

BLUEPRINT DEFIANCE OF MANIFEST DESTINY:  
ANTI-AMERICANISM AND ANTI-REPUBLICANISM IN CANADA WEST,  
1858-1867

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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March 20, 1969

"Perhaps the most striking thing about Canada is that it is not part of the United States. Somehow more than half of North America has escaped being engulfed by its immensely more powerful neighbour."

—John Bartlet Brebner

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## PREFACE

This monograph purports to examine the basis of anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism in Canada West during the epoch-making decade 1858-1867. As a general thesis, requisite for a dissertation, the author contends that the repudiation of American ways and forms in the construction of that national entity designated the Dominion of Canada was, in the words of the late Professor John Bartlet Brebner of Columbia University, "a blueprint defiance of American Manifest Destiny."

Canadian Confederation resulted from more than a fear psychosis. It marked the retention of monarchical, counter-revolutionary roots in contrast to the "democratic-republican" political philosophy prevalent in the United States. This concept of the American polity indicated that a largely subjective ideological enmity permeated the atmosphere of Canada West.

Manifest Destiny, with its ante-bellum concomitants, slavery and spatial expansionism, was an example of the inefficacy of "Yankee" political culture, the Civil War the residue of inherent flaws deriving from an excess of democracy.

Canadians evinced a clearly perceptible sentiment that they possessed a distinctive socio-political creed, and visualized greater "liberty" in the role of British subject than citizen of a revolution-born "mobocracy." The consensus among opinion-makers on the dangerous character of imported "Americanism" constituted a considerable, unifying intellectual influence in the Confederation movement, and rejected the



anathema of expansive nationalism and continentalism embodied in the phrase "Manifest Destiny."

An inspection of the socio-intellectual atmosphere in which decisive political movements occur is essential for any comprehension of the basic conditions which made these ideological "isms" predominant, in order to relate the birth of Canada to the developing effects of anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism. However, by necessity, this study of "popular opinion" in Canada West has definite limitations: it relies chiefly on emissions from the vigorous newspapers of the day, governmental publications, and the uncertain ground of private correspondence. In addition, it investigates only the vital incubation period between 1858, when Alexander Galt hauled the Confederation issue down from the clouds into the hurly-burly arena of semi-practical politics, and the July days of 1867 which witnessed the official consummation of the grand scheme justifying Canada's claim to title deeds for half a continent.

Yet whatever limitations a writer administers to himself, an enquiry into certain aspects of the historical background resulting in an incipient pan-Canadian nationalism and the gestation of a Canadian identity, illustrates quite clearly that variations in tradition and experience, in opposition to purely environmental criteria, would not permit Canadians to submit readily to translation into citizens of the American union.

The rather shapeless subject of Canadian opinion on the United States is at best indeterminate and until recent years has been a topic of substantial neglect. Previously, the nineteenth-century image of the

American Republic exuded by Canadians had been relegated to the periphery in works dealing with Canadian-American relations. By the 1960's it has become a truism that popular notions can have considerable effect on international concord. Therefore, it seems specious that an understanding, or at least a knowledge of public attitudes in their historical perspective might prove valuable, even vital, in comprehending the tradition and trend of relations between these two North American neighbours.

The writer trusts that this dissertation will make a distinct, original contribution to the scholarly knowledge of nineteenth-century Canadian-American relations, during the crucial Confederation-Civil War years. It is hoped that this work might play a small part in establishing a more intelligent understanding of what has separated Canada and the United States in times past, and of current opinions and ideas concerning the interplay between Canada and the continental empire of these New Romans.

While endeavouring to unravel and evaluate the tangled mosaic of attitudes upon which the future of Canada West was determined, the writer incurred, as all graduate students must, several outstanding obligations in the preparation of this dissertation.

He is substantially indebted to his mentor, Dr. Laurier L. LaPierre, Associate Professor of History, and Director of the French Canada Studies Programme at McGill University, for his stimulating and empathetic guidance and advice on all matters during this student's doctoral studies.

The author would like to express his gratitude to others who assisted in some way in the formation of this work. A special debt is

felt to Professor Robert Craig Brown of the Department of History, University of Toronto, as this dissertation developed from his suggestion to the writer in 1965 that an analysis of anti-American and anti-republican sentiment in the Canadas at the time of Confederation might prove a rewarding enterprise. Appreciation is also extended to two noted scholars of Canadiana, Professor Peter B. Waite of Dalhousie University and Robin W. Winks of Yale University, for expressing their confidence that the subject undertaken was indeed worthy of considerable research. Beyond this, the magnum opus of each did much to create initial interest in the study of Canadian-American relations during the Confederation era.

The debts and obligations incurred have been numerous, but the writer would be remiss if he did not accord a note of thanks to Dr. David M. L. Farr, Professor of History and Dean of Arts at Carleton University, who, though he has not seen this study, contributed considerably to the education of the student who wrote it.

The mention of these names does not imply approval or endorsement, and any short-comings in the treatise remain the exclusive responsibility of the author.

It is always pleasing to acknowledge grants, and in this regard he wishes to thank Rev. Dr. E. C. Knowles of the Student Aid Office for his numerous offers of assistance through the Annette S. Hill awards, without which this student would not have been in a position to continue his studies. Appreciation is also extended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research of McGill University for granting the author two Steinberg Summer Research Fellowships, and to the French Canada Studies

Programme for the employment of the writer as a Research Assistant during the winter of 1966-67. Finally, a former Ontario resident would like to thank the Quebec Government for a substantial post-graduate scholarship for advanced study.

As the writing of a dissertation involves a protracted search for material, the author necessarily meets many archivists and librarians who place him in their debt. The staffs of the following centers cooperated in every possible way: Carleton University, McGill University, Queen's University, Sir George Williams University, University of Ottawa, University of California (Berkeley), University of Southern California, University of Toronto, the Public Archives of Canada, the Parliamentary Library of Canada, the Public Archives of Ontario, and the Montreal Public Library.

The writer's most profound acknowledgement is to his wife, who endured a great deal while this dissertation was brought into being. His appreciation for her aid in the preparation of the final manuscript can be only inadequately expressed. Above all, her ever-present good cheer inspired that which is most important, the tenacity to see the disquisition completed.

John C. Kendall

## INTRODUCTION

There has been a curious neglect in the history of Canadian-American relations during the Confederation-Civil War period. Studies of Canadian opinion on certain aspects of the American political culture have lacked ambiance, and a series of historical inquiries into the socio-intellectual atmosphere in which political movements take place is necessary. If Canadians today were more familiar with the ideological sentiments prevalent at that time, and the underlying conditions which made them predominant, they would have exhibited considerably less rhetorical lamenting for the nation, and a more profound understanding of themselves as a North American people.

Since a majority of historians writing on this period have granted a large measure of influence to the American Republic in the adoption of the Confederation scheme, the emotive forces in the Canadian psyche that led to the expression of these "anti-isms" must be determined through the views of the exponents and makers of opinion. The strength of anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism and the role these particular ideologies played in persuading the geo-political entity of Canada West to stake its fortune in British North American union rather than in annexation, was made evident in the "public opinion" of the period.

The editorial columns of the formidable Toronto Globe, its Tory rival, the Leader, the Hamilton Spectator, the London Free Press, and the Ottawa Union, made the ideological hostility in Canada West towards the American polity very clear. Throughout this monograph, references to

various newspapers in Canada West, as well as in other sections of British America, illustrate that the feelings expressed by the politico-journalistic hierarchy of Canada West were not simply a phenomenon common to the urban conglomerations of Canada West alone, but were similarly found in rural areas and throughout British America.<sup>1</sup> Several papers, such as the Montreal New Era of the brilliant Thomas D'Arcy McGee, and the Toronto Message under the editorship of the aged firebrand, William Lyon Mackenzie, are also used to a degree because of their strong grasp of political fundamentals and their representation of important points of view. Quotations from American newspaper editorials as reprinted in Canadian journals indicate how well read Canadians were on the affairs of the United States, and act as a possible basis for the largely subjective anti-American syndrome in this particular phase of the Canadian experience. Canada West, in effect, did not exist in a vacuum.

Generally well-written and well-organized, the newspapers of the day in Canada West provide the backbone of this study.<sup>2</sup> While private political correspondence and governmental publications are used as a balance, it was the newspaper which, in the broadest sense, reflected and moulded the sentiment in Canada West regarding the American Republic. In any public opinion study of this period, it is the newspaper that will largely determine the character of the work, as it commented, criticized, influenced, and informed—and it remains the most significant mirror of opinion in Canada West in the years 1858-1867, that is still in existence.

The view which Canadians take of their neighbours, as is the case with most countries, is the product of experience and tradition.

There have been many instances since 1783 when the people of Canada were made acutely conscious of their relationship to the United States. For decades, British North America was equated by Americans with the unfinished business of the American Revolution. This "sub-Arctic, second-best America" represented the degree by which the Revolution had failed and Canada constituted an unwelcome reminder to the Americans that it had never been quite completed. In consequence, a strong current in American thinking was directed at the very existence of these British colonies. The dynamics of American expansion was expressed in such phrases as "Manifest Destiny," "Our Continent," and a more or less avowed policy of North America for Americans. As General Cass of the State of Michigan phrased it, "Americans had an awful swaller for territory."

For many years and in certain circles it had been platitudinous to discuss Canadian-American relations in trite phrases of "hands across the border," "good neighbours," and the "unguarded frontier." But this tradition of felicity wilted under a confrontation with historical scholarship.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, both sides of the border were maintained in at least a partial defensive state of readiness under the dusky cloud of what one journal referred to as "a war in anticipation."<sup>4</sup> The tenet of the "century of peace" has been common in Canadian-American relations and the obvious defects and limitations of this "useful myth" are partially traceable to the "authorized version" of Canada's story.

Professor Donald G. Creighton, of the University of Toronto, has observed that anyone delving into the popular conception of Canadian

sentiment towards the American Republic affronted the morality of "the most remarkable achievement of that remarkable creation," the Grit or Liberal interpretation of Canadian history. The "central mystery" of the emergence of the Canadian nation, the creed of the "authorized version" resolutely affirmed, was the result of a hard contest between the forces of Canadian nationalism and British imperialism. However, some like the bibulous Kingston lawyer, John A. Macdonald had never comprehended this dogma and implied that it was the new nest of rising eagles on Washington's Capitol Hill that formed the real threat to future Canadian autonomy, and not the Lords and Commons of Westminster.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever truth there might be to the "century of peace" theme, especially after the Treaty of Washington in 1871, it was by no means a century of courtesy. A number of writers have contended that despite the virulent anti-British excitation manifested by the United States, the people of Canada did not reciprocate this enmity. Even the years 1858-1867 have been unveiled as a testament that British North America generally was having an affair with its southern neighbour. While this viewpoint has had wide acceptance, historical evidence illustrates that such was not the case.

Although the majority of historical writers have seen American influence in this period as critical in the development of the Confederation movement, or in the rise of what D'Arcy McGee liked to call "the new Nationality," most studies are filled to the brim with compact generalizations but little conclusive evidence. Certainly, there was a great deal of positive Canadianism in the union endeavour, but the ideological basis



for this incipient Canadian nationalism was anti-Americanism, and this has been reiterated in more than one general election since 1867. Yet the bewildering exhibit of historical opinions, running the gamut from the view that the Americans had little or no influence, to nominating the United States as the decisive force in Confederation leaves one perplexed.<sup>6</sup> It is almost impossible to offer a definitive answer to the question of the American role, but there was clearly more anti-American and anti-republican sentiment in Canada West and throughout British America than one has been led to believe. This ideological hostility towards the Republic played a major role in the realization of Canadian Confederation.

A survey of the newspapers, pamphlets, debates, and memoirs of the period substantiates the assertion that these anti-isms were important factors and would, under no circumstance, allow Canadians with their widespread aversion to American institutions as a unifying force, to change allegiance from the lion to the eagle. A union with the celebrated "Yankee way of life" meant a plunge into democratic-republican ways and forms. Even in Canada West, the most vulnerable of all of British North America to revolutionary conspiracies and subversion, the illness of American society was attributed to the bad seed of democracy, even though Canada West was still part of the frontier, "the line of most rapid and effective Americanization."<sup>7</sup>

Beneath the prejudice against the American system was a critical distrust of Yankee aggressiveness and a fundamental understanding of the continentalism of the United States. By the middle of the nineteenth-century, Canadians were better informed and better disposed toward the

Republic than at any previous juncture, but the dangerous nature of "Americanism" made that political complex still unacceptable. Hostility, not completely based on an objective understanding, despite the proximity of the United States, was sometimes quiescent, but often dominant in regard to American socio-political institutions and behaviour. The first glimmerings of a national awakening among the British American people offered a viable alternative.

If anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism are to be accepted as touchstones in the Canadian gestation, the period under investigation is a vital one. There can be little doubt that from 1858, when Alexander Galt formally introduced his union measure before the Canadian House of Assembly, to its enactment in 1867, union of the colonies was widely regarded as the most specious solution for Canadian external and domestic difficulties. Since the internal troubles of her iconoclastic southern neighbour during the 1850's and 1860's endowed British North America with the requisite breathing space in which a new nation might be brought into existence, the pre-Confederation feeling towards the United States appears to be a significant criterion in evaluating why Canadians, especially those in the more populous and powerful of the colonies, Canada West, chose to create their own national entity rather than become the "fag end" of what Arnold Toynbee has called "the American Empire."

The United States, with its full-blown belief in Manifest Destiny, its saturation with a master-mentality, and the instability of democratic-republican government certainly aided in the production of anti-American sentiment in Canada West, from which Confederation in large part resulted.

It is common knowledge that there were urgent motives for political union among the British provinces, as for example in the sectional struggles and antagonisms that threatened to plunge the Canadian Union of 1840 into dissolution and anarchy. As well, it is recognized that consolidation of British America was an indispensable part of a policy of economic nationalism, and the commercial metropolitan centers had come to view this form of nationalism as their especial salvation. If Canada gained a union and the power to control the great Northwest, then all future trade from half a continent would flow through Canadian waterways and over Canadian railways. As such, Canadian leaders in Toronto, Montreal, and along the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system, with their control of the articulate mouthpieces of the day, the newspapers, and the Parliament of the Province of Canada, and with their big business interests, did their utmost to ram through the union scheme without a popular referendum. With such hopes of lining their pockets they could not give their loyalty to the colossus to the south.

When annexationist sentiment made an appearance in Canada, such as that in western Upper Canada in 1865, it was of short duration and limited in nature. It was "the Canadian itch" which broke out like a rash every time a depression settled down on the dusty by-ways of the provincial polity. It was a last resort, in the class of political or economic cure-alls. With the ever-present influence of the neighbour across the line, Confederation would provide the answer to the siren call of Manifest Destiny which had threatened to absorb Canada West and her sister colonies for over half a century. Yet the union scheme could not

have been completed without this commitment to Canadian counter-expansionism; it was a key element in the totality of the programmed pattern for British American survival.

The decade leading up to 1867 was one of considerable tension along the Canadian-American frontier. From these years emerged two North American nations. While the great Civil War had unveiled the grievous by-products of separatism, by 1865 it was over and the American Union was preserved. But the troubles of the United States had hastened the Confederation of British North America. Canadian thought and political philosophy, largely derived from mid-Victorian Britain with due regard to the frontier influences of North America, owed much to the Republic and its bloody Civil War.<sup>8</sup> The long conflict, with its issues of black slavery, federalism, "states' rights," self-determination and expansionism, became a part of Canada's historical heritage. As the Whitby Chronicle so aptly noted, "We are as a people, affected most acutely by the abnormal conditions of our great neighbour."<sup>9</sup>

## REFERENCES

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9. Whitby Chronicle, March 16, 1865, quoted in George P. de T. Glazebrook, A History of Canadian External Relations, Carleton Library No. 27, Revised Edition, I (Toronto, 1966), 82.

## CHAPTER I

### THE ROOTS OF DISSENSION

Canada West had long been under the influence of the United States, in some way or form. Assurances were often offered by the "loyal" elements in the province that Canadians would never contemplate trading their position as a physical part of the second British Empire for a political role in the American Union. John Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada observed in 1795 that "the great material blessings of superior soil and climate, British freedom, British Union and the experienced loyalty of those who inhabit this province will speedily raise it up to an unexampled height of prosperity and of permanent security."<sup>1</sup> Simcoe's enthusiastic plans to reverse the results of the American Revolution did not materialize and it was to be a long, difficult struggle to maintain this Canadian loyalty in the face of large numbers of Americans immigrating to the free land of Upper Canada, the blatant militarism evident in the invasions of 1812-14, and Yankee support for the rebels during the crisis of 1837-38.<sup>2</sup>

John Graves Simcoe was not the only British official to display his dislike for the democratic-republican character of American ways and forms. Sir Francis Gore expressed similar sentiments during his sojourn in Canada: "I have had the King's interest only at heart, and I have and ever will contend against Democratic principles."<sup>3</sup> Sir Francis Bond Head declared in his Narrative how he, too, had been sentenced to contend with

democracy on North American soil and that if he did not overpower it, then it would overpower him. This was a clear and trenchant enunciation of the anti-democratic, conservative, political philosophy of the day, when Tories, through habit, used the terms "democratic" and "republican" interchangeably. Democracy and republicanism were "Americanisms" and as such suspect, and threatening to the Canadian ethos. Democracy was the evil import of repulsive republicans to be repudiated as an accursed thing, portending to submerge the British American identity under the flood of Yankee influence.

The Toronto Patriot described very clearly the position of Canada in an editorial of mid July, 1839:<sup>4</sup>

That the Americans want the Canadas, we believe that no man in his senses will attempt to deny.... They have, however, been woefully mistaken. Yet has it not been for want of emissaries and advocates to preach up the excellencies of "self-government," "republicanism," and "pure democracy." All the advantages that such extrinsic aids could give friend Jonathan has had abundantly heaped upon him. Mackenzie has preached, Rolph has preached, and Bidwell has preached; and scores of others have preached in our Legislative Halls and through a licentious demoralizing Press; Yankee missionaries have preached in the pulpit, at Camp Meetings, in the wig-wams of our simple-hearted yeomanry. Yankee schoolmasters have preached in our common schools; Yankee doctors have preached at the bedsides of their patients; Yankee tavern-keepers have preached in their bar-rooms; Yankee stage-drivers have preached on the highways, and eke multitudes of Yankee squatters have preached in our backwoods. All these preachings have been for thirty years; and thus has the poison been unsparingly preached, promulgated, punched, poked and pummelled into the people, from the whining schoolboy to the grey beard; yet do the affection and reverence of the Upper Canadians to their

Sovereign remain intact, and we may now say with more confidence than ever, "Let them come if they dare."

Miss Aileen Dunham, in her study of Political Unrest in Upper Canada, noted how frontier isolationism produced a wide spectrum of emotions, from a sturdy independence to an intense egotism, the latter more often than not growing into lack of cultural appreciation and supersensitiveness. The monotonous life in the backwoods called for release and this often vent itself in spasmodic outbursts of intense emotionalism, in fact much of what Canadians to prone to accuse Americans during the nineteenth century. In Canada West, the Tory especially feared a deterioration of moral and social standards under Yankee ascendancy, and this tended to breed a consensus of conservative political thought.<sup>5</sup> The institutions and actions of the United States were ever under the critical, skeptical eye of Canadian writers. At the same time the Kingston Gazette advised the colonials not to envy their American neighbours, but to be content with their own condition and try to improve it while leading "peaceable, quiet lives in all godliness and honesty."<sup>6</sup>

Contemporaries deplored the examples of American license indulged in by many who had recently immigrated to the frontier sections of Canada West. W. A. Talbot spent Five Years' Residence in the Canadas and observed how they embraced new theories before they had been properly assimilated into the culture of the frontier: "The first, and as they conceive it, the most essential study in which they can manage in this new start of existence, is therefore to imitate everything American." Some of the new arrivals



were so successful in this pursuit that before they had spent a full year in the Province, they exhibited the finest specimens "of ignorance and affection that this or any country can produce.... They are indefatigable in acquiring a knowledge of the Rights of Man, the First Principles of Equality, and the True Nature of Independence." Miss Susanna Moodie, while Roughing It In the Bush, noted, too, how immigrants no sooner set foot upon Canadian shores than they became possessed with this "ultra-republican spirit. All respect for their employers, all subordination is at an end; the very air of Canada severs the tie of mutual obligation which bound you together." <sup>7</sup> Some who were used to differential treatment in the Mother Country found such conditions unbearable, but they were to be expected in the backwater eddies of the North American frontier. As the frontier pushed further westward and Canada West matured under "Responsible Government," this phenomenon became less and less pronounced.

In the moderate mind of Upper Canada, government was to provide stability, security, liberty, and freedom of thought and action, around which a discreet and loyal citizenry could huddle while the turbulent and hostile giant across the border belched forth enthusiasms which they dared not share.

A suspicion of disloyalty was a potent election force against those who advocated "Americanism" in Canadian politics. In 1832, one source declared: "We now see disaffection disseminating doctrines of a designing demagogue who aims at engrafting republicanism on a British constitution and disturbing the tranquility of our peaceful abode with factious broils." <sup>8</sup> With a certain anxiety about their future role, the

Tories usually exploited this suspicion to the utmost at polling time. They invariably maintained that reform advocates were really attempting to conceal their desire for the establishment of a republican government on Canadian soil. Yet it must be clear that those who might be prepared to support the trend towards democratic institutions were by no means prepared to extend it to its logical end, republicanism. Safety lay in a mixed government, one possessing both monarchical and democratic elements. And there were differences in Canadian and American concepts regarding democracy, perhaps due to the fact that Jacksonian democracy had developed after the American Revolution and after the large American migrations to Upper Canada just before the War of 1812. In addition, the later flood of British immigrants possessed a tie to old world customs and the British concept of a liberal democracy, in opposition to the "wild caprice of King Mob."<sup>9</sup>

Uncertainty as to their especial position or rank in North America led Canadians into periods of intense dislike of American practices. Torrents of abuse and political indictments issued from the provincial press showed a definite hostility towards the United States. There was a largely subjective, cultural enmity in Canada West regarding American institutional procedures. Among the latter was the dislike among Canadians of visualizing all power in the hands of popular elements, something dismissed by provincial leaders as unwanted in Canada. And under the intense pressure of potential political absorption into the American Union, the Canadian image of the southern polity became the accepted view of the mainstream of Canadian politics. The native

conservative tradition in Canada West found the American acceptance of majority rule aggravating, and this would become even more antagonizing when the large center in Canadian politics became the chief projection of the fears and emotions in regard to the American Republic.

Canadians had not been the only people to give the American polity careful scrutiny during the first half of the nineteenth century. Several erudite foreign writers had made intelligent generalizations about the North American continent for many years. While Alexis de Tocqueville's Democracy in America was one of the most important commentaries on the American scene, the observations of "Radical Jack" Durham showed a strong grasp of the fundamental reality of Canada's position in North America. In his celebrated Report on the Affairs of British North America, the most prominent by-product of the Canadian Rebellions of 1837-38, Lord Durham, a governor who was not conservative, noted that Canada's future was guaranteed if it consistently followed the principles of the British constitution by administering the Canadian government on those principles which had been found "perfectly efficacious" in Great Britain. He recommended a union of all the British North American colonies as it might in some measure counter-balance the preponderant influence of the United States on the American continent. This imperious young nobleman foresaw the need to develop a British American "nationality" as the only positive way to resist the all-pervasive sway of the United States in every facet of Canadian life.<sup>10</sup>

Many in Canada were aware that there was as much difference in the "responsible government" advocated by the little rebel of Montgomery's

Tavern, William Lyon Mackenzie, and the "King of the Coal Mines" as there was between "an independent democratic Republic and a subordinate Limited Monarchy." A rigorous Canadian nationalism within the warm, protective blanket of a healthy British imperialism alone could establish a meaningful boundary line between British and non-British North America. To have a permanent existence for a Canadian "nation," British institutions, wisely modified to suit the needs of the North American environment, would have to prevail in the Canadian milieu. The Durhamite sojourn had crystallized the view that British ways and forms were the link to "the utmost development of freedom and civilization with the stable authority of an hereditary monarchy."

## II

Between 1840 and 1858 little change took place in the fundamental attitudes of Canada West regarding the United States of America. However, the old ties of the British connection had been rudely disturbed, particularly in the re-evaluation of imperial sentiments and values in Great Britain itself. The Imperial center had dropped colonial trade preferences in 1846, and granted responsible government in 1848 under Lord Elgin. This upset more than one established apple-cart in the Canadas. In 1849, English and French Canadians of selected groups united in a "paradoxical and unholy alliance of doctrinaire republicanism and economic protest," and called for one final remedy for their common ills. These dissentients hoped to find this cure in a "friendly and

peaceful separation from (the) British connection and a union upon equitable terms with the great North American Confederacy of sovereign states." The general public was invited to join the movement, within the limits of lawful agitation. Yet this proposal made itself clear by what it left out: the great southern Republic was not to be adhered to out of a fervent desire for Yankee ways, but out of economic expediency. American values were only to be accepted because of economic self-interest.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the formidable list of notables who added their names to the Montreal Annexation Manifesto, the short-lived movement garnered little support. Yet it was not the labour of fanatic lunatics. The Manifesto represented the considered opinion of the most prominent, conservative businessmen of Canada East; it was simply too radical for the rest of the United Province. Response to the Montreal suggestion was at best disappointing, as branches of the Montreal Annexation Association in Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, and Prescott rapidly succumbed from lack of patronage. Sir George Arthur assured Sir Allan Macnab that the loyal feeling in Canada West would soon arrest the Montreal movement and expressed his pleasure that the latter had declared himself opposed to the "treasonable measure" of annexation to the United States.<sup>12</sup>

Certainly, to many in Canada West, the gospel of annexationism or merger with the Republic echoed more of treason and disloyalty than of salvation. Officially ostracized by Robert Baldwin's Canadian government and by Lord Elgin, the annexationists were quickly discredited. Baldwin wrote to Peter Perry: "Look upon only those who are for the continuation

of that (British) connection as political friends--those who are against it as political opponents."<sup>13</sup> The Toronto Globe, soon to become the "Voice of Upper Canada," believed that a vigilant watch should be kept over the Canadian annexationists:<sup>14</sup>

While the utmost latitude of discussion within the limits of the Constitution is the birthright of every freeman, it must be conceded that when the avowed objects of discussion are to break up that Constitution, and transfer the allegiance of the country to a foreign domination it is unlawful.

