

# Chapter 7

## Creating a New Country

### Chapter INQUIRY

To what extent was Confederation an attempt to solve existing problems and lay a foundation for a country?

### Key CONCEPT

## People and Government

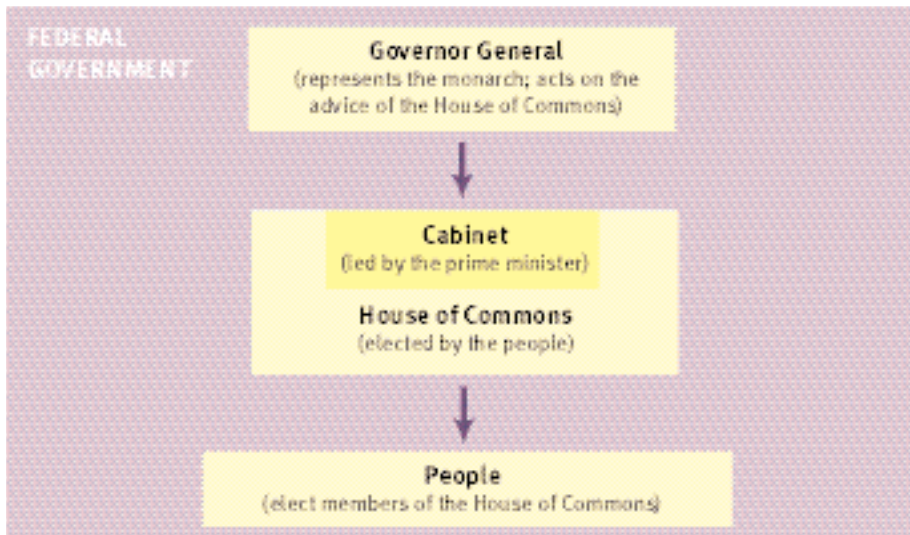
**Government** is the way societies organize themselves to make decisions and get things done. Suppose that someday you share a house with three or four other students. How would you make decisions? Most people would talk to one another and then decide what to do.

How do we make decisions in a community where thousands of people live? Or in a country where millions of people live? Some kind of organization is needed. That organization is called government.

### Canada's Government

Today, Canada is a **democracy**. That means that the people hold the power. It is also a **representative democracy**. That means that citizens elect people to make decisions for them. These representatives must make laws in the best interest of the people.

In Canada, the prime minister chooses a small group of these representatives to work with him or her. This group is the Cabinet. It runs the government. Canada has **responsible government** because the Cabinet must answer to the elected representatives.





## Honing Your Skills

Did you ever find out that research information you used was wrong? The Skill Check feature in this chapter shows you how to Identify Reliable Sources of Information. This skill is important to your studies because it will help you research effectively. The project at the end of the chapter will ask you to use this skill to research Confederation.

How did we get the system of government that we have? It all began over 150 years ago. As you saw in Chapter 6, the colonies of British North America had achieved responsible government. In the mid-nineteenth century, they began to think about joining together. The new government would have to give a say to all the different regions. It would have to meet the needs of many people. What form of government would work in the new country?

This chapter invites you to discover how and why the colonies created a new country in 1867. This process was called Confederation. You will see the form of government the founders of Confederation chose for Canada.



## Think AHEAD

The diagram on the previous page shows the structure of government created in 1867. We still use it today. In Canada, you hear and read about government every day. It's mentioned in school, in the newspapers, on television, and on the Internet. Government affects your daily life, too. As a class, brainstorm what you know about government

in Canada. Use the RAIN formula to help you bring out as many ideas as you can.

**R** Recognize all ideas.

**A** Aim for understanding.

**I** Innovate by building on the ideas of others.

**N** Numerous ideas are best.

Source: Sharon Sterling, *Global Citizens 6 Teacher's Resource* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001).



## SKILL CHECK: Identify Reliable Sources of Information

As you investigate which problems Confederation might solve, you will research the topic. How do you find reliable information? The following tips can help guide you. If you're still not sure, ask a librarian or your teacher.

### 1. Use books and other print sources with good reputations.

- Check the facts in encyclopedias and atlases. These sources give accurate and reliable information.
- The facts in news stories are usually accurate. The publishers employ people called fact checkers. They check the facts in articles.

### 2. Be careful using the Internet.

- Look for websites posted by universities, governments, and museums.
- Avoid websites without an author, a date, or contact information.
- Be careful with sites hosted by interest groups. Their purpose is to present one point of view.
- Never trust what you read in chat rooms or blogs (online journals).

### 3. Use current sources.

- Unless you're using primary sources, use current information.
- In books, check the copyright date.
  - In newspapers and magazines, check the date of publication.
  - On websites, check when the page was last updated.

### 4. Use sources that tell you where they got their information.

- Check to see if a source has a bibliography. If so, the author is trying to be accountable.
- Use sources that provide footnotes for quotes and other information taken from other sources.

### 5. Conduct first-hand interviews.

- Do you want information about a specific topic? Then talk to someone who has knowledge of that topic.

### 6. Assess the information.

- Think about whether the source is presenting facts or opinions. Watch out for opinions that pretend to be facts. (See Skill Check: Identify Facts, Opinions, and Bias on page 100.)
- Look for bias.
- Avoid sources that present stereotypes or use bad language.
- Avoid sources with sexist or racist ideas.
- Avoid sources that contain errors in spelling and grammar.

### 7. Have an inquiring mind!

- Ask questions as you read. If something doesn't make sense, double-check it.

Try It!

# Conditions for Confederation



By 1858, there were seven colonies in British North America. (See the map below.) Each colony had its own history.

Each had a unique identity. The colonies still had many things in common. They were all part of the British Empire. They had parliaments like the one in Britain. First Nations peoples lived in every colony. Except in Canada East, the people were largely of British origin.

In the 1850s, many colonists began to think about what they had in common. They began to wonder if they could be stronger by uniting as a single country.

In this section, you'll investigate the three main factors that led these colonies to think about union:

- political deadlock in the Province of Canada
- shifting trade relations
- defending British North America



## Focus

What factors in British North America led to Confederation?

