

# Confederation

## What's Chapter 8 About?

Confederation was an agreement among some of the colonies of British North America to join together. It established rules about Canadian society. Canadians today have different perspectives on the rules defined by Confederation.

These rules established equality in Canada for the French and English languages, and created a partnership between Francophones and Anglophones. They established a central government for Canada, and provincial governments with important powers.

These rules also excluded First Nations peoples as citizens of Canada. First Nations have worked, and continue to work, to change the idea of citizenship that first shaped Confederation.

This photo shows part of a “Confederation Quilt” made in 1864. Fannie Parlee, a dressmaker, used scraps of fabric left over from gowns she had made for the wives of politicians attending the Charlottetown Conference, where the idea of Confederation was first proposed. Some of her other handiwork is probably in evidence in the painting on page 248.

### FOCUS QUESTIONS

- What issues shaped Confederation?
- What ideas of citizenship shaped Confederation?
- What factors led to other provinces joining Confederation?



## CHAPTER TASK

# Create a Symbol of Confederation

## The Confederation Symbol Project

The Friends of History Society works to inform Canadians about Canada's past. This year, the society plans to remember Confederation in a thought-provoking way.

Confederation established the ideas of citizenship and identity that first defined Canada. A symbol that clearly captures those ideas will help Canadians better understand the society they have today.

The society wants your creative ideas for remembering the original Confederation agreement in one of the following ways:

- A medallion.
- A soundscape.
- An "oath of citizenship."

You will need to describe in writing or in a recorded interview how the symbol you create represents information about the following questions:

- What agreement did Confederation strike between Francophones and Anglophones in Canada?
- How did economics enter into the original agreement?
- How did the original agreement affect the identities of peoples in Canada?



This Confederation medallion dates from 1867. It is full of symbols. "Britain" is the woman sitting on the left with a scroll in her hand that says "Confederation." She is sitting with a lion, which symbolizes British imperialism. The four women on the right represent the four provinces that originally joined Confederation. Each "province" holds an object: an axe, a paddle, a sheaf of wheat, or a spade. As you learn about Confederation in this chapter, consider what message this medallion communicates and in what ways your message could be different.

## Confederation Issues

### GET READY

This section presents information to answer this chapter-focus question:

#### What issues shaped Confederation?

Before you begin to read this section, choose a graphic organizer that will allow you to accomplish two things:

- List the groups that were involved in the Confederation negotiations: Canada West, Canada East, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.
- Track the top issues for each group. Skim the headings in the section to identify those issues before you begin reading.

You also need a way to classify issues as encouraging or discouraging Confederation. What can you add to your graphic organizer to help with this task?

### A Class Confederation Conference

Use the information in this section to help you prepare for a class conference on Confederation. With a group of classmates, investigate the pros and cons of Confederation for one of the six British colonies that considered forming a union in the 1860s. As a group, formulate a recommendation. Should the colony join or not? Each group will state and explain its position in a class conference.

Representatives of the colonies of British North America negotiated for several years to hammer out Confederation. This photo dates from the first Confederation conference, in 1864, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.



## Four Key Confederation Leaders

The politicians who most wanted Confederation came from Canada East and Canada West. Why? What special problems did Canada East and Canada West have that none of the other colonies shared?

In Canada East and Canada West, four leaders formed an alliance that promoted Confederation and urged the other colonies of British North America to join.



### John A. Macdonald

John A. Macdonald came from Canada West. He was born in Scotland, and his parents settled in Upper Canada in 1820, during the Great Migration. He was among the volunteers who attacked and defeated Mackenzie's rebels at Montgomery's Tavern in 1837. A skilled lawyer, he then went on to defend some of the rebels of Upper Canada in their trials for treason.

Macdonald wanted to create a nation that stretched from "sea to sea," and that would maintain ties with Britain. He believed in accommodating people to achieve agreement. One of the key accommodations of Confederation was to grant provinces powers that gave them some control over their own affairs.

After Confederation, John A. Macdonald became Canada's first prime minister.

### George-Étienne Cartier

George-Étienne Cartier came from Canada East, from a wealthy family of grain exporters. He was born in Lower Canada and fought with the Patriotes at the Battle of Saint-Denis in 1837. After the rebellions, he lived in exile for a while in Vermont. Although they fought on different sides of the 1837 rebellions, Cartier and Macdonald later worked together to found Confederation.

Cartier supported political change, but he did not want Canada to become a republic like the U.S. He advocated powers for provinces within Confederation that would ensure the continuation of the French language and Catholic religion in Canada. The Catholic Church continued to play an influential role in the politics of Canada East — a role that Cartier supported. Catholic people generally consulted the clergy before making important decisions.

George-Étienne Cartier died in 1872, only five years after Confederation. When John A. Macdonald announced the news of Cartier's death in the House of Commons, he broke down in tears.



## George Brown

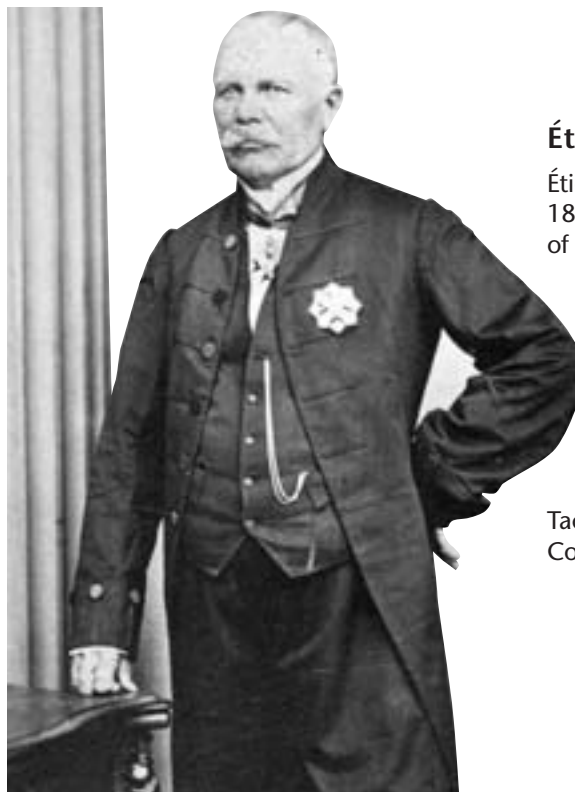
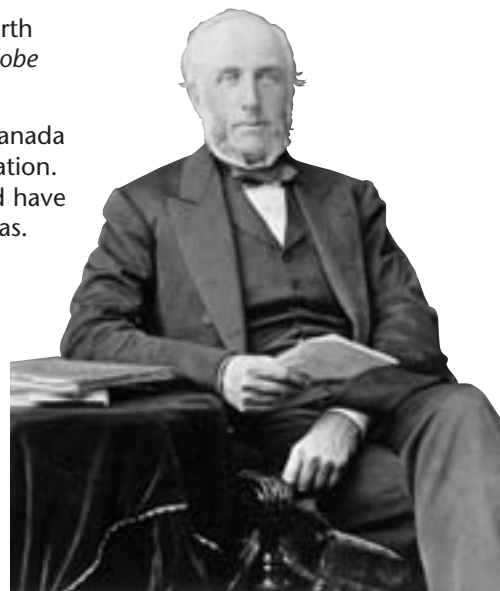
George Brown came from Canada West. Like Macdonald, he arrived in North America from Scotland during the Great Migration. Brown founded the *Globe* newspaper in Toronto, which later became the *Globe and Mail*.

