

# Newfoundland Politics and Confederation Revisited: Three New Works

John Edward Fitzgerald

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

# Newfoundland Politics and Confederation Revisited: Three New Works

*Rare Ambition*. Michael Harris. Toronto: Viking Press, 1992, \$29.99.

*Secret Nation*. Director: Michael Jones. Screenwriter: Ed Riche. Producer: Paul Pope. Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers' Co-Operative and Telefilm Canada, 1992. 109 minutes.

*The Only Living Father*. Thomas Cahill. Director: Edmund MacLean. Produced by Theatre Newfoundland and Labrador. St. John's, 1992.

## JOHN EDWARD FITZGERALD

IN THE FUTURE, OBSERVERS may look back on 1992 as one of the blackest years in Newfoundland history. On 2 July at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in St. John's, John Crosbie announced that the Government of Canada, of which he was Minister of Fisheries, had decided to impose a moratorium on the northern cod fishery. Media attention was keen in Canada and the United States, and sounds and images of enraged fishermen beating on doors at the Radisson were bounced off a hundred satellites and relayed to a news-hungry world. In the wake of the fishery closure, and bearing down on a constitutional referendum in the fall of 1992, three works on Newfoundland treated national audiences to large swallows and strong doses of political criticism of the confederation which, among other things, had not managed and protected Newfoundland's fishery or benefited Newfoundland as much as it should have. Michael Harris's book *Rare Ambition*, the film *Secret Nation*, written by Ed Riche, produced by Paul Pope, and directed by Michael Jones, and Tom Cahill's play *The Only Living Father* come, not from the hands of scholars but from outside the academy, and each re-examines the

circumstances surrounding Newfoundland's confederation with Canada. Jones et al. and Cahill ask good questions and suggest good answers about their subjects, and reconsider whether the deal was really good for Newfoundland. Harris's book merits a review, if for no other reason than to caution those unfamiliar with Newfoundland and the Crosbys.

Better known as the investigative reporter and newspaper editor who revealed justice denied to Donald Marshall in Nova Scotia, and the victims of sexual abuse at Mount Cashel, Michael Harris has continued in this latest effort the pattern of revelation. *Rare Ambition: The Crosbys of Newfoundland* appeared just in time for the 1992 Christmas buying season. Everyone seems to have either bought one or got one as a present, and it seems that all hands – me included – spent part of the holidays reading it. The book's glossy front cover sports a photo (it looks retouched) of the Crosbie clan, and it is a good harbinger of things within the covers: both are nostalgic and hazy colourizations of other documents. *Rare Ambition* is dense with detail—detail which does have a superficial allure. But *Rare Ambition* re-hashes the work of political historians, it selectively examines the Crosbys and their political ambitions and it is at great pains to publicize the darker propensities of some of the family's members. The dust cover claims that the book is “a unique brand of Canadian and Newfoundland history, a flesh and blood saga” about the Crosbie family. The Crosbie saga is, indeed, a unique story, but after reading it I questioned whether the book was really worthy of being called unique, let alone a history.

After a strategically placed promo in his “Author's Note” for *Unholy Orders: Tragedy at Mount Cashel*, and the candid but loaded observation that a “popular historian presides over a tyranny of choice” in presenting evidence, Harris touchingly tells us that “If what follows is history of a sort, I have tried to give it a human face” (p. xi). We should hope so. If history does not concern the lives, thoughts and actions of humans, then what does it concern? Rocks, perhaps, or at least this one, for *Rare Ambition* heads for them when, instead of outlining for us the questions it will answer, it devotes its first attentions to examining the claim that the Crosbie name “has its real beginnings in Viking lore” (p. 24). We then learn of the ancient Crosbie family curse from Scotland: all that the family acquired “would bring them no permanent good, and would ultimately pass to others” (p. 25). In proof of the curse, we're given the carefully-crafted stories of eight Crosbys: Sir John Crosbie, his wife Mitchie Anne; their sons Bill and Ches; Ches's wife Jessie; and the children of Ches and Jessie: John, Andrew, and Joan. Unfortunately, Harris misses the forest for the trees, and gets lost in colourful but relatively insignificant detail.

The reader is told that a larger-than-life Sir John became a member of the House of Assembly soon after the 1909 election campaign, during which he kicked Prime Minister Sir Robert Bond over a wharf (p. 67). Later he earned the sobriquet “Spars” when, as Minister of Shipping in 1917-18, he “acquired two

spars (rounded pieces of wood used for masts or booms to support a vessel's rigging) from a wrecked schooner and sold them at a profit" to the government for a thousand dollars. (p. 80). Sir Spars visited the Royal Stores in St. John's in October 1919 to get a store clerk (who was a Roman Catholic) to nominate the Liberal Progressive Party's chosen candidate, W.J. Higgins. When the clerk refused to comply, Crosbie, good Orangeman that he was, launched into a tirade against the clerk, and announced to the assembled shoppers that the Pope and Archbishop Roche "could kiss my \_\_\_\_." Within a week, Harris claims, the incident made those headlines on the St. John's *Morning Post*. (p. 82). After Sir John's early death (age 56), the family's financial empire, which until 1933 included the Crosbie Hotel in St. John's, was run by the matriarch, Mitchie Ann. In 1948, her son Ches led the party for Economic Union with the United States, but we are told that, despite his apparently strident political rivalry with Smallwood, the two remained close friends and held clandestine meetings during the referenda campaigns (pp. 175 and 183). Ches's son John came remarkably close to outbidding Joe Clarke and Brian Mulroney for the Federal Tory leadership in 1981, but failed because of his inability to speak French, and because of a quip at an unguarded moment which implied that Quebec was like a foreign country in Canada: "I cannot talk to the Chinese people in their own language either.... I cannot talk to the German people in their own language..." (pp. 353-4). John's late sister Joan was a bright and kind woman, but an alcoholic who met a tragic end, and every pile of gold touched by John's late brother Andrew turned into dust. Of course, there is more in *Rare Ambition* than just colourful and doleful tales of the Crosbies, but unless one knew better, one would be left with the impression that the Crosbie story was essentially a chronology of trivia, outrageous tales, and weak moments. It is definitely not, but this book made me have second thoughts. I was left wondering if the title, *Rare Ambition*, better described the Crosbie desire for power, or Harris's desire for acclaim as a biographer and political historian.

Chronology and logical ordering of content are basic to the writing of history, but these are also troublesome in *Rare Ambition*. On page 68, we learn how the Morris government's Throne Speech of 1909 announced the building of costly railway branch lines as rewards to the Reid family for their support during the election that year. On the next page, we learn that Sir John Crosbie endorsed his government's railway policy and was supposed to have said that "The people demanded branch lines and...the voice of the people is the voice of God." Okay, so far, so good – a coherent tale. But then Harris presents the reader with the irrelevance of who first said *Vox populi est vox Dei*: C.H. Emerson said it in the House of Assembly in 1910, but before him, Alcuin said it to the Emperor Charlemagne in the year 800. What does this have to do with the 1909 railway deal? And what is the larger significance, if any, of political corruption, or why was it unique or so important to our knowledge of the people or the period?

