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Résumé de l'article

Une grande partie de l'historiographie sur l'entrée de la Colombie-Britannique au sein de la Confédération en 1871 porte sur les motifs qui ont guidé la population de la Colombie-Britannique à vouloir s'unir au Canada. Cet article traite du débat entourant les conditions d'adhésion de la province, qui a eu lieu au Parlement du Canada et dans la presse canadienne de l'Est. Il reformule la question et la présente comme un conflit entre deux visions contradictoires de l'avenir économique du Canada. Les partisans de l'adhésion de la Colombie-Britannique croient que l'accès au Pacifique transformerait le nouveau dominion en une superpuissance commerciale. Quant aux opposants, ils voient cette Colombie-Britannique éloignée, montagneuse et peu densément peuplée comme un boulet, une région et une collectivité qui, contrairement à la Prairie de l'Ouest, ne pourront jamais se conformer à l'idéal agraire que sous-tend leur conception du Canada. Un nouvel examen du débat sur les conditions d'adhésion qui ont eu lieu dans l'Est du Canada mène à une conception élargie de ce que sont les débats fondateurs du Canada. Cette vision rencontre les travaux d'autres chercheurs qui confèrent à la division agraire-commerciale un rôle déterminant de la politique canadienne du XIX^{e} siecle.

Agrarian Commonwealth or Entrepôt of the Orient? Competing Conceptions of Canada and the BC Terms of Union Debate of 1871

FORREST D. PASS

Abstract

Much of the historiography of British Columbia's 1871 entry into Confederation has concentrated on the motives of British Columbians in seeking union with Canada. This article examines the discussion of the province's Terms of Union in the Canadian parliament and in the eastern Canadian press, and recasts the debate as a conflict between two competing visions of Canada's economic future. Proponents of the admission of British Columbia believed access to the Pacific would transform the new Dominion into a commercial superpower. Opponents of the Terms looked upon distant, mountainous, and sparsely populated British Columbia as a liability, a region and a community that, unlike the Prairie West, could never conform to the agrarian ideal that underpinned their conception of Canada. A reconsideration of the Terms of Union debate in eastern Canada suggests a broader conception of what constitutes Canada's founding debates, and supports the work of other scholars who have identified an agrarian-commercial cleavage as a defining feature of nineteenth-century Canadian politics.

Résumé

Une grande partie de l'historiographie sur l'entrée de la Colombie-Britannique au sein de la Confédération en 1871 porte sur les motifs qui ont guidé la population de la Colombie-Britannique à vouloir s'unir au Canada. Cet article traite du débat entourant les conditions d'adhésion de la province, qui a eu lieu au Parlement du Canada et dans la presse canadienne de l'Est. Il reformule la question et la présente comme un conflit entre deux visions contradictoires de l'avenir économique du Canada. Les partisans de l'adhésion de la Colombie-Britannique croient que l'accès au Pacifique transformerait le

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nouveau dominion en une superpuissance commerciale. Quant aux opposants, ils voient cette Colombie-Britannique éloignée, montagneuse et peu densément peuplée comme un boulet, une région et une collectivité qui, contrairement à la Prairie de l'Ouest, ne pourront jamais se conformer à l'idéal agraire que sous-tend leur conception du Canada. Un nouvel examen du débat sur les conditions d'adhésion qui ont eu lieu dans l'Est du Canada mène à une conception élargie de ce que sont les débats fondateurs du Canada. Cette vision rencontre les travaux d'autres chercheurs qui confèrent à la division agraire-commerciale un rôle déterminant de la politique canadienne du XIX^e siecle.

"All hail Columbia! not least though last." So the Rev. Aeneas McDonell Dawson opened his 1871 ode, "British Columbia Becomes a Province of the Canadian Confederation." Over sixty-one lines, the Ottawa Roman Catholic priest — and brother of the well-known surveyor and expansionist, Simon James Dawson — extolled British Columbia's resources and, more importantly, the position its acquisition would soon give the fledgling Dominion of Canada:

> Extend'st thine arm of might where sets the sun,
> Thy magic wand out o'er the western sea,
> And lo! ere yet, thy work is well begun,
> Vast continents and islands come to thee!
> Cashmere and Thibet welcome tribute pay,
> Her pent up treasures China willing pours;
> Japan, from rest of earth no more astray,
> And India come, their wealth changing with yours.
> How blest thy favoured people in their store!
> Earth's richest theirs! Her pearls Arabia sends,
> Her diamonds rare Golconda! Thine even more;
> With these vie each eager clime that blends
> Its lot with thine, and on thy ocean throne,
> When greater than thyself, bright land, are gone,
> Thou'lt reign Columbia, o'er the sea,
> Hope, refuge, stronghold of the Free![1]

1 Aeneas McDonell Dawson, "British Columbia Becomes a Province of the Canadian Confederation," in his *The North-west Territories and British Columbia* (Ottawa: C.W. Mitchell, 1881), 218. On the Dawson family's involvement in the Canadian expansionist movement, see Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 39.

Dawson was not alone in waxing poetic on the riches that Canada would accrue through its annexation of British Columbia. For Dominion Day 1869, a verse in the Belleville, Ontario, *Daily Intelligencer* eagerly anticipated the extension of the Dominion's borders to the Pacific, "where the stormless waves have no angry crest / As they wash our barques to the gorgeous East."[2] Two years later, the *Intelligencer*, the organ of North Hastings MP and Conservative cabinet minister Mackenzie Bowell, supported unequivocally the Terms of Union admitting British Columbia to Confederation.[3] The transcontinental railway promised as one of the Terms of Union would, the paper predicted in an editorial of 1 April 1871, "be certain to become the great artery for [the] great traffic" between China and Liverpool.[4] In extolling the value of Asiatic commerce, Dawson and the *Intelligencer* positioned themselves firmly on one side of the fierce debate over the admission of British Columbia, a debate which provides an intriguing insight into the competing conceptions of the new Canadian nation that prevailed in the years immediately following 1867.

Historians have explained satisfactorily the motivations of British Columbians in seeking federation with Canada, but the eastern Canadian parliamentary and press discussion of British Columbia's entry into Confederation has received considerably less scholarly attention.[5] Writing in the late 1950s, Margaret Ormsby was aware of the opposition to the Terms of Union in the federal parliament, opposition she attributed to the financial commitments the Terms imposed on the young Dominion.[6] She also suggested, in a brief, exploratory article on Canadian opinions of the Terms, that eastern Canadians believed in a "manifest destiny," that led them to support the annexation of British Columbia.[7] More recently, Jean Barman has described the parliamentary debate on the Terms as anti-climactic, while Patricia Roy and John Herd Thompson acknowledge that the admission of British Columbia was part of a larger strategy of western development, and relate it to the expansionist programme of Toronto *Globe* editor George Brown, but do not examine the parliamentary debate.[8] The authors of the national surveys have presented

2 "Land of the Maple Leaf," *Daily Intelligencer* (Belleville) (3 July 1869), 4, col.1.

3 Bowell was sole proprietor of the *Intelligencer* and thus its editorials reflected his political agenda P.B. Waite, "Sir Mackenzie Bowell," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, <www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41353.htm>, (viewed 16 January 2007).

4 "Admission of British Columbia," *Daily Intelligencer* (1 April 1871), 2, col. 2-3.

5 For British Columbia's economic motivations, see Margaret Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1958), 245-49, 257; Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 96; Patricia Roy and John Herd Thompson, *British Columbia: Land of Promises* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2005), 49-50.

6 Margaret Ormsby, *British Columbia*, 249-50.

7 Margaret Ormsby, "Canadian Opinion on British Columbia's Entry into Confederation," *Report of the Okanagan Historical Society*, 9 (1940): 35-7.

8 Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 97; Roy and Thompson, *British Columbia: Land of Promises*, 46, 49-50.

the Terms of Union as a "Made-in-BC" solution to local economic problems, a solution eagerly endorsed by an expansionist parliament. Arthur Lower believed the admission of British Columbia to Confederation was significant chiefly in that it rested on the consent of the colony's electorate; while W.L. Morton characterized the debate on the Terms in Parliament as a mere formality and Desmond Morton described the process of admitting British Columbia as "deceptively simple."[9]

Though these historians have downplayed the significance of the debate, the proposed Terms of Union sharply divided the Canadian parliament and press. Even if, as Ormsby suggests, Canadians believed in a manifest destiny they disagreed on whether this destiny included British Columbia: the Pacific colony's admission to the union was a considerably more divisive question for Canadian parliamentarians and journalists than the purchase of Rupert's Land two years earlier, the *Manitoba Act* the previous year, or the Prince Edward Island Terms of Union two years later. Both government and opposition commentators recognized the British Columbia debate as one of the keenest fought battles in Canada's short parliamentary history.[10] The financial cost of the Terms, and of the promised railway in particular, figured prominently in the discussion, as Ormsby correctly noted. "It wouldn't pay Canada to take many British Columbias at this price," the Orangeville, Ontario, *Sun* opined, and most opponents of the Terms were inclined to agree.[11] However, it is simplistic to characterize the debate as merely a conflict between government patriotism and opposition parsimony. Rather, the debate on the Terms was so contentious because it enflamed a pre-existing ideological conflict over the source of Canada's future prosperity. For those, generally opposition Liberals or Reformers, whose conception of Canada was inspired by the agrarian ideal, distant, barren, and sparsely-settled British Columbia was an expensive and unnecessary liability, and its population failed to conform to their ideal of the upstanding yeoman-citizen. On the other side were those, including Rev. Dawson and the staff of the Belleville *Intelligencer*, who saw Canada's future prosperity in its emergence as a nexus of international commerce. British Columbia, already rich in mineral wealth, was well situated to control the trade of the Pacific, and the construction of a Canadian Pacific railway would make Canada the entrepôt between Europe and the Orient. The division I posit

9 Arthur Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada,* 4th rev. ed. (Don Mills: Longmans, 1964), 361; W. L. Morton, *The Kingdom of Canada: A General History from Earliest Times,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969), 338; Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada,* 5th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), 104-5.