Brown didn't support Confederation at first. He thought the Province of Canada needed "rep by pop" — or representation by population — not Confederation. Within the united Province of Canada, representation by population would have given English-speaking Canadians a majority in the assembly of the Canadas.

Brown was well known for harsh criticism, and he often targeted John A. Macdonald in the *Globe*. Macdonald said it was like being hunted by a fiend.

In 1864, Brown changed his mind about Confederation. He wanted Britain's colonies to control Rupert's Land in the west, and thought they would succeed if united as one country. Otherwise, he worried, Rupert's Land might fall into the hands of the United States.

George Brown died after an incident with a former employee of his newspaper, who shot him in the leg. The wound became infected and proved fatal.



## Étienne-Paschal Taché

Étienne-Paschal Taché was a *patriote* during the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838. Like George-Étienne Cartier, he became a passionate advocate of Confederation. He believed Canadiens could best safeguard their heritage as a province of Canada, with strong powers to control local affairs.

Confederation depended on cooperation between leaders in Canada East and West — a cooperation Taché endorsed. In 1864, Taché helped forge, and then led, the alliance with John A. Macdonald — the "Great Coalition" — that became central to the success of Confederation.

Taché was involved in shaping and promoting many articles of Confederation. He died in 1865, before the final deal was struck.

## Key Confederation Issues

### The Problem of Political Deadlock

**political deadlock:** the inability to decide on a course of action because of disagreement among equally powerful decision makers

#### Provinces of Canada

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Canada East           | Canada West          |
| Francophone Canadians | Anglophone Canadians |
| 42 seats              | 42 seats             |

A **political deadlock** happens when equally powerful players in a decision-making process can't agree on a course of action.

Imagine this situation. The parents of some students at a school want all students at the school to wear uniforms. These parents believe that uniforms will promote equality in the school, because all students — no matter what their background or economic situation — will dress the same way. Some parents oppose uniforms because they believe choice of clothing is a basic personal freedom.

The school decides to put the issue to a vote among the parents. When the ballots are counted, half the parents want school uniforms and half don't.

This is a “political deadlock.”

The political structure of the province of Canada under the Act of Union encouraged the development of political deadlocks. This is because Canada East and Canada West had equal numbers of seats in the province's assembly, and they represented people — Francophone Canadians and Anglophone Canadians — with different concerns and priorities.

#### RESPOND

One way to resolve a political deadlock is to give opposing groups the power to make separate choices.

For example, in the deadlock over school uniforms, the school could create classes with different dress codes. Parents could then choose “uniform” or “non-uniform” classes for their children.

Another solution might involve separating the two groups into two different schools, each with its own dress code.

1. What advantages and disadvantages might each of these solutions have? Would one cost more than the other, for example? Do both meet the concerns of parents equally well?
2. Can you think of other solutions to the school uniform deadlock?
3. In what way might solutions to the school uniform deadlock resemble solutions to the Canada East and Canada West deadlock?

### The Question of Rights for Canadiens

Canadiens had protected their language and religion, despite the aim of the Act of Union to assimilate them. They needed a **guarantee** that any new political arrangement would recognize and respect their rights.

Some Canadian leaders, such as George-Étienne Cartier and Étienne-Paschal Taché, believed Confederation offered the best guarantee. They saw Confederation as an opportunity for Canadiens to **secure** the rights they needed to retain their distinct identity, and to make those rights law under a new **constitution**.

Other Canadian leaders saw Confederation as a threat. Antoine-Aimé Dorion, leader of the Parti Rouge in Canada East, worried that Confederation would give the federal government too much power. The federal government could override the rights and best interests of Canadiens in Canada East. He warned Canadiens: “We shall be at its mercy.”

Canada East also had another group seeking to affirm its rights: an English-speaking, Protestant minority. Like the Francophone, Catholic majority in Canada East, the group wanted to ensure it would have schools to serve its community.

**guarantee:** a promise with legal backing

**secure:** to get, to make sure of

**constitution:** the official set of rules about how a country is governed

## LA CONFEDERATION!!!



This 1866 cartoon is from Québec newspaper *La Scie*. How does the cartoonist represent Confederation? Does the cartoonist support Confederation, in your opinion?

### The Question of Independence for Regions

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island were British colonies, but they governed themselves. They worried that they would lose their independent character by joining with Canada East and Canada West. They had small populations compared to the Canadas. In a partnership with the Canadas, would the Canadas try to dominate them? Would they try to take away their powers to make decisions for themselves?

They also worried that becoming part of a new country would be expensive. It would involve creating — and paying for — a new “general government” established by Confederation.

**Under the present state of things, the people of this colony already pay for a local legislature and all the paraphernalia of a local government. Under Confederation, they will also have to pay for a lieutenant governor, and pay their share of the costs of a new general government, a new governor general, and a new foreign diplomatic service. All the revenue that is now annually collected would be placed at the disposal of the general government.**

— Adapted from “The Union Scheme,” *The Herald* (Charlottetown), October 12, 1864

## **NO CONFEDERATION!**

### **Reduced (not Increased) Taxation!!**

*Let us keep our Fisheries to Ourselves!  
Let us keep our Lands, Mines and Minerals to Ourselves!!  
Let us keep our Revenue to Ourselves!!!*

### **Newfoundland for the Newfoundlanders**

#### **NO REWARDS FOR TRAITORS**

#### **No Militia Laws for Our Young Men**

#### **No Drafting for Our Sailors.**

**Let us Stick to our Old Mother Country, Great Britain,  
the TRUE Land of the Brave and Home of the Free!!**

**Let us Never Change the Union Jack for the Canadian Beaver!!**

**Never give to Canada the Right of Taxing Us.**

— Excerpted from the *Morning Chronicle*, St. John's Newfoundland



### The Risk of American Annexation

British North America, and later Canada, worried about “American **annexation**” — about being taken over by the United States. Why? Examine the Canadian cartoons on this page and the next for reasons. How could you use the ideas in these cartoons in your class Confederation conference?

**annexation:** takeover of a territory by another country

## How Do You Read a Cartoon?

1. Cartoons often communicate with symbols. Symbols usually have labels that identify them. As a first step to understanding a cartoon, look for labels in the caption, in the picture, and in the way people and objects are drawn.
2. Next, summarize the situation in your own words.
3. Finally, check the source. What can you tell about the perspective of the cartoon, based on the source?



### A PERTINENT QUESTION

**Mrs. Britannia:** Is it possible, my dear, that you have ever given your cousin Jonathan any encouragement?

**Miss Canada:** Encouragement! Certainly not, Mamma. I have told him we can never be united.

**Look for labels:** How does the caption label the speakers? How does the man’s clothing label him? The labels tell you what the people in this cartoon stand for.

**Summarize the situation:** What does the situation say about these “people”?

**Check the source:** This cartoon appeared in *Diogenes*, an English-language newspaper. What aspects of this cartoon might convey a British perspective?

**Look for labels:** You probably know the man at the door. Who or what do you think the soldier represents?

What hints in French appear in the hems of the dresses? What do they tell you about the identities of the women and the child?

How does the way the men are dressed communicate who they are? In what way is one of them a stereotypical Canadian?

**Summarize the situation:** The men and women are signing a marriage certificate. What is the certificate called? What else is going on?

**Check the source:** This cartoon appeared in a French-language newspaper from Montréal. What aspects of this cartoon might convey a Canadian perspective?



### Western Expansion

By the 1860s, immigrants to Canada West had developed nearly all the good farmland. George Brown advocated expanding west, into Rupert's Land, and worried about American ambitions to claim Rupert's Land.