The annexationists of 1849 were essentially friends of the Yankee dollar and not particularly allies of the American way of life. As was the case with most Canadian clarion calls for union with the United States, it disappeared as rapidly as prosperity reappeared. Alexander Galt might have declared that political amalgamation with the Americans was the only cure for Canada's manifold ills in 1849, but ten years later he had evidently recanted, and totally dismissed such "wild proposals" in favour of a British North American union.<sup>15</sup>

In Canada West, Baldwin, the Globe, and most of the Reform party easily countered the republican aberrations of a handful in that party. As for the French-speaking Canadians in Canada East, Lord Elgin observed that if their religion and culture were protected, it was quite possible that the last hand which waved a British flag on North American ground might well be that of a French Canadian.<sup>16</sup> Like the confrontations of 1837, the confusion of 1849 was the striving of a small dissident element, not any seriously powerful interest group. That is, the idea of union with the United States was not held with sufficient tenacity to make the

suggestion viable.

Americans themselves had long made concerted attempts and emitted boisterous utterances about the conquest of Canada and its incorporation into the American continental empire. But the agitation of 1849, while short in duration, was the first really significant discussion by a Canadian group of substance concerning such a possibility of union. Indeed, annexation talk on the Canadian side of the border had reached a broader pinnacle than at any previous juncture:<sup>17</sup>

The question practically present to men's minds (was) not--do we hate England enough to renounce our allegiance and to affront all the conveniences and perils of separation, but rather do we love her enough, is her connection sufficiently valuable to us to induce us to refuse to clasp the hand which is stretched out towards us by a great, neighbouring and kindred nation, with whose prosperity and rapid advancement, as contrasted with our relatively slow progress, we are constantly taunted by British statesmen.

Obviously, by 1849 annexation had become a serious issue in provincial politics and Lord Elgin, fully aware of its significance at that time, issued a statement to the effect that the actions of the British government had done much to prepare the way for separation, in its dealing with the British American colonies. However, the Governor noted that there were plausible grounds for the maintenance of the Imperial connection as both foreign and domestic trade in Canada would benefit from an elimination of annexation sentiment.

One important force which steadfastly opposed the proposals of the mercantile men of Montreal for Canada's incorporation into the "irresistible colossus" was the influential Toronto Globe. Although Canadian

prejudice against "Yankee notions and republican wares" had lessened over the years, the Globe advised the largely Tory signers of the Manifesto that they could expect little in the American system that they would regard as congenial:<sup>18</sup>

This lesson has been taught us by our American neighbours, yet we see no sufficient reason, to jump to the conclusion, that there is no hope for us but by a union with them, There is no real good in their institutions, not embraced by the British mode of conducting Government....

The economic powers of Montreal might expect that the American economic pattern might allow them greater commercial freedom and opportunity, but many throughout Canada were thoroughly convinced that "Republicanism" had done very little indeed for "higher freedoms":

We...are forcibly led to the conclusion that Republican Institutions are not favourable to genuine liberty.... It is not easy to understand how a government with fifteen states, rejoicing in their cherished institution of slavery, can be actively and perpetually engaged on the side of freedom. It is difficult to believe that the Government will be perpetually on the side of freedom, when the very preservation of that unholy bond, the Union, is based on the principle that in vast tracts of their country the human mind is placed under Russian restraint, that it is death in some places to teach children to read if they have a drop of coloured blood in their veins.... These, Canadians, are the allies to whom the annexationists would introduce you. But you will spurn the degradation with the contempt it merits.

There was little need for union with such a "socially diseased" country as the United States, asserted the Tory Toronto Patriot. It was not south of the border that the colonists could look for any principle



or practice from which they could benefit. The Globe seized the issue once again and explained that it had never believed that American institutions would ever elevate or improve Canada if dragged across the international frontier. The verdict was that they had never been productive of real liberty:<sup>19</sup>

We are perpetually reminded of the high attainments of the Northern States of a moral and intellectual character, and of the wealth which enables them to command every comfort and every luxury of life. Without wishing to detract from the many good qualities which adorn a large proportion of the people, particularly in the New England States, we must demur to the general existence of sincere devotion to the cause of freedom.... The love of liberty has yet made little progress even in the North. It is an instructive fact—worthy of being weighed by all who are in search of political truth, that the most violent adherents of ultra Republicanism exhibit in the United States as in other countries, an utter disregard for real liberty.

Indeed the signers and promoters of the Manifesto of 1849 had discovered a sound excuse for a change of course in the deplorable Fugitive Slave Law, passed as a part of the Compromise of 1850. It was the last important agreement between slave and free sections in the antebellum United States. Said one Canadian paper:<sup>20</sup>

We have hitherto advocated annexation, but rather than consent to the annexation of Canada to the United States, while the slave-holding law remains in force...we would be willing not only to forego all the advantages of annexation, but to see Canada ten times poorer and worse governed than she is.

It may well have been an opportunity for preventing the ultimate severance of the British tie and union with the American Republic. Yet it also

carried a great deal of truth. Canadians, especially those in the western sector between Toronto and Windsor, were, by and large, abolitionists who saw the Law of 1850 as a "vicious, moral wrong, harsh and vindictive in spirit." It was the national law of the United States by which the North had opened its soil "to the manhunter as a hunting-ground and provided beaters and gamekeepers to assist in the chase."

The sentiment expressed in Canada West regarding the connection between annexation and black enslavement was not common to that section alone. An editorial from a New Brunswick newspaper showed that the great body of British Americans saw themselves as abolitionists and as a physical part of the British Empire:<sup>21</sup>

Ere we annex ourselves to a slave-holding Republic, we'll go down with the British flag--the true emblem of true liberty--flying at the mast-head.... We form a part of the greatest nation under the sun--a nation which holds the cultivation of young slaves, and the repudiation of old debts, in equal abhorrence; and as such, we desire no nearer connection with the United States, than that which is induced by mutual and voluntary good feeling, based upon genuine yet distant interests.

It is true that there were some "republicans" in Canada West during this period, or at least those who advocated ideas and concepts that smacked of "Americanism." William McDougall, native-born Grit owner of the Toronto North American, advised his readers that if Canada remedied the defects in her own system and adopted only the very best of the American system there would be nothing left in the great Republic that a Canadian could envy, and that would sound the death knell of

annexationism in Canada. He, like others, disliked provincial attempts to discredit the American polity through the anti-slavery cry for, as he pointed out, the terms democracy and republicanism were not interchangeable with the institution of the "accursed system." The Toronto editor was sure that eventually the free institutions of the United States would triumph over the "peculiar institution":<sup>22</sup>

We altogether disclaim the unjust, the absurd taunts which a few recently imported monarchists are perpetually flinging at Republicanism and American Institutions. We have a strong faith that under those institutions the curse of slavery, entailed upon the country under a monarchy, will be swept away.... The day is not distant when the inherent love of liberty, planted in the breasts of the American people and fostered by their institutions, will break the fetters and "let the oppressed go free."

Like William McDougall, William Lyon Mackenzie thought well of American liberty but rather preferred the British style. The American system was what he called a "quack system of liberty" which continued to be a sham in a country whose capital city was "polluted with negro slavery." It was often the disgusting gap between American professions and American practice that aggravated Canadians more than direct threats that crack units of the United States Army would come swarming across the border.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the apparent logic of the political sentiments expressed by both McDougall and Mackenzie, neither was in the mainstream of Canadian politics at this time. Problems over the Mexican War and California, among a host of domestic considerations, did not allow the United States to give any serious consideration to the Canadian annexation movement of 1849. Washington also seemed to understand that these mercantile men did

not speak for the majority of British provincials in Canada, particularly in Canada West. In fact the Buffalo Express declared:<sup>24</sup>

The State of things now existing in Canada furnishes conclusive evidence that the people are totally unfitted for enjoying our form of government. They are unacquainted with the rudiments of republicanism. The first lesson in the science is peaceful submission to the will of the majority, legally and fairly expressed. The Canadians have no idea of the thing. And until they have acquired this knowledge, or contracted the habit of obedience, Uncle Sam will not permit them to become members of his family.

By 1850, the annexationist impulse of the Galts, Redpaths, Molsons and the other signees for union with the republican Americans was read into the obituary column of political causes.

There was a broad basis for anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism in Canada by the time of the Compromise of 1850. Canadians disliked slavery as an institution, and the mid-Victorian mind could not admire a socio-political complex which professed freedom, liberty, and democracy, and yet kept almost four millions in chains. Two of the strongest abolitionists in Canada, George Brown and D'Arcy McGee, had resided in New York during their early manhood and seen something of the domination exercised in the United States by the Southern pro-slavery element. The Globe discovered that the existence of a "professedly Christian and civilized nation of menstealers" was a disgrace not only to the United States but to the entire civilized world. Brown was aware that the "leprosy of the atrocious system" affected all around it and was a formidable barrier to the spread of liberal principles.<sup>25</sup> The rapid growth of fugitive slave

communities in Canada West after 1850 documented the Canadian belief that the American polity was already rotten with decay. If slavery was the antithesis of liberty for the black man, it was almost as injurious to the liberty of the white man in the United States. Events had shown that the right of free discussion ended when the slavery issue slipped into the conversation. Added to this was the ever-present threat that the Northern states might seize the Canadas to balance off Southern plans to seize Cuba or Mexico or to counter-balance the loss of the cotton South if secession should become a reality.

Canadians had often feared the American attitude that grew out of the experience enjoyed by their southern neighbour in the years between the great compromises of 1820 and 1850. By the 1840's some imaginative elements in American society had deduced that it was the "Manifest Destiny" of that country to extend its boundaries to coincide with the rim of the North American continent. Uneasy thoughts of the War of 1812 had evaporated as American frontiersmen washed into the vast acres of the Mississippi Valley, the Oregon Territory, Texas and California: Americans had become interested in the concept and vocabulary of empire. Whenever there was a new scheme abroad to annex foreign territory to the Republic, John L. O'Sullivan's magic phrase of "Manifest Destiny" was trotted out to induce the impression that all opposition to such plans was a contest against the coming millennium, if not fate and Providence combined. It was the vision and cadence of a mighty "freedom" army on the march, bloated with an already grossly bombastic national rhetoric, intoxicating the American people with the ill-defined ambition of expansionism, militant

expansion at the expense of a neighbouring country.

Many in Canada West, as elsewhere, related the expansive nationalism clothed in the phrase "Manifest Destiny" to democratic institutions in the United States. Indeed, American reformism and American expansionism were linked closely one to the other, and the deeply rooted dogma of Manifest Destiny had considerable foundation in that of revolutionary republicanism. A mixture of republicanism, democracy, Anglo-Saxonism, economics, and a bevy of other ingredients were stirred into the melting pot of continentalism. By the 1850's, it tended to be less acquisitive in nature than ever before, and more harnessed to the opportunity for neighbouring peoples to seek self-conversion by applying for admittance into the vast American Union.

Canadians elected not to enter the portals of the so-called "temple of liberty" for a variety of reasons. Undoubtedly, the fact that most Canadians had been born in the British Isles or were the children of British immigrants, and regarded the British tie as of paramount importance is a key. But perhaps a better indication is a general view of Canadian sentiment towards the United States in the 1850's. The following portrait of an "American" was supplied by one newspaper just before the final volleys of the Mexican War: "...a leering, cigar-smoking unprincipled Yankee, guarding his almighty dollar and his title to Oregon and Texas, with elevated feet, unkempt hair, slave driver's whip, repeating pistol, and liquor glass." In the background would be found references to slave-trading, slave-beating, and slave-lynching, repudiation of debts, duelling, fighting with knives in Congress, the erection of gallows, and church

pillaging in Mexico. To many Canadians, both slavery and Manifest Destiny were faults in, or the abhorrent examples of, the failure of American institutions, and they wanted no part of them. There were better ways for peace-making than the employment of Sam Colt's revolvers.

A foreign policy of militant expansionism served as a means of maintaining sectional equilibrium between North and South over the slavery question for some time before 1850, and the United States had had the advantage of room to expand against poorly organized opposition. British disposition to compromise over the contested tracts of Maine and Oregon, the border troubles of 1837-38, and the annexation riots in Montreal in 1849, agitated the excited imagination of those in the United States who wished to export the republican form of government to the United Province of Canada.

The hope of avoiding civil war by means of an aggressive foreign policy persisted in American affairs, right down to the great schism of 1860. The expansion adventure was a profitable business for several generations in the United States, in escaping from the requirements of a reflective, balanced settlement of internal tensions. And as Professors Albert Weinberg of Johns Hopkins University, and Frederick Merk of Harvard University illustrated in their fine studies of Manifest Destiny, Americans advanced a host of explanations and justifications for their planned acquisition of the continent.<sup>26</sup>

Canadians feared for their future when such a crusading spirit controlled the foreign policy of their powerful neighbour. Granted the North had its hands full with the quarrelsome South, but what could be

expected in the coming years when the United States was prepared to wage war on itself, in a mood soon expressed in a battle hymn with blood-curdling overtones which begins: "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the Coming of the Lord...."?

The reaction of Canada West could not be enthusiastic when sentiment in the American Republic had reached such a fever pitch that its own destiny and "undeniable worth" were equated with the advent of the Modern World.<sup>27</sup> In a tone of sublime bitterness, the London Free Press burst forth:<sup>28</sup>

For ever and anon it bursts forth in ample jettings. To us it is a disgusting spectacle, as meaningless as it is vain. The pompous and braggadocio airs that they put on are most amusing.... It is the restlessness of youthful vanity—a morbid anxiety to be top high before the nations.... But again what could these swaggerers do were a spare fleet to look in upon Boston and New York some morning. John Bull gives rather ugly salutations at times, and we guess they would be felt unpleasant by the natives of Dollardom.

There was some feeling that the United States would attempt to settle her domestic problems by means of a foreign war, most likely against an old rival who offered a militarily feasible battleground and that could only be against Great Britain, with Canada the tactical objective. As a side effect, Americans felt such an encounter would produce a new "State of Upper Canada" or a "Republic of Canada." The national vanity of the Republic was regarded as unbounded when it came to such a lucrative, dashing enterprise as the extension of the United States north of the Great Lakes. The rapid and inexorable push of the



American frontier across the wide void of the West gave rise to substantial fear in the United Province that she, sometime in the foreseeable future, would reap the whirlwind of Manifest Destiny with its chief concomitant, democratic-republicanism. "Texas, we repeat, is secure; Who's the next customer? Shall it be California or Canada?"<sup>29</sup> In the fifteen years since that query in 1845, California had been seized and Canada's future did not seem secure.

Despite the many negative aspects, the American Republic stood as a patent example of intoxicating growth. It became obvious to Canadians that the consolidation of British holdings in North America was indispensable to a policy of economic nationalism, but the Confederation movement was more than a scheme to establish the supremacy of the commercial men of Montreal. In the struggle for commercial and financial hegemony Toronto sought also to possess a great hinterland, in the last reluctant wild lands of the Northwest. In fact, both centers would reap economic benefits from any trade which flowed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from sea unto sea through a continent spanned by an all-British American route.<sup>30</sup> The impoverished and disunited British colonies were largely dependent on the good-will of the United States for markets and communication; a new orientation was vital. And it was the metropolitan communities strung out along the proposed route which became the primary centers of the Confederation drive. The difficulty here is to decipher whether this incipient economic nationalism was merely part and parcel of expanding capitalism or a concerted effort to resist American interference in provincial affairs.

The fate of Canada had been temporarily secured by the comparatively friendly state of Anglo-American relations during the opening years of the 1850's. In 1854 a Reciprocity Treaty with the United States was obtained for the British American colonies mainly through the fact that Lord Elgin took Washington society by storm. As his secretary observed: "He never loses sight for a moment of his object, and while he is chaffing Yankees and slapping them on the back, he is systematically pursuing that object. The consequence is, he is the most popular Englishman that ever visited the United States." This agreement remained the hitching-post of the Canadian economy for over a decade. Reciprocity with the United States, as introduced by Lord Elgin, was a radically new concept in the Canadian economic system and it dissolved the only substantial interest Canadians had in the idea of political annexation to the Republic: the demand for economic opportunity and freedom of commercial action. Yet while some newspapers in Canada West excitedly heralded the treaty as the greatest boon that Canada could have had conferred upon her, there were others who demanded that the Yankee be kept under close surveillance: "Open the floodgates of the United States today and our thriving manufacturers would be assuredly swamped."<sup>31</sup> In general, the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 was beneficial to the growth of Canadian economic autonomy.

While most of Canada would have found little reason to debate the value of the emotional appeal of the Imperial connection as against the economic attractions of the United States after 1854, Governor Elgin cautioned all concerned that Canada would always remain within the vicinity of the fast-expanding Republic and therefore must necessarily be prepared

to assume some of the financial cost of her own defence. There had been considerable talk by "Little Englanders" in the Mother Country about the withdrawal of the Imperial legions:<sup>32</sup>

The sentiment has been widely heard, that Great Britain begins to feel her colonies a burden and a nuisance--that she desires to sever one by one the bonds that unite her to them--that the connexion therefore will be of but uncertain duration--and that annexation to the States must perforce be looked to as the inevitable goal, the only practicable mode of terminating a provisional and entering upon a definitive national existence.

Trade and defence were important for the preservation of British North America but what was perhaps of greater consequence was the broad host of anti-American statements in the Canadian press deprecating the institutions and practices of the United States. For the bulk of the Canadian people, the Republic set a rather poor example in many respects and introspection tended to reaffirm faith in the British system of government. Elections in Canada West were certainly not the epitome of propriety and decorum but it was widely felt that democracy and "universal suffrage" were concepts that would augur no good for Canada if allowed to pass through American customs:<sup>33</sup>

Democratic theories are as old as Roman philosophy, but even Cicero lived long enough to distrust their practical application to the wants of a mixed society. One condition at least seems necessary before they can be safely adopted pure and simple, by any people--viz, a high standard of intelligence, a general diffusion of education.... But what a mass of ignorance is still to be encountered in every constituency. And the lower we go on the scale of suffrage the more we add to the dangerous element.... In view of (the) facts we are not willing to travel

quite so fast or, so far in the democratic path as some of our friends. We desire to see our way clear before we jump....

The "turbulence and licentiousness of the Yankee democracy" was self-evident in its own newspapers declared one Canadian journal:<sup>34</sup>

It is astonishing with what virulence and invective the press everywhere assail the candidates who are opposed to their views. Nothing is sufficiently low or vulgar for their depraved tastes to utter. The domestic hearth is not sacred to their entrance; and even the very portals of the grave are opened up in order to vent their licentious spleen. The unbridled license of such a press is destructive to the best interests of society, and can only be tolerated, one would think where the tastes of the people are as depraved as themselves.

In all of British America there was a tacit recognition that that geographical entity had been the result of a differing historical experience, and that the American polity suggested a way of existence in which they did not wish to participate. The anticipation of a genuine alternative, a great new future for British North America was in the air in the middle decades of the nineteenth century but the impact of the American socio-political system upon the political culture of Canada West had been a powerful object-lesson. Said the Toronto Globe:<sup>35</sup>

The two great parties in the neighbouring Republic struggle earnestly and for what? To gain power by deceiving, coaxing, bribing, and betraying that immense body of uneducated electors, who, though incapable of thinking or judging for themselves in matters of States, are of sufficient weight in the electoral scale to make any party to whom they are opposed to kick the beam. Questions of public policy, of enlarged statesmanship, are never discussed on the eve of an election. These would not be understood by the masses. Cant phrases, popular catchwords,

songs, vituperative attacks, appeals to national prejudices, etc.; these are the weapons most useful in the contest, and these only are employed. The balance is held by the ignorant unreasoning mass; to sway them is the grand aim of the contest....

There was a consensus among all Canadians in this period, and particularly those in Canada West, regarding the nature and dangers of the democratic-republicanism of the United States. And there is a close connection between the growth of this Canadian political culture, the rise of Canadian nationalism, and the subjective hostility towards "Americanism." Despite the general attitude, one newspaper down by the sea showed that the anti-Americanism of British Americans was not the result of a mean, truckling nature. The programmed future of British possessions in North America would not be sought at the expense of their republican neighbours:<sup>36</sup>

It is no blind hatred of the institutions of our neighbours which prompts us thus to speak. We admire American enterprise and honour American progress, and would not rank that man among the friends of human freedom who would seek to dim the lustre of one star in her glorious galaxy; but...where is the British colonist who feels any national inferiority when compared with the proudest republican in that country?.... Our geographical position on this continent is more favourable for ultimate progress in the scale of wealth and civilization, when our connexion with the mother country is taken into account, than that of the United States itself.

Since Confederation in the Province of Canada was the culminative work of a mere handful of men, men who controlled the public prints and big business of the colony and the issue was never put to a popular vote, they in fact represented "public" opinion in Canada. This public opinion

expressed the "Britishness" of Canada, based on traditions which stood in direct opposition to Jeffersonian liberalism or Andrew Jackson's celebrated "democratic" dictum, "to the victor belong the spoils." This "mid-Victorian liberalism" in Canadian thought provided the counter-thrust to the tug of continentalism.

Whether this Canadian sentiment implied anti-Americanism or simply a lack of Americanism, economic materialism, incipient nationalism, mid-Victorian liberalism, or the pull of the metropolitan power centered in London, is difficult to discern. At a time when the greatest internal crisis in the history of the United States was rapidly unfolding before them, and the rise of anti-imperialist feeling in Great Britain was threatening to sever the cherished Imperial connection, Canadians looked inwardly towards their own experience to their own limited ways and forms. The basis for, and the expressions of, anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism in this era, indicated a typically Canadian style of co-existence.

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## CHAPTER II

### MANIFEST DESTINY, SLAVERY, AND ELECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

During the gusty October days of 1858, several ministers of the Canadian government submitted a memorial to the Imperial authorities at Westminster, calling for a confederation of all the British North American colonies. The purpose of such a union was to overcome colonial domestic and foreign difficulties under the common tie of the British connection. However, this document made itself clear by what it did not emphasize. Only through such a confederation under the aegis of the British Crown would British Americans be able to avoid assimilation into the American polity, with its black slavery, militant expansionism, and democratic-republican institutions.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of continental union, whether the product of peaceful or forceful means, was not foreign to either Canadians or Americans as the American Republic had, from the time of the General Montgomery affair at the gates of Quebec on New Year's Eve of 1775, attempted to transfer the northern half of the continent to its dominion. William Lyon Mackenzie, the rebel of 1837, was one among many in Canada West who was aware that the annexation of Canada, by the agent of the wandering spirit of Manifest Destiny, presented several important inducements to the United States.

Mackenzie pointed out that such a turn of events would mean the withdrawal from the borders of the United States of the powerful British

legions and would, in fact, complete the unfinished business of the American Revolution. Amalgamation would remove continental trade and development barriers, and the commerce of the Great Lakes would no longer be under threat of disruption every time Anglo-American relations were jeopardized. Union with the American Republic would further allow that country free and unrestricted use of the great St. Lawrence system. It was generally recognized in Canada West that the United States had always shown a strong, possessive interest in acquiring the British American colonies, once the Republic had come to understand the language of empire as expressed in the all-answering phrase "Manifest Destiny."<sup>2</sup>

While the British Government had remained cool to the confederation proposals of 1858, the powerful London Times showed an acute awareness of the North American geo-political situation:<sup>3</sup>

America must one day have fifty times our territory and ten times our people. It has no armies in India, no fifty colonies to be garrisoned, no immense navy to commission--scarcely even the pretense of an Anti-Slave Trade squadron. The time must come when, invincible as we may be on our own soil, our own shores, our own seas, and anywhere on equal terms, we should have to contend with the United States on very unequal terms on their soil, their shores, their seas, and generally in the New World.

The "Thunderer" enquired as to who these "Americans" were, a people so unruly, so provocative, and so willing to quarrel with Great Britain. As an oracle of the established classes, the Times proclaimed that most Americans were those who had already been worsted in their efforts in the British Isles, largely starved-out peasants, ousted tenants, left-handed

workmen, unlucky speculators, disappointed politicians, that is, men of every class who had seen and suffered the worst in the old world. Worst of all, they had inherited a "restless, moody, ill-contented nature" and with a certain wisdom, this paper noted: "It is an old grudge these noisy fellows are working out against us on American vantage ground." Canada, by nature, was caught squarely in the middle.

The apprehension concerning assault or invasion from the south had reached a comparatively low ebb in the short years before the opening carnage of the American Civil War. Even the ever-vigilant Conservative press of Canada West strongly deprecated the possibility of hostile action from the United States, although the subject was not under wide discussion from 1858 to 1860. North Americans waited with breathless awe as the great Republic girded its loins for secession.

The Tory Toronto Leader, after the harmonious years of the early 1850's, emitted the view that the American Union was England's "natural ally":<sup>4</sup>

More and more clearly, English journals and statesmen have begun to discover that between a constitutional monarchy and a despotism, as of France and Austria, or a bureaucracy as of Prussia, there can be no hearty concert, and that the free peoples of the United States form the only power to whom England can look for succor in the hour of need. Events transpire now and then which seem to forbid the consummation of such an alliance; but more extended intercourse, the development of vast commercial relations, the kindly influences of time—all serve to weaken the remembrances of former quarrels, and to increase the desire for permanent co-operation in the work of liberty and civilization.

The Colonist and Atlas, an ultra-Tory Toronto journal, regarded the prospect of invasion from the American side of the frontier as much too remote to merit any serious consideration. This newspaper felt that Canada had neither the manpower nor financial resources for large-scale defensive preparations in any event, and the cause for speculation at this juncture was an Anglo-French difficulty in Europe. The best position for Canada to take would be to increase her population and increase her prosperity which would in future crises provide greater strength.

The Leader was in agreement with the Colonist and Atlas that the current cause of alarm in Europe was not regarded as sufficient incentive to undertake extensive defense measures. However, the Leader saw the question of defense and attack as necessarily inter-related, and the European crisis did result in a certain state of anxiety in the editorial columns of the Leader:<sup>5</sup>

There can be no doubt that our position is an exposed one, even leaving out of account the large open boundary south of us. For, however well satisfied we are, that the American people both as a matter of feeling and of interest are not likely under any ordinary circumstances to molest us, as much can hardly be said of other countries equally powerful. The truth is a new European complication may at any time result in the appearance of a hostile fleet in the St. Lawrence.

