Burry - Labrador Pastor and Father of Confederation*, (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1983), pp. 47-8.

¹⁰⁴ Robert S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992.

¹⁰⁵ J.R. Smallwood papers, 1.03.001, Bonavista North Pre-Confed., Smallwood to G. Trickett, 26 May 1948;

¹⁰⁶ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.33.001, St. Barbe Pre-Confed., H. Genge to Smallwood, 18 March 1948; Smallwood to H. Genge, 2 April 1948. In contrast, S.T. Genge of Flower's Cove wrote the RGL, wishing "wholeheartedly" to "regain our heritage our forefathers fought so hard for...." See RGLP 3.01.019, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins January-September 1947, S.T. Genge to RGL, 23 August 1947.

¹⁰⁷ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.001, Newfoundland Confederate Association, Vice Presidents in Referenda.

¹⁰⁸ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 468, W.J. Carew to J.S. Macdonald, 10 May 1947, regarding Mr. J.R. Smallwood, J.P.

previous connections with the profession provided the confederates with a competent and informed political network when it was required.

In a last-ditch attempt to enlist American support for economic union, Stirling went to Washington in late May with a little more than a week left in the campaign.¹⁰⁹ On 24 May he met Andrew Foster of the State Department, but Stirling received no encouragement. Foster had notified other officials that Stirling did not officially represent the Newfoundland government, so no prompting or statements were to be given to Stirling because they would be used in the campaign.¹¹⁰ For his part, Stirling "referred to an alleged association of 25 years ago between Smallwood and Trotsky", and attempted to foment American fear of a "Red Party" in Newfoundland,¹¹¹ but apparently to no effect. Stirling was not even told that the Americans were interested in maintaining and augmenting a quiet defensive presence in Newfoundland. In April they had approached Commissioner of Justice Albert Walsh with a request to conduct hydrographic and topographic surveys of the coastal area of Labrador,¹¹² and hoped to conduct amphibious landing exercises. The Commonwealth Relations Office was contacted, but the Commission deferred permission pending confirmation by an elected government of Newfoundland, fearing that to bind any successive government in the offing to a deal made by the Commission would give cannon-fodder to the RGL.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ MacKenzie, "Economic Union", *NQ*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1988): 29.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹¹¹ MacKenzie, *Inside the Atlantic Triangle*, p. 201.

¹¹² PRO DO 35/3488, W. Garland Richardson, United States Consul, to Commissioner Albert J. Walsh, 13 April 1948.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, Commission of Government to Commonwealth Relations Office, 7 May 1948; and Foreign Office to H.N. Tait, 26 May 1948.

The status of the American presence in Newfoundland had the potential to influence the political campaigns. On 27 May, Lester B. Pearson held a press conference in Ottawa, at which he was asked about the fate of the American bases in Newfoundland under Confederation. He responded that the present treaty would remain in existence and that the RGL were wrong to suggest that it would be changed if confederation occurred.¹¹⁴ *The Evening Telegram* published Pearson's response on the cover of its 30 May issue, and Smallwood was so relieved that he read it over the radio, and had copies printed and sent to civilians working on the American bases at Argentia and Stephenville.¹¹⁵ But rumours of closure persisted on the bases, and were even attributed to the commander. So Smallwood contacted Major General C.V. Haynes of Fort Pepperrell in St. John's, and received a denial that he had made any such statement.¹¹⁶ When it came to the potential for the RGL to capitalize on Newfoundlanders' fears of losing jobs on the bases, the confederates took no chances.

In the last few days of May, the battle raged. The RGL had *The Independent* delivered around St. John's by the boys of Holy Cross School,¹¹⁷ and in an attempt to reach the voters of the south-west coast, on 27 May the RGL broadcast its message on radio stations in Sydney, Nova Scotia.¹¹⁸ Supporters were approached by the League to act as official agents in the polling booths, and these often telegraphed back both their

¹¹⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 882, Pearson to Bridle, 27 May 1948.

¹¹⁵ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to MacKay, 22 June 1948.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ RGLP 3.01.023, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May 1948, Brother D.F. Nash to Collins, 20 May 1948.

¹¹⁸ Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136.

willingness to do so, and an occasional report on the state of opinion around the island.¹¹⁹ But not all was within the control of the League, and confederate tactics were many and various. On the 27th from Gander, Ted Henley telegraphed Collins outlining difficulties encountered at a meeting held the previous evening. While Major Fred Marshall, Frank Fogwill, and Ron Fahey spoke, a small group of confederates attempted to disrupt the meeting, but were unsuccessful.¹²⁰ Collins countered this by telling one supporter of the nature of the confederate campaign:

The Confederate propaganda has begun to disgust the people for they are descending to the use of communistic measures such as using liars in their broadcasts out and out lies and by trying to break up Responsible Government league meetings in various settlements. I feel their day is done and they will get the licking they deserve on Referendum Day.¹²¹

While the League still had life and could fight, it did, but in a fight which was largely personal and used the mass media, it lacked the personnel and the expertise of the confederates.

Indicative of the general bitterness which prevailed, all parties received threatening telephone calls. At one point, Smallwood was telephoned at home by a caller who said: "Smallwood, you son of a bitch, I'm going to shoot you"; but before Smallwood hung up he answered, "That's fine. Thanks for letting me know".¹²² Donald Jamieson later related that he also had received a phone call when he was home with a cold. After he told the inquiring caller that he was ill, she exclaimed "Then I hope you

¹¹⁹ For an example of this process see RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, E.P. Reddy, Marystown, to O'Leary, 27 May 1948.

¹²⁰ RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, Henley to Collins 27 May 1948; and 3.01.018, Higgins to Henley, 9 August 1948.

¹²¹ RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, Collins to A.P. Moulton, Burgeo, 27 May 1948.

¹²² John R. Courage, "A Cause to Champion", *Call Me Joey*, p. 117.

die, you bastard!"¹²³ A general climate of uncertainty and acrimony had settled over the political community, and the potential for civic disorder was feared by many.

At every occasion, the confederates hammered home the message that confederation would bring the Canadian family allowance (the "baby bonus"), the "old age pension" and a chicken (a savoured morsel at this time in Newfoundland) in every pot. In response, one of Peter Cashin's platforms was the very immorality of all this, but he was captured in a *Confederate* cartoon, and vilified as a penitent schoolboy filling a chalk-board with lines of "It was I who said family allowances are immoral".¹²⁴ These financial enticements waved in front of the electorate did not escape A.B. Perlin's eye, who condemned them in *The Observer's Weekly* because the confederates gave no indication of how these services were to be funded.¹²⁵ In his 27 May "Wayfarer" column, Perlin also railed against this, and cited the recent McDonald, Currie Report commissioned by Lewin, which vindicated the RGL's view that confederation would mean new taxes, and an increased per capita debt. "Can this province provide at least \$10,000,000 a year in new taxes", Perlin asked, "apart from customs and income taxes? Certainly not without burdensome taxation".¹²⁶ But the confederates had the last laugh when *The Confederate* published Greg Power's "Stable of the Sacred Cow", which featured vicious but hilarious attacks on the escapades of Crosbie, Cashin ("Pete, the Hero of Sinking Fund Gulch"), Perlin (Mr. Wayfarer with a "thick, synthetic Oxford accent"), Jamieson ("Donald Duck"), and Malcolm Hollett, who "refused to lo in his

¹²³ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 91.

¹²⁴ For this cartoon see the front cover of *The Power of the Pen*.

¹²⁵ *Observer's Weekly*, 18 May 1948, p. 1.

¹²⁶ *The Daily News*, 27 May 1948, as reprinted in Perlin, *A Clear Head*, p. 120.

stomach pump to anyone, least of all Pete".¹²⁷ The tiresome minutiae of RGL and EUP arguments were ignored, and instead the personalities (and thus their arguments) were dealt with much more effectively using humour.

The confederates' greatest asset was the oratorical ability of Smallwood. He never tired of telling voters how the merchant classes kept the poor down, and Grace Sparkes, a campaigner for the RGL, claimed that Smallwood browbeat the people into believing him. Sparkes claimed that while merchant exploitation had sometimes occurred, it

...was not true in many, many cases. It was not true. It was exaggerated by Smallwood to the point of making people believe it. But Mr. Smallwood believed it - if he said something five times, and people didn't believe it, then he said it ten times, and still they didn't believe it; if he said it nineteen times everybody'd believe it, 'cause nobody'd say it that often unless t'were true.¹²⁸

Smallwood was a master at what anthropologist Robert Paine has called "interlocutory rhetoric", whereby oratory took the form of a "conversation" with the audience.¹²⁹ Familiar examples were taken from rural domestic and family life, and the audience was personally involved in the proposition under discussion by means of rhetorical questions.¹³⁰ Speeches were also illustrated with tall stories ("cuffers") which seized the imagination of the audience.¹³¹ Paine observed that Smallwood "brought Newfoundlanders to a new kind of awareness regarding their political identity: the

¹²⁷ Power, *The Power of the Pen*, pp. 37-8.

¹²⁸ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

¹²⁹ See Robert Paine, "Smallwood: Political Strategy, and a "Career" of Rhetoric", *NFS*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Fall 1987): 217.

¹³⁰ For an example of Smallwood's rhetoric in the "Ballot Box Peroration" from the 1948 campaigns see *ibid.*, p. 218.

¹³¹ Robert Paine, "The Persuasiveness of Smallwood: Rhetoric of *Cuffer* and *Scoff*, of Metonym and Metaphor", *NFS*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1985): 60.

awareness of self as an object unto itself",¹³² and that lacking "a "typical" middle-class St. John's voice, ...his countrywide audience could recognize he was "an outport speaker [by birth] from a non-Irish area".¹³³

The confederates employed many slogans and campaign tricks, to considerable effect. Campaign worker Herb Wells had the job of working on the St. John's finger piers, where the schooners came in with visiting crews. When the advance polls were held at the Colonial Building two weeks before referendum day, Wells would arrange transportation for the crews to the polls, and noted that "I used to chalk up on my list so many more votes lost for Responsible Government".¹³⁴ Wells also noted that one evening, having been sent up to the VOCM studios on Parade Street to pick up the confederates' tape recorder, he mistakenly took the EUP's recorder, on which there was a tape of speech by Jamieson which was about to be broadcast. The confederates listened to the speech, took notes, and then returned the tape recorder. When Jamieson's speech was broadcast, and when the confederates spoke just after Jamieson, they rebutted every argument.¹³⁵

During the last days of the campaign both sides made an all-out effort to secure every last ounce of support. The RGL divided itself into various groups and St. John's committees to ensure that its supporters turned out on polling day.¹³⁶ But according to *The Confederate*, the EUP was a little less restrained. Several nights before the

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹³³ Paine, "Persuasiveness of Smallwood", *NFS*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1985): 63.

¹³⁴ Herb Wells, "Some Memories of the Confederation Campaign", *Call Me Joey*, p. 67.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹³⁶ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 27 May 1948.

referendum a truck with EUP and RGL supporters plastered pictures of Crosbie on Smallwood's Devon Row house, and painted the sidewalk in front of his house with the slogan "Vote Responsible Government". A crowd of "nearly 500 people" had gathered outside, attracted by the campaigners, who terrorized Smallwood's wife and family who were at home.¹³⁷ That night, Smallwood was out of the house at radio station VOCM, and when "hoodlums" in a "Crosbie truck" arrived at the station threatening Smallwood, they were "driven away by the police".¹³⁸ Finally, another "Crosbie" loud-speaker truck stopped outside Smallwood's mother's house, and "for half an hour blared out insulting remarks".¹³⁹

The 20 May *Confederate* printed a list of more than 500 expatriate Newfoundlanders who supported confederation, along with their home communities in Newfoundland.¹⁴⁰ Telling readers that Canada was "a great British nation with a great future", it deliberately played to the pro-British sentiments of many Newfoundlanders, especially outport Protestants, and attempted to soft-pedal the French Catholic element whose desire for Labrador Cashin loved to emphasize. "British Union" became the new motto, and eventually the masthead of *The Confederate* was outfitted with two Union Jacks as emblems. The 28 May *Independent* also took a patriotic stand, and like *The Monitor* prayed the words of the Ode, "God Guard Thee Newfoundland", while supporting economic union by publishing a photo of Stirling and Senator Brooks.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *The Confederate*, 9 June 1948, p. 1.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ *The Confederate*, 20 May 1948, pp. 4-6.

¹⁴¹ *The Independent*, 28 May 1948, pp. 1 and 6.

On 31 May *The Confederate* projected the districts which would support and oppose confederation, and that night, in a show of defiance to anti-confederate St. John's, the confederates held a rally at the CLB Armoury on Harvey Road.¹⁴² When Smallwood emerged following the meeting, he was mobbed by a hostile crowd. His glasses were damaged, and only with the assistance of bodyguards did he escape on the roof of his car.¹⁴³ During the last two days before the vote Smallwood made a sweep around Trinity and Conception Bays in a truck equipped with loudspeakers, booming the message from hilltops and across harbours, and as Smallwood put it, settlements were blanketed with his voice.¹⁴⁴ Fifty-odd speeches were given, with the appeal to the emotions being uppermost.¹⁴⁵ Finally succumbing to hoarseness, even Smallwood temporarily gave up the ghost.

All residents of Newfoundland who were 21 years of age or over, registered on the voters list, or who were sworn in at the last minute were eligible to vote. The third of June, polling day, came and went. Both sides contented themselves with making spot announcements encouraging the electorate to vote.¹⁴⁶ Fearing that American military personnel might interfere in the referendum, U.S. troops were confined to their bases on polling day, and requests from the Newfoundland government to open polling booths in special areas on the bases were refused.¹⁴⁷ That evening, the returns were broadcast

¹⁴² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 300.

¹⁴³ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992; also see Horwood, *Joey*, p. 121.

¹⁴⁴ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁶ *The Confederate*, 7 July 1948, p. 1. This paper claimed that on 3 June, a truck bearing the Pink, White, and Green flag made the rounds of St. John's, telling voters "Don't vote against your flag!", but this may not have occurred.

¹⁴⁷ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to MacKay, 22 June 1948.

island-wide on VONF, and responsible government won, although with a plurality. 22,311 voters (14.32%) chose Commission of Government, 64,066 chose confederation with Canada (41.13%), and 69,400 chose responsible government (44.55%).¹⁴⁸

There were many reasons why Newfoundlanders voted as they did. In Fogo, many voted for confederation because the Commission did not build the hospital it promised there,¹⁴⁹ just as many civil servants and their families elsewhere voted for Commission of Government because they feared the loss of government jobs. In the neighbourhood of the Ropewalk Range on Mundy Pond Road in St. John's, not a few residents voted for confederation because they thought it would improve the poor housing standards, and because they eagerly anticipated the family allowance scheme.¹⁵⁰ In Nutak, in northern Labrador, the people voted for the first time. One speaker at a referendum-eve political meeting there advised voters to choose confederation because during the previous Easter week at the Moravian Mission at Hebron, he had been told that "God and Mr. Smallwood expected him to vote for Union with Canada".¹⁵¹ But true to Smallwood's projections, the Avalon Peninsula with its predominantly Roman Catholic districts had solidly voted for responsible government. In St. John's East and West responsible government was given 65.87% and 65.63% support, Harbour Main-Bell

¹⁴⁸ Referenda statistics are taken from Most Rev. R.J. Lahey, *Comparative Tables*, Appendix I.

¹⁴⁹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.10.002, Fogo A-F 1949, E. Earle to Smallwood, 12 April 1949.

¹⁵⁰ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.43.003, St. John's West H-Z 1949, R. Maher to Smallwood, 2 June 1949. The author's maternal grandmother, Katherine Nugent, was Maher's next door neighbour. She later recounted that she and a number of her neighbours voted for confederation because of the "baby bonus" and the "old age pension".

¹⁵¹ Northern Labrador Trading Operations Diary, Nutak, Labrador; 3 June 1948, author unknown. The author thanks Dr. James K. Hiller for this document in his possession. The same entry also noted that one man and his concubine "are now very perturbed over a misunderstanding which occurred. Joe has a radio and all Winter they have listened to Mr. Smallwood and have grown to love him. Unfortunately they thought he represented Responsible Government and because of the love they have [for] him they both voted for Responsible Government. Total votes cast Forty-Four: Commission of Government one, Confederation with Canada forty-two, Responsible Government two [sic]."

Island saw 82.56% support, Ferryland gave the highest with 90.48% support, and Placentia St. Mary's gave 78.68% support. Off the Avalon, 20% voted for Commission, 54% voted for confederation, and 26% voted for responsible government, while on the Avalon Commission support dropped to 8%, confederation claimed 25%, and responsible government polled 67%.

Significantly, of all the districts which gave a strong majority to confederation, Labrador was the highest with 81.38%. If the events which occurred in Hebron and Nutak were repeated in other places in Labrador, the vote there could be easily accounted for. But despite the support confederation received outside St. John's, it was not strong enough to win. Of great importance was the support shown for Commission of Government in districts off the Avalon peninsula. It was strongest in Twillingate, where 42.44% voted for it, Fogo (25.65%), Grand Falls (24.05%), Bonavista South (22.93%), and in St. Barbe (21.09%). Considering that there had been no campaign for Commission, it did extremely well. The considerable number of votes it received had resulted in an inconclusive verdict in the first referendum, and these votes would become crucial in a run-off vote.

Table 6.1Vote Percentages by District, 3 June 1948

Com. Government Confederation R. Government

Districts (with over 15% vote) in Central and Western Newfoundland

White Bay	16.12	63.71	20.17
Green Bay	18.87	60.62	20.78
Gr. Falls	24.05	40.37	35.59
Twillingate	42.44	43.13	-----
Fogo	25.65	46.81	27.54
Bonav. N.	-----	63.57	24.80
Bonav. S.	22.93	33.90	43.16
Trinity N.	19.67	47.93	32.39
Plac't. W.	-----	48.78	39.70
Burin	-----	78.56	-----
Fort. B.-Herm.	17.47	63.54	18.99
Burg.-La. Poile	15.88	74.74	-----
St. Geo's Pt. P.	15.93	47.22	36.84
Humber	20.43	53.72	25.85
St. Barbe	21.09	64.32	-----
Labrador	-----	81.38	-----

Districts on the Avalon Peninsula

Trinity S.	-----	47.86	41.40
Carb. B.d.V.	-----	43.36	50.39
Hr. Grace	-----	30.55	64.16
Pt. de Grave	-----	40.62	52.40
Hr.M.-B.Isl.	-----	-----	82.56
St. John's W.	-----	24.94	65.6?
St. John's E.	-----	23.51	65.87
Ferryland	-----	-----	90.48
Plac.-St.M's	-----	15.21	78.68

Immediate reactions to the results were mixed. At confederate headquarters, Horwood recounted that some cried, until Smallwood appeared among them from the upstairs room and told them to take heart.¹⁵² Confederation was within their grasp, because without a clear majority for responsible government, Commission would be dropped, and a runoff referendum would be held. More Newfoundlanders voted against responsible government than for it, as the EUP quickly realized. Many Catholic settlements went solidly for responsible government, which as Jamieson remarked, was a fact which later "could bring further Protestant defections".¹⁵³ The EUP saw that "Our movement had reached the high watermark. We had no where to go but down".¹⁵⁴ Jamieson noted particularly that both the League and the EUP "had shot our bolt", and that "In the aftermath of the first contest we were listless, uncertain, indecisive".¹⁵⁵ Perhaps it was his own wayward Celtic logic, but strangely enough, after hearing that responsible government was leading in the 3 June referendum, the mercurial Mackenzie King admitted to his diary that "Personally I would prefer to see responsible government carry and then an agreement made between a government that was responsible with the Canadian Government".¹⁵⁶ It was a sentiment shared by many Newfoundlanders.

In the first referendum campaign, the dominant struggle had been over economic union, and it provided the impetus for both the EUP and the RGL campaigns. With a pyrrhic victory for responsible government in the first round, the EUP went into decline and quickly fell apart, and the RGL was left to battle the confederates without the aid of

¹⁵² Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 122-3.

¹⁵³ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 885, Extract from *The Mackenzie King Record*.

the EUP's slickness, vigour, or enticements, or the confederates' Canadian financial and informational assistance. The appealing wording of the Commission of Government option on the ballot had been the governor's artifice, and had worked well. An otherwise straight vote between two choices had been divided, and all that now remained was to convince the Commission vote to switch to confederation, and to solidify the existing votes for confederation and augment them using every conceivable means.

At midnight on the morning of June 5, J.B. McEvoy was visited at his home on Patrick Street by "a Deputation" from the confederate party who asked him to assume the party's leadership,¹⁵⁷ and take over from Bradley. McEvoy wrote MacKay telling him this, and while McEvoy did not identify his visitors, MacKay later observed that McEvoy had been approached, "I gather, by Mr. Smallwood and others who have been disappointed by Mr. Bradley's lack of aggressiveness", and that McEvoy had confided that Commissioners Walsh and Quinton were prepared to publicly support him along with Monroe.¹⁵⁸ McEvoy appealed to MacKay "NOT as an Official of the Canadian Government", but as his old professor of political science, "for help at a very difficult time",¹⁵⁹ for information on whether the terms as negotiated were final, whether the Canadian attitude towards unity was "lukewarm or indifferent", whether the Newfoundland system of controlling fish exports would be wrecked by confederation, and whether a bare majority would be sufficient grounds to proceed on confederation.¹⁶⁰ Because MacKay was now being asked to embark on activities which were "somewhat

¹⁵⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol II, Part II, p. 1969, McEvoy to MacKay, 5 June 1948; and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 891, MacKay to Bridle, 8 June 1948.

¹⁵⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 892, MacKay to E. Reid, 9 June 1948.

¹⁵⁹ For McEvoy's letters of 5 and 7 June see Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 1969-1971, or PAC MG 30 E 159. Vol. 6, file: J.B. McEvoy, 1948-49.

¹⁶⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 892, questions as interpreted by MacKay to E. Reid, 9 June 1948.

beyond the letter" of the instructions given to J.S. Macdonald, he had a discussion with St. Laurent before entering into a voluminous correspondence with McEvoy.¹⁶¹ For the duration of the campaign McEvoy was supplied with a number of very useful memoranda on recent Canadian policy changes, the advantages to Newfoundland of being a part of Canada in the event of a recession, and on Newfoundland public finance should responsible government return.¹⁶² While McEvoy busied himself over the weekend in preparation for his new exalted office, the long knives were drawn out by the confederates.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 893, footnotes 48 and 50.

¹⁶² For these see Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 1972-1984.

Chapter 7

Town, Bay, and Garden Party: The Second Referendum Campaign, June-July 1948

The second campaign began as soon as the results of the first were known. The confederates immediately picked up where they had left off. With their superior support network and propaganda machine, they gained control of political events, and more importantly, political perceptions. As a result of the strength shown by confederation in the first referendum, a number of Water Street merchants and influential personalities reassessed their options in case confederation won in the second round, and came out in public support of the confederate cause. Unprepared for the inconclusive verdict of the first referendum, the RGL was in a state of disarray, and when the EUP began to disintegrate, it did not fill the void. Late in 1948, an irate John M. O'Neill, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Harbour Grace, looked back on the events of the previous summer. He wrote to Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, informing him that

It has been your misfortune to have been cast in the stellar role in a historical performance in company with two unmitigated scoundrels - Smallwood who unblushingly boasted to a Canadian audience recently that he used "Skulduggery" (his own word) to gain his point, and Bradley who served notice on one of my priests after the first referendum to the effect that: "This time it is going to be a straight sectarian campaign." The facts eloquently bear them both out!

O'Neill was opinionated, perceptive, and fairly accurate, but his account of events was by no means complete. In the second round the confederates engaged in a concerted sectarian campaign in an attempt to capture the Commission of Government vote and sweep the country for confederation. McEvoy was "catered to" and used by the confederates, who brilliantly exploited every situation to their advantage.

¹ PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file: N-19-2-0, Most Rev. J.M. O'Neill to St. Laurent, 28 December 1948.

On Sunday 6 June, Stirling's *Sunday Herald* published the much-touted "Words of Senator Brooks",² but also reported that for the first time in their history, the Roman Catholic lay orders of Irish Christian Brothers, Sisters of Mercy, and Presentation Sisters had voted in the polls.³ Harold Horwood later noted that the lay religious had been "released from their vows" by the archbishop,⁴ which one nun later confirmed.⁵ While Richard Gwyn believed that the report was made by accident,⁶ and Horwood thought it was "the most serious mistake of the campaign",⁷ other contemporaries had second thoughts. James Halley later recounted that there had been a lull in the EUP's propaganda, and then came *The Herald's* announcement about the brothers and nuns. He was astounded at its inflammatory nature. It was written in the style of *The Confederate*, and Halley immediately wondered if something was wrong. He wondered whether the EUP had taken leave of its senses or if party members had accepted Smallwood's blandishments and become confederates, because the EUP would not have jeopardized its own campaign and played into confederate hands unless there had been some backroom politicking.⁸ But Geoff Stirling later described the incident as one of the biggest blunders of the EUP campaign.⁹

² *The Sunday Herald*, 6 June 1948, p. 3.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 124. The vows voluntarily taken by nuns and brothers prevented them from taking part in political activity.