Do you think the desire to control Rupert's Land made Brown more interested or less interested in building a partnership among the colonies of British North America?

### Trade Challenges

Until 1846, Britain regulated the economy of British North America. Under the rules of mercantilism, Britain's colonies supplied Britain with raw resources at a price that Britain set. Britain then used these resources to produce manufactured goods.

Mercantilism meant that Britain paid as low a price as possible for resources from the colonies. It also meant the colonies could count on selling their resources to Britain.

During the 1840s, Britain took steps to end **mercantilism**. It gradually opened its market to resources from all suppliers. By 1846, it only bought resources from British North America if they were the cheapest resources. What risk did this pose for grain and timber producers in British North America?

Until 1865, British North America also had a special trading relationship with the United States, called the Reciprocity Treaty. Under the treaty, signed in 1854, British North America could sell its resources in the United States at competitive prices. The end of the treaty in 1865 meant that the United States added a **tariff** to goods from British North America. Why would farmers and merchants in British North America see this as a problem?

**mercantilism:** a regulated economic system that made a country rich from its colonies

**tariff:** an extra charge

## RESPOND

When you have concluded your class Confederation conference, work through these questions together:

1. Which colonies in your conference chose to join Confederation? Which did not? Create a class chart summarizing key reasons for each colony's decision. You will be able to compare your outcome with what happened in the real Confederation deal.
2. The six colonies that debated Confederation did not consider including First Nations such as the Mi'kmaq, the Anishinabe or the Haudenosaunee. They did not consider consulting the Métis.
  - How might this decision reflect the origins of these colonies in European imperialism?
  - As a class, brainstorm at least three arguments for including First Nations and Métis peoples in the debate about Confederation.



Many people made their living from one of Upper Canada's major exports: lumber.

### BUILD THE BIG PICTURE

Railroads became one of the factors important in negotiating Confederation. Railroads were important because they were “open” all year, unlike the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, which froze in winter.

This map shows railroad development in the early 1860s, at the start of the negotiations for Confederation. Based on what you know so far in this chapter, can you guess why Confederation drove additions to this system?

**Railways Connecting British North America, 1860s**

This map shows the concentration of infrastructure in the united Province of Canada in the 1860s.



— Completed before Confederation  
 - - - Completed after Confederation



### RESPOND

1. Which parts of British North America had the most extensive railway connections? Which parts had few railway connections?
2. Before the end of the Reciprocity Treaty, British North America had strong trade ties with the U.S. What evidence on this map demonstrates these ties?
3. Based on this map, to what extent was British North America equipped to trade with other areas by rail?
4. Why do you think building railways to link the colonies would be an important consideration in Confederation?

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# HISTORY HAPPENS

Confederation Edition: Canada Section The “newspaper” from the past for today’s reader.

## Confederation in the Making

— by Beatrix Chronos, your time-roving reporter



This luxury steamer brought the delegates from Canada East and Canada West to Charlottetown.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, Saturday, September 10, 1864 — Back in 1776, our American neighbours created a new country through bloodshed and gunpowder. This week in Charlottetown, it seems, a new country has been created through champagne and oysters.

Many of the most important men in British North America converged in this city nine days ago for what has been called the Charlottetown Conference. Originally, the conference was held to discuss uniting the three Maritime provinces — New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island — into one colony, with one legislature. With the last-minute inclusion of representatives from the Province of Canada, the scope of the discussions became much larger.

The concept that emerged was “confederation,” the proposed union of all British North America into a single political unit. Newfoundland, however, had no representatives at the conference. Sources in Newfoundland say that the colony plans to attend any future meetings to discuss confederation.

Although serious discussions took place during the days, the evenings were set aside for relaxation and socializing. This generated an overall mood of warmth and camaraderie. Many say the success of the conference flowed out of these gatherings.

“I have to tell you, they’ve had a great time since we left the dock at Québec,” said a crewmember of the *Queen Victoria*, the steamer that brought the politicians from Canada to Charlottetown. “There were eight of them on board, both French and English, and they couldn’t have had a nicer trip. They sat on the deck as we drifted down the St. Lawrence River, playing chess and backgammon, reading, and visiting.”

“And the food was fabulous,” added the steamer’s head cook.

Some might find it unlikely to think of Macdonald and Brown as cozy travelling companions, after years as bitter political rivals. “Sure, Mr. Brown and Mr. Macdonald have had their differences over the years,” smiled one insider. “But they have grown to recognize each other’s strengths.”

On the final night of the Charlottetown Conference, delegates and leaders attended a glittery grand dance.



Day one of the conference, September 1, wrapped up after a couple of hours of introductory business. That evening, PEI’s Lieutenant-Governor Dundas held a large dinner party for the visiting delegates.

The next morning (Friday, September 2), Macdonald and George-Étienne Cartier (chief representative from Canada East) spoke about the possible benefits of Confederation. Then, it was back to the dining table, courtesy of W.H. Pope, PEI’s provincial secretary.

After nine full days of meetings and parties, the delegates are preparing to head back to their respective provinces today. In a month or so, they expect to gather again at Québec to iron out the specific details of Confederation. After that, they will present their new constitutional package at a conference in London for final approval.

The deal may not be finalized for another two or three years, but we’re well on the way to a new, united British North America. ■

**RESPOND**

Some Canadians contrast Canadian identity with American identity, and point to the founding of the two countries as a source of difference. What events described in this article contrast with the violent start of the United States?

# The Confederation Deal

## GET READY

This section presents information to answer the chapter-focus question:

### What ideas of citizenship shaped Confederation?

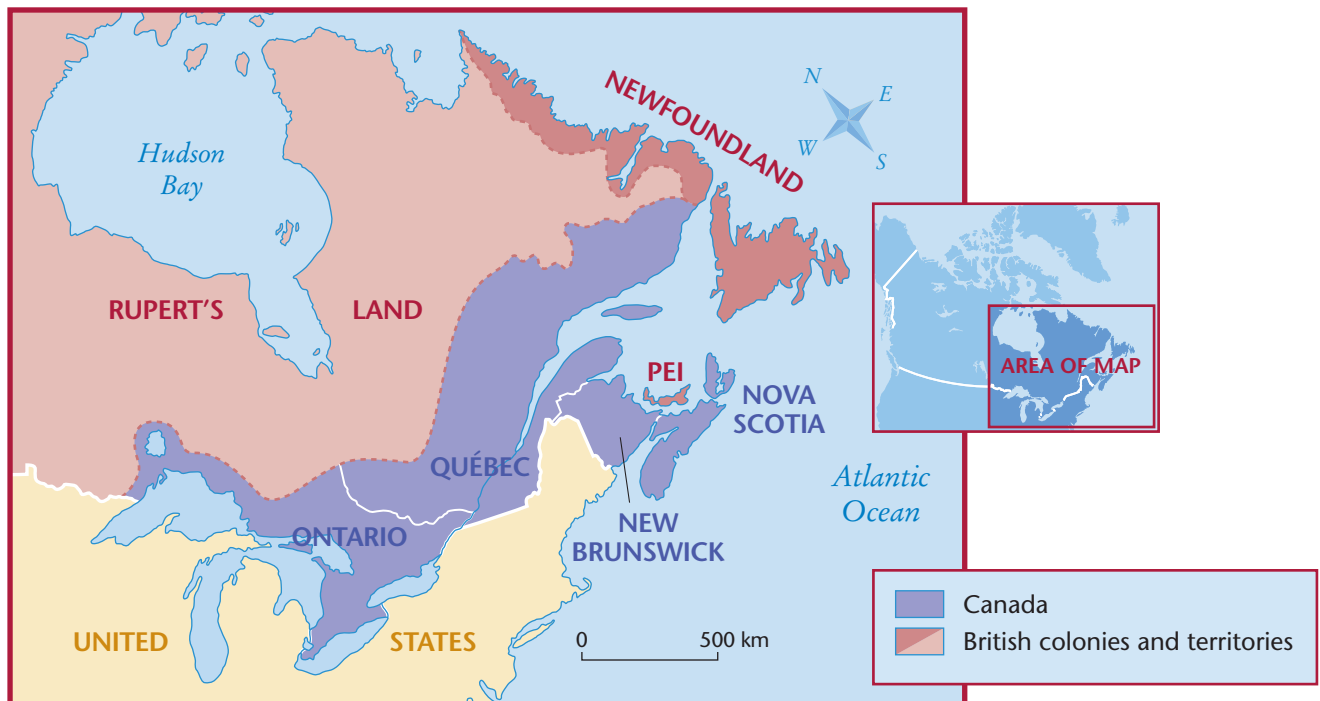
As you read this section, look for examples of how Confederation:

- Included peoples of diverse cultural communities.
- Excluded peoples of diverse cultural communities.

## Rights for Regions

The colonies involved in the Confederation negotiations wanted to protect regional rights. They did not want to create a central government that took away the power of each region to make important decisions on its own.

### Canada at Confederation, 1867



Confederation created the provinces of Ontario (formerly Canada West), Québec (formerly Canada East), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

**jeopardize:** to threaten

During a debate on Confederation in 1865 in the assembly of Canada, John A. Macdonald summed up the problem like this. Did your class conference raise any issues he mentions here?

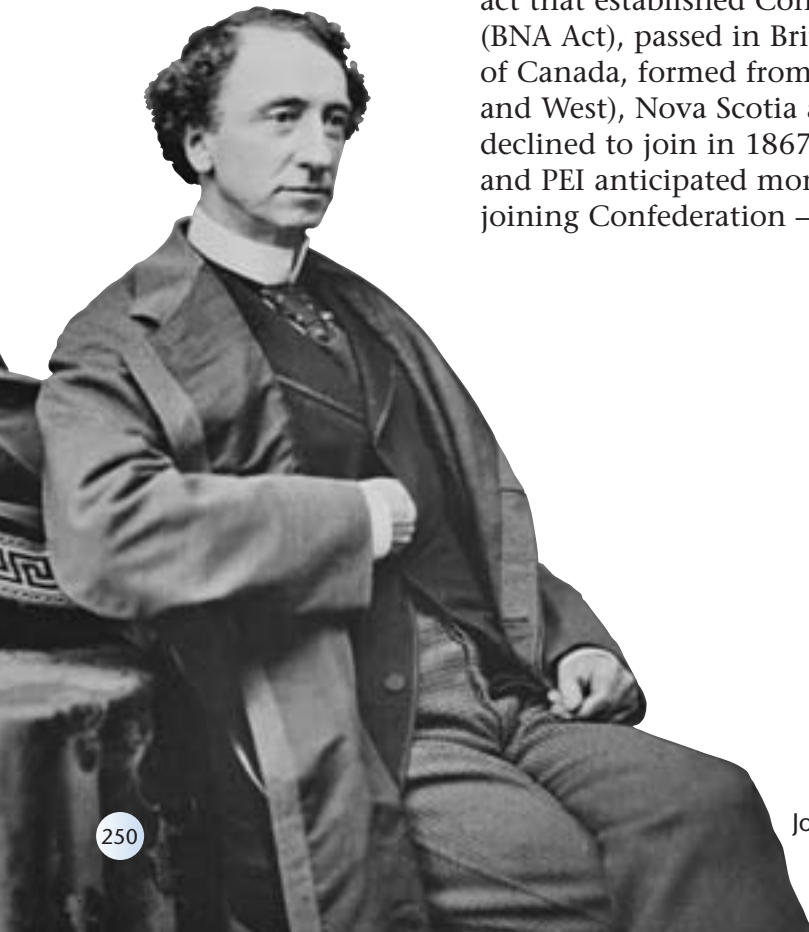
**The people of Canada East felt that — as a minority, with a different language, nationality and religion from the majority — their institutions and their laws might be threatened by Confederation, and the ancestral associations, on which they prided themselves, attacked. It was found that any proposal that jeopardized the individuality of Canada East would not be received with favour by her people.**

**We found, too, that the Maritime provinces — though English-speaking and with British laws — were as disinclined as Canada East to lose their individuality.**

**Therefore, we were forced to conclude that we must either abandon the idea of Confederation altogether, or devise a way to preserve the provinces as separate political organizations.**

— Adapted from a speech by John A. Macdonald, 6 February 1865  
in Dennis Gruending (editor), *Great Canadian Speeches*.  
Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2004, pages 31–35.

John A. Macdonald, along with George-Étienne Cartier, wrote the act that established Confederation: the British North America Act (BNA Act), passed in Britain in 1867. The act created the Dominion of Canada, formed from the former colonies of Canada (Canada East and West), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Prince Edward Island declined to join in 1867, as did Newfoundland. Both Newfoundland and PEI anticipated more disadvantages than advantages from joining Confederation — especially from increased taxation.



John A. Macdonald

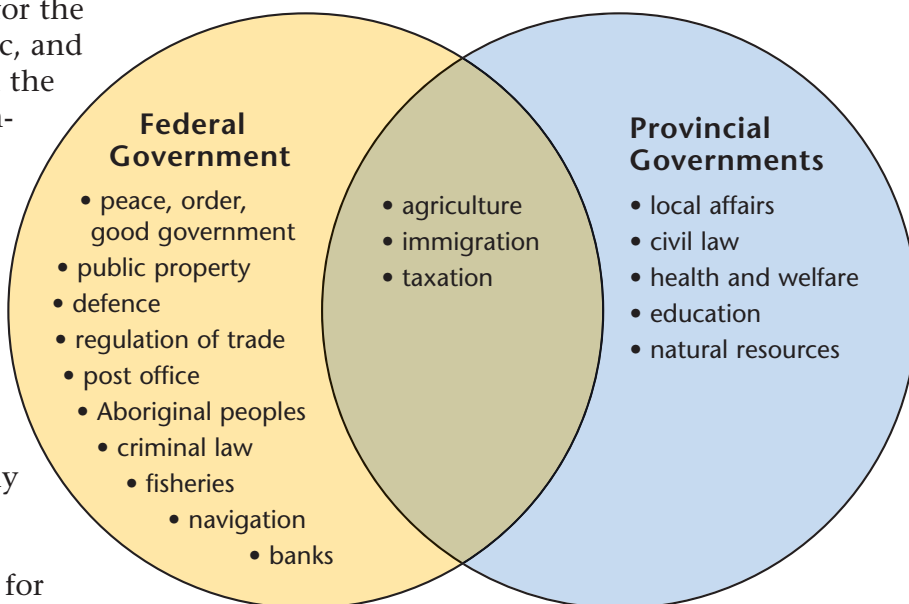


## Key Points in the BNA Act

- The BNA Act gave the federal government the power to make laws for the “peace, order and good government” of Canada.
- The act created a division of powers between the federal government and the provincial governments.
- The act established French and English as languages of Canada’s parliament.
- It guaranteed public schools for the Protestant minority in Québec, and for the Catholic minorities in the rest of Canada. These religion-based rights corresponded to English and French language divisions in Canada, since most Protestants spoke English and most Catholics spoke French.
- It gave the federal government the power to protect the rights of Catholic or Protestant minorities in any province in the future.
- The BNA Act established representation by population for Canada’s House of Commons. This gave Ontario the most seats in the House of Commons.
- The act guaranteed the new government of Canada would pay for a railway linking the Maritimes with central Canada.