10 Alexander Morris to Sir John A. Macdonald, 1 April 1871, cited in Donald Grant Creighton, *John A. Macdonald,* vol. 2 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955), 105; "The British Columbia Resolutions," *Perth Courier* (7 April 1871), 2, col. 3.

11 "The resolutions to admit British Columbia … " *Sun* (Orangeville) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

between the commercial and agrarian camps was not perfect. Commercialist Conservatives were certainly concerned about agriculture and frequently sought to reassure the opposition that parts of British Columbia were indeed arable. For their part, Liberal agrarians asserted, often formulaically, their commitment to the eventual consummation of a transcontinental union and even to the desirability of expanding trade with Asia. Party allegiance certainly informed the final division on the Terms, but we should not dismiss partisanship as a mere antipathy between the "ins" and the "outs." Rather, the parties that emerged in the decade after Confederation were themselves products of competing conceptions of Canada's economic and political future. Ben Forster in particular has emphasized the importance of the tariff question, which divided farming and business interests, in defining the political landscape of the 1870s.[12] That the debate on the Terms of Union was so acrimonious, especially when compared to the relative bi-partisanship that had typified discussions of other expansionist legislation, suggests an important role for the agrarian-commercial dichotomy generally, and the British Columbia debate specifically, in defining Canada's early two-party system. Considering the Terms of Union debate as a contest between two competing conceptions of Canada's ideal economic foundation accounts for the debate's contentiousness.

In recasting the debate on the Terms of Union as a debate on the future of Canada as well as of British Columbia, this article contributes to a growing revisionist historiography of Canadian Confederation, a literature that challenges long-accepted nationalist interpretations and presents a version of Confederation that is more problematic and more firmly situated within its multiple contexts. Ian McKay urges historians to consider Canada as a project in liberal state formation, but, as he correctly observes, liberalism in nineteenth-century British North America resembled a "secular religion" rather than "an easily manipulated set of political ideals."[13] Thus, while none of the politicians and newspapermen considered in this study would have dared to challenge the key tenets of classical liberalism — individual liberty, at least for some, and its economic corollary, the free market — they differed considerably on the form the liberal state they envisioned might take. Several historians and political scientists have demonstrated that the conceptions of British North America's future that animated

12 Ben Forster, *A Conjunction of Interests: Business, Politics, and Tariffs, 1825-1879* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 147-64. Jonathan Swainger also discusses the emergence of modern political parties during the 1870s, while S.J.R. Noel discusses a corollary to sharper ideological differentiation, the emergence of the centralized party apparatus. Jonathan Swainger, *The Canadian Department of Justice and the Completion of Confederation, 1867-78* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 4-6; S.J.R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 275-93.

13 Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (December 2000): 617-45.

nineteenth-century politicians, newspapermen, and the public were rooted not only in economic self-interest but also in broader political and economic ideologies, with the dialectic between agrarian virtue and commercial avarice figuring prominently.[14] The chief shortcoming of much of the recent Confederation historiography is that it does not carry its analysis beyond 1867 to include the admission of the latecomer provinces.[15] Yet the question at least one contemporary parliamentarian raised during the British Columbia Terms of Union debate is pertinent to a reassessment of the overall purpose of Confederation: why was an economically, and perhaps morally, bankrupt community of 10,000 white settlers, perched precariously on the Pacific Slope, able to dictate terms to a more developed confederacy of four million?[16] What did British Columbia offer the new Dominion such that a majority of Canadian parliamentarians was willing to ignore the opposition's dire predictions of financial ruin? The debate on the British Columbia resolutions concerned not only the political future of a far-off colony, it also served as an opportunity for Canadians to discuss once again the nature and future of their "new nationality."

The circumstances and provisions of the British Columbia Terms of Union are well known to most students of British Columbian and Canadian history. In the years following the union of British Columbia and Vancouver Island in 1866, rival factions emerged favouring either federation with Canada or annexation to the United States as a means of alleviating the depopulation and economic recession that followed the Cariboo gold rush. Meanwhile in Canada, Prime Minister Macdonald lobbied the Colonial Office to replace British Columbia's anti-Confederationist Governor, Frederick Seymour, with someone more

14 Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation," in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory, or Republican?* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), 47-78; Allan Greer, "Historical Roots of Canadian Democracy," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 34, no.1 (Spring 1999): 7-26; Rusty Bitterman and Margaret McCallum, "When Private Rights Become Public Wrongs: Property and the State in Prince Edward Island in the 1830s," in John McLaren, A.R. Buck, and Nancy E. Wright, eds., *Despotic Dominion: Property Rights in British Settler Societies* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 144-68. Greer is careful not to characterize the phenomenon he identifies as "agrarianism," but his discussion of anti-corporate ideology in pre-Confederation Canada generally accords with Peter Smith's thesis.

15 *Canada's Founding Debates* is an exception, as its editors consider 1873, the year of Prince Edward's Island's entry, to be the date by which the work of Confederation was substantially complete. However, the book offers a narrow definition of the founding debates, considering for the latecomer provinces only the debates in the local legislatures. Jonathan Swainger argues for 1878 as the end-date for the Confederation period, but his focus is institutional developments in Ottawa, not territorial expansion and the admission of new provinces. Janet Azjenstat, et al., eds., *Canada's Founding Debates* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1999), 1; Swainger, *The Canadian Department of Justice and the Completion of Confederation, 1867-78,* 18.

16 The politician in question was Quebec Senator John Sewall Sanborn. Canada. Senate, *Debates of the Senate, 1871* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 184.

favourable to union.[17] After Seymour's sudden death at Bella Coola in June of 1869, the Colonial Office complied with Macdonald's request and dispatched Anthony Musgrave, the Governor of Newfoundland, to Victoria. Frustrated with the divisions among the colony's pro-Confederationists, Musgrave presented draft terms, as a motion of the Government, to the colony's unicameral legislature during the winter of 1870.[18] Upon the legislature's ratification, with some minor modifications, of the Governor's proposed Terms, a delegation of three under the *de facto* leadership of the colony's Commissioner of Lands and Works, Joseph Trutch, travelled to Ottawa to negotiate with the Dominion government.[19] Macdonald's Quebec lieutenant and fellow leader of the great coalition, Sir George Etienne Cartier, acted for the Dominion, famously offering the British Columbians a transcontinental railway when only a wagon road had been requested.[20] The revised Terms, ratified by the colonial legislature in January 1871, included a *per capita* subsidy for the maintenance of the provincial government; representation in Parliament by six members and three senators; and, most importantly and controversially, a promise to commence construction of a transcontinental railway within two years, for completion within ten.[21] Trutch then returned to Ottawa, where British Columbia's political future now lay in the hands of Canada's parliamentarians.

Cartier introduced the address to the Queen embodying the British Columbia Terms of Union in the House of Commons on 28 March 1871.[22] For

17 Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), CO 537, Colonial Office Secret Supplementary Correspondence, 1832-1922, /100, no. 204, John A. Macdonald to Sir John Young, 23 May 1869.

18 PRO, CO 60, British Columbia, Original Correspondence, 1858-1871, /38, no. 11, Anthony Musgrave to Sir John Young, 20 February 1870.

19 The other two members were R.W.W. Carrall, a member of the legislature for Cariboo District, and Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken, a long-time colonial official and until lately an opponent of the Confederation scheme.

20 Musgrave's dispatches to the Colonial Office suggest that the British Columbians expected a railway long before Cartier offered one. The "noisiest" advocates of Confederation, Musgrave informed the Colonial Secretary on 5 April 1870, had led the people to expect a railroad as "a certain matter of course," and that only when Canada's offer was known would the colony's political radicals cease to use the rosy prospect of Confederation for "weal political purposes." PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 32, Musgrave to Lord Granville, 5 April 1870.

21 *Terms of Union, 1871* (Victoria, B.C.: Queen's Printer, 1981). At the request of the Canadian government, Trutch agreed that British Columbia would not insist upon the ten-year deadline. At a dinner in Ottawa following the passage of the Terms through Parliament, he reassured his hosts that British Columbia had not made a "Jewish bargain," and being now part of the Canadian body politic, the province would be loathe to demand its "pound of flesh." *British Columbia and the Pacific Railway: Complimentary Dinner to the Hon. Mr. Trutch, Surveyor-General of British Columbia, given at the Russell House, Ottawa, on Monday, 10th April, 1871,* (Montreal: Gazette, 1871), 9.