Harris needs a critical sense of how to make an argument and how to decide what is important and what is not. *Rare Ambition* suffers from over-stuffing. With sins of omission and inclusion and poor chronology come confusion for the reader. The legions of Crosbies (83, according to the index) who are superficially mentioned sprawl across the 389 pages of the book. A family tree would have helped to keep the lines straight. Words like “famous”, “larger than life”, “wealthy” and “legendary” flow easily from Harris’s word processor in describing the Crosbies. If an episode had the potential to make the Crosbies more famous, more larger-than-life, wealthier, or more legendary, it seems to have gone into the book. Harris’s tyranny of choice was indeed great.

*Rare Ambition* also ran amok in its treatment and use of sources. Good history-writing is original; where it has to, it thoughtfully interprets older works, and it generously acknowledges its sources and intellectual antecedents, so that those who follow can question and cross-question hypotheses and conclusions. Unfortunately, Harris borrowed his chronology and his political facts wholesale from S.J.R. Noel’s *Politics in Newfoundland*, from which the theme of political ambition is lifted (Harris, p. 67). Detail and colour are also borrowed, not in Conservative but in Liberal quantities, from Paul O’Neill’s *The Oldest City: The Story of St. John’s, Newfoundland*, and Richard Gwyn’s *Smallwood, the unlikely revolutionary*, without acknowledgement for the sources of specific crucial bits of information. Harris even reprints, uncritically and without credit, Don Jamieson’s version of Ches’s reaction to the results of the second referendum in July 1948.<sup>1</sup> *Rare Ambition* should have exhibited what Marc Bloch called “a fascination with the lower margin of the page bordering on mania”.<sup>2</sup> No proof is given of anything which is said, asserted, or attributed. Bloch said it best:

...apart from the free play of imagination, we have no right to make any assertion which cannot be verified and a historian who in using a document indicates the source as briefly as possible (that is, the means of finding it again) is only obeying a universal rule of honesty.<sup>3</sup>

When historians ignore details and chronology, and fail to separate the strands of differing interpretations, one result is that factual errors abound. Ches Crosbie’s brother-in-law, St. John’s Mayor Andrew Carnell, was not called the “Mayor of Newfoundland” because “there were no other elected mayors of Newfoundland in 1934” (p. 114), but because he was elected and re-elected in the only democratic elections in Newfoundland during the entire Commission of Government period. Governor Sir Gordon Macdonald’s last name is not spelled MacDonald (p. 147). Francis M. O’Leary, not Peter Cashin, was the leader of the Responsible Government League (p. 173). While F. Gordon Bradley was a smart lawyer, he was not regarded as a “member of the establishment” (p. 179).<sup>4</sup> The “spoils” of office – the posts of Newfoundland premier and federal cabinet minister – were not divided by Smallwood and Bradley “in the first few days of the [National] Convention’s life” (p. 146). If Harris had listened carefully – or

should I say “listened” – to one of his sources, a recorded interview of Smallwood done in 1979 by former MP Charles Granger, he would have heard Smallwood say that the meeting took place during the spring of 1946, not in the fall when the Convention opened.<sup>5</sup> And the Roman Catholic Church did not come out “foursquare against Confederation” (p. 183); in fact, most of the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. George’s – including its bishop, Michael O’Reilly, voted for confederation,<sup>6</sup> and the laity and clergy, island wide, were also split in their allegiances. Sometimes, Harris gives his readers enough information so they can ask their own questions. But he falls into the trap of not answering the “questions” he asks, and he has not bothered to find out what the best questions are. One example will suffice. I was pleased to see that the chapter on confederation, “In the Belly of the Wolf,” contains significant new information, unpublished elsewhere, on the opinions of the Commission of Government’s undercover police of Smallwood as a “shady character” (p. 175), and on the opinions of the American Consulate in Newfoundland of the role of Ches Crosbie in the Economic Union Party which arose in 1948 and advocated union with America (pp. 172-175). But if Harris had really done his homework he would have clarified why some Canadian mandarins held Smallwood in bad odour, as well as clarified the chronology of events in the campaigns and the whys and wherefores of Ches’s place in the confederation settlement. Chronology is vital to understanding the dynamics of the referenda campaigns, and to understanding why things happened as they did, but it is forgotten. Parts of the story are botched, or left out. Where analysis is called for, there are myths and clichés. Where factual biography is required, there are anecdotes and gossipy details. Harris does not distinguish between provable fact and opinion, and he thus loses many golden opportunities to really change how we think about confederation. *Rare Ambition*’s facts become Norman Mailer’s “factoids”, which Stuart Pierson identified in the works of Gwyn and Horwood on Smallwood as “half-invented, over-dramatized, unverified, and unverifiable details”.<sup>7</sup> We end up not finding out what we should have been told.

While weaving myths and invented traditions with facts, Harris leaves us with poor and weak impressions, and omits important information. He asks too few critical questions about his subject matter. His portrayal of women is one example of this. Where are the lives of the Crosbie women, the backbones of a family which is portrayed as being periodically awash in various distillations? We want to read more about the family’s community-minded women, like Vera (Crosbie) Perlin of Vera Perlin School fame, who is only mentioned in passing. Instead, we learn that when Ches and his first wife Jessie left St. John’s after their wedding, Ches made Jessie pregnant “before the honeymoon ship got out of the harbour” (p. 113). Unfortunately, this episode, portraying women as objects at the hands of the Crosbie men, got reprinted last fall as an exemplar of the book (and, to be sure, of how Newfoundland history-writing is “so colourful”) in

reviews in *MacLeans* and *The Globe and Mail*. It reminded me of how, not so very long ago, people remarked that African-Americans were “so rhythmic”. And what of Sir Richard Squires’ daughter-in-law Alice, who married Ches after he divorced his first wife, Jessie? What were the effects of her marriage to Ches on the family? Does Harris know that she lives long and prospers in Florida today? We aren’t told. We are given enough information about Mitchie Anne, Aunt Ellie, Jessie, Joan, and Jane to conclude that the women always were the figures around which the men orbited in the Crosbie family. But we’re left guessing about their lives, thoughts, problems, and triumphs. When they do appear, they are always subservient to the men.

In many ways, *Rare Ambition* treats history like soap opera. Harris informs his readers that many “female supporters” of former Newfoundland Premier Frank Moores thought that Moores was “the horn of plenty” (p. 311). From the moment John Crosbie entered Federal politics, St. John’s MP Jim McGrath had a “greenish tinge” from fear that “Crosbie would usurp his cabinet seat in any future Clark government” (p. 318). John Crosbie crossed Canada during the PC Leadership campaign suffering from “the same complaint that prevented Napoleon from sitting [on] his horse at the battle of Waterloo”, preserved from accidents “by a Kotex between the cheeks of his ass” (pp. 352-3). We even get a photo of John and Andrew Crosbie and John Perlin as youngsters dressed up in drag. Are these details really crucial to an understanding of the Crosbies? Do they give us insights into character(s) at critical points in their lives, or tell us why things happened? No. I left the book thinking that perhaps the stuff of *Rare Ambition* would have done better as Newfoundland’s first serialized soap opera, made for washing (like dirty laundry?) on television, a medium with which Harris is much more conversant.