### “French Canadian” versus “Québécois”

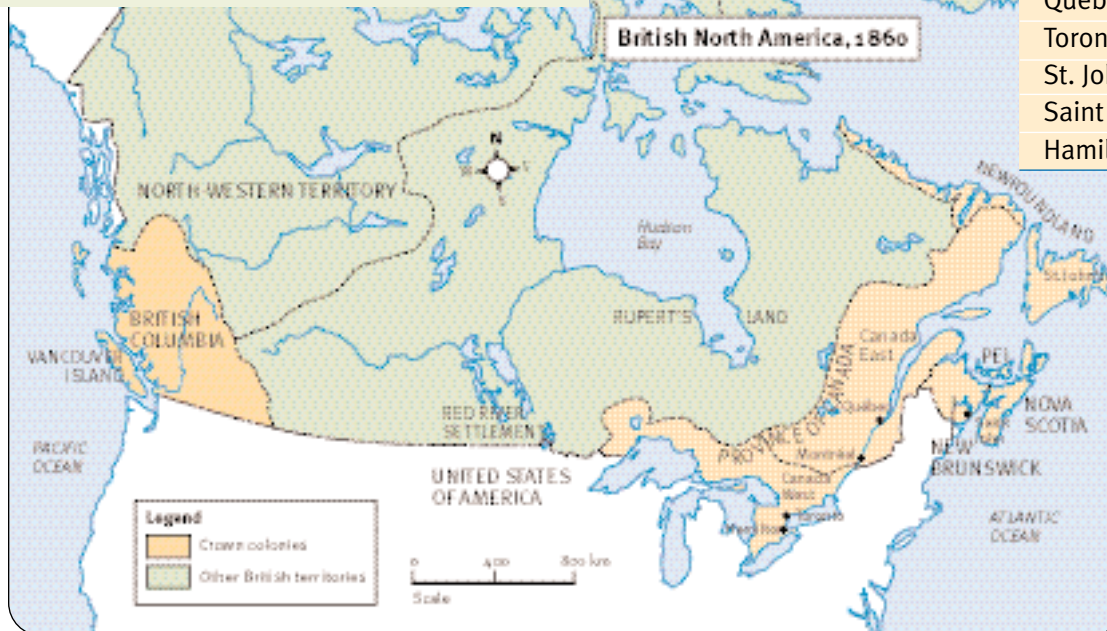
After Confederation, the term *French Canadian* was used to identify Francophone citizens of Canada. Since the 1960s, however, most Francophone Québeckers prefer *Québécois*. Today, *Québécois* refers to Francophones of Québec origin or residents of Québec. Canada also has Franco-Albertans, Franco-Manitobans, and so on.

Colony	Population
Province of Canada	
Canada West	1 396 000
Canada East	1 112 000
Nova Scotia	331 000
New Brunswick	252 000
Newfoundland	122 000
Prince Edward Island	80 000
British Columbia	51 524
Vancouver Island	

**Figure 7.2** The population of the British colonies, 1861. Think about how many people were in each colony. What big concern do you think people in the four eastern colonies had about union?

City	Population
Montréal	107 225
Québec	59 700
Toronto	56 000
St. John's	30 475
Saint John	28 805
Hamilton	26 700

**Figure 7.3** The largest cities in the colonies by population, 1861. Do an Internet search or check your atlas to find the current population of each of these cities. How have the rankings changed? What factors might explain these changes?



**Figure 7.1** The colonies of British North America in 1860. Rupert's Land was not a colony. The Hudson's Bay Company controlled it. Early on, talk of unity focused on the five colonies in the East. Speculate on the reason.

## Political Deadlock in the Province of Canada

By the 1850s, people were unhappy with the political system. You learned in Chapter 6 that Upper and Lower Canada were united as a single colony in 1841. It was called the Province of Canada. The English members in Canada West and the Canadien members in Canada East had just one Assembly between them. The English made up a majority. The Canadiens were often outvoted on matters that were very important to them.

Some Canadiens then began to talk about dividing the province of Canada. A moderate Reformer, Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine, disagreed. He thought he could make the system work for the Canadiens. La Fontaine was a big supporter of French language rights. He often spoke French in the Assembly. He did this even though he was supposed to speak English.

La Fontaine knew that the English were not as united as they seemed. In fact, they were divided into two groups, the Reformers

Who were the parties in the Assembly, and what did they want?

- The **Clear Grit Party** was a group of radical Reformers. They wanted a more democratic government. They were impatient with the demands of the Canadiens. Their leader was George Brown.
- **Les Rouges** (the Reds) were a group of Canadien radicals. They wanted independence for Québec. Their leader was Antoine-Aimé Dorion.
- **Les Bleus** (the Blues) were a group of conservative, business-oriented Canadiens. They were in favour of co-operating with the English. Their leader was George-Étienne Cartier.
- The **Liberal-Conservatives** were conservative, business-oriented English Canadians. They were in favour of co-operating with the Canadiens. Their leader was John A. Macdonald.
- The **Independents** were individuals who had not joined any party. They voted as they wished.

**Figure 7.4** Parties in the Canadian Assembly during the 1850s. The Assembly was ineffective because rival parties could not agree. Which of the parties might have formed alliances? Why?

## Canada Today

Baldwin and La Fontaine were partners in a **Great Ministry** from 1848 to 1851. They made many changes that benefit us today. They began Canada's first public school system. They fought for responsible government. They even made French one of Canada's two official languages. These leaders also started the first **municipal government**. Municipal, or local, governments provide many services that we use every day. For example, they provide the fresh water that pours out of our taps. What are some of the services that your local government provides?



and the Tories (also called the Conservatives). He joined forces with his good friend, the English Reform leader Robert Baldwin. Together, they formed a “Great Ministry” and developed laws to improve life in Canada.

Responsible government gave more power to the elected assemblies. It did not mean that the government ran smoothly, though. Things got worse after the Great Ministry ended. During the 1850s, the Assembly was deadlocked by rivalries between groups. It seemed that no one could agree on anything.