**public school:** a school whose funds come from “public money” (taxes paid to a government)

### Federal and Provincial Powers, 1867



This division of powers applied to all the provinces of Canada. How did it affirm the language and religion of Canadiens in Québec?

### RESPOND

1. In what way might “peace, order and good government” make the federal government more powerful than provincial governments?
2. How do the decisions of the colonies to join or reject Confederation compare to the decisions your class conference made?
3. What features of the BNA Act deal with the concerns of the colony you represented?
4. To what extent did Confederation provide the people of Québec and Ontario with more control over their own affairs? What made this issue particularly important for these provinces?

## To What Extent Was Confederation an Attempt to Strengthen the Maritime Colonies?

The Maritimes had strong economic connections with Britain and with British colonies in the Caribbean, based on trade by sea. They had almost no connection with Canada East and West, in the interior of North America.

How do you think mercantilism and geography had shaped these global trade patterns? How do you think the end of mercantilism affected them?

The leaders of Canada East and Canada West offered the Maritimes economic benefits to join Confederation. Concerned about the future, many people in the Maritimes thought the offer made sense.

Leaders from Canada East and West promised the Maritimes a railway to link the Maritimes with the interior. They promised money for roads, bridges and other development.

The decision to join Confederation, however, was unpopular with the voters of Nova Scotia. The leader of Nova Scotia's assembly, Charles Tupper, made the decision to join Canada despite this. His main opponent, Joseph Howe, predicted that Nova Scotia would "lose its identity" as part of Canada.

In elections following Confederation, anti-Confederation candidates won 36 of the 38 seats in the Nova Scotia legislature, and 18 of Nova Scotia's 19 seats in Canada's parliament.

### RESPOND

1. How did trade with other parts of the world affect the identity of the Maritimes? Identify two examples in the events surrounding the decision of the Maritimes to join Confederation.
2. Global economic connections affect Canada today. For example, many companies in Canada come from other places, such as Japan and the United States. You may one day work for one of these companies. In what ways might this affect your identity?

The Intercolonial Railway connected the Maritimes with Québec and Ontario after Confederation.



## FOCUS ON INQUIRY

## What does Canada's national anthem say about Canada?

### The Topic

When was the last time you paid attention to the words in "O Canada"? The words are so familiar, it's easy to forget that they have a purpose. "O Canada," like all national anthems, reflects ideas about Canadian identity.

To get a fresh look at Canada's anthem, you will compare its two original official versions in French and English. To what extent do these anthems present the same perspective or different perspectives on Canada?

### Getting Started

Work with a group of classmates to plan this inquiry, and to retrieve and process information. Start with these ideas:

- Do you know the exact words to "O Canada"? Where can you find the exact English and French words?
- Do you need to translate the versions, or find translations? How could you do that?
- What three specific words or phrases stand out in the French version, in your opinion? What three stand out in the English version?
- To what extent do these words or phrases communicate different perspectives?

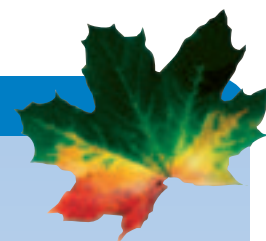
### Your Goal

On your own, **create and share a way to communicate** your conclusions about the French and English versions of "O Canada." Be sure to answer these questions:

- What is your message about the French and English versions of "O Canada"?
- How can you best communicate your message to someone unfamiliar with this topic? Take into account your talents and the content of your message.

### Finishing Up

What did you learn during this inquiry that you could apply to your next inquiry? Identify at least one skill or piece of information. Be prepared to discuss it in class.



### FOCUS SKILLS

#### Creating and Sharing

Present and discuss a way to communicate what you learn.





These photos show Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Residential School in 1897. What is the significance of his altered appearance?

## First Nations and Confederation

During the Confederation negotiations, the colonies of British North America did not consult any First Nations for their views. Their idea of citizenship excluded First Nations. Here are some examples of that view:

- In 1857, Britain passed the Gradual Civilization Act. The act required First Nations peoples to give up their ways of life before they could become citizens with the right to vote. Very few First Nations people chose to become citizens under these terms.
- In 1867, the British North America Act established Confederation. Without consulting First Nations, it made First Nations peoples a responsibility of Canada's federal government, along with items such as the postal service.
- Until 1960 — almost one hundred years after Confederation — Canada's government did not allow people with legal status as **Indians** to vote. Only people who gave up their status could vote.

**Indian:** Many First Nations people prefer not to use the word *Indian* to describe themselves, except to identify those people recognized by Canada's Indian Act. We use it here because we are talking about people recognized by the Indian Act.

### RESPOND

The government of Canada used a “but clause” to deny First Nations citizenship for many years. The “but clause” began like this: “You can belong to Canadian society, but...”

1. With a group of classmates, generate a list of examples of “but clauses” at work in your own life as a teenager. For example: “You can shop in this store, but you have to leave your backpack at the door.”
2. Some of the “but clauses” in your life have good reasons of safety or respect behind them. Which ones? Look at the list of examples you generated and identify those motivated by good reasons. Check page 392 of the Skills Centre for ways to make decisions as a group.
3. What's left? Choose one of these examples and develop a skit that demonstrates how it makes you feel.
4. What “but clause” defined the idea of citizenship for First Nations in Canadian society at Confederation and for many years? With your group, formulate a statement of this clause.
5. In what way has doing this activity helped you to understand the perspectives of others?

## M O M E N T I N H I S T O R Y

## First Nations Join Confederation on their Own Terms

In 1982, Canada's Aboriginal peoples — First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples — successfully lobbied for recognition of their rights and identity in Canada's **constitution**. Section 35 says “the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed” and that the Aboriginal peoples of Canada include First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

In 1990, Cree politician Elijah Harper helped defeat the Meech Lake Accord. The accord aimed to change Canada's constitution. Harper opposed the accord because it had been negotiated without consulting First Nations — just like the BNA Act. Elijah Harper's action declared the need to include First Nations in decisions about Canada's future.

**constitution:** the official set of rules about how a country is governed



Elijah Harper holds an eagle feather for strength as, alone, he prevents the Manitoba legislature from ratifying the Meech Lake Accord. Harper's action guaranteed that the accord was dead. The accord needed the approval of Manitoba's legislature to change Canada's constitution. It also needed Newfoundland's approval, but Newfoundland also rejected the accord.

## R E S P O N D

Confederation originally recognized “two founding nations”: the Canadiens and the British in Canada. In what way did Elijah Harper's stand draw this idea into question? With a group of classmates, pretend you are preparing to report on his stand live for radio. You need to compare Elijah Harper's vision of Canada with the vision that originally shaped Confederation. You have three minutes until you go to air. What would you say?

## PERSPECTIVES ON

# The Fathers of Confederation

This famous painting is *The Fathers of Confederation* by Rex Woods (after Robert Harris, 1885). Some of the key figures include: John A. Macdonald (standing, background and centre), George-Étienne Cartier (seated, right of Macdonald), George Brown (seated, front and centre), and Charles Tupper (standing, front and right).

