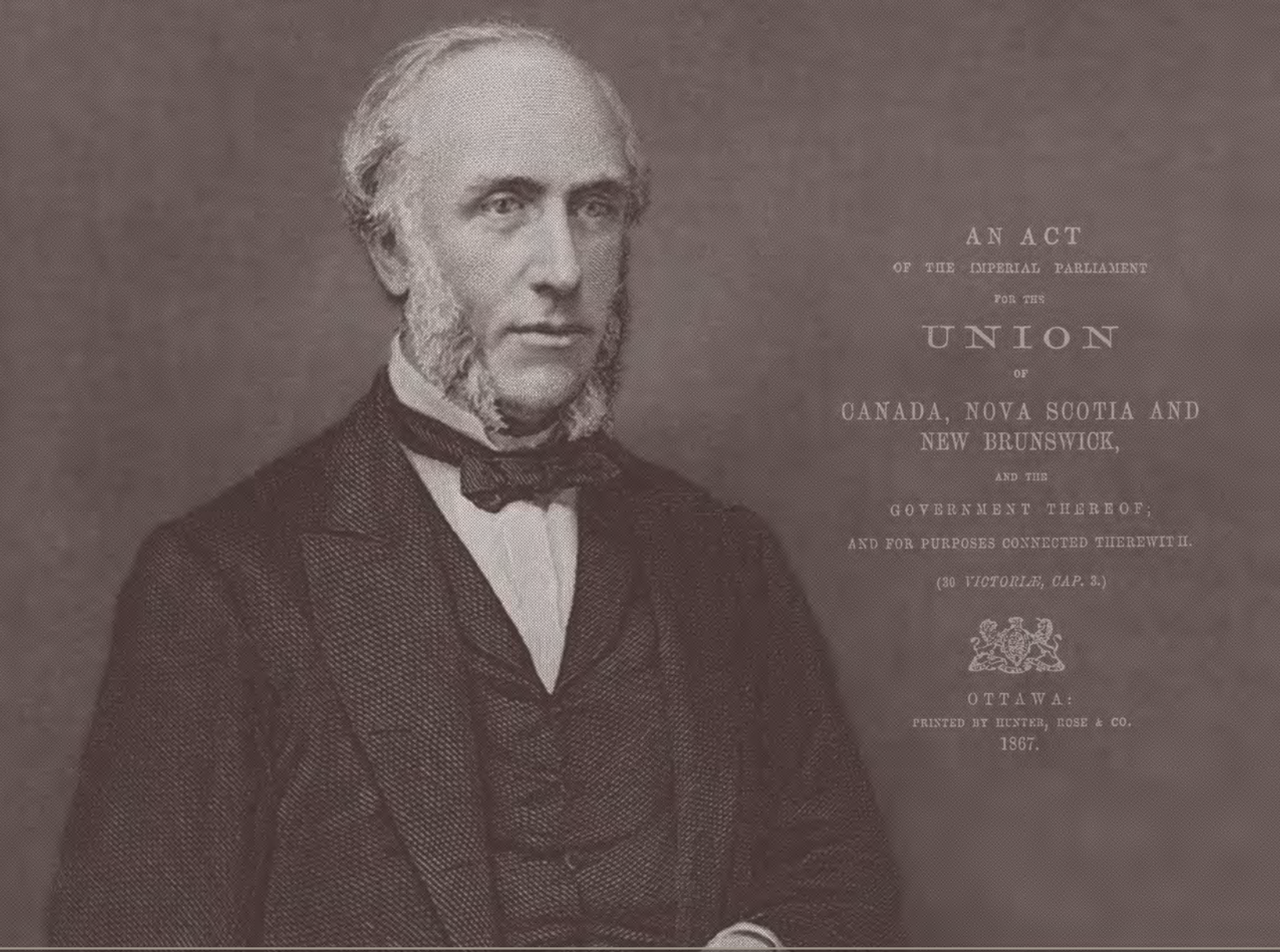


# GEORGE BROWN
## *The* Reformer

by Alastair C.F. Gillespie

With a Foreword by the Hon. Preston Manning

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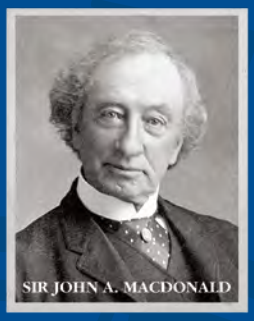


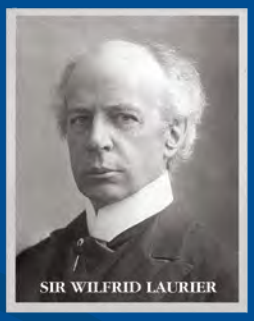


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Charlottetown Conference Delegates, 1864. Library and Archives Canada.

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# Foreword

In the late 1990s, as Leader of the Reform Party of Canada and the Official Opposition in Ottawa, I once addressed a "reduce the taxes" rally held in Toronto's St. Lawrence Hall – one of the oldest public meeting places in Ontario. After the meeting, one of the building custodians approached me, saying something about there being "nothing new under the sun." He then showed me an old poster advertising a meeting in that same hall in the 1850s. The subject of the meeting? "The iniquitous state of taxation in the colony." And the speaker? George Brown, Leader of the Reform Party of Upper Canada.

As the following chapter thoroughly describes, George Brown was an extraordinary political pioneer – a nation builder in the truest sense despite the accusations of his opponents that he was merely a "narrow sectionalist." He vigorously championed many ideas and policies fundamental to the development and success of Canada as a democratic federation. He did so at a time when most of those ideas and policies were fiercely resisted by the political establishment of his day.

On the democratic front, George Brown famously championed "representation by population." On the economic front, freer trade. On the religious front, separation of church and state. On the geographic front, Canada West. And on the constitutional front – George Brown eventually became one of the strongest champions of "Confederation."

Canada today needs political people who will vigorously advocate conservation of the best elements of our past and present. But we also continue to need "reformers" – those who will vigorously pursue constructive changes to our economic, social, environmental, democratic, and constitutional arrangements and institutions. Let such reformers especially, draw inspiration and courage from the story of George Brown as told in the following pages.

While he never became a Prime Minister or a Premier (other than for two days in 1858), George Brown richly deserves his statue on Parliament Hill, recognizing him as one of the foremost of the Fathers of Confederation. He also richly deserves an honoured place in our minds and hearts as residents and citizens of the democratic federation he helped to create and build.

*The Hon. Preston Manning,*
*Founder and Former Leader, Reform Party of Canada*

# Avant-propos

À la fin des années 1990, en tant que chef du Parti réformiste du Canada et de l'Opposition officielle à Ottawa, j'ai pris un jour la parole devant un rassemblement à l'appui d'un allègement de l'imposition, lequel s'était tenu à St. Lawrence Hall, à Toronto – une des plus grandes salles publiques de réunion en Ontario. Au terme de cette réunion, un des gardiens de l'immeuble s'était approché de moi pour me faire part de sa réflexion à l'effet qu'il n'y avait eu là « rien de nouveau sous le soleil ». Il m'avait fait voir une vieille affiche annonçant une réunion dans cette même salle en 1850. Et quel était l'objet de la réunion ? « La situation inéquitable à l'égard des impôts dans la colonie ». Qui était l'orateur ? George Brown, chef du Parti réformiste du Haut-Canada.

Comme le chapitre qui suit le relate en détail, George Brown a été un pionnier politique extraordinaire – le constructeur d'une nation au sens le plus vrai du terme, malgré les accusations de ses adversaires qui le taxaient de sectionaliste « étroit ». Il a vigoureusement défendu de nombreuses idées et politiques fondamentales pour le développement et la prospérité du Canada en tant que fédération démocratique. En outre, il a livré son combat à une époque où l'establishment politique était farouchement opposé à la plupart de ces idées et politiques.

Sur le plan démocratique, George Brown a été le défenseur emblématique du principe de la « représentation proportionnelle à la population »; de la libéralisation du commerce, sur le plan économique; de la séparation entre l'Église et l'État, sur le plan religieux; de l'Ouest canadien, sur le plan géographique. Et sur le plan constitutionnel – George Brown a fini par devenir l'un des plus ardents partisans de la « Confédération ».

Le Canada d'aujourd'hui a besoin de personnalités politiques prêtes à plaider avec force pour le maintien des meilleurs aspects de notre passé et de notre présent. Nous avons également toujours besoin de « réformistes » – ces personnes qui cherchent résolument à provoquer des transformations constructives sur les plans économique, social, environnemental et démocratique, ainsi qu'en termes de dispositions constitutionnelles et d'institutions. Laissons ces réformateurs puiser inspiration et courage dans les réalisations de George Brown, telles qu'elles nous sont racontées dans les pages qui suivent.

Bien qu'il ne soit jamais devenu Premier ministre, (sauf pendant deux jours en 1858), George Brown mérite bien sa statue sur la Colline du Parlement, qui le fait reconnaître comme un des plus grands Pères de la Confédération. Il mérite aussi une place d'honneur dans nos esprits et dans nos cœurs de résidents et de citoyens d'une fédération démocratique qu'il a contribué lui-même à créer et à construire.

*L'hon. Preston Manning,*
*Fondateur et ancien chef, Parti réformiste du Canada*

# Introduction

*"Who does not know that the early advocates of any great political movement are seldom the gainers by it? Who does not know that the more firmly and boldly you advocate any great truth while the world yet frowns, the more hatred will you inspire, the more personal bitterness you will excite? The whole history of civilization shows that the men who have taken the first active steps in any change have had all the sacrifices to make – that when the tide of prosperity begins to flow, those who once stood aloof, or mayhap gave bitter opposition, come in at the propitious moment, and carry off the laurels which early antipathies deny to the real victors."*

George Brown, September 23, 1853.

It all began with George Brown, the voice of Upper Canada tinged with a Scots burr, insisting that the Constitution of Canada had to change. From his entry to Parliament in 1852 down to Confederation, the speeches and writings of Brown's 15-year public career form one long campaign for constitutional reform, a battle he fought enthusiastically and with every weapon to hand. Elected to the legislature at the age of 33, he was proprietor of the mighty *Globe* newspaper, a journalist who took into politics the campaign for constitutional reform he ignited in his Toronto paper. More than any other, Brown disrupted the old Canadian Union joining Ontario and Quebec under a single legislature, insisting on constitutional reform – when others denied the need for change or mocked him as an agitator whose extreme views meant he could never take power.