It might be excusable if *Rare Ambition* were simply an interpretation of a family’s history by a writer who knew nothing about Newfoundland history. But a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and *Rare Ambition* touts itself as “a unique brand of history”, as if the existing literature on Newfoundland had been at long last digested, made relevant, and served up to a thankful public otherwise unable to read historians. Until more historians know 20th-century Newfoundland, there will be more like Michael Harris, with more weak questions, and more sensationalism masquerading as history-writing. I found *Rare Ambition* an aggravating, impotent, patronizing tale of a mystical, mythical, magical place, or as Harris himself said, a “strange, turbulent, elemental land”(p. 10). I was left with a sense that Harris approached his subject with a chuckling “imagine that” patronization typical of Canadian adoration of its quaint “Rock”. The book does not do justice to the finer points of Newfoundland politics and society, and it does not adequately explain the Crosbie family. What distinguishes each Crosbie generation over *la longue durée*? How do they make history, and how are they a part of it?

Is ambition appropriate as an overall, overarching, unifying theme and explanation of Crosbie motivation? This application of "ambition" as the overwhelming motive of all the Crosbies is the application to the family of what historian David Hackett Fischer called the fallacy of the one-dimensional man: one aspect of their human condition is made the measure of their humanity:

In one of its forms, this fallacy mistakes people for political animals who are moved mainly by a desire for power. It reduces the complex psychic condition of men merely to their political roles and shrinks all the components of the social calculus to a simple equation of power, ambition, and interest.<sup>8</sup>

Harris ascribes far too much to the overwhelming motive of ambition to explain the lives of not one Crosbie, but the whole clan. As a result, we get a good story, but poor history. What made the Crosbies tick? We're not told, but it was more than just ambition. Like the Narrows of St. John's Harbour in 1941, the factual and methodological holes in *Rare Ambition* are big enough to steam the U.S.S. *Edmund B. Alexander* through. I found the fare dished up to be undercooked, "rare" indeed. What's in a title? Everything. While Harris paints a very broad picture of Newfoundland across the best part of a century, we are not told anything specific which changes how we think about the Crosbies or any other "great families" of Newfoundland. By its ubiquity, I think *Rare Ambition's* destiny in posterity is mediocrity.

If *Rare Ambition* was a story masquerading as history, *Secret Nation* is a story playing with it. This is Newfoundland's largest and most expensive feature film to date, and it hits Newfoundlanders and Canadians right between the eyes. "Against the grain" describes *Secret Nation* mildly, and Smallwoodian Liberals are well advised to stay away. Made for Newfoundlanders by Newfoundlanders (and bravo for getting well over a million dollars of Canadian money with which to do it), *Secret Nation* presents a full-blown conspiracy theory about confederation, crafted to salve the wounds the Smallwood era inflicted upon anti-confederates and radicals, and to challenge the rest of Canada into seeing Newfoundland's history on Newfoundland's terms. Courtesy of NIFCO, the Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers' Co-operative (the operative word here is "independent"), the film bludgeons us from the outset with the premise that "Confederation was a nasty business", perpetrated by a mythology-weaving pro-confederate establishment. *Secret Nation* is a thriller, complete with the Seven Deadly Sins of cinema: murder, politics, lust, theft, betrayal, rage, and bribery. It opens with the death of the elderly but wealthy Leo Cryptus, the Chief Returning Officer for the 1948 confederation referendum. By the end of the film, we have been served an intriguing counter-myth of how confederation was achieved.

The twin strengths of *Secret Nation* are its cast, and its three "information" subcultures – politics, the academy, and the taxicab world – in which its characters find themselves. Ray Guy once observed that "Newfoundland has a genetic pool the size of a dixie cup", and the casting reflects this: most of the

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actors are from the CODCO family, and they represent Newfoundland society in microcosm. Frieda Vokey (Cathy Jones) is a depressed but bright Newfoundland doctoral student who is at McGill, struggling to complete her history thesis on confederation – “the decline of the sovereign Newfoundland state”. After an unsympathetic meeting with a cold clutch of her professors who know little and care less about Newfoundland, Vokey returns to St. John’s to do research and finish her dissertation. Absent for some years, she is greeted at the airport by her mother, Oona (Mary Walsh), with whom she immediately strikes up a woman-to-woman relationship. Oona is a real estate agent whose concerns for her family make her the character with whom we most sympathize. Her foil is her husband Lester (Michael Wade), a brooding *Evening Telegram* editor who moonlights as an alcoholic and private advisor to Premier Valentine Aylward (Andy Jones). Aylward sashays around town in taxi cabs, and chronically suffers from what the film’s omnipresent CBC Radio newsreaders call “cranial dysfunction”. In one of this film’s Monty Python-esque touches, Aylward vomits in front of TV cameras at the Government lodge at “Awk” Bay. Frieda’s brother Chris (Rick Mercer) has just returned to Newfoundland from New York, and a fascination with skydiving from 27th-story windows and the roof of his parents’ house in St. John’s has earned him some broken ribs. His new occupations in the subsistence economy of St. John’s include taxi dispatching, and “being” the quintessential Newfoundland artist. History professor Dan Maddox (Ron Hynes) is seduced by Frieda; afterwards, while he is asleep, she treacherously rifles his research documents. The rest of the story becomes a paperchase, to see who can first reach the elusive but conclusive evidence that Newfoundland’s confederation with Canada was rigged.

The film is strengthened by a strong supporting cast, which includes many public figures, politicians and media personalities.

*Secret Nation* gives a long-overdue intellectual tilt to what it means to be a Newfoundlander, something which has been lacking in 30-second enunciations of our identity by Labatt’s Blue commercials. In fact, there is a rebellion here against the stereotyping of Newfoundland’s history, culture, and identity, an incessant railing against the distillation of our essential characteristics – the “I winks, and you nods accordin’” routine – into a commodity for mainland audiences which leaves the impression that we are a beer-guzzling crew of simpleton “Newfies”. Frieda is outraged at the racist Newfie jokes which are prevalent in Canada – and Newfoundland. Bravo! Furthermore, in order to set the historical record straight, and as a fillip to the carefully-crafted confederate orthodoxy that Newfoundland was saved by confederation from absolute death, Jones and screenwriter Ed Riche give us a high-pressure injection of the cultural and political landscape of Newfoundland, just before and at the time of the confederation debates. A bitter nostalgia permeates. Footage of a prosperous Water Street circa 1950, replete with dray carts and a fish-carrying smiling

urchin (from the days when one could actually get a codfish as big as a small boy), is juxtaposed with modern footage of Frieda driving through desolate, car-wreck-strewn Bauline South. We see the wasteland of confederation, and discover that it is us. After 42 years of Smallwood's didactic explanations of how confederation was a "great boon", we now get another view. The parallax intended by Jones and Riche is accomplished magnificently, and we are forced to ponder the negative effects of confederation on Newfoundlanders, their souls, their identities, their dignity, and what our culture lost. Confederation, Baby Bonuses and U.I. came, but at what price? Us. This film is as psychological as it is political, and it does its work with great skill.