One of the issues that divided the Assembly was **representation by population**—or “rep by pop.” Under this system, elected members all represent the same number of people. The larger the population, the more representatives. This was not the system in Canada. People were frustrated.

The Act of Union had given Canada East and Canada West the same number of seats in the Assembly. Earlier, in the 1840s, Canada West had had a smaller population than its neighbour to the east. As a result, people in Canada West were happy to have the same number of seats. Then, in the 1850s, the population of Canada West began to outgrow that of Canada East. Politicians in

Canada West began to demand more seats. They wanted rep by pop. The Canadian politicians in Canada East objected. The Canadiens would be outnumbered if Canada West got more seats. The fight over rep by pop led to deadlocks in the Assembly. It was time for a change.

## Shifting Trade Partners

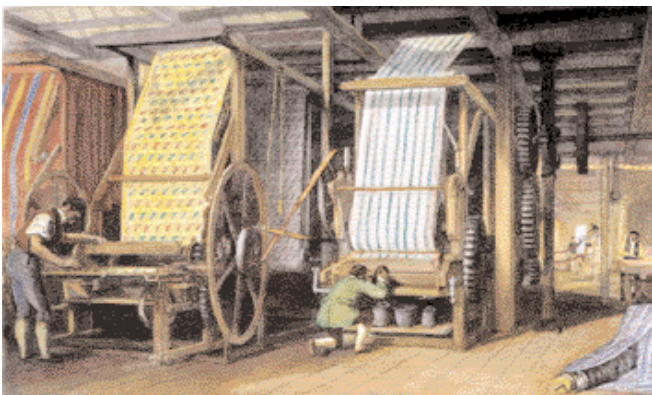
Political deadlock was not the only reason for change. There were economic reasons, too. Under the mercantile system, the British colonies had helped make Britain rich. For a long time, the furs, timber, wheat, and fish from the colonies boosted Britain’s economy. The system helped the colonies do well, too. Britain taxed imports from all countries except its colonies. This made the colonial goods inexpensive and popular in Britain. The colonies could depend on the British to buy their goods.

Then the situation changed.

### *Britain Lets Go*

By 1846, the mercantile system was no longer working. Britain’s new **manufacturing** industries were getting bigger. Britain needed to find more places to sell its goods. It decided to reduce or remove taxes on goods imported from all countries. In turn, Britain could sell its goods to more countries. In other words, Britain began **free trade**, or tax-free trade, with all countries. The colonies no longer had an assured market for their goods.

At the same time, the British began to wonder why they were keeping the colonies. Britain no longer needed them for trade. It wanted the colonies to pay for their own governments and defence. In return, Britain would give the colonies greater control over their own affairs.

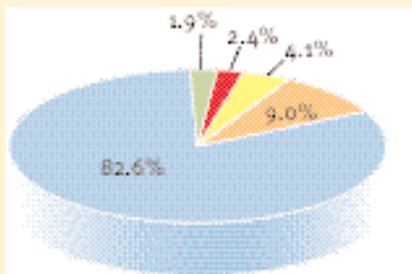


**Figure 7.5** Calico printing in a British cotton mill, 1834. In the nineteenth century, Britain began to make many products in vast quantities. Why do you think it needed more places to sell goods?

# Global Connections ■

## Global Trade

Today, many businesses in Canada rely on global trade. We **export** goods and services to people in many other countries. This brings money into Canada. It creates jobs. This graph shows Canada's most important export markets in 2003.



### Trade with the United States

Britain urged its colonies to look for other markets. The colonies in British North America turned to the United States. In 1854, they signed a trade agreement. It created **reciprocity** between the colonies and the United States. Fish, timber, and grain could flow both ways across the border free of any import taxes.

Reciprocity was good for the colonies. Their businesses did well. However, the Americans decided they weren't getting enough out of the trade deal. After just 10 years, the United States cancelled the deal.

The colonies faced an economic crisis. Now they had lost their special trade relationships with both Britain *and* the United States. What were they to do? For many people, the answer was union. If the colonies were united, they would trade more among themselves.

### Good Business Sense

Business leaders had their own reasons for wanting a union of the colonies. They thought it made good business sense. It would give businesses in Canada East and Canada West access to the Maritime ports. They could use these ports to transport their goods overseas. In turn, the Maritime ports would gain more customers. In a united market, the colonies could exchange goods without paying taxes. Building a stronger market at home was one way to make up for the reduction of trade with Britain and the United States.



**Figure 7.6** The Great Western Railway station in London, Canada West, in 1858. The large building in the background is the Tecumseh House Hotel. Imagine a small London button manufacturer. Would the workers in the factory welcome the coming of the railway? Would the hotel owner? Why or why not?

## CASE STUDY

# The Railway Revolution

Better transportation systems make good business sense. Could a desire for better transport also help create a country?



### Respond

Other forms of travel at the time were the canoe, steamboat, stagecoach, wagon and team, saddle horse, and sleigh. What are the benefits and drawbacks of the railway compared with those of these forms of transportation?

In the mid-nineteenth century, a railway boom was taking place in British North America. “The days of stagecoaches have come to an end,” boasted one newspaper, “and everywhere is to be heard the snorting of the iron horse, and the shrill blast of the steam whistle.” By 1861, more than 3000 kilometres of railway track stretched across the colonies.

Before railways, geography had kept the colonies isolated. Then the railway came. Farmers could get their crops to market. Tracks connected towns and cities from east to west. Businesses could move their goods quickly and easily.

Businesses wanted even more railway track. People began to talk about building a railway linking Canada West with Halifax. The project would cost a lot of money. It could only go ahead if the colonies were united. Then all the colonies could share the cost.

## Defending British North America

The end of the reciprocity trade deal brought change. It soured relations between the colonies and their southern neighbour. Colonists worried that the United States might send its mighty armies north.