22 Macdonald was in Washington as part of the British delegation negotiating a new fisheries treaty with the Americans. The absence of references in his papers suggests that he had little involvement in the British Columbia debate.

the governing party, the admission of British Columbia was simply the culmination of the road to nationhood embarked upon at Charlottetown in 1864. Cartier reminded the house that the former Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, had predicted as early as 1858 that the colonies of British North America would one day form a united empire from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and he marvelled at the speed with which Lytton's prediction had been accomplished. The progress of the Dominion evoked favourable comparisons with the American experience: expansion to the Pacific had taken the Americans six decades, Cartier remarked, but Canada had accomplished it in less than ten years, indeed in less than five.[23] Canada's development ought to mirror or even overtake that of the United States, for it was the new Dominion's duty and destiny to establish a British empire in North America.[24] If a transcontinental empire was the "ulterior object" of Confederation, as Postmaster General Alexander Campbell suggested on introducing the Terms of Union in the Senate on 3 April 1871, certainly the admission of British Columbia was integral to the success of the project.[25]

The supporters of the Terms of Union looked beyond expansion to the Pacific. Cartier's speech only briefly alluded to the purpose for which Canada should acquire a Pacific seaboard. English history, he suggested, demonstrated the "splendid position" that could be achieved through maritime power, and access to the Pacific was critical "if ever this Dominion was to be a powerful nation in the future."[26] In conversation with the British Columbia delegates, Cartier had expressed his belief that Quebec, as a manufacturing centre, and British Columbia, as the inlet for the Pacific trade, would become the most important sections of the Dominion, and his Montreal organ, *La Minerve*, was quick to develop the theme of maritime commercial power.[27] The day after the British Columbia resolutions were introduced in the House, *La Minerve* reprinted its editorial of 26 May 1869, when Parliament had contemplated the purchase of Rupert's Land. The editorial's imagery echoed that of Dawson's poem:

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23 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, 1871* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1871), 663. Newspapers favourable to the Terms also recalled Lytton's prediction. "After the vote …," *Daily News* (Kingston) (31 March 1871), 2, col. 3; "The Pacific Railway," *Times* (Ottawa) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

24 See, for example, the speeches of Col. John Hamilton Gray, Hector-Louis Langevin, and William Miller. Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 692, 700; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871*, 179.

25 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 151-2.

26 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 663.

27 Quoted in John Sebastian Helmcken, Dorothy Blakey Smith, ed., *The Reminiscences of Doctor John Sebastian Helmcken* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975), 358.

> Le Nord-Ouest n'est aujourd'hui qu'un vaste désert et la solitude est la seule compagne de cette nature sauvage; mais attendons. Le Nord-Ouest, c'est la grandeur et la richesse, c'est l'empire du commerce; c'est le dernier trait-d'union entre l'Europe et l'Asie; c'est le chemin de l'or australien des shawls, du cashmere [sic], des diamants de Golconde, des soies de la Chine, des épices du Malabar et des Moluques, etc. Une immense activité mettra un jour Victoria en rapport journalier avec Montréal et les nations, pour trafiquer, devront débarquer chez nous.[28]

The future lay with trade, the editorial continued, and the trade routes to the Orient had long determined the fate of western nations. Victoria, a thousand miles closer to China and two thousand miles closer to Japan, would soon overshadow San Francisco as Asia's port of entry just as Alexandria had displaced Petra, Tyre, Palmyra, and Constantinople.[29] *Le Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe* also believed that the Pacific Railway would become the favoured route to Asia, and, though less effusive in its support for the Terms than its Montreal and St-Hyacinthe contemporaries, *Le Nouveau monde* of Quebec City also stated that the admission of British Columbia offered to Canada "l'espérance d'obtenir le contrôle d'une partie du commerce de l'Asie avec l'Europe."[30]

Conservative MPs and newspapers from Ontario also looked forward to Canada's emergence as the world's leading commercial power. The member for Russell County, Dr. James Alexander Grant, spoke in terms very similar to *La Minerve*. Like the nations of classical antiquity and more recent commercial centres, British Columbia was destined to become the new centre of Asian trade. When he considered the geography of the Strait of Georgia basin, Grant saw a series of harbours "set apart by a special Providence as a depot for the shipping of the East, and as an entrance to the great highway of all nations across the British American continent."[31] The Ottawa *Free Press* suggested that the construction of a "British Pacific Road" was "not only essential to the union of British Columbia, but to the [securing] to this country that trade with the real Orient which its position entitles it to expect, and which will be of more value than it is now possible to estimate."[32] The national prosperity that Oriental trade would bring was worth the price the British Columbians

28 "La Colombie et le chemin du Pacifique," *La Minerve* (Montreal) (29 March 1871), 2, col. 2-5.

29 Ibid.

30 "La division qui a eu lieu …, " *Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe* (11 April 1871), 3, col. 3-4; "Annexion de la Colombie anglaise," *Le Nouveau monde* (Quebec) (3 April 1871), 1, col. 3.

31 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 675.

32 "British Columbia in the House of Commons and Senate," *Free Press* (Ottawa) (31 March 1871), 2, col. 1.

demanded. Equally enthused was Alexander Morris. The Inland Revenue minister and member for Lanark South had been among the earliest proponents of transcontinental Confederation. His 1858 lecture on "The Hudson's Bay and Pacific Territories" foresaw the emergence of a "Great Britannic Empire of the North" that would become the thoroughfare for the trade of China and Japan.[33] In the Commons in 1871, Morris reiterated his contention that a transcontinental railway would serve not only to unite the new Dominion, but would also ensure Canada's commercial supremacy.[34]

For some years Maritimers had eagerly anticipated that the trade of the Orient flowing into British North America through British Columbia would flow out through Halifax and St John.[35] Cartier had predicted that the merchant communities of the lower provinces would make common cause with the British Columbians, and indeed many Maritime MPs and newspapers came out in favour of the British Columbia resolutions.[36] The member for the City of St John, former New Brunswick premier Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, spoke to the commercial benefits for eastern Canadian ports. He argued that, unlike a railway that ended at the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains, as some in the opposition proposed, an interoceanic line would capture not only local but also through traffic, and this trade could only benefit the terminal cities of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic seaboard.[37] Another maritime Father of Confederation, Sir Charles Tupper of Nova Scotia, argued that the Canadian railway, unlike the American, would travel through fertile territory and would reduce the journey between China and Great Britain by 1000 miles.[38] Maritime newspapers sympathetic to the federal ministry also saw the Canadian national destiny in global terms. "We have entered upon an era of great public works," predicted the Halifax *Daily Reporter*, "all tending to give British North America its true position in the British Empire as the great central link uniting the three Islands that constitute the 'Motherland' with those great dependencies of India, Australasia and New Zealand and forming the great highway over which traffic and travel to and from these dependencies shall pass by the shortest and

33 Alexander Morris, *Nova Britannia: or Our New Canadian Dominion Foreshadowed* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1884), 88.

34 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 714.

35 An early example is T.T. Vernon Smith's 1859 lecture before the St. John Mechanics' Institute, which enumerated the commodities of the Orient that would flow over a proposed transcontinental network of railways and waterways tributary to the New Brunswick port. T. T. Vernon Smith, *The Pacific Railway, and the claims of Saint John, New Brunswick, to be the Atlantic terminus read before the Mechanics' Institute of Saint John, February 7, 1859* (St John: W.L. Avery, 1859), 19-20, 28-9.

36 Quoted in Helmcken, *Reminiscences,* 358.

37 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871*, 668, 671. One Anglophone Quebec newspaper also noted the prosperity the railway would give to that city. "The position of the Opposition...," *Quebec Mercury* (31 March 1871), 2, col. 2.

38 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 757.

speediest route."[39] The Halifax *British Colonist* also noted the importance of the railway for imperial unity and trade, and believed that Britain would subsidize the railway as both a military and commercial undertaking. British and Canadian subsidies would encourage investment, and the completed railway would "advance these young countries to the foremost position among the commercial communities of the world."[40]

In the upper chamber, senators reiterated both rosy visions of Canada's commercial ascendance and dire predictions of what might transpire were the Terms rejected. Peter Mitchell of New Brunswick foresaw Canada's emergence as a great maritime power within a decade, while James Skead of Ontario warned that if British Columbia were not admitted on the Terms presented, Canada would lose access to "the carrying trade of China and Japan."[41] It was Nova Scotia senator William Miller, however, who presented the most detailed articulation of the commercialist view of the British Columbia Terms of Union. In the longest speech delivered during the three-day senate debate on the Terms, Miller suggested that, while British Columbia's own resources were considerable, the colony's greatest contribution to Canada and the Empire would be the opening of a British Pacific seaboard to Asian commerce. Like James Grant and *La Minerve*, Miller looked to history to illustrate the benefits of commerce to a national economy. Citing an "able" yet anonymous author, he observed that since antiquity Oriental commodities had been a source of great wealth to the communities that trafficked in them. The transcontinental thoroughfare would be of particular value to the Maritimes. With its mighty capital poised to become "the great Atlantic depot of the trade of the East," Miller speculated that the name of Nova Scotia might one day stand alongside Phoenicia, Rome, and Arabia. It was to secure the trade of the Orient that Canada undertook its "especial mission" to unite British North America from coast to coast.[42]