The same paper decried the lack of martial spirit in the Canadian Volunteer force and throughout the colony generally for protective measures. But Governor Edmund Head had always expressed the rather sagacious desire to keep a tight rein on the Canadian militia with the view of preventing the Volunteer Corps from taking their weapons into the United States on

"holiday visits."<sup>6</sup>

Canadians were perhaps less alarmed about American designs on Canada in 1858 than they had been for many years before or after that date. The question of slavery had often been resolved temporarily by the issue of expansionism, as internal dissensions had been answered by external aggression. Only Canada's association with Great Britain had saved her from the fate of Mexico in the 1840's. Yet some thoughtful Canadians foresaw a civil conflict in the Republic which threatened to unleash once again the whirlwind of Manifest Destiny into both Cuba and Canada.

The interest in American affairs was widespread in the newspapers of Canada West and, in fact, more attention was paid to that subject than to all the Maritime colonies combined. Comment on the affairs of the United States was amplified by extensive quoting from American newspapers, thus giving Canadians a very good background to events transpiring in the troubled Republic. The New York Herald, for example, explained to Canadians that the arrest of Walker's filibustering army on the shores of Nicaragua by a detachment of the United States Navy would create a very bitter feeling among Southern politicians, and among all parties in the Southern States whose sympathies had been actively enlisted on behalf of the Southern "manifest destiny programme" of General Walker. The "Central American affair" led some in Canada to frequently consider the problem of security. In the event of a separation of North and South and a possible civil war, the Northern States might naturally seek compensation in acquiring the St. Lawrence: "C'est

principalement pour conjurer cette éventualité que nous appelons de tous nos vœux une confédération de toutes les colonies anglaises de l'Amérique du Nord."<sup>7</sup>

Among the many editorials on "United States Politics" was an accusation that the "Little Giant," Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, was an annexationist and filibuster in foreign affairs. Douglas was feared for his "dauntless ambition and matchless industry," and further because he was a "Canada, Cuba, and Central America" man. While many Canadians felt it gratifying that the great principle of slavery had been made the cause of conflict on the American political stage, they also possessed a feeling of trepidation as to the ultimate result of the struggle which had engaged the people and the government of the United States. Throughout the years 1858-60, the press of Canada offered the public extensive coverage of Walker's expedition, the Mormon trouble in Utah, Indian uprisings in Florida, and more importantly, "The Latest from Kansas."<sup>8</sup> There can be no doubt that even the interest of the more languid in Canada West perked up when President Buchanan stated that it was beyond all doubt the destiny of the American people to spread themselves over the North American continent; "and this, at no distant day, should events be permitted to take their own natural course." The New Era blamed the London Times, among others, for stimulating the Manifest Destiny aspirations of the United States, labelling the expansionistic phraseology as a "sinister superstition."<sup>9</sup>

The opinion of British newspapers was important in the shaping of the colonial mind, as efforts were made to distinguish "reality" from

fiction in regard to the American polity. The London Times was the most important foreign paper in Canada West during the 1850's, and it had a considerable influence on the Conservative press. The comment of the Times that Buchanan was "treading on eggs" in reference to the Kansas entanglement and the Mormon broil, but that neither side would take up arms to settle any question, was adopted by many in the Province as the accepted pattern of thought. The North would not stand up to the "insolent and bullying South" over such a sacred principle, as both sides saw that "anything was better than fighting." The convulsion in the Republic had led it to the verge of civil war in Kansas: "Prophecy was awakening, and all eyes were directed upon the United States, to see the issue of the great republican problem."<sup>10</sup>

Canadians were instructed to keep a close eye on the events in the United States in relation to slavery and republican expansion. J. J. E. Linton of Stratford, Canada West, wrote a letter to Mackenzie's Message in which he explained the equation between slavery and republican institutions in the United States. Thomas D'Arcy McGee showed that ever since Mexico, in imitation of the United States, declared itself a republic, its government had alternated between anarchy and despotism, and that in all of Mexico's troubles the hand of American diplomacy could be seen at work, thus teaching Canada, by example, that the latter had little chance for peace if she should ever become a lesser republic in the neighbourhood of a greater one. The Port Hope Atlas observed that some in the government at Washington wished President Buchanan to seek a union with British North America and Cuba. A member from Ohio was gracious



enough to suggest that no Canadian territory would be admitted into the American Union until it had a sufficient population to send one member to the House of Representatives. The Niagara Mail commented on the "Grand Annexation Movement" in Washington, entitling the movement, "The Greatest Farce Yet!"<sup>11</sup> This newspaper stated that Mr. Campbell of Ohio had introduced a joint resolution into the House of Representatives authorizing the President to negotiate, through the State Department, for the acquisition of Canada and "the other British Isles adjacent thereto," and annex them to the United States.

It was to be expected that the people living in the peninsula of south-western Canada West, the area which thrust far south of the main body of the province and deep into the Republic, should be apprehensive about American foreign policy. But the interest of the London-Hamilton-Toronto area in the threat of annexation had greater meaning than the ultimate effect on that area alone. The overwhelming value of the St. Lawrence system was too powerful an asset for Canada West to forfeit with visions of its own "Manifest Destiny" in regard to the future traffic from the Hudson Bay Territory. By acquiring this vast tract, Canada could lay the foundations of a new North American empire, strong enough to resist absorption by its dangerous neighbour to the south. And fear of encroachment from the United States was an important factor in the role played by the press of Canada West, and especially the Toronto Globe, in attempting to take control of the Hudson Bay territory out of the hands of the Hudson Bay Company. Lord Adderley, in addressing the British House of Commons, had referred to the danger of annexation. He added: "If the country were

freed from the Hudson's Bay Company, it would not be handed over to the Colonial Office but to Canada, or would be formed into a colony to be maintained by its own administration. Unless this were done the inhabitants would do what they had done before, petition to the United States to be annexed." Mr. Roebuck told the same House that if England did her duty, there would be created in the Hudson Bay territory "the Germany of North America, and therein something to counteract the preponderance of the United States."<sup>12</sup> In defense of the Company, Edward Ellice argued that if the district were released from the control of the Company, annexation with the United States would result, due to geographical access and proximity. However, many far-sighted Canadians realized that a trading company was not a fit agent for colonization, nor had the Company saved Oregon from annexation.

The apprehensions regarding the United States were not unfounded. Not only had the Red River colonists petitioned to Congress in 1857 for admission into the American Union, but the Congress had received a bill providing for the admission of the colony into the American confederation. In 1860, McGee referred to the Northwest question: "American enterprise has lately taught us a salutary, though a rebuking lesson, for while we were debating its true limits and the title by which it is held, they (Americans) were streaming down to Fort Garry with mails and merchandise from St. Paul." The Globe had also played a leading part in agitating for the removal of the Company's monopoly from the Red and Saskatchewan rivers and the opening of the tract to Canadian settlement. With a certain anxiety, George Brown watched every move by the Americans which

seemed to bring the Red River closer to Minnesota: "If we allow it to slip from our grasp and to pass into the possession of the United States, if all the rest of the continent outside of Canada and the Atlantic provinces acknowledge the sway of the Republic, we should be unable to contend with her. Our ultimate absorption would be a foregone conclusion."<sup>13</sup>

Brown and McGee never missed an occasion to put forth a vivid portrait of a great new British America extending from Atlantic to Pacific. At a Belleville banquet, Brown asked an audience about the future of Canada: "Who cannot look at the map of this Continent and mark the vast portion of it acknowledging British Sovereignty, without feeling that Union and not separation ought to be the foremost principle with British American Statesmen?" If Canadians kept faith, the British American flag would proudly wave from Labrador to Vancouver Island, from Niagara to the shores of Hudson Bay. Enthusiastically, the editor-politician went on: "Who cannot see that Providence has entrusted to us the building up of a great Northern people, fit to cope with our neighbours of the United States and to advance step by step with them in the march of civilization." Was Canada less able to take charge of the Northwest than two hundred and fifty "rat skin traders living in the City of London"?<sup>14</sup> The Globe was impatient that the boundaries of Canada be drafted in order to counteract the influence of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. It also saw the economic benefits that would accrue to Canada West in a policy of pan-Canadianism; Canadian manufacturers would find a ready market in the Northwest and the new trade from the West would have to pass through the ports and cities of Canada West. With a broad vision it was seen that

westward expansion would produce an era of prosperity for all of British America, and it would be so under the stability of the British Crown.

La Guêpe of Montreal agreed with its colleagues from Canada West that a British North American union, from coast to coast, would constitute a power formidable enough to resist the encroaching spirit of the United States:<sup>15</sup>

Nous n'aurions plus alors à craindre d'être absorbés par le Giant Américain, lors même que nous ne pourrions plus compter sur la protection de l'Angleterre.... (N)ous pourrions plus que jamais nous moquer de la Destinée manifeste, principe d'après lequel nos voisins prétendent nous annexer à eux. En tout cas, ce qui se passe aujourd'hui aux Etats-Unis donne un démenti énergique aux autopistes qui rêvent une république universelle.

It was obvious that there would be serious strains on the gossamer webs of peace for several years to come.

"Canada and Cuba" was the cry in many places of the United States during the presidential campaign of 1856, according to the reports of the Message, and this newspaper found it likely that "Jonathan" would roar still louder in the fall and summer of 1860. The accompanying cartoon exhibited Cuba as the forbidden fruit, with Spain in the form of an old woman watching the tree and the United States as a young sailor with a club in one hand, stretching up the other arm to pull down the ripe apple. There appeared to be some validity to Mackenzie's comments as the New York Tribune remarked how a new North American Association in the United States had been formed for the conquest of Cuba, composed of legions of ten thousand men and called the Knights of the Golden Circle.

President Buchanan had been as strong a Cuba man as any previous American leader, including Thomas Jefferson who in 1823 discovered that Cuba would be the most interesting addition to the United States as it was the key to Mexico and the Mississippi, and already a slave territory under the tutelage of Spain.<sup>16</sup> While Canada had to wait until the time of the Alabama claims in the late 1860's, the United States had already made an offer to buy Cuba for the sum of \$130,000,000. However, both Canada and the United States realized that Canada could not be taken by "a mere matter of marching" as the aforementioned Jefferson had prophesized almost fifty years previously. Yet Manifest Destiny was soon to be temporarily replaced in the American scheme by a whole new set of destinies and despairs.

With a prescience rarely encountered in a village sanctum, the editor of the Napanee Bee commented upon the future course of the United States: "Between Northern and Southern portions of the Union an implacable enmity seems to have taken root; and bitter, indeed, will be the fruit thereof when it shall have matured. Slavery is a dark stain on the escutcheon of the American people, a stain which will only be removed, I fear, by the spilling of blood." The Toronto Message prophesied civil war bursting out in the American Republic as early as New Year's Day, 1858, while the Montreal Pilot, amid reports "By Telegraph," widely discussed the American situation.<sup>17</sup>

It was pointed out in the Canadian press, between columns crammed with the account of the arrest of the American filibuster General William Walker, that it was indeed foreigners who best appreciated the progress

that Canada was making. For all her evident problems, the future of Canada seemed assured if she could remain outside the clutches of Manifest Destiny. And it was important that others should approve of the attempts by "those wretched colonials." An Englishman on a North American tour, Dr. Charles Mackay, told a gathering at London, Canada West, that he had been greatly impressed with the "magnificent colony" and "splendid country." After a six months sojourn in the United States he found it delightful to be once more among his countrymen and added: "I consider you have more liberty here than on the other side; your government cannot go on ruling the country against the wishes of the masses of the people as the United States can." He hoped that in the not too distant future Canada would send her own representatives to the British Parliament. Testaments of this type undoubtedly aroused the "Britishness" of a large portion of those in Canada West, and the anticipation of the future would turn the eyes of less farsighted Canadians from considering the temporary expedient of annexation to the United States.<sup>18</sup>

In all its comments upon the situation south of the border, the Canadian press showed a primary interest in the question of slavery, an issue which was an inherent part of ante-bellum American expansionism. It was perhaps the evidence of this sympathy in British America for the black man's burden that influenced John Brown to conduct his secret convention at Chatham, Canada West, in the spring of 1858. The evidence at Brown's trial showed that his ill-starred insurrection had been matured at Chatham, which led Governor Wise of Virginia to rage against the provinces: "With God's help we will drive all the disunionists together

back to Canada. Let the compact of fanaticism and intolerance be confined to British soil." The South had long been aware of Canadian hostility towards its institutions. The Southern Review railed against the "vile, sensous, animal, infidel, superstitious Democracy of Canada and the Yankees."<sup>19</sup>

Canadians had been made aware of the slavery issue to a strong degree through the arrival in their midst of large numbers of refugees fleeing from the effects of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The process was aided by the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin in 1852, by the activities of the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society, and the succession of fateful but dramatic events in the United States itself as the Republic drew near the final catastrophe of war. And, as 1860 was a presidential election year, the press of Canada paid more attention than usual to American affairs.

This sympathy for the anti-slavery cause was probably strongest in the south-western peninsula of Canada West, which had been a major portal for the "Underground Railroad" to freedom for fugitive slaves. There were large centers of Negro settlement in Chatham, Niagara, and Windsor, and the population of Canada West had an intimate personal contact with the fugitives that was not found elsewhere in the United Province of Canada.<sup>20</sup> However, Canadian discussions and debates about the black code of the South were just not as sensational as events like John Brown's wild raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia.

The foray into the heart of Virginia was covered in detail by the Canadian press. George Brown's anti-slavery Toronto Globe condemned John

Brown's forced ascent to the scaffold, noting that his execution would perpetuate and martyr his memory as a brave man who "perilled property, family, life itself for an alien race." Mass meetings were held throughout the length and breadth of the Province proclaiming resolutions of sympathy and among those who were prominent were Luthur Holton, and John Dougall, both members of the Canadian Assembly. Oliver Mowat wrote to George Brown comparing Brown's raid of 1859 to the American "sympathizers" during the Canadian rebellions of 1837, and explained the "illegality" of the Harper's Ferry raid.<sup>21</sup> After the adventure had come to grief, there were those in Canada West who feared that this "act of madness" would only further arouse feelings on the eve of the presidential election. John Brown might be commended for risking his life and liberty for the advancement of an "alien and despised race," but both Southerners and Northerners might be tempted into alliance to punish those responsible for the October outrage. The thunder at Harper's Ferry caused Governor Wise to comment: "One of the most irritating features of this predatory war is that it has its seat in the British provinces which furnish asylum for our fugitives and send them and their hired outlaws upon us from depots and rendezvous in the bordering states."<sup>22</sup>

The Globe felt that that excursion by John Brown had done much to increase the tension between North and South and civil war would result if the ill-feeling between the two sections were not relaxed. According to the Toronto paper: "No force which the South could bring to bear would keep the slaves down were the North anxious that they should be free. Dissolution of the Union would not help the case. The effect would rather



be the reverse. The South has not shown wisdom or statesmanship in arousing the spirits of the North by their frantic attempts to extend their peculiar institution." The death of John Brown would do much to arouse the spirit of the North "to that earnest spirit which alone can bring the South to understand its true position."<sup>23</sup> Certainly many in Canada West wanted no truck with a "slave-holding democracy" which soon threatened to become "The Great Split Republic."

Mackenzie's Message was generally more inclined to express hope in the United States than the majority of newspapers in Canada West. He assured his readers that Kansas would enter the Republic free from the curse of slavery, under a new constitution: "The fertile young State will make its way into the Union with honour, having passed through an ordeal which proves its fitness for Republican freedom. Kansas and Nebraska are, literally, the garden of North America." A further comment was made about Senator William H. Seward of New York who was viewed as a possible Republican candidate for the presidency in 1860: "A shrewd, sensible, persevering man is Senator Seward." One notable thing about the Americans, said the member for Haldimand, was that they were a free people who washed their linen in public, while the French, Russians, and Austrians had to do their laundry in private. They even set an example for Canada, where the lack of a written constitution was regarded by the editor of the Message as one of the greatest of evils, and where there were "shabby rogues in office." British "misrule" in Canada would give "Young America the Canadas ere long" but if they joined as free states of the Union in the near future, it would be greatly to their advantage.<sup>24</sup> The spirited old

rebel was pleased to publish a letter written to him by James A. Davidson which noted that "we live in a most desperate dollar-worshipping age, and I know the Message is not ruled by E. s. d.". While not the hireling of big business interests of the Province, neither did Mackenzie's paper represent any considerable body of opinion in Canada West. But it was the most consistently outspoken republican, annexationist, anti-slavery newspaper in the United Canadas. Mackenzie, until his death in 1861, was perhaps the epitome of "radical left" in Canadian politics.

Comments made by Americans abroad on conditions in the United States were extensively reported in the press of Canada West. Bayard Taylor wrote from ancient Sparta that official corruption was as prevalent in Greece as it was in the United States, but there was no means to prevent it in the former. Theodore Parker, the radical Boston clergyman, advised his congregation from Montreux, Switzerland: "You and I may be thankful that our land is not trodden by the hoof of war; not yet, I mean, but the days will come when we must write our great charter of liberty in blood."<sup>25</sup> No nation in Europe had as difficult a problem to solve as the United States did, where, the Reverend Parker pointed out, the "spirit of despotism" was lodged and where three hundred and fifty thousand slaveholders kept four millions in a degrading bondage which Europe only knew in her ancient history: "Besides there are 350,000 Hunkers, entrenched behind the colleges, courts, markets, and churches of America, who are armed, in their way, for the defence of this despotism and are deadly hostile to all the institutions of freedom."

Abolitionist Parker confided to his readers that peace would come

at last but in the great European strife then in progress no one dared appeal to America for encouragement, because her four million slaves, her attempts to revive the African slave trade, her practices which laid waste the principles of democracy and justice, her churches leagued with the stealers of men, were arguments put forth by despots against the American system. With a welcome light filtering into Russia, and Austria, the "hindmost State of Christian Europe," repelling the light of day, the Boston minister felt that even this despotism did not have one slave while democratic America chained one-seventh of her population and set four million men for sale: "France is the ally of rising Italy; America the helper of Austria, which would hold back the world."

Horace Greeley, the editor of the powerful New York Tribune and one of the most popular journalists on the North American continent, was praised by Canadians for his reasoning on the slavery issue. His eight-point letter expressing the desirability of abolition was reprinted for the benefit of Canadian abolitionists and it showed that slavery was virtually in conflict with the fundamental basis of the American government, the inalienable Rights of Man. It was the chief obstacle to the progress of republican institutions throughout the world and a standing reproach to the United States abroad, as well as a cause of "exultation and joy on the side of the armed despots." Greeley, confirming what many in Canada West already thought, accused the institution of slavery of being the chief cause of dissension and hatred among the American people, keeping them "perpetually divided, and jealous, hostile." If it were abolished, Americans would never dream of fighting one another or of

dissolving the Union. And validating another Canadian belief, Greeley noted that slavery gave powerful aid to keep the "most thoroughly unprincipled party, the most corrupt demagogues, that our country has ever produced," in power.<sup>26</sup> The Toronto Message observed that the "peculiar institution" was worth more as consolation to the tyrants of France and Austria than an additional army of one hundred thousand men.

The absorbing topic in American politics, the admission of the sister state of Kansas into the American Union, was also watched with mounting interest in Canada West. A correspondent of the Montreal New Era reported from New York that if the Lecompton Constitution passed through Congress, the next presidential struggle would see the entire North and West united to overwhelm the "fiery, but impracticable South." "A. Celt" wrote again at a later date that Sam Houston, Senator from Texas, introduced a measure into the American Senate which called for the establishment of a protectorate over Mexico, which of course had been unasked for by Mexico. The writer was positive that filibusterism and the spread of slavery were the motive forces behind this plan, with Houston believing that the Americans should rule America and anything else they could get hold of, having no objection to "any little employment in the plundering way." It was the supposed democracy of the South which supported the Texan Senator as they had found slavery rather profitable for themselves and were anxious for new fields of labour. They cared little for the means by which they might be obtained: "They make long speeches on the stump about freedom while their own wealth and luxury are drawn from that very questionable source--slave dealing and slave labour."<sup>27</sup> This

same clique continued to gaze with eager eyes on the distant shores of fertile Cuba.

The Toronto Message claimed that the annexation of Canada by the North and of Cuba by the South was one of the chief topics of the hour. As Canada had been blessed with the tutelage of "sharp dealers in hocus pocus, scripts, stocks, debentures," such as the Baring Brothers and Company, it would be impossible for Canada to be independent in the future; she had to be either British or American. Yet like most in Canada West at the time, the spontaneous Mr. Mackenzie was not unduly frightened of American aggression or the possibility of that nation's legions crossing into the Province. A Captain Smyth of Brockville had attempted to recruit men for the 100th Regiment of Foot and had not secured a single man. Added the Grit Perth Courier: "Soldiering does not appear to be popular about these parts."<sup>28</sup>

William Botsford Jarvis, the Sheriff of Toronto, was in London, England, at the time and noted that there were rumours of trouble with the United States but everyone in Great Britain was assured that there "was nothing to fuss about." London was too excited with the Derby, the opening of Parliament, and the launching of a new vessel to "fuss about such a trifle as a War." The High Sheriff of the Home District told his family back in Canada West that there was a state of fermentation in the Mother Country and Rifle companies were being organized on paper, but he expressed confidence that there was plenty of room on the European continent to fight "and there will be the tug-of-war."<sup>29</sup> Summing up the situation in the metropolitan center in regard to North America as a whole,

Jarvis remarked that everything was so different there from what it would have been in America, either in Canada or the United States: "Everything was decent and proper."

Canadian opinion of, and dislike for, American practices and policies was greatly increased by the internal strife of the United States, as reported in the newspapers of Canada West. The New York Post claimed that the recent debate in the United States Senate had been belligerent and reckless in tone, neither dignified nor statesmanlike. No responsible person could believe half of what had been uttered in that chamber. The Niagara Mail in an editorial entitled "The Saturday's Game of Drag" castigated the Southern Senators for their call for stern "if ludicrous" measures against British cruisers seizing Southern slave ships. How the American Senate could raise such a howl on the side of slavery was beyond the comprehension of most of the citizens of Canada West. When the London Times remarked on American progress and energy and felt proud of the accomplishments of the English race, the Mail noted the response of a Baltimore broad-sheet. In "Jonathan's Latest Fanfaronade," British subjects were offered the "delightful little homily" that the Yankees were pleased and in an amiable mood since the Times was willing to take the latter by the hand of friendship, in spite of their "bad manners, yellow vests, and filibustering designs."<sup>30</sup>

"Bluster!" commented the Message on remarks made by Harper's Weekly that the American Senate could be relied upon to act with wisdom, discretion, and prudence in emergencies of high moment.<sup>31</sup> The "elite" of American public men had woefully impaired confidence in the Senate and

had come close to losing the designation of "American statesmen" over the "crazy" debates which had taken place over the British "outrages." Senators from all parties had discussed the question with the temper of "bullies and the logic of school-boys," disgraced the body of which they were the leaders, and brought the Republic to a humiliation which the thoughtful could be expected to realize. Faith in the Senate had been scattered to the winds and newspapers in Canada West suggested that it would be well for the American nation if the "war debates" of the Senate were expunged from the Congressional Record.

William Lyon Mackenzie noted how the citizens of Canada West often thought of the "innate wickedness and selfishness" of the human race as displayed in the United States, of how the Americans had "conquered" Texas to restore slavery, and despite having set up laws against the "accursed slave trade," had nevertheless encouraged it greatly. The celebrated Republic continued to make slaves of those who had only the slightest tinge of African ancestry and seemed ever ready to go to war with England to maintain their right "to kidnap poor Africans." The Toronto paper placed the blame on the Irish-Catholics in the United States, as well as on a considerable number of Protestants for warmly supporting the party that regarded slavery as being the corner stone of the "Yankee empire." Yet, Mackenzie pointed out, these very Irish-Catholics had endured the "evils of slavery" themselves in Ireland: "Have we not, then, great reason to fear that American institutions, fair to the outside are rotting at the heart?"

Politically, economically, and in other spheres, Canada West was

exposed to a great deal of pressure from both the United States and Great Britain. It was situated between the powers and both competed against each other for the ultimate control of the British colonies in North America. For this reason, Canadian newspapers widely discussed the future of Mexico as an example of what might be in store for Canada. The New Era reported that Mexico was in a state of open anarchy but this came as a surprise to no one. Reports from the New Orleans telegraph showed a "phenomenon without a cause." The gradual encroachments of the United States on the once widespread territory of Mexico all pointed in one direction: to its final extinction as a power and its piecemeal annexation by its aggressive and acquisitive neighbour.<sup>32</sup> The whole European policy of the United States occupied less attention at Washington than the fate and fall of Mexico. Had not successive presidents signalized their official terms by appropriating Texas, New Mexico, and California, and by conniving at successive forays such as the Sante Fe and Sonora expeditions? Buchanan was walking in the footsteps of Tyler, Polk, and Pierce, or, rather, he obeyed "like them, the same national instinct which points steadily southward to the spoils of the Spanish race, and the extension of the area of Negro slavery."

If it was usual or polite to entertain foreign questions in the Canadian House, McGee blurted out, Canadians would soon hear an emphatic condemnation of this "plunder" of the weak by the strong and a stern rebuke of the practical assertion of the brutal dogma that made might right. Every civilized people, every free state in the American Union was interested in the censure of national wrong: "When the right and duty ceased to be



exercised from any feeling of fear or favour, then all human government would have lost one of its best and highest sanctions." World opinion was the best guarantee of its liberties and if Canada were not "out of the political world," the orator-poet chided, her generous and timely word would not be wanting for "her suffering sister--Mexico."

Yankee newspapers which criticized the "sickness" of America, particularly James Gordon Bennett's New York Herald, continued to be quoted in the papers of Canada West. The Herald mocked General Walker as the great filibustering champion of Manifest Destiny, showing disgust at Walker's "lawless and disreputable enterprise" in Nicaragua. It had been ashamed of the Sumner-Brooks row in the House of Representatives, discovering that it would be difficult to find such a parallel "in the lowest groggery, in the vilest hell which is to be met with in our metropolitan stew."<sup>33</sup> Bennett expected civil war in the near future. Of course, all this American self-criticism poured fresh oil on the smouldering coals of anti-Americanism and anti-republicanism in Canada West.

The Niagara Mail continued to bring "Exciting News from Mexico" to its section of the Province close to the American frontier. The New York Times elucidated what Canadians already suspected when it was suggested that the American Cabinet was "a nest for hatching small but very culpable conspiracies against the peace and prosperity of their neighbours." The Niagara paper also gave extensive coverage to the "Fistfight" and "Row in Congress" and to how that body was full of "scheming politicians" with their "projects of Disunion."<sup>34</sup> While most Canadian papers quoted

from American newspapers, there was little which could be termed thoughtful comment, except in the major journals such as the Toronto Globe and Leader. Interestingly enough, while the Canadian press was quick to condemn the American polity, it made little comment on Great Britain's problems of the time, including Lucknow and the Indian Mutiny.