⁵ John Edward FitzGerald, "Sectarianism, The Roman Catholic Church, and the Fight for Confederation" unpublished ms. in Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland. 1 1989, p. 39.

⁶ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 109.

⁷ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 124.

⁸ James Halley to the author, 20 May 1992.

⁹ Geoff Stirling to the author, 6 July 1992.

Harold Horwood later admitted that the division of votes by religion in the first referendum was "a split we could use to great profit".¹⁰ At confederate headquarters, he asked Smallwood if he had seen *The Herald*. Smallwood's response is not known. But the confederates shot around town to buy up all the *Sunday Heralds* they could find.¹¹ Horwood circled the article about the brothers and nuns, and with Smallwood worked up a list of Newfoundland Orange Lodges,¹² of which there were around 190.¹³ They then clipped the article out of the paper and sent it to every Lodge in the country.¹⁴ Copies of *The Monitor's* editorials were also sent to the Lodges.¹⁵ According to Power, during the second campaign Smallwood called a number of his supporters into his office, notably the Keans and Barbours, who were captains of vessels which called at ports around the island. He threw a copy of *The Monitor* on the desk in front of them, told them about the "Borgia from Branch" and "the Popish Plot" and, playing on the RGL's "Home Rule", said "What do you want? Rome Rule? Now go and tell your people".¹⁶

During the first campaign, Governor Macdonald had alluded to the connections between religious duty and politics. For the 75th anniversary of George Street United Church, he mounted its pulpit and revealed his dream of the union of church and state when he admonished the congregation to vote in the forthcoming referendum

¹⁰ Harold Horwood, "How We Got Confederation", *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 37.

¹¹ Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 124-5.

¹² Horwood, "How We Got Confederation", *Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 37.

¹³ Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 83.

¹⁴ Horwood, *Joey*, p. 124.

¹⁵ Gregory Power to the author, 27 January 1992; also see J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.028, Correspondence J.G. Higgins, 1949-1951, Free Protestant, Grand Bank, to Higgins, 29 March 1950.

¹⁶ Gregory Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

...for the sole purpose of making Newfoundland a grander country, not so much to serve selfish and personal interests, but to serve the interests of every Newfoundlander.... To vote to serve sectional interests regardless of the consequences to others is patently unchristian. It is only when the Christian spirit, the Christian way of life prevails at the polls...that we shall be able to remove the misery and anxiety that torture the human race today. Putting Newfoundland right is also an individual responsibility.¹⁷

On 23 May the governor delivered another sermon at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in St. John's. Noting the Italian election and that

Many factors affected this election, but few would claim that any of those factors operated more decisively than the action taken by the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church....They intervened and intervened effectively.¹⁸

Noting Bishop Abraham's article in *The Diocesan Magazine* reminding every voter of the "personal responsibility" to "record his vote; then to make it a personal vote",¹⁹ Macdonald then quoted *The Monitor's* admonition to voters, and pronounced that "The Christian Church is not prepared to stand aside and to maintain an attitude of silence, whilst fundamental issues in which man's welfare is involved are being decided".²⁰ By the governor's lights, it was only right and proper that the church play a part in the state, and in the first campaign he had contented himself with encouraging voters to fulfil their Christian duty. But his earlier sermons were only the beginning of his public political activities.

On Thursday 3 June, the day of the referendum, the Newfoundland Conference of the United Church of Canada went into regular annual session for six days at Wesley

¹⁷ Sir Gordon Macdonald, *Newfoundland at the Crossroads*, (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1949), pp. 66-7, speech of 17 May.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

United Church in St. John's.²¹ On Saturday 5 June, the delegates were guests of Governor Macdonald at an afternoon tea at Government House,²² and at that time the governor was invited to address the Conference banquet on 7 June.²³ "A Great Bible Man",²⁴ Macdonald had irritated many St. John's inhabitants for his condemnation of "the decadence of St. John's", where the people were the "beer guzzlers of the West end and the cocktail drinkers of the East end".²⁵ Macdonald spoke on Monday evening and remarked that "There is one denomination here which played a big part in the last Referendum. It is time that the Protestant bodies should unite".²⁶ The United States Consul General observed that the event "sparked protest and bitter feeling", and later reported that the governor was accused of inspiring a circular letter to the Loyal Orange Association.²⁷ Where in the first campaign Macdonald had been pro-active in his support of confederation, in the second, he joined the confederates in becoming openly sectarian in the bid for votes.

²¹ *Minutes and Reports of the Newfoundland Conference of the United Church of Canada held in Wesley Church, St. John's Newfoundland, June 3-9, 1948*, (St. John's: Robinson and Company, 1948), in the Archives of the Newfoundland Conference, United Church of Canada, Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²⁴ See Willard De Lue, file: De Lue in Newfoundland, Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, MF-233, "Labor Peer Governor "A Great Bible Man", no pub. or date; and Brian Cahill, "Newfoundland's Labor Governor", *Atlantic Guardian*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (January 1948): 22.

²⁵ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.028, Correspondence J.G. Higgins, 1949-1951, Higgins to Sir Waldron Smithers, Kent, England, 22 March 1949.

²⁶ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.027, J.G. Higgins to Dr. Leo Jackman, 26 August 1948; J.R. Smallwood Papers, 7.01.003, Cashin to Burchell, 15 January 1949; and Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 323.

²⁷ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 323, and p. 420, footnotes 55-7.

On 8 June, R.A. MacKay wrote Bridle informing him of the request the confederates made of McEvoy, and that McEvoy "appears to have definitely made up his mind".²⁸ MacKay also noted that in a telephone conversation, McEvoy mentioned that "two commissioners and W.B. Munro [sic] might come out publicly in support if he took the lead".²⁹ Bridle indicated that "unless there is a substantial alteration of existing views the disposition of the 22,000 Commission of Government votes will likely be the decisive factor at the second poll".³⁰ He was sure that the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church was an important factor in the support given to the RGL, but also that the confederates "may shortly receive the support of some more influential and prominent men.... Politics have entered into the very texture of society here...."³¹

McEvoy's overnight involvement in the Newfoundland Confederate Association illustrated two battles raging: one public, and one private. The first was for Commission of Government votes; the second was for final control of the confederate party, and thus for the premiership. For years, Smallwood and Bradley had planned for confederation and prepared to lead a confederate party, and it would be most unlikely that they would suddenly step down after so much work, with the taste of victory on their lips.³² McEvoy also envisioned himself as the premier, and given the warning Bradley had received in April about McEvoy's vanity, Smallwood must have known this. The benefits

²⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 891, MacKay to Bridle, 8 June 1948.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 891. Walter S. Monroe was a Water Street businessman and had been prime minister from 1924-1928.

³⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 889, Bridle to MacKay, 8 June 1948.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 890-1.

³² On 1 June F.G. Matthews of Corner Brook wired the Confederate Association inquiring as to the truth of a rumour that Bradley had resigned. The reply came back over the typed names of Smallwood and Bradley, simply giving "our kindest regards" and predicting a "glorious victory." See J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.20.001, Humber Pre-Confed., F.G. Matthews to Confederate Association, 1 June 1948; Smallwood/Bradley to F.G. Matthews, 1 June 1948.

of offering McEvoy the party leadership were obvious. The latter could be removed once and for all as Smallwood's rival; through McEvoy's connection with R.A. MacKay, Ottawa could be milked for even more information and assistance; McEvoy was a confidante of the governor, and above all, McEvoy's connections could bring Commissioners and prominent Water Street merchants into the party to help switch the Commission vote from the first referendum, and put the decisive stamp of respectability on confederation. In a brilliant stroke, Smallwood astutely dangled the party leadership before McEvoy's eyes in the hope that his vanity would make him take it, but in the knowledge that with a sectarian campaign in the offing, McEvoy as a Catholic would never be accepted by the Protestant outports, even if he brought in some Catholic support. Smallwood may have mercilessly denounced the merchants, but their support and the support of the Commission had to be obtained in order to switch the Commission vote. He would later ditch McEvoy and disavow him for his February 1948 statement to the *Evening Telegram*,³³ but for the time being, he used him to deliver two things the confederates needed: Canadian information, and Commission of Government support.

With McEvoy enthralled with the idea that he was to lead the party, events had to become sectarian to prevent him from actually doing so. On June 8, members of the Star of Bethlehem Lodge LOBA of Little Catalina, Trinity Bay met with their counterparts of the Benbow Loyal Orange Association.³⁴ The next day the following letter was signed by James Johnson, Worshipful Master, and C. Edgecombe, Acting Secretary, and sent to Captain Leonard T. Stick, one of Smallwood's vice presidents and Provincial Grand Master of the LOA:

³³ For Smallwood's desertion of McEvoy see PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 59, file: 26 British Government, files 6 & 7, Senator A.N. McLean to Hon C.D. Howe, 28 March 1949.

³⁴ In the 1930s, several attempts were made to rename Little Catalina as "Orangeville", in recognition of the "strongly Protestant character of the community." See Robert H. Cuff, "Little Catalina", *ENL* III, pp. 339-40.

At an emergency meeting held on June 8th, the members of the Star of Bethlehem Lodge L.O.B.A. and Benbow L.O.A. passed the following resolution to be forwarded to the Grand Lodge for the consideration of its members.

We, as members of the Association have come to the conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church is endeavouring to dominate Newfoundland. We have reached this conclusion after careful consideration of the results of the votes from the various R.C. Settlements during the National Referendum. Therefore be it resolved:-

THAT THE GRAND LODGE CALL AN EMERGENCY MEETING AT THEIR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE AND SOME WEEKS PRIOR TO THE COMING REFERENDUM IN ORDER TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER THE QUESTION SUBMITTED BY OUR COMBINED LODGES.³⁵

Whether Johnson and Edgecombe actually wrote the letter, or whether Stick was told by Smallwood to suggest that they write it is unknown. Once the letter arrived in Stick's hands, Bradley and Smallwood would probably have been given a copy.³⁶ But the confederates already had the referendum results, and they first went to work using these.

The first referendum had left the 22,311 Commission of Government votes in limbo. By Smallwood's own account, it was just after this that he latched upon the idea of appealing to Newfoundlanders' sense of being British, and the ties with Britain which Canada also shared, as a means of defeating the EUP platform, which would require "us to strike the flag... and swear a new oath of allegiance to a foreign land and flag".³⁷ He went to Long Brothers, the confederates' printers, and ordered fifty thousand small posters with the words "British Union" and "Confederation", between which was a

³⁵ PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file: N-19-2, copy of letter of Johnson and Edgecombe to L.T. Stick, 9 June 1948.

³⁶ A carbon copy of this letter exists in Smallwood's papers. See J.R. Smallwood Papers, 7.01.002, J.R. Smallwood Correspondence, 1948, Johnson and Edgecombe to L.T. Stick, 9 June 1948.

³⁷ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 31.

multicoloured Union Jack. "The sudden appearance of thousands of these in house windows and elsewhere", Smallwood claimed, "was a violent reminder of the fact that we were British, not American, and that Confederation would allow us to continue to be British subjects".³⁸ The confederates' new platform was born.

June 9 was the busiest day of the campaign. The latest edition of *The Confederate* appeared, having been prepared over the weekend, and to use Power's phrase, it "poured forth its stream of poison". It announced that a second referendum would be held "about the middle of July",³⁹ and with "British Union" as its new motto, its headline shouted, "Tail Tries to Wag Dog". In an attempt to rout the remaining EUP/RGL support in the outports, it cut to the quick when it claimed that

There is an element in Newfoundland who is anti-British; an element amongst our Newfoundland people who hate everything British.

These people would like to pull down the Union Jack and run up some other flag.

Behind the Economic Union movement is this anti-British hate, this pro-American sentiment.⁴⁰

Cashin, Jamieson, Crosbie, and their parties were all accused of "rotten", "cheap", "cold-blooded, deliberate" lies, and the RGL was accused of bribery for passing out \$20 bills in exchange for the placement of "certain pictures" in windows. *The Daily News* was decried as a "bitter and vindictive enemy of Confederation and of every move ever made for the uplift[ing] of Newfoundland's people", and Stirling's *Sunday Herald* was a "filthy and obscene rag". Furthermore, the newspaper claimed that in districts "such as Hr. Main-Bell Island, Ferryland, and Placentia-St. Mary's" (predominantly Roman Catholic districts), "the lie spread and whispered about to kill Confederation" was that

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁹ *The Confederate*, 9 June 1948, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

"Confederation equals Communism. If Confederation wins, religion will not be allowed to be taught in the schools".⁴¹

Smallwood and Bradley were quite astute to appeal to outport Newfoundlanders' affinity to Britain, and to their suspicions of pro-Americanism. Crosbie and Stirling had a considerable following among Newfoundlanders with personal connections to America. It was well known that Newfoundland Roman Catholics had been one of the island's foremost groups of migrants to the United States at the turn of the century and later.⁴² They were also the working class civilian employees of the American bases, especially Forts Pepperrell, McAndrew, and Argentia,⁴³ and with families, cousins, and friends in the United States, many were not surprisingly pro-American in their views. Certainly for some members of the RGL, Smallwood's "British Union" with Canada had overtones of the Irish Act of Union, and further polarized political opinion. In contrast, outport residents on the north-east coast were primarily Protestant. Newfoundland Orange Lodges were among the largest in the world, and the Loyal Orange Association was a significant social, cultural, and political force in community life.⁴⁴ A powerful allegiance to Britain was a hallmark of the Order, and as folklorist Philip Hiscock has demonstrated, in Newfoundland with this went a strong anti-republicanism and a dislike of the American flag, the symbol of a nation which had been born of a rejection of Britain.⁴⁵ Because

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴² On this see William G. Reeves, "Newfoundlanders in the "Boston States": A Study in Early Twentieth Century Community and Counterpoint", *NFS*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1990).

⁴³ McAndrew was at Argentia, which was a dominantly Roman Catholic community. For the human history of the area around this time see Eileen Houlihan, "Eileen (Hunt) Houlihan's Family Memoirs" (Ed. Peter Neary), *NFS*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring 1991): 48-64.

⁴⁴ Houston and Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore*, pp. 79 and 83.

⁴⁵ Philip Hiscock, "Orangeism and Orangemen's Day in Newfoundland", unpublished ms., Dept. of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1984, pp. 5-6.

of its pro-American platform, by itself the EUP may have frightened off many outport Newfoundlanders, who may have suspected them of treason. But Smallwood's *Confederate* embarked on a calculated campaign of enlisting support for confederation by playing this anti-republicanism for all it was worth.⁴⁶ In Canada, Orangeism already had a history of supporting "the maintenance of the British Connection and the support of any movement which tends to make closer and more binding the relation between Canada, Newfoundland and the Mother Country",⁴⁷ and from their own experiences as Orangemen it was likely that Smallwood and Bradley had some sense of this.

In much of the confederates' correspondence after the appearance of the 9 June *Confederate*, Smallwood began to use the slogan "British Union" and appealed to his correspondents' senses of "what happened" in the first referendum:

I can see from your letter that you understand clearly what happened on June 3rd, and that you understand how and why it happened. "The tail tried to wag the dog", but this time "the dog will wag the tail." In other words, the boot will be on the other foot.⁴⁸

and to Carbonear:

This time it is going to be a different story. "The tail tried to wag the dog" but on the 22nd of July "The dog will wag the tail."

From all parts of the country we are getting word that shows that the people know clearly what happened on June 3rd. They are going to turn the tables.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ In the fall of 1948, one RGL supporter noted that the LOA was not in favour of the United States and that this had been a factor in the campaign. See RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence Collins, September 1948, T. Hickey, Toslow, Placentia West, to Collins, 8 September 1948.

⁴⁷ Houston and Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore*, p. 151.

⁴⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.14.001, Grand Falls Pre-Confed., Smallwood to a correspondent, Buchans, 18 June 1948.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.08.001, Carbonear-Bay de Verde Pre-Confed., Smallwood to a correspondent in Carbonear, 18 June, 1948. Also see 1.15.001, Smallwood to R. Crowell, Little Bay Islands, 18 June 1948.

The confederates carefully co-ordinated their use of slogans, suggestions, and insinuation, and throughout the entire campaign, Smallwood's dictum of the need for a unity of approach permeated.

On 9 June, the Responsible Government League met at 8 p.m. in its offices at the Angel Building. A small committee from the League and the EUP had met, and while "both groups would continue as at present", they would be financed from a common fund, and a joint committee would co-ordinate their efforts.⁵⁰ As in the previous campaign, the responsibility for campaigns in the districts would be divided between the League and the EUP, but O'Leary announced that for the second campaign, the EUP "had decided not to put forward names of men to form [a] party," though the League was free to do so.⁵¹ This was significant, for it reflected a disintegration of the EUP to which the League was blind, and a lack of commitment by the EUP, a danger sign which the League ignored. For all intents and purposes, with union to the RGL the EUP had ceased to exist, and thus there would be a battle for the allegiances of its members and adherents. Finally recognizing that confederate strength had come from the use of local supporters and workers, it was suggested that the League prepare campaign pamphlets "to suit different districts," instead of having just one pamphlet. But this should have been done a year earlier, and if it was done, it was ineffectual. There was also considerable discussion of the results of the referendum. Then a bombshell struck. The entry in the minutes records that "A suggestion that the chairman vacate the chair in favour of Hon. J.S. Currie due to anticipated sectarian issue was ---".⁵² There were obviously serious doubts about O'Leary's ability to lead the RGL in the coming fight because of his Catholicism, and the support that would be drawn away from the RGL by

⁵⁰ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 9 June 1948.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.* It was not recorded who made the suggestion.

the confederates, who were running a sectarian campaign. Currie was not a Catholic, and would have been therefore more acceptable as a leader to outport Protestants. But for the matter to have been allowed to come up for discussion would seem to indicate, if not a certain self-doubt on O'Leary's part, then certainly serious doubts and dissension in the ranks of the RGL executive membership. O'Leary and the RGL stayed the course for the time being, but within a week there was a plea to send "influential men" to campaign in a district, "to whom the country can look up [to] with confidence. Make a public announcement that they would be willing to assume the responsibility of managing this country's affairs".⁵³ After the first referendum, the League never fully regained its momentum, and was out-manoeuvred by the confederates. A definite governmental alternative to leading the country into confederation should have been presented to the electorate by the combined League and Economic Union Party, but it never was.

Following the merger of the two parties, the EUP fell into decline. Jamieson later maintained that once Crosbie was converted to a power-sharing arrangement, "The most our faction could salvage was an agreement to keep our worker organizations more or less separate although subject to the board's overall control".⁵⁴ In his earlier account, Jamieson noted that once sectarianism became an issue, strenuous efforts were made to convince Crosbie to "bid for Protestant support", but Crosbie "was temperamentally incapable of waging a religious battle", and "insisted that if we could not win without appealing to prejudice he would rather lose".⁵⁵ More likely, Crosbie had seen that as a United Churchman, he could not hope publicly to fight the Loyal Orange Association and Smallwood without being labelled a traitor. But above all, the fact remained that

⁵³ RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, S.W. Cook, Corner Brook, to O'Leary, 16 June 1948.

⁵⁴ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 118.

⁵⁵ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *RNF*, pp. 91, 103.

more people had voted in the first referendum against responsible government than for it, and in light of the excellent known prospects for confederation, whether achieved in the second vote, or under a future responsible government, it was obvious that confederation would not disappear as an issue. As astute businessmen, like a number of Water Street merchants, the EUP leadership began to reconsider the possibilities of lending tacit support to confederation, just in case it did win and they found themselves out in the cold.

While the old EUP was re-examining its political options, the new RGL-EUP had other problems. Cashin and Hollett were not present at the 9 June meeting. It is known that at one point in the second campaign, Cashin went on a drinking spree.⁵⁶ Two weeks later, a resident of Dildo, Trinity Bay, wrote O'Leary advising that

It would ... be wise to send suitable men to districts if you have to send any. Not just men out on a drunken spree like the ones that visit this district a few weeks ago. This is a small village, and news get around quickly. Has for your newspaper, *The Independent*, its better to send my copy to one of the 69,000 has I am one of the 65:000 who was never interested in it. It only got has far has the kitchen stove.⁵⁷

In more than one case, the damage was done not by what the League organization did, but by the human flaws of its membership.

On 9 June, Noel-Baker reported the results of the first referendum to Clement Attlee. While Gordon Macdonald had "not yet fixed a date for the second ballot", but because "party feeling has become so strong" (or, more likely, because the governor knew that the all-out campaign that a confederate win would require could not last

⁵⁶ Thomas Cahill to the author, 11 May 1992.

⁵⁷ RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, July-September 1948, Mrs. Brown, Dildo, to O'Leary, 24 June 1948.

indefinitely), Macdonald had announced that "if the necessary arrangements can be made in time, it will be held in the second half of July".⁵⁸ Noel-Baker also commented that

It is interesting to observe that at the recent ballot Responsible Government gained a majority in only eight of the twentyfive [sic] electoral districts. Thus, even if there were a majority of votes for this form of government it is possible that the "confederate" party would have a majority in the elected chamber.⁵⁹

Not surprisingly, Noel-Baker clearly expected that regardless of the outcome of the referenda, the confederates would eventually dominate a Newfoundland House, and in any event confederation would be a distinct possibility.

As a result of the play to McEvoy's vanity, Smallwood received high-powered support when it was required. On 10 June Bridle informed MacKay that

...following have agreed to enter a sort of inner Cabinet of Confederate Association: J.B. McEvoy, Will Roberts, Lowther Monroe, Honourable W.S. Giffard, Sir Leonard Outerbridge, Honourable H.W. Quinton, Honourable H.L. Pottle, Honourable A.J. Walsh. C[alvert] C. Pratt is said to be on the outer fringes. All except Pratt are said to be prepared to support Confederation publicly.⁶⁰

Bridle then noted that he was "inclined to wait for the turn of events before concluding that the above will eventuate entirely as planned". and that

My information differs from yours in one respect. I understood that [the] present leadership of the Confederate Association is to remain intact. On the other hand, I have heard it rumoured that Bradley is going to resign as President. While it may be that McEvoy is to succeed him, the rumour regarding his resignation is entirely unconfirmed so far as I am concerned.⁶¹

Bradley was far too involved with the Confederate Association to withdraw just before victory, and he still had a vital part to play in the campaign. Meanwhile, that same day

⁵⁸ PRO PREM 8/1043, Noel-Baker to Attlee, 9 June 1948.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 894, Bridle to MacKay, 10 June 1948.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 894.

MacKay delightedly replied to McEvoy, saying "May I say how pleased I am that you have been asked to assume the leadership of the Confederate Party".⁶² But in the words of Peter Neary, American Consul General Wainwright Abbott observed that "some of the 'best people' who had now lined up on the Confederation side hoped to dump Smallwood once Confederation was carried...."⁶³ Smallwood was not about to let that happen.

On 12 June, McEvoy again wrote MacKay, noting that his final decision whether to lead the confederate party would be made "at a Meeting to be held on Monday night [14 June] at our country home at Manuels, and upon which I shall give you an immediate report".⁶⁴ Six days later McEvoy reported that

...we are slowly but surely getting a worthwhile Organization built up although it will probably take another week before we will be ready to go into action....

Meanwhile, we had a full dress meeting two night's ago in which Policy was decided upon, and I think that you can expect that the matter will be conducted on a much higher plane than heretofore.⁶⁵

With Commissioners and Water Street merchants in tow, McEvoy was preparing an attempt to switch the votes from Commission to confederation, and "to conduct" a more "respectable" campaign on a "higher plane" than could be mustered by Joe Smallwood. But Smallwood and Bradley never gave him the opportunity to lead the Confederate Association. Instead they attempted to secure more broadcasting time from the Broadcast

⁶² PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: J.B. McEvoy, 1948-49, MacKay to McEvoy, 10 June 1948.

⁶³ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 322.

⁶⁴ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: J.B. McEvoy, 1948-49, McEvoy to MacKay, 12 June 1948.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, McEvoy to MacKay, 18 June 1948.

Corporation of Newfoundland for the influential speakers McEvoy was expected to bring to the confederate cause.⁶⁶

On 11 June Sir Eric Machtig wrote Governor Macdonald and asked:

Could you arrange to fly over for a few days in the week after next so that we could discuss with you the steps to be taken when the result of the second referendum in July is available? We feel that whichever of the two new forms of government is successful at the referendum we ought to be ready with our plans as soon as the result is known and that we should not then have to embark on correspondence before we can announce them.⁶⁷

The next day Macdonald wired back that he was in full agreement, and informed Machtig that "Arrangements being made to leave Gander on Tuesday night 22nd June accompanied by Walsh, Vice-Chairman, and Private Secretary".⁶⁸ Macdonald then wrote Attlee "just a little line" to let him know about his travel plans, and to suggest that "Maybe you could find time in your Very busy life for a brief conversation."⁶⁹ Gordon Macdonald and the Dominions Office were determined to have a response prepared for whatever the decision was. In preparation for the visit, Macdonald had Commissioner of Finance R.L.M. James prepare a memorandum on the Canadian terms of union already offered, and on questions which Canadian and Newfoundland representatives would discuss in the event of a majority for confederation in the referendum.⁷⁰ For answers James went to Bridle, who in turn informed MacKay of James' questions.