Brown was a polarizing figure, a partisan warrior whose tactics were criticized in his own time and are open to question today. Yet Brown's successful use of federalism would defuse the regional, cultural and religious tensions he exploited in his career, and secure his goal of constitutional reform. Canada rewarded Brown with power only when he finally offered political solutions to clear away the conflicts that were his path to power.

Brown's unbending insistence on representation by population – a great rallying cry to force Lower Canada into submission – later evolved into a non-partisan appeal for a new federal system in which "rep by pop" would be secured, coupled with a division of powers restoring substantial self-government to both Upper and Lower Canada. This early regionalism heightens the significance of his conversion to genuine Canadian patriot. Canada changed George Brown, before George Brown helped change Canada.

The strategies Brown adopted also invite a revision of history's judgment that Brown was less gifted than John A. Macdonald in the art of leadership, Brown allegedly a prisoner of short-term thinking,

Macdonald looking over the horizon to long-term success. Yet the record of Brown's long constitutional campaign is also one of great endurance. Here is a man who waged his greatest political battles in opposition – and when other issues promised an easier path to power, made the fundamental law of Canada the central axis of his political career. This supposed failure in politics – this "government impossibility" – achieved his single principal goal: to carry one great scheme of constitutional reform then retire from the scene forever.

# Exposing Contradictions

## "Rep by pop"

Brown's contribution to Confederation began with exposing the contradictions in the existing Canadian Union of 1840, which created a single Province of Canada composed of two sections: Canada West and Canada East, still commonly referred to by their historic names of Upper and Lower Canada. The years from Brown's entry to Parliament in 1852 through 1858 were years of division and defiance, when Brown came to personify Upper Canada's demand for representation by population.

In March of 1853, Brown asked Parliament to endorse "rep by pop" for the first time, only attracting a few votes in what was then a forlorn cause. Representation by population meant an end to a fundamental condition of the Union: equal seats for Upper and Lower Canada in Parliament. Brown's demand for more votes for growing Upper Canada would overpower French-Canadian votes.

In time, rep by pop became Brown's best political card, exposing the illegitimacy of a system that left hundreds of thousands of Upper Canadians unrepresented, and in which conflicting election results saw Upper Canada majorities erased by stronger majorities from Lower Canada. But rep by pop was also the issue that most limited his political potential. French Canadians ardently opposed a change which threatened to swamp their distinctive language, culture and institutions in a tide of western votes.

## In opposition by nature

By nature he was an opposition politician, waging his campaign for constitutional reform from the opposition benches even when his own party was in power. The *Globe* was founded as a Reform-supporting newspaper, backing Reformers' drive for responsible government in which cabinet was first made responsible to representatives of the people. But by July 1850, the *Globe* was disappointed in the government it once backed, arguing backsliding on divisive issues such as separate schools and the clergy reserves showed it had sold out to French-Canadian and Catholic influence. "We can no longer be silent," said the *Globe*. Reformers must take a stand on these divisive issues though "ten years opposition stared us in the face" (Careless 1959, 135).

Brown lost his first election in Haldimand, unsurprisingly receiving little help from the Reform cabinet his newspaper attacked, and who feared support for Brown could divide the party by alienating French-Canadians (Careless 1959, 130). Elected soon after for Lambton, running as an independent Reformer, Brown entered the House as a thorn in the side of the Reform government of Sir Francis Hincks. Hard to imagine for a modern audience used to rigid party discipline, Brown's independent stance set a pattern of opposition that would persist for most of his career.

Brown's independent streak cost him years in the political wilderness, and some argue that his inflexible nature signalled failings as a politician. Yet Brown often claimed his outsider stance was an explicit strategic choice, and he criticized those who made the compromises necessary to govern. "For myself," said Brown, "I resolved that, if I sacrificed every hope as a politician, I should not shrink from demanding on all occasions and insisting upon them those measures of justice to Upper Canada to which she was entitled" (*Globe*, September 27, 1853). Unlike those in power skirting divisive issues to attract votes in both Upper and Lower Canada, Brown cultivated support solely in Upper Canada, taking the part of a regional politician. Doing so, he consigned himself to opposition, but gained the freedom of action to show the necessity of change in a divided country. His clear stands on issues soon attracted a growing political following.

*"Brown often claimed his outsider stance was an explicit strategic choice, and he criticized those who made the compromises necessary to govern Canada."*

## Religion and politics

Brown's opposition tactics combined with a strange magnetic attraction to the most hot-button issues mixing religion and politics that divided Canada in those days. Chief among those was opposition to Catholic separate schools, and demands to secularize the clergy reserves, lands set aside in 1791 to support an established Protestant church. Brown argued only separation of church and state could prevent religious discord in a country of diverse religious faiths, maintaining there could be no government favouritism to a particular church.

Brown claimed divisive religious issues were "the most necessary to be settled at once and for ever" because although economic matters would be settled over time by common pocketbook interests, sectarian issues would continue to rankle unless dealt with head-on. As he said (reported, as was common practice, in the third-person reporter's voice) in an 1853 speech at Cobourg, "All he contended for was that the state should in no shape interfere with matters of religion – that it should allow every man to worship God as he saw fit, give no public money for sectarian ends, recognize no man in any other capacity than as a citizen of the country" (*Globe*, September 27, 1853).

*"Brown claimed divisive religious issues were 'the most necessary to be settled at once and for ever'."*

## The need for constitutional reform

From a constitutional perspective, Brown's most significant message was his criticism of coalition governments. Under the old Canadian Union, *every* government was effectively a coalition government, its single central legislature struggling to reconcile the conflicting wills of Upper and Lower

Canada. With only a single level of government, either Upper Canada or Lower Canada tended to be "in charge" – depending which section elected a majority of government supporters.

With no division of powers, all local issues had to be dealt with by the centralized government, alienating one section or the other when sensitive issues split public opinion along sectional lines. These structural problems were reflected in the dual premiership and dual cabinets for each section of the province, and the constant peregrinations of the capital city between Upper and Lower Canada.[1]

Governments tried to cope by cobbling together impromptu coalitions as best they could. In Brown's view, coalition government was a consequence of what he called "French domination," the outsize influence of the cohesive French Canadian bloc entrenched under the Union constitution. This issue called forth Brown's most divisive rhetoric. "What has French Canadianism been denied? Nothing," he wrote in the *Globe* late in 1852. "It bars all it dislikes, it extorts all it demands, and it grows insolent over its victories" (*Globe*, December 30, 1852). Voting with conservatives to topple the Hincks government in 1854, Brown was apoplectic when ex-Reform ministers joined the conservatives in a new coalition government.

As the years passed, Brown worked to channel disparate Reform elements in Upper Canada into a single-issue movement centred on representation by population.[2] As Brown attracted majority support in Upper Canada, he was able to claim Upper Canada was governed against her will, a powerful message that added to his growing regional power.

Although Brown deserves credit for his continuing concern with the institutions of his young country,[3] rep by pop was a simplistic prescription that threated to replace Lower Canada domination with Upper Canada rule. After his regionalist start – something more was required. Brown would become one of Canada's foremost federalists, his regionalism giving way to a genuinely Canadian patriotism reaching from sea to sea.

# A Fascinating and Promising Idea

By 1858, Brown had strengthened his position in Upper Canada, but remained mired in opposition, the Liberal-Conservatives under Macdonald and Cartier continuing to rule. Brown stumped the towns of Upper Canada, preaching to crowds of party faithful, printing entire transcripts of his speeches in the *Globe.* Among the best was Brown's address to the Reformers of Belleville, of January 1858, a capstone of this first uncompromising period of his career (*Globe*, January 25, 1858). With the need to marshal French-Canadian support increasingly obvious, there were hints of ideas that could bridge that divide between Upper and Lower Canada and transform Brown into one of Canada's leading federalists.

Warming to his theme, Brown offered perhaps the classic epigraph of his political faith in this period. "For some years before I entered Parliament, I had the advantage as a public journalist of becoming well versed in the political affairs of the Province – I had been to some extent behind the scenes – I saw there was an evil in our political machinery that checked the energies of the growing West, an influence in our political councils potent enough to overawe our public men whatever side they es-

poused as politicians, and when I took my seat in the House of Assembly, it was with the determined resolution to grapple with these evils and overcome them if I could." (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

To Brown, the Province of Canada was more divided than ever, and the structure of Canadian politics producing disillusionment and corruption. "I saw that towards effecting the great ends contemplated by its advocates, the Union of the Provinces had thus far miserably failed – that the line of separation between the two sections, far from being obliterated, was being more deeply marked than ever. I felt that we were fostering, by our legislation, two separate systems of local institutions, that we were outraging Protestant feelings by fostering Roman Catholic institutions, that the system of representation in Parliament by practically disfranchising several hundred thousand persons in the West, while the great burden of the national taxation was borne by Upper Canada, was fast exciting a feeling of hostility to the Union" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

Yet by this date, Brown's acrimonious rhetoric was evolving with a fascinating and promising idea – he argued that divisive sectional issues could be cleared away from the arena of Canadian politics, like so much tangled underbrush. Brown's paradoxical claim was that the political issues that attracted his attention the most must be pushed out of the sphere of Canadian politics forever, by settling them once and for all.

"How shall all this iniquity be put an end to? It can only be done by our finding a common basis of legislative and executive action that will be just to both sections of the Province, and to men of all creeds – a basis on which we can stand to grapple with those sectarian and local jealousies and antipathies that have divided and distracted us, and remove them forever from the political arena . . . we must sweep away all these grounds of contention, and strike out a new path more generous and just" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

It was an idea Brown would return to again and again in the years down to Confederation.