Mackenzie agreed with the New York Herald that England and France were "robbing, annexing and plundering" from Africa to the Far East, but he took the New York paper to task for its blustering attitude. The Herald was accused of counselling Congress to swamp Mexico, seize the territory of a neighbour nation, and wantonly appropriate it for the use of the federal Republic. Mackenzie noted that the editor of the Herald was a Scot, and evidently a mercenary who, besides hating the North American Republic, probably had no greater interest than making money. Bennett's "positively idolatrous" mockery of the Roman Catholic church gave a good indication of the editor's "style and morals." Although Bennett was "blackballed in the best society," Mackenzie was not adverse to quoting short articles from his paper on such topics as "American Morals," which were based on a social system "rotten to the core."<sup>35</sup> More importantly, the former Canadian rebel observed that the taste of the American people could be ascertained from the columns of the New York Herald. The Buckingham Journal agreed that the proprietor of the New York paper was "a compound of infamy and obscenity of the foulest kind...whose malignity exemption was only to be purchased by advertising largely in his paper, or bribing himself. He had been horsewhipped repeatedly, and legal proceedings taken against him for his libellous attacks on

individuals...." "The disgrace is that the Americans endorse it," added the Message.

As the Herald had the power in the United States that the Times did in England, some in Canada thought that the extracts from the latter afforded proof that the tastes of the well-to-do in England were less depraved than those of the same class in America, a circumstance which was rather ominous respecting the future of republicanism "in a quarter where it has had the best of opportunities to flourish." As a general rule, Bennett was abhorred for his advocacy of the policies and interests of the slaveholders, and favouring President Buchanan's policy for cheating Kansas out of a free constitution and urging the South onwards to the immediate annexation of Mexico. Despite the editor's behaviour, he was remarkably well informed and the weekly edition of the Herald was well distributed. The daily issue of the Herald, the morals of which were "rotten," was the most heavily patronized New York daily in "pious" Toronto and even the New York Tribune "had not a ghost of a chance."

Amid the constant references to the "Revolution in Mexico" there was also extensive coverage from the New York Herald, New York Times, and other newspapers in the United States regarding the capture of American slavers by British cruisers. Often there were special details given about the "great sufferings among the slaves," descriptions of the capture of the slave-ships and the condition of the "cargo." For their part, Yankee papers accused Canada of enlisting fugitive slaves for Imperial service in India. The Niagara Mail, located in an area frequented by fugitive slaves, gave more coverage to the possible re-opening of the

Southern slave trade than almost any other newspaper in Canada West. Articles from the New Orleans Delta, the Charleston Mercury, the Charlottesville Advocate, and the New York Advertiser, revealed that the Southerners had declared their own set of American laws by re-opening the slave traffic. In fact, new African slaves had already been imported into Mississippi and Louisiana.<sup>36</sup>

A correspondent of the New York Journal of Commerce gave an account of the horrors of the "middle passage" and his visit to a slave vessel which had recently been captured by British cruisers off the African coast: "There were 650 slaves in the most horrendous condition, the lower decks an almost solid mass of human, manacled flesh." It was intensely galling to Canadians that the New York Herald should defend the rights of American sailors to be free from inspection by the British Navy when docked for supplies at British West Indian ports, emphasizing the doctrine that "flag covers cargo," and denying the right of search whether the cargo was "niggers or nothing." The Mail was happy to note that the New York Advertiser sympathized with the British outlook, as did the majority in Canada West, against the abuses the American flag placed in the way of suppressing the infamous traffic.<sup>37</sup>

Great Britain's Lord Napier sent a list of the slave ships flying American colours that had been seized by the Royal Navy to the Secretary of State in Washington. He pointed out that the coast of Africa continued to be infested with slavers and that they endeavoured to prosecute their commerce with impunity by sailing under American colours. It was apparent that the abusive practice could only be extinguished by the

presence of a competent American squadron, as the principles of maritime law asserted by the United States rendered the effects of the British government powerless "for the abatement of the evil." The Charleston Mercury stated that the African slave trade was in no way, shape, or form, piracy, and thus Britain had no right of search. In a long article, the South Carolina paper proposed once more to go to war, for the freedom of the seas.<sup>38</sup>

The Mercury was not alone in its jingoistic spirit. The Washington correspondent of the Utica Telegraph provided a specimen of the belligerent chatter running the rounds of the American press, noting that all attention was then being given to the outrages of the British cruisers in the Gulf of Mexico: "The city is worked to a fever heat, and Congress is hourly rising to a war point. The President has met their insolent aggressions with a determined spirit. We shall have a brush that will dwarf the affair of 1812 if these English are at all anxious." The Niagara Mail assured Canadians that those who were adept at bragging were seldom good at anything else. This type of bluster from the Americans was pretty well appreciated in the Mother Country, as they had had so much of it at various times that "this proof of amity and good-will" was expected as a matter of course, especially when Britain was otherwise engaged in difficulties with another power.<sup>39</sup> The editor of the Mail explained that it was not very brave or very magnanimous of the Washington government to wait for such occasions to put forth a tough anti-British policy. As England was busily engaged with a mutiny in India and a dispute with France, it was expected that "Jonathan" would seize such a favourable,

"safe" opportunity for "chiming in with the enemy." Although it did not anticipate war, the Niagara paper observed: "The broken down and disreputable Buchanan Cabinet are only hoping to turn the public eye away from their Kansas inequities, and the Utah disgrace, and perhaps, to help to re-establish the slave trade in the South, as the crown and glory of their regime."

To many of the observers north of the international boundary there seemed to be little doubt that the stories of the alleged "British outrages" had been either wholly fabricated or at least grossly exaggerated. American journals of a moderate tone tended to agree with this view. The New York Post said that many aspects of the seizures had been too often invented and offered the testimony of John Rodger, Commander, U.S.N., to the effect that the acts of the British cruisers had been "grossly exaggerated." Horace Greeley's Tribune explained away the "blood and thunder speeches" which erupted in the American Senate on this subject, by alleging that the members were inebriated. The Tribune thought it unlikely that sober men could possibly have made such an exhibition of themselves.<sup>40</sup>

The Niagara Mail continued to cram its columns to the brim with articles, reports, dispatches, and telegraphic news regarding the African slave trade. Some Southern newspapers denied that the slave trade had been re-opened in the Gulf of Mexico, in "evident violation of the laws of the United States and the sentiment of civilization." Despite the belief of the Charlottesville Advocate that such a thing was not possible in the middle of the nineteenth century, reports from Columbus, and Macon, Georgia told Canadians that there could no longer be any doubt regarding

the desire of some of the Southern states to re-open the African slave trade in defiance of the laws which declared it piracy.<sup>41</sup> These Southern papers continued at some length to discuss "fresh" shipments from the Wanderer and other slavers flying the colours of the United States.

This constant struggle between the British Navy and Southern slave interests had considerable effect in aggravating Canadian dislike of the "peculiar institution" in the United States, and the type of society and politics which would allow the crime to be compounded by the re-opening of the slave trade. The Toronto Message, in late December, 1858, carried the story that a coloured convict had been "showered to death with water" at Auburn state prison, and that another of the same race had been "whipped to death" in Virginia. Anti-slavery feeling, strong for many years in Canada West as in England, reached a new apex in the late 1850's. As James Stirling, a British tourist travelling in the United States remarked: "Thank Heaven! I am once more in the North. Behind me is despotism and desolation; around me is freedom and prosperous industry. One breathes more freely. The little step from South to North is a stride from barbarism to civilization; a leap from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century."<sup>42</sup>

Personal and business ties with the United States had led many in Canada West to acquire a considerable awareness of the influence of slave interests in the affairs of the United States. Canadians came to condemn slavery as it had resulted in the gagging of liberty and made a mockery of American boasts of freedom and equality. Both the Toronto Globe and the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society had been influential in

arousing considerable sympathy for the refugees and hostility against the "manifold and unspeakable iniquities of slavery." A famous abolitionist, S. R. Ward, who had lectured throughout the North and Canada West, commented on the strong anti-slavery sentiment which existed in Toronto and vicinity: "Toronto is somewhat peculiar in many ways; anti-slavery is more popular here than in any city I know save Syracuse."<sup>43</sup> Toronto was highly regarded by the North American Coloured Freeman Association as the "safest city" for meetings and it was evident that a substantial majority of the Canadian people felt that in the slavery struggle the North was in the right. They had been strengthened in this view by the powerful agency of the Globe and excerpts from the American press that were republished in newspapers throughout Canada West.

There is no doubt that the amount of attention which the Canadian press paid to American affairs through the columns of the local newspaper served to educate whole communities on the issue of slavery, and the concomitant issue of Manifest Destiny. Throughout the files of the provincial press runs the entire story of the slavery question, including the "Bleeding Kansas" troubles, and the election of Abraham Lincoln as President in November of 1860.<sup>44</sup> Most Canadian papers expressed interest in the election of that year, primarily because of its possible effects on slavery. Though there was some talk that Lincoln's election would lead to a dissolution of the American Union, the Globe evinced a strong note of confidence: "Since Abraham Lincoln became President...we have totally failed to find one good and sufficient reason for destroying the Union."

As Great Britain had abolished slavery throughout the Empire in



1833, Canadians had something of a smug feeling of righteousness in the presence of the evil which still existed in the land of "liberty and freedom." The Southerners were slaveholders and the Northerners were their accomplices in slavery. Most of the people of Canada West were outspoken in their denunciation of anything that suggested an alliance with slavery. This offered an additional reason to avoid a possible absorption of the British provinces under the American expansionistic impulse. That Canada would not be a partner in slavery was the view held by the mainstream in Canadian politics in the 1850's, especially at a time when the South was talking of secession, disunion, and possible civil war. As a Conservative newspaper in the United Province observed: "It would be a sorry instance of our wisdom to make a present of our country to a foreigner and buy a civil war at the same time. We should have less reluctance to annex to the disunited states than to the present United States."<sup>45</sup> Canada was separated from the United States only by an imaginary boundary, from a people who had harboured such theories as Manifest Destiny and universal sovereignty, and other ideas not very reassuring to their neighbours. The obvious dislike of many Canadians for a "mobocracy" which kept four millions in chains and had acquired title to Texas, New Mexico and California by dubious means was only heightened in the period of coming continental dissolution by an abhorrence of "Americanisms" in the political functions of Canadian life.

The benefit of the British constitution was not lost on the colonials of the day. During the early 1850's, there had been considerable debate over the benefits of elective institutions as applied to the

Canadian scene, but by late in that decade the pendulum had swung back in opposition to such principles. It was not so much a case that Canadians objected to the elective principle in itself but that it was not applicable to parliamentary government. One newspaper thought that the adoption of such a principle must inevitably prove a failure, "sooner or later."<sup>46</sup> Canadians did not have the materials to frame an upper chamber after that of England, nor could they pattern it after the United States without changing the whole colonial system of government. Canada would have to make the best of a "bad bargain" as the great power and influence wielded by the Senate and the House of Lords insured those bodies that they would be the deposit of the chief talents of their respective nations. A largely primitive and colonial society like that of Canada could not dream of such conditions on the craggy banks of the Ottawa.

It was obvious in many quarters that the more thoughtful Canadian leaders, editors and politicians saw the destiny of their Province linked either to monarchy or Yankee republicanism. And the ideas prevalent in Canada West were also largely prevalent in the sister section of Canada East. It was difficult to separate the important influence of the leaders of Canada East on those of Canada West as both sections had been under the same government and leadership since the Union Act of 1840. Both English and French in Canada were the descendants of a monarchist people and the French, for their own particular historical reasons, were more conservative and less republican than their Anglo-Canadian confrères. In fact, they were even more British and less American than the "loyal"

citizens of Canada West. Though there might be scattered talk of a union with the dominant American power if the rights of French Canada were threatened with assimilation, J. C. Taché wrote several articles to Le Courier du Canada which analysed the political and social institutions of Canada and the United States, and discovered that those of the latter were not suitable for Canada.<sup>47</sup>

Joseph Cauchon told the Canadian House at a later date than there were some in Canada who were imbued with democratic-republican ideas. While recognizing the limited egalitarian or "democratic" nature of Canadian society, both Cauchon and the leader of the French Canadian Bleus, George Etienne Cartier, felt that Canada had sufficient "social" democracy, egalitarianism and democratic spirit. The need was for more counter-balances:

L'esprit démocratique est assez fort ici pour agir sur les hommes politiques, mais nous n'avons pas ce système outre que le rend souverain en toute chose. Il existe un sentiment monarchique très-prononcé dans notre population. Oui, le population du Bas Canada est monarchique de caractère et de sentiment. Pour ne rien perdre de notre force défendons avec jalousie tout ce que contiennent de monarchique nos institutions!

Cartier made clear that, like the majority of his peers in Canada West, he was a champion of British constitutional practice:

I am living in a province in which the inhabitants are monarchical by religion, by habit and by the remembrance of past history. Our great desire and our great object in making efforts to obtain federation of the provinces, is not to weaken monarchical institutions, but to strengthen them, and increase their influence.

Whatever material reasons there might be to closer ties with the American polity, E. U. Piche told the House that the French Canadians were as "loving subjects of Her Majesty as any."<sup>48</sup>

Like the quarrel between the Clear Grits and the Conservatives in Canada West, the Bleus periodically charged A. A. Dorion and his Rouges of being altogether too republican, endeavouring to force dangerous ideas upon the Canadian scene. Cartier was particularly incensed at Rouge proposals for universal suffrage and elective institutions. Conservatives in Canada East viewed with great suspicion any extension of the franchise as each modification in the franchise altered the basic wisdom found in the practical use of British constitutional procedures. They also opposed the great demand of George Brown and the Toronto Grits for "representation by population" for internal reasons, but also because it was a doctrine which did not consider property as well as numbers in any electoral basis. The concept was not based upon English principles. Even the Globe found cause to deny that this notion in any way reflected on its adherence to British principles.<sup>49</sup>

In the struggle against "l'esprit démocratique" throughout the Province it was evident that both sections believed that monarchy and stability were virtually one and the same. While the call for a proper role for property, stability, and a "decent" gradation of society was probably somewhat stronger in Canada East, the idea that the Crown offered protection against extreme popular government and was, at the same time, a symbol of popular government was widely accepted in both eastern and western sections of the Province. Some counterpoise was required to hold

the agrarian democratic, republican elements in check in Canada, especially in the frontier sections in the western areas of Canada West. In the future, Canada would require a constitution which might reconcile the conservative and democratic element, for it was believed that the weak point in democratic institutions was the depositing of all power in the hands of the popular element. In order for Canadian institutions to be stable in the years to come there had to be some power of resistance to the democratic influence, and neither the Senate nor the President offered such resistance in the American system. For its part, the Three Rivers Inquirer felt that there was altogether too much chatter about the threat of republicanism, although it declared that it was the most serious of all questions.<sup>50</sup>

During the period of general turmoil in Canadian politics, it was British and not American political examples that were quoted as the correct path to follow. While Adam Fergusson cried out that the House of Assembly was "a rotten concern, in fact a mass of corruption," Colonel John Prince was advised in the Legislative Council to beware of being "miserable, narrow-minded, un-British" in legislative policy.<sup>51</sup> Macdonald, Brown, McGee and others expressed the view that order, stability, toleration and freedom were embraced in Canada due to the British connection, the assertion of the monarchical as against the democratic principle. For Canadians, monarchy was fundamental to the happiness and stability of a country. Charles Clarke, Clear Grit, discussed the position of both Brown and Macdonald on the monarchy, in his Sixty Years in Upper Canada:<sup>52</sup>

Brown was, naturally, a Limited Monarchy

man; Macdonald was a life-long advocate of Absolutism, if that were essential to his personal or party success. Both were loyal to the Crown, and sincerely anxious to preserve, perpetuate and extend the limits of British connection.

The hierarchical form of society and class distinction implied by monarchy was accepted by Canadians under a constitutional monarchy. Under the British system there was guaranteed constitutional liberty as both majorities and minorities were protected by the supremacy of law. A similar state of affairs was regarded as impossible under American democracy:<sup>53</sup>

We all feel the advantages we derive from our connection with England. So long as that alliance is maintained, we enjoy under her protection, the privileges of constitutional liberty according to the British system. We will enjoy here that which is the great test of constitutional freedom--we will have the rights of the minority respected.... In all countries the rights of the majority take care of themselves, but it is only in countries like England, enjoying constitutional liberty, and safe from the tyranny of a single despot or of an unbridled democracy, that the rights of minorities are regarded. So long, too, as we form a portion of the British Empire, we shall have the example of her free institutions, of the high standard of the character of her legislation, and the upright administration of her laws.

While one Canadian newspaper reported that the illustrious and restless John Bright continued to make flaming speeches about the "miraculous advantages" of the political institutions of the United States, it was the Canadians who were living alongside the working model of democracy. An old-line Tory, John Hillyard Cameron, noted how he had

never harboured a democratic idea and was only interested in solutions arrived at in a "constitutional manner," but it was often obvious that the political terminology of the period was confusing. In addition, there was a difference between "social" and "political" democracy. The democracy of Great Britain was a liberal democracy and was readily accepted by the bulk of the Canadian people as workable, but the American form was equated with republicanism and this led John A. Macdonald to declare that he desired "constitutional liberty as opposed to democracy."<sup>54</sup> The excesses committed in the name of democratic-republicanism in the United States, including the "despotism" of the President, revealed the fundamental flaws in the American system. It had done much to create a nation of anti-continentalists, of "Pan-Americanophobes."

While Canadians were seeking that mutual protection and confidence which would engender general prosperity, the press of the Province quoted many articles from the American press showing first-hand how "corrupt and depraved" the Republic had become in almost every respect. For almost a year, the well-informed New Era blamed riots occurring in New York, as another manifestation of the elective principle and mob rule in the American system of democracy. The Toronto Message discussed an article from the New York Times which gave a clear indication of the implications of American justice. "Yankee Scoundrels and their Chances of being Punished" showed that a culprit had odds of fifty to one in his favour that he would escape justice in New York. New York was further touted as the most corrupt civil government in the world, with municipal expenses placed at one hundred dollars per year "to" each voter, and the suffrage

was "as universal as even John Bright could wish it to be."<sup>55</sup>

The Niagara Mail wrote of the "Anarchy in New Orleans" and in other areas controlled by "men-stealers." It was time for the Louisiana city "to be governed like any other well-ordered and civilized community, after years of disorder, outrage and unchecked assassination." There had also been the recent "Assassin Demonstration" in New York, in which different societies and delegations represented the "Red Republicanism and Socialism" of that and neighbouring cities.<sup>56</sup> In an editorial of late June, 1858 entitled "Free America!", the Message discussed a recent debate in the American Senate and sardonically related the "edifying and encouraging colloquy" between Senators Toombs and Hale. The former observed that the Americans spoke of the corruption in the Mexican, Spanish, French and other governments, but from his "somewhat extensive" experience he did not believe that there was as corrupt a government in the world as in the United States. Senator Hale agreed. The New York Times added: "The whole Senate seemed to assent to the truth of this disgraceful confession."<sup>57</sup>

The example of the United States enabled Canadians to foster the assumption that it was more dangerous to place a president at the head of a predominant party than a king. The most ambitious power known to man, according to William Lyon Mackenzie, was an elected individual executive, "even if he had to apply that remark to James Buchanan." A party president in the American Republic stood far above all constitutional checks and possessed a powerful means of making himself and his party a permanent fixture. The South controlled the great bulk of the patronage



and policy of the American Union and this had resulted in crisis after crisis in the United States as the slavery issue came to a head: "The curtain has fallen amid the mingled cheers and groans of the audience. A new epoch is commencing in our history, more important than any that has occurred since the Revolution. Let us hope that the sympathies, at least, of our neighbours on the other side of the line will be with us in this struggle."<sup>58</sup>

The atmosphere of comment from the American press reported in Canadian newspapers was not always one of negativity. Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, one of the most widely read of the American metropolitan papers in Canada West, was moderate in tone.<sup>59</sup> Greeley asked for the aid of all "Republicans" in an attempt to alleviate oppression, to extend liberty and limit slavery. All Americans who favoured "National Progress" should do so through internal development rather than by means of external aggression and territorial extension. It would be better to devote national resources to the construction of a railroad to the Pacific, or to Nicaragua, to cut down unnecessary spending by "abolishing or immensely reducing the army and navy," and to spend the money thus saved on works that would last for generations. No real advantage could ever accrue to a nation from acquisitions achieved by means which contravened "the laws of eternal right." With correspondents throughout the "civilized" world and an able staff, Greeley's paper was accepted in Canada because of its frankness and consistency in the issues which it sought to discuss. Despite the fine work of the Tribune, Mackenzie's Message noted with skepticism that "the cow, like the true American, is perpetually chewing. If the cow,

however, chewed the same stuff, there would soon be a scarcity of milk for tea."

The Niagara Mail had taken considerable interest in the study of republican institutions and come to the conclusion that "Republicanism (Is) Not the Thing." Undoubtedly, parliamentary reform was necessary in Canada as well as in Great Britain and this was admitted even by politicians who were of the "fossil tribe." However, the question was how to effect such changes without opening the flood gates to corresponding, or even worse evils than those which already existed. This newspaper noted that Earl Grey, long-time Colonial Secretary, had written a study of Parliamentary Government and Reform of Parliament, which manifested a good deal of "patient research and learned inquiry."<sup>60</sup> Grey had paid especial attention to the American system, as it had been extolled by the ultra-radicals of Britain as the "ne plus ultra of political perfection," and the noble lord had come to the opinion that the British system was vastly superior to the American system. The chief grounds for this attitude were that under the republican government, the chief ministers were rendered irresponsible to the people for the fixed period of their mandate and this consequently produced a want of concert between the executive and the legislature.

Earl Grey put forth many criticisms of the republican system of the United States and these were parroted by the colonial press to further justify the worth of the Canadian system. Canadians had long been aware that the American President was elected to office by "basely pandering to the momentary desires and prejudices of the masses," and consequently the

men most worthy were rejected and the unscrupulous and least qualified of the population were chosen to fill offices of the highest trust. The principle result was that the most suitable talent did not find its way into the legislative halls; America was under "mob rule." To compound this problem was the quandary that the people had no redress of grievances until the completion of the President's term of office if they should happen to be in variance with the views of the Executive. In addition, the government of the United States was not any better qualified than that of Britain or Canada to develop the resources of a country or to advance its material prosperity. After all, Britain showed that it could build a world empire and the unprecedented advancement of the United States arose chiefly from its vast territory, its sparse population, and the fact that its geographical position did not require large military expenditures.

The government of the United States had certainly been favourable to the welfare of the American people but there were also large drawbacks from this very advantage. Men enjoyed less real liberty in the American polity than they did under the British system, as the "tyrannical pressure" of the majority cramped the freedom of thought and action of the individual. The legislation of the Republic was less well directed than under the British system through an enlarged regard for the good of the whole community, and the management of public affairs was in the hands of men selected without regard for their fitness for the task. There was little quarrel among Canadian political thinkers that the greatest corruption prevailed in American society, both in the general conduct of public business

and in appointments to public office. Even the administration of justice was tainted, failing to command confidence in its impartiality and fairness: "The policy of the nation is vainly directed by demagogues and those who are least scrupulous in flattering the passions of the people." And it was a matter of general observation, highlighted by Grey's study, that the republican system of government had already done much to lower the tone and character of the American people and their statesmen.

Not all Canadians took such a harsh look at American political practice, as an "Extra" edition of P. Blanchet's Montreal L'Avenir still carried the masthead: "Journal Républicain, Publié dans les Intérêts Populaires." Yet Canadians in general took Grey's views as their own. Even American readers had been pleased with the "friendly tone" which Earl Grey commanded throughout his work towards the Americans as a people, drawing a clear distinction between them and their institutions. The Colonial Secretary had been wise enough to quote American authors and statesmen in support of his views, thus leaving the feeling that the entire work had been written with a desire of arriving at a knowledge of the real advantages and disadvantages of the two systems. Said the Niagara Mail: "This work must have immense weight with the statesmen of Britain, and there can be little doubt, therefore, that democracy is not the thing for England, the people themselves being their own judges."<sup>61</sup> And Canadians were closely tied to the British constitutional system, from necessity, tradition and choice.

As one of the leading spokesmen for the Niagara region of Canada West, the Mail noted: "Tried by the constitution and position of England

socially, and condemned, Republicanism can offer no charms for Canadians, especially as we are so well acquainted with the working of their 'peculiar system,'--repudiation, lynchism, and disgraceful filibustering." Taking the question of American ways and forms to the grass roots level, Mackenzie's paper quoted a letter from an American who was travelling in Italy. The author of the note related to the Message one of the legends of Gaeta, to the effect that the Pope and the King of Naples had visited aboard an American frigate. The American Commander apparently welcomed them in these terms: "Pope, how are you? King, how d'ye do? Here Lieutenant Jones, you speak French; parley-vous with the Pope, while the King and I go down and have a drink. King come on!" Needless to say, this revelation of supposed American moral and social behaviour abroad caused more than one aspiring colonial to cringe in disbelief.

Late in the year 1858, the Toronto Message carried a copy of a letter from Sir Edward-Bulwer Lytton in which he compared the Swiss and American republics. Quoting Maltraver's statement that universal suffrage was democracy, the new Colonial Secretary posed the question of whether a democracy was better than an aristocratic commonwealth. Answering his own queries, Lytton made the following comment on the best form of government: "A just and benevolent Republic is as yet a monster equally short-lived. When the people have no other tyrant, their own public opinion becomes one. No secret espionage is more intolerable to a free spirit than the broad gleam of the American eye."<sup>62</sup>

There had been considerable debate in the Legislative Council during this period on the merits of the republican and monarchical systems

of government as applied to the North American continent. The consensus was always the same: the constitution of Canada must be assimilated as closely as possible with the British constitution. Thus constitutional change in Canada had always been approached with much caution. However, the need for some type of reform in the position of Canada led William Hamilton Merritt, a member for Lincoln, to propose that the United Province of Canada adopt the 1846 constitution of the State of New York, which brought a devastating response from Cartier: "Je ne connais pas une seule constitution, qu'elle prenne la forme du despotisme oriental, d'une monarchie modernée ou absolue, ou d'une démocratie complète, qui ait pu empêcher un Etat d'augmenter sa dette suivant le progrès de la population et ses besoins ou ses intérêts."<sup>63</sup> Merritt's reasoning was based on financial considerations and not on the political merits of the New York constitution. There was a general desire to maintain a viable entity under the British Crown against the preponderating influence of the United States.

