

Moreover, Great Britain was going through a phase of anti-colonial attitudes, at least as far as her North American colonies were concerned. The most obvious symbols of this were the increasing reluctance to spend money on British North America, or to keep troops there, and the encouragement of the North American colonists to stand on their own feet as much as possible. British troops were indeed stationed in North America and more were sent out at the time of the *Trent* crisis, but a decade later, in November 1871, the last of the British troops left the Citadel of Quebec, leaving only Halifax with a garrison of British troops.

These external pressures would not of themselves have effected a union of British North America but they established conditions by which it was possible to justify very far-reaching changes. Internally, the driving force for change came from Canada West. That section of the province of Canada had become increasingly dissatisfied with the union of 1841, and wanted to have the political power that its million and a half people warranted. It now had half again as many people as Canada East, yet by the union constitution it had equal representation with Canada East in the Canadian Assembly. Hence arose the cry of the Reform party of Canada West, "rep. by pop.", that is, representation according to population.

John A. Macdonald and the Conservative party, and their Bleu allies in Canada East under George-Étienne Cartier (1814-1873) resisted these demands as long as they could. But by 1864 it became clear that unless some solution were found for the political demands of Canada West no government could long survive. In June 1864, a strong coalition was formed between the Conservatives and the Bleus on the one hand and the Reformers of Canada West led by George Brown (1818-1880) on the other, with the aim of achieving a British North American Confederation.

The Atlantic colonies were separated from the province of Canada by miles of forest, the mountains of Gaspé and the salient of Maine, and each had a different history and orientation. Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland were both somewhat distant from mainland concerns. Many of the Prince Edward Islanders whom George Brown met in 1864 had never left the island, and this was even more true of Newfoundlanders. Nova Scotia was a maritime colony of some importance with her ships, and those of New Brunswick, trading in the ports of the seven seas. Both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick evinced some interest in a union of the three Maritime colonies, but it was largely ephemeral. Nova Scotians had talked about both a Maritime union and a British North American union during the 1850s but none of the newspapers and few of the politicians who took part in these discussions seemed to have many practical suggestions as to how to achieve either of them.

A Maritime union conference called to meet at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, on September 1, 1864 showed some evidence of Maritime pressures, but mainly the pressure came from the province of Canada which wanted to present its own proposals for a Confederation of British North America. In the event, the Canadians swept the board at Charlottetown. Maritime union vanished and the Maritime delegates were caught up in the glittering Canadian proposal for Confederation, more easily since the Canadians brought with them a well-defined outline of just how it might be effected.

At the Quebec Conference in October 1864 the scheme was elaborated formally in 72 resolutions. It was accepted by the British government but then had to be ratified by the legislatures of the five colonies. The province of Canada passed it in March 1865 but a New Brunswick election at just that time defeated any further progress in the Maritime provinces. Nova Scotia was sufficiently opposed that there was no hope of passing it unless New Brunswick agreed. Prince Edward Island was to refuse to have anything to do with Confederation until special circumstances caused it to join in 1873. Newfoundland was less opposed to Confederation than Prince Edward Island, but it hesitated uneasily, and an election in 1869 defeated any hope of it joining at that time. The idea was not successfully revived in Newfoundland until 1948.

In 1866, however, strong pressure from the British government, together with threatening gestures from the United States, exemplified in the Fenian raids of April and June 1866, swung New Brunswick around, helped also by strong action from the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, Arthur Gordon (1861-1866). Nova Scotia then passed a Confederation resolution. The British North America Act was passed through the British Parliament early in 1867, and brought into effect on July 1, 1867.

The British North America Act had a number of noteworthy accomplishments to its credit, but there were also some things which it did not do. The Act effected a federal union