Shot on location at sites in and around St. John's (the city looks enchanting, as cities on film often tend to do), *Secret Nation* has both a visual charm and an immediacy of relevance to Newfoundland viewers, especially Townies. The Historic Trust crowd must have loved it. There are some good shots of the Battery, which are sympathetic to the rural way of life found in Newfoundland, and not at all patronizing, as are the stills that CBC Toronto's *The National* uses to represent St. John's to the rest of Canada. We also get St. John's Airport, the "Vokey" house on Mullock Street, Devon Row, Winterholme, the University's History Department (especially the infamous Seminar Room) and Andy Den Otter's office as Dan Maddox's, with Stuart Pierson's "Fitting Newfoundland In" article lying on the desk (*Newfoundland Studies* Vol. 4, No. 2) under Maddox's name. There's also the LSPU Hall, the Colonial Building, and the *Evening Telegram* building on Topsail Road. In short, we're shown many things which Michael Jones thinks should matter to Newfoundlanders, and especially to those with St. John's- Responsible Government League sympathies, to whom he is playing. *Secret Nation* is nothing if not a long-overdue self-celebration of our too-secret identity as embodied in the geography, architecture and material of our culture. Another bravo for the identification and proclamation of some of its elements, before it is too late.

Ed Riche's script of *Secret Nation* is another of its strengths. While Cathy Jones and Michael Wade deftly carry off the drama of the film, Rick Mercer serves up liberal swallows of dark humour and philosophy. Rick as the dispatcher-cum-psychoanalyst of Crown Taxi on Springdale Street flushes the taxi stand – just slightly larger in size than a good outhouse – with wit in the quintessential reply to the Newfie joke:

The phone rings. Chris answers: "Crown? Er, ah, *Bonn Swaw*."

Chris (into microphone to the cabbies): "Byze, don't be usin' the word 'Frog' in the vee-hicles."

And again:

"Look, if the lady's in a wheelchair, you put her packages in the trunk. Das' the policy."

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While a good measure of Chris's dialogue is contrived Townie-speak, it provides colourful and effective comic relief to the suspense created by Frieda's search for the documents proving that confederation was rigged.

In another triumph of script and casting, Ken Campbell shines as the pompous British lawyer Cecil Parkinson, retained by the Smallwood family to keep an inquisitive public away from the dying Smallwood, and to preserve Smallwood's orthodoxy of how Newfoundland got confederation and how good it was for the little country. Campbell brings his work in the recent John Cleese film *A Fish Called Wanda* to the role, and makes Parkinson a wonderfully outrageous parody of the patronizing British mandarin that every anti-confederate Newfoundlander of 1948 loved to hate. Frieda visits Parkinson to ask for an appointment to see Smallwood, and the two debate whether confederation was done properly or whether a conspiracy existed. Parkinson's reaction to Frieda's request captures Anglo-Saxon and anti-Catholic nativism about the coloniality of Newfoundland, and ironically, some of the disparaging bitterness of not a few Newfoundlanders who left their homeland:

Parkinson: "In any event, the Papists and crackpots lost! I must caution you about painting too flattering a picture of Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders. That is so difficult for you, because it is, after all, your heritage. Newfoundland is a sad, sad place, and Newfoundlanders are a sad, simple people. I'm sure you see them as victims, awaiting some kind of emancipation, some kind of heroic, revolutionary gesture! Alas, they were just not meant for it! What you have in Canada is far better than your lot! What was it Mr. Smallwood said? – The 'Sport of Historic Misfortune,' the 'Cinderella of Empire'?"

Frieda (defiantly): "And Confederation the glass slipper?"

Parkinson (with a sense of dawning surprise): "Yes, I suppose so...! Clever, isn't it!"

This exchange is important. Parkinson's assertions enunciate the Smallwood orthodoxy against which Jones' film reacts – the claim that the anti-confederates were either crackpots or Roman Catholics – and British reasons why Newfoundland had to confederate with Canada. *Secret Nation* thus becomes the enunciation of a counter-orthodoxy. Who said the battle over confederation ended in 1949? If Jones has his way, it's only just begun.

The political scene presented by *Secret Nation* was intriguing, but there were some inconsistencies and minor glitches. At the beginning of the film, the viewers and Leo Cryptus are told that Newfoundland gave up Representative Government (not Responsible Government) in 1933. And while we are more than prepared to endure carefully-changed names, and disclaimers in the credits, no doubt to keep the lawyers from producer Paul Pope's door, the ghost of Lorenza Goodyear, Peter Cashin's fictive secretary who tottered around the Airport and the Provincial Archives, providing supernatural guidance to Frieda, was not a believable character. And why did an insane Premier Val Aylward

romp around outside the *Evening Telegram* building, clad in his underwear, crying out for Lester Vokey, with Ray Guy peeping out through a window looking like a latter-day Hitler? Did this advance the plot? In other parts of the film, the stereotyping was too severe. Like the film's version of Satan – the devious, document-destroying, ageless G. Wilson Hammersmith (an artful combination of Dominions Office mandarin P. Alexander Clutterbuck and Hammersmith Terrace, Sir Alan P. Herbert's London address) – at some points the viewer is "left with a sleepless unease". The Academy was treated too harshly. Historians in particular, of which Maddox is the exemplar, came off as a booze-swilling, swearing lot, given to in-fighting among themselves over the right to publish certain articles in particular journals. Then again, could there be some truth in this?

Despite its small flaws, *Secret Nation* is an important film because it asks and legitimizes questions which hitherto have not been taken seriously: did behind-the-scenes manipulation and collusion take place between Confederates and the British and the Canadians? Could the results have been rigged? Who counted the referendum results? And who in recent years has asked these questions? *Secret Nation's* counter-orthodoxy calls for a thorough re-examination of what is known about the process of Newfoundland's confederation with Canada. Smallwood is portrayed as having been allowed to leave this world without being subjected to a proper question-and-answer session. To balance his own view of himself as the creator of Newfoundland history, he emerges here as very much the *éminence grise* of that history, about whom and whose role in securing confederation we don't know nearly enough. Above all, *Secret Nation* sets out to shock Newfoundlanders from their complacency about everything from the loss of our political independence, to the collapse and closure of our fishery, to the perceived loss of our distinct culture. The operative word here is *our*. We are told that confederation was something done to us without our full knowledge or consent, and that we, for a variety of reasons, didn't see or understand everything that went on at the time. We're asked to suspend our disbelief in conspiracies, and to question the social and political order constructed on the shaky foundations and thin veneers of confederation. *Secret Nation* claims that Newfoundland was seduced by the confederate politicians, who sold one thing on the surface, but concealed a different package of goods which was revealed once the glamorous garb was taken away. The best example of this claim is made while the film's final credits roll. We hear the prophetic voice of Smallwood, dubbed in from a recording of the proceedings of the National Convention, telling the members of the Convention that

...our people are in the mood to ask many questions today, that they never asked before! And our anti-confederates are going to find that out in 1948, when the referendum takes place. They will, ah, set out to persuade our people that under

confederation, their property will be taxed, their homes, their land, their barns and outhouses, their flakes and stages, their fishing rooms, and boats, and fishing gear, their animals and livestock. "You'll have to pay taxes on all these things", the Anti-Confederates will tell you, but the people of Newfoundland needn't bother about this – all this will be fully explained to them, Sir, before the referendum is held. They'll have to be blind, deaf, and dumb! – all three! – not to understand, before this referendum is held – I'll guarantee that right now! All of them! All three together – blind, deaf, and dumb! – not to understand what confederation means, between now and the referendum!