A cordial approval of monarchical government and a repugnance for the democratic-republicanism running rampant south of the international boundary was evident in Canada West. It was more than the Tory's fear of any form of radicalism or sensitivity to popular pressure as was obvious in the forays into nationalist discussion by both Reformers and Conservatives in the Province. The Englishman spoke of the British possessions in North America as "those wonderfully flourishing colonies" and the American spoke of them as "the germs of a powerful empire," but Canada had been the last to perceive the "giant strides" she was making. While Canada's future had

been the subject of reflection and speculation abroad, there was talk in Canada herself about the need for the development of a Canadian national feeling to offset American influence.<sup>64</sup> D'Arcy McGee showed his grasp of the fundamental reality of the Canadian situation: "We are here living ...on the St. Lawrence. We are new men in a new country. Our affairs are with the Imperial Government, and the American Republic...."

The editor of the Port Hope Atlas entertained visions of a national status for Canada and the creation of a "new kingdom" on the banks of the St. Lawrence to prevent the encroachment of American political influence. This had been the side effect of the "insane cry" of the Clear Grits for a dissolution of the Canadian Union and the attempts of "an unprincipled demagogue" to embitter one section of the country against the other. The matter which engaged Canada in 1859, as ten years earlier, was, according to the Atlas, the question of republicanism or monarchy, annexation or direct vice-regal rule. It wanted neither a direct and unchangeable royal government nor American republicanism, but what was then known in Canada under "the name, style and title of responsible government."<sup>65</sup> It was typically Canadian in response, not American, but a physical part of the British Empire in North America.

Canadians, it was claimed, did not have one of the causes of complaint against Queen Victoria which the American revolutionaries had had against George III, in justification of their declaration of independence. As Canada possessed a reduced model of the English constitution and sought to develop that system further, it could only be from a "perverse and wanton ingratitude" that she would seek separation from the Mother Country.

And the English model was not to be lightly rejected as it had excited the admiration and commanded the homage of Montesquieu, Burke, O'Connell and Montalembert. Without doubt, the theoretical excellence of the British constitution fell short at times when applied to the Canadian situation, but it offered some manner of bulwark against Canada's slipping under the "widespread wing of the American eagle." The entire Canadian frontier was covered with "a race that seeks expansion," and the best minds in the colonies were rapidly turning to Great Britain for the erection of that power in British America which they felt to be inherent in the vast area north of the American border. The Halifax Express was pressed into service with the ominous note that on the eve of the terrible Indian Mutiny, the signs of warning had gone unheeded and the result had been obvious to the world. There could be no political interchange with the Yankees, for fear of absorption, possibly by force of arms: "The foundation of the great Republic...stretching from the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, seeks to absorb Central America and turbulent Mexico in its already enormous agglomeration of States."<sup>66</sup> The great federal republic of the United States, as well as all the republics south of the Rio Grande were crumbling with decay. Once the American armed immigration to the south, when satiated in Nicaragua and Cuba, came to an end, it would once again be seized by a cavernous appetite for more "free" land north of the frontier.

British North America, "free, vigorous, and slow of action, possessed strength and endurance, and the elements of greatness" and might well form a "very respectable beginning" for a new nation. This could be



done with an Imperial guarantee to stem the tide of American filibusterism. Amid the crash of arms in other parts of the globe, Canadians still lived in a "fancied security," yet it took no spirit of prophecy to foresee that one day the Canadas would either have to fight or be absorbed in the "great tide of democracy" that claimed control of the entire North American continent as its inalienable destiny. Canadians were reminded that it was less than a century before that volunteers from Maine and Massachusetts found their way to the walls of Quebec, less than forty years before American regulars had burnt York, the capital of Upper Canada. In any new spat with the Americans it was not readily accepted that they could be checked so easily again. The comments from the press of the Maritime colonies, the western territories, and Canada East gave the urgency which some Canadian leaders lent to the situation. It gave the views of Canada West more coverage and apparent merit, showing that the dislike of American policies and practices, coupled with a rise in a "Canadian" sentiment under the aegis of the British Crown was not strictly the property of Canada West.

Conjuring up all the military lore common to the mid-Victorian mind, McGee advised Canadians to stand on guard: "Self-preservation is the first law of nature; weakness incites rapacity, strength repels it. Active progress can alone induce security." The day could not be far away when the turbulent and truculent democracy, flushed with expectations, eager for the diffusion of the Jacksonian doctrine, "to the victor belong the spoils," would not be overscrupulous in attempting to wrest what they desired from their neighbours. Only the foolish would be content with

Canadian security as it was in the late 1850's. Discounting its alarmist stance, the New Era declared that there was no immediate danger but that a defensive union of the colonies ought to be the unceasing cry of every public print in the British provinces.<sup>67</sup>

Although they were amateurs in the study of political science on the international scene, Canadian editors understood the geo-politics of North America. They realized that some influence would have to be invoked as a counterpoise to the fervour of democratic freedom in a country largely composed of the same stock as Canada. It was a question of eventual equality or submission: "The free spirit (of British North America) has no other choice; it can never couch in submission, and therefore the race for equality must be enforced on equal terms." Without the promise of a counterbalance against the United States, the provinces were powerless: "United they are invincible, and might bid defiance to the world." It is difficult to say whether this feeling implied an incipient Canadian nationalism or a cordial dislike of the United States, in fact "anti-Americanism."

The loquacious New York Herald continued to call for the absorption of Canada although there was no necessity for hostilities or even the possibility of any taking place. Bennett added: "The contracted views of the people of Lower Canada will be enlarged and expanded by an infusion of the Anglo-Saxon element and the energy of the people of the free States, who, being cut off from a Southern field of enterprise, must, by the law of nature, expand northward and westward. Such is the degree of manifest destiny, and such the programme of William H. Seward, Premier of

the President elect." Yet there was no guarantee that Canada would not have to face the military prowess of the Republic, especially when one considered the deranged condition of the American polity in the late 1850's. Scattered chatter in the American press concerning the anticipated abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 was also seen as a threat towards annexation to the United States. A union of the British American colonies seemed to be the one sure way in which such a turn of events could be prevented. Canada had to either maintain the British connection or belong to the greatest commercial rival of the Mother Country.<sup>68</sup>

The future of Canada and its possible cause of conflict between Britain and the United States had been the subject of international speculation since the days of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Many thought it not unusual that there should be talk of Canadian-American union as the two entities had a great deal in common, especially the Northern states and Canada West. Canada West was literally imbedded in the heart of the North and if it were not for the problems of slavery and republicanism, it seemed "natural" that Canada West, at least, should become a state in the American Union. It seemed more logical that the largely Protestant section of Canada would prefer a union with the Americans rather than maintain the Union of 1840 with an "alien people," the French of Canada East.<sup>69</sup> The most outspoken critic of the state of politics in Canada West in the late 1850's was William Lyon Mackenzie who declared in the Freedom Almanac for 1860 that the self-governed free states of the American Union were preferable to the colonial situation of the British provinces, except for the "curse of negro slavery; in other words, 'property' in human beings...." But the states of

the North were radically different from those in the South and the entire United States was not to be judged by the South alone or by a week-end visit to the slums of New York. With a great deal of truth, Mackenzie noted that his demand for a written constitution for Canada "is democratic, is republican, is American, and in reality--of course it must be shunned in Canada!" However, the old fire-eater was not totally oblivious to faults in the American system, as was evident in his vivid comment on the upper house in the United States: "The Senate of the United States--elective--double distilled representing 25 millions--is just as great a cheat as our 49 miserables. Our Canada would make capital Yankees."<sup>70</sup>

As aware as Canadian leaders were of American faults and foibles, they were not too "anti-American" to extract what appeared to be substantial improvements over their own way of existence, showing that their "anti" feeling was based largely on the question of politics and not peoples. The Toronto Message observed how Sault Ste. Marie was being surveyed on the American plan of thirty-six square miles per township. John A. Macdonald and D'Arcy McGee saw favourable clauses in the New York militia laws that the Province could put to her own use. John Ross and William Hamilton Merritt cited examples of the same state's economic and educational measures as examples to be followed in certain cases. Oliver Mowat, the member for South Oxford, quoted favourably the fact that England, New York and several other American states, had adopted new trial practice including the use of judge and jury together in connection with legal reform.<sup>71</sup> But these were comparatively minor affairs and in the larger geo-political sense of continentalism, the American Republic offered little to the Canadas as an

enticement to join the Union. There was a genuine desire to preserve British institutions in the northern half of the continent and to prevent the spread of the seditious ideas of "Americanisms" into British North America.

While the Canadian Union was the object of much fervent discussion in Canada West during this period, the citizens of that sector were often just as interested in the proceedings of their great neighbour as they were in the affairs of British America. And they had reason to be appalled by the troublesome situation so close to home. The election of a "Western merriman" as President of the United States in 1860 gave indication that the destruction of the American Union was inevitable: "Le ciel politique est partout chargé de sombres images: encore un moment, et l'orage va éclater aux quatre coins du monde." In the discussion of the "irresistible conflict," the stigmatic appellation given the situation in the "Great Republic" by Senator William Seward, Canadians were well informed. Charles Clarke of Elora, Canada West, received several letters from George Sheppard who was doing the major editorial work for the Washington Constitution. Sheppard, former editor on the staff of the Toronto Globe and decidedly pro-Southern, explained that Lincoln's election would bring trouble to the United States "of a kind not seen by the present generation. Abolitionism and the Union cannot coexist." The election would create "an era of revolution." He found the Southerners were "truly more liberal, more generous, and vastly more devoted to principle" than the people and politicians of the North: "You can't buy or bully them, as northern politicians and voters were bought and bullied."<sup>72</sup> Sheppard prophesied that there would

be no parallel to the state of affairs developing in the United States since the American Revolution.

The people of the "far north" had no conception of the trouble that would follow, but George Sheppard explained that it would result in either peaceful or bloody revolution: "The wealthy southern states are already in quasi revolt. The revolutionary cockade is seen even here." While attempting to be non-partisan in his reports to Clarke, he felt that secession would be justifiable as a measure of self-defence "forced upon the slave-holding states by the assaults of a horde of fanatics, whose benevolence expends itself upon a race marked by God for a condition of servitude." Yet the most interesting point raised by Sheppard was in relation to any future plans for British North American federation:

Any action taken by the south in the direction of secession will involve questions worthy of your careful study. Can a state constitutionally withdraw from a federal union? Can a state constitutionally resist what its people consider the unfriendly attitude of the federal government? In other words, does a state, in entering a federal alliance, relinquish its sovereignty?

Whatever the case, Sheppard was sure that in the contest between the North and South over "States' Rights," Charles Clarke would, by his own principles, be on the correct side, "howsoever strong may be your partiality for the nigger-worshipping, foreigner-hating republicans."

In his last letter from the American capital in 1860, the editor of the Constitution did not attempt to describe matters in the United States: "They are almost indescribable. Whatever newspaper accounts you read fail to convey an idea of the state of controversy between the two sections, and the hopelessness of everything like reconciliation." On the merits of the

quarrel he remained with the South but was shocked at the prostration of the entire business and social life of Washington: "Let blood be shed, and the horrors of the first French revolution will be enacted.... Yet with all its inconveniences, this crisis is a study which I would not readily have foregone. There has been nothing like it in our day."

A general assumption held by Canadians for generations about the United States had become even more valid by 1860: the American Republic was a friendly place to visit and an unruly but generally well-meaning neighbour, but Canadians did not want to live there or have the Province placed in such a position that it would be under American institutions.

There was genuine dismay and regret in Canada West at the developments in the United States that were splitting that nation. Secession was the result of slavery and democratic-republican institutions in the United States; American political ways and means were bankrupt. The Canadian system offered the example of more authority in opposition to the elective radicalism of the American Union and despite the influence of the United States, Canadians continued to cling to constitutional monarchy. The secession crisis, they believed, had proved once again the superiority of the former system over the democratic "assumptions" of the Americans.

This, then, was the milieu in Canada West during the period 1858-1860 in regard to "external affairs." The muddled atmosphere, with its imprecision and superficiality, mirrored the general state of Canadian political and social thought in this era. The myriad of quotations from the press of England, the United States, and Canada East, tell of the influence under which Canada West came to political decisions. The sense

of involvement of Canada West in the major problems of the day in North America gave its people that urgent need experienced by all small peoples, the necessity to intensify the value of their own institutions and way of life. The mirror reflected an incoherent image as a whole, but that was Canada West in the pre-Confederation period.



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### CHAPTER III

#### ANNEXATION, INDEPENDENCE, OR FEDERAL UNION

While the American Republic was being threatened with the secession of a number of Southern states over the slavery issue, the United Province of Canada faced the possibility of a dissolution of the Canadian Union consecrated in 1840. In Canada, as in the United States, the talk of break-up was the result of sectional conflict. "At some times, in some countries, this state of things would be the precursor of revolution. We speak advisedly, after much observation and inquiry, when we say that the feeling which, at this moment predominates in the West, has had no parallel since 1837."

George Brown's Toronto Globe, the recognized mouthpiece of the Reformers in Canada West declared that if dissolution of the Canadian Union were refused, annexation to the Republic would result: "Should the demand for annexation ever be renewed, it will be in consequence of a continuance of the Union--not as a result of dissolution."<sup>1</sup> If the system in operation continued, no step would be too extravagant, provided it relieved Upper Canada of sectional domination by Lower Canada, "with all its insults, with all its injuries, all its ruinous effects upon the trade, taxes, and finances of Upper Canada." The twin cry of the Globe during this period was levelled against the "slavocracy" of the Americans and the "priestocracy" of Canada East, and it did not stand alone in its views in Canada West.

The question of maintaining the Canadian Union affected the outlook of some Canadians regarding the American polity. Under George Sheppard's

guiding hand, the editorial columns of the Globe in late 1858 had become quite radical, questioning the suitability of British institutions in Canada. A simple dissolution of the Union and a new constitution based upon democratic ideals was proffered. The correspondence between Sheppard and Colonel Charles Clarke gave evidence of the former's "pro-American sympathies" for organic change, including dark hints at the full use of the elective principle, separation of powers, simple government, a written constitution, and other "Americanisms."<sup>2</sup> The lack of success of the Grit demand for "representation by population" had led to a partial discard of that doctrine and this disenchanted group demanded much more sweeping and radical solutions. Sheppard called for a "simple, unadulterated dissolution of the Union"; the system of government he desired to see adopted resembled "most closely that in force in those states formed out of what was the North-West Territories. We suggest Ohio or Illinois."<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly, the owner of the Globe, George Brown, had been terribly disillusioned and disturbed over the "Double Shuffle" of 1858:<sup>4</sup>

The decisions in these cases will strengthen the hands of those who demand a written constitution, after the American model. With his unwarranted exercise of the prerogative and his tempering with the usages of the constitution, Sir Edmund Head has done more to Americanize our institutions than all other influences combined, although they have been more numerous and powerful. His reckless rule has weakened confidence of even the most devoted advocates of the British model. The Queen of England would not be a party to such a disgraceful trick, whereby the people are deprived of their rights.... The Crown of England has preserved the love and admiration of the people, because the Gracious Sovereign who has worn it during the last twenty years

has been loyal and true to popular rights...  
but neither the Governor, who plays the  
part of James nor his servile judge, are  
fit to breathe the free atmosphere of  
Canada in the middle of the nineteenth  
century.

The "wild" statements of the Globe astonished many in Canada West; they  
smacked too strongly of republicanism. They cost the Grits the support  
of the influential London Free Press. It became an independent Reform  
paper as Josiah Blackburn concluded that George Brown would never head  
a Canadian Government and that he had given up on him. But the indignant  
editor did not absolve the Tories of the blame:<sup>5</sup>

However deeply the Macdonald administration  
may be supposed to have sunk into the slough  
of iniquity, it must be admitted that the  
same men have reached still lower depths....  
That a deep-laid conspiracy, cut and contrived  
was organized to oust the leader of the  
Opposition from Parliament and perpetrate  
one of the vilest political swindles that  
has ever been enacted, is now evident enough.

John A. Macdonald replied in the House that such a view was as false as  
Hell.

The Conservatives were jubilant and amused at Brown's predica-  
ment and the St. Thomas Weekly Dispatch sadly noted: "Poor Brown what  
will become of him, instead of being strengthened in his his last act  
of his political dream, he will find himself as everyone else has to be  
a mere tool of his own fanatical machinations."<sup>6</sup> The ultra-Tory Toronto  
Colonist and Atlas claimed to see sinister motives behind the "ravings"  
of the Clear Grits:<sup>7</sup>

We have shown beyond all possibility of denial,  
that the object of Mr. Brown and his immediate

partisans, as plainly indicated by the language of the Globe newspaper for nearly a twelvemonth past, has been to reduce the Province into that kind of condition, when, like the victim squeezed by a boa constrictor out of all vitality and shape, it shall be just fit to be swallowed up and annexed bodily.

The Hamilton Spectator noted that Canadian confidence had been shaken by the "basest and most unpatriotic exertions of a desperate and unscrupulous politician who all the time has been seeking to advance his personal ends at the general expense."<sup>8</sup>

The Globe was happy to republish articles from the press of Canada East which seemed to indicate that there was justification in the course of action it had taken. The Franco-Canadian of St. John's acknowledged that some in Canada West were unhappy in the Canadian fold:<sup>9</sup>

The dissolution of the Union is already accomplishing itself, in spite of the Government, in spite of the Legislature, in spite of the letter of the law. Upper Canada, especially the peninsula west of Kingston, is detaching itself from the East with a force that is irresistible. These people, whom we are governing against their will, are turning towards the American Republic; they are becoming Americanized to the extent of favouring the commerce of the United States and their public works to the prejudice of ours. The exasperation is such among these people that monarchical traditions are becoming extinguished in their spirits and their hearts....

Even the Montreal Transcript, the newspaper in Canada East which came closest to the Globe's radical platform, confessed with regret that the implementation of responsible government in Canada had been unsatisfactory,



and that if the situation did not speedily improve, "a written constitution, however unpalatable as an Americanism foreign to British ideas, will become necessary." As a firm ally of "everything British," this paper desired to see the same system firmly established in Canada rather than the American system of checks and balances, but as the Union of 1840 had been a failure, constitutional change was vital: "We do not see how, on a survey of the history of the past eighteen years, the conclusion can be avoided that some change in our constitutional system must be made, in order to save Canada from going further on the downward career of helpless embarrassment."<sup>10</sup> Dissolution of the Union had become the great political cry of the Reformers of Canada West, and when a public figure of George Brown's "experience and standing and influence" declared that some modifications in the constitution of 1840 were necessary, it was time to take action.

As charges of disloyalty were employed with relative abandon during this era, it was not unusual that the Toronto Leader should claim that Clear-Gritism was a synonym for "disloyalty." Since the Globe did on occasion provoke some of the charges, and was the leading Grit paper in Canada West, it became the whipping-post and the chief target of those Conservative newspapers which indulged in calumny. Others agreed with the Leader in its violent aspersions on the lack of loyalty in the Opposition. There were two programmes in the Brown-Dorion party snarled La Minerve; the first and foremost was the desire for annexation to the United States.<sup>11</sup> For its part, the Leader alleged that,

from Dunham Flats to the extremity of the

Western Peninsula, be sure that wherever there is a Clear-Grit, there also is a man anxious to seek another state of political existence, under another allegiance, and with other national traditions.

For the Colonist and Atlas, the Globe's advocacy of republican practices, including an elected judiciary, senatorial veto, and the barring of Ministers from the legislature, could have but one result:<sup>12</sup>

...are not republican principles like these, sown broad-cast over the land quite sufficient to establish their author's determination to sink Canada in the American Union? The thing is obvious on the very surface; and deny it as he may--which yes he does not--Mr. Brown will never restore confidence in his professions of loyalty to the monarchy and the empire.

Of course, George Brown was not one to take any amount of criticism in a prostrate position, and found that the Grits, too, could use the words "disloyal" and "patriotic" and even "annexationist" as political powder. In the House of Assembly he accused ~~two~~ members of the Government of having favoured a union with the United States as a panacea for constitutional difficulties. In 1849 the Commissioner of Public Works had had the reputation of drafting the celebrated Annexation Manifesto. Cleansing his own side of the House, Brown noted that only one member of the Brown-Dorion administration had been foolish enough to join with the "honourable gentleman" ten years earlier. The Grit leader desired to know if the men of 1849 had recanted on the subject of annexation, "or was that the way in which they intended to tinker up the canister can?" The House was entitled to know the views of the Ministry on the subject.<sup>13</sup>

It was evident that the two questions raised by the Grits of

Canada West, and put forth in the pages of the Globe, were widely debated in the Legislature and the newspapers of the Province.<sup>14</sup> The issues included the repeal of the Canadian Union with all the peripheral questions which that decision might involve, and to a great extent, representation by population which, in effect, was the cause of much of the demand for dissolution. As Chester Martin explained, "Rep. by Pop." remained the most dynamic and dominant issue in Canadian politics.<sup>15</sup> An unsatisfactory solution to the issues might lead to an "isolated" Canada West, which might in turn resort to expedients of commercial or political alliance with the United States. For many, this meant annexation pure and simple. Both the Reformers of Canada West under Brown, and the Rouges of Canada East under A. A. Dorion demanded the repeal of the Union.<sup>16</sup> For what reason had Galt, Rose, Holton and others proposed annexation to the United States in 1849, or Galt and Cartier advocated a federal union the year before in England, inquired the Toronto Message. The Grits had come out in the open, but Galt and others had done all they could "to facilitate annexation to the United States, a measure urged upon England, in the House of Commons, by the head of the House of Baring thirty years since."<sup>17</sup>

The Toronto Leader, the most influential Conservative paper in Canada West, also thought that that section was being victimized by Canada East: "...if we go on as we are, the Union will cease to be operative." Like the Colonist and Atlas, it was a reluctant defender of Canada East. The latter saw the "howl of Lower Canada domination" as nothing more than a bugbear invented by the Opposition.<sup>18</sup> It had reached such a state in Canada West that every time anything connected with Canada East arose,

they became ipso facto opposed:<sup>19</sup>

So strongly, indeed, has this spirit been displayed on the part of certain leading members of the Opposition that we cannot avoid the conclusion that the main end and object of their policy is, by throwing every impediment in the way of the development of our own resources, to render more complete our commercial dependence upon the United States, and thus by degree to accustom the minds of our people to the idea that annexation has become a matter of commercial, if not of political necessity.

This Toronto paper was forced to admit, however, that disunionism was not confined to the Grits exclusively in Canada West. While the real struggle against the union came from the Reformers, it confessed that some Conservatives supported disunion also. The Leader and John A. Macdonald felt that Canada West could not exist separately and the Conservative press as a whole thus opposed dissolution of the union as a cure for political maladies.<sup>20</sup> The Colonist and Atlas was vituperative in its denunciation of the Reformers who advocated dissolution as it was sure that the Opposition was merely trying to destroy the constitution because they did not control the administration.<sup>21</sup>

In Canada East there was no great enthusiasm for the existing union, but a genuine reluctance to abandon it until some better arrangement might be ready to substitute in its place. A plethora of schemes was proposed as a redress of grievances, real and imagined, but Canada East remained violently opposed to "rep. by pop."<sup>22</sup> While both the Globe and the Leader agreed on the desirability of "rep. by pop.," most of the citizens of Canada West saw dissolution of the existing union as the final

remedy, if no satisfactory adjustment in the status quo was possible.

The clear and vociferous cries of sectional conflict in Canada West led the Globe to warn its readers in a grim tone:<sup>23</sup>

We shall see the results ere long. No people above the rank of serfs, not silenced by the strong arm of power, would submit to such injustice without remonstrance, and certainly the people of Upper Canada will not.

Such statements, often misconstrued and taken out of context, implied a threat of annexation if Grit political objectives were not met. Not entirely insensitive to journalistic attacks from the Conservatives, the Globe defended itself by questioning the motives of those who had laid the charges:<sup>24</sup>

The apologists of the Union are not insensible to the utility of a loud cry. They wisely abstain from all attempts to argue the question, either on the ground of right or expediency.... But they bellow lustily, nevertheless. And their cry is always the same. "Dissolve the Union," they allege, "and annexation will follow." Why such a proceeding involves such a result we are not told.

The issue of annexationism did not infect the Reform party but the Globe was unwilling to conclude that the then indifference or hostility to such a suggestion could survive any provocation.

According to the Conservative Montreal Gazette, Brown had become so embittered over the "double shuffle" that he had renounced all his old opinions in favour of dissolution. But this paper noted, dissolution would have the evil effect of prolonging the existence of "petty colonial government" and would weaken Canada so as to encourage her annexation by "American slaveholders."<sup>25</sup> And indeed, in September of 1859, the Globe

denounced the British connection as the "greatest of evils," and the first step towards a solution was to get rid of the Governor:

"Unfortunately, that did not depend upon the people of Canada, but upon an Imperial Minister. In this matter the people of Canada felt themselves powerless, and (that) was...the worst feature in the present state of affairs." The Globe could see nothing worse than a great community depending for the removal of the "direst evils on a distant power, and feeling that which power has neither knowledge of, nor sympathy with that condition."<sup>26</sup> Mr. Reesor, a member of the Legislative Council and brother-in-law of William McDougall, supported Brown's contentions. As editor of the Markham Economist, he declared that his fellow Grits were very loyal but, nevertheless, if they failed to break up the Union they would opt for annexation to the United States:

The people of Upper Canada are loyal, and do not desire annexation to the United States. But some of the most loyal have declared that, if they cannot be separated from Lower Canada, they will go for annexation. It would be well, therefore, for those who oppose a dissolution of the Union, to consider well the responsibility of such a position. Scarcely one man in a hundred in Upper Canada is in favour of the Union.