While the commercialists shared many common ideas, they adapted their approaches to their various audiences. Miller's speech was calculated to appeal not only to Maritimers but also to imperialists, for he saw the emergence of Canada as the entrepôt of the Indies in imperial as well as national terms. He was supported in this view of the railway as an imperial necessity by the writings of Viscount Bury, the British MP and former Canadian Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who had written extensively on the economics of railways and believed that British trade with the Pacific must be carried through the North American colonies.[43] *La Minerve* had also cited Bury, but the Montreal paper recognized the necessity of making the prospect of a transcontinental empire

39 "Marching On," *Daily Reporter and Times* (Halifax) (1 April 1871), 2, col. 1.
40 "Our Ottawa Letter," *British Colonist* (Halifax) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 3.
41 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 243-4.
42 Ibid., 179.
43 Quoted in Ibid., 177.

attractive to French Canadians.[44] In its editorial of 3 April, after the Commons had ratified the resolutions, *La Minerve* not only reiterated its faith that Canada would dominate the trade of the Indies, but also credited French Canadians with having originated and fulfilled the idea of a transcontinental nation. La Salle, Beauharnois, and Varennes had proposed it as early as the seventeenth century, and it was Cartier, "un premier ministre canadien," and "une courageuse phalange de Canadiens-Français intelligents," who had ensured that the idea would reach fruition.[45] Cartier himself linked the admission of British Columbia with the national aspirations of French Canada in a speech at a banquet for Joseph Trutch.[46] One Anglophone paper melded *La Minerve*'s French Canadian interpretation with the British imperialist view. According to the *Ottawa Times*, the railway was a significant imperial concern, insofar as it would strengthen Great Britain's military and commercial position in the Pacific. However, in recounting Cartier's speech at Trutch's banquet, the paper deemed it noteworthy that the opening of a western route to Asia would be the work of a "lineal descendant" of Jacques Cartier, who had also sought "Oriental splendour" up the St. Lawrence.[47] In the centuries-old quest for the Northwest Passage, the commercialists found common ground for French and English Canadians.

La Minerve's appeals to see the admission of British Columbia as the culmination of a long history of Canadian progress were not, of course, shared by all French Canadian commentators. A rival Montreal paper, *Le Franc-Parleur*, argued that in considering only the commercial side of the Terms, the government would increase the national debt and thus compromise Canada's future.[48] In the House of Commons, the most vocal French Canadian opponent of the Terms of Union was Henri-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, ironically the man Wilfrid Laurier would later appoint as British Columbia's Lieutenant-Governor. Ever fond of illustrating his contentions with the fables of Lafontaine, Joly compared the Canadian expansionists with the frog who, aspiring to be as large as an ox, inhaled air until he exploded.[49] He ridiculed in particular the

44 "La Colombie et le chemin du Pacifique," *La Minerve* (Montreal) (29 March 1871), 2, col. 2-5.

45 "L'admission de la Colombie Anglaise," *La Minerve* (Montreal) (3 April 1871), 2, col. 3-4.

46 *British Columbia and the Pacific Railway,* 4.

47 "'The Star of Empire Glitters in the West'," *Times* (Ottawa) (13 April 1871), 2, col. 1-2.

48 Adolphe Ouimet, "La Colombie Anglaise et le chemin de fer du Pacifique," *Le Franc-Parleur* (Montreal) (6 April 1871), 314-16.

49 In the Confederation Debates in the Canadian provincial legislature, Joly had used a Lafontaine fable about an overburdened donkey to draw attention to the tax burden the union of the colonies would impose. Lafontaine's frog and ox fable was also paraphrased by at least three western Ontario newspapers in their coverage of the British Columbia debate. Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 696; Azjenstat, et al., eds., *Canada's Founding Debates,* 138-9; "British Columbia," *Owen Sound Advertiser* (6 April 1871), 2, col.2; "An Outrageous Proposition," *Norfolk Reformer* (Simcoe) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1; "The Dominion Parliament," *Weekly Dispatch* (St Thomas) (6 Apr 1871), 2, col. 1-2.

notion that Canada might become a highway to Asia. "It was very fortunate," he observed sarcastically, "[that] the Pacific made a boundary to the land to be annexed, although it was true [that] China and Japan were beyond, and perhaps the Pacific might yet be made a Canadian sea."[50]

Joly was joined by English Canadians in dismissing the notion of a Canadian empire built on commerce. The Toronto *Globe* acknowledged that Canadians were interested in Eastern trade and were therefore willing to offer prudent and economical inducements to British Columbia.[51] Others in the English Canadian opposition were less charitable. For Montreal Centre MP Thomas Workman, the notion that merchants would send Oriental goods over the Pacific Railway was ridiculous because long distance travel by rail would damage fragile items.[52] Robert Dickey, a Nova Scotia senator, generally supportive of the British Columbia resolutions, had to concede that while some light luxury goods might travel from Asia to Europe through Canada, most commodities would continue to travel by sea.[53] Quebec senator John Sewall Sanborn used the proponents' classical illustrations to a different end: as Alexander the Great had found eventually that there was no more world left to conquer, so it would be for Canada's would-be expansionists. When Sanborn recalled Lord Elgin's observation that "a Yankee would not be content with the Garden of Eden but would go westward," he alluded to another contention of the opposition, that expansion to the Pacific to rival the United States was not only economically untenable, it was also un-Canadian. William Miller might profess that Canadian expansionism had goals more just and more noble than mere self-aggrandizement, but both Thomas Workman and Ontario Senator William McMaster saw in the resolutions and the speeches of their proponents a "spread-eagleism" more characteristic of American than Canadian nationalism.[54] The *Norfolk Reformer* ironically alluded to Jonathan Sewall's oft-quoted motto of American manifest destiny, "No pent up Utica contracts our powers," in its denunciation of the imperial delusions of the government. The Bowmanville, Ontario, *Canadian Statesman* compared the admission of British Columbia to the recent American purchase of Alaska, both examples of "'extension of territory' mania of the worst form."[55] In Loyalist Ontario, no

50 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 696.

51 "The British Columbia Resolutions," *Globe* (Toronto) (30 March 1871), 2, col. 1.

52 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 723.

53 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 200.

54 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 723; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 247.

55 "No Pent Up Utica," *Norfolk Reformer* (Simcoe) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 3; "The rulers at Ottawa...," *Canadian Statesman* (Bowmanville) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1. Sewall's 1778 epilogue to Joseph Addison's play, *Cato*, juxtaposed Cato the Younger's opposition to the excesses of Julius Caesar, which was Addison's setting, with the new American Republic's resistence to the tyranny of Great Britain. It concluded that Washington might aspire to an empire encompassing "the whole boundless continent," unlike Cato, confined to his "pent-

comment against a policy could be so damning as the suggestion that it reeked of Americanism.

Opponents of the Terms argued that the ministry's American precedents were not apt because British Columbia and the American West were at different stages of development. Senator David Wark of New Brunswick observed that there was already a substantial population and a rich economy in California before the Americans contemplated a railway.[56] David Mills, the Liberal member for Bothwell, Ontario, raised the same objection, as did the secessionist Halifax *Morning Chronicle*.[57] To the opposition, British Columbia lacked a critical feature necessary for nation-building, namely the presence of, or even the potential to attract, a significant and permanent population. The mining colony's population was composed largely of transient sojourners, who rarely stayed long in one location and felt no compunction against quitting British Columbia when the mines ceased to be profitable. For Canadians, as for others, mining was a valuable pursuit insofar as it garnered attention for new fields for colonization, but it was not in itself a viable economic foundation for a new nation.[58] A railway intended to carry through-traffic was a purely speculative venture and no more a suitable basis for national stability than gold mining. Agriculture alone was the basis for lasting prosperity. The Canada the opposition envisioned was a nation of thrifty yeoman farmers, with a fiscally prudent legislature constituted strictly upon the principle of representation by population to protect them from the excesses of corrupt ministers and monopolistic corporations. Richard Cartwright, for example, recalled in his memoirs that the independent farmers of Ontario "answered very nearly to the class of old English yeomen," as the epitome of civic virtue and the bulwark of democracy against the onslaught of urban commercial oligarchy, and others in the opposition also commented on the salutary influence of the freeholding agricultural

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up Utica." The *Reformer* also quoted from Fitz-Greene Halleck's popular poem, "Marco Bozzaris," comparing the expansionism of the government to the nocturnal delusions of Halleck's decadent Turk, whose dreams of empire and riches are foiled by the Greek hero Bozzaris. In seeking to contract the powers of an expansionist government, the Canadian opposition fulfilled the roles of Cato of Utica and Marco Bozzaris. Jonathan Sewall, "A New Epilogue to Cato," *New-Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth) (31 March 1778); Fitz-Greene Halleck, "Marco Bozzaris," in James Grant Wilson, ed., *The Poetical Writings of Fitz-Greene Halleck* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1869), 13-17.

56 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 224.

57 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 699; "Dominion Extravagance," *Morning Chronicle* (Halifax) (12 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

58 "An English gentleman...," *Globe* (Toronto) (5 September 1865), 2, col. 2-3. Even some of British Columbia's staunchest supporters had admitted that a "productive class" was necessary for long-term stability. See Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, *Speeches of Edward Lord Lytton,* vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1874), 87; "Art. III: British Columbia and Vancouver Island," *North British Review* 35 (1861): 66-7.

class on national political life.[59] When British Columbia and its Terms and potential were assessed according to this conception of Canada, the Pacific colony was everything the new Dominion was not.