⁶⁶ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 3, Monthly Meeting, June 1948, Galgay to Governors, wherein Galgay presented the Confederate Association's request and commented that he thought there was too much political broadcasting in the first referendum campaign.

⁶⁷ PRO DO 35/3458, N 2005/63, Machtig to Gordon Macdonald, 11 June 1948.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 12 June 1948.

⁶⁹ Attlee Papers, Deposit 71, folio 114, Gordon Macdonald to Attlee, 12 June 1948.

⁷⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 905, Bridle to MacKay, 21 June 1948.

On 14 June, the governor announced that the date of the second referendum would be 22 July,⁷¹ but Smallwood was already out of the blocks on the 12th, predicting the date of the referendum to the editors of Toronto newspapers, and asking Newfoundlanders in Canada to send money to the cause.⁷² The Dominions Office later noted that Macdonald fixed the date without consulting them in advance, but observed that he was "naturally anxious to get the voting done in time to allow for a possible General Election in the autumn in the event of Responsible Government being restored".⁷³ More likely, the governor made the decision in order to give the advantage to the confederates, who by this time were running an all-out campaign, and because he feared a small majority for confederation.⁷⁴ Compared with the first referendum, the second was to be held at the height of the summer fishing season, so the Commission took care to make special polling arrangements for the fishermen through a revised Referendum Advance Poll Act. The number of districts in which advance polls were held for the second referendum increased from nine to seventeen, and depending on the district, the advanced poll extended from 25 June or 2 July to 21 July.⁷⁵ Along the Labrador coast, a motor vessel had deposited ballot boxes for the first referendum and afterwards retrieved them; the same procedure would be followed in the second. For the floating fishery, the vessel would come alongside schooners and the advance poll would be held on board.⁷⁶ As in the first referendum, Nehemiah Short would be the Chief Returning Officer, and members of the Newfoundland Constabulary and the

⁷¹ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 894, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 14 June 1948.

⁷² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.006, Confederation Miscellaneous Correspondence, Smallwood to Editor, *The Daily Star*, 12 June 1948.

⁷³ PRO DO 35/3459, Dominions Office internal circular memo, 16 July 1948.

⁷⁴ For this latter observation see PRO DO 35/3459, 1008, author unidentified.

⁷⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 920, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 2 July 1948.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 920.

Newfoundland Ranger Force would assist in supervising the referendum, where necessary.⁷⁷ But Macdonald's timing of the event was critical. It gave the confederates a decisive opportunity to run a tight second campaign using all the means at their disposal.

The confederates and the opposition used every opportunity they could to convince the electorate of the merits or the perils of confederation. When one Bonavista correspondent asked Smallwood on 17 June if he could arrange for a polling booth on Gooseberry Island for 28 voters, Smallwood replied that he had, and sent "regards to all friends".⁷⁸ Even though this would have been done by the Chief Electoral Officer, not by Smallwood, the confederates still claimed the credit. On the other side, the 19 June *Monitor* expressed its gratification that Newfoundlanders "responded so magnificently" to the referendum, but observed that the failure to restore responsible government gave "rise to a great deal of misunderstanding and arouses a great deal of suspicion".⁷⁹ It restated the position that it was "wholly and indefensibly wrong" to ask people to make a choice based on so little information, and proposed that "the restoration of the Newfoundland Parliament should be the aim of every Newfoundlander".⁸⁰ While *The Monitor* was delivered on the ground, the EUP obtained the services of a Piper Cub airplane, which bore Jamieson and his amplified voice aloft like Smallwood, preceding the party's caravan over outport communities.⁸¹ But the second campaign belonged to the confederates, and their two goals were the destruction of the overwhelming

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 920.

⁷⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.03.001, Bonavista North Pre-Confed., H. Perry to Smallwood, 17 June 1948; Smallwood to H. Perry, 17 June 1948.

⁷⁹ *The Monitor*, 19 June 1948, p. 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸¹ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, p. 104.

responsible government vote in St. John's, and the conversion of the Commission of Government vote.

Early on the morning of Sunday, 20 June, a truck filled with campaign workers drove around the downtown of St. John's. Their mission was to paste up posters reading "Confederation means British Union with French Canada" at various locations. *The Confederate* later related that these posters were "offensive" and had been placed on Smallwood's house, on telephone poles, and on Protestant churches, notably on Gower Street United Church, poles near the Anglican Cathedral, Victoria Hall (the Loyal Orange Association hall), St. Michael's Anglican Church, the Elim Tabernacle, and George Street United Church.⁸² Later that day an Orange parade was scheduled to pass several of these buildings.⁸³ *The Confederate* used the rhetoric of the poster's headlines to great effect, since the headlines were not dissimilar to a typical RGL slogan, and *The Confederate* even published the name of the truck owner, Clifford Coady, and its license plate number, and blamed the League for the scandal.⁸⁴ All parties denied any involvement,⁸⁵ but Horwood later maintained that Phil Forsey had arranged the incident to confederate advantage with the "lunatic fringe" of the League, and that the confederates had the posters printed and posted them up.⁸⁶

⁸² *The Confederate*, 23 June 1948, p. 1.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 1. The next edition of *The Confederate* claimed that the parade did not take place that day because of heavy rain.

⁸⁴ *The Confederate*, 30 June 1948, p. 1.

⁸⁵ See *The Evening Telegram*, 21 June 1948, p. 3, and 23 June 1948, p. 6; *The Independent*, 26 June 1948, p. 1; and RGLP 3.01.024, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, May-June 1948, copy of Collins to Editor, *Evening Telegram*, 22 June 1948.

⁸⁶ Harold Horwood, "Newfoundland and Confederation, 1948-1949," *Regionalism 1867-1967*, p. 254; and Horwood, *Joey*, p. 126.

Two days after the posters appeared, the pro-confederate *Evening Telegram* called the act "reprehensible," and condemned this attempt "to introduce into the campaign the sinister spirit of racialism and sectarianism".⁸⁷ *The Independent* called the poster incident "silly", but part of a "skilfully thought out plot" because of the sectarian interpretation given the event by *The Confederate*,⁸⁸ and one observer later noted that from the content of the posters, it was perfectly clear that their intention was not sectarian, but rather to deflate Smallwood's "British Union" slogan with a dose of reality. In addition to what *The Confederate* and the *Evening Telegram* reported the posters said, in smaller print they primarily gave statistics on the populations of Canada, Ontario, Quebec, the numbers of judges, and how in the future, given the birthrate in Quebec, Canada would be a mostly French nation.⁸⁹ Clifford Coady later observed that the posters were put up with no intention of promoting sectarianism, and that they were just "an expression" of his "personal conviction that by no stretch of the imagination can we call Canada [a] pure British nation".⁹⁰ But regardless of what the posters actually said, the event had already been seized upon by the confederates.⁹¹

By claiming that its opposition's supposed tactics were sectarian, the confederates turned a poster which innocently rebutted "British Union" into a most useful half-truth, and bruited it around the country to great effect. Much later, Harold Horwood claimed that Philip Forsey had suggested the idea of plastering the churches with the posters to

⁸⁷ *The Evening Telegram*, 22 June 1948, p. 6.

⁸⁸ *The Independent*, 26 June 1948, p. 1.

⁸⁹ James Halley to the author, 10 June 1992.

⁹⁰ *The Daily News*, 26 July 1948, p. 6.

⁹¹ Jamieson, *No Place For Fools*, pp. 121-2 also suggested that the posters were inflammatory, but made no mention of the smaller print.

an inebriated nightclub owner, one of whose assistants was the truck driver.⁹² The sense that things British and Protestant were being persecuted was further fomented on 23 June when *The Evening Telegram* told readers that an arsonist had levelled the Britannia Loyal Orange Lodge Hall at Petries on the west coast. Neatly juxtaposed next to the article was a photograph of Archbishop Roche, with a caption that congratulated him on his fifty-first anniversary as a priest and pregnantly wished "that His Grace may be spared many more years of fruitful service".⁹³

On 21 June, Smallwood and Bradley wrote a significant letter to C.D. Howe, the Canadian Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, who had suggested contributors to the cause. They informed him that "a new group for confederation" had been formed, consisting of McEvoy, Arthur S. Monroe, his father W.S. Monroe, Leslie Curtis, Eric Bowring (of the St. John's firm Bowring Brothers), Sir Leonard Outerbridge, and Commissioners Herman Quinton and Herbert Pottle, among others.⁹⁴ Bradley and Smallwood noted that "All of these, except Hon. W.S. Monroe, will broadcast for Confederation, and will contribute something" to the cause. Then, betraying their delight at the alliance forged with the previously-condemned upper classes who could deliver the stamp of British respectability on the "British Union" campaign, Bradley and Smallwood noted that "this will bring to the cause what it hitherto lacked - namely, the respectable element of the country". They then prophesied that

The prospects now look excellent. What happened last time was that the Roman Catholic Church (except on the West Coast) went solidly responsible. This has provoked an underground reaction. The population is two-thirds Protestant. The consequence may be that the Catholic Church will throw its influence our

⁹² Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 126-7.

⁹³ *The Evening Telegram*, 23 June 1948, p. 3.

⁹⁴ PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file: 26 British government, 1, Bradley and Smallwood to C.D. Howe, 21 June 1948.

way, or at least drop its pressure the other way. In any case, even without Catholic support, it looks like a comfortable majority for confederation.⁹⁵

Bradley and Smallwood then confirmed the source of their funding, and told Howe "We need money desperately, Taking into account what we will raise locally, we must have at least another \$20,000. We need it quickly". Smallwood then added the postscript that "A great many people were surprised by the big showing Confederation made. They had not been taking it seriously".⁹⁶

In response to the "British Union" slogan, on 26 June *The Independent* made an appeal to fair-minded British sentiments among its readers, asking, "Who Says We're Anti-British?" It also conveyed a warning by Walter Jones, the Premier of Prince Edward Island to Newfoundlanders not to join the federation, lest they be treated as Prince Edward Island had been.⁹⁷ The last thing Smallwood wanted were public indications from Canadian politicians that union with Canada might not be as beneficial as the confederates had claimed. He immediately shot off a telegram to Jones, observing that "This statement published today in large type in anticonfederate paper and will do serious harm if allowed to stand.... Is statement correct?.... Can you remedy?"⁹⁸

But the Jones affair was minor stuff for the confederates, who saw much more profit in spreading news of the Clifford Coady poster scandal, and playing up the sectarian possibilities. When Coady apologized for the posters in the press on Saturday

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *The Independent*, 26 June 1948, p. 4.

⁹⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.01.006, Confederation Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1948-1949, Smallwood to W. Jones, 26 June 1948.

26 June,⁹⁹ his timing could not have been more perfect. The next morning saw one of the largest Orange parades in the history of St. John's. Hosted by the St. John's Royal Oak Lodge, it included representatives of outport Lodges. Accompanied by a Salvation Army band, it proceeded to St. Thomas' Anglican Church for a service.¹⁰⁰ Many Orangemen who had spent the preceding night in St. John's would have seen the Coady letter in the papers, and if told to, would have interpreted it as evidence of a conspiracy. But Smallwood further exploited the sectarian possibilities of the event and reinforced them. In the 29 June *Evening Telegram* he demanded a further investigation of Coady's "diabolical move",¹⁰¹ and the 30 June *Confederate* also pressed for an inquiry into "the whole dastardly affair".¹⁰² *The Confederate* of that day also trumpeted "Whispering Is On Again", and accused the RGL and the EUP of running a "Dirty Campaign", and of whispering that there was a secret Communist party in St. John's; that the confederate campaign was run by Russian money; that people in Catholic districts were told that confederation would mean being over-run by Communist Protestant Canadians, and that people in Protestant districts were told that confederation would mean being over-run by Catholic French Canadians.¹⁰³

On 26 June, BCN Chairman George Williams wrote to VONF manager William Galgay, informing him that the corporation had decided that political broadcasts would re-commence on 5 July and terminate on 17 July, and that the RGL and confederates would be given equal airtime. Because Galgay had been in Corner Brook, this

⁹⁹ *The Daily News*, 26 June 1948, p. 6.

¹⁰⁰ *The Evening Telegram*, 28 June 1948, p. 3, and 30 June 1948, p. 6.

¹⁰¹ *The Evening Telegram*, 29 June 1948, p. 6.

¹⁰² *The Confederate*, 30 June 1948, p. 1.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

information had already been sent to the concerned parties.¹⁰⁴ Pencilled in the margin of Williams' letter, Galgay noted: "two periods 20 mins. total for all 80 mins.".¹⁰⁵ Galgay may have desired to impose the limit of forty minutes broadcasting time per political party on the campaign, but as events turned out, more broadcasting was done during the second campaign than during the first.

While the confederate campaign went further down the road of sectarianism, the Commission of Government continued to plan the political future. On 19 June, Bridle reported that the governor was alarmed "at the prospect of Newfoundland being restored to [the] unfettered ministrations of local politicians", and that he was doing "what he could to further the cause of confederation."¹⁰⁶ On 21 June, Macdonald and Justice Commissioner Albert Walsh left for London to discuss the steps to be taken following the referendum.¹⁰⁷ The next day the talks began, with High Commissioner Norman Robertson and M.H. Wershof of Canada House sitting in.

On 1 July, the vigilant Sir Eric Machtig reported to the British High Commissioner in Canada that the London talks had been concerned with the steps to be taken after the results of the referendum were known.¹⁰⁸ In the draft of his despatch, Machtig revealed that during the discussions, Gordon Macdonald was

...very anxious to reach agreement beforehand as to the announcement which he should make in Newfoundland when the result of the referendum is known and

¹⁰⁴ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 3, Monthly Meeting, June 1948, Williams to Galgay, 26 June 1948.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 June 1948.

¹⁰⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 895, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 June 1948; and *The Evening Telegram*, 22 June 1948, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ PRO DO 35/3458, Machtig to High Commissioner in Canada, 9.45. p.m., 1 July 1948.

that in view of the political conditions in Newfoundland there should be no undue delay in establishing a new government.¹⁰⁹

If Newfoundland voted for responsible government, the action would be straightforward. The 1934 letters patent would be revoked, and a general election would be held in time for a new government to take over on 1 January 1949.¹¹⁰ Macdonald had suggested that

...a decision to proceed with Confederation, in [the] face of a very narrow majority, might indeed lead to disturbances in Newfoundland and particularly in St. John's, where a large majority of the population strongly favour Responsible Government.¹¹¹

The Canadians wanted the British and Newfoundland governments to say whether the majority achieved would be adequate to justify confederation, but the British could not accept this view, and this was explained to the Government of Canada through Norman Robertson. Machtig also proposed to tell the High Commissioner in Canada that the British should, "if pressed, argue that Confederation had carried the day even if the majority in the referendum were a majority of one repeat one only".¹¹² In the actual despatch, Machtig stated that, if left to Britain, confederation would be proceeded with if only "a bare majority" for confederation were received.¹¹³ But the matter was not one for Britain, and officially, the Government of Canada would decide whether or not a majority for confederation was adequate, and whether they would accept the decision.¹¹⁴ If it were not, responsible government would be restored.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, draft of document, enclosed in file with despatch.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ PRO DO 35/3458, Machtig to High Commissioner in Canada, 1 July 1948.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ PRO DO 35/3459, 1008, author unidentified, 1 July 1948.

Macdonald and Walsh were more cautious than Machtig, but still felt that "there was no chance of a big majority for confederation", and "very probably much less" than 3000,¹¹⁶ and Walsh thought that it would not be wise to base an irrevocable change on a very small majority.¹¹⁷ But they worked on the draft documents to be used depending on the result of the referendum, and then returned home in time for Macdonald to unveil a war memorial and speak at Grand Falls on 4 July.¹¹⁸ By 7 July all documents and possible statements were in place, ready to cover any constitutional eventuality.¹¹⁹ But there remained the niggling problem of civic troubles should the populace not accept the verdict.

While he was in England, Macdonald had approached Viscount Hall, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and Noel-Baker, about the possibility of obtaining naval assistance in the event of civil unrest. Informing Hall that Attlee had approved of the idea, Noel-Baker requested a naval presence in Newfoundland waters, "if only because the safety of the Governor and Commissioners may come into question...."¹²⁰ On his return to Newfoundland, Macdonald remained haunted by the spectre of civil disorder, and discussed the matter with Walsh. They decided that the "the future is uncertain", and in a letter to Machtig agreed

...that it would be advisable to have say within a day's sailing of St. John's a Cruiser or a Destroyer on Friday night July 23rd. We should need to know how

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ See Macdonald, *Newfoundland at the Crossroads*, p. 76.

¹¹⁹ This is evident in PRO DO 35/3461. For a draft of the governor's statement which would have been made had responsible government been returned see PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, enclosed in M.H. Wershof to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 1 July 1948.

¹²⁰ PRO PREM 8/1043, Noel-Baker to Lord Hall, 3 July 1948.

to contact the ship to inform the Commander, as soon as possible, as to whether it was necessary for him to sail into St. John's Harbour.

I am sorry that one is unable to be more definite, but you know the difficulty, especially as the whole matter has to be kept a top secret.¹²¹

But Machtig informed them that a naval visit was impossible because the closest naval vessel would be in San Juan, Puerto Rico, a five and a half-day sail from St. John's.¹²² Privately, Macdonald's wife lived in Government House in mortal terror that civil disobedience would bring harm to her family.¹²³ When Macdonald wired back his appreciation that there would be no naval visit that year,¹²⁴ his determination must have been steered to see confederation achieve a large enough majority so that external intervention would not be required.

Soon after Macdonald left England, the British government decided that after the voting, Macdonald should submit an objective report which could be used to help decide on what to do next, and to give the Canadians assistance in reaching a decision. Instructions to Macdonald were drafted, with the objective being, as one Whitehall civil servant observed,

to phrase the despatch that the Governor is able to prevent members of the Commission from interpreting it as either a request or permission for recommendations from them as to the line to be taken as a result of the referendum.¹²⁵

The rules of the game were made and tightly controlled by the Dominions Office and Gordon Macdonald, and not the Commission. On 13 July, Philip Noel-Baker sent the

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 13 July 1948.

¹²² *Ibid.*, Machtig to Gordon Macdonald, 17 July 1948.

¹²³ Before his death, the late Frank W. Graham told this to the author and Wallace Furlong, n.d.

¹²⁴ PRO PREM 8/1043, Macdonald to Machtig, 17 July 1948.

¹²⁵ PRO DO 35/3460, C.G.L. Syers to Machtig, 6 July 1948.

despatch to Macdonald, requesting from him that "as soon as possible after the full results of the referendum are known, I should receive from you a full summary of the results and an appreciation by the Commission of Government of the position in the Island".¹²⁶ Noel-Baker then requested a report on the total number of votes polled for responsible government and confederation, "with percentage indications in relation to (a) the total voters' roll, and (b) the total number of votes cast", as well as an analysis of the voting in the districts, and "an objective appreciation of the position in the Island as revealed both at the referendum and during the following days". Macdonald was also to send this to the British High Commissioner in Canada for communication to the Canadian authorities.¹²⁷ In a draft of this despatch, however, Noel-Baker had been much more urgent and personal, and he wrote that the London meetings were "designed to ensure so far as possible that you and I were in agreement as to the action which will have to be taken".¹²⁸

John G. Higgins of the RGL later observed that after the governor arrived back, "immediately things started going" in the confederate campaign.¹²⁹ The confederates' broadcasting campaign was re-opened for the second referendum, and on 5 July Bradley spoke on the radio. That evening the confederates held a large rally in St. John's at the CLB Armoury. Sixteen hundred people listened to music by the CLB band, and speeches by Bradley, Smallwood, Leslie R. Curtis (who had previously signed the Newfoundland Bar's protest to Britain), Dr. William Roberts, Henry Genge, J.P., Solomon Drodge, and

¹²⁶ PRO DO 34/3460, Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 13 July 1948.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ PRO DO 35/3460, draft despatch of Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 12 July 1948.

¹²⁹ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.027, Correspondence J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to A.G. Allen, London, 11 August 1948.

Frank Brenton.¹³⁰ The confederates had begun a concentrated campaign in St. John's. But as Smallwood left the rally, he was mobbed by anti-confederates, and the mood turned sour. *The Confederate* later claimed that Smallwood was struck on the neck, and that Bradley had to be escorted out of the meeting.¹³¹ But despite the rabble-rousing efforts of the mob which included "O'Keefe and Murphy", two Irish pro-RGL types,¹³² Smallwood escaped on the roof of a car, which Paul Bridle reported had almost been overturned.¹³³ Putting a triumphant spin on the event, *The Confederate* claimed that St. John's was confederate, and that confederation would get a majority in St. John's on polling day. The truth may have been different, but impressions were everything.

In addition to purveying news of the rally, *The Confederate* became openly inflammatory. In an article entitled "Who Started This Sectarianism?", the paper re-stated that "the campaign leading up to June 3rd was a sectarian campaign", and asked and answered rhetorical questions:

Who whispered around in the Roman Catholic districts the foul lie that Confederation means Communism?

Not the Confederates.

Who whispered in those districts that Newfoundland would be flooded with divorce cases?

Not the Confederates.

Who whispered around that bingo, housie-housie and other games of chance would not be allowed under Confederation?

Not the Confederates.

Who went on the radio and in an anti-Confederate speech read out statements made by the Lord Bishop of Newfoundland and the Archbishop of St. John's?

Not the Confederates.

¹³⁰ *The Confederate*, 7 July 1948, p. 1.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 925, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 July 1948.

Who compared the recent June 3rd referendum to the recent election in Italy?

Not the Confederates.

Who plastered offensive anti-Confederate posters on Protestant Churches and the Orange Hall in St. John's two Sundays ago?

Not the Confederates.

Who went around St. John's around Polling Day in a loudspeaker truck flying the Pink, White, and Green flag, shouting "Don't vote against your flag"?

Not the Confederates.¹³⁴

Then readers were rhetorically asked if their Orange Lodges, unions, and churches were already united with Canadian Lodges, unions, and churches, how confederation could mean selling their country.¹³⁵ In another article, entitled "Just Picture It", *The Confederate* warned outport readers that if responsible government won, the Irish would be in power and the country in an uproar:

Cashin would want to be the boss in the Government. He would have Hr. Main, Ferryland, Placentia-St. Mary's at his back, and he would demand to boss the Government. He would be backed by O'Leary, Doyle and Hollett.¹³⁶

The RGL-EUP campaign was called "a disgusting game - a filthy, diabolical game", but with sixty thousand copies of *The Confederate* being delivered to every corner of the island, it was a game the Confederates played better than their opponents.

Bradley's speech began the confederate broadcast series. On 7 July the speaker was Leslie Curtis, and Smallwood spoke the next night. On 10 July, Commissioner Herman Quinton spoke for confederation "as a private citizen", and was introduced by Sir Leonard Outerbridge, a former supporter of responsible government,¹³⁷ astutely

¹³⁴ *The Confederate*, 7 July 1948, p. 1.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³⁷ Outerbridge's sympathies were related in RGLP 3.01.027, J.G. Higgins Correspondence, March-December 1948, Higgins to A.G. Allen, London, 11 August 1948.

advertised as Colonel Sir Leonard, D.S.O., LL.B.¹³⁸ Outerbridge was Britain personified, a pillar of the Anglican Cathedral, and the brightest and best of the sons of the Empire. Bridle reported that Outerbridge spoke on the Christian and British traditions of Canada, and that his introduction hailed the objectivity which Quinton's speech would bring to the campaign, and highlighted Quinton's service in the first World War.¹³⁹ While Bridle thought Quinton's speech was "simple in the extreme", it signalled the Commission's approval of confederation, and Outerbridge's introduction lent considerable legitimacy. Commissioner Herbert L. Pottle spoke on behalf of confederation the next evening.¹⁴⁰ Both Commissioners' speeches would have been made with the tacit approval of the governor, and they were done in an attempt to persuade Commission voters of the respectability of voting for confederation.

The Commissioners' speeches caused considerable outrage in RGL circles, and around the island. The conservative *Grand Falls Advertiser* "demanded that the two be either removed from office or silenced", while Currie's *Daily News* regretted that such a public scandal had taken place,¹⁴¹ and demanded that Quinton resign.¹⁴² But *The Evening Telegram* thought that it was for the Commission to determine whether Quinton was no longer "capable of exercising his functions" as a Commissioner.¹⁴³ Bridle told

¹³⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 921-5, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 July 1948. Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 29, noted that he insisted on seeing the speeches of Outerbridge and the commissioners before they were broadcast.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 923.