Editor McQueen of the Huron Signal appears to have donned the same spectacles, for he, too, urged the adoption of strong changes to give success to the designs of the Grits: "If nothing less than revolution could rid us of the present system, it might be seriously debated whether revolution would be justified."<sup>27</sup>

The Tories watched Brown's increasingly erratic course with

notable interest. Obviously the frustrated publisher was treading the path of "preposterous extremism." While they recognized that Sheppard, a North American political radical, was the principal author of a long series of editorials challenging the value of the parliamentary system and responsible government, they were doubtless pleased that Brown was taking the larger portion of credit in the public eye. It appeared that the owner of the Globe was leading the stumbling crowd towards the dubious structure of elective institutions to the congressional system at Washington. "He has made the grand mistake," Robert Spence wrote to Macdonald, "of assailing the system as well as the men working it out--charging as it were the hands of ineptitude and treachery and at the same time declaring that the ship's bottom was so rotten she must founder." In a prophetic sense, Spence noted that "in no quarter, to any extent worth speaking of, will annexation leanings have any support--and changes of any kind will be looked upon with great distrust inasmuch as failure in constitutional tinkering might ultimately bring about such a result."<sup>28</sup> The "organic changes" advocated by the Reformers would not be regarded with an unbiased eye by many in Canada West if Spence's observations were correct.

William Lyon Mackenzie could not allow the waverings of the Grits to go unanswered. Accusing the Grits of inconsistency, he noted how George Brown had once attacked two Grit newspapers edited by William McDougall in the early 1850's, when the Toronto Examiner and North American had called for dissolution of the Union. Brown had sneered at these early cries for repeal of the Union, and subsequently bought out McDougall while enticing him to join the staff of the Globe. The ex-rebel's Message observed:<sup>29</sup>

When the Clear Grits were out of office and bellowing to get in, but with a very slim prospect of it--they were ready to revolutionize the institutions of the country, or to do any possible wild thing, to yet quit the unbearable oppression of "French dictation." The sufferings of Upper Canada were so horrible that they saw no relief short of dissolution of the Union.

It was evident to those who possessed even a slight degree of political sagacity that the Clear Grit out of office was a very different animal from what he was when in the seat of power. While the Montreal Weekly Herald did not expect the "natural allies" of Canada West, the English in Canada East, would join in supporting the "just demands" of the former for "rep. by pop.," it did fear that the Reformers might attempt a cure for existing evils beyond the limits of the existing constitution.<sup>30</sup>

In point of fact, annexationism did not appear to have caused undue concern in the press of Canada West at this time. Only the Message and the Oakville Advertiser came out strongly for union with the United States. William King, the proprietor of the Oakville paper, demanded immediate annexation for all of Canada and he expected to see it accomplished sometime before 1861. Under the title "Union with Young America," King noted that there had always been some in Canada West who had regarded annexation as not only judicious, but inevitable. There was nothing new in the scheme as it had been brought forward in open rebellion in 1837 and then through the extensive but short-lived agitation of 1849. The Advertiser saw it as the natural course of events for any colony so distant from the Mother Country and in such close proximity to a powerful and prosperous nation like the United States to consider union with the latter.<sup>31</sup>



The Oakville newspaper showed how the constant intercourse between Americans and Canadians created a similarity of habits and ideas which "speedily beget like national feelings and pride." And Canadians were already "commercially united with, and dependent upon them." The same influences which affected American trade and commerce was felt to *Understand* an equal degree in the Canadas, as a large portion of the latter's production was either purchased by Americans, or was the medium through which the Canadas reached foreign markets. Illustrating how strong the economic penetration into Canada by the United States was even by 1859, the Advertiser pointed out that a large share of Canada's imports was either through or from American soil, with American capital both in banking and manufactures being extensively invested in both Canada West and East. Canadian citizens and labourers were constantly crossing the frontier in either direction as the demand for employment in the Province fluctuated.

Beyond all these commercial and economic considerations, King noted that the people of the two countries were drawn together by common ties of origin and the still stronger ties of "blood, kindred, and intermarriage." In fact, in every branch of business, as well as in the social relations of life, Canadians were daily becoming more and more closely identified with the Americans. It was, therefore, "an absurdity and a delusion" to suppose that the time could be far off when Canadian political connections would be the same as their commercial and social connections: "Once link the trade and people of a small and comparatively feeble colony like ourselves, in this way, with a wealthy, powerful, commercial, and aggressive nation, and the teachings of the past must be

strangely false, if the one does not become entirely incorporated with the other."<sup>32</sup> As the editor of the Oakville paper was a close relative of George Chisholm, the local member of the Assembly, it was further intimated that the latter was sympathetic with the views expressed by the Advertiser.

While the Globe said that the Advertiser was the only newspaper in Canada West that was annexationist, it was undoubtedly true that Mackenzie's Message heartily approved of Mr. King's lectures. Amid giant cartoons on Canadian-American fishery relations, showing the Yankees landing all the big gudgeons, Mackenzie commented on this new call for annexation:<sup>33</sup>

Galt, Rose, Clarkson, Redpath, Bidwell, Molson, DeWitt, Papineau--well known names these on the side of independence, Canadian (immediate) annexation--but only one KING takes the same side, a ruler whose patrimony is in Nelson, and whose organ is the Oakville Advertiser. He has been a tory, we learn had resided in California, and keeps quite steady in his avowed purpose.

The Advertiser, as if to further clarify its stand, offered some advice to the Colonial Office:

Let the great, the unquestionably great, caste statesmen of England be admonished and advised that the States, Provinces, and dependencies North--South of it too for that matter--of Mason's and Dixon's line are, and are to be, one great confederacy of Republican States, under one nationality.... The one great conservative move and policy within their reach, in their age and time is to yield gracefully, timely and magnanimously, before events force reluctant concessions, and with the feelings and hatreds engendered by strife and conquest.

Yet, for the timid, the Globe advised that,

the Government knows well that though this disturbed state of the country—in consequence of Sir Edmund Head's dishonest administration of affairs—has encouraged a single individual to start a paper to advocate annexation, there is no party which is now prepared to support such a movement.

Brown's newspaper told of the damage that the Ministerial cry of "disloyalty" might do to Canada's relations with the American Republic:

We find in the American journals constant reference to the declarations of the ministerial press that an active agitation is going on amongst us, secret meetings being held and plots being hatched, with the view of annexing Canada to the United States. American editors, seeing these stories in Government journals, which recommend at the same time the employment of spies to ferret out the designs of the conspirators, and arrest them when discovered, can hardly fail to believe that there is a large party in Canada anxious for annexation. They do not know how completely at their wits end the organists are to find some means of stopping the agitation for a dissolution of the Union.

Even the sentiment of those favourable to annexation did not come so much from disloyalty as from the fear of the calamities which might befall the Province's exposed conditions in the event of an American attack to "liberate" the colonists.

By July, Brown had again seized the initiative in directing the Reform party towards British liberalism in opposition to American democratic republicanism. Sheppard wrote to Charles Clarke in a disdainful tone:<sup>34</sup>

The movement of the Globe for organic changes is one which I shall have to bear the

responsibility. Brown and I have conversed on the failure of the present system, but he was not at all prepared for the distinct committals that have been made, and is still afraid to own them....

But it was too late to stop Mackenzie, who of course paid allegiance only to the "Mackenzie" party. In the same month the Toronto Message came out with a twenty-eight point programme calling for annexation to the United States, and this plan was carried in almost every issue of the paper for the remainder of 1859. Mackenzie contended for free trade with "Brother Jonathan," a republican constitution for Canada West, and elective institutions to apply to every government position in the Province.<sup>35</sup> Ransacking a period of history of which he had formed a large part for sources to support his theories, the ex-rebel attempted to show that almost half of the important political figures in Canada during the years 1837 to 1859 had been for "our immediate annexation as free States in the American Union." Even the old Tory, Allan MacNab had frankly declared that he would rather join "free American protestants, speaking English on our immediate border, than be ruled by ignorant, sordid, greedy Frenchmen, who hated us." But it appeared that annexation in Canada was a political cure-all to escape from domestic difficulties, and not a preference for Americanized institutions. This is what separated William Lyon Mackenzie from the "also ran" annexationists, as he was sure that republican institutions would provide a better form of government for Canada, more suited to the North American environment. However, Mackenzie and a handful of Rouges from Canada East were the only persons in the United Province who

maintained a consistency in the matter of annexation to the United States.

There was also some talk in the late 1850's about annexation and the Reciprocity Treaty. When the ministerial press raised the annexation cry because the Liberator of London, Canada West expressed the view that the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty would produce a tendency towards union with the Americans, the Globe spoke up in defence of the London paper. The latter agreed that the Treaty was so necessary to Canada West that its termination might well produce a sentiment favourable to annexation. The Conservative Leader, while not allowing that the abrogation of the Treaty would produce an annexationist sentiment, admitted that any ending of the existing profitable commercial relations with the Republic would result in incalculable suffering for Canada West. This newspaper thought that there were a few in the Province who would, for purely commercial reasons, join the United States with a day's notice, and implied that these individuals were, as expected, to be found among the Reformers. Disregarding the calumnies of the Leader, the Globe placed the blame for the state of affairs directly upon Alexander Galt. Galt was determined to place every difficulty in the way of carrying on the Reciprocity Treaty.<sup>36</sup>

Canada West generally opposed a policy of protection for Canada and had struck out bitterly against the Caley Tariff of 1858. Galt's Tariff of 1859 seemed to strike at the very center of Canada West's contacts with the United States, and it was widely despised in that section of the Province. The Globe commented that the tariff of 1858 had begun an "insane protective war, in which the Americans will not be slow to encounter them

(the Canadian government), there is no saying what will be the result.... (It) is the maddest thing ever devised by men in their senses." Yet the charges of subversion heaped upon Galt's tariff policy of 1859 were much more severe. Galt had been the perpetrator of the outrage:<sup>37</sup>

It moots not to enquire into Mr. Galt's motives. Whether he is still pursuing his old chimera annexation idea and sees no better way of accomplishing his purpose than to place the agriculturist and lumbermen of Upper Canada at a disadvantage in their nearest and best market, or whether he is seeking to force the products of Upper Canada through the St. Lawrence to benefit the Grand Trunk and his own property in Montreal, is of little consequence....

In the belief that the new tariff worked unequally upon Canada East and Canada West, the Globe remarked: "Whatever be his motives, Mr. Galt has revived the hopes of the annexationists."

Galt came to his own defence in the Canadian House of Assembly. He expressed his hope that the position of Canada was not so low that they could not advocate the interests of their own people without being told that they would offend the merchants of New York or Boston. The member for Sherbrooke repudiated such a state of affairs, asserting that Canadian commercial policy was not to be regulated by the "dictates of a foreign nation." Reviving the old vision of the commercial empire of the St. Lawrence, he added: "The St. Lawrence is to be the great highway into and out of the country, and I believe public opinion is as strong in this direction as ever."<sup>38</sup> Christopher Dunkin cautioned the House that it had not been American good nature that had given Canada reciprocity or maintained

it. If the United States could gain anything by abrogation it would do so, but as the agreement had been profitable it remained partially secure: "As they are not mealy-mouthed about their tariff neither should we be about ours." As for the question of adopting the American tariff and forming a zollverein with the Republic, it would call for the imposition of an anti-British tariff as in the United States and thus make Canada a dependency of that country. The opening of Canada's markets to the manufacturers of the American Union, and vice versa, would have been "a very jug-handled sort of reciprocity." How could Canada adopt the anti-British tariff of their neighbours across the line, possessing no tariff of its own against the United States, without drifting into annexation? "No; not drifting, steering, with heads on, sails set, and steam up."<sup>39</sup>

William Merritt did not agree that a Canadian adoption of the American tariff was tantamount to "going for annexation." John B. Robinson added to the debate by asserting that the financial distress of the United States was due for the most part to the free trade policy which the Southern states had forced on the central government, over fifteen years before.<sup>40</sup> While the debate on Galt's tariff continued, it was widely recognized by the mercantile interests in Canada East that the new policy would be of some benefit to them. The tariff had been intended to divert commerce from the Erie-Hudson route to the St. Lawrence. A correspondent writing to the Canadian News from Montreal, lauded Galt for his economic policy: "To him is due the honour of the inception of a policy truly Canadian, and one which, if carried out steadily, will develop vastly the

commercial capabilities of the St. Lawrence...." The Montreal Gazette was positive that the trading capabilities of the St. Lawrence route would receive "immense development, if the Reciprocity Treaty should be broken," and there was more of a possibility that it would be severed if Canada continued her plans for "economic independence."<sup>41</sup>

During the 1850's Toronto was coming of age as a financial and commercial metropolis. The mercantile men of that city envisioned it as the entrepot for a vast and virgin hinterland.<sup>42</sup> But the depression of 1857-1858 had brought great suffering to Canada West, as the President of the City Bank of Montreal observed in 1858:<sup>43</sup>

The pressure of the crisis was lighter in Lower Canada than perhaps in any other country in the world. In Upper Canada its effects were severe. The derangement of all the commercial interests which had long previously existed had ill prepared that section of the province for such a trying emergency. Under the most favoured circumstances their commerce must have struggled for a time from the consequence of previous over-trading and over-speculation in landed estate; but the surprise of a money panic and severe commercial crisis, falling upon a community at such a conjuncture, was an event calculated to produce the most disastrous consequences. Almost immediate and general prostration in every branch of trade ensued.... The commercial action of the country was paralysed....

The reasons why Canada West, except for Isaac Buchanan and a small group of fellow protectionists, was all but unanimous in its dislike for tariff measures at this time became more obvious.<sup>44</sup> Alexander Campbell's statement of 1865 on the state of affairs in Canada West could easily have been applied to the period 1858-1860 as far as political pundits in that sector of the Province were concerned. In a letter to Macdonald he suggested



that:<sup>45</sup>

If you succeed—Confederation goes on and the reciprocity treaty be renewed—we shall settle down to work our destiny as a portion of the Empire, with a future as a monarchy in the dim distance. But if you fail, and our farmers are again placed in a position of inferiority as compared with those of the United States—we shall be republicans in our own day, I think.

There were complaints in Canada of new "Yankee notions" which regulated all goods exported from the Province over a certain value. The Niagara Mail suggested that the United States wanted to abrogate the Reciprocity Treaty and it was useless to look for an enlarged liberal spirit from the American government, its statesmen, or in its diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. They had never risen above the level of "hucksters, whose creed is to take all they can get, and among whom he is the smartest man who can cheat the most, and lie the hardest." The Niagara paper expected that a trading people would have enough wisdom to know that whatever tended to impede trade diminished it ten times more than the positive value of the impediment, and whatever the true reasons or value of the American position may have been, the important point was what Canadians believed it to be at the time. And it was evident from the columns of the Mail that the free trade concepts of mid-Victorian Britain had reached the Great Lakes.

Canada had made many liberal concessions to the United States in terms of navigational rights, but they had apparently not been reciprocal: "Not only are old restrictions continued against us, but new ones are invited." Canadians did not regret the narrow policy of the

American government as it would drive a considerable portion of the produce which had formerly been received by the United States to find an exit by other channels, and would help to foster direct trade through the St. Lawrence. "This terrible fear of the enterprise of our population clipping the wings of the American Eagle is complimentary to us as a people," exclaimed the Mail, but when Canadians felt that they had nothing to fear from American competition upon equal terms, then the situation became a farce: "The Chinese, excellent judges of character, called the Americans 'second chop British', and accepting their valuation of them, we must not be too hard upon their littleness and failures."<sup>46</sup>

Calvin Phelps penned a letter to the editor of the St. Catharines Constitutional documenting the reaction of the colonists in his area to the American restrictions on specific goods exported from Canada. He saw that it was a matter of the greatest importance that the "so-called" Reciprocity Treaty remain in force between the two countries, and that "this false construction and narrow contracted policy" that certain groups in the Republic were seeking to establish be done away with as soon as possible. Phelps took it for granted that the Treaty had been made in good faith by both governments and that they intended to carry out its provisions according to the "true intent and meaning of the same." However, "some new light had been discovered: to swindle Canadians out of a few thousand dollars a year in the hope of fees." The New Era issued a report of Canadian canal accommodations to show how Canadians might avoid much of the American economic influence by forming a substantial carrying trade through the St. Lawrence. Editor McGee noted that the immense American trade of the

Great Lakes might be directed through the St. Lawrence system, which was in the best interest of "every nook and cranny of Canada: but for Montreal it is an absolute essential for future existence." The Montreal paper was pleased to report that its suggestion had been favourably received by the London Morning Chronicle, which also saw that the economic possibilities of Canada could provide a substantial threat to American business and trading interests along the Erie Canal and lower Great Lakes."<sup>47</sup>

Alexander Galt had expressed a similar sentiment in a confidential note to the Colonial Secretary, Sir E. B. Lytton which illustrated the auspicious state of Canadian-American economic relations. The Canadian Minister of Finance summed up the colonial reliance on American good-will in matters of trade.<sup>48</sup>

The position of Canada is both peculiar and exceptional. A population now numbering three millions of British-born subjects reside in the interior of America and during the winter season are absolutely proscribed from any intercourse with either Great Britain or the other colonies except through a foreign country jealous of the power of England on the Continent.... The present state of the case is that Canada is at this moment at the mercy of the American Congress for the continuance of her trade between December and June. The repeal of the American bonding laws would at once arrest the whole commerce of the Province. It would entail ruin on every merchant and trader in Upper Canada.... The only security we have against such action by the American Government lies in the value of our trade to their railways, forwarders and merchants-- we have none in their policy as a government.... Canada has no other interest in the Inter-colonial Railway than to be freed from a painful state of subordination to the United States.

In the event that the United States adopted a different trade policy or a war broke out, an Intercolonial Railway would provide Canada with another outlet. Canada's freedom from the "foreign trammels" of the United States would provide the security against its need.

The protectionist group in Canada West, led by Isaac Buchanan and John Carling, two local members of the Assembly, had held several important meetings for the "Protection of Canadian Industry." A gathering met at Hamilton and proposed to take steps to bring their plight to the attention of the Canadian legislature. Buchanan told this highly influential group of "friends of Canadian industry" how Canadian manufacturers suffered from "whatever evils occur in the United States," without having the benefits that might accrue in either country. Whenever there was financial distress in the Republic, Canada was overwhelmed with American manufactures, yet when a state of prosperity was prevalent in the United States, Canadians were debarred by a tariff.<sup>49</sup> The Mail called for further discussion to take into consideration "the propriety of modifying the present Customs Tariff, with a view to its assimilation to that of the United States, or as near an approximation to that tariff as circumstances will permit."

The Mayor of Niagara, F. A. B. Clench, chaired another meeting at Niagara to discuss "Home Manufactures." It was again decided that the United States profited to Canada's disadvantage by flooding Canadian markets with American produce imported under the low tariff of 1858. Canada was thus giving the United States complete possession of her markets while she was almost entirely excluded from those of the Republic. Canadians could

never expect to see their own manufactures grow enough to stand by themselves against the pressure of foreign competitors. A similar consensus was arrived at during another gathering of merchants, manufacturers and others favourable to the encouragement of the manufacturing industry in Canada, at Toronto's St. Lawrence Hall. This programme was the best for the development of the resources of the United Canadas and, as such, it was this group of "protectionists" in Canada West which supported Galt's Tariff of 1859.<sup>50</sup>

Of course the variety of viewpoints regarding "truck and trade" with the Yankees brought a variety of responses from Canadian newspapers, making the discussion within the Province on the matter of protection versus free trade a loud and lengthy one. While the greater part of Canada West, as it was still in many respects a frontier society, opted for free trade or reciprocity in economic affairs, the Port Hope Atlas called for protection for Canadian manufacturers, not "Free Trade, reciprocity, or other bug-bears." To the Atlas, "Yankee notions and wooden nutmegs" were taking precedence over Canadian ideas and enterprise: "There is little self-reliance about us. We expect what the country brings forth, and contrive nothing. We sow and others reap. There is no nationality about us, we are dependent upon the United States. May we not imitate the United States' commercial policy, and be permanently benefited?"<sup>51</sup> While McGee's New Era desired fair play for Canadian industry and hoped that it "may yet reckon the London Free Press among the friends of a discriminating protection of our infant manufactures," the latter paper saw it as an "undeniable fact" that the existing tariff arrangements worked

disastrously against the Canadian manufacturer. It felt that free trade between Canada and the United States was the only practical cure: "Endeavours should be made to secure it."<sup>52</sup>

As usual, Canadian newspapers kept a close eye on American papers, noting their reaction to the current manufacturing crisis in the Province. The Albany Journal was touted as bearing testimony to the sagacity of Canadian policy. In its discussion of the commercial enterprise of Canada and her powerful neighbour, the New York state paper pointed out that Canada possessed a quality which the United States lacked: a just appreciation of the immense value of her trade. The advantages that the Republic let fall by the wayside, Canada seized eagerly.<sup>53</sup> The Albany editor observed that while the Americans were taking away fishing bounties, postponing her Pacific Railroad, and discontinuing European steamers, Canada was granting a new system of bounties, pushing forward the Grand Trunk daily, and forming a line that would bring the mails to Quebec three days in advance of New York. The Journal wondered just how long its country could afford to turn business away from its doors, as the benefits of America's northern neighbours would soon, he claimed, be most obvious. It may be assumed that self-congratulation was a popular pastime in the Province the day that this editorial was reprinted in the Canadian press.

There had been more than "French domination" and the Galt Tariff that had led the Grits of Canada West to mumble talk about annexation and the dissolution of the Canadian Union. Another major issue was "the seat of government question." George Brown had moved an amendment against Queen Victoria's selection of Ottawa as the capital of Canada and this motion

received a majority against the government. By resigning, the Ministry expressly took its stand on the decision of the Queen and so would place the Opposition in a position of "disloyalty."<sup>54</sup> The Government had completely identified itself with the sovereign, and in becoming her defender was shrouded by the shadow of the public sympathy "which at once encircled her." The Tory Hamilton Spectator scurried to seize the initiative and paint a livid picture of Grit rebellion against the Queen. In a lengthy editorial, it used every means to blacken the Opposition in the eyes of the public and to raise the ministerialists as martyrs to the cause of the Crown. William Gillespie was positive that Brown and the Grits were behind the clamour for watered-down republican ideas in Canada West, and continued to deliver sharp rebukes to the Globe for its antagonisms towards the Queen's choice of Ottawa as the new capital. Had not the Grits threatened rebellion in consequence of the decision in favour of the permanent location of the seat of government at Ottawa? The followers of Brown were chided that nearly a week had passed and yet there was not one symptom of either dissatisfaction or revolution. The Globe had proved a false prophet and had probably discovered by this time "that all its howls are not so taking as might have been imagined."<sup>55</sup>

Le Pays of Montreal, the champion of Dorion and the Rouges, defended the Reformers against Tory accusations of disloyalty. It was sure that the settlement had been the work of the traitors of 1849, hypocritical scoundrels who were once rebels and now pretended loyalty. Despite the angry outburst by Le Pays, papers which had been as loud in their professions against the Government on this issue, such as the London Free Press, also

received the epithet "disloyal." In a similar vein, the Montreal Herald was editorially clubbed by the New Era:

It day by day becomes more strikingly apparent that whenever the Herald can get a fling at Queen, Lords or Commons, it gladly embraces the opportunity. Its avowed object appears to be, to exalt and elevate republican rules and institutions, and, by every means in its power, detrude and turn into ridicule the government under which we live, and the Queen whose subjects we are.

Fresh examples of this "disgraceful abuse" of the power of the press were found in later editions of the Herald, under the title, "Downing Street Selection of a Capital for Canada." To McGee, the Herald was wontingly discussing the whole question from a republican point of view.<sup>56</sup> Whatever the real background of the case, the charge had been laid.

In refuting the charge brought against him of insulting the Queen, Brown treated it justly, proving its lack of substance.<sup>57</sup>

Do you think Her Majesty cares a straw where the government of Canada is fixed? I yield to no man in loyalty to the Crown of England. But what has this purely Canadian question to do with loyalty? It is a most dangerous and ungracious thing to couple the name of Her Majesty with an affair so entirely local.

Governor Head did not interpret the Opposition's stance as one of disloyalty, but he was mortified that the selection should have met with such a reception. A despatch from Lord Lytton to Head reported the Home Government's regret at the turmoil in Canada, but he had too much faith in the loyalty of the representatives of the Canadian people to believe that any individual among the members who joined in the vote intended a slight to his sovereign.<sup>58</sup> Yet the role of the Queen's representative in the



celebrated "double shuffle" resulting from the vote of the House on the Ottawa site, played a large part in the demand by Brown and the Reformers for more radical, Americanized institutions.

William Merritt told the Assembly that the question had been based on loyalty: those who voted for the Queen's decision were loyal and those who voted against it were not. The results had simply confirmed what many "loyal" men had already suspected of the Clear Grits and other seditious persons in their midst. The deputy for Lincoln explained, however, that it was all a question of "cold cash"; "prosperity brought loyalty, the reverse disloyalty." Examples were cited from Canadian provincial history, from 1791 to 1858, pointing out with a great deal of wisdom that Canadian annexation movements developed themselves, having been caused by the depression of her commercial and industrial interests.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, there was really little to worry about, for as Mr. L. A. Dessaulles assured his fellow members, "The House feels and expresses the most profound and loyal respect to our most gracious sovereign, who in no part of her dominions commands more sincere homage from her subjects than in Canada."

## II

The seat of government question, economic disparities, and the political alliance with Canada East led the Reformers to a convention held in Toronto in November, 1859. The assembled representatives opened proceedings at the Great Reform Convention with a condemnation of the "intolerable evils" of the Union regime and responsible government. The

more radical Grits, strongly in sympathy with American political institutions, campaigned forcefully for constitutional reform. The Globe had made the position of the bulk of the Reform party clear in its editorial columns throughout the months: "Let the system now in operation be continued, and no step will be too extravagant provided it relieves us from sectional domination." On another occasion it observed that the continuance of the existing Union might well lead to a demand for connection with the American Republic.<sup>60</sup>

The anger and resentment of the Globe led it to draw a parallel between Canada and the United States:<sup>61</sup>

We have often noticed the striking similarity between the political contests in which the people of Canada and of the United States, are now engaged. In both cases it is the effort of a majority to escape from the tyrannical rule of a minority, and this, too, under political systems which profess to recognize the popular voice--the will of the majority--as the only source of power.... Let the people of Upper Canada take courage from the example of their neighbours. Let them rally to a single cry--"down with the corruptionists!"--and the year 1861 will become memorable on this continent for the overthrow of two equally baneful dominations--the Slavocracy of the South, and the French Priestocracy of the North.

The Brant Herald, in its discussion of the "double majority" system in Canada, sketched somewhat the same parallel: "What Lower Canada is to Upper Canada the Slave States are to the Northern States of America in some great measure." The New Era found all this "a stretch, and no mistake, comparison large."<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps the most bitter and outspoken critic of the "tyranny of

the Union" was the Perth Courier. This Grit paper spoke with surprising candor of the sectional conflict:<sup>63</sup>

Notwithstanding twenty years of union, the differences...between Canada East and Canada West, are now nearly as great as at the time of Union.... In Canada West, where British freedom of thought and discussion exists in all its pristine vigor, there is naturally a diversity of political opinion among the people, and the consequence is the division of the population into two political parties antagonistic to each other and continually engaged in party strife. In Canada East, however, the French Canadians being fully aware of their gradually waning strength as regards numbers, make up for their numerical weakness by uncompromising unity. Political principle, at least as Britons understand it, they may be said to have none.