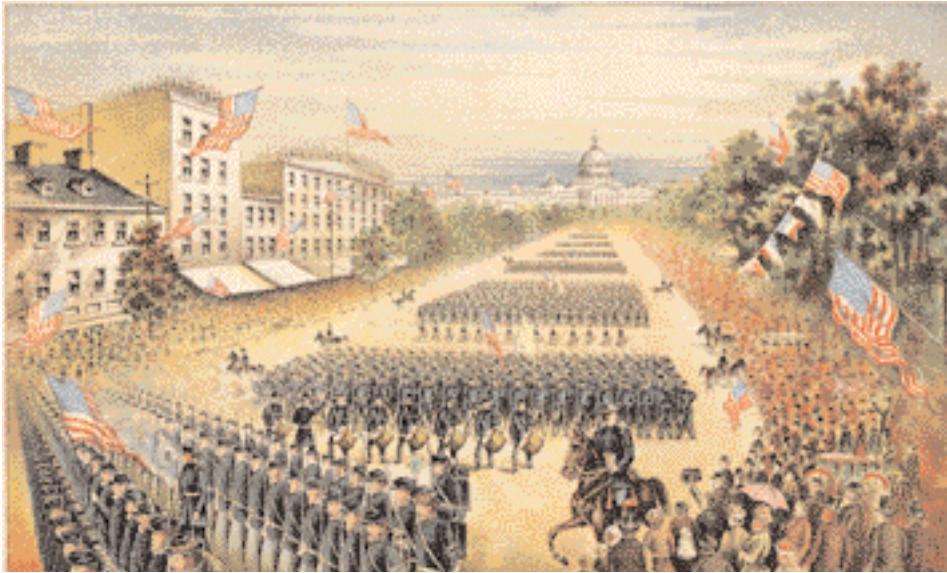
In 1861, civil war broke out in the United States. It was the northern states versus the southern states. The two main issues were slavery and the power of the states to make their own laws. Most of the colonists in British North America opposed slavery. They supported the North. Britain’s textile industry, however, depended on cotton from the southern plantations that enslaved African Americans. It seemed that Britain was supporting the South. As a result, the North looked on Britain *and* its colonies with suspicion. This concerned the colonists in Canada. If the North won the war, would the United States turn its mighty

army north? When the North did win the war in 1865, some Americans wanted to do just that. They wanted to punish Britain for supporting the South. Other Americans wanted to take over the colonies for another reason. They believed in **Manifest Destiny**. They thought it was the natural right of the United States to control all of North America.

The colonists feared the United States. In union, though, perhaps the colonies could protect themselves better. It was one more good reason to think about union.

The colonists had to think about another defence issue, too. The Fenians were a group of Irish Americans. They wanted Ireland to be freed from British rule. In 1866, Fenians attacked some border towns in the British colonies. They thought this would force Britain to free Ireland. It didn’t work. However, these events made the colonists even more nervous about the security of their borders.





**Figure 7.7** A grand review of the armies after the Civil War, Washington, DC, 1865. When the war ended, the United States suddenly had a large and powerful army with nothing to do. Did the colonists have good reason to worry about an American invasion? Why or why not?

## CASE STUDY

### Choosing a Capital

Have you ever wondered why Canada’s capital isn’t one of our big cities?

Every country has a capital city. It is the centre of government. In the 1850s, no one could agree where the capital should be. They even thought of switching the capital! It would be Toronto for two years, and then Québec City for the next two.

In 1857, the Assembly asked Queen Victoria to choose the capital.

To everyone’s surprise, she chose a small logging town called Bytown. (It was later renamed Ottawa.) Bytown was on the border between Canada East and Canada West.

Why would the queen choose such an out-of-the-way place?

Location! Ottawa was located where three rivers met. This meant people could get there easily by water. It was right between Canada East and Canada West, too. This made it a good choice for both

French and English Canadians. Most important, though, was Ottawa’s location relative to the US border. This location made it less vulnerable to attack. On 31 December 1857, Ottawa became the capital of Canada.



#### Respond

Look at an atlas map of Canada. Why was Ottawa more secure than Québec City, Montréal, or Toronto? If you could choose today, where would you put the capital city of Canada? Give reasons for your choice.



**Figure 7.8** The Parliament Buildings under construction in Ottawa, 1863. Most of these were destroyed by fire in 1916. The Parliament Buildings you see in Ottawa replaced the originals. What are the advantages of being the capital city of a country?

Think It Through

1. Choose any two facts from this section and find reliable sources to confirm that they are true. List the two sources you used. **SKILLS**
2. a) Make a chart to record information about the factors that led colonists to think about union. Here is one way you could organize your ideas. Was any one factor more important than the others?

- b) Imagine you are a colonist in favour of union. Write a letter to the editor of the *Novascotian* newspaper. Explain your reasons for supporting union.  
Alternatively, imagine you are a colonial artist in favour of union. Create a series of colour sketches. They should show your reasons for supporting union.

Factor	How It Encouraged Confederation

## Confederation and the Maritime Colonies

The Maritime colonies had little in common with the Province of Canada. Geography kept them far from the large,

inland population. The Maritime colonists made a living from the sea. Many fished for a living. Others traded with other countries. The goods leaving Maritime ports were bound for Britain, the United States, and the Caribbean.

In this section, you'll learn about the Golden Age of the Maritimes. You'll also learn some Maritime colonists' opinions about union.

### The Golden Age of the Maritimes

The years between 1840 and 1870 were a "Golden Age" for the Maritime colonies. It was the age of wind, wood, and sail. Maritime shipbuilders were respected for the wooden sailing ships they made. British North America had the fourth-largest shipping fleet in the world. Only Britain, the United States, and Norway had bigger fleets. Of these ships, 70 per cent were built in the Maritimes. It's no wonder that shipbuilding came to symbolize the Maritimes.



#### Focus

To what extent was Confederation an attempt to strengthen the Maritime colonies?