The alleged agricultural sterility of British Columbia underpinned much of the opposition to the Terms of Union, and the proponents of the resolutions worked vigorously to refute it. Although the commercialists had presented the British American West as a "passage to India," they also subscribed to the second great myth of the west, the myth of the "Garden of the World."[60] Lacking personal experience of the colony, politicians on both sides of the floor drew on anecdotal and published sources for their information about the colony's productivity. On the basis of Trutch's reports, Alexander Morris stated that British Columbia encompassed almost as much agricultural land as Ontario.[61] Nova Scotia senator Frank Smith contended that the colony was as fertile as Ireland, though he did not provide a source.[62] Peter Mitchell suggested that the proposed Bute Inlet route would pass for three hundred miles through a plateau so bountiful that horses could survive through the winter without fodder.[63] Others sidestepped the issue of British Columbia's fertility to emphasize its other resources. Cartier himself in introducing the resolutions suggested that the land offered to the railway company would be "not merely agricultural land, but mineral land," and *Le Journal des Trois-Rivières* noted the colony's mineral and timber wealth, citing Trutch as its source.[64] The Ottawa *Free Press* wrote of British Columbia's "fertile valleys," but also predicted that the new province

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59 Cartwright, *Reminiscences*, 340-1. For other appeals to the yeoman myth from opponents of the Terms of Union, see Edward Blake, "To Knights of Labour," in *Dominion Election Campaign of 1886. Hon. Edward Blake's Speeches. No. 12 (First Series)* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1886), 352; William M. Baker, *Timothy Warren Anglin, 1822-96: Irish Catholic Canadian* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 28; University of Western Ontario Library, David Mills Papers, B-4281-2, file 196, "Address at Victoria BC," 5 October 1899, 10; "Address re: Political Systems in Canada," (c.1893), 21; Azjenstat, et al., eds., *Canada's Founding Debates,* 137-8.

60 Henry Nash Smith and John Allen examine the place of these myths in the American imagination, while Doug Owram discusses the myth of the garden in the context of Canadian expansionism. John Logan Allen, *Passage through the Garden: Lewis and Clark and the Image of the American Northwest* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975); Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth,* Reissue ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden.*

61 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 714.

62 Ibid., 224.

63 Ibid., 238. Mitchell's source was Alfred Waddington, "On the Geography and Mountain Passes of British Columbia in Connection with an Overland Route," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 38 (1868): 118-28. What the senator failed to mention was that Waddington, as concessionaire of the Bute Inlet right-of-way, had a vested interest in promoting the Chilcotin route for the railway.

64 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 662; "Parmi les mesures ...," *Le Journal des Trois-Rivières* (17 April 1871), 2, col. 2.

would become an important market for Canadian grain.[65] Senator James Ferrier of Quebec drew attention to the colony's mines and fisheries, while William Miller, acknowledging the "uneven ground," spoke of rich supplies of coal and timber, as well as the prospect of a thriving trade in fish between British Columbia and Catholic South America.[66] In addition to its strategic importance for the Pacific trade, the commercialists saw in British Columbia the resources necessary for diverse economic pursuits, including agriculture.

For the opposition, however, the lack of agriculture loomed large. The member for Lambton County, Ontario, and future Liberal prime minister, Alexander Mackenzie, contended that the Pacific Slope was barren, a position corroborated by the colony's dependence on the neighbouring American states for its food supply.[67] In addition to trade statistics printed in the sessional papers, opponents of the Terms drew, albeit selectively, on the reports of Canadians who had first-hand knowledge of the far West. David Christie related to the Senate his recent personal conversation with Malcolm Cameron, the Sarnia politician and newspaperman who had visited the Pacific colonies in 1862. Cameron's initial reports from British Columbia to eastern newspapers had been favourable, emphasizing the colony's mineral wealth and dismissing Canadians who had returned home prematurely and now denigrated British Columbia's resources as "not worthy sons of the men who made Canada."[68] Indeed, like the Macdonald-Cartier government six years later, Cameron predicted in an 1865 speech that political unification of British North America would make Canada the great commercial emporium of the world.[69] However, as Christie emphasized, Cameron had been only lukewarm in his assessment of the colony's agricultural potential. While the demand created by the mining communities ensured prosperity for some farmers, Cameron remarked that "the country was never intended for a purely agricultural one."[70] In his conversation with Senator Christie nine years after his visit to the west, he stated that the only fertile lands in British Columbia were prone to flooding, while the uplands were sterile deserts of bunch grass. Moreover, Christie recalled, Canadian settlers in British Columbia had dismissed as overly optimistic even Cameron's most cautious assessments of British Columbia's agricultural fertility.[71]

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65 "The Wealth of British Columbia," *Free Press* (Ottawa) (13 April 1871), 1, col. 6-7.

66 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 172-3, 227.

67 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 672.

68 Quoted in "Hon. M. Cameron on British Columbia," *Globe* (Toronto) (14 November 1862), 2, col. 2.

69 Malcolm Cameron, *Lecture Delivered by the Hon. Malcolm Cameron to the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, the Lord Bishop of the Diocese in the Chair* (Montreal: G.E. Desbarats, 1865), 21.

70 Quoted in "Hon. M. Cameron on British Columbia," *Globe* (Toronto) (14 Nov 1862), 2, col. 2.

71 Quoted in Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 255

To the opponents of the Terms of Union, the government's suggestions that British Columbia would attract settlers, and consequently that sales of land in the province could finance railway construction, were absurd. "If you could not derive a revenue from the fertile lands [of Ontario and Quebec], how could you expect to do so from this miserable region of the West?" inquired Senator Benjamin Seymour. Timothy Warren Anglin, member for Gloucester County, New Brunswick, made much the same point, asking why settlers who would not take lands in Ontario would choose to settle in a "sea of mountains" where "it would be difficult to find those vast tracts of fertile country spoken of by hon. Members opposite."[72] In Anglin's view, perpetual landslides and avalanches would frustrate efforts to construct railways and farms in British Columbia's "sterile mountains" and gloomy canyons.[73] Another New Brunswicker, Senator William Hunter Odell, echoed these doubts, questioning why British Columbia, so attractive a country in the eyes of the government, had hitherto failed to attract settlers.[74] He pointed to the difficulties of clearing land, the exhaustion of the gold mines, and the improbability of a timber industry given that conifers as large as those on the west coast would splinter in falling.[75] For Quebec nationalists Antoine-Aime Dorion and Luc Letellier de St. Just, the money necessary to build "a railway in a barren and mountainous country" would be better spent to improve transportation networks in the proven agricultural districts of the St Lawrence Basin.[76] Given that even the Grand Trunk Railway, which passed through settled and civilized country, had failed to turn a profit, *Le Franc-Parleur* thought it easy to predict "la carrière brillante du 'grand Pacifique,' sillonnant les forêts et les déserts."[77] The Huntingdon *Canadian Gleaner*, which served the Anglophone population of southwestern Quebec and whose editor, Robert Sellar, was certainly no friend of French Canadian nationalism, had to

72 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 718, 720. The "sea of mountains" characterization was, of course, made famous by Edward Blake in his "Aurora speech" of 1874. While Blake spoke against the Terms as presented, he did not oppose the eventual annexation of British Columbia, and did not speak to its fertility and geography in this debate. Neither Blake nor Anglin coined the phrase. It first appears in reference to British Columbia in Milton and Cheadle's 1865 work, *The North-west Passage by Land*. Edward Blake, *Speech at Aurora Delivered October 3rd, 1874* (Montreal: Penny, Wilson, 1874), 7; William Fitzwilliam Milton and Walter B. Cheadle, *The North-West Passage by Land Being the Narrative of an Expedition from the Atlantic to the Pacific* (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, 1865), 391.

73 This characterization of British Columbia's geography does not appear in the official record of the Commons debate but it does appear in at least one press account of Anglin's speech. See "The Dominion Parliament," *Weekly Dispatch* (St Thomas) (4 April 1871), 2, col. 1-2.

74 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 264.

75 Ibid., 265.

76 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 165; Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 729.

77 Adolphe Ouimet, "La Colombie Anglaise et le chemin de fer du Pacifique," *Le Franc-Parleur* (Montreal) (6 April 1871), 316.

concur with the judgement of Dorion and Letellier. "A road of such a length can never pay during this century as a commercial speculation," the *Gleaner* wrote of the Pacific railway, "and no man would exchange a hundred acres of land on the banks of the St Lawrence for a thousand at the base of the Rocky Mountains."[78] Without an agricultural base, critics of the Terms of Union feared British Columbia would never enjoy significant population growth. Just as any Ontario county west of Hamilton was more productive than British Columbia, so the population of British Columbia was, and was likely to remain, smaller than that of the larger Canadian counties.[79]

The small size of the present and projected population of British Columbia was a significant concern for opponents of the Terms. The resolutions estimated British Columbia's population at 60,000 for the purposes of determining its per capita subsidy and parliamentary representation, and, accordingly, granted the province six members in the House of Commons. However, if British Columbia did have a population of 60,000, even by the most generous estimates only one quarter of that population was white, the rest comprising Aboriginal peoples and Chinese.[80] The British Columbia government was most concerned about the population estimate as it affected the subsidy.[81] The Canadian press and parliament, however, were most concerned about the apparent violation of the principle of representation by population. To Ontarians in particular, the constitutional violation, which followed a dangerous precedent established by the *Manitoba Act* the previous year, threatened to reignite sectional hostility.[82] The Goderich

78 "The Admission of British Columbia," *Canadian Gleaner* (Huntingdon) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 5-6.