The editor of this newspaper expressed the general irritation and growing apprehension in Canada West regarding the domination by Canada East and the French Canadians: "Instead...of the Union Act swamping the French, it has enabled the French to swamp the British, and Angle-Saxons in a British Colony are for once ruled by a foreign race inferior to them in numbers." A motion to make government employes in the Canadian Legislature bilingual incensed the Perth Courier: "This, to say the least of it, is a cool piece of impertinence. Canada is a British Colony—not French—and the English language is therefore the national language of the country."<sup>64</sup>

For the Conservative press of Canada West, the question of French domination posed something of a dilemma. They understood the justice of most Grit demands yet their power in the Province depended upon the support of the Bleus from Canada East, as the Conservatives were a minority in Canada West, while the Bleus dominated the eastern sector. It seemed that

the Conservatives had to accept the sectional antagonism and attempt to minimize its effects. As for Cartier's Bleus, they had always been and still were, willing to support any Ministry that would accede to what they were asking in respect to the promotion of "Lower Canada sectionalism."<sup>65</sup> Yet Canada East was not immune to the factional diseases evident in Canada West. Both the Montreal Transcript and Advertiser joined the Globe and the Courier in condemning the domination of the Anglo-Saxons of Canada West by Canada East, and took the French Canadians to task for splitting Canada. The Advertiser suggested a truce between French and English, with the hope that they might all become "Canadians" and submerge their separate nationalities in a greater one.<sup>66</sup> While the bitter racial and religious recrimination between the two sections of the Province continued, some newspapers in Canada East thought that some accommodation with Canada West on the doctrine of representation by population might be necessary. But as La Minerve had observed, French Canada was united and uncompromising in its opposition to any change in the representation which might endanger its "separate nationality": "Cette question, ce me semble, menace déjà d'entraver la marche du Gouvernement, et peut amener plus tard une guerre civile entre les deux Sections de la Province."<sup>67</sup> It was recognized that the Conservatives at any time might form a backlash alliance with their own most bitter of enemies, the Clear Grits of Canada West, to "crush out what French Canadians so much desire to preserve and to make Canada radically and essentially a British colony."<sup>68</sup>

When the Reform Convention opened discussion to consider the alternatives before Canada West in the face of the domination of Canada

East, the Tories started to look for weaknesses in the convention. With little success, they gradually came round to the view that conventions in general were evil, another sinister Yankee political invention which men of doubtful loyalty were embracing. The Chatham Planet attempted to show that even the Grits were full of disunity and ready to crumble at the slightest provocation. "The leading spirits of Canada West" were blamed for having taken hold of a set of political "notions—principles they do not deserve to be called—as false and pernicious as the dogmas of the defunct Rouges." The Grits were found repulsive for importing the democratic theory of numerical representation from the adjacent American states, falling into the error of confusing "mere numbers" with strength: "In their ardor for improvement and change, they have cast over the guidance of their ancestors."<sup>69</sup>

While rejecting Sheppard's drastic proposals for reforms and dissolution of the Union, Brown emphasized the possibility of a federal arrangement between Canada East and Canada West. Committed to the point of enthusiasm against the existing union, the party closed ranks and decided that cooperation with Canada East should continue if constitutional reforms and federation under some "joint authority" could be established. Simple dissolution of the Union was not pressed. It was a personal triumph for Brown, and James Young of Galt wrote of the wild enthusiasm for the programme when the convention ended.<sup>70</sup>

Agreement on matters of broad policy was not as unanimous in Clear Grit circles as Young had contended. The only memorable thing appeared to be the diversity of opinion among the Reformers, and the

Convention seemed the ill-disguised move of the "Upper-Canada Yankee party." Le Canadien in a cynical mood dismissed the resolutions of the Convention rather summarily as some of those west of Toronto had desired a repeal of the Union pure and simple, others clamoured for a confederation of the two sections, and a number went for representation by population, and others for annexation. Even Brown, Sheppard, and McDougall, the three editors of the Globe, differed fundamentally among themselves. the Quebec City paper assumed that, with the exception of the Toronto Leader, Canada West was as a whole unfavourable to the continuance of the Union, whereas Canada East would only welcome a repeal if confederation were to take its place. But the leader of the Conservatives of Canada West had made his position clear; "he did not believe in dissolving the Union."<sup>71</sup>

John Sandfield Macdonald's Cornwall Freeholder still believed that it was possible for there to continue to be an "honest, upright, un-principled Government under the constitution as it is." Reminding its readers that other people did not see the validity of Brown's list of grievances through the same spectacles, and that constitutional perfection was even lacking in Great Britain, the Montreal Pilot preferred to bear the ills they already had than to fly to those they knew nothing about. Perhaps it was better that the Grits persist in their resolutions as they were certain to incur a defeat and that would quiet the agitation and set it at rest forever. As it was, the Pilot was not impressed by the Reform Convention. It had been "a mockery of democracy," a "farce" packed and manipulated by Brown, McDougall, and the Toronto Grits.<sup>72</sup>

William Gillespie, the editor and owner of the Hamilton Spectator could not rid himself of the conviction that there was a sinister connection between Clear Grit schemes and American republicanism. At the very moment that the Grit programme mentioned dissolution in 1859, the Spectator saw only a plot to destroy the Union, weaken the provinces, and ultimately drive the political wreckage to annexation with the United States. Like other newspapers of a similar political ilk, the "anti-Grit" Tory Spectator seized upon the loyalty cry, partly for party purposes, but also from a sincere belief that Grit plans were diametrically opposed to the cherished British connection.<sup>73</sup>

While the Gazette deplored the agitation in Canada West and it was not surprised that it had arisen, the Transcript hoped that the Convention had narrowed down the definite limits of constitutional change alleged necessary for the future well-being of Canada. Having decided that change was vital, the next thing was to discover what remedy was best adapted to the circumstances of the country, and best fitted to cure the "existing evils." It was expected that there should be considerable diversity of sentiment on this matter but the Transcript felt that a written constitution would act as an efficient check on the "proclivities of men in power to extravagance and corruption." The only difficulty with the suggestion for a written constitution was the fact that it implied the adoption of "Americanisms" in Canadian political affairs.<sup>74</sup>

The personal animosity between Brown and the editor of the Free Press led Blackburn to declare that the clamorous demand for a new political order had resulted from the exigencies of a "baffled and inefficient

leader," and not from a necessity imposed by the condition of the country. As John A. Macdonald wrote to Charles Lindsey, the editor of the Leader, "We are having great fun just now with the opposition. They are quarrelling like fury and do not affect concealment."<sup>75</sup> In the Canadian Legislature, the past Grand Master of the Orange Lodge, George Benjamin of North Hastings, replied to the proposals of Brown and his supporters. Having "utterly and completely demolished the arguments of Mr. Brown" in a flush of eloquence, he noted that the repeal of the Canadian Union would throw Canada West under American domination.<sup>76</sup> He denounced the inconsistency of Brown's political creeds over the years; the Grit leader's doctrines would foster "republicanism" hostile to British institutions. The Toronto Convention had been a "dodge," its resolutions "the most arrant humbug ever foisted on the public." Benjamin lauded the benefits of the present provincial union and could see no reason why a twenty-year old union of good standing should be destroyed for a "miserable, juggling expression" such as a "joint authority." As the Gazette was happy to report, Grit strength was greatest where most remote from Montreal.

The vote taken in the Assembly on the Reform resolutions in early May of 1860, settled the matter in no uncertain terms. The resolution that the Union could no longer be continued in its present form with advantage to the Canadian people was rejected by a count of two to one. The determination that prevailed in certain political circles to bring about constitutional reform had been stopped temporarily. The Globe put on a brave face and announced that "the great question of constitutional change has passed its first parliamentary ordeal."<sup>77</sup> As the aging Methodist, Egerton Ryerson,



warned Brown, it was not "in that rear of faction which deafens the ear and sickens the heart the voice of liberty is heard. She turns from the disgusting scene, and regards these struggles as the pangs and convulsions in which she is doomed to expire."<sup>78</sup> The overwhelming presence of a supremely confident American Republic led Canadians to insist upon their intrinsic political, social, and moral superiority, even though it had a paralytic effect upon the Canadian mind and upon the quality of Canadian thought. The rigidities imposed by the compulsive desire to maintain a separate identity narrowed the spectrum of political debate, directed political thought along well-known paths, and discouraged the venturesome and daring conceptions of the Clear Grits and their tendency, in times of trouble, towards "Americanisms."

Brown's suggestion of a federative union of the two Canadas to replace the Union of 1840 did not receive a wide acceptance in the Province. One newspaper had seen the agitation for repeal arising and had proposed a solution: "We have long foreseen this agitation, and therefore advocated a federation which would work more easily than the present."<sup>79</sup> A federal system with a written constitution controlling the legislative and executive powers and functions might work well enough for the Americans, but it would be "too cumbrous" a machinery for governing the small population of Canada. But if the Maritimes could be brought into the discussion, that was another matter. The Spectator of Hamilton, in tones of derision, offered its opinion of the recent Reform Convention, noting that none of the Grits but the "junta" itself pretended to understand the federative scheme. The suggestion of a federation of Canada West and

Canada East to replace the original legislative union was largely the property of the Grits. But the idea of a confederation of all the British North American colonies had been the work of the Macdonald-Cartier ministry which introduced it into the Provincial Assembly in 1858.<sup>80</sup>

From 1858 to 1864, when George Brown made an uncharacteristic move toward compromise in the House, Confederation had been a party issue.

Before the advent of the American Civil War, the Conservatives had employed the idea that unless British America were confederated, absorption into the Republic had to be accepted as inevitable. Although they generally supported the principle, the Conservatives were opposed by the Reformers for varying reasons. As Christopher Dunkin said several years later:<sup>81</sup>

I hold that proper means ought to be taken to prevent our disunion from the British Empire and absorption into the United States.... I have no fancy for democratic or republican forms or institutions, or indeed for revolutionary or political novelties of any sort.

This mid-Victorian liberal regarded himself as part and parcel of a physical British Empire, and felt that Confederation would destroy the Imperial link and force the Canadas into the American Union: "Because I am an Englishman and hold to the connection with England, I must be against this scheme."

The Reform press saw a British North American empire a destiny well worth the scramble, but felt that it would not be generally acceptable to either Britain or the other colonies. It did not display any animosity to the scheme as it saw nothing attractive in it. Confederation was a Tory device to escape domestic difficulties and besides, it was still too remote

to satisfy Canada West's immediate grievances.<sup>82</sup> Confederation may have been untimely but for the Conservatives it cushioned them against the Grit cries for "rep. by pop." and offered an attractive alternative. Even the Conservatives of Canada West had not been overly enthusiastic at the initial introduction of the proposed union. The lack of fervour was due to the fact that it was regarded as a "necessity" but there was no immediacy to it. The Colonist and Atlas was sure that in the "fullness of time" it would naturally take place, while the Leader had begun to associate Confederation with patriotism. Conservative support in Canada West was bolstered by the readiness of the Montreal business community and the Bleus to accept such a "noble destiny" for Canada.<sup>83</sup> With typical overstatement, George Cartier observed a few years later that the scheme met with the approval of all moderate men: "The extreme men, the socialists, democrats, and annexationists were opposed to it."<sup>84</sup>

The Provincial Secretary, Charles Alleyne, laid before the Legislative Assembly several despatches from the Colonial Secretary in February, 1858. Since that time, the idea of British American union had been adrift in the colonial atmosphere. Alexander Galt, John Ross and George Cartier had made it clear to the Colonial Office that the disparity between, and distinctiveness of, each colony was neither promotive of the physical prosperity of them all, nor of that "moral union which ought to be preserved in the presence of the powerful confederation of the United States." It was well within the authority of the Imperial power to sanction a confederation of the provinces which in the future would constitute a dependency of the Empire, "valuable in time of peace and powerful in the

event of war, for ever removing the fear that these Colonies may ultimately serve to swell the power of another nation."<sup>85</sup> Maritime leaders added that the substantial material prosperity and introduction of responsible government had left British Americans nothing to envy in the political conditions of the citizens of the neighbouring Republic. Yet the importance of the subject of Confederation required "the most deliberate and mature considerations."

One point upon which there was considerable discussion in Canada East, and little in Canada West, was the question of a vice-royalty. Mr. DeBlaquiere told the Legislative Council that such a step was calculated to strengthen the interests of the British Empire and to promote the welfare and prosperity of the colonies, and he assured his colleagues that they would be safe under the "Aegis of the British royal standard." No doubt the blustering stance of both the United States and Canada West was the basis for much of his reasoning. The Quebec Military Gazette, the New Era, and the ultra-Tory Quebec Mercury all spoke of a "monarch" for a united British North America.<sup>86</sup> This Canadian monarchy, headed by a Viceroy from among "the males of the Royal Family of England" would provide the best guarantee of stability in the "new-formed institutions." It would also ensure an "abiding and affectionate moral union with the parent state." The new nation must have a lofty and imposing head, invested with a title suitable to "the power and dignity...of a ruler of the Western Empire." It was to be based on aristocracy and not democracy until the latter was perfected by God. Besides, even the "Republican denizens of the United States were longing for titles."

D'Arcy McGee felt that if Canada were to attain political sovereignty in the coming years it was "most natural" that she would look for the founder of her own dynasty in the English royal family. Within fifteen years it would be possible to find a British prince established on an independent throne in Canada, and McGee supported it. The visit of the Prince of Wales to North America in 1860 was seen as an oracle of the times, and it was necessary for Canadians to impress upon the Duke and his entourage the "free, frank and resolute spirit of the people of Canada, of every origin and creed." The royal party was also to be impressed with the "imperative necessity" of providing for some bulwark against the inevitable tendency towards independence and annexation. This could be done through the timely establishment of a native Canadian sovereignty, as a safeguard against "assimilation, absorption and subjection to and by Americanism." A British North American union would provide a "guarantee, focus, and standard of Canadian nationality." If Canada were to copy the English original, the editor of the New Era noted, she would have to have a monarch and an aristocracy, as well as a free and full parliamentary representation of the people. There would be little difference in Canada East and Canada West over the importance of the third estate, but about the establishment of a monarchy and aristocracy in that region, "honest and loyal men may and will entertain dissimilar opinion."<sup>87</sup> The former Irish rebel did not feel any distrust of constitutional monarchy and declared that it was solely for Canadian reasons that he advocated such a system for Canada. It would render the transition of the provinces from dependence to independence easy and amicable: "We have regarded the future

with the anxious gaze of a Canadian patriot, and by that light, from this point, we have seen a constitutional crown, among the not undesirable possibilities of the future."

This talk in the Province concerning Confederation showed that Canadians felt a certain "independence" in their relations with the Mother Country. Although it was difficult at times to tell whether William Lyon Mackenzie advocated independence for Canada as a route to eventual annexation, there is no doubt that he felt Canada had to be "free" to be prosperous and was thus wholly in favour of Canadian independence. In a letter to "The Friends of Canadian Independence," Mackenzie blamed Canadian politicians in their "vile scramble for office" for the depressed state of Canada and the inequalities of Canadian society: "But for the Press, and our neighbourhood to the United States, we Canadians would be oppressed and trampled on, worse even than the miserable people of Austrian Italy." Josiah Blackburn's Free Press had a tendency to be less controversial than Mackenzie's paper but it, too, looked forward to an independent Canada which would be under British and French protection in the opening years of independence. And the comments of Quebec's Le Canadien were widely reprinted in Canada West in support of the view that the only alternative would be Yankee absorption. All these newspapers spoke of independence from Britain as the best solution to Canada's difficulties but the feeling did not in any way reflect an anti-Imperial sentiment in the Province. With Confederation Canadians could solve their religious, national and social differences: "Aujourd'hui la force des choses nous pousse à la Confédération. Demain elle nous poussera à l'indépendance. C'est la loi

du progrès. La Confédération c'est l'aboutissant nécessaire de notre état de transition. Elle dessinera d'autres horizons sans doute: car le term définitif c'est l'indépendance."<sup>88</sup> More importantly, Confederation would provide the vital check on American expansion: "Car l'annexion aux Etats-Unis ne répugne pas seulement à notre fidélité politique et à nos obligations d'allégeance envers la couronne de Victoria, mais encore à nos propres instincts de conservation nationale. La Confédération est aujourd'hui une oeuvre commencé dans l'opinion."

The Perth Courier thought federal union would lead to the emergence of an independent nationality. Grit papers remained largely quiescent or indifferent to the necessity of creating a national feeling, but the Courier firmly believed in Canada's future:<sup>89</sup>

It is not within the range of probability that British North America will always remain a Colony, and British statesmen, as well as Canadian are becoming in a measure alive to the fact. The population of Canada now is almost as large as that of the United States at the time of the revolution; and if the whole of the British Provinces are taken into consideration, there is a sufficiency of everything requisite to form a strong and powerful northern nation.

This newspaper preferred to consider Canada a British colony, although once Canada were able to defend herself she would hardly be content to remain in a state of dependence. The Leader also came forth to tell that Canada might some day aspire to independence and nationality, but in the meantime looked to Britain for protection. And the rival Globe observed that when Confederation became possible the terms had to be fixed by Canadians, and not by a power three thousand miles away.<sup>90</sup>

When the Canadian press reached the point of confrontation with the Mother Country, it demonstrated a spirit of independence. When the English protested the Galt Tariff, the Leader reminded its contemporaries that the colony had every right to pursue the ends it wished and needed no advice from England on the matter. Attempting to reconcile its nationalism with the Imperial connection, the Leader elaborated upon its theory of Imperial relations:<sup>91</sup>

The true plan experience has proved to be to give the colonies the greatest power of self-government compatible with a dependent position.... The only chance for them is the unfettered play of local self-government; and besides the sending out of governors to the colonies, it is desirable that the entanglements between the old stock and the young off-shoot should be as few as possible.

George Brown's paper agreed with its rival on the question of Imperial relations, championing local autonomy and defending Canadian freedom of action on purely Canadian matters. Like many provincial papers, it resented misplaced criticism and advice from the metropolitan power. The important point is that this rise in Canadian nationalism would not allow Canadians to seek union with the United States. Canadians obviously felt that they had a distinctiveness of values and culture.

Yet, while Canadians viewed the future prospects of independence and nationhood with optimism, there was little disposition to precipitate the matter prematurely. The colonists gloried in Imperial unity, the traditions and power of Empire, and totally rejected the "Little England" school of thought in Great Britain.<sup>92</sup> However, the irrepressible Mackenzie continued his demand for complete independence from the Imperial



connection:

Messrs. Galt, Holton, DeWitt, Redpath, Clarkson, Rose, Molson and Co. told you the truth in 1849. Independence is our only remedy—the power is wanted of framing our institutions, choosing all magistrates, and entering into such alliances or confederacies as may be for our permanent interest. With our debt and government, an angel would fail to secure general prosperity.

The Toronto Message, that "free, outspoken, really useful newspaper, speaking the sentiments of an honest, untrammelled editor," spent a great deal of time and effort during this period discussing the threat of annexation resulting from the shambles into which the Assembly was rapidly turning the political future of the colony.<sup>93</sup> Mackenzie was ready to support any plan which would afford Canada a "speedy and permanent relief" from the spreading discontent in the Province, even if it meant that Canada would dissolve into two or three republics.

George H. Macaulay published a lecture in 1858 which was in sympathy with some of the views of the Message. He told the Hochelaga Debating Club that Canada's development would lag behind the United States unless the former adopted the independent federal republican institutions of the United States, and emancipated itself from the chariot wheels of Downing Street. Macaulay was not, however, in any way, shape, or form an annexationist, and his ideas received wide coverage in Canada.<sup>94</sup>

In an extensive study of the "Canadian Declaration of Independence," Mackenzie noted how Canada in 1849 had taken her station among the nations of the earth. Ten years later Canada was still part of an unequal alliance, having no voice in Imperial affairs and standing in the "simple relation of

obedience." If Canada were to join the United States, her citizens would find a field for "high and honorable distinction on which we and our prosperity might enter on terms of perfect equality," under a simple and economical "State" government in which direct responsibility to the people would be the distinguishing feature. Canadian institutions did not possess the permanence which alone could impart security and inspire confidence in the country, while the relief of the parent state from the large expenditures incurred in the military occupation of the Canadas would be an added boon derived from the grant of independence. It would at the same time remove many of the causes of collision with the United States, "which result from the contiguity of mutual territories so extensive." In terms of economic benefits, the larger market which the increasing prosperity of Canada would create was an additional consideration which, "in the minds of her ablest Statesmen, render our incorporation with the United States a desirable consummation." Mackenzie must have been the most radical of that handful in Canada which espoused democratic republicanism, and thus was somewhat feared by the vested interest groups in the Province.

It was perhaps acceptable to look forward to the day of Canadian independence but not if this step were designed to lead to incorporation into the United States as the Message desired. References to that "Speck of War" in the vicinity of the San Juan Islands gave a certain currency to the theory that Canada, if not independent, would bear the brunt of any outburst of martial spirit between the United States and Great Britain. If a federal union was found to be impracticable for the

purposes of defence and domestic harmony, the Coburg Star noted that no other measure than annexation would satisfy the people of the Province.<sup>95</sup> Le Canadien saw the annexationist talk as so much dribble, sure that Confederation would make British America materially prosperous and strong enough to resist effectively any threats from the American Republic.<sup>96</sup>

The old warrior, Mackenzie, ever willing to break lances against the established order, published An Almanac of Independence and Freedom for the Year 1860. Reputed to be the first edition of ten thousand, the pamphlet presented an amazing hodge-podge of arguments, invectives, and innuendoes in favour of Canadian independence or annexation to the United States. It contained a plea for the relief of the inhabitants of Canada from "a state of colonial vassalage or irresponsible rule, and their early entrance upon a prosperous, happy career, as educated, self-governed freemen," in combination with a consideration of the position of Canada West in relation to the Republic. The former senior member of the Assembly from Haldimand had penned a devastating compilation of the wrongs committed by the Imperial power throughout the length and breadth of the Empire.<sup>97</sup> Mackenzie opted for elective institutions, economy in government, and the severance of the British connection. Had not both the British and the Americans shown the way for Canada? The London Times declared in 1859 that the Province of Canada might, if it pleased, separate itself from "the Dominion of Her Majesty," and whatever it desired to do, not a sword would be drawn nor a trigger pulled on the part of Britain for the purpose of preventing it. Horace Greeley's New York Tribune had ten years earlier called for "perfect Reciprocity with Canada and free intercourse, in

everything; we shall be heartily in favour of Reciprocity with the Canadas-- thorough Reciprocity."<sup>98</sup> The vast number of historical examples from which the aging radical drew to support the issue of independence was truly amazing, running the gamut from Benjamin Franklin in 1778 to Mackenzie himself. Mackenzie discovered that Brown, Macdonald, McGee, and so on, were all possessed of the same brand of loyalty: "Deception's their game-- Canada their dupe." Free from the taint himself but exposed to persecution and slander from "faction's leaders," he recommended that on the question of Confederation the colonies might examine what the Americans, when British colonists, were disposed to do. And Canada would never be in a position to set an example for her American cousin while she was still in a colonial state.<sup>99</sup> However, the majority of Canadians felt that with Confederation they would have all the privileges of a republic, with immaterial exceptions and without any of the excesses. The blending of liberal and conservative Canadian opinion on American institutions developed into a predominantly "national," conservative consensus during these years. Some like Mackenzie conceded the virtues of republicanism, but Canadians were, by and large, disenchanted with the American polity and saw their chief salvation in the construction of a new "North American nationality."

It appears that the main impetus for a distinctive Canadian nationality, as for Confederation, came from the Conservative press. Some Canadians had usurped the term "manifest destiny" and some of its associated ideas from their Yankee neighbours. One paper waxed eloquent in its insistence of the desirability of a Pacific railroad as it would be a step towards a Canadian nationality: "Then will British America be one great

country, with all the elements of an enduring nationality.... Here is surely a manifest destiny of ours." The Toronto Leader was also much concerned over the matter of colonial nationality and it admonished immigrants to forget their origins and make way for a Canadian nationality.<sup>100</sup>

There were those in the Province who had doubts whether a nationalism was really possible in Canada, with its close ties to England, France, and the United States. The Leader viewed the Volunteer Corps as a stimulant to nationalism but was upset at the lack of military spirit in Canada: "Why, in short, at the present rate of decline there may per chance hardly exist five years hence even a remnant of what promised to be the nucleus of nationality." Christopher Dunkin, several years later, gave an articulate indication of his inability to grasp the concept of Canadian nationhood:<sup>101</sup>

Talk, indeed, in such a state of things, of your founding here by this means "a new nationality"—of your creating such a thing—of your whole people here rallying round its new Government at Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, is such a thing possible? We have a large class here whose national feelings turn towards London, whose very heart is there; another large class whose sympathies centre here at Quebec...another large class whose memories are of the Emerald Isle; and yet another whose comparisons are rather with Washington; but have we any class of people who are attached, or whose feelings are going to be directed with any earnestness, to the city of Ottawa, the centre of the new nationality that is to be created? In the times to come, when men shall begin to feel strongly on these questions that appeal to national preferences, prejudices and passions, all talk of your new nationality will sound but strangely. Some other older nationality will then be found to

held the first place in most people's hearts.

The chief apostle of a "new Nationality" for Canada, to resist encroachment from American ways and forms, was D'Arcy McGee. His ideas on how to establish a Canadian sovereignty, upon which a Canadian nationality would be structured, were given wide discussion in Canada West. The politician-poet expressed his admiration for that "wise and gifted" generation which had fathered the American Republic, but he did not advocate copying the same pattern. While the democratic-federal Republic was still regarded by many in the Canadas as a magnificent experiment, its administrative and moral results were not altogether to be envied. The experiment was still incomplete and the example imperfect; the frontier conditions of much of American society still continued to churn up a political and social turbulence in that country. The events in Salt Lake City and Kansas had shown that freedom and solidarity in the American polity was lacking. In addition, the position of the British colonies of North America in relation to the Mother Country was very different from that against which the original Thirteen Colonies openly revolted. There also entered into the field of Canadian affairs a host of "uncouth, aboriginal circumstances," which had to be confronted if a lasting edifice for Canada was to be established. The United Province of Canada was still, by and large, a forest-covered country, shut off from the world by a six months' winter, in the shadow of a great neighbour over a lengthy, exposed, not even half-settled frontier, and under the protection of a distant patron.<sup>102</sup> And it was these conditions which would mould a "Canadianism" whether the colonials desired it to be so or not. McGee, in

an oratorical impulse, observed that "circumstances, the most unspiritual god, and mis-creator," entered daily into human affairs, and "more especially into political constitutions."