## A growing national ambition

In another hint of the future, Brown sounded a note of national ambition, looking ahead to continental expansion, reflecting the *Globe's* consistent interest in the future of the North-West territories, the Hudson's Bay Company: "Who, Sir, can look at the map of this continent and mark the vast portion of it acknowledging British sovereignty, without feeling that union and not separation ought to be the foremost principle with the British American statesman? Who that examines the condition of the several Provinces which constitute British America can fail to feel that with the people of Canada must mainly rest the noble task at no distant day of consolidating these Provinces – aye, and of redeeming to civilization and peopling with new life the vast territories to our north, now so unworthily held by the Hudson's Bay Company? Who cannot see that Providence has entrusted to us the building up of a great northern people fit to cope with our neighbours of the United States, and to advance step for step with them in the march of civilization and social amelioration? Sir, it is my fervent aspiration and belief that some here tonight may live to see the day when the British American flag shall proudly wave from Labrador to Vancouver's Island, and from our own Niagara to the icy shores of Hudson's Bay" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

## Separation of Church and State

Determined to deflect charges of intolerance, Brown claimed he wanted only justice for Upper Canada, arguing a secular state was the only way to secure social peace. There was much force in Brown's argument on this point. "When we ask that all the children of the Province may meet in the same school houses to obtain a sound practical education, and when we protect the faith of every child from assault or disrespect, do we ask that which is unfair to any, or do we not thus adopt the only

system of national education that is attainable or desirable? And when we ask that church and state shall have no connection – that the members of each church shall support their own, and that the public funds shall not be applied to any sectarian purpose – do we propose anything unjust? Do we place any church in a position of inferiority? Do we not, in fact, adopt the only system that can remove jealousy, and put an end to our sectarian bickerings, at least in the halls of legislation?" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

But before Brown had finished, he delivered a strong dose of the religious invective that narrowed his political appeal. Addressing a common criticism head-on, Brown raised a question he must have thought his audience was thinking: "Why, I am asked, do you talk so hard against Roman Catholicism and Romish priestcraft?" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858). When the church came into the political arena, Brown argued it became fair game for political combat. "I care not to be particular what are the weapons I use . . . " said Brown, "so long as they are honourable and legitimate. But let the Roman Catholic priest draw off from the public arena, let him cease to meddle with our school system, let him leave our public chest alone, let him cease his canvassing in the lobby of the House of Assembly, and there will be no complaints that we hold him up to indignation. But so long as we find him carrying on the warfare . . . against the best interests of the country, so long we will assail him, so long we will treat him as a public enemy, and will make use of those weapons of offence which we find most serviceable against him" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858).

The oft-repeated charge of fanning sectarian flames is perhaps the most damaging to Brown's place in modern memory. Yet Brown's claims that only a secular state could keep the peace have an uncomfortable ring of truth in a century too familiar with religious strife. And there are countervailing facts suggesting the charge of fanaticism could be overblown and was usually politically motivated. He was always careful to distinguish that the target of his attacks was church interference in secular politics, never Catholics as a class. For a time he was allied with Irish Catholic Thomas D'Arcy McGee. His attacks on "French domination" were aimed at the illegitimate system of representation, not French Canadians as a group.

Just before Confederation Brown told a Reform convention that he rejoiced at the removal of sectarian issues from Canadian politics, and the opportunity for the "unhesitating and complete return" of Catholics to the ranks of his party (*Globe*, June 28, 1867). He defended himself in terms suggesting that the end of separation of church and state justified the rhetorical means he used to fight for it. Do you have to adopt sectarian vocabulary to rouse a crowd to action? Brown thought so, and his supporters agreed – his speech was punctuated by cheers. But for many Canadians, this aspect of Brown's career will complicate the record of a man with a central role in Canada's founding.

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*"Determined to deflect charges of intolerance, Brown claimed he wanted only justice for Upper Canada."*

## In the wilderness

By the beginning of 1858, Brown appeared to have succeeded in leading his followers into the political wilderness. By the acid test of success, George Brown was getting nowhere. He was the "unrivalled chieftain of an embattled West," (Careless 1959, 237) but his versatile opponent John A. Macdonald maintained his grip on power with the support of George-Étienne Cartier. As Brown cleaved

more tightly to Protestant Upper Canada, he undercut any hope of support from Lower Canada. The disciplining structure of the Canadian Union first denied George Brown any chance at power, before moderating even one such as him.

Why not give up all his political demands, and just say what was necessary to get into government, Brown asked? Even at the price of long-term exclusion from government, Brown argued his opposition strategy held the only chance of success. "No, Sir, there is but one way to secure representation by population, and that is by all its earnest advocates remaining in stern opposition until they are strong enough to carry it" (*Globe*, January 25, 1858). This was Brown's opposition strategy in boldest relief. It was the antithesis of more slippery operators in politics, who thought "it was more important to have a winning Liberal government than a losing Liberal principle" (Careless 1963, 15).[4]

After six years in Parliament, the great question remained: could Upper Canada's champion ever form a government? The moment – and it was only a moment – came in 1858. Finally George Brown was on the way to becoming Canadian, forming the first Canadian government committed to constitutional reform.

*"The period from 1858 on marks a new, more constructive phase in Brown's career."*

# The Federalist Transformation

The comic-opera aspect of a government that lasted a few days – the Brown-Dorion government of 1858 – has largely obscured its importance as a step toward Confederation. Often seen as an object of mockery, a mere footnote in Canadian politics, Brown's two days in power take on more significance when considered as a first attempt at a lasting Canadian constitutional settlement. He was premier only briefly, when the Macdonald-Cartier government resigned after losing a vote choosing Ottawa as the new seat of government.

The policies of the Brown-Dorion government reveal that the goal of Brown's regional strategy was to reach a broader constitutional settlement with Lower Canada when the opportunity came, and that his earlier career should be understood as a negotiating stance to strengthen his hand at the conference table. The period from 1858 on marks a new, more constructive phase in Brown's career, when the demand for representation by population was softened with checks and balances designed to protect French Canada from majority rule by the rest of Canada. Canada was transforming Brown into a federalist, and the arc of that transformation is fundamental to Canada's federalist heritage.

## Power, snatched away

Ejected from power almost immediately after losing a snap vote of no-confidence, Brown was exposed to a measure of personal humiliation it is difficult to imagine a political leader surviving today, even if the rough and tumble of 19th century politics meant that defeats were rarely permanent.

As a matter of political strategy, obvious questions arise. Why run the risk of forming a government that had little hope of survival? Was this simply a leap at the dangled hook of power, lowered mischie-

vously by Macdonald, taken by an impulsive man long banished to the opposition benches? Did this episode prove Brown's shortcomings as a politician, or was there something more?

Brown's first major public address just after his ejection from power was a battle to narrate the meaning of the extraordinary events that had reconfirmed his opponents' grip on power. In Brown's view, his government was a crucial step in his campaign for constitutional reform, formed to settle the divisive issues besetting the Province of Canada. He claimed he was not blind to the risks. After the Macdonald-Cartier government resigned, he had to at least try to take power, or otherwise suffer a blow to his credibility his opponents would not soon let him forget.

These were the messages of his defiant speech at Toronto, along with a resolution to persevere. "If there is one single act of my life above all others for which I am prepared to claim credit at the hands of the people of Canada," exclaimed Brown, "it is the part I have taken in the startling transactions of the last few days" (Mackenzie 1882, 268).

*"Brown claimed he would 'most joyously have declined' the Governor General's invitation to form a government."*

He began with a survey of recent political developments. The recent election had strengthened the hands of the Upper Canada opposition, signalling a protest against the government's refusal to grant representation by population, its extension of separate schools, its high spending, heavy taxation and corruption. Far from wanting to be prime minister, Brown claimed he would "most joyously have declined" the Governor General's invitation to form a government, saying he had no desire to be in politics or for power for its own sake. "The constant taunt . . . of the last two or three years – 'He can't form a ministry' – was no taunt to me at all. I did not desire to form a ministry, or to be part of any ministry, but to see the great disturbing questions of my country settled, and then retire to private life" (Mackenzie 1882, 273).

## Compelled by duty

Yet Brown was also conscious, he said, of a compelling sense of duty. His mission in politics was constitutional reform, and the prospect of settling forever these great issues was an overruling factor in his actions of the preceding weeks. "I came into Parliament, after eight years of public life, with a full knowledge of the constitutional and social difficulties that marred the harmonious working of the Union. I was thoroughly convinced that unless a basis of legislative and administrative action could be found, just to both sections of the Province, but removing from the political arena those fertile sources of sectional and sectarian strife that separated the two races and the two Provinces, our national animosities would increase from year to year, until at last the national fabric would be rudely rent asunder; and I entered Parliament with a settled determination to grapple with those great evils, and devote my whole energies to their removal" (Mackenzie 1882, 273).

A large measure of pride and no little political realism had influenced Brown's choice to run the risk and accept the task of forming a government. His opposition strategy implied willingness to strike when the time was right. The trouble was that the opportunity had presented itself too soon, and the resulting loss of credibility was too great to make refusal a viable option.

So Brown confessed to his disappointed supporters he was conscious of the expectation of failure, leaving no choice but to accept or face never-ending mockery. "Had I then stated to His Excellency that I would not undertake the task . . . my opponents would never have ceased to throw my failure in my teeth" (Mackenzie 1882, 273–4). Brown called a meeting of his caucus and, receiving their unanimous support, reached out to the French-Canadian *Rouge* leader Antoine-Aimé Dorion for his help as leader for Lower Canada. Brown and Dorion opened negotiations to see if they could agree on a common policy to form a government together.

## Negotiating the first government committed to constitutional reform

Brown's account of his parlay with his French-Canadian co-premier traces the bargaining process behind the formation of the first government of Canada committed to constitutional reform. Speaking of the negotiations to his Toronto audience, Brown adopted the vivid technique of recounting his bargaining with Dorion, back-and-forth, volley and return, the champion of Upper Canada in council with the leader of the Lower Canada *Rouges*. Then and now, Canadians could follow the reasoning that traced the outlines of the original case for constitutional reform in Canada. It was a convincing method that Brown would return to in future.

The Brown-Dorion negotiation began to apply the logic of federalism to the structural problems of the Canadian Union, softening representation by population, the law of majority rule, with added protections for French Canada. The fundamental insight was that although Canadians were divided in certain respects, they shared common interests in others, and that the unity of Canada could be preserved if allowances were made for local differences.

"On most questions of general public policy we heartily agreed, and regularly voted together," said Brown of his French-Canadian counterpart. "On the questions that have divided all Upper Canadians from all Lower Canadians alone we differed" (Mackenzie 1882, 274). This was the logical consequence of Brown's idea that divisive issues could be cleared away like underbrush, opening a space for a common politics free of sectional rancour. This idea makes the Brown-Dorion government a significant development in Canadian politics, for its central logic was a step in the direction of federalism.

## Checks and guarantees

Brown's opening gambit to Dorion was a declaration that he could form no government not pledged to representation by population, the demand French Canadians resisted as a threat to their institutions, language and culture. Dorion admitted the principle was just, but the French-Canadian leader pushed back, knowing rep by pop without guarantees for French-Canadian autonomy would spell political death for his colleagues at the next general election.