### RESPOND

You can look at this famous painting from many perspectives. Use the following questions to work through these perspectives:

1. What makes this image important? Sum up the reason for creating this painting in your own words.
2. What evidence does the painting contain that Confederation represented an equal partnership between the Canadiens and the British in Canada?
3. What evidence does it contain that Confederation was an incomplete agreement that excluded some segments of Canadian society?
4. In what ways does this painting reflect accepted values of its time? Describe at least two values this image takes for granted. Why is it important to understand these values?



## Other Provinces Join Confederation

### GET READY

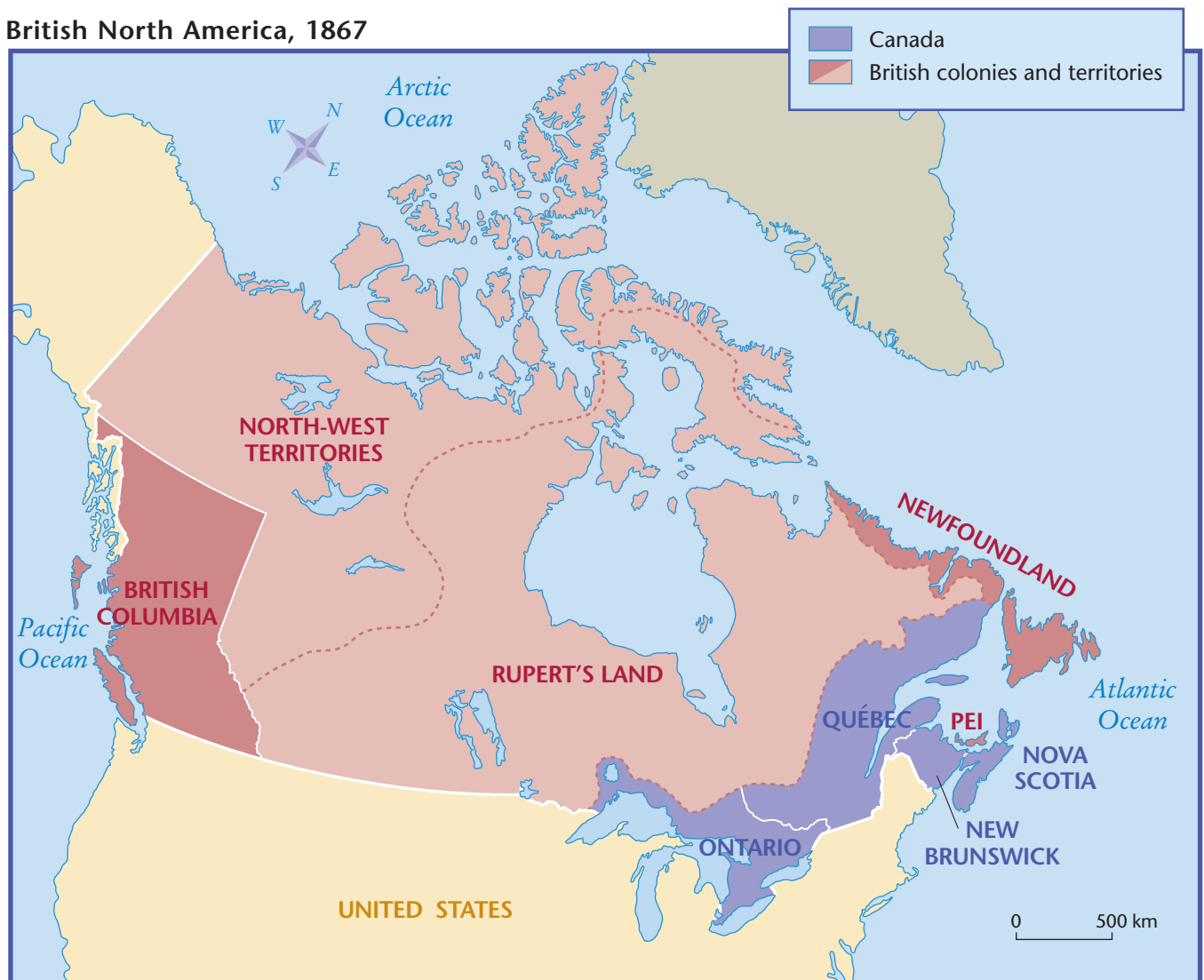
This section presents information to answer the chapter-focus question:

### What factors led to other provinces joining Confederation?

As you read this section, look for:

- Examples of pressures created by identity.
- Examples of pressures created by economics.
- Examples of challenges created by geography.

British North America, 1867



## Backgrounder on the Steps in Canada's Evolution

In 1867, Canada included only four provinces: Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Britain claimed the rest of what eventually became Canada either as colonies or as territories.

Colonies and territories were different. The colonies had well-established British settlements, but the territories had very few British settlers. The colonies had governments advised or elected by the colonists, but the territories were governed by appointed British officials.

The colonies and territories became part of Canada in different ways.

The colonies — British Columbia, PEI and Newfoundland — joined through agreements among the colonists, Britain and Canada. They joined Confederation as provinces, with elected provincial governments and the power to make many of their own decisions.

The territories were simply transferred to Canada, through an agreement between Britain and Canada. Canada's government expected to control the territories directly, without establishing elected assemblies for the people who lived there.

People in what is today Manitoba objected to Canada's plans, and won the right to join Confederation as a province. This was a pivotal moment in Canada's history, and it's the subject of its own chapter, Chapter 9.

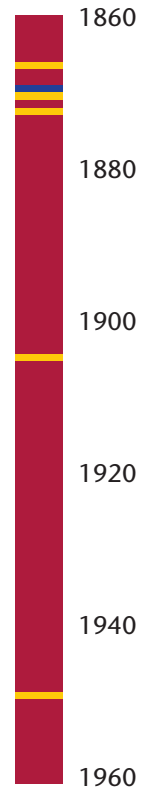
Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces as the settler population of the territories grew. Chapter 10 explores the history of western Canada's settlement, and the creation of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

This chapter focuses on the factors that led to British Columbia, PEI and Newfoundland joining Confederation.



## A Confederation Timeline

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 1867 | <b>Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia</b><br>Negotiated the original Confederation agreement and joined as provinces. |
| 1870 | <b>Manitoba</b> (Chapter 9)<br>Refused to be transferred to Canada as a territory.<br>Demanded to join as a province.             |
| 1871 | <b>British Columbia</b><br>Joined as a province.  |
| 1873 | <b>Prince Edward Island</b><br>Joined as a province.  |
| 1905 | <b>Alberta and Saskatchewan</b> (Chapter 10)<br>Created from territory transferred to Canada.                                     |
| 1949 | <b>Newfoundland</b><br>Joined as a province.  |