Now it's time, says *Secret Nation*, to investigate and "fess up" to the dirty past, or at least to search behind the rhetoric and discover what actually happened to Newfoundland. *Secret Nation's* gift to posterity is the "sleepless unease" and the doubts about the confederation process it bestows on us. So what about the "dirty past", the claim that the second referendum vote was rigged, that is at the heart of *Secret Nation*? Was there a conspiracy, as the film insinuates, and was the vote tampered with?

In 1983, after examining a newly-opened collection of papers at the British Public Record Office, which dealt in good measure with confederation, Peter Neary claimed that there was not a conspiracy but that Newfoundlanders chose in a fair referendum to cast their lot with Canada.<sup>9</sup> More recently, Neary's magisterial *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World* (1988) made clear several important things: that planning for confederation took place over a long period between British and Canadian civil servants and politicians; that conspiracy is not the right word for this planning; and that after all, it should not come as any surprise that British and Canadian mandarins and ministers were planning confederation for Newfoundland. But what of Neary's observation that "Rumours persist of electoral irregularities in Newfoundland in 1948, but not a shred of evidence has been produced to substantiate them"?<sup>10</sup> Of course, the lack of production of such evidence does not necessarily mean that it does not exist, and if one reads only the documents at the Public Record Office, the Public Archives of Canada, and at the Provincial Archives in St. John's, Neary's observation rings true. But when new sources, such as the letters written by ordinary Newfoundlanders to Smallwood during the late 1940s, and oral history sources, are compared and integrated with older, official sources, they suggest that there is a case for a close re-examination of Smallwood's activities, the referenda campaigns, the mechanics of the voting, and the official rhetoric and explanations meted out by the confederates in the wake of the events themselves. It would be foolhardy to think that there is nothing new to learn from any period or episode of history. As British secret agent James Bond said, "Never say never".

In his 1973 autobiography, for instance, Smallwood claimed that he "chose Canada" for Newfoundland, and that he first decided to cast his lot with confederation and get elected to the National Convention while reading of the

announcement of the Convention in a newspaper in Montreal in December 1945.<sup>11</sup> But this is not true. He was chosen, or settled upon, from a number of possible candidates, as early as 1943 or 44, to lead a Newfoundland confederate party, by the Canadian High Commissioner to Newfoundland, Charles Burchell. James Halley, who in the 1940s was a law student and then an articling lawyer in the St. John's offices of John B. McEvoy, was an observant young man. One of his observations was that McEvoy was the Newfoundland connection to the Halifax law firm of Burchell, Parker, Fogo, and Smith, and that after Burchell's arrival as Canadian High Commissioner in Newfoundland, Burchell considered McEvoy, and then McEvoy's law partner Charles Hunt, as possible leaders of a confederate party, and discussed this with them. Of the active involvement of the Canadian Department of External Affairs in Ottawa in pushing for confederation, Halley had no doubt, for by 1944 it had a Newfoundland desk, staffed by one of McEvoy's old Dalhousie professors, R.A. MacKay. Back in St. John's, Dr. John Sparkes, a St. John's physician, and his wife Grace, observed Smallwood coming and going a number of times from Burchell's residence long before he went out to Gander to establish a piggery in the fall of 1943.<sup>12</sup> Grace Sparkes later became a campaigner for the Responsible Government League. Several years later, in the fall of 1947, Halley began the "Union with the United States" party, which became the Economic Union party after Ches Crosbie agreed to lead it. That same fall, McEvoy was appointed Chairman of the National Convention when F. Gordon Bradley resigned, and in March 1948, Smallwood reported to R.A. MacKay in Ottawa that McEvoy was interested in seeing confederation go through, and that McEvoy (whom Smallwood disliked) was "visibly lusting after a knighthood".<sup>13</sup> And what did Smallwood do when he got to Gander? According to his Barrelman assistant, Leo Moakler, Smallwood used the free flights to Canada he got from pig-farm partner Captain David Anderson (the Commanding Officer of the RAF Transport Command)<sup>14</sup> to "learn the facts of confederation", which included financial information about Canada.<sup>15</sup> And why beat it out to Gander in a hurry? To make the resident-in-the-district requirement of a forthcoming National Convention, of which Halley claims that Smallwood had previous knowledge, and for which Smallwood ran and was elected.<sup>16</sup>

And during the referenda campaigns of 1948, for example, was there Canadian assistance to the confederates, especially financial help? Smallwood categorically denied it in a 1979 interview conducted by Charles Granger:

... I am absolutely, and I mean absolutely, certain, that the issue was argued and argued and debated by us, by ourselves, and we snarled, and hissed, and roared, and bawled among ourselves, but it was an issue that we Newfoundlanders settled. It was a question that we debated, and there was no help or influence in any shape or form from Britain or from Canada, and when I say influence I'm including money. There was no money, there was no campaign funds, there was no material or printed help, quite apart from the question of propaganda, or really, perhaps, from

the question of advice. I never had one solitary word of advice from anyone in Canada or Britain. Not one word. Not one syllable. What I did, I did. What I said, I said. What I didn't say, I didn't say. What I didn't do, I didn't do. Entirely of my own volition. There was never any, not even vestigial remains, not any sign from Canada....<sup>17</sup>

But, on 21 June 1948, at the height of the second referendum campaign, in a letter to C.D. Howe, the Canadian Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, Smallwood and Bradley pleaded: "We need money desperately. Taking into account what we will raise locally, we must have at least another \$20,000. We need it *quickly*."<sup>18</sup> Note the *another*. According to confederate lieutenants Greg Power and Harold Horwood, the confederates had already extracted between \$200,000 and \$250,000 from Canadian Liberal Party supporters to run a campaign in Newfoundland.<sup>19</sup> Later analysts have suggested that the RGL and EUP, which were led by prominent St. John's merchants, should have been able to fund their campaigns as effectively, but their combined funding only amounted to around \$50,000.<sup>20</sup> So much for Smallwood's claim of Canadian impartiality and disinterest in Newfoundland affairs. And did it matter that the Canadians paid for the confederation campaigns? A good deal of mileage was gained by Smallwood during the referenda campaigns when he told voters that a vote for confederation would get away from the graft, corruption, and dirty politics of wealthy Water Street merchants, who, before 1933, were used to buying votes. Was Smallwood somehow a different kind of operator than the old-time merchants he decried? No. Did he avoid associating with them during the National Convention, during the referenda campaigns, or afterwards when he came to power? No. Was Canadian money somehow pure or clean, while St. John's-merchant money somehow dirty or sullied? No. Confederate claims that St. John's-merchant money was corrupt were nothing more than a convenient smokescreen to divert attention from where they were getting their own money.