Dorion replied saying "this country is peculiarly situated; we are two races; we have two languages; and my countrymen in Lower Canada are very much alarmed that if representation by population were adopted, Upper Canada might obtain an overwhelming preponderance of representation over them; that the whole of our institutions would be swept away, and the people of Upper Canada would rule us with a rod of iron" (Mackenzie 1882, 275). If rep by pop was to be carried, there must be constitutional guarantees. "To guard my people in Lower Canada, constitutional checks, constitutional protections, must be granted for our local institutions, in some manner as under the Union Act" (Mackenzie 1882, 275).

Brown agreed, replying: "I am perfectly willing to agree to any reasonable protections for local interests; the people of Upper Canada desire no advantage over the people of Lower Canada. All we ask is justice; all we ask is that the Province shall not be one for purposes of taxation and two for representation; our whole demand is that the same number of electors in Upper Canada and Lower Canada respectively shall return a representative to Parliament. We want no advantage whatever over Lower Canada, but we will not submit to the unfair disadvantage now existing. Give us representation by population, and let it by all means be accompanied by every reasonable protection for your local interests and for ours" (Mackenzie 1882, 275).

An earnest discussion followed as to the means of securing these checks and protections, said Brown. Among the options was a written constitution "proceeding direct from the people," the intriguing idea of a "Canadian Bill of Rights" guaranteed by the British Parliament, or the adoption of a federal union, with guaranteed provincial rights. There was little time to arrange details, but there was every reason to believe an agreement could be reached and carried, said Brown. He and Dorion pledged to lay a bill before Parliament at its next sitting, and to stand or fall by it as a government.

*"Every other divisive sectional question that roiled the Province of Canada was taken up in turn."*

Every other divisive sectional question that roiled the Province of Canada was taken up in turn, including the seat of government, public education and the seigneurial tenure, the feudal land laws of Lower Canada requiring costly compensation to buy out seigneurial interests.

On the thorny question of education, Brown said to Dorion, "I want of course that the common school system of Upper Canada shall be made entirely uniform, and that all the children, of whatever denomination, shall come into the same school-room, sit at the same desks, grow up hand in hand, and forget those sectarian animosities that now form the greatest obstacle in the way of our progress as a people" (Mackenzie 1882, 276).

Dorion replied that many Catholics of Upper Canada held religion should be the basis of education, and did not see that principle reflected in common schools. Brown rejoined saying the state could not be responsible for religious education in a country as diverse as Canada, that it ought to be left to the family and the church to give religious teachings. They agreed to thoroughly investigate the Irish national schools as potentially well adapted to Canada, and a bill was to be drafted as a government measure, by which they would stand or fall.

Having recounted the talks with Dorion, Brown asked the Toronto crowd whether there was any evidence he had sold out Upper Canada for the sake of power. He must have been conscious of the vulnerability of his position, entering a government with a French-Canadian ally, watering down representation by population with checks and guarantees – whatever those might be. "I fearlessly ask you, did I abandon my principles? I appeal to you if the measures here traced in outline, if carefully matured, would not have removed, in a great measure, the animosities between the two sections of the Provinces, would not have infinitely lessened the grave difficulties which have distracted our country and whether on this platform all could not have united, Upper and Lower Canadian, French and British, Protestant and Catholic?" (Mackenzie 1882, 277).

Effectively, Brown was attempting to convince his Toronto audience that his government would have settled all the divisive issues that had fuelled his politics to this point, and once these sectional questions were removed, the way would be cleared for a new national politics based on shared common interests. This was the progress the arch-regionalist had made, and this was his new insight. People of differing national origin and religious faith could be governed under a common system, because they shared common interests regardless of those differences. "On the general policy of the country, on measures affecting the whole Province, on questions of commerce, of finance, of retrenchment, of departmental organization, and on all questions of reform and progress, you who witnessed the debates from the galleries must have seen that Mr. Dorion and myself almost entirely agreed, and with a unanimity rarely witnessed in opposition. The only questions on which we disagreed, as I have said, were those on which all Upper Canadians differ from all Lower Canadians" (Mackenzie 1882, 279).

Implicit in those remaining disagreements was the scope of the checks and guarantees to be offered to Lower Canada, the nucleus of what would become provincial jurisdiction.

## An important step toward Confederation

Brown's account of his negotiations with Dorion is significant as an eyewitness report of a comprehensive settlement to preserve the Canadian Union, the more significant because one such as Brown was made the instrument of the push for constitutional peace. The regional leader, channelled and influenced by the very structure of Canadian politics, now showed the potential to create, as likely was his intention all along. It is a classical instance of a very Canadian statecraft: the realistic appraisal of conflicting interests, followed by the use of politics to reconcile regional and cultural differences.

Beyond the political was the constitutional, the outlines of a deal between French and English Canada. Brown's earlier efforts to seize the reins of government for Upper Canada through representation by population had now been modified with guarantees to protect French Canada. The details were never hammered out, but the key idea was there. It was majority rule, with minority rights, a fundamental formula that has lasted in Canada to this day.

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*"Had the Brown-Dorion government lived, a form of federalism might have arrived in Canada 10 years before Confederation."*

This step toward federalism was an important advance toward reconciling the antagonistic public wills of Upper and Lower Canada with a new piece of technology. After all the strife and invective, the disciplining realities of Canadian politics had led Brown to the federalist insight that the fundamental interests of a portion of the country should not be submitted to majority rule, the portion which to this point had barred his path to power.

Had the Brown-Dorion government lived, a form of federalism might have arrived in Canada 10 years before Confederation. This was the idea to which all the conflict of Union politics led Brown, seeking a common basis of government for a divided people. He could secure representation by population, provided constitutional guarantees were granted to protect the language, laws and institutions of French-Canadians. The competition for power had pushed these unlikely allies together, forcing

Brown to bend his supposedly uncompromising principles. The Brown-Dorion government was stillborn, but as a set of ideas it was a milestone on the road to Confederation.

Many take a dim view of these events, for history has not been kind, heaping ridicule on the short administration, proof positive of Brown's shortcomings as a politician. John A. Macdonald has had the privilege of writing his rival's epitaph, through his oft-quoted interpretation of these events. "The great reason why I have always been able to beat Brown," he wrote in later years, "is that I have been able to look a little ahead, while he could on no occasion forego the temptation of a temporary triumph" (Pope 1921, 161).[5]

When the new ministry was announced, and in the convention of the day all the new ministers forced out of the House to seek re-election, an immediate vote of no-confidence toppled the new government. Brown asked the Governor General for an election, and when refused, he resigned, attacking the refusal as an assault on the rights of the people to vote on the policies of his new government. Cartier and Macdonald returned to power, avoiding a similar by-election with the notorious "Double-Shuffle," taking advantage of a law allowing cabinet ministers to change portfolio and not seek re-election. Without much choice, Brown seemed to have fallen into an artfully laid trap.

Brown deserves recognition for great patience in the course of a career which prioritized constitutional change in preference to the fleeting rewards of power. By 1858 Brown had waited six years in opposition, and would wait another six before helping form the coalition government that carried Confederation. Far from showing inability to resist temporary triumphs, Brown's 15-year career shows a consistent opposition strategy, exposing the contradictions of the Union, hewing decisively to the side of Upper Canada to gain the strength to carry constitutional reform. Long resisting calls to forget his principles to get himself into government, Brown's efforts to change Canada were crowned with success, with more lasting effect on the country than the achievements of many governments, probably most.

*"There is no rule of history or politics that the events of a single day may not be of the greatest significance."*

There is no rule of history or politics that the events of a single day may not be of the greatest significance. All of Brown's career is an invitation to revisit our assumptions about the criteria for success in politics, beyond the simplistic measure that compares his two-day government to Macdonald's decades in power.

Brown failed to form a lasting government, but had formed the first Canadian government pledged to constitutional reform. Having lost the battle in 1858, when defeat might have broken or disheartened him, or convinced another man to alter course, Brown resolved to continue, predicting eventual victory for his party's cause. Such was the conclusion he drew addressing his constituents on the night of his re-election to Parliament. Their opponents had postponed the day of constitutional reform, but could not avoid it, said Brown. "Gentlemen, I do sincerely believe that if the Brown-Dorion Administration had lived – and I apprehend that one very like it will yet live to do real service to the country – you would have found in the measures and principles it was prepared to advocate the only restorative fitted to bring back peace, harmony, and prosperity to every part of the country."

# Perseverance in the Constitutional Campaign

When Brown returned to Parliament early in 1859, it was to reorganize the Reform party and point the way ahead. Entering the third phase of his constitutional campaign, Brown broadened his political appeal, softening his harsh partisan tone, and changing his tactics of adamant opposition.

Perhaps giving up hope of changing the existing Union solely with support from Upper Canada, Brown pivoted to a moderated message of constitutional change centering on federation. Doing so, he faced resistance from within his party to his continued pursuit of constitutional reform. His single-minded pursuit appeared to be a serious political liability, and his leadership was threatened with open revolt. Those looking back at his role as a Father of Confederation must acknowledge such perseverance, which can have few if any equals in all of Canadian politics.

*"Brown pivoted to a moderated message of constitutional change centering on federation."*

One of Brown's first opportunities to defend himself came during the debate on the speech from the throne, on February 9, 1859. Government members had been relentlessly needling the opposition, mirthfully hoping to catch out the Reformers for giving up their so-called principles to form a government with their Lower Canada allies. Gleeful conservatives insisted representation by population with the Brown-Dorion "checks" meant a broken promise – checks denied the very principle of majority rule, and no one could even explain what they were.

Brown was not blind to the note of mockery hanging in the parliamentary air, but claimed he would be vindicated. "Sir, honourable gentlemen opposite may exert their wit on 'the two days administration,' but the day will yet come, when it will be remembered with gratitude as the first Cabinet avowedly formed to place the constitutional relations of Upper and Lower Canada on a just and lasting basis – on a basis which would remove forever from the political arena those causes of sectional and sectarian strife that threaten so seriously the continuance of the Union" (Globe, February 14, 1859).