¹⁴⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 925, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 13 July 1948; Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136.

¹⁴¹ For newspaper reaction see Geoff C. Knight, "Newfoundland Newspaper Reaction to the Confederation Issue: 1946-1948" B.A.(Hons.) Diss., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1984, p. 71.

¹⁴² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 923, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 July 1948.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 923.

Ottawa that in his broadcast, "Quinton himself said that, since the Commission of Government was no longer a possible future form of Government for Newfoundland, he is under no obligation to remain silent on political matters".¹⁴⁴

In early July the RGL was much more aggressive in sending speakers outside St. John's,¹⁴⁵ but it was not able to counteract the confederate propaganda, and was disorganized. Mrs. Fanny Ryan Fiander, a well-known journalist, writer, and popular speaker from Harbour Grace,¹⁴⁶ campaigned at outdoor meetings, and her appeal was powerful and strident. But when she claimed that "we'll look after our own babies", it was, as Judge Billy Browne later observed, fatal.¹⁴⁷ In a circumspection typical of the RGL's supporters in the legal community, Browne contented himself with being a silent supporter of the League and seemingly an advisor, even though Smallwood's magisterial supporters took active parts in the campaign. Browne noted that Cashin and Malcolm Hollett had already condemned the "baby bonus" as immoral. He thought that this was a tactical mistake, and encouraged Cashin to state that the scheme would also be possible under responsible government, but Cashin said "I won't say anything about it",¹⁴⁸ But the damage had already been done in other ways. One writer to the League from Change Islands noted rumours that Smallwood was chartering a boat to canvass the area,¹⁴⁹ and

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 923.

¹⁴⁵ For a list of speakers and the towns and districts in which they spoke, see RGLP 3.01.003, Minutes of General Meetings, District Speakers.

¹⁴⁶ On this often-forgotten but remarkable woman, see Bertram G. Riggs, "Fanny Ryan Fiander", *ENL* I, pp. 60-1.

¹⁴⁷ Browne, *Eighty-four Years a Newfoundlander*, p. 301.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁴⁹ Several vessels had been chartered and equipped with loudspeaker systems. See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 924, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 July; *The Sunday Herald*, 11 July 1948, p. 5.

observed that he was "using every dirty-trick conceivable" to capture the votes of the "illiterate and poorest classes":

One woman belonging to here went to the polling booth. She could not read or write and when asked what form she was voting for she said, "Oh, the one who gives out the money".¹⁵⁰

Another supporter from Clarenville was pleased to see the League advocate "Home Rule" for Newfoundland, but reported that the sectarian cry had been raised, and that he had been told by one voter that

...he was going to vote Confederation. "They says" he said, "if we don't - we'll have a Catholec [sic] Government." I said "What odds if we do?" Now they did circulating in remote places that Crosbie is a Catholic. I had to tell a lot of people when Alderdyce [sic] led his party that Alderdyce was an Anglican.¹⁵¹

In Deer Lake, another complained that "These miserable Confederates try to explain the vote as a religious one. They deliberately insult the adherents of one particular religion".¹⁵² The confederates had not only gained support; they had also polarized the electorate.

Week by week the campaign grew more bitter and murky. Political newspapers continued to go missing, and were sometimes burnt by those of differing views.¹⁵³ On 11 July, the front cover of Stirling's *Sunday Herald* blared "POISON PEN LETTERS" in huge headlines. The paper noted that "terrible" letters "of a religious and political nature" had been sent to "three clergymen, four Water Street businessmen, the Mayor,

¹⁵⁰ RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins July-September 1948, G.T. Farley to O'Leary, 4 July 1948.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, M. Pelly, Clarenville, to O'Leary, 8 July 1948. Frederick C. Alderdice was Prime Minister of Newfoundland in 1928, and from 1932-1934.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, K.R.J. Prowse to O'Leary, 14 July 1948.

¹⁵³ *The Sunday Herald*, 11 July 1948, p. 1.

and six other prominent citizens of St. John's" by an unknown writer on naval stationery,¹⁵⁴ commenting on their political leanings. The next week, the *Herald* claimed that Mayor Andrew Carnell, Mr. E. Collingwood, Mr. C. Brett, and six other citizens had received the letters.¹⁵⁵ Confederates were also threatened. Smallwood was taunted by Mayor Carnell, who himself was then accosted by Gregory Power with his own walking stick and given a good scare.¹⁵⁶ Like Smallwood and Jamieson, Power himself received telephone calls during the middle of the night, with gruff voices threatening "We're gonna get you, you bastard!"¹⁵⁷ At the end of the first campaign Smallwood had been given bodyguards in St. John's, and he began wearing a gun, although Horwood claimed it was never loaded.¹⁵⁸ As if in confirmation of *The Herald's* nebulous attitude towards the confederates - during the first campaign it had provided militant opposition - the 11 July *Herald* gave uncritical top billing to the confederates' scheme of using "Political Loudspeakers" in its campaign, and printed an article on this.¹⁵⁹ The EUP party line was also maintained, but from the changed content of *The Herald* it seemed as if the bets were now hedged with Smallwood.

Gordon Bradley later noted that in the first referendum, "Protestants and Orangemen had been offended by the way that Roman Catholics had ganged up".¹⁶⁰ During the week of 8-14 July, the women of the Loyal Orange Benevolent Association

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1 and 5.

¹⁵⁵ *The Sunday Herald*, 18 July 1948, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 121-2.

¹⁵⁹ *The Sunday Herald*, 11 July 1948, p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ Hiller, "Bradley - Political Biography", p. 49.

held their annual convention at Grand Falls, at which Gordon Bradley was present and proposed a toast.¹⁶¹ After the convention, Bradley remained in Grand Falls for the convention of the Grand Lodge,¹⁶² which was presided over by Grand Master Captain Leonard T. Stick, Smallwood's vice-president in Bay Roberts.¹⁶³ Stick had just returned from Hamilton, Ontario, where he had been raised to the rank of Past Grand Master of Sovereign Grand Lodge of British America, a signal honour of Canadian favour and encouragement which would not have been lost on Newfoundland Orangemen.¹⁶⁴ On 17 July, Bridle indicated his own close knowledge of the events of the convention when he reported that "the officer who was next in line for the position of Grand Master, and who is said to be a Confederate, has been elected to that office".¹⁶⁵ The previous day, Chesley Fillier, a small merchant from Clarkes Beach, had been elected to replace Stick.¹⁶⁶ In Bradley's handwriting, there exists a resolution dated 12 July, Orangemen's Day, specifically citing that

...the campaign waged by *The Monitor* the official organ of the R.C. Church, the attitude of its clergyman, the nature of the arguments used by its adherents, and above all the records of the polls in the various settlements and districts indicate clearly an attempt to influence the results of the said referendum upon grounds having no relation to the various forms of government submitted to the people,....¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ *The Evening Telegram*, 3 August 1948, p. 7.

¹⁶² Horwood, *Joey*, p. 129. Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 110 claims that Bradley "rarely acted except on Smallwood's instructions." This was not true, but Smallwood was probably consulted on Bradley's activities at the Grand Lodge.

¹⁶³ *The Evening Telegram*, 29 June 1948, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1. The article noted that the previous Newfoundlander accorded this honour was Prime Minister Sir Richard Squires. It may have been that through a highly placed source in the Canadian government, Smallwood and Bradley arranged this honour for Stick.

¹⁶⁵ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to Secretary of State, 17 July 1948.

¹⁶⁶ *The Evening Telegram*, 24 July 1948, p. 3.

¹⁶⁷ F. Gordon Bradley Papers, file: Confederation Orange Letter, 12 July 1948.

This letter retained the signatures of the movers of the original resolution, Johnson and Edgcombe, and indicated that the resolution was made "on behalf of Little Catalina Lodge".¹⁶⁸

Even though the Prince's Theatre on Bell Island had indicated to the RGL that politics was prohibited in the Orange Lodge, this dictum seems not to have been followed at the Grand Falls convention, which saw considerable disagreement over the propriety of the resolution.¹⁶⁹ But on 16 July, Fillier issued a new "Orange Letter", which quoted Bradley's draft and addressed all the Orangemen of Newfoundland.¹⁷⁰ Fillier later claimed that he never wrote the letter,¹⁷¹ and Gregory Power said that Smallwood wrote it.¹⁷² It is likely that Bradley and Stick arranged Fillier's election to the post of Grand Master in exchange for the latter's agreement to issue the pre-prepared circular letter calling on Orangemen "to use every effort" to bring the Church's activities "to nought".¹⁷³ According to Don Jamieson, the letter quickly became public, and got into the hands of Cashin, who ensured its wide distribution in Catholic districts "as evidence of Orange tactics".¹⁷⁴

While the confederates were busy prompting Orangemen to give confederation a majority, the civil servants were quietly crafting more policy. In mid-July, the Dominions

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Diane P. Janes, "Chesley Fillier", *ENL* II, p. 66; Jamieson, *No Place for Fools*, p. 122.

¹⁷⁰ The copy of Fillier's letter in the Bradley Papers bears the following handwritten note by Bradley: "several copies of this on hand."

¹⁷¹ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

¹⁷² Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

¹⁷³ For Fillier's letter see Appendix II.

¹⁷⁴ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 102.

Office sent H.N. Tait to Ottawa to discuss how to deal with a small majority, and to solicit Canadian views as to the statements Macdonald would have to make depending on the outcome of the referendum.¹⁷⁵ On 15 July Lester B. Pearson suggested that if the majority for confederation were small,

...it might assist in reaching a decision here for a Canadian Minister (e.g. Mr. Paul Martin) to go to St. John's as soon as possible after the referendum in order to judge for himself the local atmosphere, since so much will depend on how the opponents of confederation, and particularly the Roman Catholic Church, react.¹⁷⁶

After hearing from Machtig on this, and after discussing this suggestion with Albert Walsh, Macdonald feared that it might not serve any useful purpose.¹⁷⁷ Macdonald had already been instructed to provide an official report. But the Canadian suggestion was later to be a most useful tool for convincing a hesitant Mackenzie King to accept union, and there were other considerations. On 16 July, Pearson told Robertson that the plan was to avoid making a public statement about a decision to accept a small confederate majority until after the election in Quebec on 28 July.¹⁷⁸ Meanwhile, whomever the Canadians sent would sound out the willingness of opponents of confederation to enter the union, and if some of the "leaders of the Responsible Government group were to indicate that, the people having spoken, they were prepared to accept the decision, this might well be an important factor in the decision of the Canadian Government".¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ On Tait in Ottawa see PRO DO 35/3460, Commonwealth Relations Office to Gordon Macdonald, 17 July 1948.

¹⁷⁶ PRO DO 35/3459, United Kingdom High Commissioner in Canada to Machtig, 15 July 1948.

¹⁷⁷ PRO DO 35/3460, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 19 July 1948.

¹⁷⁸ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Pearson to Robertson, 16 July 1948.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

While official arrangements for the aftermath of the vote quietly proceeded, the campaign raged on. The remnants of the EUP used a variety of tactics to counter the confederates. One was particularly interesting. Crosbie's son John worked for the EUP at Geoff Stirling's house, listening "on the radio to all phone calls between Newfoundland and Canada" in order to "get any information on what the Confederates were doing... or locate who they were getting their money from".¹⁸⁰ The younger Crosbie later explained that Stirling "had some kind of a gadget fixed up to listen in on all radio phone calls", which would have been all long distance calls made to outside the country.¹⁸¹ In a real sense, the battle was as much for information which could deliver political power, as it was for the allegiance of the electorate.

In its own campaign the RGL avoided the technologically advanced methods of the EUP, and instead used some of the confederates' campaign tactics, but with varying success. On 14 July, R.J. Fahey reported from Humbermouth on the west coast that an RGL meeting had been held in the Orange Hall there, and while the attendance was not large, the meeting went well and responsible government was favourably received.¹⁸² But the same day, J.T. Cheeseman reported that a League meeting at Twillingate had been broken up by a small band of confederates.¹⁸³ Peter Cashin also used the emotional appeal with a sectarian twist, but misguidedly. At a Twillingate meeting he absent-mindedly held up a set of Rosary beads in one hand and an orange in the other, and asked the crowd to choose between the two. When the audience chose the orange,

¹⁸⁰ John C. Crosbie, "A Completely Dominant Personality," *Call Me Joey*, p. 145.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145. This may have been how the *Sunday Herald* found out during the first campaign that the confederates had made \$100 i. telephone calls to Ottawa.

¹⁸² RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins July-September 1948, R.J. Fahey to Collins, 14 July 1948.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, J.T. Cheeseman to Collins 14 July 1948.

Cashin recoiled in horror, and then realizing his predicament, attempted an escape, but barely left the community unscathed.¹⁸⁴ On this occasion, Cashin's only error was in not gauging the sentiment of the community before he spoke. Smallwood was also familiar with the tactic,¹⁸⁵ but the confederates always made sure of their audience before it was used.

During the second campaign, League campaigners Grace Sparkes, Frances Holmes, and Major Fred Marshall went to hold meetings in the Bonavista-Trinity area. Sparkes later recalled that "the people had been primed with two years worth of propaganda of old age pensions and baby bonuses".¹⁸⁶ Every evening before their RGL meetings, Smallwood's plane would "buzz" the communities overhead, booming out his message. At Champney's East, the League decided to "let the people be entertained", and incongruously prefaced their meeting with a movie of the Queen's visit to Africa, facilitated by an electric generator outside the building.¹⁸⁷ When the movie concluded, Sparkes recalled,

We couldn't make ourselves heard. There was such a noise of banging, and oh! A terribly loud noise! We found out it was a crowd of men outside the building, pounding on the building with staves... and we found out afterwards that they were going to cut the wire to the movie, but they were warned and didn't do it. We had to close the meeting.¹⁸⁸

Not knowing that Sparkes was at the meeting, a number of years later, one man who was there told her that he had been paid \$5,000 by the confederates to hire men to disrupt the

¹⁸⁴ Augustus Hutchings to the author, 8 June 1992. This may have been the Cheeseman meeting.

¹⁸⁵ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 312.

¹⁸⁶ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992, and *The Gazette*, Vol. 24, No. 18 (4 June 1992), p. 12.

¹⁸⁷ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

meeting.¹⁸⁹ Harassment of League meetings occurred a number of times on their speaking tour.

Promises and the distribution of confederate largesse had an effect during the second campaign. Confederate party workers expected to be re-appointed as paid official agents in exchange for supporting confederation,¹⁹⁰ although the payment of agents was prohibited by the Referendum Act.¹⁹¹ One correspondent wrote to Collins that

The Confederates worked every scheme to outwitt [sic] us as the Confederates had payed [sic] agents working in every place. There were two here and when there were two here how many was there in other places? The way I see it - it was disgraceful as it looks to me as if these people were payed and bribed to vote for Confederation....¹⁹²

The confederates were not the only group which used patronage. At one point the Chief Returning Officer told W. Bussey in Port de Grave that widows "were the right ones to have the polling booth", because a stipend was awarded for performing the function.¹⁹³ But the District Returning Officer gave the booth there to one of his relatives. Bussey told Smallwood that confederate votes would be lost unless the situation was rectified,¹⁹⁴ but Smallwood explained that he could not interfere.¹⁹⁵ These episodes

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ For a request for a polling booth see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.001, Port de Grave, E. Bradbury to Smallwood, 28 June 1948.

¹⁹¹ 1948 The Referendum Act No. 9, *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government 1948* (St. John's: The King's Printer, 1948), p. 54.

¹⁹² RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence Collins Sept. 1948, W. Hollahan, Southern Bay, Bonavista Bay to Collins, undated.

¹⁹³ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.001, Port de Grave, Pre-Confed., W. Bussey to Smallwood, 3 May 1948.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Smallwood to W. Bussey, 5 May 1948.

illustrate the widespread expectation of political patronage, and it is questionable whether the "vacation from politics", which was part of the *raison d'être* of the Commission, had any effect. The confederation campaigns of 1948 were no different from any other campaigns in Newfoundland history, and Newfoundlanders' expectations of their politicians in 1948 had not changed substantially from the 1920s or 1930s.

Despite confederate dominance in some campaign practices, the League continued on the warpath. When the 15 July *Independent* appeared, it claimed that "At Last We Know" that Smallwood had vehemently attacked "merchants, lawyers, millionaires, and old time politicians", but that he had now attracted Water Street merchant Arthur S. Monroe, millionaire merchant Sir Leonard Outerbridge, Leslie R. Curtis, and especially "old-time politician Herman Quinton".¹⁹⁶ On 17 July, Bridle reported that during the previous evening the "painfully articulate" Jamieson spoke on the radio for economic union. He castigated Quinton as Commissioner of Public Health and Welfare for "squandering money" on useless projects, and savaged Commissioner Pottle for his claim to have voted in the first referendum for confederation, even though he had made a pro-Commission speech. Jamieson insinuated that Pottle had been bought off, and concluded that Pottle "must have had a strong reason for espousing confederation". Bridle also noted that Crosbie also broadcast an address, but that he "murdered" his delivery.¹⁹⁷

On the night of 16 July, Gordon Higgins, President of the Benevolent Irish Society in St. John's, addressed members on the confederation issue, and told them that because they were Catholics it was incumbent upon them to vote for responsible

¹⁹⁶ *The Independent*, 15 July 1948, p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 July 1948.

government.¹⁹⁸ But the most impressive event was yet to come. Later that night, the speech of Mrs. Fanny Ryan Fiander at the League's rally at the CLB Armoury was broadcast. Bridle reported the press opinion that she delivered an "eloquent expression of faith and courage" and "aroused the audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm".¹⁹⁹ "As one of those who listened" to the broadcast, an impressed Bridle continued,

I can testify that this description of her oratory is in no sense exaggerated. Her ability to play on sheer emotion is superior to that of the inimitable Major Cashin. It is perhaps a good thing for Confederation that they are the only ones of their kind in active politics.²⁰⁰

At the same meeting, the League attracted other speakers, including the popular Mayor Andrew Carnell, J.S. Currie, P.E. Outerbridge (Sir Leonard's brother),²⁰¹ and the ardent Grace Sparkes,²⁰² but none were as stirring as Fiander. By the end of the meeting League supporters were so agitated that they left and marched on Government House. Sparkes noted that only the plaintive cries of Major Fred Marshall, standing on top of his car at the gate of the estate prevented the house from being stormed and the governor lynched.²⁰³

The last week of the campaign saw a variety of activities by all parties. On the west coast, McEvoy made speeches in Stephenville and St. George's, and gave a public address for confederation on the radio, introduced by St. John's businessman Don

¹⁹⁸ Edward FitzGerald to the author, 15 May 1992.

¹⁹⁹ PAC RG 2-18. Vol. 129, N-18 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 July 1948.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 July 1992.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

Clouston.²⁰⁴ The last issue of *The Confederate* on 16 July cried "BRITISH UNION ON TOP" and claimed that "Grand Reports Pour From All Directions". Touting the support received by Commissioners and various notables, the paper also went around the island, printing reports on the state of confederation on the north-east, south, and west coasts by confederate campaign workers Samuel F. Vincent, Philip Forsey, and Charles Ballam. On the evening of 17 July, fish exporter H.B. Clyde Lake was introduced by Dr. Will Roberts and gave a radio address on the future of the fishery under confederation.²⁰⁵

That same evening, Calvert C. Pratt spoke on national radio for responsible government, stating that he was "unalterably opposed to voting in favour of Confederation" because so little was known about how it would work in Newfoundland. But Pratt, who had been rumoured to be one of McEvoy's confederate supporters, carefully avoided "burning his bridges", and simply stated that with the results of the recent referendum, confederation would remain an issue in the future.²⁰⁶ The next morning, *The Sunday Herald* appeared with the headlines "DIRTY POLITICS", and nebulously claimed that

A politician flees for his life in St. John's....Another is stoned in the Burin Peninsula....A clergyman receives a slanderous letter....A prominent citizen receives a phone call threatening his family....Another is warned to keep his nose out of politics....and yet another is publicly abused because of his religion.²⁰⁷

The Herald then observed that father had been set against son, family against neighbour, and that the whispering campaign was spreading across the country. But unlike its issues

²⁰⁴ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 942, P.A. Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 July 1948; Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136. Stacey dates McEvoy's address as having been given on 15 July, while Bridle, *Documents*, p. 931, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 17 July 1948, noted that McEvoy spoke "last night".

²⁰⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 932, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 19 July 1948.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 934.

²⁰⁷ *The Sunday Herald*, 18 July 1948, p. 1.

before the first referendum, *The Herald* carefully avoided slamming the confederates, or even identifying who was using which campaign methods. It instead satisfied itself by "demanding" (to use a favourite word of Smallwood's) "that the next 12 days of the campaign be conducted on a dignified scale, and let us on the 23rd of July join hands...."²⁰⁸

On Monday 19 July, Smallwood spoke on the radio,²⁰⁹ and after dismissing the issues of taxation and the possible effects of confederation on codfish markets and exports, proceeded to tell his audience how he had been threatened with hanging, knifing, and shooting, and had been assaulted twice - once by Cashin and once outside the CLB Armoury - and how the police had to place a guard outside his house at night.²¹⁰ Bradley broadcast on Wednesday evening, in what was probably a recording, but he had been clearly eclipsed by Fanny Ryan Fiander, whom Bridle observed had made a "strange pilgrimage from obscurity to political fame".²¹¹ She had done morning and evening radio publicity spots for the RGL before returning to Harbour Grace on the Sunday prior to the vote, at which time she took her leave of politics with a "remarkable valedictory letter" in the 20 July *Daily News*, entitled "Over the Top With Fanny".²¹² Just before the referendum, Smallwood sent out a final letter to the electorate, claiming that

As soon as we get Confederation in Newfoundland, the Old Age Pension will be Thirty Dollars (\$30) a Month per person, starting at age 70.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1 and 22.

²⁰⁹ This must have been a recording, for on the same evening Smallwood attended a confederate rally at the CLB Armoury.

²¹⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 937, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 20 July 1948.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 939.

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 938-9.

This will be \$30 a month for the husband, and \$30 a month for the wife. A couple will get \$60 a month.

Besides the Pension, an old-age pensioner will be allowed to earn another \$240 a year and still get the full Old Age Pension.

We hope you will be sure to vote for Confederation on the 22nd. Do not let anything stop you from voting.

Confederation will put money in your pocket. And prices of what you buy will be lower.

Be sure to vote for Confederation.²¹³

This infuriated one RGL supporter on the West Coast, who fulminated: "What do you call this? I call it bribery They have cheated us out of our Responsible Gov't....no doubt all old age pensioners got one".²¹⁴

On 20 July the League finally reacted to the speeches of Commissioners Quinton and Pottle, and sent telegrams to Philip Noel-Baker, the British press, several British MPs, and members of the House of Lords. The League claimed that

The Commission of Government has permitted two of its members to broadcast strongly partisan speeches in favour of confederation with Canada....We protest the action of these two Commissioners and the apparent acquiescence of the Commission of Government and we request your support in obtaining fair play and assuring that undue or improper pressures will not be allowed unchallenged to prejudice issue.²¹⁵

The Commissioners' open advocacy of confederation violated many Newfoundlanders' sense of fair play. A reply to the telegram was requested, but it did not arrive until after the vote. Noel-Baker confirmed the "complete freedom of any citizen to broadcast under

²¹³ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary 1944-1948, enclosed in C. Renouf, St. David's, to O'Leary, 1 August 1948.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary 1944-1948, O'Leary to Noel-Baker *et al.*, 20 July 1948.

the auspices of any of the organizations engaged in the Referendum campaign", and explained that he saw no grounds for intervention.²¹⁶

At the end of the referendum campaign, radio broadcasts for both sides were extensive, and an all-out campaign was waged. On 20 and 21 July, RGL radio speakers included Cashin, Crosbie, Charles Hunt, and Raymond Gushue, who at last had gone public. The confederate speeches of Pottle, Monroe, Quinton and Outerbridge were re-broadcast.²¹⁷ Hunt was introduced by R. Gordon Winter, president of the well-connected importing firm of T. and M. Winter Ltd.²¹⁸ While the League concentrated on St John's and its areas of strength, the confederates repeated the pattern of the first campaign and held another concluding rally at the CLB Armoury on the night of Monday 19 July, and in the following two days Smallwood made the rounds of Conception and Trinity Bays with a vehicle and the loudspeaker truck, starting at Brigus.²¹⁹ Occasionally he met with some resistance, as in the responsible government stronghold of Harbour Grace, where he broadcast to the community from across the harbour, while responsible government supporters leaned on their car horns, trying to drown him out.²²⁰ On the eve of polling day, Brother Smallwood also visited the Orange Lodges in Conception Bay "to marshal the pro-confederation vote".²²¹ By Smallwood's own

²¹⁶ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence, F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, W. Marshall, Acting Secretary of the Commission of Government, to O'Leary, 31 July 1948.