And with such vast sums of money, political skulduggery during the referenda campaigns was made possible. One night in Champney's East, the Responsible Government League (RGL) decided (in a good indication of the RGL's predominant mind-set) to "let the people be entertained" before a political meeting. A film of the Queen's visit to Africa was shown, but it was disrupted, Grace Sparkes recalled, by the tremendous noise created by men pounding on the outside walls of the building with staves.<sup>21</sup> Years later, Sparkes learned from a man who had been outside that evening that he had been paid \$5,000 by the confederates to disrupt the meeting.<sup>22</sup> The confederates also disrupted the mails which delivered the newspapers of the other parties; in several instances, the papers did not arrive until after the second referendum was over.<sup>23</sup> Smallwood and F. Gordon Bradley had both been employees of the Commission of Government – Smallwood as a justice of the peace, and Bradley as a magistrate – and both had a large and intimate network of informants and collaborators

around the island, which included a number of magistrates in the outports. In many cases, these magistrates were the district returning officers for the referendum, and even some agents in the polling booths were not immune to confederate influence. In Harbour Breton, an RGL supporter reported to the League after the second referendum that the "highroad booth" reported 80 votes for confederation when only 8 had been polled, and put his finger on one of the problems when he claimed

Honestly, I believe this referendum crooked in strong Confederate centres where illiteracy is great. I may be wrong, but have feeling votes were illegally marked in stations where poll officials were both Confederates and where no Responsible Government agent was present.... Cannot understand why Magistrate was not allowed to open Ballots in my presence as that I could check count and compare with that reported by message[s] from various stations. This most undemocratic, and I vehemently protest conduct and procedure this referendum. ...there was nothing to prevent an ardent Confederate deputy to mark illiterate ballots for Confederation where we had no agent.<sup>24</sup>

Illiteracy in the outports was a major problem for the League, which had not mounted as effective a campaign as the confederates. The confederates had more personnel, and were consistently vigilant and shepherded the electorate where they could. As one confederate reported on 7 June, "On Polling Day [in the first referendum] I acted as Agent for Confederation in Marystown South Booth I went there to watch the illiterate vote so I know who to work on this time".<sup>25</sup> In then following up on who had voted for which options, confederate campaign workers made their campaign a personal one, and tailored their appeals to individual electors. From the first referendum, the confederates' campaign workers knew exactly how the vote stood in smaller communities, and because the RGL lacked polling workers in the outports, it was powerless to counter this kind of campaigning.

Illustrative of the sectarian aspect of the confederation campaigns, in Twillingate and Notre Dame districts, a correspondent maintained that at Cottle's Island the confederates told voters that "if they voted for Responsible Government they were voting for the Roman Catholic Church", and that the magistrate there moved several ballot boxes to the residences of confederates to ensure votes for confederation, because "he didn't want a Catholic to run his country".<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the magistrate changed officials in another polling booth in the district, possibly to ensure that voters would come under confederate influence.<sup>27</sup> In St. John's, two ladies visited a number of polling booths around the city and voted a number of times, and the League obtained a number of sworn affidavits attesting to this.<sup>28</sup>

The confederates had knowledge of a number of instances where influencing and "instructing the vote" occurred. In the community of Creston, on the Burin Peninsula, one confederate later wrote,

I myself fought hard for Confederation in fact all the people of this little place Creston fought hard. I was in the Pool Room door keeper on July 22nd on the South Side of Creston & Every Person went through the Secret Room door I reminded them well to mark there x For confederation. We had 132 voters & 114 marked x for Confederation. So I think we done well on the South Side of Creston.<sup>29</sup>

Another in Burin acted as polling agent and loaned his truck to the cause. He later admitted "I done all in my power to force this thing and I am still doing it because I think it is the best thing for Newfoundland".<sup>30</sup> In other small communities like Hopeall, Southport, Caplin Cove and Hodge's Cove (Trinity Bay), North Harbour, Oderin, and St. Joseph's (Placentia Bay), and Campbellton (Notre Dame Bay), voters later reported to Smallwood their intimate knowledge of who voted for confederation, and who voted against it.<sup>31</sup> In Harbour Mille, one supporter later noted that game wardens and fishery inspectors (Commission of Government supporters) voted for responsible government, while 166 others voted for confederation.<sup>32</sup> Given Smallwood's broadcasting career as the Barrelman, and his subsequent political career, he had made a living from the trivia garnered from telling people to "write in". He knew most Newfoundland communities and their residents intimately. Once promises of a brighter future were made in the referenda campaigns, many hundreds of Newfoundlanders wrote to Smallwood, asking for relief, jobs, and patronage. The standard reply usually informed them to write back after he "came to power". Considerable psychological pressure could have been and likely was placed on outport voters by outport confederates, either to vote for confederation or to run the risk that the community would be denied patronage after confederation went through.

On the night of 22 July 1948, the tabulation of the final results took place in the Colonial Building in St. John's. Significantly, supervising the final tabulation of the results was the sole prerogative of the Governor of Newfoundland, Gordon Macdonald, and Chief Returning Officer and Magistrate Nehemiah Short, and anyone else they would have wished to be present.<sup>33</sup> Macdonald had come to Newfoundland from Wales to secure confederation for his good friend Clement Attlee, and when confederation came about, it was the crowning achievement of Macdonald's career. Short himself was a confederate,<sup>34</sup> and earlier that year on 21 February he published the polling divisions for the referendum, each of which contained about 300 votes.<sup>35</sup> Four days after the second referendum, Governor Macdonald reported to Whitehall that 12,927 votes had been cast in St. John's West for Responsible Government.<sup>36</sup> Two days later he revised this figure downward by 414 to 12,513 because, he claimed, one ballot box had been counted twice.<sup>37</sup> But if one ballot box was used for each poll, and if there were, as Smallwood's *Book of Newfoundland* claimed, only 300 voters per poll, how could 414 votes be removed from a box? In an outport this may have been possible, if the box was jam-packed with votes, but in a dense urban area with a high turnout, there were

ballot boxes in profusion, and some split polls which used two ballot boxes per poll. Furthermore, the Referendum Act required deputy returning officers to submit official statements on poll returns to Short,<sup>38</sup> and several versions of the Orange letter<sup>39</sup> sent out by the confederates implied a knowledge of the poll-by-poll returns for the first referendum,<sup>40</sup> but this information is missing from the Smallwood and Bradley papers, and the official poll-by-poll statements are missing from the Newfoundland Provincial Archives.<sup>41</sup> Was the referendum "rigged"? Perhaps not in the sense that *Secret Nation* postulated, where the results were changed overnight. But with a little jiggering of results in St. John's West, and in enough outposts on a minor scale, it could well have been enough to put confederation over the top by 6989 votes.<sup>42</sup> We will not really know for certain about a definitive "rigging" unless a set of poll-by-poll results appears. But that in no way diminishes the facts that there are more than a few shreds of evidence of electoral irregularities, that the second referendum was indeed "dirty", and that, obviously, quite a few people in high places thought that the "end" of confederation justified the means they used to achieve it.