The only consistent policy Brown saw on the government side was to keep John A. Macdonald in office, at the price of many colleagues swallowed up by a political system that consumed its public men. Patching up contradictory coalitions resulted in heavy spending, sacrificed principles and compromised morals in public life. "Where, Sir, are the eleven colleagues that entered the coalition four short years ago? All gone, all swept aside as peace offerings to the indignation of an outraged public opinion – all sacrificed one after the other to the craving necessities of the Attorney General West (Macdonald). There he sits, Sir, the sad remnant of that unprincipled coalition, 'the last rose of summer left blooming alone.'" At this, the House broke out in laughter. "Sir, we laugh, but is it really a laughable subject? Is it not enough to make all of us stop and reflect sincerely how it is that in four

short years twenty-six public men have been expended, worn out, used up, in the government of this country? Can the system be good, must it not be execrably bad, that produces so startling a result?" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

The problems of the Province of Canada could be traced to a single cause: the structure of the Union itself, two peoples bound together under a single government, confounding each other's popular will. This was the heart of Brown's diagnosis of the Union's ills, the central thesis underpinning his drive for change: "The scandalous extravagance and corruption, the feeble legislation, the accumulating financial difficulty, the ruin or withdrawal of so many public men, may in a large measure be traced to the immense difficulties of governing two people with two languages, two creeds, two systems of local institutions, under one general government, and unless we can find some common basis of legislation and administrative action, just to both sections, that will banish sectional and sectarian jealousy from the political arena, we had better, a thousand times better, dissolve the connection" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

> *"The only consistent policy Brown saw on the government side was to keep John A. Macdonald in office."*

Again Brown related the history of his fleeting government, his constitutional negotiations with Dorion, closely following the presentation in his Toronto speech. He was treated to a dose of genial Macdonald politics for his trouble, heckled with demands to explain, "What were the checks?" There was more laughter at this interruption, Macdonald cutting in a second and a third time. Brown fired back that it was wrong to make a joke of checks and balances, when they were "worthy of the gravest consideration of any statesman in framing a constitution" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

## "Without a plan, without a suggestion, without an idea"

The government's lack of a real plan to address the constitution was an abandonment of their responsibility to Canadians, said Brown: "They are the rulers of the country, it is their duty to meet the crisis, and yet, Sir, there they sit, without a plan, without a suggestion, without an idea." His government, even if given a chance to try, might well have failed, Brown admitted. "But this I do say, that no men ever came together with a more sincere and anxious and disinterested desire to frame a constitution that would meet the grave evils we all deplore and do equal justice to both sections of the Province, than the members of the late Administration. We sought no station like the gentlemen opposite, we sought to shirk no responsibility, we sought no delay for party or personal ends. All we demanded was time to go to our constituents, a brief space to prepare our measures, and an early meeting of the Legislature. We were pledged to lay our measures before this House at its opening, and to stand or fall by them as a Government" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

Brown claimed it was absurd for the government to attack Reformers for selling out their principles, when Reformers had intentionally stuck to consistent, unyielding opposition for years at considerable personal sacrifice: "What, Sir! Desert our principles, sacrifice our conscientious convictions – plant the brand of dishonor forever on our brows, for the miserable possession of office for two days, or two months, or two years, or twenty years! . . . Tell me what has kept so many men of ability out of office for so many years, but the resolute determination to maintain their honour and their principles untarnished? Think you, Sir, that had we been willing to sacrifice the interests of our country,

to pander to corrupt influences, to traffic for sectional votes, we might not long ere now have crossed this floor?" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

There was no truth to the charge he had leapt at the chance of power, for public office in Canada was no prize, said Brown; it carried personal and moral costs. Such were the dangers and temptations of our conflicted system of government that a government post was to be "earnestly avoided," and he felt "pity" for a new member taking his seat in the House. "Sir, I undervalue not the position that gives power to a public man to carry into effect the plans for the peace and advancement of his country of which he has been the advocate – but alas for the man who builds his hopes, who guides his actions, who rests his peace of mind, on the frippery of official life, aye or on such a shadow as popular applause! Today you have it, tomorrow it is gone." (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

## "We should lay aside our party feelings"

All parties must take up the cause of constitutional reform, declared Brown, recommitting himself to what must have seemed an increasingly quixotic cause to his frustrated supporters. Signalling his changing approach to politics, the zealous partisan now called for party allegiances to be put aside: "I do appeal to honourable gentlemen on both sides of the House, from both sections of the Province, whether the time has not arrived when we should lay aside our party feelings and set ourselves with thorough earnestness to frame such changes in our political system as will put an end to those ruinous sectional and sectarian strifes that are fast rendering government impossible." (*Globe*, February 14, 1859). Years before Confederation, years before the Great Coalition, just after suffering his greatest political defeat, George Brown was offering to put country before party to give Canada a new Constitution.

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*"As an old proverb goes, in Parliament your opponents sit in front of you, but your enemies sit behind."*

At this, Brown was interrupted by sardonic laughter from Macdonald: "The Honourable Attorney General laughs – he would tell me that I have been the cause of those strifes – but nothing could be more unjust . . . I have contended earnestly – I contend still – that this Union cannot be maintained unless it is really treated as a Union, and all the people awarded the same political influence, man for man, in whatever section they reside. I have contended that, divided as we are in matters of religion, it is utterly hopeless to expect peace in the country if sectarianism is fostered by the State, either by doles from the public purse, or by legislative favours. But not one privilege have I ever demanded for Upper Canada, or for Protestantism, that I have not been ready to share with Lower Canada and Roman Catholicism – not one privilege have I sought to deny to them which was not to be denied equally to ourselves" (*Globe*, February 14, 1859).

A bravura performance, filled with the pith and substance of a case for constitutional reform, even though it fell from a man whose political future was in doubt, and was delivered to the strains of his opponents' mocking laughter across the way. And as an old proverb goes, in Parliament your opponents sit in front of you, but your enemies sit behind. It was time to rebuild the party, silence the mutterings of dissent, and recommit to making a new Constitution for Canada.

# The Great Reform Convention of 1859

Brown went through a period of despair in the months following this speech, as the parliamentary session brought painful awareness of opportunities lost, and new evidence of the continuing sectionalism of Canadian politics (Careless 1959, 299 ff). The *Globe* ran a series of editorials over the summer favouring radical constitutional changes, including American-style checks on executive power, even expressing support for dissolution of the Union (Careless 1959, 302).

Yet by July Brown's optimism had returned, and he was writing to colleagues planning to host a Reform convention, intending to "merge all our questions in the one great issue of a change of constitution" (Careless 1959, 305). So began the orchestration of the Great Reform Convention of November 1859, and the adoption of federalism as official policy of the Upper Canada opposition. With much behind-the-scenes stage-management, invitations were issued to Reformers across Upper Canada to gather as delegates. There was a serious risk that a self-destructive demand to break up the Union might overtake the party, and that Brown would be ditched in favour of a politician who could lead them into power. Brown's task was to persuade Reformers to continue his decade-long constitutional campaign and sustain his leadership.

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> *"This message he sent directly to French Canadians: 'Tell us plainly what you want. What checks do you desire?'"*

Five resolutions were drafted to lay before the convention, the fourth of which was the fundamental proposition that federalism be introduced to Canada as the remedy to the divisive politics plaguing the Union. It was a surprising and counter-intuitive culmination of Brown's politics, another milestone on Canada's road to federalism. "Resolved, that in the opinion of this assembly, the best practicable remedy for the evils now encountered in the government of Canada is to be found in the formation of two or more local governments, to which shall be committed the control of all matters of a local or sectional character, and a general government charged with such matters as are necessarily common to both sections of the Province" (Careless 1959, 315).

The *Globe* carried full reports of the convention over six issues, column after column reporting entire speeches of the delegates. With feelings still raw from 1858, and a movement to split the Union afoot on the convention floor, Brown took his case for federalism to the people of Upper Canada. Whether led to this point by conviction, force of events, or a desire to maintain his grip on the party, Brown now found himself fighting to maintain the unity of Canada. Not in its present state as his adversaries wished, but by convincing his party to rally behind a great scheme of federal constitutional reform.

In his first intervention, Brown drove home the logic of federalism: self-government could be returned to both Upper and Lower Canada, and the unity of Canada maintained (*Globe*, November 11, 1859). He returned to his tested technique of giving the constitutional dialogue directly to his audience, so they could grasp the issues at stake and the logic of their solution.

This message he sent directly to French Canadians: "Tell us plainly what you want. What checks do you desire? We want you to manage your local institutions as you like, but we do not want you to control our local institutions. . . . Manage your own local affairs, and we will manage ours. Grant us the good principle of representation by population accompanied by such checks as will be fair and reasonable to both sections of the Province, and we are prepared to sit down and discuss with you what those fair and reasonable checks will be" (*Globe*, November 11, 1859).

All admitted the time for change had come, and Brown now pitched the idea of a federation of Upper and Lower Canada to win back those threatening to split the country in two. "Let there be a separation of the two Provinces insofar as local government was concerned; but let there be such a connection for general legislation as would keep them united." The federal tie should be limited in extent, "everything that could possibly be left to the local governments should be left to them, and as little as possible to the general government . . . in this way they would have all the advantages of dissolution, with all the advantages of union" (*Globe*, November 11, 1859).

Federation should begin with the two Canadas alone, ensuring a fix without delay. Expansion to the other provinces could come later. This was a crucial difference from the Cartier-Macdonald conservatives, who advocated the federation of all British North America – but seemed to do little to actively achieve it.

> *"Again Brown pressed home the logic of federalism, the power of self-government to resolve the most divisive issues that had fired the partisans of Canada with indignation."*

## The decisive speech

The proceedings rolled on, before Brown made his decisive speech on the final day of the convention (*Globe*, November 16, 1859). With appeals to dissolve the Union threatening to split the convention, Brown waited to give himself the advantage of the reply. When at last he rose, Brown tactfully emphasized there was already agreement on several key platform planks. First, that the present Constitution could not be maintained, and the legislative union of Upper and Lower Canada must be dissolved. Second, that the so-called "double majority principle" – requiring government to have majority support in both Upper and Lower Canada – was not a workable solution. Third, that a federal union of all the colonies of British North America was still too far-off to offer an immediate solution to the problems of Canada itself, which had to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

The final question to resolve, said Brown, was whether there would be a complete split with Lower Canada, or a split solely "as regarded all local affairs," preserving a tie in common matters with "a central government to regulate interests necessarily common to both" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859). Brown appealed to the delegates to think of practical politics, not the impulsive satisfaction of a clean break with Lower Canada. A vote to split the Union would split the party and cost all their support east of Kingston, where the flow of trade was through Montreal. He urged the delegates to remember the convention was an instrument of party unity: "the vote about to be taken is not to affirm what each member of this convention would individually like to see carried out – but what would be best and safest for the great Liberal party to adopt as the ground work of united action" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859).

Again Brown pressed home the logic of federalism, the power of self-government to resolve the most divisive issues that had fired the partisans of Canada with indignation. The federalism Brown pitched had its centre of gravity in the provinces, with as few powers allocated to the federal government as absolute necessity required. "All local and sectional matters are to be left to the localities, and to be defrayed from local funds, those of a general character, and those only, are to be left to the general government. And the matters assigned to the general government are to be clearly defined – not left to doubt, not left open to future encroachment. Now, will not this remove the chief sources of complaint? Will it not put an end at once to the interference of Lower Canada in our local affairs? Will it not put an end forever to Lower Canada works being purchased with Upper Canada money? Will it not terminate the strifes of race and creed that almost threaten us with civil war?" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859).