²¹⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 943, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 July 1948; for the VONF political broadcast schedule see W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 26, Schedule of Political Broadcasts.

²¹⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol II, Part II, p. 1011, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 August 1948.

²¹⁹ Smallwood, "The Story", *BNF*, p. 31.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²²¹ Houston and Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore*, p. 154. For a map of the geographic locations of these lodges see p. 81.

admission, the second campaign "was a cruel ordeal", and he knew full well that "the slightest wrong word might lose us thousands of votes".²²² His words were words to live by, and they were a dictum Smallwood enforced. With his "iron dictatorship" over the confederate campaigns from start to finish, it worked.

In tone and content, the second campaign had been quite different from the first. It was dominated by the confederates' public campaign of sectarianism, which had been aimed at the conversion of the Commission of Government vote, and the decimation of the EUP. Towards these ends, the Commission of Government also put forth concerted efforts, and the sanction of the governor and Commissioners greatly helped the confederate cause. Smallwood brilliantly used his rival McEvoy to deliver last-minute "respectable" and influential support for confederation, and then just as brilliantly prevented him from claiming the credit by pressing the sectarian issue. The League had been weak, and was further weakened by the disintegration of the EUP, a part of the re-examination of political options in light of the results of the first referendum. But the confederates again succeeded in delivering a tight campaign to the outports, one unmatched by their opponents. With the decisive help of the Canadians and the Commission of Government, the results were not surprising.

²²² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 305.

Chapter 8

"The Country's Gone n' We're All Canadians!": Referendum and Result

Even though it rained in Newfoundland on polling day, Thursday 22 July 1948, in many ways the rambunctiousness of the campaign was reflected in the events and activities of the day and its aftermath. The confederates had named poll clerks for all divisions and districts, but in what was perhaps to prove to be their downfall, the RGL and EUP split the responsibilities for scrutineering just as they had divided their campaign responsibilities, and in many polls they had no representatives. Deputy returning officers supervised the voting, which proceeded from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m.² Early that evening the first returns were telephoned and telegraphed to the Chief Returning Officer, Nehemiah Short, whose headquarters was the Colonial Building in St. John's.³ At 4.15 that afternoon, Sir Eric Machtig had sent a telegram to Gordon Macdonald instructing him that apart from sending an objective analysis of the returns, he was also to "keep me and Canadian Government informed at regular intervals by telegram of voting figures as and when they become available".⁴ The governor spent the evening busily dashing off telegrams to Downing Street and Ottawa.

For all the riotous political activity which preceded polling day, the day itself was more quiet than expected. On the whole, Newfoundlanders' reasons for voting the way they did were multitudinous, and all of them will never be known. But Harold

¹ James A. McGrath to the author, 27 August 1991.

² See *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government of Newfoundland 1948* (St. John's: King's Printer, 1948), p. 54.

³ James A. McGrath to the author, 27 August 1991. Only these two methods of transmitting returns would account for the ability of the government to release the results over VONF that evening.

⁴ PRO DO 35/3460, Machtig to Gordon Macdonald, 4.15 p.m., 22 July 1948.

Horwood later generalized on what happened to the RGL and the Catholic Church in the outports in the second referendum:

Every right thinking Protestant in the country went out and voted against them. In the last ten days we fired off tons of gunpowder and distributed thousands of dollars of Union Jacks. The baymen walked and crawled, and went in wheelchairs to the polling booths, and gave us a 7,000 majority (78,000 to 71,000). The Queen [sic] had been saved and the Pope sent back to his lair.⁵

Other evidence survives to indicate more clearly the events or the mood in some communities, and why the results were as they were. In Bonne Bay, on the west coast of the island, one woman was struck as she went to vote because she was a confederate,⁶ while in North River, Monsignor Dinn's house was pelted with stones.⁷ South-west of St. John's in the Goulds, another confederate was "barred from a job in the booth" and was later "deliberately assaulted on entering the booth" to vote.⁸ Voting had always been a tumultuous business in Newfoundland, and 1948 was no exception.

There were also a host of electoral irregularities, official and otherwise, evidence of which the League collected in an attempt to have the referendum declared null and void, and which were also later reported by confederate correspondents to Smallwood. In one case, a returning officer took a ballot box from a polling booth and brought it to an old lady so she could vote.⁹ In Harbour Breton, an RGL supporter reported that the "highroad booth" reported 80 votes for confederation when only 8 had been polled, and put his finger on the problem when he claimed

⁵ Harold Horwood, "I'd Do it All Again", *Call Me Joey*, pp. 62-3.

⁶ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.33.001, S.D. Pike, Bonne Bay to Smallwood, 2 February 1949.

⁷ Gregory J. Power to the author, 27 January 1992.

⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.43.002, St. John's West A-G 1949, R. Bowe, Goulds, to Smallwood, 25 April 1949.

⁹ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.027, Higgins to E.J. Phelan, 14 September 1948. The community in which this occurred was not identified.

Honestly, I believe this referendum crooked in strong Confederate centres where illiteracy is great. I may be wrong, but have feeling votes were illegally marked in stations where poll officials were both Confederates and where no Responsible Government agent was present.... Cannot understand why Magistrate was not allowed to open Ballots in my presence as that I could check count and compare with that reported by message[s] from various stations. This most undemocratic, and I vehemently protest conduct and procedure this referendum. ...there was nothing to prevent an ardent Confederate deputy to mark illiterate ballots for Confederation where we had no agent.¹⁰

Illiteracy in the outports was a major problem for the League, which had not mounted as effective a campaign as the confederates, who had more personnel, and who were consistently vigilant and shepherded the electorate.¹¹ As one confederate reported on 7 June, "On Polling Day [in the first referendum] I acted as Agent for Confederation in Marystown South Booth I went there to watch the illiterate vote so I know who to work on this time".¹² In then following up on who voted for which options, confederate campaign workers made their campaign a personal one, and tailored their appeals to individual electors. From the first referendum, the confederates' campaign workers knew exactly how the vote stood in smaller communities, and because the RGL lacked polling workers in the outports, it was powerless to counter this kind of campaigning.

In another instance, RGL agent Bill Cossitt in Corner Brook supplied J.G. Higgins with evidence on electoral fraud in the west coast community of McIvers in the Bay of Islands.¹³ Higgins observed in reply that

Your information... confirms what many of us think, that there was a good lot of fraud in connection with the voting.... You say only six voted for Responsible

¹⁰ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, G.W. Porter to O'Leary, 29 July 1948.

¹¹ On the correlation between illiteracy levels and voting for responsible government see Appendix III. Illiteracy is defined broadly as the inability to read or write.

¹² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.30.001, Placentia West, J. Brenton to Smallwood, 7 June 1948.

¹³ For evidence of this information-gathering see RGLP 3.01.027, Correspondence J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to Cossitt, Corner Brook, 9 September 1948, and 13 September 1948.

Government. If we find out there were fifteen or twenty who said they voted for Responsible Government then it would look as if the ballot paper was not marked as directed.¹⁴

In response to the events in McIvers, Higgins waxed poetical:

Who is this noble gentleman,
This dapper gay achiever,
This doughty warrior of words,
One Warren J. MacIver?

...

So Newfoundlanders take your posts
And man your every station:
MacIvers are abroad today
To force Confederation.¹⁵

Because many voters were illiterate, they had to indicate to a returning officer or a poll clerk which option they wished to be marked on the ballot. Polls in which there was only a confederate agent or in which the returning officer was confederate most likely played the decisive part in delivering the confederate vote. The damage which could be done by an un-scrutinized confederate team running the polling stations and counting the ballots later became apparent to League campaigner Grace Sparkes. She later observed that a number of responsible government voters around the island wrote in to the League saying "we voted for responsible government, but there were none of our votes counted from this community".¹⁶ As Sparkes recalled, Champney's East was one settlement in which this occurred.¹⁷ But after confederation when this evidence was presented to Smallwood's Minister of Justice, Leslie Curtis, it disappeared,¹⁸ and was too little, too late.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Higgins to Cossitt, Corner Brook, 9 September 1948.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, "Rhymes of a Newfoundlander". Also see *ibid.*, Higgins to Cossitt, 9 September 1948.

¹⁶ Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Other discrepancies occurred. In Twillingate and Notre Dame districts, a correspondent maintained that at Cottle's Island the confederates told voters that "if they voted for Responsible Government they were voting for the Roman Catholic Church", and that the magistrate there moved several ballot boxes to the residences of confederates to ensure votes for confederation, because "he didn't want a Catholic to run his country".¹⁹ Furthermore, the magistrate changed officials in another polling booth in the district, presumably to ensure that voters could come under confederate influence.²⁰ In St. John's, two ladies visited a number of polling booths around the city and voted a number of times, and the League obtained a number of sworn affidavits attesting to this.²¹

The confederates had knowledge of a number of instances where influencing and "instructing the vote" occurred. In the community of Creston, on the Burin Peninsula, one confederate later wrote,

I myself fought hard for Confederation in fact all the people of this little place Creston fought hard. I was in the Pool [sic] Room door keeper on July 22nd on the South Side of Creston & Every Person went through the Secret Room door I reminded them well to mark there X For confederation. We had 132 voters & 114 [of them] marked [their] X for Confederation. So I think we done well on the South Side of Creston.²²

Another in Burin acted as polling agent and loaned his truck to the cause. He later admitted "I done all in my power to force this thing and I am still doing it because I think it is the best thing for Newfoundland".²³ In other small communities like Hopeall,

¹⁹ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, G. Pike to W.S. Perlin, 13 August 1948.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, various enclosures.

²² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.30.003, Placentia West, correspondent to Smallwood, 6 April 1949.

²³ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.06.001, Burin 1949, S. Moulton to Smallwood, 1 February 1949.

Southport, Caplin Cove and Hodge's Cove (Trinity Bay), North Harbour, Oderin, and St. Joseph's (Placentia Bay), and Campbellton (Notre Dame Bay), voters later reported to Smallwood their intimate knowledge of who voted for confederation, and who voted against it.²⁴ In Harbour Mille, one supporter later noted that game wardens and fishery inspectors (Commission of Government supporters) voted for responsible government, while 166 others voted for confederation.²⁵ Considerable psychological pressure was likely placed on outport voters by outport confederates either to vote for confederation or run the risk of the community being denied patronage. Respected community leaders, especially teachers, were often openly confederate, and admitted to influencing the vote. One in Hopeall wrote, "I won many Confederate votes both at my home, Grates Cove, and where I was last year, Musgravetown. I have been teaching for the past five years and have used my influence and ability for the cause of confederation".²⁶ Evidence of influence being brought to bear reached its apotheosis in the claim of Fr. J. Ronald Jones of Lourdes, on the Port au Port Peninsula, to Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent:

I have no hesitation in claiming that it was due principally due to my efforts that about fourteen hundred voters in this area voted for Confederation while less than four hundred voted for Responsible Gov't.

Besides this, my words were carried to all parts of the island. I asked them to be carried when I spoke Sunday after Sunday to my people.²⁷

²⁴ For instances of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.45.004 (Trinity North M-Z 1949), A. Peddle to Smallwood, 5 April 1949; 1.30.002 (Placentia West A-F 1949), R. Eddy to Smallwood, 28 April 1949; 1.30.003 (Placentia West G-O 1949), T. Lake to Smallwood, 30 April 1949; 1.30.004 (Placentia West P-Z 1949), E. Pierce to Smallwood, 2 May 1949, 1.45.002 (Trinity North A-F 1949), S. Avery to Smallwood, 2 May 1949, and J. Drodge to Smallwood, 16 April 1949; 1.46.003 (Trinity South H-P 1949), H. Piercy to Smallwood, 25 April 1949.

²⁵ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.12.001, Fortune Bay-Hermitage, R. Barents to Smallwood, 5 February 1949.

²⁶ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.46.004, Trinity South Q-Z 1949, G. Stansford to Smallwood, 25 April 1949; also *Ibid.*, 1.45.002, Trinity North A-F 1949, E.R. Fisher to Smallwood, 4 April 1949.

²⁷ PAC MG 27 L, Vol. 61, N-19-2, Fr. Jones to St. Laurent, 9 March 1948.

In many cases, the motivation to vote for confederation was provided by the close relationships of the campaign workers with the electorate, and the vote was delivered by a tight party organization.

When the first results became available just after 9 p.m.²⁸ that night they were broadcast nationally on VONF at intervals,²⁹ interspersed with musical selections. The whole country held its breath while the count proceeded, and the atmosphere was electric. Responsible government led confederation in the first ten reported counts. Paul Bridle later reported that by 1.10 a.m. the next morning, complete returns had been received from 7 of 25 districts, with Labrador returns incomplete, and confederation stood at 64,160 votes with responsible government at 64,890 votes.³⁰ But when the eleventh count was announced, confederation had overtaken responsible government, and the latter never recovered its lead.³¹ After the eleventh return was broadcast, the disk jockey played a record, entitled "The Beginning of the End", and the BCN telephone lines began buzzing with virulent responsible government callers.³² Late that night, when the results indicated an irreversible trend, young James McGrath made his way home past the Colonial Building, from the polling station in the General Hospital at which he had worked. He noticed that like a national shrine, the Colonial Building was brilliantly floodlit for some unknown reason, and he later recalled that it gave him a eerie

²⁸ *The Daily News*, 23 July 1948, p. 3, indicated that the first return was from the Grace Hospital at 9.03 p.m., with returns of 49 for responsible government and 60 for confederation, but presumably this was an error, since it would hardly have been possible to open and empty the ballot boxes, count the ballots, and telephone this to the Colonial Building within three minutes after the legal hour for polls to close.

²⁹ See RGLP 3.01.044, Polling, "Total-Responsible-Confederation."

³⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 944, Bridle to Secretary of State, 23 July 1948.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 944.

³² RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins July-September 1948, clipping of Canadian Press News Service article, 23 July 1948.

sense that "something terrible was happening" to his country.³³ Near his house, he stopped to visit a neighbour, and was met with the plaintive cry, "My Jaysus, Jamie, the Country's gone n' we're all Canadians!"³⁴

With some polls not yet received from Labrador, the referendum results took a number of days to be finalized. The final count showed that 84.89% of eligible voters had voted, a drop of 3.47% over the first referendum. Confederation received 78,323 votes, Machtig's "bare majority" of 6,989 votes over the 71,334 votes for responsible government.³⁵ But as John G. Higgins observed, though confederation received about 52% of the actual vote, this represented less than 43% of the "total of registered voters".³⁶ The predominantly Roman Catholic districts of St. John's East and West, Harbour Main-Bell Island, Ferryland, and Placentia-St. Mary's - the historic strongholds against confederation - voted for responsible government, along with the predominantly Church of England districts of Harbour Grace and Port de Grave, while the remaining districts, including the Roman Catholic districts of St. George's-Port au Port and Placentia West, voted for confederation. Twillingate, which in the first referendum had voted 42% for Commission of Government and 43% for confederation, voted 75% for confederation in the second referendum, seemingly confirming the efficacy of the "British Union" and the Commissioners' campaign. Responsible government lost support in seven districts, and Bonavista South switched from responsible government to confederation. The Avalon Peninsula had rejected confederation, but the outports and the rest of Newfoundland had chosen it.

³³ James A. McGrath to the author, 27 August 1991.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ See Appendix I, Table III.

³⁶ RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary/Collins July-September 1948, Higgins to the Editor, *Globe and Mail*, Toronto, 30 July 1948.

Table 8.1
Disposal of Commission of Government Vote, 22 July 1948

Districts where majority of Commission vote went to Confed.	Districts where majority of Commission vote went to R.G.	Districts where Majority of Commission vote was split between Confed. and R.G.
White Bay	Labrador	Green Bay
Grand Falls		Placentia West
Twillingate		St. George's Pt.Pt.
Fogo		Plac.-St.M's (R.G.)
Bonavista North		
Bonavista South *		
Trinity North		
Burin		
Fortune-Hermitage		
Burgeo-La Poile		
Humber		
St. Barbe		
Trinity South		
Carbonear Bay de V		
Harbour Grace	(R.G.)	
Port de Grave	(R.G.)	
Hr.Main-B.Isl.	(R.G.)	
St. John's W.	(R.G.)	
St. John's E.	(R.G.)	
Ferryland	(R.G.)	

* Bonavista South voted for responsible government on 3 June.

Unless noted by (R.G.), districts voted predominantly for confederation.

Responsible government lost support in the south coast Anglican districts of Fortune-Hermitage and Burgeo-LaPoile, while confederation gained, very likely due to the confederates' "British Union" campaign. Responsible government also lost support in the Protestant Conception Bay - Trinity Bay districts (Trinity South, Carbonear-Bay de Verde, Harbour Grace, and Port de Grave), where Smallwood's Orange Lodge rallies seem to have had an effect, and also because a number of residents were engaged in the migratory fishery on the Labrador. Support for confederation dropped in Labrador, while responsible government gained, which was possibly due to the summertime fishery, accounting for the 119.44% vote turnout. Ferryland saw a drop in the responsible government vote, and an increase for the confederate vote, and had 104.59% turnout, possibly because of the summertime fishery in that area. In later years, Jamieson pondered: "The tantalizing question remains, however, to which there is no answer; was the [Orange] letter enough to give the Confederate force the splinter thin margin of about one per cent by which it finally triumphed?"³⁷ But Smallwood's carefully orchestrated second campaign employed far more than just one Orange letter, and its sectarian appeal was deliberately aimed at the conversion of the Commission voters. Confederation claimed the pro-British Commission vote, and with other factors being equal, that was probably enough to put confederation over the top.

While the district results indicate trends in voting, a number of mysteries remain about the polling. On 26 July Governor Macdonald reported that 12,927 votes had been cast for responsible government in St. John's West.³⁸ Two days later he revised this figure downward by 414 to 12,513 because one ballot box had been counted twice.³⁹

³⁷ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 103.

³⁸ PRO DO 35/3460, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, 7 p.m., 26 July 1948.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, 1 p.m., 28 July 1948.

But if one ballot box was used for each poll,⁴⁰ and if there were only about three hundred voters per poll,⁴¹ the governor's explanation would not seem to account for the revision of the figures. Significantly, supervision of the compilation of the polling results at the Colonial Building remained the sole prerogative of the governor, Short, and his designates, and no evidence exists to indicate that the political parties scrutinized the gathering and compilation of the results.⁴² Minor "skulduggery" could have been carried out with ease, and probably was, but definitive proof of this is lacking. Other events also remain clouded. Years later, in 1966, the then chief returning officer, G.E. Trickett, certified that from 1913 to 1954, all the ballot boxes for any given district were sent to the returning officer, who opened them and mixed them all together, and "Thus only the total vote ... for the district could be obtained".⁴³ But the Referendum Act required deputy returning officers to submit official statements on poll returns to Short.⁴⁴ As well, the Johnson-Edgcombe and Bradley Orange letters implied a knowledge of the poll-by-poll returns for the first referendum, and the confederates obviously had and used this information and knew precisely which neighbourhoods in which communities voted for and against confederation. But this information is missing from the Smallwood and

⁴⁰ It would be likely that all the voters in one poll voted in one ballot box. For polling divisions in St. John's West see RGLP 3.01.044, Polling. Each poll was comprised of one or two neighbourhoods, and certainly had less than 414 voters each. Additionally, large divisions would most likely have used split polls, with two ballot boxes per poll.

⁴¹ Stacey, "1000 Days", *BNF*, p. 136. The Referendum Act left the creation of polling divisions to the chief returning officer.

⁴² There was no provision in the Referendum Act for scrutinizing the compilation of the results.

⁴³ "Prefatory Note" in G.E. Trickett, "Report of the Provincial Elections of the Province of Newfoundland Covering the Years 1949 to 1966 Inclusive, Together With the Names of the Persons Elected to the National Convention in 1946 and the Results of the Referendums of 1948", typescript, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁴⁴ See The Referendum Act 1948, and The National Convention Act 1946, paras. 70 and 84, on which it relies for the provision of the mechanics of conducting the polling.

Bradley papers,⁴⁵ and the official poll-by-poll statements are missing from the Newfoundland provincial archives.⁴⁶ In 1981 two academics at Memorial University discovered the returns for Bonavista South at the Newfoundland provincial archives,⁴⁷ and in 1985 the poll-by-poll results for Labrador were published.⁴⁸ If complete poll-by-polls are found and correlated with documentary and oral sources, there will emerge a clearer picture of why Newfoundlanders voted as they did.

For better or worse, confederation had narrowly won over responsible government in the referendum. But this did not mean that it was a *fait accompli*. The union of Newfoundland and Canada would require definitive enunciations of policy and the taking of action by the Canadians, the Commission, and the British, and it would have to be accepted by the population, and especially by those who opposed it and voted against it. The weeks which followed the vote were as crucial as the campaign and the vote itself, and saw an unprecedented quantity of behind-the-scenes manoeuvring take place in the final push to put Newfoundland into confederation.

⁴⁵ The Smallwood and Bradley papers contain no poll-by-poll results.

⁴⁶ On the work of a previous researcher at finding this information see Walsh, *More Than a Poor Majority*, pp. 300-1. Not surprisingly, then, do rumours persist to the present day about the referendum "being rigged".

⁴⁷ See Mark W. Graesser and Michael Wallack, "Partisanship, Social Structure, and Political Culture in Newfoundland", unpublished ms., Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1981, pp. 29 and 40. The author has been unable to find this information at the provincial archives.

⁴⁸ Doris Saunders, "Confederation - Labrador Gets the Vote", *Them Days Magazine*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (March 1985): 38-42.

Chapter 9

"Amid the Fog and Oft the Storm": The Confederate Ascendancy and the Decline of the League, 1948-1949

With victory at the polls for confederation, the confederates, the British, and the Canadians lost no time in giving legal effect to the results. A survey of Newfoundland political opinion was done immediately following the vote, during which the Roman Catholic Church virtually abandoned its opposition to confederation, and the Canadian decision to proceed with confederation was encouraged. The RGL began to dissipate in the wake of its defeat, but remnants of the group continued to fight back with a variety of legal appeals, receiving some assistance from British MPs. But the RGL eventually abandoned the cause after confederation was realized. During the days and months following the campaigns, Smallwood eagerly pressed the Canadians for control of the provincial government of Newfoundland. He received this, and the important right to dispense patronage, ensuring allegiance to the cause, and forging the acceptance and initial success of the new political arrangement.

The morning after the referendum, the timing of events and the making of decisions once again became the prerogative of governments, with help from the confederates, and the process of crafting a constitutional settlement was once again removed from the realm of public politics and the input of average Newfoundlanders. Gordon Macdonald wrote Sir Eric Machtig a personal letter, informing him that

The result of the Referendum will give Confederation at least [a] five thousand majority. Having in mind the campaign that preceded the second referendum, I consider it a fine achievement....

...in my personal opinion there is only one course for the Canadian authorities, namely, to accept the decision and to ask for a delegation of authorised representatives to be appointed, and to state that such a delegation

¹ RGLP 3.01.027, Correspondence, J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, in Higgins to A.P. Herbert, 30 December 1948.

would be received at an early date. So far as you can influence the decision I trust you will do so. Quick decision along with quick action is by far the wisest course.

...There must be no hesitation on the part of the Canadian authorities. Any sign whatever of hesitation will be fatal.

You need not refer to this communication in any official communication to me.²

Machtig copied Macdonald's letter to the High Commissioner in Ottawa.³ On 23 July, Gordon Macdonald wrote to Clement Attlee, and suggested with a certain urgency that

...if you can find an opportunity in your busy life, ...you might have a word with Noel-Baker to urge him to urge the Canadian authorities to cease [sic] the opportunity of bringing about Confederation to do so without delay.

The slightest sign of hesitation on their part can do irreparable harm. Quick decision and quick action is the one hope.⁴

The confederates, the governor, the Commissioners, and Canadian money had delivered the vote, and now the initiative was with the Canadians.

In a press release on the afternoon of the 23rd, Mackenzie King simply acknowledged the events in Newfoundland, and refrained from further comment until the final results were known.⁵ But that morning, King's secretary Jack Pickersgill had been prepared, and reminded King that the majority for confederation was larger than any the Liberal party had received in any election since 1921.⁶ That night, King's diary recorded his own preference for the union of Newfoundland with Canada "as the logical end to

² PRO DO 35/3460, Gordon Macdonald to Machtig, 23 July 1948.

³ PRO DO 35/3460, Machtig to U.K. High Commissioner in Canada, 26 July 1948.

⁴ Attlee Papers, Deposit 72, folio 217, Gordon Macdonald to Attlee, 23 July 1948.

⁵ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 947, Statement to the Press by the Prime Minister, 23 July 1948.

⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 948, footnote 76.

it",⁷ and at midnight R.A. MacKay quietly arrived in Newfoundland as the Canadian observer.⁸

Even before the final results were in or could be appreciated by Newfoundlanders, the final push was begun to pilot Newfoundland into the Canadian federation. The day after the vote, Smallwood, McEvoy, Governor Macdonald, and the Attlee government turned their energies towards pressuring Ottawa to accept the small majority for confederation. The EUP, which had declined in the second campaign, collapsed, and the RGL pressed on in its efforts to halt confederation. When newspaper reports appeared speculating that Canada would not accept the majority, Smallwood contacted Bridle to impress upon him the urgency of a Canadian announcement, but Smallwood was told that a Canadian decision would be unlikely before the official returns were known.⁹ The same day, McEvoy telephoned MacKay to say that Newfoundland "would be "very badly out on a limb" should the Canadian government turn down the verdict of the people.¹⁰ According to plan, R.A. MacKay would visit the politicians and especially the Church hierarchy in order to obtain their analyses, and determine if the opposition could accept confederation.

When the results became known, reactions were mixed. The confederates were elated, and within days held a victory celebration in the confederate stronghold of Victoria, Conception Bay, with Smallwood under the watchful eyes of his personal

⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 947-8, Extract from *The Mackenzie King Record*.

⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 947, MacKay to Bridle, 23 July 1948. I'aul Martin did not come to Newfoundland, as he was a leadership hopeful for the imminent Liberal Party leadership convention.

⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 946, Pearson to St. Laurent, 23 July 1948.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 946.

bodyguards.¹¹ But in St. John's, the mood was "ugly".¹² The RGL was devastated and angry, but did not yet consider itself defeated. Jamieson recalls that as the night wore on and the trend became known, he was "beyond consolation",¹³ and "the older and more stoic amongst our supporters, though bitterly disappointed, were resigned to the outcome."¹⁴ The next morning at dawn, Crosbie "roared" to his workers, "What the hell's wrong with you? It's not the end of the world. Let's get some breakfast",¹⁵ and Jamieson reportedly headed off on a "three day drunk".¹⁶

On 24 July Paul Bridle despatched a cursory analysis of the referendum results to Ottawa, identifying Smallwood as the "Apostle of Confederation", and crediting the decision for confederation to the promises of the Canadian social welfare state.¹⁷ He deliberately downplayed religious and class divisions - since these could possibly dampen Canadian eagerness to proceed with confederation - and claimed that he could "see no evidence that anything like a religious cleavage has occurred or is likely to occur".¹⁸ Noting that the Roman Catholic Church supported confederation on the west coast, he thought that "this is one indication of a definite movement away from a division of political opinion along strictly religious lines", and that "reluctant to press further along the road of sectarianism", in the second campaign the Church did not exert "the effort

¹¹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 314-5.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 315.

¹³ Jamieson, "I Saw the Fight", *BNF*, p. 104.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁶ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 112.

¹⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 953, Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 July 1948.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 953.

they put forth before June 3rd".¹⁹ Bridle noted that the EUP "were unable to produce further evidence to support their claims", and that "their campaign was rather drab this time in comparison with the highly theatrical performance which they put on last May".²⁰ But the RGL was expected to continue the fight, and Bridle claimed that "I would not be surprised to see some of the die-hard advocates of Responsible Government continuing to agitate for its return on constitutional grounds".²¹ Two days later, Gordon Macdonald made his official report to London, and observed that

...fishermen and lumbermen supported Confederation and... professional and commercial classes and miners supported Responsible Government. ...the chief support for Responsible Government was in St. John's and on the Avalon Peninsula....

If the poll is examined from the point of view of religious division of the country it can, we think, be said that the Roman Catholic vote was mainly Responsible Government and the remaining denominations were divided but chiefly Confederate.²²

Macdonald also added that "Early decision on part of Canadian authorities is essential. Any hint of hesitation on part of Canada will have an adverse effect on conditions here".²³

In St. John's, R.A. MacKay collected personal evaluations of events from the confederates, the governor, the Commissioners, and the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁴ The governor thought that the RGL had "suffered a shattering defeat", and

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 952.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 951-2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 953.

²² PRO DO 35/3460, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, 7.00 p.m., 26 July 1948.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ There are collected in PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, Interdepartmental Committee on Canada-Newfoundland Relations, General Correspondence. For their partial publication see Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 981-992.

advised that a date be chosen for the union, suggesting 31 March 1949.²⁵ Macdonald told MacKay that he would choose two negotiators from responsible government ranks who would serve on a delegation to Ottawa, although he was not quite sure if the two he had in mind would accept his offer.²⁶ MacKay reported that

The Governor emphasized that not to proceed with Confederation at the present time is not only to decline to accept the decision of the majority of the Newfoundland people but also broadly speaking to support the Responsible Government people on the Avalon Peninsula against those favouring Confederation outside of it.²⁷

The next day, MacKay further discussed the establishment of political parties, and confederation with the governor, who reiterated that "if Confederation is turned down now by the Canadian Government, it may never happen in our time".²⁸

MacKay received a similar analysis from McEvoy, Smallwood, Bradley, and Monroe, whom he met on the evening of 26 July at McEvoy's house. But the topic of discussion turned to sectarianism, and McEvoy attributed the responsible government vote on the Avalon peninsula to *The Monitor's* stand, and "a few chance remarks which the Archbishop was alleged to have made", while the confederate vote on the west coast was largely attributed to the Church.²⁹ Another person present then noted that 70% of the vote outside the Avalon Peninsula had gone for confederation, and that a number of people had written the confederates asking whether the Avalon could be politically

²⁵ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, I.C.C.N.R., *General Correspondence, First Conversation With Governor and Commissioners Walsh and Pottle, 26 July 1948, p. 1.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, *Second Conversation With Governor and Commissioners Pottle, Quinton and Walsh, 27 July 1948, p. 2.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, *Discussion at the Residence of Mr. J.B. McEvoy, 26 July 1948, pp. 2-3.*

separated from the rest of the island.³⁰ Bradley observed that the Orange Order "had turned out to a man in favour" of confederation, and thought that it had swung the vote in Bonavista.³¹ MacKay noted that there had been no discussion of divorce and education at the McEvoy meeting.³² But when he passed on the opinion that "for Canada to decline to accept Newfoundland ... would be to establish minority rule", and that such a response would precipitate civil disturbances in the outports,³³ he betrayed a certain confederate panic that their win would not be confirmed. Perhaps unable to wait, the next day he telephoned Pearson to press the point that "not to proceed with Confederation... would cause great resentment and would be considered by the Confederation party as disastrous".³⁴

On 27 July, RGL members Cheeseman, Collins, and Hollett were courteous to MacKay, but emphasized their determination to fight any decision to put Newfoundland into confederation, and remarked that "in spite of the best will in the world on the part of the League it might be difficult to prevent trouble".³⁵ Two days previous, the League had contacted Mackenzie King. Claiming to represent the 48% who voted for responsible government, the League observed that the

...confederate majority was unquestionably obtained through use by confederate association of tactics deliberately designed to divide people on class regional and

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4. MacKay did not identify the person who said this.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Discussion at McEvoy's house, p. 4, and also *Ibid.*, MacKay's "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 29 July 1948," p. 2.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 4. It is not known who said this.

³⁴ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Memorandum for the Prime Minister from Pearson, 27 July 1948.

³⁵ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, I.C.C.N.R., General Correspondence, Talk With Responsible Government People, 27 July 1948.

sectarian grounds with result that divisions and conflicts created that would gravely prejudice success of confederation from very beginning.³⁶

MacKay saw the telegram and challenged its assertions. On 27 July, he told St. Laurent that "In my opinion the views set forth in the telegram cannot be said to represent the present attitude of most of the 70,000 people who voted for Responsible Government".³⁷ He continued that "there is an element in the Responsible Government movement which is determined to use every means at its disposal to oppose Confederation", and observed that the telegram's assertion that the charges of sectarianism against the confederates

...not only ignores the fact that it was the Responsible Government side which were chiefly responsible for this sort of thing but also inexcusably exaggerates the seriousness of such divisions as exist at present. The only division that is of significance is that between the Avalon Peninsula and the rest of the country.³⁸

MacKay's assertion that there was a division between the Avalon and the rest of the island was true, but his other observations about sectarianism were inaccurate, and his interviews had been primarily with the confederates and thus tempered by their opinions. Much more evidence existed of confederate sectarianism than evidence on the exploits of Peter Cashin, or on the anti-confederate sectarian activities of the east coast Church.

Chief Justice Sir Edward Emerson, a Roman Catholic, told Bridle and MacKay that the religious vote had been significant, with *The Monitor* and the archbishop influencing the "average unenlightened voter",³⁹ but that religion had not been as

³⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 955, Collins to MacKenzie King, 25 July 1948.

³⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 966, MacKay to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 27 July 1948.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 967.

³⁹ PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 3, I.C.C.N.R., General Correspondence, First Conversation With Sir Edward Emerson (With Mr. Bridle Alone), 26 July 1948.

important as the "floating vote", which was unrelated to religious opinion.⁴⁰ Emerson advised them to see Archbishop Flynn, to obtain the Church's opinions on what had transpired. But Emerson was preaching to the converted, for the Canadian and British governments had been consistently mindful of the Church's position on confederation. If its opposition could be placated, reduced, or contained, then confederation could be proceeded with without fear of recriminations. All that was required was the opportunity.

On 27 July, MacKay met Flynn and Bishops O'Neill and O'Reilly, who had been gathered in a retreat. They told MacKay of the Church's fears that educational funding would be inadequate, and that to proceed with confederation would further split the country. The bishops stressed that confederation was a national and not a religious issue, because two Catholic districts had voted for confederation.⁴¹ MacKay's report presented other reasons for opposition: Archbishop Roche was old, tired and averse to change; next to the Crown the Church was the biggest landholder in Newfoundland, and feared the imposition of taxes; the hierarchy disliked the prospect of losing autonomy to the Quebec hierarchy; and historically, the Irish had "put over" responsible government.⁴² But MacKay was also careful to create the impression that the opposition of the Church could be overcome. He reported that O'Neill and O'Reilly were personally in favour of confederation, and noted that in the meeting they had to present a common front. MacKay then concluded that the bishops "appreciated a mistake had been made by open opposition to confederation", and he claimed that "they would like a face-saving

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Second Conversation with Sir Edward Emerson, p. 1. Neither Emerson nor MacKay defined what was meant by the "floating vote"; presumably, these were the voters who were undecided until the last minute.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Talk With Coadjutor Archbishop Flynn and Bishop O'Reilly and Bishop O'Neill, pp. 1-2.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

arrangement".⁴³ Significantly, in meeting with MacKay, the Church freely showed its hand and allowed MacKay to put his own interpretation on the event. Apart from a *Monitor* editorial which re-stated the Church's view that confederation should have been decided between the elected parliaments of Newfoundland and Canada, and a few rumblings by O'Neill that fall, the Church essentially abandoned its opposition to confederation. MacKay's meeting with the bishops gave the Canadians the opportunity to describe the encounter as a success, which they quickly did.

Wainwright Abbott, the American consul general in St. John's, sent a summary of events to Washington. He thought that "Had it not been for the success of the Governor in obtaining the aid of the United Church, the Orangemen, two of the Commissioners and a few other prominent citizens at the last moment the result would probably have been different".⁴⁴ But Abbott was more candid about Smallwood's prospects for the future:

The new men who came out at the last moment reassured the more conservative voters and cast an aura of respectability about the Confederate party which had been lacking before. Having made use of Smallwood's undoubted organizing and demagogic talents, these new accessions to Confederation are now faced with the problem of how to get rid of him, which they privately state they wish and intend to do.⁴⁵

In MacKay's final summary to Lester B. Pearson (which the latter referred to Mackenzie King on 30 July), he concluded that "the Catholic vote in the St. John's, Bell Island and Harbour Grace areas was instructed",⁴⁶ and that this had the effect of "stirring up the Orangemen who conducted a whispering campaign and appear to have turned out to a

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Abbott to Secretary of State, Washington, 2 August 1948, cited in Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 324.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

⁴⁶ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 980, MacKay to Pearson, 29 July 1948.

man to support Confederation, especially in the second referendum".⁴⁷ While skirting the issue of who created and ensured the Orange vote, MacKay noted that there had been a considerable Catholic confederate vote at Placentia, and that on the West Coast, three Catholic priests were confederate workers, and one "presided at Confederation meetings and "heckled" at Responsible Government meetings".⁴⁸ In MacKay's opinion, religion had been a dominant factor in the campaigns, and the post-referendum attitude of the Archdiocese of St. John's would play a major role in determining the settlement which would be possible. Despite the bitter campaign, MacKay advised that if responsible government were to be restored, confederation would be postponed "indefinitely and perhaps for ever". Even worse, MacKay pregnantly remarked, "the Confederate leaders would feel they had been double-crossed and supporters generally that they had been rebuffed".⁴⁹ The implication was not only that the day must be seized, but that the deal had been done and could only be completed with the continued support of Smallwood and his band of confederates, who had been intimately involved thus far in Canadian plans and who would fear betrayal if an answer were not given in the affirmative.

On 27 July the Canadian cabinet moved quickly and approved the referendum majority as substantial enough to proceed with confederation.⁵⁰ While MacKay's report on sentiment was being written, the United Kingdom and Canadian governments exchanged last-minute views over legal procedures, and the final wording of the announcement of the Canadian decision. Gordon Macdonald pressed for both acceptance

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 980.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 980.

⁴⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 980, MacKay to Pearson, 29 July 1948.

⁵⁰ See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 964-5, "Memorandum by Department of External Affairs," and Extract from *The Mackenzie King Record*.

and simultaneous announcements in Ottawa, London, and St. John's.⁵¹ On 29 July the League made a last-ditch appeal to Mackenzie King to receive a delegation "to lay before you the considered views of the League in what is regarded to be the best interests of both Newfoundland and Canada" prior to making an announcement.⁵² King replied, claiming that "the Canadian government has at no time intervened in any way in the determination of the procedure to be followed in Newfoundland", and stated that Canada would only receive a delegation "authorized by the duly constituted authorities of Newfoundland".⁵³ That same day the announcement that union would be proceeded with was agreed upon between Gordon Macdonald and Ottawa,⁵⁴ and on 31 July the Canadian, Commission, and United Kingdom governments made their announcements, though not without a transgression of the news release embargo by Reuters News Agency.⁵⁵ The Canadians welcomed, "warmly and sincerely, the decision of the people of Newfoundland", and the British noted that "the next step will be for appointed Newfoundland representatives to go to Ottawa in order to arrange for negotiation with representatives of the Canadian Government the final terms of union".⁵⁶ Governor Macdonald announced that Commissioner Albert Walsh would lead the Ottawa delegation to negotiate the terms. In addition to Walsh, the group eventually came to consist of Smallwood, Bradley, McEvoy, Philip Gruchy, Gordon A. Winter (R. Gordon's confederate son), and Ches Crosbie,⁵⁷ the last of whom accepted appointment after

⁵¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 970, Pearson to Bridle, 28 July 1948.

⁵² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 972-3, Collins to Mackenzie King, 29 July 1948.

⁵³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 978, Mackenzie King to Collins, 30 July 1948.

⁵⁴ See *Ibid.*, pp. 974-978.

⁵⁵ See PRO DO 35/3459 for this.

⁵⁶ For the news releases see Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 993-998.

⁵⁷ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1007, Minutes of a meeting of the Delegation of Newfoundland, 25 August 1947. Subsequent citations of Bridle will be to this volume unless noted.

consultation with the committees of the EUP.⁵⁸ Charles Hunt and R. Gordon Winter had been invited to join the delegation, but they declined.⁵⁹ Significantly, the delegation was appointed and not democratically elected, and in this respect it was in keeping with recent British practice in Newfoundland: like the Commission, it was neither representative of nor answerable to Newfoundlanders. While each member of the delegation may have had every intention to secure the best terms possible for Newfoundland, in retrospect, the delegation's appointed status placed it in an unequal, and ultimately poor, bargaining position for securing terms from Canadian civil servants and cabinet ministers.

While the Canadians had come to Newfoundland and measured reaction and opposition to the decision, another process of mollifying, assimilating, and muzzling opposition to confederation was begun in the Newfoundland political community. This was begun and aided by pleas to forgive and forget, and the appearance of a surprisingly conciliatory attitude from some quarters. Three days after the referendum, *The Sunday Herald* editorialized that "the voice of the majority is generally accepted by the minority, and both majority and minority groups co-operate and work together for the common good".⁶⁰ Then quoting Addison's rejoinder to Cashin, *The Herald* added: "The old saying that "God helps those who help themselves" is still true even under Confederation".⁶¹ Almost in confirmation of the success of Smallwood's earlier baiting of Crosbie, the day after *The Herald* appeared, Bridle "received a tip from one of the

⁵⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1010, telegram of Crosbie to EUP, cited in Bridle to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 August 1948.

⁵⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1006, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, 14 August 1948.

⁶⁰ *The Sunday Herald*, editorial of 1 August 1948, p. 6, quoted in Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 963, MacKay to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 July 1948. It is evident that the 25 July edition was issued before the second referendum, as it contained political advertising.

⁶¹ Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 963, Telegram 143, MacKay to Pearson, 26 July 1948.

confederates that Crosbie was disposed to accept [the] verdict and might come out publicly and would like to be on [the] delegation to Ottawa".⁶² Crosbie's conversion was important to the confederates, the Canadians, and the governor, whose success with the confederation process would be greatly aided by public support from a former member of the EUP-RGL group. On 28 July, Bridle informed MacKay that he had spoken with Crosbie, who was "obviously bitterly disappointed by [the] failure of an effort into which he has put so much".⁶³ Yet Crosbie had emphasized that "further postponement of an announcement by the Canadian Government to proceed with Confederation is fraught with danger".⁶⁴ How did Crosbie know that a Canadian announcement was imminent, and after all the time and money he spent on the EUP campaigns, why was he now encouraging confederation? Compared with the glamour and glitz of the first campaign, his relative silence during the second was quite apparent, and Jamieson recounted how easily he accepted the verdict of the electorate on "the morning after". It may have been that recognizing a sinking ship, he accepted Smallwood's blandishments in exchange for tacit support. His defection to the confederate side further splintered the already shattered opposition to confederation, and removed the only popularly-acceptable anti-confederate leader from the responsible government campaign.

The Canadians downplayed the divisions and rancour created by the confederation campaigns, and despite the loss and defections of the EUP, the RGL was less than entirely defeated and bravely pressed on. On 2 August the League executive met to discuss sending its own delegation to Ottawa and a meeting with the governor, but with a characteristic legalistic bent, spent the evening making and amending motions to effect

⁶² Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 962, Telegram 142, MacKay to Pearson, 26 July 1948.

⁶³ PAC RG 2-18, Vol. 129, N-18, 1948, file: June-July, Bridle to MacKay, 28 July 1948.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

these ends.⁶⁵ A week later, the meeting was devoted to reading correspondence and moving that the Drafting Committee draft replies.⁶⁶ The same day, Higgins wrote Ted Henley in Gander, reflecting on the state of public tension and the Commission's intolerance of protest:

Between ourselves, we are still fighting although we are doing it very quietly. Gestappo [sic] methods are being employed here. V.O.N.F. has shut off all political discussions and V.O.C.M. is being muzzled. Strong pressure has been brought to bear on the latter.⁶⁷

The next day, VONF received an application from Peter Cashin, appealing for broadcast time as a former minister of the Crown. The station manager, William Galgay, diplomatically replied:

Your application for broadcast time for the purpose of expressing your views in connection with the result of the recent national referendum, has been considered by the governors of the BCN.

I am now instructed to inform you that all political broadcasts and broadcasts on political matters have been suspended for the present and it is not possible to place time at your disposal.⁶⁸

While the League was temporarily rebuffed, Galgay was planning the merger of the corporation with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He forecasted "little hope of success" for the League's efforts, and observed that "The fact that Confederation will be consummated sometime in March or April of next year is generally acknowledged...."⁶⁹

Disheartened, on 13 August O'Leary resigned the League's presidency, observing that while he thought that responsible government should be restored, Canada and the

⁶⁵ RGLP 3.01.001, Executive Minutes, 2 August 1948.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 9 August 1948.

⁶⁷ RGLP 3.01.18, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, Higgins to Henley, 9 August 1948.

⁶⁸ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 21, Galgay to Cashin, 11 August 1948.

⁶⁹ W.F. Galgay Papers, file # 16, Galgay to D. Manson, Assistant General Manager, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 7 September 1948.

United Kingdom were determined to proceed with confederation, and "further action at this time would not be in the best interest of the League or the country".⁷⁰ Wickford Collins later noted that League members felt deeply hurt over the kind of campaign waged by the confederates, and observed that the League "had neither the intention or the talent to engage in a war of deceit, vilification or ridicule".⁷¹ O'Leary may have been correct to resign. There were few avenues of action left open to the League: the Church had virtually accepted the verdict, radio discussion was muzzled, the Commission of Government was intent on proceeding with confederation, and the Canadians had refused to receive a League delegation and were pushing for the union. The only avenues left to the League were to collect evidence of wrongdoing, to make various appeals to Britain, and to attempt to stop confederation in the courts.

Political activities eventually came full circle. RGL lawyer John G. Higgins recruited Sir Alan P. Herbert, the originator of the idea of the Convention, for British parliamentary assistance to save Newfoundland from confederation. Higgins passionately told Herbert that

The story of the manner by which Newfoundland has been railroaded into Confederation is a sordid one, a contemptible piece of political chicanery, perpetrated on a simple, honest people by men holding high positions who apparently forget the primary tenets of public morality....

If Confederation eventually goes through, there will be a blot on English politics which will never be erased. Everything was done to force it through. At the last moment the Commission of Government took an active part for Confederation and two Commissioners broadcast in favour of it. The Governor ever since his arrival has been stirring up class hatred. His sinister figure has moved through many situations.⁷²

⁷⁰ RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence, F.M. O'Leary 1944-1948, O'Leary to Collins, 13 August 1948.

⁷¹ Collins, "League outclassed", *The Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1969, p. 36.

⁷² RGLP 3.01.027, Correspondence, J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to A.P. Herbert, 6 August 1948.

The League estimated that the Orange vote "turned over at least 5,000 votes which would mean in the long run 10,000 that is to say votes that had gone in favour of Responsible Government in the previous referendum",⁷³ and Higgins told Gerald Waring of the *Montreal Standard* that

The Roman Catholic *Monitor* suggested that the terms of Confederation should be negotiated between two governments. There is no harm in saying that and it outlines the proper procedure. The Loyal Orange Association held its Convention a week before the last elections and a disgraceful Resolution was passed and this was embodied in a letter from the Grand Master to all Orangemen in Newfoundland. This is the first time that Sectarianism has been shown in this country for many years. The effect of this letter was noticeable on the votes in some of the districts. It turned a sufficient number of voters to bring about Confederation.⁷⁴

Higgins later wrote to the *Daily News* under the *nom-de-plume* "Realist" and accused the confederates of introducing "the red rag of class distinction" to win votes, and of committing "the heinous crime of using the highest, the most sacred and most personal of all human ideals and beliefs, - RELIGION, to attain their goal".⁷⁵

Like O'Leary, some thought it better to accept the verdict, but forgiveness came late to others. On 2 September the League started a petition demanding the return of responsible government, which eventually received 50,000 signatures.⁷⁶ Public reaction flooded in. In St. John's, Peter E. Outerbridge, Sir Leonard's brother, wished the petition every success but wrote

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Higgins to A.G. Allen, London, 11 August 1948. Allen and Overy were solicitors contacted by the League to secure counsel for the League in England. See W.J. Browne, *Eighty-Four Years*, pp. 304 and 313.

⁷⁴ RGLP 3.01.027, Correspondence, J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to G. Waring, 12 August 1948.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, "Realist" to Editor, *The Daily News*, undated.

⁷⁶ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 337.

If you gave a bum on the street a dollar and went to him the next day to try to get it back, what would be your chances? In this instance the bum is the Province of Quebec and the British Government as represented locally by His Excellency Sonavabitch Sir Gordon Macdonald. The dollar is Newfoundland which ignorant and avaricious outporters handed over to Canada as a free gift on July 22nd.⁷⁷

Others were equally as vicious, but offered analysis and suggestions. "It is apparent you are refraining from holding public meetings because of possible disturbance that may be created", said another perceptive St. John's resident. "May I offer you a suggestion? Order 75,000 Newfoundland flags and 75,000 black flags 24 X 24 (nice size) immediately. Let the Responsible voters make their own price, send them to your outside agents also".⁷⁸ Even Newfoundlanders abroad were shocked and dismayed. "The Confederates fought anything but a clean campaign, when men stoop so low as to attempt to divide class against class, and creed against creed in order to gain their ends...." wrote one man in New York. "This last campaign was so rotten that I was expecting to hear of it being declared null and void".⁷⁹ Like some confederates, a number of RGL supporters also suggested the partition of the Avalon Peninsula from the rest of the Island,⁸⁰ creating a North American Free State of Avalon on the Irish model.