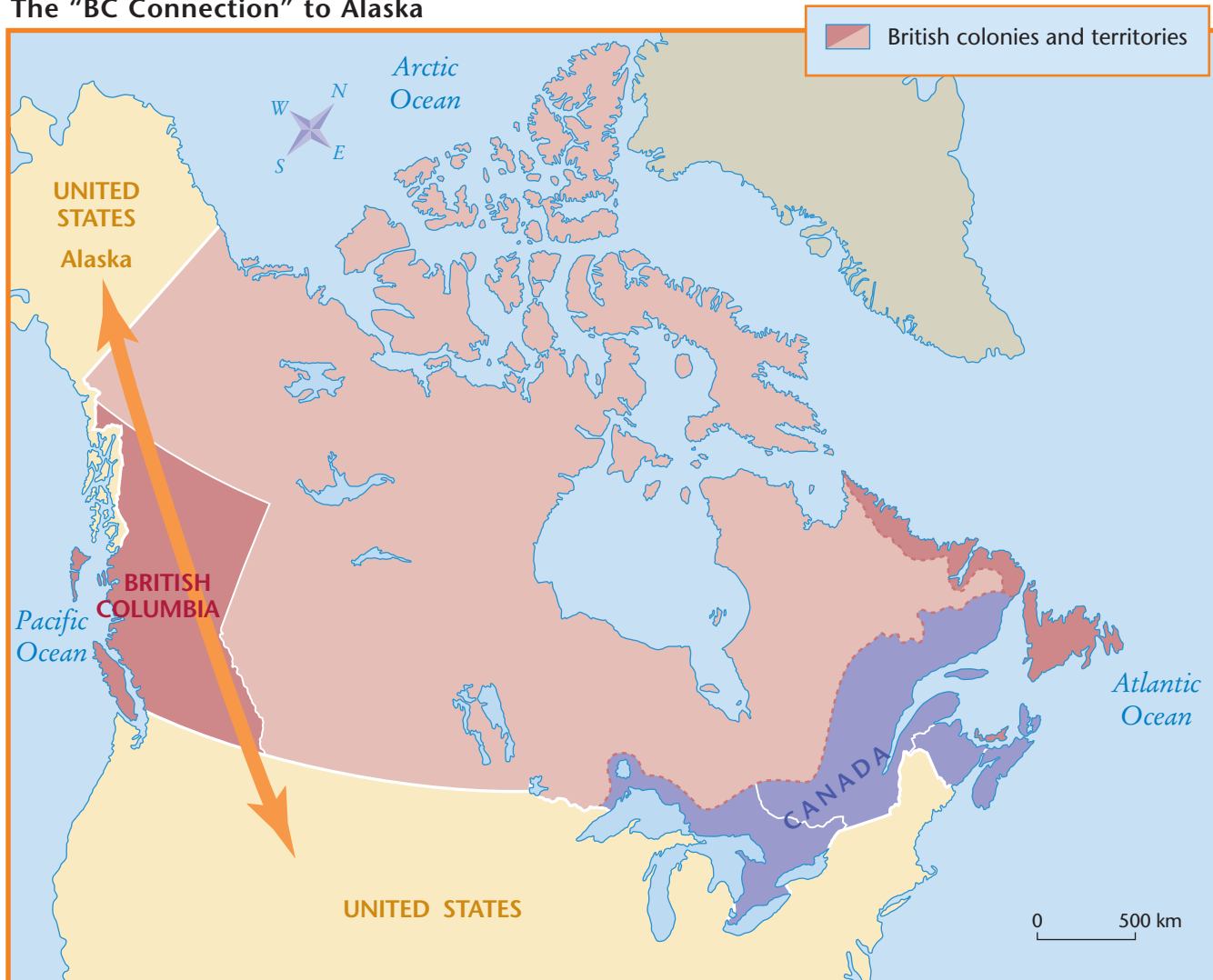
This became Canada's flag in 1965, well after Confederation. Like Confederation, the flag provoked controversy. For example, some Canadians felt the flag should carry symbols reflecting its "two founding nations": the Canadiens and the British in Canada. In the end, the flag remains neutral on this subject. What might be the reason, in your opinion?

## British Columbia

British Columbia became a colony because of British settlement along the west coast following the voyages of British explorer George Vancouver from 1792 to 1795. The first colonists made their living mostly in the fur trade, under forts established by the Hudson’s Bay Company.

The economy began to change in 1857, when a gold rush began. The colony borrowed money to build roads and railways to centres of mining. It counted on the gold to pay the money back, but the gold rush didn’t last long. By 1867, BC was in economic trouble. Many people felt it had no future as a British colony.

The “BC Connection” to Alaska



In 1867, the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia. BC seemed like a natural geographic bridge between Alaska and the rest of the U.S. What pressure did this geographic fact place on BC?

Some colonists thought BC should join Canada.

Some thought it should join the United States. They considered the geographic divide between BC and the four provinces of Canada too great to make joining Confederation a good choice.

Few colonists thought about consulting the First Nations whose lives and lands the decision would affect.

Canada's government encouraged BC to join Confederation. The fathers of Confederation had a grand vision of a nation that stretched from "sea to sea." They agreed to pay off the colony's loans, and to build a railway linking BC to the four provinces of Canada in the east.



FROM HALIFAX TO VANCOUVER.

MISS CANADA.—“THIS IS WHAT WE WANT, COUSIN JONATHAN. IT WILL GIVE US REAL INDEPENDENCE, AND STOP THE FOOLISH TALK ABOUT ANNEXATION.”

JONATHAN.—“WAL, MISS, I GUESS YOU'RE ABOUT RIGHT THAR; BUT I'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN I SEE IT.”

How does this cartoon answer the arguments for American annexation?

**Look for labels:** How does the caption help identify these people?

**Summarize the situation:** Who doubts the future of the railway? Why might this be important?

**Check the source:** This comes from an English-language Canadian publication. How does this cartoon reflect issues that concerned English-speaking Canadians?

## RESPOND

1. What geographic challenge did BC's entry into Confederation pose for Canada? How did the railway propose to overcome that challenge?
2. Why is it important for a country to be "connected"? Think of at least two reasons.
3. How has new technology affected the way Canada is "connected" today?



Dr. Joseph Gosnell stands in front of the BC Legislature.



Along with other Nisga'a leaders, Chief Israel Sgat'iin worked for recognition of Nisga'a rights. This photo of him dates from the 1890s.

### The Challenge BC Posed to First Nations

BC's decision to join Canada directly affected First Nations. The BC government, at the time, refused to recognize the rights of First Nations to land. One First Nation, the Nisga'a, campaigned for their rights for more than a century. In 1998, they concluded a treaty with the governments of BC and Canada — BC's first treaty.

Here is what Nisga'a leader Dr. Joseph Gosnell said on that day in the BC Legislature.

**Today marks a turning point in the history of British Columbia. Today, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are coming together to decide the future of this province.**

**I am talking about the Nisga'a Treaty — a triumph for all British Columbians...**

**A triumph because, under the Treaty, the Nisga'a people will join Canada and British Columbia as free citizens — full and equal participants in the social, economic and political life of this province, of this country...**

**In 1887, my ancestors made an epic journey from the Nass River here to Victoria's inner harbour.**

**Determined to settle the land question, they were met by a premier who barred them from the legislature...**

**Like many colonists of the day, Premier Smithe did not know, or care to know, that the Nisga'a is an old nation, as old as any in Europe...**

**How the world has changed. Two days ago and 111 years after Smithe's rejection, I walked up the steps of this legislature as the sound of Nisga'a drumming and singing filled the rotunda. To the Nisga'a people, it was a joyous sound, the sound of freedom.**

— From a speech by Dr. Joseph Gosnell to the British Columbia Legislature, 2 December 1998.

### RESPOND

1. How does a society demonstrate its idea of citizenship?  
List three ways a society might show who "belongs."
2. What words and phrases in the excerpt from Dr. Gosnell's speech capture his idea of citizenship?
3. How does your list compare to Dr. Gosnell's?

## Prince Edward Island

In the early 1870s, the colony of Prince Edward Island began to have economic trouble. The colony's government had borrowed money to build a railway, because it thought a railway would make the island's economy stronger. The economy, however, became weaker as Britain and the U.S. ended their special trading relationships with British North America.