Yet beyond this emphasis on the fruits of division, Brown also sounded a note of national aspiration, giving voice to the currents of ambition beginning to swirl in a young country. There was no reason to let the British in Downing Street rule in matters we should far better handle for ourselves, said Brown, building to his climax. "Now, Sir, I do place the question on the ground of nationality. I do hope there is not one Canadian in this assembly who does not look forward with high hope to the day when these northern countries shall stand out among the nations of the world as one great Confederation. What true Canadian can witness the tide of immigration now commencing to flow into the vast territories of the North-West, without longing to have a share in the first settlement of that great and fertile country – who does not feel that to us rightfully belongs the right and the duty of carrying the blessings of civilization throughout those boundless regions, and making our own country the highway of traffic to the Pacific?" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859)

Splitting the Union would put an end to all these aspirations, Brown told the convention. "How can there be the slightest question with one who longs for such a nationality, between complete dissolution and the scheme of the committee? Is it not clear that the former would be a death-blow to the hope of future union, while the latter might, at some future day, readily furnish the machinery of a great Confederation?" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859)

*"The struggle for constitutional reform had been afoot for years, and he begged the delegates not to throw it all away."*

The struggle for constitutional reform had been afoot for years, and he begged the delegates not to throw it all away. Reformers had to leave the convention with a united policy. "We have now an Upper Canada majority in the Assembly and a vast majority in the country – but this point has not been reached without much toil, much endurance, and I warn you to beware lest by your vote of this night you dissipate the work of many years . . . the question then for our friends who advocate dissolution to consider is this – will you accept the scheme of the committee and secure all but unanimity, or will you insist on dissolution with the certainty of splitting up your party? Will you accept a remedy that essentially meets the disease, or will you let the ravages of the disease proceed unchecked rather than accept any remedy but your own?" (*Globe*, November 16, 1859)

The appeal was successful, and the convention adopted a compromise resolution proposing "some joint authority" between Upper and Lower Canada, rather than the original "general government" which was too strong for some. It was a classically elastic formulation – some might say classically Canadian – papering over genuine differences but serving its useful purpose. It preserved the unity of the party, and gave the Upper Canada Reformers a coherent policy to take back to the country.

So ended a proper political convention, one of the earliest in Canada. It was a milestone achievement of party organization and in the development of the federal idea in Canada – but troubles were brewing that would put all of this at risk.

## Leadership challenge

News of a challenge to Brown's leadership burst into the open in 1860. An article appeared in the *Globe* of April 2 detailing "a serious breach" in the ranks of the Upper Canada opposition, between supporters of Brown's campaign for constitutional change and a moderate faction led by Sandfield Macdonald (*Globe*, April 6, 1860). The latter rejected the need for formal constitutional change, backing the so-called "double-majority principle," and was open to making compromises necessary to get into government.

As the *Globe*'s correspondent related, when Parliament met in February 1860, caucus dissent began to surface. Mutterings were heard that the convention resolutions closed off possibilities for compromise, that there should be changes in policy to work within the existing Union. But Brown was immovable, introducing the convention resolutions in the House straight away and signalling his intent to call a formal debate soon. At this, there was an eruption of caucus unrest. A steady drip of leaks began to be fed to the newspapers. But for Brown, the leaks suggested, the opposition might well be in power.

Brown summoned a special caucus to settle this leadership challenge, issuing an ultimatum in the form of an offer to resign. He insisted the convention resolutions must be moved, even at the cost of keeping the party out of power. He would step aside if it would help the party secure the principles it had been fighting for, but what he would not do was "make way for a combination which looked merely to office and evaded the great issue of the day" (*Globe*, April 6, 1860).

Discussion followed, newly-fearful members declaring there was no desire for change. Brown asked the meeting to put his leadership and the resolutions to a vote. Twenty-four voted in favour of the resolutions, five against, and five declined to vote. When the vote of confidence in Brown was moved, Sandfield and two others walked out. Those that remained voted unanimously to stick to Brown.

*"Brown emerged with his strategy affirmed by his party – but at great cost."*

Brown emerged with his strategy affirmed by his party – but at great cost. Some might say it was a thing done bravely; others might say he had led with a rash and characteristic whip-hand. A *Globe* editorial of April 9 emphasized there was no turning back: "Nothing could be more absurd, more injurious to the true interests of the Opposition than a proposal to abandon the platform of the Convention. It would be an act of cowardice, of treachery to the principles which the party has always professed . . . The Convention of last November gave a fair expression of the opinion of the thinking

people of Upper Canada, and there is not the slightest reason to doubt that the policy adopted by it will ultimately be that of the whole Province. The present Union cannot exist in its present shape" (*Globe*, April 9, 1860). Owning a newspaper had its uses, it seems.

Brown's single-minded pursuit of constitutional reform demonstrated remarkable conviction. These events suggest the conventional view of Brown as a flawed politician may itself be flawed, if the assumption is called into question that the test of a politician is to get into government. Much had been achieved. There was the organization of the convention itself, to galvanize the party after the major setback of its failed bid for government. There was the drafting of the resolutions to settle policy and unite the party. There was the choice to keep pushing the constitutional issue, in the face of calls to give up a course that barred the party from power. There was the founding of the Constitutional Reform Association, and the issuance of its 50-page *Address to the People of Upper Canada* outlining the case for change. Then there was Brown persuading the assembled party delegates with a great speech on the convention floor.

Here was evidence of a political operator of no little talent, prepared to tough it out in opposition to secure his goal of constitutional reform. Any conviction politician might point to this record with pride.

> *"I am not one of those theoretical Reformers, who see in a well-drawn Constitution a panacea for all the ills of state."*
>
> George Brown

# Putting Country Before Party

On April 30, 1860, Brown followed through on his pledge, making a major speech to the Assembly on constitutional change, centring on the two key resolutions of the 1859 convention; first, that the existing legislative union could no longer be continued with advantage to the people; second, that the best practicable remedy was to split Upper and Lower Canada with some joint authority for matters common to both sections of the province (*Globe*, June 4, 1860). The clerk read the resolutions, then Brown began a speech that was the high water mark of his first drive for constitutional reform. Now almost forgotten by Canadians, it foreshadowed the Great Coalition of 1864.

"Did I affect, Mr. Speaker, that it is without any feeling of regret I rise to propose a change of the constitution of this Province, I should do myself great injustice. I have been among those who did conceive that the constitution of 1840 might be successfully maintained, I have for many years striven earnestly to maintain it, and if I am now found among those who demand that the existing system shall be overthrown, and another system reared in its place – it is because I have been reluctantly driven to the conclusion that our present constitution has not only failed to realize the expectations formed at its installation, but that evils of the greatest character have arisen from it for which nothing short of a radical change of system can be an adequate remedy (Cheers)" (*Globe*, June 4, 1860).

"I am not one of those theoretical Reformers, who see in a well-drawn Constitution a panacea for all the ills of state. I know that a system of government may be admirably suited for one people and ut-

terly unfitted for another, that every system is open to abuse, and that the purest system the wisdom of man ever framed will not protect a people who are not pure themselves" (*Globe*, June 4, 1860).

Criticized in his own ranks for resisting demands to separate Upper and Lower Canada, Brown had refused to open the Constitution until every last resort had been tried. "I felt it was our duty to exhaust every expedient, to repeat our demands for reform again and again – to make the equity of our demands, and the hopelessness of obtaining justice manifest to all – ere resorting to the alternative of a disruption of the Union. Year after year we have steadily and patiently urged our demands for a reconsideration of the basis of popular representation in Parliament – year after year, we have exposed the administrative abuses entailed by the present system – year after year we have entreated the reckless majority in Parliament to pause in their wild career – but in defiance of all our warnings and protests, government and their supporters have treated with contempt every demand for a reform" (*Globe*, June 4, 1860).

Brown alleged many members of the House were prepared to admit privately the necessity of constitutional change, foreshadowing the closed-door negotiations that proved crucial to the achievement of Confederation. "Clear those galleries, turn out the reporters, bolt the doors, assure every member that what he says will never be repeated outside these walls – then let each member rise and state candidly his views – and what a triumphant response should we have in favour of my first resolution! Would that this debate could be conducted with such sincerity – but well I know that party ties and sectional jealousies, and ambitious aspirations stand formidably in the way, and that until the people themselves speak out in a manner not to be misunderstood, no such unanimous expression of opinion will be witnessed in this Chamber (*Globe*, June 4, 1860)."

A surprising change in strategy was required, argued Brown. All hope of changing the existing Union had ended, the battle was shifting from the political to the constitutional plane, and now the partisan warrior must reach across party lines. In a debate about the very rules of the political game, cross-party consensus was essential. "If during the present session the course I have pursued has been modified from that of other sessions – if I have sought studiously to avoid acrimonious debate, it has been because I have ceased to hope that corruption and abuse can be stayed under the present system, it is because all hope of maintaining the legislative union with harmony and disadvantage has gone, and because I earnestly desired that we might come to the consideration of the constitutional relations of Upper and Lower Canada with that candour and that freedom from party and sectional rancour that becomes the discussion of matters so vital to the happiness of our people (Cheers)" (*Globe*, June 4, 1860).

*"The battle was shifting from the political to the constitutional plane, and now the partisan warrior must reach across party lines."*

## Extending an open hand

This statement was a significant change in Brown's strategy, backdating by several years the traditional view that Brown mellowed and moderated only after his marriage to Anne Brown in 1862 and in the run-up to the coalition of 1864 (Careless 1960, 57–73). Defying the bounds of conventional party politics, this most partisan of partisans now offered to support the Cartier-Macdonald government if it would embark sincerely on a project of constitutional reform: "If those honourable gentlemen

would at the present moment throw aside all partisanship and go in heartily to work for the good of the country, he would second the scheme."[6] So the Great Coalition of 1864 was less the miraculous apparition it is often made out to be, for by 1860 Brown was already extending an open hand. A new time was approaching, when none was for the party, and all would be for country.