#### Facts about the Maritime Colonies

##### New Brunswick

- economy: forestry and fishing
- most important city: Saint John
- famous for its wooden sailing ships
- Acadians in the north
- largest group of colonists: the Irish

##### Nova Scotia

- economy: fishing
- most important city: Halifax (naval centre)
- land good for farming: 10 per cent
- trade with colonies in the Caribbean
- largest group of colonists: the Scots
- about 1500 Mi'kmaq [MIG-mah]

##### Prince Edward Island

- economy: fishing and farming (fertile soil)
- most important city: Charlottetown
- no bridges to the mainland
- the smallest colony in both area and population

##### Newfoundland

- economy: fishing (exported to Britain) and seal hunting
- most important city: St. John's
- land good for farming: none
- isolated from the other colonies
- very close ties to Britain

Fish, lumber, and grain were major exports. Coal mining was about to make Nova Scotia one of the largest coal producers in the world. The economy of the Maritimes was growing.

### *Benefits Not for All*

The eastern colonies were growing. There were the first peoples, the Mi'kmaq and the Maliseet [MAL-ih-seet] who lived throughout the region. There were Scottish immigrants in Cape Breton. There were the Acadians, Loyalists, and Irish immigrants in New Brunswick. There were Black Loyalists and German immigrants in Nova Scotia.

The mid-nineteenth century was not a golden age for all these people. The Mi'kmaq and Maliseet peoples did not share in the economic benefits. Many First Nations signed treaties and were assigned limited reserve lands. Much of this land was not good for farming. The natural resources on which the First Nations made a living were disappearing. It was not a good time for Black Loyalists, either. They experienced racism and discrimination. And while exports in timber were strong, the workers on the lumber gangs endured many hardships in the backwoods. How would those not enjoying the prosperity feel about the “Golden Age”?

Most people in the Maritimes, though, did well. For them, the mid-nineteenth century was truly a Golden Age. Would union make the Maritimes stronger—or weaker?

### **Would Union Help or Hinder?**

Many people opposed union because they thought it would end the good times. They wanted to expand their trade with Britain and the United States, not Canada.

People who supported union saw that the world was changing. New technologies based on coal, iron, and steel threatened to end the age of wood, wind, and sail. Union would give them access to the bigger economies of the Canadian provinces. In time, supporters thought, trade within the union would grow.

The proposed railway was very attractive. It would be good for business. Further, if there were an American invasion, the proposed railway could move in troops to help fight the Americans off.

### **Reading STRATEGY**

To remember a list of important names, try this. Make a “word” out of the first letter of each name. For example, you could use PNNN to help you remember the names of the Maritime colonies.



**Figure 7.9** The tall ship *Marco Polo*, built by Smith Shipbuilding of Saint John and launched in 1851. (John Lars Johnson painted this image about 1930.) The *Marco Polo* was described as the fastest ship in the world. Who would benefit from a strong shipbuilding industry in the Maritimes?

# Biography

## Joseph Howe (1804-1873)

Joseph Howe was the leading politician in Nova Scotia in the Confederation period. When he was just 23 years old, Howe bought a Halifax newspaper called the *Novascotian*. Once, he published a letter that said the government was stealing from the people. He was arrested and put on trial. Howe argued that a newspaper had to be free to criticize the government. The judge agreed. Howe went free. He became a popular hero in the colony.

In 1836, Howe was elected to the Assembly. He was the leader of the Reform



### Respond

A Nova Scotian would probably say that Howe showed the qualities of a great citizen. Would a colonist in Canada West agree? Explain your opinion.

party. He and the Reformers helped bring responsible government to Nova Scotia. They did so with fewer struggles than the Canadians did.

Howe was fiercely loyal to Nova Scotia. He spoke out against union with Canada. He believed Confederation

favoured Canada at the expense of the Maritime colonies. With his newspaper, Howe made his

views well known. Howe became a hero for his defence of the colony.



**Figure 7.10** A photograph of Joseph Howe, taken about 1871. Howe called Confederation the “Botheration Scheme.” In other words, he thought it would be a lot of trouble, with little benefit to Maritimers. Howe was ahead of his time. Think of a modern advertisement that uses humour to get a message across. Is it effective?

## Think It Through

- What were the reasons that people in the Maritime colonies began to consider union with Canada? Make a chart to record this information. Here is one way you could organize your ideas.
  - Make a similar chart titled “Reasons the Maritimes should *not* join Confederation.”
  - Decide whether Confederation would be the best choice or not.
- Write a speech or create a poster about the Maritime colonies joining Confederation. To promote union, show how it would strengthen the colonies. To oppose union, show how it would weaken the colonies.



# Confederation Discussions

Not everyone in British North America liked the idea of Confederation.

Politicians had a lot of work to do. They had to work out a deal that everyone could accept. In this section, you'll see how deadlock was finally broken. You'll hear different points of view about Confederation. You'll discover what each colony decided and why.

## Focus

How was Confederation finally achieved?

## Breaking the Deadlock

As you saw earlier in this chapter, political deadlock was making it hard to govern in Canada. Then, in 1864, there was a breakthrough. George Brown, leader of the Clear Grits, convinced his party to join a coalition. They would vote with the Liberal-Conservatives and Les Bleus (the conservative party of the Canadiens).

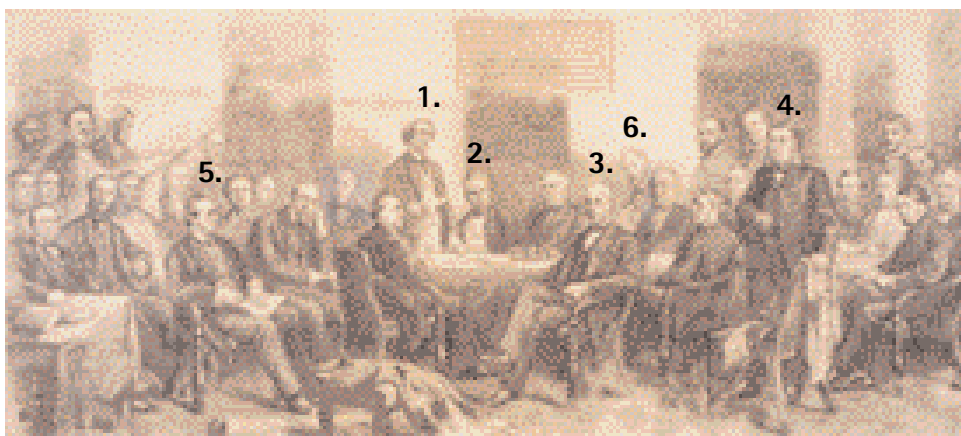
In return, Brown wanted these two parties to support a plan that he had—a plan to unite all the colonies. Brown

proposed **federalism**. Each colony would keep its own government to run its own affairs. A central government would look after matters that affected the whole union. This arrangement would reduce concern in the Maritimes that central Canada would control their affairs. It was a good plan for Canada East and Canada West, too. If they each had their own government, it would break the long-running political deadlock.