The island had another problem, too. Many island farmers did not own the land they farmed. People who lived in Britain owned it, and the farmers paid them rent. Rent took part of the island's earnings every year.

In 1873, PEI hoped Confederation would solve its economic problems. Canada hoped PEI would join Confederation, so it wouldn't join the United States.

Canada agreed to pay for the colony's railway and to provide money to buy the island's farmland from its British owners. Canada also agreed to provide a year-round ferry service between the island and the mainland.

This print shows a PEI farm in 1870.



## DOMINION DAY

CHARLOTTETOWN — On Tuesday, Prince Edward Island became a province of the Dominion of Canada. But among the people there was no enthusiasm. A few moments before noon, Mr. Sheriff Watson stepped forward on the balcony of the Colonial Building and read the Union Proclamation. The audience below consisted of three persons, and even they did not appear very attentive. After the reading of the Proclamation, the gentlemen on the balcony gave a cheer, but the three persons below responded never a word.

The great majority of the people of PEI, it is pretty evident, have accepted Confederation as a necessity. Since the Island is now part and parcel of the Dominion, the duty of our people is to make the best of their position.

— Adapted from an editorial in Charlottetown's *The Patriot*, July 3, 1873.

### RESPOND

1. Does the editorial from *The Patriot* support or oppose the entry of PEI into Confederation? Support your conclusion with evidence from the editorial.
2. In what way did joining Confederation challenge the identity of Prince Edward Islanders? In what way did it affirm their identity?

## Newfoundland

In 1867, and again in 1869, Newfoundland rejected Confederation. Newfoundlanders felt optimistic about their economic future. They also had a strong sense of their own identity. What role do you think geography may have played in shaping their identity as an independent people?

For almost sixty years after rejecting Confederation, Newfoundland remained a colony of Britain, but with a government that the colonists elected and controlled. It had a successful economy based on trade in fish and timber.

During the 1930s, however, countries around the world cut back on trade because of the **Great Depression**. This hurt Newfoundland's economy, and it meant Newfoundland could no longer pay for schools, hospitals and other services its people needed.

In 1934, Britain took direct control of Newfoundland's affairs. Newfoundland remained under British control until after **World War II**.

The war boosted Newfoundland's economy. Demand for its products rose, and it became an important centre for supplying Britain from North America.

After the war, in 1945, some Newfoundlanders wanted to regain their independence, but others worried about the return of hard times. Britain said it could no longer assist Newfoundland if it had difficulty in future. The war had left Britain in need of financial help itself.

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**Great Depression:** the global economic slowdown that occurred between 1929 and 1939

**World War II:** a global war that took place between 1939 and 1945



Newfoundland's economy centred on fishing. In what way might this have shaped the identity of Newfoundlanders as an independent people?

Newfoundland put its future to a vote in 1948. The choices on the ballot included taking control, once again, of its own affairs under “responsible government,” or joining Canada. In a very close vote, Newfoundlanders decided to join Canada.

Canada’s government supported this decision. Canada worried that, unless Newfoundlanders chose Confederation, they might end up joining the U.S. Some Newfoundlanders wanted “responsible government” to keep this option open.

To build support for Confederation, Canada’s government promised to pay most of the colony’s debts, to provide money to develop Newfoundland’s economy, and to link Newfoundland to Canada with a ferry service.

### The Choice Facing Newfoundland

Newspapers in Newfoundland took strong stands on the issue of Newfoundland’s future.

Delegates to a convention on Newfoundland’s future decided what choices should go on the ballot. At first, a slim majority — 29 — chose to keep Confederation off the ballot. Delegates supporting Confederation organized a petition to Britain, and had this decision overturned.

## *Call to Action*

When the 29 dictators tried to cheat you out of the right to vote on Confederation, I advised you to flood me with telegrams demanding the right to vote on Confederation.

Over 51 000 of you sent your names. You won a great People’s Victory over the 29 dictators. The British government heard your demand and put Confederation on the ballot paper.

Confederation is the greatest benefit to the greatest number. Confederation will bring down the cost of living. It will protect the children and the aged. It will raise the standard of living of all our people.

Confederation will link our country to that great, famous and wealthy BRITISH nation, Canada. We will go up with Canada. We will grow with Canada. We will be prosperous with Canada.

Pay no heed to catch-cries and red herrings. You know where Responsible Government led you in the past. Do not give it a chance to crush you again. You do the crushing first — on polling day. Bury it beneath your ballots.

What the ordinary man wants is some sense of national and personal security. You have never had that. Confederation will bring you the safeguard of a great and powerful nation.

From now till polling day, think and talk Confederation. On that day, vote Confederation.

F. GORDON BRADLEY



## **VOTERS OF NEWFOUNDLAND**

Your country's fate will be in your hands when you mark your ballot paper on June 3rd.

You can sell Newfoundland only once, for Confederation is final. Once in, you stay in!

You can take time to study what is best for you and for Newfoundland by voting for

### **RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT**

The choice is yours.

You can take the path to servitude under Ottawa from which there is no return, or

You can follow the road to freedom which will allow you to send a delegation to Washington where the U.S. Senate has promised a hearty welcome.

Will you vote for the last time as a free Newfoundlander or will you give yourselves and your country a chance to carve out a new and greater prosperity through independence and a beneficial trade deal with the United States.

### **THINK WELL FOR YOUR COUNTRY'S FUTURE LIES IN THE BALANCE.**

**"GOD GUARD THEE NEWFOUNDLAND"**

This column appeared on the front page of *The Independent* on May 28, 1948.

## **RESPOND**

1. What purpose do these newspaper columns serve? Do they aim to inform, persuade or entertain? Find examples of words or phrases that support your conclusions.
2. Which column argues for protecting the identity of Newfoundland? What words and phrases indicate this?
3. Which column argues for economic security? What words and phrases indicate this?
4. Economic factors played an important role in the decisions of BC, PEI and Newfoundland to join Confederation. These decisions had impacts on their identity. How do you think economic factors affect your own identity? Describe at least three ways economic factors could influence "who you are" in future. How important are economic factors in shaping identity, in your view?

## Chapter 8 Review

### WHAT DID CHAPTER 8 EXPLORE?

- How Confederation aimed to resolve a variety of issues.
- What idea of citizenship originally shaped Confederation.
- Why BC, PEI and Newfoundland joined Confederation.

### Check for Understanding

1. To what extent were the colonies involved in the Confederation negotiations concerned about the same issues? Give one example of an issue that concerned most of the colonies. Give one example of an issue that concerned only some of the colonies.
2. Give an example of how Confederation both included and excluded peoples of diverse cultural communities.
3. In the decisions of BC, PEI and Newfoundland to join Confederation, give one example of the impact of each of the following factors:
  - Identity.
  - Economics.
  - Geography.

### Demonstrate your Knowledge

4. In what ways, positive and negative, was the original Confederation agreement connected to the history of colonies in North America?

### Apply your Skills

5. What is the point of the following cartoon, and from whose perspective? Use the steps you learned in this chapter to formulate your answer.



CHILD CANADA TAKES HER FIRST STEP  
MOTHER BRITANNIA: See! Why, the dear child can stand alone!  
UNCLE SAM: Of course he can! Let go of him, Granny; if he falls I'll catch him!

— From the English-language publication, the *Canadian Illustrated News*, July 1870.

### Take Stock

6. What new information about Confederation did you learn in this chapter? Describe at least one important piece of new information you learned, and explain what makes it important.