79 "Hon. M. Cameron on British Columbia," *Globe* (Toronto) (14 November 1862), 2, col. 2; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 163.

80 Several estimates of the white population were posited, ranging from 10,000 to 17,000. Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871*, 665, 696, 718, 729; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871*, 153, 184, 220, 225; "The Confederation of British Columbia," *Daily Advertiser* (London) (30 March 1871), 2, col. 3; "A Hundred Million Dollars, and a Hundred Million More," *Huron Signal* (Goderich) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1; "The British Columbia Resolutions," *Globe* (Toronto) (30 March 1871), 2, col. 1.

81 The British Columbia delegation did not object to a reduction in the population estimate from Musgrave's proposal of 120,000 to 60,000 because Cartier determined another means of ensuring an appropriate subsidy. Concern over the per capita grant came to the fore again in the province's dispute over the validity of the 1891 census, and in proposed colonization schemes intended to increase the population and thereby boost the grant. Helmcken, *Reminiscences,* 348-9; Garth Stevenson, *Ex Uno Plures: Federal-Provincial Relations in Canada, 1867-1896* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 176; British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCA), GR-0441, Premier's Papers, Box 4, File 4, Item 579/96, Alexander Begg to Premier John Herbert Turner, 26 October 1896.

82 The Winnipeg *Manitoban* defended the representation formulae of both Manitoba and British Columbia on the grounds that the communities of the western frontier needed a full representation of their interests at Ottawa through their formative years. The paper also hoped the Terms would ensure the prompt completion of railway between Fort Garry and the east. Manitoba's

Huron Signal calculated that British Columbia would have one member of parliament for every 2,000 white citizens, while Ontario had but one member for every 20,000 citizens.[83] In his memoirs, Richard Cartwright, the member for Lennox, speculated that in admitting British Columbia the ministry had sought to compensate for projected electoral losses in the East with new, safely Conservative seats in the far West.[84] Grit papers in London and Simcoe also worried that the new provinces were intended as nothing more than rotten boroughs the governing party could use to overwhelm the new-found influence of Ontario.[85] In Parliament, member after member rose to challenge the representation formula.[86] In the Senate, Letellier also criticized the proposal to give British Columbia three senators, though Jean-Charles Chapais quickly pointed out that senate representation was sectional rather than proportional, and even Alexander Mackenzie was willing to allow some departure from the letter of the constitution in this area.[87]

Just below the surface of these impassioned defences of the principle of representation by population was a disagreement between opponents and supporters of the resolutions over the basis of political participation. For the commercialists, the preconditions for political representation were very different from those assumed by the opposition, as Governor Musgrave's justification for the proposed representation formula indicates. In a letter to Sir John Young, the Canadian Governor-General, explaining British Columbia's terms, Musgrave noted that a small population and small production rendered the colony dependent on imports. Such imports yielded greater customs revenue *per capita* than anywhere in the older provinces. Musgrave therefore argued that British Columbia's population estimate should be based upon the annual customs revenue in eastern Canada; as British Columbia had collected about $350,000 in customs duties the previous year, and as Canada's customs

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single member of the House of Commons, Donald Alexander Smith, voted in favour of the Terms and later presided over the completion of that railway as Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, president of the CPR. "British Columbia," *Weekly Manitoban* (Winnipeg) (29 April 1871), 2, col. 3.

83 "A Hundred Million Dollars, and a Hundred Million More," *Huron Signal* (Goderich) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

84 Richard J. Cartwright, *Reminiscences* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1912), 94.

85 "The Confederation of British Columbia," *Daily Advertiser* (London) (30 March 1871), 2, col. 3; "An Outrageous Proposition," *Norfolk Reformer* (Simcoe) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1-2. Two Quebec papers supported the Terms on precisely these grounds, arguing that the admission of new provinces was an acceptable means of establishing balance in the federal system as it would curb Ontario's influence and frustrate efforts to impose a legislative union. See "Annexion de la Colombie anglaise," *Le Nouveau monde* (Quebec) (3 Apr 1871), 1, col. 3; "The position of the Opposition …," *Quebec Mercury* (31 March 1871), 2, col. 2.

86 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 666, 672, 680, 698, 702, 727; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 164, 250, 257.

87 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 163, 202; Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 672.

revenues were $2.75 *per capita*, the colony's consuming public was worth as much to the Dominion treasury as 120,000 eastern Canadians. Thus, the exact population was irrelevant, and British Columbia should "come into the Union with the privileges, as she relinquished the Revenue, of 120,000 of the population of the Dominion."[88] While Musgrave's despatch was printed in the 1871 Canadian *Sessional Papers*, making it available to proponents and opponents of the Terms alike, Canadian politicians were reluctant to follow his logic, arguing instead that immigration would quickly correct British Columbia's excess representation, or that competing local interests within the colony demanded more than one member of parliament.[89] However, at least one Ontario newspaper favourable to the Terms did agree with Musgrave that wealth, area, and "varied interests" should be given weight alongside population when determining parliamentary entitlements.[90]

What Musgrave advocated, and the Terms embodied in fact if not in spirit, was political representation based not on population or property ownership but on consumption and taxation, that is, on participation in a commercial rather than an agricultural economy. Indeed, Musgrave had informed the Colonial Office in 1870 of the impossibility of a property qualification in British Columbia, and the *British Columbia Government Act* of that year enshrined in law his recommendation that the franchise be extended to all male British subjects irrespective of property ownership.[91] For the opposition, however, permanent landed settlement, almost certainly agricultural, was the only basis for political participation. In their view, agriculture determined not only the size but also the moral quality of a population.[92] Governor Musgrave himself gave the opposition ample evidence that the nature of British Columbia's economy indeed produced moral degradation. "The white inhabitants," Musgrave had written to Governor-General Young, "are chiefly male adults of wasteful and expensive habits," and the Canadian opposition seized upon this characterization.[93] For David Christie,

88 PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 11, Musgrave to Sir John Young, 20 February 1870.

89 Canada. Parliament, *Sessional Papers* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1871), no.18, 2; Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 661-2, 692; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 153, 228, 259.

90 "The Parliamentary Representation of British Columbia," *Times* (Ottawa) (31 March 1871), 2, col. 2.

91 PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 20, Musgrave to Granville, 23 Feb 1870.

92 Adele Perry argues that British Columbia's social and racial composition challenged Victorian moral ideals, and she suggests that the failure of the colony to evolve from a mining outpost into an agricultural society perpetuated its moral marginalization. Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 3-19.

93 PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 11, Musgrave to Young, 20 February 1870. Musgrave also believed the people of British Columbia were as yet unfit for responsible government, and a significant portion of the Confederation debate in the British Columbia Legislature was spent interpreting and refuting his assessment. PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 20, Musgrave to Granville, 23 February 1870; Azjenstat et al., eds., *Canada's Founding Debates,* 23-55.

it was incomprehensible that a population whose own Governor described them so should enjoy so disproportionate a parliamentary representation.[94] Benjamin Seymour of Ontario thought the representation provisions an insult to the people of his own province, who more closely fit the agrarian ideal of citizenship. "I cannot see the fairness," Seymour told the Senate, "in giving some 10,000 whites, represented as being of wasteful and extravagant habits, three members in the senate whilst Ontario, with two millions, representing a sturdy yeomanry, an industrious population, not a people of wasteful and extravagant habits, has only twenty-four members in the same branch."[95] A people so un-Canadian in their morality were only fit for an un-Canadian form of government. William Macdougall, the Member for Lanark North, whose own brother had experienced disappointment in the British Columbia gold fields, made this clear when he stated that "it was absurd that the future destiny of [British Columbia] was in the hands of a few adventurers who were mining there."[96] Senator Sanborn thought it humiliating that "a country like [Canada], enjoying responsible Government and representative institutions for many years — with a superior system of colleges and schools, with a territory and resources in a high stage of development," should have terms dictated to it by a despotism such as British Columbia.[97] For those opponents of the Terms who did accept the principle of extending the Dominion's boundaries to the Pacific, the American model of territorial administration was preferable, both economically and politically, to the admission of full provinces in the West. Inexpensive to administer and represented only by a non-voting delegate, territories were only admitted to statehood when they reached a certain population threshold and a concomitant level of infrastructure development and political maturity.[98]

If the opposition saw the white population as degraded by their economic circumstances, they were even more indignant at the suggestion that Aboriginal peoples be included in the population for the purpose of calculating subsidies and parliamentary representation. This was further evidence of the government's intention to undermine representation by population; why else, the opponents wondered, should British Columbia's Indians be included in the population estimates if Ontario's were not?[99] Musgrave acknowledged that the population included "a large number of Indians," but he also noted

94 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 252.

95 Ibid., 220.

96 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 725; "British Columbia: Letter from a Toronto Miner," *Daily Leader* (Toronto) (20 November 1862), 2, col. 4.