What was the result of all this finagling? Newfoundland never was returned to self-government, as the British promised when it was suspended. Canada got Newfoundland through the back door, and got lucrative control of airports, land and sea resources, and a measure of satisfaction at having kept the wily Yanks from turning the place into another Alaska. On a more personal level, there were also spoils. Smallwood got the premiership. Bradley got a place as Newfoundland's representative in the Canadian cabinet. On his return to England, Gordon Macdonald got a peerage as the first Baron of Gwaenysgor. In the New Year's Day 1949 honours, Nehemiah Short was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, and Commissioner Albert Walsh, a Newfoundlander, the Vice-Chairman of the Commission of Government, and right-hand-man of Governor Macdonald, was made a Knight Bachelor.<sup>43</sup> On 1 April 1949, the day of confederation, Walsh was appointed by Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent as Newfoundland's first Lieutenant-Governor. This was because he agreed to appoint Smallwood as Premier when Leonard Outerbridge, the first choice to be governor, had refused to. Outerbridge was considered first because he had provided support to the confederates at a crucial time in the campaign. And how about one of the quirks of Newfoundland history, to round off the story? Walsh's niece and nephews are none other than Cathy, Andy, and Michael Jones, the actors in and director of *Secret Nation*. Guy's dictum about genetic pools and Dixie Cups rings true, and this bodes well for our eventual ability to know what actually happened. But for our purposes here, one question remains: if today were 22 July 1948, and knowing what you now know about what went on behind the scenes, would you vote for confederation with Canada?

## 120 Fitzgerald

If *Secret Nation* wanted to get at what caused confederation, Tom Cahill's *The Only Living Father* tries to get at the many mysterious motivations of a man, and what he did. It transforms history and myth into high art. *The Only Living Father* is an eloquent, meticulously researched one-man show about the life and times of Joseph Roberts Smallwood, a biography of the man and his *mentalité*. We are carried from Smallwood's opening words - "I was born....I was born, on the 24th of December", to the firings of cabinet ministers Ted Russell and Greg Power, to the damnation of Valdmanis. For 90 minutes, Lorne Pardy as Smallwood gives a performance with the power of Churchill Falls, and Pardy's ability and stamina rival Smallwood's. Pardy intoned and inflected Smallwood's words and speech so well, and re-enacted his gesticulations so perfectly that, at the performances I attended, audiences reacted as if they were watching Smallwood himself. The play's set and props are minimal, and as a result the viewer comes face to face with the many faces of the Only Living Father. We are let inside his head. We hang on every word that comes from the mouth of Joe, but in this case, the credit must go to Cahill for selecting and capturing those words brilliantly. Cahill and Pardy resurrect the Only Living Father: punctuating the atmosphere with wild gestures, chatting a mile a minute to a legion of imagined followers, weaving a dense web of energy, thought, remembrance, regret, and triumph. Smallwood re-lives portions of his life, narrates others, and glosses over yet others. The result is a thoroughly engrossing performance.

In turns, Smallwood talks as a socialist, a populist, a liberal, a conservative, a capitalist, a union man, a bigot, and a slick politician. Where does one end and the other begin? All are rolled into one, and Cahill's audience is at once charmed, intrigued, and enraged. Cahill delivers enough material from Smallwood's own mouth for us to ask: "Who is this that cometh from Gambo, with dyed garments from Ottawa? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" (Apologies to the Prophet Isaiah and to George Story and his oration on Cardinal Leger.) And as if he had anticipated our questions, Cahill's Smallwood exultantly delivers a masterful, off-putting reply which subtly reveals Joe's greatest lust – his desire for recognition:

In Europe I was in great demand as an after-dinner speaker, and especially enjoyed my German engagements, where the custom is to name ALL the guest's honorary degrees. So I would be introduced as Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor Smallwood!

If Newfoundlanders never got a straight answer from Smallwood during his life – at least, Geoff Stirling never got one from him when he interviewed him on CJON TV at three in the morning – why should we get one now? Who and what was Joe Smallwood?

Smallwood's death provided the opportunity to rejuvenate the Only Living Father, and Cahill does just that. Alternate incarnations of Joe appear: the supremely ambitious orphan of an alcoholic father, The Only Living Father (as

Joe wanted to be remembered), and The Premier as he appeared to his critics: a demagogue. We get profuse details of a passionate life. A young Joe Smallwood falls in love with a Jewish girl in New York. In 1932 he spirits Sir Richard Squires out of the Colonial Building. During the confederation campaigns, a zealous Joey Smallwood champions the Baby Bonus for outport Newfoundlanders, damns Archbishop Roche for opposing confederation, and then creates the Orange response (this is the first time Smallwood has been portrayed as a plotting sectarian). An authoritarian Premier Smallwood fires cabinet ministers left, right and centre, and presides over both the industrialization and economic collapse of Newfoundland, consorting all the while with a squad of scoundrels. From British Union to Valdmanis, from Come-By-Chance to New York, we see the dark side of the man, the man-familiar shading into the persona-veiled, an enigma inside a riddle wrapped in a mystery. Every explanation for everything given by Smallwood – his orthodoxy – is exposed by Cahill for scrutiny and questioned, simply by having Smallwood raise the subject and then whisk it away with his rhetoric. And as suddenly as conflict emerged, all's right with the world again. Cahill's Smallwood in *The Only Living Father* is like Elgar's *Enigma Variations*: we'll never really figure out who all the characters were, and we may not find out what really happened to them on the way to confederation. Cahill's point? There never was an *Only Living Father*. After this play, can anyone say that they *really* knew Smallwood? Will he ever be knowable?

*The Only Living Father* is the best portrayal of Smallwood yet. Like *Secret Nation*, after it played in St. John's it went on a national tour, and is well worth seeing. By the time this review reaches print, we will have been treated to Cahill's next play, *The Gallant Major*, a work about Smallwood's nemesis, the loud, brash, hard drinking, uproarious but lovable Peter Cashin, who even according to Cashin's cousin, retired Chief Justice R.S. Furlong, was "all plots". Cahill's Cashin offers his views on Burchell and Dominions Office mandarin P.A. Clutterbuck, and on Smallwood's connections to the two. And what was Peter's opinion of Joe? "At least Judas Iscariot had the decency to hang himself!" From the mouth of a rehabilitated Peter, perspectives on Joe and on what really happened at the time of confederation should prove a vintage wine with which to wash down the dry cheese of Smallwood's orthodoxy.