Federalism was well suited to British North America, with its scattered colonies. The Liberal-Conservatives and Les Bleus agreed to Brown's idea.

## The Talks Heat Up

In 1864, delegates from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island were going to meet in Charlottetown. They wanted to talk about a union of *their* three colonies. The politicians in Canada asked to be invited. The Maritime leaders listened to their plan to unite all four colonies. They agreed to meet again.



1. John A. Macdonald, leader of the Liberal-Conservative Party in Canada West
2. George-Étienne Cartier, leader of Les Bleus in Canada East
3. George Brown, leader of the Clear Grits in Canada West
4. Charles Tupper, premier of Nova Scotia
5. Leonard Tilley, premier of New Brunswick
6. J.H. Gray, premier of Prince Edward Island

**Figure 7.11** A charcoal sketch of the founders of Confederation. These political leaders attended the conferences in 1864. In 1883, the government asked Robert Harris to portray the group as they had looked in 1864. Some had died. The rest were older. Harris worked from photographs and interviews with those who had been there. How do you think the process affected the accuracy of his work?

A month later, the founders all gathered at Québec City. For two weeks, they argued.

## Tech Link

To see a photo of the provincial delegates to the Québec Conference, open Chapter 7 on your *Voices and Visions* CD-ROM.

They all tried to persuade the others to see things their way. Then they found ways to **compromise**—everyone gave up a little to get an agreement they could all live with. They finally reached **consensus**. The delegates had drafted the Seventy-Two Resolutions. These were the foundations for a new country and a new

government. First, though, the colonial assemblies had to agree.

## The Great Debate

Now the great debate began. Politicians and ordinary citizens alike talked about union. Families talked about it at the kitchen table. Neighbours debated it across the farm fence. People stopped to express a point of view at the general store. In the end, though, the decision was in the hands of the politicians.

## VOICES

Some politicians supported the idea of union. Others did not. Here are opinions from five leading politicians of the day.

“It is said that the Canadians have outgrown their Constitution. Well, if they have, what of that? If they are in trouble, let them get out of it; but don't let them involve us in distractions with which we have nothing to do. Are not the Canadians always in trouble?”

—Joseph Howe, Nova Scotia

Source: *Halifax Morning Chronicle*, 11 January 1865.

“If union were attained, we would form a political nationality with which neither the national origin, nor the religion of any individual, would interfere.”

—George-Étienne Cartier, Canada East

Source: Parliamentary Debates on the Subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces (Québec, 1865) pp. 59–61. Quoted in K.A. MacKirdy et al., *Changing Perspectives in Canadian History*, revised edition (Don Mills, ON: J.M. Dent, 1971), p. 214.

“We would be such a small portion of the Confederacy, our voice would not be heard in it. We would be the next thing to nothing. Are we then going to surrender our rights and liberties?”

—Cornelius Howatt, Prince Edward Island

Source: *The Charlottetown Examiner*, 27 August 1866. Quoted in Paul W. Bennett and Cornelius J. Jaenen, *Emerging Identities*, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1986), p. 252.

“The dangers that have arisen from this [American] system we will avoid if we can agree upon forming a strong central government. If we can only obtain that object—a vigorous general government—we shall not be New Brunswickers, nor Nova Scotians, nor Canadians, but British Americans, under the sway of the British Sovereign.”

—John A. Macdonald, Canada West

Source: Edward Whelan, comp., *The Union of the British Provinces* (Toronto, 1927), pp. 29–30. Quoted in K.A. MacKirdy et al., *Changing Perspectives in Canadian History*, revised edition (Don Mills, ON: J.M. Dent, 1971), p. 212.

“I oppose Confederation because I foresee innumerable difficulties with the joint powers given to the local and general governments in several areas. These conflicts will always be resolved in favour of the general government.”

—Jean-Baptiste-Éric Dorion, Canada East

Source: Philippe Sylvain, “Jean-Baptiste-Éric Dorion,” *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*, Vol. IX. (Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1977), p.235. Quoted on <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/confederation/h18-2322-e.html>.

## Respond

Summarize the arguments listed here for and against Confederation. Which is most convincing? Why? Do some research to find another opinion about the issue. Don't forget to judge your sources carefully. **SKILLS**

## What the Colonies Decided

### *The Province of Canada*

Most of the people in Canada West were in favour of union. This was not the case in Canada East. Many Canadiens worried that English Canadians would control the new country. George-Étienne Cartier disagreed. He believed that federalism would give the Canadiens control over matters that affected them directly. Francophones received promises that their language and other rights would be respected. Section 93 of the BNA Act gave the provinces control over education. The vote passed 91 in favour, 33 against.

### *New Brunswick*

Many people in New Brunswick worried that the larger Canadian colonies would dominate the union. At first, the Assembly voted against the idea. Then Britain put pressure on New Brunswick to accept the deal. The promise of a railway appealed to many colonists, too. New Brunswick politicians changed their minds. They voted to support union.

### *Nova Scotia*

Joseph Howe worried that Nova Scotia would have little influence in the new country. He argued that the people of Nova Scotia would have to pay higher taxes, but that the money would be spent elsewhere. On the other hand, union meant Nova Scotia would get a railway. In the end, Nova Scotia voted to join union, too.

### *Prince Edward Island*

This island colony was isolated from the other colonies. People thought that Prince Edward Island was too small. It would be swamped by the other colonies. Prince Edward Island did not join Confederation until 1873.