97 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 184. Sanborn's characterization of British Columbia as a "despotism" referred, of course, to the absence of representative and responsible government in the colony.

98 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 666; Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 251-2.

99 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 672, 698.

that they were consumers.[100] If one accepted his contention that contribution to revenue was an appropriate basis for representation, and if the Aboriginal population participated in a taxable market economy, then there was, ironically enough, no contradiction in including Aboriginal peoples in the representation formula.[101] Proponents of the Terms echoed Musgrave's assessment of the colony's native peoples. Both Cartier and Public Works Minister Hector-Louis Langevin characterized the Aboriginal population as civilized subjects engaged in useful occupations.[102] The opposition, however, mocked the government's presentation of the Aboriginal population. According to Cartier, the *Canadian Gleaner* reported sarcastically, the native inhabitants were "not wild Indians . . . but Indians like those of Caughnawaga."[103] Senator Christie suggested instead that the Indians in question were "perfectly worthless," and, according to Arthur Harvey's *Statistical Account of British Columbia*, contributed nothing to the labour force.[104] The most damning assessment of British Columbia's racial composition came, however, from the Halifax *Morning Chronicle*, which warned that "the 'fellow countrymen' we would meet at the end of the [Pacific railway] would be mostly Digger Indians and 'Heathen Chinees'."[105] While the prospect of having "heathen Chinees" as compatriots was probably offensive enough to white Canadian sensibilities, the American term "Digger Indian" connoted all that was undesirable about the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Slope.[106] Lazy, dirty, and simian to the settler's eye, the Digger Indians of California were seen as the lowest, most degraded form of humanity, much lower in the hierarchy of races than the First Nations to the east of the continental divide.[107] In Canada, the distance between the Aboriginal peoples of the east and the Diggers was illus-

100 PRO, CO 60, /38, no. 11, Musgrave to Young, 20 February 1870.

101 There was, of course, no question of extending the franchise to Aboriginal peoples, or of allowing Aboriginal subjects to stand for Parliament.

102 "The Commons," *Ottawa Citizen* (29 March 1871), 2, col. 3; Canada. House of Commons, *Debates*, 1871, 700.

103 "The Admission of British Columbia," *Canadian Gleaner* (Huntingdon) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 5-6.

104 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 252; Arthur Harvey, *Statistical Account of British Columbia* (Ottawa: G.E. Desbarats, 1867), 9.

105 "British Columbia," *Morning Chronicle* (Halifax) (3 April 1871), 2, col. 1. In addition to its strident dismissal of the Aboriginal population, this article is the only one I have found that addresses, however briefly, the undesirability of British Columbia's Chinese element, and thus foreshadows the rise of the "Oriental Question" to national prominence beginning in the 1880s. For more on Asian stereotypes in Canada, see W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), 3-22.

106 Allan Lönnberg, "The Digger Indian Stereotype in California," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 3, no. 2 (1981): 215-6.

107 Ibid., 219; William Penn Adair, "The Indian Territory in 1878," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 4, no. 3 (1926): 258-9.

trated succinctly by John Charlton, the Liberal Member for Norfolk North, when he asserted in Parliament in 1890 that, "if I am to be compared to an Indian, I would rather be compared to an Iroquois [an Eastern people] than to a Digger Indian."[108] While colonialism had transformed the "Indians of Caughnawaga" into farmers, the Digger Indians with whom the *Morning Chronicle* populated British Columbia were not agriculturalists but "[grabbled] for wild roots, and [had] a general fondness for dirt."[109] In California, the degradation of the Digger Indian justified expansion and dispossession. For Canadian opponents of the British Columbia Terms of Union, the presence of degraded western Aboriginal peoples, combined with the lax mores of the settler population and the sterility of the soil to present British Columbia as quintessentially un-Canadian space.

Aside from the un-Canadian nature of British Columbia's geography and population, the opponents of the Terms of Union also focussed on the motives of the government in endorsing the resolutions. The arguments they chose echoed a long tradition of agrarian, or civic republican, suspicions of the excesses of the commercial class. As Peter Smith has argued, the use of patronage was the main point of contention between agrarian and commercial interests in the pre-Confederation Province of Canada, and concerns about patronage animated the opponents of the British Columbia Terms.[110] Increasing the size of the union could only increase the scope for government patronage, and indeed the opposition contended that this had been the cynical aim of Confederation in the first place. "Injurious as has been the effect of Confederation to the best interests of this province," opined the *Canadian Gleaner*, "it has yielded rich fruits to Cartier and his colleagues. It has enriched and aggrandized them in every way. They look for greater results from this admission of British Columbia."[111] After all, the paper predicted, the Pacific Railway would provide considerably more opportunities for corruption than the Intercolonial Railway, a remarkably prescient observation considering the scandal that would sweep the government from office two years later. The Bowmanville *Canadian Statesman* was much more succinct, worrying what might become of the country "should the schemes of Sir John, Sir George, and their hords [sic] of leeches on the public chest, not be decisively vetoed by the people."[112]

The opposition was particularly concerned that the principal beneficiaries of the government's new railway patronage would be large private interests.

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108 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, 1890* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1890), 657.

109 O.P Fitzgerald, *California Sketches* (Nashville, TN: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1883), Chapter Two. <www.books-about-california.com/Pages/California_Sketches_2/CA_Sketches_2_Chpt_02.html>, (viewed 6 November 2005).

110 Smith, "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation," 55.

111 "The Admission of British Columbia," *Canadian Gleaner* (Huntingdon) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 5-6.

112 "The rulers at Ottawa ...," *Canadian Statesman* (Bowmanville) (6 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

Fear of corporate capitalism had been a strong feature of pre-Confederation reform ideology, as Allan Greer has demonstrated, and the prospect of a privately-constructed but state-subsidized transcontinental railway rejuvenated these concerns.[113] Where the proponents of the union and of the railway saw the fulfillment of the dream of the Northwest Passage, the opposition remembered a previous gamble on the value of Pacific trade, the South Sea Bubble of 1720, in which rampant speculation had ruined many an investor.[114] Now the investor that faced ruin was the State. Numerous politicians and newspapers feared that cost overruns in the construction of the Pacific railway would drive the Dominion to bankruptcy. Aside from the ministers who would profit from patronage, the only beneficiaries of the railway speculation would be large capitalists, who would receive substantial land grants to finance the project. The government presented the proposed land grants as a means of financing railway construction without spending public funds, but the opposition saw it as a massive giveaway of public property to private interests. Richard Cartwright, for example, warned that the grants were equal in area to several American states. Senator Letellier and Oxford North, Ontario, MP, Thomas Oliver, opposed granting the best land in the Northwest Territories to a private corporation, while the Halifax *Morning Chronicle* spoke of "whole provinces to be given away to private capitalists as a guarantee to build a railroad that will not pay its working expenses for fifty years!"[115] Aside from the economic cost, some also saw in the rise of corporate power a threat to Canadian liberty. David Mills, in an article published the year after the Terms of Union debate, warned that railway companies such as the Canadian Pacific were enemies of popular government and suggested that nationalization might be the only solution.[116] The anti-corporate sentiment that inspired opposition to the railway scheme, also led the leader of the opposition to dismiss the economic attractions of British Columbia. "The gold mines have certainly proved remunerative," granted Alexander Mackenzie, "but they are carried on by large companies," so presumably little of the wealth they produced went to the ordinary miner.[117]

113 Greer, "Historical Roots of Canadian Democracy," 18-22.

114 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 166.

115 Canada. Senate, *Debates, 1871,* 162; Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 717; "Dominion Extravagance," *Morning Chronicle* (Halifax) (12 April 1871), 2, col. 1.

116 David Mills, "Railway Reform: the Canadian Pacific Railway," *Canadian Monthly and National Review* 2 (1872): 437.

117 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1871,* 672. Mackenzie no doubt recalled Cariboo gold rush-era reports in the eastern press that development of the mines required considerable capital, and he echoed a longstanding concern that this would exclude the free miner. "British Columbia," *London Free Press* (30 April 1862), 2, col. 1; "Late from Vancouver Island (Correspondence of the Leader)," *Daily Leader* (Toronto) (6 August 1862), 2, col. 3; "British Columbia," *Daily Leader* (Toronto) (25 August 1862); "British Columbia," *Novascotian* (Halifax) (8 December 1862), 1, col. 5.

The virtuous Ontario yeoman who settled in British Columbia, unable to draw a living from the land, could only hope to become the degraded wage slave of a mining conglomerate.