Parliamentary government was a great experiment in Canada, argued Brown – he extolled its virtues, but it was an open question whether such institutions could work in a land where serious restraints on executive power did not exist. Such were the risks of unchecked executive power, where acts were done by executive fiat without consent of the legislature. "It was impossible not to perceive the difficulty of carrying out so elastic a constitution in a country where party spirit runs to such extremes, and where every man demands and exacts the utmost farthing of his rights . . . In England, constitutional landmarks are maintained with religious fidelity by men of all parties; but in Canada, every constitutional bulwark is leveled without remorse to carry the Minister of the hour over the emergency of the moment" (Thompson 1860).

> *"An entire change of system is absolutely necessary, if we would save our country from the dangers that beset us."*
>
> George Brown

The abuses complained of were all traceable to the Union itself, said Brown, and Canada's great material progress had been in spite of the Union, not because of it. "At this moment," said Brown, "Upper and Lower Canada are as widely apart as the day they were united . . . it was the great evil of the present system that men must have two consciences who came to the House – one for Upper Canada and one for Lower Canada" (Thompson 1860). A change in government would not suffice; in Brown's words, "an entire change of system is absolutely necessary, if we would save our country from the dangers that beset us."

He ran through each of the remedies in turn: representation by population, the double majority, a written Constitution, the exclusion of ministers from Parliament, or a federation of all the provinces, which he still held to be premature. Each was deficient in some way. The only way out was the policy of the 1859 convention: separation of the provinces with some joint authority to govern their interests in common.

## Too soon

But the time was not yet, and both of Brown's motions were defeated on May 8, 1860, though a slender majority for both was found in Upper Canada.[7] Recorded among the "no" camp were John A. Macdonald, George-Étienne Cartier, Alexander Tilloch Galt and Hector Langevin, all future Fathers of Confederation. The French-Canadian contingent was all but unanimously opposed, fighting to maintain the advantages of the 1840 Constitution.

Brown's biographer is scathing in his assessment of his headstrong decision to press the convention resolutions: "It was an ineptly calculated risk and it displayed his leadership at its faultiest. Here his chief failings as a politician were all revealed: over-confidence, impatience, and imperiousness, and then sheer inability to woo and win – to persuade and conciliate instead of ordering and insisting. Brown, the strong, far-sighted director of the Convention of 1859, and Brown, the hasty, uncompromising dictator of the caucus of 1860, were two aspects of the same man" (Careless 1963, 23).

Yet it would be wrong to conclude nothing had been achieved. The words that had passed could not be unsaid, nor the ideas suppressed. Federation was like a book put back on the shelf, ready to be taken down when the time came again. An idea need not win a vote in Parliament to take a grip on the political mind.

With new tactics Brown was building a made-in-Canada case for federation, one that had a chance of support in French Canada with its offer of substantial self-government. Tantalizingly, we also now know that additional resolutions for the 1860 debate were found in Brown's private papers, calling for the other provinces and the Hudson's Bay territories to join with Canada (Careless 1969–70). In the end, Brown chose to ask for the federalization of Upper and Lower Canada alone as the near-term achievable goal. But here is evidence Brown the regionalist was already imagining a wider vision. A Canada from ocean to ocean could be achievable within his lifetime. It must have seemed far-off that day in May, 1860, after this most recent defeat.

# Endurance

A series of bad reverses lay in store for Brown, darkness before the dawn. He lost his seat in the election of 1861 – many of the causes traceable to his own course in politics. The embarrassing collapse of the Brown-Dorion government, the failure to achieve rep by pop, party divisions and the failed federation resolutions all took their toll, as did a bout of illness (Careless 1983, 45–46).

Reform lost its Upper Canada majority, support bleeding away after their opponents stole their best card by allowing Liberal-Conservatives to support rep by pop.[8] But when a Reform government finally took power in May, 1862, after the collapse of the Cartier-Macdonald government over its Militia Bill, it was under the moderate Sandfield Macdonald – the new cabinet agreeing to drop rep by pop and adopt the double majority instead.

"Are you all mad there?" Brown cabled to those conducting the cabinet negotiations (Careless 1963, 65). "A greater set of jackasses . . . was never got by accident into the government of any country," he wrote another correspondent (Careless 1963, 67). Brown was out of the House, and Reformers in power had repudiated his course in politics.

> *"A greater set of jackasses . . . was never got by accident into the government of any country."*
>
> George Brown

Yet contradictions were amassing that would pave the way for Brown's return. The Sandfield government had an Upper Canada majority, nearly evenly matched against a Lower Canada majority under Cartier, and could not muster the double majority it claimed was necessary to govern. When Parliament met in February 1863, western conservatives craftily pressed for rep by pop, splitting Reform by forcing Upper Canada moderates to join the Lower Canada *Bleus* to defeat the issue that had once been their own battle cry (Careless 1963, 88).

In March 1863, the Scott separate school bill only passed with a Lower Canada majority and 22 Liberal-Conservative votes from Upper Canada. Though the majority of Upper Canada Reform voted against a measure that had cabinet support, the government did not resign, and the double-majority was shown to be a mirage. In an ironic twist, Reform now seemed to govern Upper Canada against its will (Careless 1963, 89).

## Back in Parliament

Despite personal misgivings and a longing for private life, Brown stood in a by-election for South Oxford, returning to the House in mid-April 1863, an independent backbencher once more (Careless 1963, 90).

In early May, John A. Macdonald moved no-confidence in the Sandfield government, and heads swivelled as Brown rose to speak. Brown asked the House to "listen for a brief space of time to a voice from the cross benches," to laughter and cries of "Hear, hear!" heard around the chamber (Scrapbook Debates, May 7, 1863). In 1854, Brown had voted with conservatives to kill off one Reform government, and he might be poised to finish another.

The scene was "one of a very extraordinary character," said Brown, Macdonald now in opposition criticizing Reformers for doing what he once did himself. On issue after issue, "like an old Grimalkin," John A. sat "at the door of the pantry watching the mice come in and out." More laughter, then came the point. "In this debate the real issues have been left entirely out of view . . . the scenes witnessed year after year proved the necessity of radical changes." As he had been saying for a decade, the real issue was still the Constitution.

## Dysfunction and paralysis

The government was narrowly defeated and fresh elections called, resulting in an Upper Canada victory for Reform and rep by pop, offset by defeat in Lower Canada. The tallies were roughly 40 Reform seats in Upper Canada, to 22 Liberal-Conservatives, but only 24 *Rouges* in Lower Canada versus 34 *Bleus* under Cartier (Cornell 1962, 110). The shuffled Sandfield-Dorion government – constructed with Brown's assistance – staggered on with the House in nearly equal balance, a steady drumbeat of no-confidence motions driving the Union into crisis. When Parliament met in August, two ousted Reform ministers moved no-confidence, the government only narrowly surviving, before the opposition followed up with a series more.[9] The government was increasingly paralyzed, its slender margin of support meaning no bold policy could be adopted.

# The Brown Committee

Against this backdrop of dysfunction, Brown announced in October 1863 his intention to ask the House to establish a non-partisan committee to examine the Constitution.[10] Brown tactfully cited a dispatch drafted by the conservatives Cartier, Galt and Ross in 1858 – admitting "very grave difficulties" governing the Union, and the "necessity of providing a remedy for a state of things that is yearly becoming worse." A constitutional settlement was an "absolute necessity," said Brown, and it would be "deeply regretted" if another meeting of Parliament were held in similar circumstances. No specific action was called for – just "that a Select Committee of 13 members be appointed to enquire and report on the important subjects embraced in the said dispatch, and the

best means of remedying the evils therein set forth." Brown called no vote, saying he would wait for the government or some independent member to call his motion when the mood of the House improved. "Where is the independent member to be found?" demanded Cartier. Taking a bow, Brown replied, "I have the honour to be one."

*"Where is the independent member to be found?" demanded Cartier. Taking a bow, Brown replied, "I have the honour to be one."*

Parliament met again in February 1864, Brown declining to speak in the debate on the throne speech, even though he was mocked for abandoning rep by pop by propping up the Sandfield government. The debate was an acrimonious joust, each side testing the other for weaknesses, conscious the government could collapse any day. On March 14, Brown again called his constitutional committee motion for debate.[11] Brown argued he was only asking his conservative opponents to agree with their own dispatch of five years before: "There never was wiser, or more sound and patriotic advice given by Ministers of the Crown." At this Cartier heckled: "That is the first time you have ever said so – the first time you ever gave us credit for sound advice." Brown shot back: "He could on that account say it with the more force now. And he could say it with all his heart."

Brown said he "deeply regretted" the political situation, as politics in the Province of Canada had culminated in the "spectacle" of another Upper Canada-backed government facing off against an opposition with a majority in Lower Canada. The contest between Upper and Lower Canada resulted in constant instability, crisis after crisis as governments tried to reconcile the conflicting wills of the two sections in a single state. Cartier heckled again – "It is a chronic state" – to laughter in the House. There had been crisis for 11 years, Brown replied, and it was "of utmost importance that they should find some means of going on without having a breakup so very often."

Brown canvassed well-known members' views on options. McGee favoured Confederation and constitutional monarchy. He wasn't sure whether Galt favoured federation for all the provinces, or just Canada alone. "Of all the Provinces," Galt replied. Others wanted to dissolve the Union, still others wanted a legislative union of all the provinces, and others again wanted the joint authority from the Reform convention of 1859. At this there was sarcastic laughter. "Honourable gentlemen might laugh," shot back Brown, "but there never was a fairer proposition broached, and he doubted a more satisfactory one could ever be found." The Committee was the way forward, concluded Brown. He had no doubt it could find a solution.

Macdonald, Galt and Cartier were all there, though none rose to the occasion and all opposed Brown's motion. Macdonald was prepared with a sheaf of newspaper clippings to read to the House – that "occasioned much merriment" and "elicited roars of laughter" – all designed to make Brown look like a hypocrite for abandoning rep by pop.

"The hon. member for South Oxford knew the question of Representation by Population was as dead as Julius Caesar," Macdonald exclaimed to cheers and laughter. Brown's "stalking horse to power" was now cast aside, and the committee was "a mere show, without any reality," declared Macdonald, "drawn up for the purpose of sending the question to the Committee room downstairs, never to rise again." Macdonald read a little poem to make his point: "What makes all decisions plain and clear, 'Tis just twelve hundred pounds a year, and prove that false was true before, the summer plain – twelve hundred more!"

## The dying light of the old Canada

Brown's Scots temper flared as he stood to reply. It was "singular" Macdonald's speech contained no statesmanlike idea, that he only tried to "excite the mirthfulness of the House." The old invective surfaced, Brown painting Macdonald as the tool of Cartier's will: "If there had ever been an obsequious, painstaking paid agent of Lower Canada, it was the member for Kingston during the time he held office – especially during the latter portion of his official career. He had stood there as the puppet of the member for Montreal East, and had spoken and voted, and bobbed up and down as directed by that honourable gentleman."