The unifying theme of these works is political darkness. *Rare Ambition* is preoccupied with the movement of the Crosbys from outer darkness to power. Harris virtually ignores Smallwood and his relations with his close friends the Crosbys, save to occasionally note how many millions Joe bilked out of the public purse by his well-meaning schemes, and how John eventually opposed Joe's regime. But confederation and the Crosbie place in the new order are not treated satisfactorily at all. If Harris had used his sources (particularly the Smallwood papers and the Granger Collection) properly, we should have been

told more of the back-room deals during the referenda campaigns. On the other hand, *The Only Living Father* and *Secret Nation* begin to illuminate the darkensses of Smallwood and the politics of confederation, simply by asking good questions. Difficult questions are beginning to see the light of day, along with a sense of the increasing urgency to ask these questions and seek answers to them if Newfoundland has a chance at economic, social, and cultural survival. Jones deconstructs and Cahill reconstructs the image of the man who for over 45 years – in office or out – had thousands of Newfoundlanders convinced that the sun shone from a certain part of his anatomy. Now, for what we don't know about him and about what he did, Smallwood is not (as Clyde Wells observed at his funeral) “the greatest Newfoundlander who ever lived”, but the greatest *éminence grise* of Newfoundland history. What happened on the way to confederation has been like the moon in eclipse: obscured in the shadows of politicians, among them the Crosbys and Smallwood. But this dark spot in our knowledge is now being approached from the far side, looking back through space and time, and using new sources. The further we move around and away from 1948, and Smallwood, and his accounts of confederation, the more these will be illuminated.

It's about time.

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Compare Harris, p. 195, with Donald Jamieson, “I Saw the Fight for Confederation”, *The Book of Newfoundland*, Vol. 3, Ed. Joseph R. Smallwood (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1967) (hereafter *BNF*), p. 104.

<sup>2</sup>Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 1953), p. 87.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>4</sup>On Bradley's relationship with the Commission of Government, the political “establishment”, see J.K. Hiller, “The Career of F. Gordon Bradley”, *Newfoundland Studies*, 4, 2 (Fall 1988): 169.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Granger Collection, Moving Image and Sound Archives (hereafter Granger Coll.), Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa (hereafter PAC), 1980-11/4b, Smallwood to Granger, 27 February 1979.

<sup>6</sup>See the author's “The Confederation of Newfoundland with Canada, 1946-1949”, M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1992, pp. 49-51.

<sup>7</sup>Stuart Pierson, “Two Views of J.R. Smallwood”, *Newfoundland Studies*, Vol 6, No. 1 (Spring 1990): 111.

<sup>8</sup>David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies – Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 200.

<sup>9</sup>See Peter Neary, “Newfoundland's Union With Canada: Conspiracy or Choice”, *Acadiensis*, 12, 2 (Spring 1983): 110-119.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>11</sup>For the “discovery-of-announcement-of-Convention-while-in-Montreal” epi-

sode, see Smallwood, *I Chose Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), p. 225.

<sup>12</sup>Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

<sup>13</sup>PAC MG 30 E 159, Vol. 6, file: 1944-1950, Smallwood to MacKay, 15 March 1948.

<sup>14</sup>Smallwood, *I Chose*, pp. 224-228.

<sup>15</sup>Leo Moakler, "The Barrelman", *Call Me Joey*, Ed. James R. Thoms (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1990), p. 27; Leo Moakler to the author, 18 May 1992.

<sup>16</sup>James Halley to the author, 11 May 1992. Halley claimed he had evidence that Smallwood had prior knowledge through Burchell of the residency requirement for delegates to the National Convention.

<sup>17</sup>Granger Coll., PAC, 1980-11/5a, Smallwood to Granger, 4 March 1979.

<sup>18</sup>PAC MG 27 III B 20, Vol. 58, file 26 British government, 1, Bradley and Smallwood to C.D. Howe, 21 June 1948.

<sup>19</sup>Harold Horwood, *Joey* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1989), p. 111 and Gregory J. Power to the author, 17 January 1992.

<sup>20</sup>See RGLP 3.01.015, Donors and Donations, Approximate Amounts Received (4 pp.). From these figures, which are approximate and did not include donations of below \$20, the League received \$25,950, and the EUP received \$17,340, from which, being generous with the addition of petty donations, the cited figure were estimated.

<sup>21</sup>Grace Sparkes to the author, 15 January 1992.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, and Sparkes' "Address to Convocation", the Memorial University *Gazette*, 24, 18 (4 June 1992), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup>See the author's "Confederation of Newfoundland", pp. 160-1.

<sup>24</sup>Responsible Government League Papers (hereafter RGLP), Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Memorial University (hereafter CNSA), 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, correspondent to O'Leary, 29 July 1948.

<sup>25</sup>J.R. Smallwood Papers, CNSA, 1.30.001, Placentia West, correspondent to Smallwood, 7 June 1948.

<sup>26</sup>RGLP 3.01.018, Correspondence F.M. O'Leary, 1944-1948, G. Pike to W.S. Perlin, 13 August 1948.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, various enclosures.

<sup>29</sup>J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.30.003, Placentia West, correspondent to Smallwood, 6 April 1949.

<sup>30</sup>J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.06.001, Burin 1949, correspondent to Smallwood, 1 February 1949.

<sup>31</sup>For instances of this see J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.45.004 (Trinity North M-Z 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 5 April 1949; 1.30.002 (Placentia West A-F 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 28 April 1949; 1.30.003 (Placentia West G-O 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 30 April 1949; 1.30.004 (Placentia West P-Z 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 2 May 1949; 1.45.002 (Trinity North A-F 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 2 May 1949; and correspondent to Smallwood, 16 April 1949; 1.46.003 (Trinity South H-P 1949), correspondent to Smallwood, 25 April 1949.

<sup>32</sup>J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.12.001, Fortune Bay-Hermitage, correspondent to Smallwood, 5 February 1949.

<sup>33</sup>The Referendum Act made no specific provision for scrutinizing the compilation

of the results, thus leaving it at the discretion of the Chief returning officer.

<sup>34</sup>J.R. Smallwood Papers, 1.39.001, St. John's East, includes "N. Short, Colonial Building" on a list of confederate supporters.

<sup>35</sup>Alec G. Stacey, "1000 Days That Changed Our Destiny", *BNF*, p. 136.

<sup>36</sup>Public Record Office, Kew, England Dominions Office 35/3460, Gordon Macdonald to Philip Noel-Baker, Secretary of State for Dominions Affairs, 7 p.m., 26 July 1948.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, Gordon Macdonald to Noel-Baker, 1 p.m., 28 July 1948.

<sup>38</sup>See the Referendum Act 1948, and the National Convention Act 1946, paras. 70 and 84, on which it relies for the provision of the mechanics of conducting the poll.

<sup>39</sup>Smallwood and Bradley were behind three versions of a letter to the Orangemen of Newfoundland, designed to mobilize a sectarian pro-confederate vote.

<sup>40</sup>See the author's "Confederation of Newfoundland", p. 262.

<sup>41</sup>On the fruitless efforts of a previous researcher to find this information see Bren Walsh, *More Than A Poor Majority* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1985), pp. 300-1. The author had the same difficulties.

<sup>42</sup>In the second referendum, confederation officially received 78,323 votes, while responsible government received 71,334 votes.

<sup>43</sup>*The Evening Telegram*, 3 January 1949. Short's honour was given "in recognition of his outstanding work as a magistrate, and for his able service to the country in other fields."