The opposition's arguments failed ultimately to influence the will of Parliament. The division in the Commons was 91 in favour (56.9 percent) to 69 opposed, while in the Senate the resolutions were passed by a slightly larger margin of 36 (63.2 percent) to 21. However, a comparison of the Commons vote to a division on the purchase of Rupert's Land in 1869 illustrates just how divided Canadian opinion was concerning the British Columbia Terms. No roll call exists for the vote on the Rupert's Land purchase, but what has survived is a roll call on an unfriendly amendment to the resolution. Proposed and seconded by two members from Nova Scotia, one of whom was the son of a prominent anti-Confederate, the amendment characterized the Northwest as "a Territory likely to involve this Dominion in a heavy expense without any prospect of adequate remuneration."[118] The Commons rejected this contention by an overwhelming majority of 121 to 15. Those who voted in favour of the amendment, and thus against the annexation of Rupert's Land, apparently opposed territorial expansion generally, for they all voted against the British Columbia Terms two years later.[119] However, many of the most vocal opponents of the British Columbia Terms had not only opposed the amendment to the Rupert's Land resolutions, but had spoken passionately in favour of the purchase. Alexander Mackenzie, though opposed to continued rights for the monopolist Hudson's Bay Company in the Northwest, nevertheless believed the Prairie West was a valuable acquisition.[120] Alexander Tilloch Galt noted the "new field of duty" that the cession of the Hudson's Bay territories opened for Canada.[121] Opposition politicians did object strenuously to certain provisions of the *Manitoba Act* of 1870, and their particular concern about Manitoba's parliamentary representation presaged their opposition to the British Columbia Terms the following year.[122] Despite his misgivings, however, Alexander Mackenzie recognized the necessity of organizing a Canadian administration for the Red River settlement and was willing to see the Manitoba bill pass

118 Canada. House of Commons, *Journals of the House of Commons* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1869), 145.

119 Nine Quebeckers, five Nova Scotians, and one New Brunswicker voted in favour of the amendment. All of the Quebeckers and the lone New Brunswicker were Liberals, while three of the Nova Scotians were former anti-Confederates who had joined the Liberals rather than follow Joseph Howe to the government benches.

120 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, 1869* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 490-1.

121 Ibid., 492.

122 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, 1870* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 1305-6; Owram, *Promise of Eden,* 97-8.

without opposition.[123] The cases of Rupert's Land and Manitoba demonstrate that opponents of the British Columbia Terms of Union were not motivated by a generalized antipathy toward territorial expansion, for they strongly supported the integration of the Prairie West into the Dominion.

It is not, of course, surprising that the agrarians supported the purchase of the Northwest. As Doug Owram has demonstrated, an old perception of the Prairie West as a desert was replaced by the 1860s with a vision of a fertile field for the settlement of Canada's surplus population.[124] The reformers dominated the emerging expansionist movement and hoped to replicate on the Prairies the virtuous yeoman society they believed existed in rural Ontario. "We hope to see a new Upper Canada in the North-west Territory," opined the *Globe*, "a new Upper Canada in its well-regulated society and government — in its education, morality, and religion."[125] The Prairie West offered the promise of agrarian utopia, a utopia that Canada could refashion in her own image. The commercialists also supported the purchase of Rupert's Land, but for different reasons. Cartier shared the agrarians' view of the Prairies as an outlet for surplus population, but he also believed the acquisition would further Canada's commercial destiny. With the Northwest annexed to the Dominion, British Columbia's admission was imminent, and a Canadian transcontinental railway would soon carry "the trades of the east."[126] John Alexander Grant spoke of Canada's centrality in the new global system. "We here in Ottawa," he claimed, "are geographically and politically in the very heart of the world, equidistant from Europe on the one side, and Asia on the other; and the reasons why we should, and must, in the course of time, have a Pacific road of our own, are self-evident."[127] Thus, the Northwest could be all things to all people; the Prairie West was both the passage to the Orient and the Garden of the World, and this explains the near-unanimity of Parliament regarding the desirability of its annexation. William McDougall had presented the acquisition of the Northwest as critical to the completion of Confederation, and promised that he and other reformers would remain in the coalition government "until the work they had undertaken was completed."[128] Similarly, Timothy Anglin, the New Brunswick anti-Confederate,

123 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1870,* 1504. The British Columbia Terms of Union debate was also considerably more contentious than the debate on the Prince Edward Island Terms two years later, in which speakers praised the Island's fertility and accepted the Terms unanimously. See F.W.P. Bolger, "The Coy Maiden Resists, 1867-1872," in F.W.P. Bolger, ed., *Canada's Smallest Province: A History of Prince Edward Island* (Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Prince Edward Island 1973 Centennial Commission, 1973), 227.

124 Owram, *Promise of Eden,* Chapter Two.

125 "Prospects in the West," *Globe* (Toronto) (2 June 1869), 2, col. 1.

126 Canada. House of Commons, *Debates, 1869,* 484-5.

127 Ibid., 500.

128 Ibid., 486, 489, 491.

decided to make the most of the new order and supported the Rupert's Land purchase.[129] British Columbia presented no such imperative, and its admission appealed only to the commercial aspirations of the governing party. After the bi-partisanship of the Rupert's Land debate, the division on the British Columbia Terms reflected a hardening of party allegiances.

In 1871, the commercialists' conception of Canada carried the day, and British Columbia was admitted to Confederation with the hope that the barques of "the gorgeous East" would soon ply the province's harbours and the transhipment of their wares would enrich the entire nation. Since Confederation, the dichotomy between agriculture and commerce has underpinned not only eastern perceptions of British Columbia, but also the province's own process of self-definition. As Daniel Marshall has suggested, the division between city and countryside, between commercial and agrarian interests, was a defining conflict in British Columbia's post-Confederation legislature.[130] When relations between Ottawa and Victoria reached a nadir during the Mackenzie administration, the opposition between agriculture and commerce continued to set the terms of the debate. Liberal Edward Blake, in his 1874 speech to the Reformers of North York, reiterated the conception of British Columbia as "that inhospitable country, that 'sea of mountains'," while singing the praises of the fertile Northwest.[131] Meanwhile Malcolm Macleod, writing in the *Ottawa Citizen* under the pseudonym "Britannicus," continued to press the Canadian Pacific Railway as a route to the Orient, and presented the mountainous landscape as a defensive asset rather than an agricultural liability.[132] In the twentieth century, Duff Pattullo's Liberal government lamented that Musgrave's argument about per capita revenue had not been accepted by Canada, while a popular British Columbia historian of the inter-war period, Bruce McKelvie, re-envisioned the construction of an imperial route to the Orient as the true purpose of Confederation.[133] As late as 2005, Prime Minister Paul Martin sought to improve his political fortunes in the west by promoting his government's

129 Quoted in Baker, *Timothy Warren Anglin,* 137. Baker believes Anglin's opposition to the British Columbia Terms demonstrated his complete acceptance of Confederation in that it indicated his concern for the country's fiscal stability, 138.

130 Daniel P. Marshall, "An Early Rural Revolt: The Introduction of the Canadian System of Tariffs to British Columbia, 1871-4," in Ruth Sandwell, ed., *Beyond the City Limits: Rural History in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 47-61.

131 Blake, *Speech at Aurora Delivered October 3rd, 1874,* 7, 9.

132 Britannicus, *The Pacific Railway: Britannicus' Letters from the Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa: Citizen Printing and Publishing Co., 1875), 34-5, 39-40.

133 BCA, K/A/B77, British Columbia. Information Bureau, "British Columbia's Claim for Equality of Treatment in the Confederation of the Provinces" (unpublished typescript, c.1935, n.p.); Bruce A. McKelvie Fonds, MS-0001, Box 3, File A, "Speaking Notes for Leon Ladner, MP," 21 October 1928, 1; Box 4, File E, "Led Way to Confederation" (typescript, c. 1958).

"Pacific Gateway Strategy," a program of infrastructure development with a view of encouraging Asian trade to pass through British Columbia ports, as "a great national undertaking," capitalizing on the "great strength of western Canada . . . the opening up to Asia-Pacific."[134] In hindsight, the Terms of Union debate may be read as an early Canadian discussion of the desirability of globalization. It is, of course, overly anachronistic to see Alexander Mackenzie or Timothy Anglin as an ideological forefather of David Orchard or Maude Barlow, yet the issues the opponents of the Terms raised in 1871 seem strangely familiar. Is the transhipment of international commodities a viable basis for a national economy? How sustainable is a country that relies on a foreign country for its food supply? Should large corporations have a controlling interest in Canada's natural resources and transportation networks? Should political influence be predicated upon residency and citizenship, or upon consumption and contribution to GNP?

The parliamentary and press debates on the British Columbia Terms of Union were about much more than the future of British Columbia. For the government and its supporters, swift extension of the Dominion's boundaries to the Pacific promised to make the new country the centre of international commerce, with the Canadian Pacific Railway cutting thousands of miles off the voyage between Asian and European ports. For the opposition, however, the extravagant promises made to secure the admission of a barren, under-populated colony threatened Canada's future as a nation of virtuous, self-governing yeoman farmers. Thus, Canadian politicians used the proposed admission of British Columbia as an opportunity to rearticulate their visions of Canada's future, and in its ideological underpinnings the Terms of Union debate represents a continuity from earlier discussions on British North American union, and a foreshadowing of discussions yet to come. This analysis of the Terms of Union discussions suggests we must expand our definition of what constitutes the "Confederation Debates" to include the parliamentary discussions about the admission of the late-comer provinces, for it is in the significances Canadians attached to territorial expansion that their aspirations and anxieties concerning their new nation were most evident. Pitting the opposition's conception of Canada as an agrarian commonwealth against the government's dream of becoming the entrepôt of the Orient, the debate on the admission of British Columbia clearly demonstrated that, in the first years of Confederation, a long-standing conflict over Canada's character and future remained unresolved.

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134 "Leaders' Debate," CBC Television, 16 December 2005, 6:30 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

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