Brown's outburst was the last flash of the old divisive politics, provoked by the wit of his sardonic opponent in the dying light of the old Canada. The debate lapsed without a vote, and the Sandfield government resigned a week later. The Liberal-Conservatives were recalled to power a final time.

When Parliament met again in May, the House finally voted to establish Brown's long-sought committee – 59 yeas, 48 nays, among them Cartier, Galt and John A. Macdonald. It was May 19, 1864. On June 14 a brief report came back from the committee. "A strong feeling was found to exist among the members of the committee in favour of the change in the direction of a federative system, applying either to Canada alone or to the whole of the British North American Provinces . . ." (Careless 1963, 128). The committee's vote reflected an important change in results. Cartier, Galt and McGee had swung their support behind Brown, leaving Macdonald among only three holdouts, voting no.

*"Some histories of Confederation begin in 1864 – but a long campaign had led up to this extraordinary moment."*

Fate then intervened: the Taché-Macdonald government collapsed that very night, on a trumped up no-confidence vote attacking a financial irregularity from years before. Brown sent word to his conservative opponents: an offer of support, if they would use the present crisis to settle the constitutional question forever. At three o'clock next day, as the benches filled in the House, eyes must have bulged as Brown and Macdonald strode to the middle of its floor. The well-known events that followed are a story for another day.

Some histories of Confederation begin in 1864 – but a long constitutional campaign had lead up to this extraordinary moment.

# Understanding Brown's Long Constitutional Struggle

Speaking on George Brown's role in Confederation, Brown's biographer J.M.S. Careless asked a revealing question: whether George Brown "was a nation-builder at all, or a narrow sectionalist who perhaps did "one good thing" in backing the Confederation movement" (Careless

1969–70). Considering Brown's constitutional campaign in full, we now see the man who resolved to sacrifice every hope as a politician was no governmental impossibility in the conventional sense. Brown's 15-year campaign reveals explicit strategic choices: first to make the case for constitutional change while gathering strength in opposition; second, to hew decisively to the cause of Upper Canada in view of the split in the popular will between each section of the province; third, long-term discipline to resist giving up a political goal deemed absolutely essential – even at great cost to his electoral hopes.

Brown's long struggle invites a re-examination whether his blueprint for political action might not hold lessons for an era of retail politics where leaders are dismissed after failure in a single election, if nothing else for its tenacity, its populism, and its endearing but elegantly complete architecture of Victorian political engagement. If this was failure in politics, perhaps we should all fail so well.

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*"If this was failure in politics, perhaps we should all fail so well."*

Long known as an anti-politician, a man whose private correspondence indicated a longing to give up parliamentary life and return to his family, George Brown deserves new recognition as a talented conviction politician, if one not minded to go along to get ahead. Brown's career can be understood as a provincial activist's attempt to trace and secure the boundaries of what would become provincial jurisdiction – and it is important to recognize that the division of powers reflects demands for self-government that originated in Ontario with George Brown.

History's judgment sometimes hands the laurels of Confederation to Macdonald and Cartier alone. To our heritage we owe a better regard, to see in Brown not just a primary instigator of Confederation, but also a beguiling reflection of ourselves. To see Brown as a Canadian today is to cast a rearward glance at a brand of political and cultural conflict that pointed out the need for federalism in a divided country.

Yet Brown is not solely a reminder of primordial fires lying beneath the comparative harmony of present day. His early radicalism was tempered by the moderating structure of Canadian politics, which necessitated alliances with French-Canadians and Catholics. Rep by pop gave way to majority rule with minority rights, then to federalism as the solution to the conflicts on which he vaulted to power. Accused by his enemies of being a Protestant Pope, Brown would develop a political friendship with his French-Canadian counterpart George-Étienne Cartier as they carried Confederation together.

Before he could be useful to Canada, George Brown had to recognize that Lower Canada had as much right to self-government as Upper Canada, and had a right to pursue her own way of life. This he gave in exchange for representation by population. The more some might dislike Brown's divisive rhetoric, the greater the significance of his later federalist conversion, the stronger the argument that his career demonstrates the ability of peoples of different origin, language and religion to unite in the cause of their common country. His political career could only have been possible in Canada, whose divided population makes its politics and its social life a great engine for the wearing down of prejudice. Nothing so much suited Brown in life as becoming Canadian.

Brown is mainly remembered as the instigator of the 1864 constitutional committee. Viewed in its true context, the Brown committee no longer appears as any great surprise. Like the summit of Ben Nevis in Brown's native Scotland, Confederation was reached after a very long climb.

Only in light of Brown's 15-year campaign can we appreciate his pride and relief when the Great Coalition of 1864 was formed:

"If I never had any other parliamentary successes than that which I have achieved this day, in having brought about the formation of a Government more powerful than any Canadian Government that ever existed before, pledged to settle and to settle for ever the alarming sectional difficulties of my country, I would have desired no greater honour for my children to keep years hence in their remembrance, than that I had a hand, however humble, in the accomplishment of that work" (*Globe*, June 23, 1864).

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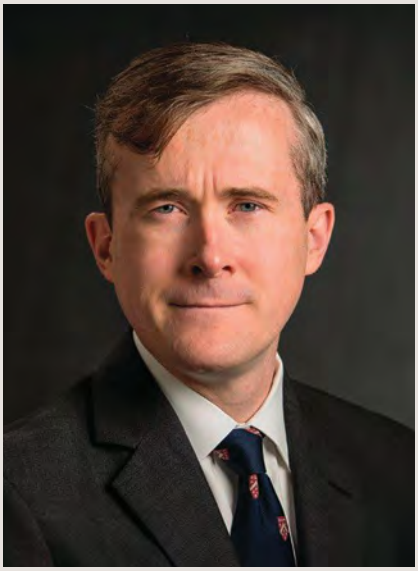
*"Nothing so much suited Brown in life as becoming Canadian."*

But we anticipate, for next we turn to the record of Brown's great adversary, the French-Canadian chief George-Étienne Cartier, who trod the path of power in Union politics before leading French Canada into Confederation.

# About the Author



Alastair Gillespie is a Canadian lawyer living in London, England. He is an associate in the London office of a large New York-based international law firm and his experience includes a broad array of corporate finance transactions. Alastair has also completed a secondment to a major investment banking institution. He is a Munk Senior Fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

Alastair has authored articles reporting on the founding speeches of five key Fathers of Confederation, published as a series by the *National Post* on occasion of the 150th anniversary of the constitutional debates held in the Legislature of Canada in 1865 prior to Confederation. The *National Post* also published Alastair's reflections on the life of Sir John A. Macdonald on the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Prior to his legal career, Alastair was Special Assistant to the Hon. A. Anne McLellan, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Alastair holds a B.A. in History from Yale University where he was a research assistant to Dr. Paul M. Kennedy, a member of Yale's Studies in Grand Strategy program and a rower on the Lightweight Crew. Alastair holds a B.C.L./LL.B. from the McGill University Faculty of Law where he was an Editor of the *McGill Law Journal*.

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# Endnotes

1 In the Macdonald-Cartier government, for example, John A. Macdonald held the position of Attorney-General West, and Cartier was Attorney-General East.

2 See, e.g., *Globe*, September 19, 1856.

3 See, e.g., *Globe*, October 3, 1853.

4 Attributed to Francis Hincks.

5 Macdonald to M.C. Cameron, January 3, 1872.

6 The remainder of Brown's speech is taken from Thompson 1860.

7 *Journals of the House of Assembly of the Province of Canada*, May 8, 1860.

8 A so-called "open question." In an example of issues migrating from party to party, three Liberal-Conservative ministers supporting rep by pop were sworn in during March 1862. See Careless 1963, 62.

9 *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada*, 1863, 57–58.

10 *Scrapbook Debates*, October 12, 1863.

11 *Scrapbook Debates*, March 14, 1864.

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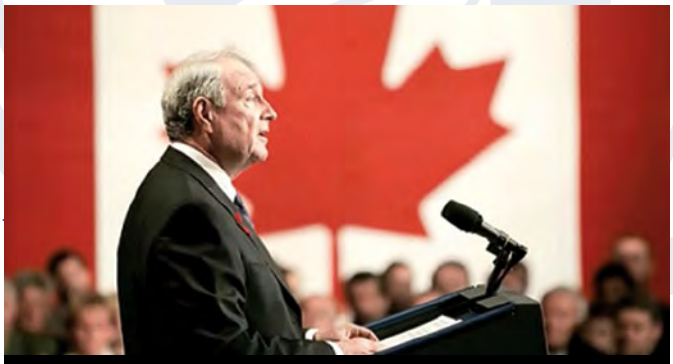

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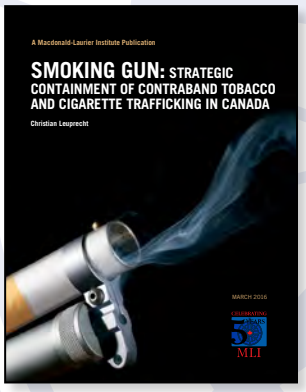


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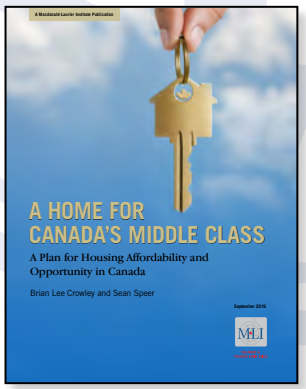


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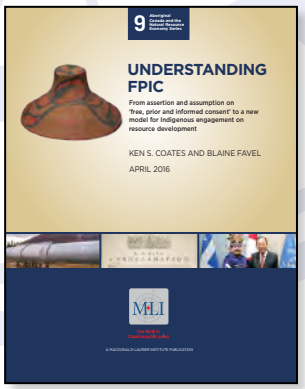
Brian Lee Crowley and Sean Speer

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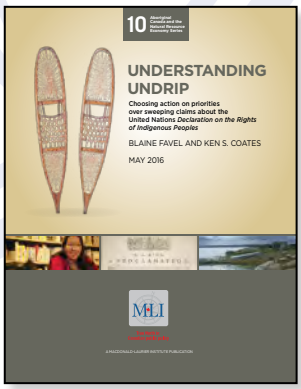


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True North in
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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PAUL MARTIN

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BARBARA KAY, NATIONAL POST COLUMNIST

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