Still others vented their rage at the confederates' sectarian tactics, and suggested various solutions. "Of course it is understood that "Loyal Orangeism" might oppose any movement for closer business association with the United States", wrote one pro-E⁷ observer in Toslow, Placentia West, "But what has "Loyal Orangeism" ever done for the

⁷⁷ RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence Collins, September 1948, Outerbridge to RGL, 3 September 1948.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, V.J. Nugent to Collins, 12 August 1948.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, C. Goff, New York, to Collins, 17 August 1948.

⁸⁰ See RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, July-Sept. 1948, unsigned supporters, Kingwell, Placentia Bay, to Collins, 2 August 1948; 3.01.026 Correspondence Collins September 1948, T Hickey, Toslow, to Collins, 8 September 1948.

advancement of the world?"⁸¹ Another voter in Musgrave Harbour complained, "both Com.[mission] and Responsible [government] refused to vote as the Confederat[e] Leaders had used so much sectarianism both in the Orange Society & Church & State the few with a bit of intelligence refused to vote with the ignorant and illiterate".⁸² One resident of Middle Brook, Gambo, wrote Collins that

If the fight was a square fight we would accept it in a better spirit. But it was only won on Bluff and Deceit. Telling the people there would be no taxes, and turning class against class and Smallwood by his Diabolical Schemes Got every Orangeman in the Country to Fight, which disgusts every sane and intelligent person in the country. ... Even in religious circles, we see that by a settlement here about Ten miles away The first referendum it was 85 % responsible last Time only 35 %. That was after Joey started Sectarianism.⁸³

Enraged with the British treatment of the island, one resident of Long Pond, Manuels, concluded "We have been treated worse than the Indians and now we all know what is causeing [sic] trouble in other Count[r]ys [sic]".⁸⁴ But some analyses were slightly different. One resident from East Curling wrote that

The Responsible Government League failed miserably in their duty to give the people the facts about Confederation....

In May of this year I wrote Mr. F.M. O'Leary and asked him if he could make arrangements to have meetings where a speaker could address the people out the Bay of Islands and speak to them in a language they could understand. At that time the good people out the bay were afraid of Confederation and were finding it hard to make up their minds between Responsible and Commission. Nothing was done about it so the entire Bay of Islands went Confederate.

⁸¹ RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence O'Leary/Collins, September 1948, T. Hickey to Collins, 8 September 1948.

⁸² RGLP 3.01.025, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary/Collins, July-September 1948, E.G. Abbott to RGL, 26 July 1948.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, A.L. Pritchett to Collins, 3 August 1948.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Mrs. R. Jefford to RGL, "July".

The Responsible Government League were so sure of the second victory that they just sat back and lost the election.⁸⁵

Because it sent campaign workers out from the city, the League's campaign outside St. John's lacked the strength of the confederate campaign, which used residents of communities to campaign in their own communities. The confederate advantage was clear: the gospel was spread by familiar faces with intimate knowledge of the views and aspirations of the people.

On 12 November Higgins, Cashin, and Major Marshall went to England to present the League's petition. They met Herbert, and once Noel-Baker discovered that they intended to press Parliament to stop the Newfoundland constitutional process, there was consternation in Whitehall. On 13 November in Newfoundland, six former members of the House of Assembly issued a writ against the governor and the Commission of Government, claiming that union could only be legislated by the Parliament of Newfoundland, not the British parliament.⁸⁶ On 18 November, an obviously flustered Noel-Baker hastily asked for the governor and Commission's views on the petition and the League's arguments.⁸⁷ Four days later, he requested views on the advisability of meeting the delegation, and he told Macdonald to include "an indication of the approximate political strength in Newfoundland of [the] party represented by [the] present Delegation".⁸⁸ Macdonald replied that the Commission found it "difficult to disagree with the disposition of the Secretary of State to receive the delegation, even though it

⁸⁵ RGLP 3.01.026, Correspondence Collins, September 1948, M.S. Leggo to Collins, 1 September 1948.

⁸⁶ These plaintiffs were Hon. J.S. Currie, Hon. Frank McNamara, Hon. J.V. O'Dea, Captain W.C. Winsor, Harold Mitchell, and Judge W.J. Browne. For this period and his involvements in it see Browne, *Eighty-Four Years*, p. 317.

⁸⁷ PANL GN 38/S3-5-4, file # 14, Responsible Government Petition, Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 18 November 1948.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 22 November 1948.

means official recognition to an unofficial delegation".⁸⁹ Then, in an attempt to discredit the RGL and the delegation, Macdonald observed that the Commission was "unable to comment on the methods adopted to secure signatures" on the petition.⁹⁰ Furthermore, the Commission was unable to give

...any reliable estimate of [the] approximate political strength in Newfoundland of [the] party represented by the delegation. It is thought that though now numerically smaller than the Referendum indicated, feeling seems to have intensified since then in some quarters. Cashin is not popular with the moderates of the RG group but has a large and vociferous following among the uneducated classes in St. John's and the Avalon Peninsula. Crosbie, the leader of the most potent faction in the campaign for Responsible Government, publicly accepted the decision of the people in the Referendum and is a member of the Newfoundland Delegation now at Ottawa.⁹¹

Finally, for good measure and to halt any allegations of collusion that the delegation might make, Macdonald instructed Noel-Baker that

Members of the Commission wish you to know that they have not hitherto been consulted on the matters raised in paragraph 6 of the petition and that they have throughout assumed that the decision to give the people the choice of Confederation with Canada was reached, and the method of enabling them to exercise it was devised, by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.⁹²

Noel-Baker was thus equipped to deal effectively with Cashin and company. Sir A.P. Herbert presented the League's petition to the Commons on 23 November, and moved that the government introduce a bill to restore self-government to Newfoundland.⁹³ Even

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, telegram 265, 23 November 1948.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, unnumbered telegram, 23 November 1948.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, telegram 267, 23 November 1948.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁹³ *Bridle, Documents*, p. 1342, Robertson to Pearson, 24 November 1948.

though Herbert had help from ten British MPs of all political stripes,⁹⁴ the motion died on the order paper.⁹⁵

When Herbert and the Newfoundlanders met Noel-Baker in early December, the latter stated that he had made the decision to add Confederation with Canada to the other recommendations of the Convention, and that this had been done "with [the] full approval of Cabinet".⁹⁶ He noted that his decision had also been influenced

by the considerable minority in the Convention which had expressed itself in favour of the people being given a opportunity to vote on the form of Government. To have refused them this opportunity would have been virtually to disenfranchise them.⁹⁷

Noel-Baker "strongly" rebuked the delegates for making allegations of misconduct against Gordon Macdonald, and told them that he would require "detailed written evidence" of wrongdoing, and that he would "not listen to more rumour".⁹⁸ With no apparent recourse in England, the delegation arrived back in Newfoundland on 9 December, and the next night held a mass meeting in St. John's, which resolved that the Ottawa delegation be told by the Commission not to sign the terms.⁹⁹ After the meeting concluded around 11 p.m., many of those present marched to Government House in protest. Higgins, Marshall, and Cashin got the governor out of bed, and presented the

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1342.

⁹⁵ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 338.

⁹⁶ PANL GN 38/S3-5-4, file # 14, Responsible Government Petition, Noel-Baker to Gordon Macdonald, 3 December 1948.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 338.

resolution to him.¹⁰⁰ Macdonald, who had feared civil disobedience in St. John's, met the Commission the next day, and together they drafted a request for British naval support.¹⁰¹ The Commission later decided not to send the telegram, but a seemingly paranoid Gordon Macdonald privately sent it to London.¹⁰²

Through the fall the Ottawa delegation negotiated the terms of union, which were signed on 11 December 1948 in the plush Canadian Senate chamber. Ches Crosbie dissented and did not sign, fearful that the terms offered were not adequate.¹⁰³ Only on 13 December, when confederation was virtually assured, did Justice Brian Dunfield dismiss the League's court action. After an unsuccessful local appeal, the League finally appealed its case to the Privy Council.¹⁰⁴ At the end of 1948, when poetic verse seemed to be the only useful weapon left in Newfoundland, Higgins sent Herbert an offering on Noel-Baker's "twisted mentality":

I'll give to you exactly what's your due
 (Of every decent cause the mean forsaker):
 The curse of every honest man on you,
 Noel-Baker.

I've lived amid the fog and oft the storm,
 I fear not at any time the calm or blizzard;
 But oh! I hate your talk, your face, your form,

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 338, and Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1346, Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 December 1948.

¹⁰¹ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1350, Robertson to Pearson, 30 December 1948.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 1350.

¹⁰³ On Crosbie's decision not to sign see Jamieson, *No Place for Fools*, pp. 140-2.

¹⁰⁴ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 317.

You lizard!¹⁰⁵

Although a zealot, Higgins was not alone in feeling offended. In January, Herbert had help in London from Lord Sempill, who attempted to press a Newfoundland Liberation Bill through the House of Lords, but to no avail.¹⁰⁶ Cashin wrote abusive letters to the governor, Burchell, and St. Laurent, decrying various "plots" to put Newfoundland into confederation, and circulated the Johnson/Edgecombe and Fillier Orange Letters as evidence of wrongdoing, but this was also fruitless.¹⁰⁷ That spring, the British bill effecting union was debated and received third reading,¹⁰⁸ and was given royal assent on 23 March. In May the League's appeal was finally withdrawn.¹⁰⁹

In contrast with the fortunes of the Responsible Government League, the confederates began enjoying unbridled success from their labours during the referendum campaigns. From 5 to 7 August, Smallwood and Bradley attended the Canadian Liberal leadership convention and addressed the delegates.¹¹⁰ Because Lester B. Pearson desired a "well-known and popular Canadian" to fill the post of High Commissioner to

¹⁰⁵ RGLP ? .01.027, Correspondence, J.G. Higgins, March-December 1948, Higgins to A.P. Herbert, 30 December 1948. Ironically, at the end of his life in the late 1970s, Noel-Baker was given a Papal Knighthood for his work towards nuclear disarmament.

¹⁰⁶ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1366, Robertson to Pearson, 29 January 1949, and p. 1524, Robertson to Pearson, 18 February 1949.

¹⁰⁷ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1359, footnote 124, and PAC MG 26 L, Vol. 61, file: N-19-2, various letters by Cashin.

¹⁰⁸ On the progress of this through Parliament, including the opposition given to the bill by Herbert and Sempill, see Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 1544-1559, High Commissioner in Great Britain to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 March 1949.

¹⁰⁹ On this see W.C. Gilmore, "Law, Constitutional Convention, and the Union of Newfoundland and Canada," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1989): 111-126. On the decline of the League see Webb, "Responsible Government League," *NFS*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1989): 214-16.

¹¹⁰ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1003, Extract From *The Mackenzie King Record*, and footnote 3. At the convention, Louis St. Laurent was chosen to replace Mackenzie King as party leader.

Newfoundland - Bridle lacked the seniority and prestige¹¹¹ - Charles Burchell was re-commissioned from Australia. His appointment was effective from 7 September, and he arrived triumphant, as he later noted, "to smooth over the details of Confederation".¹¹² While he had been in Ottawa, Smallwood attempted to consolidate his political holdings and alienate his enemies. He questioned R.A. MacKay for information on the interim government in Newfoundland after confederation, threatening that "if he and Bradley did not get control" before an election could be called, "the Government here would lose every seat in Newfoundland".¹¹³ He also intimated that he was afraid that McEvoy would be asked to form a government, and that McEvoy and Crosbie were "teaming up".¹¹⁴ To prevent this, and to ensure that a favourable lieutenant governor would appoint him as the interim premier, Smallwood and Bradley met with St. Laurent, Pickersgill, and Brooke Claxton one night in December, and discussed the matter.¹¹⁵ Smallwood pressed a reluctant Louis St. Laurent to establish a lieutenant governor of Newfoundland, who would then call on the confederate leader to form an administration, instead of calling an election first.¹¹⁶ Pickersgill later noted that "one of the things that had to be done was to indicate to the new lieutenant governor... that Mr. Smallwood was the man who in the opinion of the Canadian Government was the appropriate person to be chosen as Premier".¹¹⁷ Smallwood seems to have brought the Canadians around to his way of thinking. By early February his fears had evaporated, and he boasted to the

¹¹¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1002, Pearson to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 August 1948.

¹¹² Kathryn E. Hayman, "The Origins and Function of the Canadian High Commissioner in Newfoundland, 1941-1949" (M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1979), p. 39.

¹¹³ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1574, MacKay to Burchell, 18 November 1948.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1574.

¹¹⁵ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1580, footnote 192, and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 381-2.

¹¹⁶ See Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 581-2.

¹¹⁷ Jack W. Pickersgill, "My Part in Newfoundland's Confederation", *BNF*, p. 69.

media that he would become the first premier of Newfoundland after union, that he would lead an interim administration, and that Sir Leonard Outerbridge would be named lieutenant governor.¹¹⁸

Respecting the wishes of Governor Macdonald, on 31 March at midnight the union was consummated, and the next day official ceremonies were accompanied by the Peace Tower carillon on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and the crackling of logs in fireplaces and the chiming of the hour of eleven on the stateroom clock in Government House in St. John's.¹¹⁹ Less formally, 87 year old Mrs. Annie Simms in Roddickton was joined in spirit by hundreds of Newfoundlanders in the outports in the traditional greeting of approval of "discharging a powder gun" to welcome confederation,¹²⁰ and flags flew on Cape St. George.¹²¹ Telegrams and letters of congratulation flooded in to Smallwood, including advice from Monsignor Dinn on the future fortunes of the federal Liberal party in Newfoundland.¹²² But in St. John's, citizens wore black armbands. R. Gordon Winter, whose son had signed the Terms of Union, lowered the flag to half-staff on the family's beloved Winterholme on Rennie's Mill Road.¹²³ John G. Higgins' house on Cochrane Street was bedecked with black flags, and at a number of places the Pink, White, and Green flew at half mast. Higgins even received a telegram from a sympathetic Lord Sempill who submitted "that his Excellency the Archbishop

¹¹⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 1574-5, Burchell to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 February 1949.

¹¹⁹ For accounts of the ceremonies see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 326-9.

¹²⁰ For this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.48.002, White Bay Post-Confederation A-L.

¹²¹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.37.002, St. George's-Port au Port 1949, J. Cornet to Smallwood, 11 April 1949.

¹²² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.32.002, Port de Grave 1949, Msgr. M.F. Dinn to Smallwood, 7 April 1949.

¹²³ Gordon Winter to the author, 17 January 1992.

should decree April the first a holiday of obligation".¹²⁴ This was not done, but instead, the *De Profundis* was sung in the packed Roman Catholic Cathedral on 1 April, which coincided with the monthly religious feast of "First Friday", commemorating the crucifixion.¹²⁵

Even before 31 March, the date of union, favour and patronage flowed, although not without considerable horse trading. From London, courtesy of Gordon Macdonald, the 1949 King's Honours List for New Year's Day made Albert Walsh a Knight Bachelor, while Dr. Will Roberts was named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, and Chief Returning Officer Nehemiah Short was named an officer of that order.¹²⁶ During the winter, Smallwood first expected¹²⁷ and Bradley first suggested to Ottawa that Sir Leonard Outerbridge be named as the new province's lieutenant governor.¹²⁸ Bradley met Outerbridge and discussed the matter in early March,¹²⁹ but St. Laurent instructed Bradley to wait until the British parliament had passed all the Newfoundland legislation before "making a definite approach to him".¹³⁰ But Outerbridge had no intention of calling on Smallwood to form an interim provincial

¹²⁴ J.G. Higgins Papers, 3.01.028, Correspondence J.G. Higgins 1949-1951, Lord Sempill to Higgins, 31 March 1949. A "holy day of obligation" is a day in the church year on which Roman Catholics are obliged to attend church and hear Mass.

¹²⁵ The *De Profundis* ("Out of the Depths I Cry") is a funerary hymn.

¹²⁶ *The Evening Telegram*, 3 January 1949, p. 6. Short's honour was given "in recognition of his outstanding work as a magistrate, and for his able services to the country in other fields."

¹²⁷ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1580, footnote 192, and p. 1581, Burchell to Pearson, 5 March 1949.

¹²⁸ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1582, Burchell to Pearson, 7 March 1949. Smallwood and Bradley were both "strongly pro-Outerbridge" (See *ibid.*, p. 1589, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.).

¹²⁹ Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 1579-80, Bradley to St. Laurent, 4 March 1949.

¹³⁰ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1582, St. Laurent to Bradley, 8 March 1949.

cabinet,¹³¹ and he was reluctant to "make political decisions without direct instructions from the Government".¹³² Thus, ostensibly to have someone willing to assume the responsibility for calling on Smallwood to form a government, and to settle and reassure the archbishop and Bishop O'Neill, and privately to keep Smallwood satisfied and quiet about the back-room maneuvering which had and continued to go on,¹³³ St. Laurent arranged that Sir Albert Walsh would become Newfoundland's first lieutenant governor, because he was willing to swear in Smallwood as interim premier.¹³⁴ With Smallwood taken care of, several months later, Sir Leonard Outerbridge was appointed as the second lieutenant governor.¹³⁵

Smallwood's first interim cabinet, until he won a 27 May 1949 provincial election, included Commissioners Herman Quinton and Herbert Pottle, businessman Gordon A. Winter, Confederate Association supporters W.J. Keough, Phil Forsey, Charles Ballam, and Sam Hefferton; M.J. Sinnott, and finally Smallwood's lawyer, Leslie R. Curtis,¹³⁶ who seems to have finally redeemed the promise of "other good

¹³¹ Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1582, Burchell to Pearson, 7 March 1949 noted that Outerbridge thought that he should go to Ottawa to discuss "upon whom he should call upon to form an Executive Council", because of the "unusual situation" in Newfoundland. Also see Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 128-9. Horwood noted Lady Outerbridge's dislike for "that dreadful little man" Smallwood, and that it was rumoured at the time that Outerbridge would not choose Smallwood as premier, and thus he was not offered the lieutenant-governorship until Smallwood was in place.

¹³² Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1595, St. Laurent to Burchell, 25 March 1949.

¹³³ Pickersgill reported to St. Laurent that he feared that "Smallwood would leave if we did not go along with him." (See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1589, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.).

¹³⁴ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1583, St. Laurent to Walsh, 8 March 1949. Bradley could not accept Walsh as lieutenant governor and remained bitter about Roman Catholic opposition to Confederation (See Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 1587-8, J. Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.). On St. Laurent's affinity to Walsh, and Walsh's acceptance of Smallwood for premier see Pickersgill, "My Part", *BNF*, p. 68 and 69.

¹³⁵ Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 128-9.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

and valuable consideration" extracted from the Kenmount Road pig farmer in October 1945. After Smallwood pressured St. Laurent, Bradley was named Secretary of State in the federal cabinet,¹³⁷ while Ray Petten, Alexander Baird, George J. Penney, and Dr. Vincent Burke became Newfoundland's first senators,¹³⁸ posts which in 1951 were awarded to Calvert C. Pratt, Herman Quinton, and Corner Brook native Michael Basha.¹³⁹ Leonard Stick and Thomas Ashbourne were later elected to the House of Commons. According to Webb, McEvoy was given a \$3000 honorarium for good and faithful service to the Convention,¹⁴⁰ but this was all the recognition he got. Smallwood flatly rejected him, and in punishment excluded the "vain" McEvoy from favour because of his predominantly non-committal attitude to the confederate cause, and his "damaging" statement to the *Telegram* in February 1948.¹⁴¹ When Bradley was appointed to the Senate in 1953, Smallwood campaigned in Bonavista-Twillingate for Jack Pickersgill, who was elected and re-elected five times until 1967, when he resigned to become chairman of the Canadian Transport Commission.¹⁴²

With the advent of confederation, political and sectarian divisions were maintained and the anti-confederates became the Progressive Conservative party. Hollett, J.G.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-3, and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 584.

¹³⁸ Penney died in December 1949 and was replaced by Burke.

¹³⁹ "Newfoundland Senators since 1949", *BNF*, pp. 198-199. Smallwood and Bradley intimated to Pickersgill that they thought that Pratt was a "pirate" and that they wanted nothing to do with him (See *Bridle, Documents*, p. 1587, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.).

¹⁴⁰ Webb, "Convention", p. 140.

¹⁴¹ Jack Pickersgill reported to St. Laurent that McEvoy had always been "anti-Smallwood" but a confederate (See *Bridle, Documents*, p. 1589, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.). While Senator A.N. McLean accepted the confederates' condemnation of McEvoy, C.D. Howe wished to "keep him in the Liberal camp if at all possible." See *Bridle, Documents*, pp. 1560-2, McLean to Howe, 28 March 1948, and Howe to McLean, 29 March 1949.

¹⁴² Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 507-9.

Higgins, Frank Fogwill, Leonard Miller, and Ray Fahey were elected to the first Newfoundland provincial House of Assembly as PCs, and Cashin as an independent, while sometime anti-confederates Gordon Higgins and William J. Browne were elected as PC members for St. John's to the House of Commons. While Bradley had abandoned the hope of getting federal Liberals elected in Catholic St. John's,¹⁴³ Smallwood made attempts to secure the favour of his previous enemies, but securing Roman Catholic representation in his provincial cabinets remained a perennial problem. Despite encouragements that "You have the Protestants at your back; now keep the Romans in their place!", Smallwood re-established the traditional system of sectarian representation, fearing "dire possibilities" if Catholics were not represented in his first cabinet.¹⁴⁴ During the winter of 1949 he approached R.S. Furlong, Allan Fraser, Leo Murphy, and Dr. J.A. McGrath to join, but all declined.¹⁴⁵ He also approached his old employer F.M. O'Leary, who on 3 January 1949 wrote Archbishop Roche for advice. Indicating his misgivings, Roche replied that

...the Catholic people of the country wish only to live and let live - to live in peace and ... harmony with their fellow countrymen. The monstrous slanders circulated recently [have put] a great part of the country against them, notwithstanding, they have not, and never had any desire to dominate the country and be a menace to their fellow countrymen....It would be far better for Catholics to have no representation in the Councils of their country than to do anything that might appear to condone bigotry and intolerance, and the creation of religious animosities against our people.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ See Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1590, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.

¹⁴⁴ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 331. This system, as in the days of the Commission of Government and before, saw one-third of the posts in the civil service and cabinet filled by Anglicans, one-third by Methodists, and one-third by Roman Catholics.

¹⁴⁵ R.S. Furlong to the author, 20 January 1992; Bridle, *Documents*, p. 1591, Pickersgill to St. Laurent, n.d.; and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, pp. 331-2.

¹⁴⁶ Archives of the Archdiocese of St. John's, Archbishop E.P. Roche Papers, Roche to O'Leary, n.d. The author thanks Dr. Hans Rollmann for a copy of this letter in his possession.

Needless to say, O'Leary also declined Smallwood's offer. W.J. Keough was the only Roman Catholic in Smallwood's first cabinet.¹⁴⁷

On the principle that Catholic districts had to have Catholic members of the House, and Protestant districts had to have Protestants, Smallwood wooed and did secure Catholics in his later cabinets, and attempted to circumvent hierarchical opposition.¹⁴⁸ He also attempted to secure the support and influence of a number of Roman Catholic clergy. Fr. Hinchey in Fortune Harbour, Green Bay, was made chairman of the roads board there,¹⁴⁹ and Monsignor Dinn in North River was also given a say over where pavement was laid. For the first provincial election, Smallwood campaigned in Ferryland by going to church with Greg Power, and greeting priest and people on the church steps after Mass. In 1951 he commissioned a census of Newfoundland by community and religious denomination, which was useful for securing district majorities when constituency boundaries were re-drawn.¹⁵⁰ In 1953, Smallwood even succeeded in getting former RGL activist Allan Fraser elected to the House of Commons as a Liberal in the Catholic stronghold of St. John's East.¹⁵¹

For the outport people, confederation meant the placing of more capital in their hands than at any other time in their history. Smallwood's appointment and subsequent election as premier in May 1949 also gave him a stranglehold on political patronage. Confederate supporters received roads, social welfare, and swamped the erstwhile

¹⁴⁷ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, p. 332.

¹⁴⁸ On this see Horwood, *Joey*, pp. 145, and 149.

¹⁴⁹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.15.003, Green Bay I-Z, 1949, B. Morgan to Smallwood, 7 May 1949.

¹⁵⁰ See J.R. Smallwood Papers, 4.02.023, Census by Religious Denomination.

¹⁵¹ "Election Results Since Confederation", *BNF*, p. 179.

prophet of confederation with clamouring requests for patronage and consideration. Essentially, confederation had been a pact made between Smallwood and his supporters. He would provide the money; they the votes. It was a process the outport electorate understood perfectly well. As the postmaster on Brunette Island in Fortune Bay reminded the new shepherd in early May 1949,

We are all glad that Newfoundland is now under Confederation and that you are its Premier, and we sincerely trust that you will see that this Island is looked after, better than it was when under The Commission of Government. We have been treated as an Island of people belonging to nowhere, every Voter voted for Confederation [sic], and now they are ready to vote for a Liberal Government. The reason for voting for Confederation and the Liberal Party, as we are looking forward to be looked after.¹⁵²

Still others expected jobs: "I am the man who telegraphed you to act as agent in the Second Referendum", said another,

I considered things were unfair at the first referendum. I received your telegram authorizing me to act, but the telegram was delayed due to light trouble.