### *Newfoundland*

Newfoundland had little in common with the other colonies. The people did not think they would have much influence in such a distant government. They were more interested in their ties to Britain. Newfoundland and Labrador stayed out of Confederation until 1949.

## Reading STRATEGY

Try taking turns reading paragraphs out loud with a partner. After each partner reads, the other partner describes what he or she heard.



**Figure 7.12** Canada and its first four provinces, 1867. In that year, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada East, and Canada West formed a union. Look at a modern political map of Canada. Compare Canada's original size and shape with its size and shape today.

## Working Together



The man who argued, cajoled, and finally convinced politicians across the colonies to join in Confederation was John A.

Macdonald. He believed that Canada had to be a partnership between Canadiens and



### Tech Link

To see a painting of the young John A. Macdonald, open Chapter 7 on your *Voices and Visions* CD-ROM.

English Canadians. To make this happen, he formed an alliance with George-Étienne Cartier from Canada East.

Union was George Brown's idea. Macdonald, however, was the one who led the campaign at every step.

He was the unofficial “architect” of Confederation at the early discussions in Charlottetown and Québec. At the London Conference in 1866, he headed the meeting that drew up the British North America Act (also called the BNA Act). In fact, Macdonald wrote much of the BNA Act himself.

The new country's name, Canada, came from the Haudenosaunee [hah-duh-nuh-SAH-nee] word for village: *kanata*. Many people are proud that our country's name has roots in the language of one of the First Peoples. Why might they hold that opinion?

## Biography

### George-Étienne Cartier (1814–1873)

George-Étienne Cartier was the leading Québec politician of the Confederation era. He and John A. Macdonald worked tirelessly to achieve their shared vision. After Cartier's death, Macdonald said, “Cartier was bold as a lion. He was just the man I wanted. Without him, Confederation would not have been carried.”

The Cartier family had been in Lower Canada for more than 200 years. As a young and fiery lawyer, Cartier had fought with the Patriotes during the rebellion of 1837–1838. After exile in the United States, he returned to Montréal. There he began a career as a lawyer and railway promoter. Cartier won election to the Assembly in 1848. He worked many long hours to adapt the French civil code to Canada East. The civil code is still used in Québec today.



Cartier spoke passionately in the great Confederation debates in 1865. “We must either have a confederation of British North America or be absorbed by the American union.” He knew, however, that union might be disastrous for the Canadiens. He and another moderate, Étienne-Pascal Taché, fought to achieve the right compromises. Cartier and Taché worked tirelessly. They convinced the Canadiens to give the new scheme a chance.

Cartier's career reminds us that citizens of different languages and cultures can work together to make great things happen.



### Respond

What qualities of citizenship did Cartier have? Do Canadians still value these qualities today?



## Dawn of a Dominion

July 1, 1867, saw the creation of a new country: the Dominion of Canada. Citizens



celebrated together in many communities across the country. At midnight, church bells began ringing. Bonfires lit up the night skies. Cannons boomed. Soldiers fired rifle salutes. British naval ships in Halifax Harbour discharged their guns. When daylight broke, people took to the streets. People waved flags. Crowds cheered. Then, at 11 o'clock in the morning, mayors and officials in towns and villages across the country read a proclamation from Queen Victoria. Canada was now a country.

**Figure 7.13** Young Canadians in Vancouver celebrate their country on Canada Day. How do citizens in your community celebrate Canada Day?

### Think It Through

1. Imagine it is 1 July 1867. Design a poster to celebrate the birth of Canada. Your poster should include symbols that reflect the new country's identity. Consider what various groups would find important about the new country. Alternatively, write lyrics for a rap song that tells the story of the birth of the country.
2. John A. Macdonald was one of the top 10 nominees for the 2004 CBC contest *The Greatest Canadian*. Do some research about Canada's first prime minister. Why do many Canadians admire him? Did he have faults? Discuss this statement: Politicians should be perfect. **SKILLS**

## The Structure of Canadian Government

The founders of Confederation made many compromises. What decisions did they make? In this section, we'll look at how those decisions laid the foundation for Canada today.

### Focus

What did Confederation achieve for the Canadian system of government?

### Making It Official

In 1867, the British Parliament passed the BNA Act. It was official: the Dominion of Canada was a country. Britain still controlled defence and foreign affairs. Canada remained part of the British Empire. The British monarch was Canada's head of state. A Governor General

would represent the monarch in Canada. Since 1935, he or she has been chosen by the prime minister.

Parliament was divided into two parts. There was an elected House of Commons and an appointed Senate. The number of seats a province had in the House of Commons was based on rep by pop. Therefore, Ontario and Québec had more representation. Senate seats were based on region. The senate would give the less populated provinces a larger voice in government. It would also protect the rights of minorities. It was the House of Commons, however, that held the real power.

### A Federal System

The BNA Act called for a **federal system** of government. This created two levels of government. The central government had

power over matters affecting the whole country. The provincial governments had power over local and regional matters.

## Identity

### Peace, Order, and Good Government

Why did the founders of Confederation divide the powers the way they did? The provinces wanted to retain their unique identities. The founders, however, had just witnessed the Civil War in the United States. In part, this war had been a fight about who should have more power: the states or the central government.

The founders of Confederation did not want a civil war in Canada. They chose to have a strong central government. The BNA Act states that the federal government has the power to make laws for the “peace, order, and good government” of Canada. This phrase has become part of the Canadian identity.

Look in the chart below to see what the Founders of Confederation did about **residual powers**. These are the powers over things that no one knew about in 1867. They include things such as telephones, airplanes, and the Internet.



### Respond

Brainstorm a list of things that exist today that did not exist in 1867. Then, working in a small group, decide which level of government you think should control each one. Give reasons to support your decisions.

Federal Powers	Provincial Powers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defence</li> <li>• the post office</li> <li>• trade and commerce</li> <li>• weights and measures</li> <li>• currency and coinage</li> <li>• taxation</li> <li>• navigation</li> <li>• fisheries</li> <li>• copyright</li> <li>• banking</li> <li>• First Nations</li> <li>• criminal law</li> <li>• naturalization</li> <li>• marriage and divorce</li> <li>• residual powers</li> <li>• the power to cancel any provincial laws that went beyond the bounds of provincial power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• property and civil rights</li> <li>• education</li> <li>• local works</li> <li>• highways</li> <li>• hospitals</li> <li>• municipalities</li> <li>• courts</li> <li>• provincial and local police</li> </ul>
	Shared Powers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agriculture</li> <li>• immigration</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.14** The powers the federal and provincial governments were granted by the BNA Act. In what ways could the provincial powers help provinces maintain their unique identities? If you were to reassign any powers, which would you change? Why?

## A Limited Democracy

In 1867, Canada was a democracy—to a degree. Who had the vote in 1867? Only citizens over the age of 21 who owned property or rented large amounts of

### Canada Today

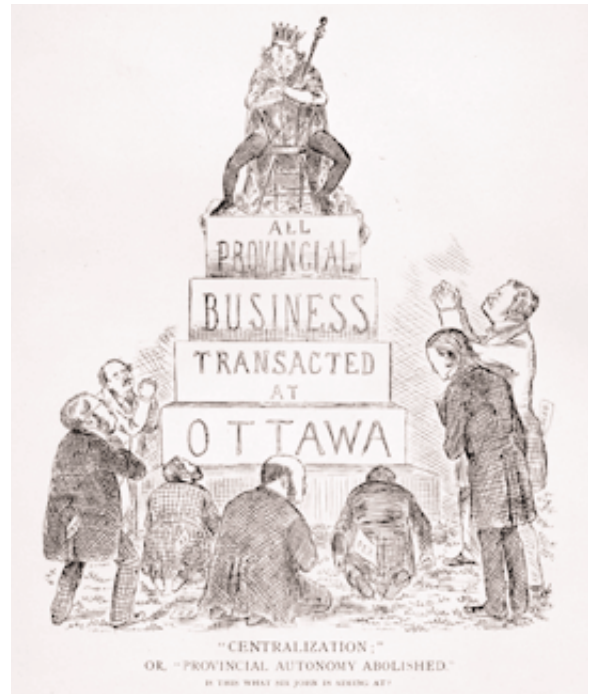
The decisions that went into the BNA Act have strongly influenced what Canada has become. For example, the BNA Act made education a provincial responsibility. Besides Québec, the provinces used this power to deny the right to instruction in French. As a result, many Francophones did not receive their schooling in French until recently. How would this affect the number of Francophones across Canada today?

### Not Included

The Canadiens and English Canadians far outnumbered the First Nations peoples. Should the politicians have consulted the First Nations about Confederation? The idea probably didn't even cross their minds. Even so, the results very seriously affected First Nations. Section 91(24) of the BNA Act gives the federal government responsibility over "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians." How had the relationship between the new Canadians and the First Nations changed since first contact?

property had the vote. Married women could not vote, and very few single women owned property. Neither did various visible minorities, farm labourers, or unskilled workers. Neither did First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. In all, only 11 per cent of the population had the vote.

Today, all Canadian citizens aged 18 and older can vote.



**Figure 7.15** A political cartoon about the relationship between the federal and provincial governments, published in a collection in 1886. John A. Macdonald is shown as a king surrounded by the provinces. What is the cartoonist saying about federal-provincial relations? Do you think this message holds true in Canada today? Explain.

### Think It Through

1. Choose one decision that the Founders of Confederation made. In a paragraph or brief speech, describe how it affects your Canada.
2. Recall the Iroquois Confederacy, which you read about on page 20. In your opinion, was this nation more or less democratic than Canada in 1867? Give reasons for your answer as jot notes or a paragraph.
3. Voting is the responsibility of all adult citizens. What do you think the voting age should be? Working with a small group, list the reasons for your choice. Give evidence to support your answer. Then, as a class, try to reach a consensus.
4. To what extent was Confederation an attempt to solve existing problems and lay a foundation for a new country?



# Chapter 7 PROJECT Researching Confederation

Confederation was a defining moment in Canadian history. Therefore, there is a lot of information about this subject. This chapter project challenges you to use your research skills. Your task is to find reliable sources of information about the problems that Confederation was meant to solve.

## Focus

Look for information on Confederation in the library or on the Internet. Use Skill Check: Identify Reliable Sources of Information on page 148 to guide you. Find as many of the following types of sources as you can.

- **Primary sources.** Speeches, letters, newspapers, the BNA Act, photographs, and artwork.
- **Secondary sources.** Canadian history books, textbooks, and political biographies.
- **Canadian Encyclopedias.**
- **Atlases.** Check for Confederation-era maps. Try the *National Atlas of Canada* website.

## Recording Your Sources

After you find your information, record your sources so you can back up your research.

**Figure 7.16** A chart to help you keep track of books.

Author	Title	City	Publisher	Year	Page Nos.
Alfred Duclos De Celles	La Fontaine et son temps	Montréal	Librairie Beauchemin, limitée	1912	24-26

**Figure 7.17** A chart to help you keep track of magazines.

Author	Article Title	Magazine Title	Volume or Issue Nos.	Date	Page Nos.
Dan Palmer	His Legacy Lives On	Edmonton Sun	-	12 Nov. 2004	A1

**Figure 7.18** A chart to help you keep track of websites.

Web Address	Organization	Article Title	Date Updated or Copyright Date
<a href="http://www.cbc.ca/greatest/top_ten/nominee/macdonald-john.html">http://www.cbc.ca/greatest/top_ten/nominee/macdonald-john.html</a>	CBC	Sir John A. Macdonald	2004

Use a record sheet like the ones shown at the bottom of the page. You can use the given examples to guide you.

## Sharing Your Sources

After you have recorded your sources, display your record sheets on a class bulletin board. Look over the other record sheets. Record the details of two sources of information you missed. Find them in the library or on the Internet.

## Drawing Conclusions

How much information on Confederation is available? What problems does this create?

## Making Recommendations

Choose two sources of information on Confederation that you would recommend to the class. For each one, explain why you believe it is a reliable source. Explain your recommendations to a small group or in written form. How could you find more reliable sources next time?