...I have been looking after Brunette light since 1945, for the same salary.... I consider that I am entitled to some payment and I know you will agree with me.¹⁵³

Another in Trinity Bay expected the promised payment for the referendum agents, and expected to receive the payment so he could pay others and perpetuate another hegemony.¹⁵⁴ And others wanted contracts. After noting that out of eight shopkeepers in Whitbourne, he was the "Sole Liberal and Sole Confederate" during the referenda,

¹⁵² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.12.002, Fortune-Hermitage, A-C 1949, E. Ball to Smallwood, 8 May 1949.

¹⁵³ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.12.005, Fortune Bay-Hermitage R-Z 1949, A. White to Smallwood, 16 April 1949.

¹⁵⁴ For but one instance of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.46.003, Trinity South H-P 1949, W.A. Pollett to Smallwood, 5 April 1949.

another supporter wanted the contract to supply the Whitbourne Boys' Home with food and provisions.¹⁵⁵

The corollary to the desire for patronage was the desire to deny the dispensation of patronage to the enemy. Some voters were vindictive, and reported all anti-confederate activity in their districts to Smallwood. "The customs man here - he sat in his car and drove them all to the Booth in the two days", wrote one resident of Aquaforte, "he is all With Cashin and to hell with me now i [sic] Want you to give me some Recognition don't let me down...."¹⁵⁶ From central Newfoundland came the observation

Those chaps that's on the fire warden job and the relieving officer. Now sir they should have kept their mouths shut. ... Now sir when you come in power don't forget those people. Someone got to bring them to their senses".¹⁵⁷

From Spaniard's Bay, Smallwood was informed that the chairman of the Roads Committee there spent money "against you in both Referendums". Smallwood was then advised to change chairmen, and was told that the "Breakwater at Upper Island Cove was really a stimulant to [the] people of that place".¹⁵⁸ Patronage even carried threats of appeals to higher authorities if not awarded. "Mr. F.G. Bradley is my first Cousin and I [am] proud I belong to the same family now sir I hope to get this job of relieving officer here", said Wilfred Bradley, Master of the Lodge and Worshipful Preceptor for the Royal Black Preceptory in Musgrave Harbour. "I fought for Confederation from start to finish and use all my influence for your Party", he continued, "I carried a good influence for Confederation and I am expecting to get a job for it if I don't it Will be Just

¹⁵⁵ J.R. Smallwood Papers , 1.46.003, Trinity South H-P 1949, E.G. Peckford to Smallwood, 6 June 1949.

¹⁵⁶ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 7.01.002, J.R. Smallwood Correspondence 1948, R. Maher to Smallwood, 16 December 1948.

¹⁵⁷ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 7.01.003, J.R. Smallwood Personal Correspondence, J-M 1949, E. Goodyear to Smallwood, 20 March 1949.

¹⁵⁸ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.16.002, Harbour Grace 1949, "Sol" to Smallwood, 22 April 1949.

to bad".¹⁵⁹ Even for the confederates, confederation came with a price tag. With the largesse began the complaints, like one from Fox Cove, Placentia West, complaining of higher prices in the wake of the choice of confederation, but even this was tempered by news that the returning officer was "doing his utmost to turn votes" against Smallwood in the upcoming provincial election.¹⁶⁰ Some, like one writer from Catalina after confederation, just wanted their own version of British justice:

What do some people wish to turn this country into a "Map of Ireland" 2/3 of this country are Protestant why not give us a chance.... Never mind Joey old man, you carry on keep your chin up. If some people are trying to work in religion the I fear there will be trouble.¹⁶¹

A more temperate Rev. W.B. Perry, United Church minister at Grand Falls, cautioned Smallwood that if rumours were true that Cashin were being contemplated for the post of finance minister in the provincial cabinet, it could "seriously effect the forthcoming Federal Election in this riding".¹⁶² In confederate Newfoundland, there was a tacit understanding that since "the Battle is fought and the Victory won",¹⁶³ there was to be no surrender.

With the advent of confederation, opposition died and was removed by the efforts of the new Smallwood administration, and the Government of Canada. The "leaders" of Newfoundland had become the confederates, and they replaced the members of the RGL, who would have led a Newfoundland government if confederation had not come about.

¹⁵⁹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.10.002, Fogo A-F 1949, W. Bradley to Smallwood, 31 May 1949.

¹⁶⁰ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.30.002, Placentia West, P. Antle to Smallwood, 11 April 1949.

¹⁶¹ J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.45.002, Trinity North A-F . 949, A. Brazil to Smallwood, 14 June 1949. Emphasis included in original document.

¹⁶² J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.14.005, Grand Falls O-R, 1949, Rev. W.B. Perry to Smallwood, 1 June 1949.

¹⁶³ As observed in J.R. Smallwood papers, 1.14.005, Grand Falls 1949 O-R, J. Rice, Indian Point, to Smallwood, 4 April 1949.

Ironically, the RGL and many of its more prominent supporters had become a dispossessed colonial leadership, or "elite", abandoned in favour of a new elite which had been more than willing to collaborate with British policy. When the Newfoundland electorate placed its approving stamp on confederation, it also approved the political ascendancy of the new elite. Presiding over the new order was the undisputed champion, Joseph R. Smallwood, who proceeded to rule Newfoundland with an iron fist for almost twenty-three years, and haunt her for even longer. Peter Neary thought that "of all the players in a complex game" of constitutional positioning and arrangement in the mid 1940s, the British "remained the best informed and the most clever".¹⁶⁴ In light of Smallwood's engineering of the campaigns, and the settlement he forged out of them, Neary's observation may be applied equally as well to Smallwood.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Neary, *North Atlantic World*, p. 240.

¹⁶⁵ For the settlement which emerged from the confederation battles, see Peter Neary, "Party Politics in Newfoundland, 1949-1971: A Survey and Analysis," in eds. Hiller and Neary, *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

The confederation campaigns of 1948 were the most divisive in the history of Newfoundland. They were the culmination of a long process of policy making by officials of the British, Canadian and Commission governments, and of political manoeuvring by Smallwood and Bradley in Ottawa and Newfoundland. Canadian High Commissioner Charles Burchell, and his successors J.S. Macdonald and Paul Bridle were intimately involved with Bradley and Smallwood, whose campaigns largely followed their 1946 plans. The confederates ran a tight campaign, with vital infusions of Canadian funding and information, with dense networks of St. John's and Ottawa-based government officials, with island-wide contacts and supporters, and with the tactical intervention of Governor Macdonald and the Commissioners.

In contrast to the confederates, the RGL was disorganized and bureaucratic. Its greatest failures were its inability to forge an alliance with the pro-responsible government Convention delegates, its ineffectuality during 1947, when it had the golden opportunity to agitate while the confederates were away in Ottawa, and the surprising failure of its lawyers to anticipate and take action to counter British policy manoeuvres, which should have been apparent from the first indications in 1945 that a policy announcement would be made. By the time of the 1948 campaigns, the confederates had long since finished planning and were prepared to act once the referendum dates were known. But the League lost precious time planning, debating policy, and rescuing wayward members from various stupors when it should have been on the hustings. Its campaigns were lacklustre, and this was as much a function of the legal bent of the executive and its perhaps naive reliance on "British justice", as it was of their conservative-St. John's orientation. While the League's campaign was educated, rational,

and constitutionally and morally correct, it was "dusty and academic",¹ and probably too highbrow for many outport voters. In contrast, the Economic Union Party was fast-moving and well-organized, and provided much of the impetus and many of the issues for the responsible government movement. While both parties were under-funded compared with the confederates, responsible government received almost half of the popular vote in the first referendum. But it was still inadequate to halt confederation, and more voted against responsible government than for it. Aware of political realities if confederation were to succeed, some Water Street merchants converted to confederation during the second campaign. Once the "sectarian card" was played by the confederates in the second campaign, both the League and the EUP were unwilling to fight fire with fire. The EUP fell into decline and was emasculated by the confederates' "British Union" campaign. After the referendum, the RGL was denied recourse to the Commission and the Canadians, and had to satisfy itself with making legal claims in Newfoundland and Britain. In many ways, its last public hurrah came vicariously in the pages of the confederate *Evening Telegram* of 8 March 1948, two days after Governor Gordon Macdonald left for England and a baronetcy. "Ennobled" as he was "with duty well performed", Macdonald was venerated in an acrostic by the anonymous "E.A.". Read vertically, the first letter of each line made up the words "The Bastard".² Many thought it an appropriate tribute.

Jeff Webb argued that the case for sectarianism had been over-stated in explaining why Newfoundlanders voted for or against confederation.³ This may be so, and it may never be known exactly why everyone voted as they did. But when Commission of Government was taken off the ballot for the second referendum, the confederates ran "a

¹ Gwyn, *Smallwood*, p. 109.

² J.R. Smallwood, "Acrostic, Celebrated", *ENL* I, p. 3.

³ Jeff Webb, "Responsible Government League", *NFS*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1989): 217.

straight sectarian campaign" from start to finish in an attempt to convert the Commission vote, and destroy the EUP's appeal. The pro-British Commission vote was captured, and Protestant districts were swept for confederation. Aided by Roman Catholic pro-confederate sectarianism on the West Coast of the island, and some electoral irregularities, confederation narrowly succeeded. The battles which were fought and the settlement which was forged by the confederates provided the basis - the political machinery and mythology - to launch Smallwood forth upon the Newfoundland political scene, and ensure his grasp of power, which lasted for a generation.

Throughout the entire process of policy-making, National Convention and referenda, and more policy-making, the official attitude and activities of the Roman Catholic Church were crucial. J.G. Higgins correctly observed that the Church certainly had the right to state its views, but the question remains: when the Church became openly political, did it play into the hands of the confederates, who created and openly exploited the sectarian issue? The post-confederation establishment myth of the monolithic Roman Catholic Church contributed to the perception that the Church was largely responsible for sectarianism, and largely circumvented further analyses of the nature and role of this factor in the campaigns. Sectarianism was important, but in later explanations of what happened it was vaguely defined and was substituted for an analysis of confederate-Canadian-Commission political collaboration. The Roman Catholic Church was internally divided, and ironically, the prophecies of Archbishop Roche in 1916 about the consequences of a divided priesthood seem to have come true. When O'Neill, O'Reilly, and Flynn met with MacKay just after the referendum, the Roman Catholic Church essentially abandoned its opposition to confederation, with the result that the remaining responsible government movement was further crippled. Coupled with the British and Canadian governments' effective stonewalling of the RGL's efforts to halt the march of events, followed by the Smallwood government's healing balm of partisan patronage and equal sectarian division of all cabinet and civil service posts, the path was

cleared of major opposition to Smallwood and union. With the death of Archbishop Roche in 1950, the mantle of leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland fell on Patrick J. Skinner, a Newfoundland-born Canadian-trained cleric. In many ways, confederation saw the Irish heritage of Newfoundland independence traded for cultural, educational, spiritual and iconographic assimilation by North American ways.⁴ It is hoped that future studies will further illuminate the roles of the Roman Catholic Church in twentieth-century Newfoundland history.

Viewed almost half a century later, the actual events of the confederation campaigns have dulled in the memories of Newfoundlanders. Legend has replaced the knowledge of and desire for fact, though the Newfoundland consciousness is not without occasional pangs of postpartum nationalism. In 1948, the Responsible Government League had its own nationalist mentality, and was a world apart from many of the outports of Newfoundland. Webb thought that the RGL may have lost when it combined an inchoate campaign with an appeal to a nationalism which was non-existent in and foreign to the outports.⁵ But the League's nationalism was real and did exist outside St. John's. Furthermore, this alone does not explain why confederation won. The confederates won in a bitter campaign facilitated with Canadian money, when they created and played on fears of a return to government dominated by St. John's merchants, and latterly, the Roman Catholic Church, and appealed to outport Newfoundlanders' desire for economic security provided by a "British" nation to the west. For the British, the transfer of Newfoundland to Canadian jurisdiction warmed the hearts of Whitehall mandarins and ministers, who delighted in the thought of pacifying the "somewhat squawking baby" with a Canadian social welfare state. In Canada, the

⁴ On the Canadianization of the Newfoundland Church see Bridle, *Documents*, pp. 1309-10, Robertson to Pearson, 10 August 1948; and *The Centenary of the Basilica Cathedral of St. John the Baptist*, Ed. Rev. P.J. Kennedy (St. John's: Robinson and Company, 1955).

⁵ Webb, "Responsible Government League", *NFS*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1989): 216-7.

union of Newfoundland with the federation was seen as a triumph of Canadian policy making, a geo-political "rounding out of the union", and was acclaimed in ministerial circles as the completion of the nation's manifest destiny. In Newfoundland, Smallwood's post-confederate triumphalism momentarily prevailed, along with attempts to build a "new Jerusalem". But when the young province bitterly experienced labour unrest, resettlement, out-migration, massive unemployment, further economic decline, and the collapse of the fishery, many Newfoundlanders had cause to think again of what had been lost, and to reassess the "benefits" which accrued to Newfoundland when an appointed delegation negotiated "Terms of Union" which substituted Canadian nationalism and monthly cheques for Newfoundland's sovereignty and control over its own resources. As one writer put it most succinctly: "The Quebeckers say "Je me souviens," but they do not remember being a nation. We remember."⁶

⁶ Patrick O'Flaherty, *Come Near At Your Peril*, (St. John's: Breakwater Press, 1992), p. 20.

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Appendix I

Comparative Tables of Religious Demography and Referenda Results.

These tables were compiled using the Reports of the Chief Returning Officer for both referenda (12 and 26 August 1948), and data obtained from the referenda results (which are also in Bridle, *Documents*, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 1990-3) and the 1945 Newfoundland census. The author thanks Most Rev. R.J. Lahey for his compilation, reproduced here.

TABLE I

Religious Demography and Voting Percentages

District	Predominant Denomination	Total Popl'n	C.E.	Pent.	R.C.	S.A.	U.C.	Oth	% of vote				
									Conf	R.G.	% of vote Conf R.G.		
White Bay	U.C.	10,745	3223	526	2163	908	3747	170	16.12	63.71	20.17	75.81	24.19
Green Bay	U.C.	8606	559	1238	500	2530	3734	37	18.70	60.62	20.78	71.36	28.64
Grand Falls	U.C.	19,454	3401	2072	4883	3306	5521	268	24.05	40.37	35.59	56.46	43.45
Twillingate	U.C.	9566	1212	881	231	2228	5003	8	42.44	43.13	14.43	75.25	24.75
Fogo	U.C.	10,077	3500	203	1138	1164	3925	141	25.65	46.81	27.54	61.93	38.07
Bonavista N.	C.E.	12,978	4920	11	1310	2030	4648	56	11.63	63.57	24.80	74.49	25.51
Bonavista S.	C.E.	11,584	4630	0	1783	895	4194	81	22.93	33.90	43.16	51.90	48.10
Trinity N.	U.C.	12,808	5344	121	618	746	5877	97	19.67	47.93	32.39	65.09	34.91
Trinity S.	C.E.	10,983	5021	269	847	1401	3390	46	10.74	47.86	41.40	60.27	39.73
Carbonear-BDV	U.C.	12,825	1221	392	3139	648	7395	26	6.25	43.36	50.39	52.71	47.29
Harbour Grace	C.E.	7249	4704	15	1624	27	816	63	5.29	30.55	64.16	37.68	62.32
Port de Grave	C.E.	8278	3119	416	1635	340	2691	49	6.98	40.62	52.40	49.04	50.96
Hr. Main-B. Is	R.C.	17,549	6015	51	9922	505	937	117	5.32	12.12	82.56	17.42	82.58
St. John's W.	R.C.	36,435	9178	279	16,875	976	8107	714	9.43	24.94	65.63	33.11	66.89
St. John's E.	R.C.	28,821	7204	75	14,737	526	5478	761	10.61	23.51	65.87	31.22	68.78
Ferryland	R.C.	6346	138	0	6188	0	9	8	3.75	5.77	90.48	15.44	84.56
Plac't-St. M's	R.C.	9448	440	1	8697	70	223	15	6.10	15.21	78.68	18.40	81.61
Placentia W.	R.C.	9653	2166	108	5403	267	1689	14	11.51	48.78	39.70	54.81	45.19
Burin	U.C.	10,940	2249	0	3274	1575	3829	13	7.93	78.56	13.51	84.96	15.04
Fort-B.- Herm	C.E.	11,445	7479	0	2976	349	626	2	17.47	63.54	18.99	81.40	18.60
Burgeo-LaPoil	C.E.	9,357	7895	0	97	31	1291	40	15.88	74.74	11.38	88.91	11.09
St. Geo's-Pt-P	R.C.	13,074	2327	28	10,122	18	481	97	15.93	47.22	36.84	56.73	43.27
Munster	C.E.	20,560	7322	735	6168	1752	4330	230	20.43	53.72	25.85	68.73	31.27
St. Barbe	C.E.	7509	5220	54	1077	248	908	2	21.09	64.32	14.59	78.80	21.20
Labrador	C.E.	5525	2391	83	599	31	1251	1162	7.10	81.38	11.52	77.78	22.22

Key: C.E.= Church of England Pent.= Pentecostal R.C.= Roman Catholic
 S.A.= Salvation Army U.C.= United Church Oth.= Other

TABLE II

Denominational Percentages of Total Population

District	Predom.Denom.	Total Popl'n	C.E.	Pent.	R.C.	S.A.	U.C.	Other
White Bay	U.C.	10,745	29.9	4.9	20.1	8.5	34.9	1.6
Green Bay	U.C.	8606	6.5	14.4	5.8	29.4	43.4	0.4
Grand Falls	U.C.	19,458	17.5	17.5	25.1	17.0	28.4	1.4
Twillingate	U.C.	9566	12.7	9.2	2.4	23.3	52.3	0.1
Fogo	U.C.	10,077	34.8	2.0	11.3	11.6	39.0	1.4
Bonavista North	C.E.	12,978	37.9	0.1	10.1	15.6	35.8	0.4
Bonavista South	C.E.	11,584	40.0	0	15.4	7.7	36.2	0.7
Trinity North	U.C.	12,808	41.7	0.9	4.8	5.8	45.9	0.8
Trinity South	C.E.	10,983	45.7	2.4	7.7	12.8	30.9	0.4
Carbonear-Bay de Verde	U.C.	12,825	9.5	3.1	24.5	5.1	57.7	0.2
Harbour Grace	C.E.	7249	64.9	0.2	22.4	0.4	11.3	0.9
Port de Grave	C.E.	8278	37.7	5.0	19.8	4.1	32.5	0.6
Hr. Main - Bell Island	R.C.	17,549	34.3	0.3	56.5	2.9	5.3	0.7
St. John's West	R.C.	36,435	25.2	0.8	46.3	2.7	22.3	2.0
St. John's East	R.C.	28,821	25.0	0.3	51.1	1.8	19.0	2.6
Ferryland	R.C.	6346	2.2	0	97.5	0	0.1	0.1
Placentia - St. Mary's	R.C.	9448	4.7	0	92.1	0.7	2.4	0.2
Placentia West	R.C.	9653	22.4	1.1	56.0	2.8	17.5	0.1
Burin	U.C.	10,940	20.6	0	29.9	14.4	35.0	0.1
Fortune B. - Hermitage	C.E.	11,445	65.3	0	26.0	3.0	5.5	0
Burgeo - La Poile	C.E.	9357	84.4	0	1.0	0.3	13.8	0.4
St. George's-P. au P.	R.C.	13,074	17.8	0.2	77.4	0.1	3.7	0.7
Humber	C.E.	20,560	35.6	3.6	30.0	8.5	21.1	1.1
St. Barbe	C.E.	7509	69.5	0.7	14.3	3.3	12.1	0
Labrador	C.E.	5525	43.3	1.5	10.8	0.6	22.6	21.0
TOTAL:		321,819	33.16%	2.73%	27.55%	7.3%	25.15%	1.52%

TABLE III

Numbers of Voters and Voting Percentages in the Referenda

Voting District	Comm.Gov't	Confederation		Responsible Gov't		% of Popl'n	
		Ref.# 1	Ref.# 2	Ref.# 1	Ref.# 2	Ref.# 1	Ref.# 2
White Bay	842	3327	4171	1053	1331	92.21	97.16
Green Bay	682	2208	2392	758	960	78.45	72.09
Grand Falls	3025	5078	6228	4477	4802	109.78	96.26
Twillingate	1544	1569	2524	525	830	65.99	60.94
Fogo	1084	1978	2438	1164	1499	74.77	69.66
Bonavista North	595	3252	3466	1269	1187	75.78	69.00
Bonavista South	1315	1944	2730	2475	2530	80.34	73.70
Trinity North	1048	2554	3153	1726	1691	76.30	69.37
Trinity South	471	2099	2593	1816	1709	74.15	72.73
Carbonear-Bay de V.	337	2336	2705	2715	2427	78.74	75.00
Harbour Grace	181	1045	1206	2195	1995	81.89	71.71
Port de Grave	242	1409	1565	1818	1626	75.36	69.32
Hr. Main - Bell is.	431	982	1431	6690	6784	88.38	89.61
St. John's West	1874	4958	6193	13,048	12,513	101.50	95.51
St. John's East	1732	3838	4895	10,752	10,784	100.05	96.11
Ferryland	134	206	612	3230	3353	94.17	104.59
Placentia-St. Mary's	313	780	920	4034	4081	89.96	87.75
Placentia West	469	1987	2067	1617	1704	74.22	68.71
Burin	372	3687	4079	634	722	82.58	84.48
Fortune B. Hermitage	815	2964	3675	886	840	74.44	72.04
Burgeo - La Poile	607	2780	3296	435	411	79.39	77.00
St. George's-P au P	1030	3053	3817	2382	2911	95.51	99.39
Humber	2367	6225	7133	2996	3245	107.84	96.58
St. Barbe	639	1949	2353	442	633	80.69	79.52
Labrador	162	1858	2681	263	766	79.11	119.44
TOTALS:	22,311	64,066	78,323	69,400	71,334	AVERAGES: 88.36%	84.89%

Appendix II
"The Orange Letter"

Clarke's Beach

July 16, 1948

Dear Sir and Brother,

As your Grand Master I direct your earnest and loyal attention to the following important resolution adopted at the recent Session of our Provincial Grand Lodge at Grand Falls. **It requires your immediate consideration:**

"Whereas a referendum on forms of government for Newfoundland was held on the 3rd of June, 1948;

And Whereas the nature of the campaign waged by "**The Monitor**", the official organ of the Roman Catholic Church, the attitude of its clergymen, the nature of the arguments used by its adherents, and above all, the records of the polls in the various settlements and districts, indicate clearly an attempt to influence the result of the said Referendum upon grounds having no relation to the merits of the various forms of government submitted to the people;

And Whereas this, in the opinion of this Grand Lodge, constitutes an unwarranted invasion of and an effort to dominate the free right of choice of the individual elector;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Grand Lodge in regular session assembled condemns such efforts at sectional domination, and warns the **Orangemen of Newfoundland of the danger inherent in all such attempts to influence the result, and calls upon them to use every effort to bring such attempts to naught."**

I cannot too strongly impress upon each member of our Order the importance of this decision of your Grand Lodge and the necessity for his loyal co-operation.

Yours fraternally,

Chesley Fillier,
Grand Master.

Appendix III

Voting Percentages Favoured Responsible Government by District, 22 July 1948, with Illiteracy Rates.

	% Vote for Responsible Government	% of Illiterate Voters in District
Central/Western Newfoundland Districts		
White Bay	24.19	18.7
Green Bay	28.64	20.8
Grand Falls	43.45	14.2
Twillingate	24.75	16.9
Fogo	38.07	16.5
Bonavista North	25.51	17.7
Bonavista South	48.10	21.1
Trinity North	34.91	13.0
Placentia West	45.19	23.7
Burin	15.04	13.9
Fortune-Hermitage	18.60	28.4
Burgeo-La Poile	11.09	23.7
St. George's Pt. Pt.	43.27	21.9
Humber	31.27	12.8
St. Barbe	21.20	26.0
Labrador	22.22	N/A
Avalon Peninsula Districts		
Trinity South	39.73	14.1
Carbonear Bay de V	47.29	9.7
Harbour Grace	62.32	14.5
Port de Grave	50.96	9.3
Hr. Main-B. Isl.	82.58	11.2
St. John's W.	66.89	4.0
St. John's E.	68.78	5.2
Ferryland	84.56	5.8
Placentia-St. M	81.61	9.8

Source: William Warntz, "A Methodological Consideration of Some Geographic Aspects of the Newfoundland Referendum on Confederation With Canada, 1948", *Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 6 (1955): 43.