Newly-elected to the House of Assembly in 1858, the member for Montreal West declared that he had entered upon public life to aid in the preservation of the individuality of the British American colonies, "until they ripen into a new nationality." Every important topic that arose had to be viewed in the light of the requirements of Canadian nationality. Canadian politicians had to turn all their thoughts to the creation of a national name for Canada: "The desire of many hearts...must become the passion of the rising generation." Canadian nationality, he said, could not be allowed to be mocked out of its inheritance, nor degraded into sinking its own title to sovereignty in the medley of American states, half-free and half-servile: "Canadian nationality must include, as the oak-tree does its core, Canadian sovereignty; and the question can be but one of time and of form; to choose between, sooner or later, a monarch and a mob."<sup>103</sup>

McGee desired nothing but good for his adopted country and hoped that all the old domestic controversies would be ended by the magic of one word, "nationality." So much could be accomplished if all parties and factions could be induced to close old accounts with the past and open an entirely new set of books with the future: "We soon would be called upon the record the birth and baptism of a new North American nationality." The Tory Toronto Colonist and Atlas praised McGee's "earnestness and ability" in his discussion of Canada's constitutional future. His

statements on the assumption of national power by Canada had been made in a "dispassionate and withal loyal spirit," and had shown no tendency to discuss the question from a "republican" or "American" point of view. As nationality would be Canada's "not improbable destiny," the Toronto paper recommended that all the antipathies arising out of that "puerile and ignoble of all differences, the mere accident of national origin," be discarded.<sup>104</sup>

The New Era marshalled as much support for the concept of "Canadianism" as possible, and drew both the Fredericton Head Quarters and the Halifax Express into the fray to show that the concepts of sovereignty and nationality were not the property of Canada alone.<sup>105</sup> The New Era had very decidedly demonstrated in its columns that Canada could have "no real Canadian nationality" while still a colony. Such a nationality was the only means of countering American influence and if it were not fostered Canada would soon disappear as a nation, becoming merged with her more powerful neighbour.<sup>106</sup> The subscribers of the Montreal paper were assured that the prejudices against Canada's colonial position would vanish when the North American provinces were able to stand in the proud position of a nation, containing all the elements of "strength and power." Under Confederation, Canadians would enjoy all the commercial prosperity of the United States; while "enforcing a moderate conservatism in matters of government, they could avoid that laxity of social condition which characterizes the great Republic."<sup>107</sup> Confederation and Canadian nationality would throw up a strong barrier against "the encroaching 'annexing' spirit of the American, who maintains that the manifest destiny of his republic is



to swallow up in its capacious may the surrounding countries. To achieve this latter result alone, would be to succeed."

The London Free Press, "thickly planted" throughout Middlesex, Huron, Lambton and Elgin counties in Canada West discussed Canada's position and course of action:<sup>108</sup>

There are but two courses for Canadians to take; the one to promote Canadianism as a national principle, or, to be content to allow the Province to lapse into the confederation of the United States. It appears evident that the day cannot be far distant when they will join hand in hand, and forgetting the strifes of former times, caused by differences which no longer exist, unite for the promotion of the general welfare of the country.

Such sentiments as these did not stop the "insane threats" of the Globe that if some quick remedy were not found for the political situation between Canada West and Canada East, there was the possibility of a "violent disruption of the present political relations of the province towards each other, and possibly towards Great Britain." Yet even George Brown was willing to admit the necessity of a new union of the provinces if Canadian government was not to be tainted ineluctably with flaws unknown to parliamentary government. Some affirmation of the superior utility of British forms was vital.

The session of 1860 in the Canadian Parliament, in a subtle way, marked the termination of this phase of the Confederation movement which Galt, Ross, and Cartier had brought into prominence in 1858. Both major parties had adopted and tested a policy based on the federal principle without success, and each one had seemed to favour a greater centralization of powers than was afforded by the "pure federalism of the United States."

As Macdonald noted in 1860:

It is true that the government had proposed a Confederation of the British North American Provinces--so as to make a great empire. But they were not prepared to admit that there were any internal grievances which could not be constitutionally remedied--cured without any alteration in the constitution whatever.

The Canadian government was interested in Confederation as late as 1860, but after February of that year it was quietly laid aside. Undismayed, the Globe added that "Upper Canada Will become the centre, at no distant day, of a British Confederation extending from the Rocky Mountains to the Banks of Newfoundland."<sup>109</sup>

The sincerity of Alexander Galt when he introduced the confederation idea into practical politics was never questioned even by his political opponents. Many still harboured a profound admiration for the material achievements of the United States, but they now desired to emulate them independently in British America. There was a regularity with which the proponents of confederation were wont to invoke the vision or spectre of American initiative, as Galt's confidential note to Sir Edward Lytton illustrated: "My deliberate opinion is that the question is simply one of Confederation with each other or of ultimate absorption in the United States, and every difficulty placed in the way of the former is an argument in favour of those who desire the latter."<sup>110</sup> The logical outcome of the amalgamation would be the adoption of American institutions, both republican and democratic. Unquestionably some Canadians were sympathetic to American institutions, but they did not have the stability required for a nation state according to Canadian values and character;

they did not have the power of the British model for preserving social order.

While events "stronger than advocacy, stronger than men" would ultimately force the issue of a defensive union in the form of Confederation during the ensuing five years, the issue was removed from the field of practical politics in Canada in 1860. One newspaper summarized the results of the past few years in Canada thusly:<sup>111</sup>

During the present session the same Parliament under the same leadership, which informed the Imperial authorities that some great change was required, and who sent home able negotiators to urge that change have now authoritatively informed us that we live in the best possible world, where any change would be for the worse, and where it is a pious and patriotic duty to keep things just as they are.

Though separated from the United States only by an imaginary boundary, from a people entering the throes of separation and civil war, the political culture of Canada West had not reached the point of development necessary for a confederation. The following four years would give the reasons for such a union greater validity, and Canada the breathing space for nation-making.

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## CHAPTER IV

### CANADIANS AND THE OUTBREAK OF CONTINENTAL CRISIS

The years 1858-60 had been comparatively quiet ones in Canadian-American relations and, as such, gave some currency to the myth of the reputed "century of peace." Scattered incidents which marred an otherwise unruffled international scene in North America during the nineteenth century were swept aside as exotic exceptions. Even the year 1861 has been offered up to the altar of Canadian-American relations as ultimate proof that Canada approved of the American Republic. The idea that the Canadian was pro-Northern throughout the greater part of the bloody civil conflict in the United States despite the evident anti-Canadian hostility manifested by the Yankee, and thus in a sense was pro-American, has had wide acceptance.<sup>1</sup>

Fred W. Landon, in one of his major works, Western Ontario and the American Frontier, stated that in Canada there was a feeling that the North was in the right and this sentiment became more and more deeply implanted as the war continued. The author maintained this thesis in all of his numerous articles on slavery and the Civil War: "On the eve of the Civil War Canadians were decidedly anti-slavery in their opinion. Indeed the real heart of Canada was with Lincoln and the North throughout most of the war." Professor Landon upheld this view even though acknowledging Robin Wink's potent Maple Leaf and Eagle.<sup>2</sup>

While some historians apparently based their observations chiefly

on the columns of the powerful Toronto Globe, they assumed that other Reform papers followed Brown's editorial enterprise, a fact which was not necessarily true in non-domestic issues. One author who appeared to differ from most of his peers pointed out that there was no "whole-hearted" enthusiasm for the North until Lincoln issued his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in late September of 1862. The erudite Professor George P. de T. Glazebrook deftly circumvented the problem by stating that there was no general Canadian opinion on the issues of the war, but judged in terms of practical aid, it was the Northern cause which was the more popular. The late Professor John Bartlet Brebner of Columbia University indicated that, in general, the colonists favoured the North "as their early prohibition of slavery and conspicuous asylum for fugitive slaves demonstrated." He added that the colonial position was impaired by the British government's clear preference for the South and by the activities of Confederate military and naval agents who used Canada as a base for raids against the territory of the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Former Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, O. D. Skelton, believed that once the vigorous New York Herald had ceased its anti-Canadian campaign, and once the determination of the North to destroy slavery completely had been confirmed, it was probable that opinion, especially in the smaller towns and rural areas, had been on the side of the North:<sup>4</sup>

At the outbreak of the Civil War in the United States, Canadian and British public opinion favoured the North, as their early stand on slavery and the numbers of Canadians who served in the ranks of the Northern armies

demonstrated.... In general the colonists favoured the North....

This statement was in line with the general Liberal interpretation of Canadian development as reflected in Canadian historical writing in the era following World War I. Skelton also avoided an ideological confrontation by arguing that public opinion in Canada probably fluctuated somewhat with the fortunes of war between the Union and the Confederacy.

Richard Cartwright, a Kingstonian and Civil War contemporary, told a reporter in his Reminiscences of the feeling in Canada regarding the American Civil War:<sup>5</sup>

As regards Ontario as a whole, I think the sympathies of the bulk of the people were with the North. The Conservative party probably leant to the South, but they were in the minority. There was a strong anti-slavery sentiment in Canada which had a large influence on the people. Both in Canada and in England the sympathies of the great majority of what are called the upper classes were with the South and those of the rank and file with the North.

The illustrious Toronto Globe hopefully felt in 1861 that over half of the Canadian press was favourable to the North although that newspaper was willing to admit that many colonials had lost sight of the character of the struggle with startling swiftness "in the exasperation executed by the injustice and abuse showered upon us by the party with which we sympathized."

It is almost impossible to state with any exactness the extent to which public opinion, always fluid, expressed sympathy for either of the combatants south of the international boundary. The pattern most acceptable is that the Union held the general sympathy of Canada West

during the secession crisis and the first few months of Lincoln's administration. Recent, reliable sources have agreed that Canadian opinion began to shift by the summer months of 1861. Contemporary evidence shows that much of this change was due to the President's failure to declare unqualified war on slavery. There had been a strong pro-Northern reaction in the Canadas as the impending struggle mushroomed, for it seemed to foreshadow the doom of slave institutions, an "Americanism" which found scant sympathy in Canada especially after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act by the American Congress in 1850. Canada West had become the haven for a large number of fugitive slaves, the northern terminus of the "underground railroad."

Added to this was a sincere deprecation in Canada of a break-up of the American Union, which for all its faults had set a great North American example for nation-building and if not as "free and stable" as Great Britain, was a considerable improvement over the tyrannous politics of continental Europe. Said the New York Herald: "The sympathy which is felt both in England and Canada...is very strong...and may be an index of the popular feeling throughout the British dominions in favour of the Union and its preservation at all hazards.<sup>6</sup> Canadian opinion of the justice of the anti-slavery cause was often tempered by the fact that "democratic-republicanism" was more strongly associated with the North and "aristocratic virtues" with the South. Obviously any looking to "Americanisms" or attempts to break up the Canadian Union of 1840 by the Reform party would be frowned upon after the secession imbroglio and civil war in the United States had illustrated the terrible,

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destructive fruits of separatism.

Newspaper editorials and memoirs of the period reveal that the Federal debacle at Bull Run, the blustering braggadocio of the New York press, and the Trent scare, produced a decided anti-Northern, anti-American current which ran through the Canadas. There has been much historical disagreement as to whether opinion in the Province returned to its original pre-Northern attitude by 1863, following the declaration of emancipation. Helen Grace Macdonald advanced this view in her doctoral dissertation for Columbia University in 1926, and was supported in her interpretation by Donald F. Hill. The latter study was conducted at the University of Southern California in 1956.<sup>7</sup>

A number of other writers have contended that Canadian public opinion after 1863 was "almost universally with the South." Yet it was not until 1960 that Professor Robin W. Winks in his magnum opus, Canada and the United States: The Civil War Years, showed how this "pre-Northern" myth developed through accretion and uncritical acceptance of scholarly apparatus. This book, the out-growth of a doctoral dissertation for Johns Hopkins University, has shown in a most convincing manner that previously accepted patterns are in error in several important particulars. In point of fact, the Yale University professor had gone a long way to submerging that "pre-Northern" myth in an article written for the Canadian Historical Review in 1958, entitled "The Creation of a Myth: 'Canadian' Enlistments in the Northern Armies during the American Civil War."<sup>8</sup>

There have been those who supported the "pre-Southern" contention

but without strong documentation. John Buchan found that the Civil War period "proved an anxious time for Canada" and that its "articulate sympathies" inclined to the South. Indeed, Professor Skelton pointed out that the tone of the city press and parliament had been hostile to the North, and that the social and commercial circles in Toronto and Montreal were especially pro-Southern. While Skelton modified his position by declaring that it was not to be supposed that Canadian sentiment was wholly pro-Southern, as the rural areas were pro-Northern, Hugh Gillis in Democracy in the Canadas expressed the opinion that, for the most part, Canada favoured the North. Fred Landon disagreed with Skelton's views on the sentiment of the Canadian parliament, pointing out that the Canadian government showed a "generally friendly feeling towards the North during the whole war." It is perhaps easiest to agree with the contention made by a formidable group of current scholars, including Robin Winks, Peter B. Waite and Donald Creighton, that there was a strong but not universal feeling against the North in Canada.<sup>9</sup>

It should be expected that Canadian opinion would reflect the various strata of opinion in Great Britain as the colonials regarded themselves as a physical part of the British Empire. While the British labouring class, like the rural class in Canada, may have tended to favour the North in the struggle, the major newspapers, government officials, and the diplomatic corps, the effective and articulate segments in mid-Victorian society, in general, favoured the Confederacy. An attempt to refute this generalization was not completely convincing and further studies would have to be conducted in order to alter accepted theories.

While the British working-class was not as solidly pre-Northern as many have suspected, the Conservatives formed a solid phalanx of pre-Southern sentiment. Conservatives in Canada West, echoing conservative opinion in England, tended to be anti-Northern, although not completely.<sup>10</sup> The Toronto Leader and the Hamilton Spectator, both strong Conservative papers in Canada West, felt an elemental sympathy for the Northern cause at the outset, but it was never dominant and always critical. It quickly receded with the initial Confederate victories and the gradual realization that the American calamity might produce substantial gains for British North America. The predominant feeling of the Canadian press became sympathetic to the South in its stand for self-determination in the face of Yankee imperialism. The Globe remained one of the few strongly pre-Northern partisans in the Canadas, and not until the fall of Atlanta in 1864 did the majority of newspapers in Canada abandon the hopeful attitude that the long-promised but highly elusive Confederate victory would soon be achieved.

Dalhousie University's Professor Peter B. Waite, in his excellent Life and Times of Confederation, saw that the sympathy of the provincial press tended to be with the South, concurring with Robin Winks in this view.<sup>11</sup> Of the ten most important Canada West dailies considered, six were anti-Northern, one neutral, and three anti-Southern.<sup>12</sup> And those newspapers which hoped for a Northern victory did not necessarily do so out of regard for the North. The American press assumed that the colonials were very antagonistic towards the North, as most of the more important Canadian journals, with the exception of the Toronto Globe and

the Montreal Witness, appeared to be anti-Northern. Of the over three hundred newspapers published in British North America at the time, more than half were from Canada West, and the twenty odd dailies flourishing in that section of the Province set the tone for the rest of the press in Canada West.

While Professor Skelton claimed that, in general, the press in Canada swung back to some degree of pro-Northernism, the celebrated University of Toronto historian, Donald G. Creighton, in his recent Road to Confederation, maintained that sympathy for the South had been steadily preserved from the very beginning of the Civil War. This strong and widespread feeling shown in the editorial columns of Canadian newspapers did not flag in the hope of an ultimate Southern success. During the summer of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, they kept the faith as they had done during the flood-tide of the Confederacy's fortunes. By the early summer of 1863, when Lee's legions lay encamped across the Potomac contemplating the invasion of Pennsylvania and the North, anti-Northern feeling in Canada was fairly strong and widely disseminated: "A few newspapers upheld the Federal cause; but most of the urban dailies and tri-weeklies, whether Liberal or Conservative in politics, favoured the South." Professor William L. Morton, another Canadian historian with Tory views, stated in a British historical magazine that "British American sentiment, if anything, became more anti-Northern as the war went on."<sup>13</sup>

In point of fact, either the right or left in Canadian political opinion could turn anti-Northern although the trend would often be more



noticeable in a Conservative newspaper. The situation was probably made clearest by E. W. Thomson, "publicist and littérateur," who recalled in his Reminiscences that at the beginning of the civil war he was a school-boy in Canada West and that the students used to fight it out during recess, North versus South. During the opening skirmishes the "North" was preponderant in strength, but gradually the two sides became nearly equal, and by the latter years of the war there were few students vying for the part of the "Northern soldier."<sup>14</sup> The tendency in current writing is definitely towards the "anti-Northern" thesis. Although it may prove more accurate to speak in terms of "anti-Southern" or "anti-Northern" rather than use the word "pro" in either case, it was the North that definitely represented much of what Canadians disliked in the United States. If the South had consented to rid herself of black slavery, Canadians would have had little room for disagreement with that polity, whereas the North was the very symbol and embodiment of "Americanism" by 1861.

As the major portion of the Canadian press was outspoken in its anti-Northern, anti-American sentiment, Canada must have appeared predominantly irritating to the North at the time. And the Conservative press, which hotly disliked Yankee ways and forms, was generally more vocal as a whole than the liberal press in Canada.<sup>15</sup> The notable exception to this anti-American feeling expressed towards the Northern States was the powerful Liberal newspaper, the Toronto Globe, under the aegis of George Brown, the Reform leader of Canada West.

It appears that the assertion that Canada was pro-Northern throughout the Civil War arose for two distinct reasons. Despite the

currency of the "pre-Northern" myth, Canadians continued their dislike of both Americans and republicans throughout this period, and although it was largely a subjective attitude, it showed that the provincials felt a distinctiveness of values and character from their neighbours. Many have supported the contention of pre-Northernism because of the presence of some "forty thousand soldiers of Canadian blood in the armies of the North" who bore Union arms because they believed that cause was just. Robin Winks showed that the presence of unwilling regulars who had been crimped, enticed by a large bounty, or forced into military service through economic circumstances, swelled the number of Canadians who served in the American armies, but did not reveal any devotion to the Northern cause. Professor Winks demolished the mythical case for the "forty thousand" to such a degree as to throw a great deal of doubt upon the validity of this aspect of the pre-Northern thesis.<sup>16</sup>

Another reason for this interpretation might lie in the fact that many earlier scholars, when using newspapers as the basis of their public opinion studies relied almost exclusively on the dusty "files" of the Globe for the basis of their studies. Helen Macdonald and Fred Landen who have done much to push back the frontiers of knowledge in this period relied very strongly on the columns of the Globe. Although Miss Macdonald was criticized for not using British, American, and Canadian diplomatic correspondence, this was not her expressed purpose in a public opinion study, and the collections of private letters of Canadian leaders would not have provided enough information to alter her basic theories. The use of the pre-Northern Globe coupled with the legend of the "forty thousand"

proved a formidable basis for the pro-Northern interpretation in previous decades.<sup>17</sup>

Broad in scope and productive in detail, Robin Wink's thoroughly researched study in "revisionist" history shows how strongly the threat of war existed between the United States and British America, and how closely the celebrated "undefended" international border was scrutinized. Canadians entertained strong feelings of fear and hostility against the North, and he demonstrates that they were not illogical by any means and were kept throughout the war years. The largely subjective Canadian feeling towards the North was, of course, the product of Canadian attitudes towards democracy, republicanism, and federal union as found in the United States.

It is not strange that a pro-Northern interpretation was arrived at when one considers the power and influence of the Toronto Globe. It is at this point that one must turn: to see the attitude of the Globe during the conflict. Undoubtedly, it favoured the North and was one of the few large urban dailies or tri-weeklies to do so; one is able to comprehend why those writers who relied so extensively on the columns of the Globe believed that Canada must have remained in support of the Union throughout the Civil War.

There is much to be said, and much has been said, about George Brown's paper as an opinion-maker and opinion-reflector in Canada West. From a glimpse at relevant historical studies, it is obvious how the Globe influenced its hinterland in the 1850's and 1860's, especially in domestic issues. However, while endeavouring to understand the role of this newspaper during the pre-Confederation era, one must attempt to avoid the failings of

earlier historians who assumed that a "century of peace" also meant a "century of courtesy" even though the liberal Globe may have sketched the canvas in that manner. To many then as now, "friendly relations" had a technical meaning, implying something less than a state of active warfare.

The opinions of the Globe lead to the question of the attitude of the Canadian press as a whole towards the United States at the time of the opening volleys in the great Civil War. General surveys indicate that journals of opinion often followed the lines of political partisanship in Canada in their surveys of American political, social, and educational institutions. Newspapers that befriended the North were not necessarily pro-American, pro-republican, or pro-federalism, while those which sympathized with the South were not by any means pro-slavery. The Globe often reflected that which was best in Canadian sentiments regarding the United States, although unfortunately Professor Maurice Careless' fine biographical study of the editor of the Globe does not cover this dark and dusty corner adequately for our purposes.

In its initial stages the Civil War was a war for the preservation of the American Union, while the liberation of the slave might prove a beneficial side-effect. For most North Americans the question of the United States of America had become Shakespearian, its future uncertain. The attitude of Canadian newspapers on the American problem bulked very large in the discussions of the pre-Confederation years as it was the central and decisive feature of a crisis that convulsed a whole continent during the 1860's.<sup>18</sup> As the Globe was the leading paper in Canada West, it is paramount to any study of public opinion in that sector, and it must

be dissected and placed in juxtaposition with other sources of the period in a series of crises that raised the question of Canada's relationship to both the British Empire and the American Republic. The attitude of the Canadian press towards American affairs, as they directly affected Canada West, must always be balanced off by the Toronto Globe.

George Brown's newspaper was the foremost exponent of anti-slavery agitation and Federal victory in the high adventure in which the American States were engaged during the mid-nineteenth century. And the power and influence of the Globe was considerable as it was perhaps the most obvious example of the "metropolitan press." The railway-building mania which burst upon the Canadas in the 1850's had done a great deal to increase the circulation and sphere of influence of important urban dailies. While the towns of Canada West were often Conservative bastions, the Globe had a large circulation in Toronto and claimed its sales in Hamilton by 1861 were equal to that of any local newspaper.<sup>19</sup> It was evidently read by more than just Grits and farmers and as studies by Professor Careless have illustrated, it was the "most magisterial and imposing voice of any newspaper" in British North America. Both parties in Canada West, Reformers and Tories, eagerly grasped copies in hotels, book stalls, and railway stations to see the current wisdom or folly indulged in by the Globe. While it was acknowledged that its circulation far surpassed that of contemporaries and rivals in Canada, its tri-weekly edition reached almost as many readers as similar editions of such titans as the New York Herald and New York Tribune.<sup>20</sup> With over thirty thousand subscriptions by 1861, it was three times as large as any other Canadian paper, and its closest rival in British

America was probably the Saint John Morning Telegraph with twelve thousand subscribers. In 1854 it had impudently declared that it was the most widely circulated paper in the British Empire, excluding the London Times and two London weeklies, while in 1862 it claimed that in proportion to Canada's population, its total sales were greater than those of any other newspaper in the world. Luther Hamilton Helton, in a letter to Brown in 1862 discussed the Globe's claim to be considered "the leading Journal of the Country." Seven years later, the Toronto Globe again boasted that there was not another paper on the face of the earth that was perused by so large an audience in proportion to the population.<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that such grandiose claims were difficult to prove, there can be no doubt that the Globe was big, especially for Canada West. It becomes obvious that an institution of such stature in a relatively limited colonial community as Canada West had an enormous and even domineering moral power.

Brown made the Globe, between its founding in 1844 and his death by gunshot in 1880, so forceful an instrument that one harried opponent, that "slashing controversialist," Goldwin Smith, agitatedly described the Globe's sway in the Bystander as a "literary despotism which struck without mercy," and labelled the overlord of Liberalism, the "Czar of King Street."<sup>22</sup> No doubt other uncompromising, radical, anti-imperialists found the potent Globe abusive, fierce and ruthless as an ideological foe.

An influential number of prominent historians support the view that the Globe achieved an "intellectual domination" in Canada that has never been equalled. Among the Canadian and American writers who have recognized the primacy of the Globe's empire during this period is Frank

Underhill who saw the Toronto paper as "the outstanding newspaper in Upper Canada." Maurice Careless called the King Street newspaper "the most influential...in British North America" and went on to subtitle the first volume of his superb study of editor Brown, "The Voice of Upper Canada." Scholarly Robin Winks stated that the Globe was the "most widely read newspaper in the British North American provinces," while such contemporaries as the Conservative Coburg Star had recognized the hold which Brown's paper had upon the sentiment of Canada West as early as 1853.<sup>23</sup> Such credentials are a striking testament to the ascendancy of the Toronto Globe in Canada West during the Civil War-Confederation era.

More than any other newspaper in Canada, the Globe could claim to formulate and guide public opinion through the powerful appeal of its editorial page, full of vigorous, emphatic conviction. William Buckingham, one-time editor of the Red River Nor'Wester, and former employe<sup>e</sup> of the Globe <sup>e</sup><sub>Λ</sub> described the effect of Brown's editorials at the height of the Grit leader's power in the late 1850's:<sup>24</sup>

At this period he was the uncrowned king--the self constituted champion of the rights of Upper Canada. Invariably the reader's first impulse on receiving the Globe damp from the press when Mr. Brown was editor was to turn to the inside page. His articles were the talk of the country-side and the pabulum as well of the country press, for when the great dog barked, all the little dogs barked in chorus.

Whatever the partisan nature of its editorials, the paper was a formidable force, often "sweeping" its rivals with its use of telegraph arrangements. While on non-domestic issues it would exert substantially less influence, it still must be considered as the one Canadian newspaper which had the

possibility of affecting Canadian opinion regarding the United States to any large degree.

Perhaps the most impressive credential of George Brown and the Globe was its unwavering stance on the evils of American slavery. Due to his close identification with the paper, much of the credit is given to the elder Brown, but his brother Gordon was more of an idealist and threatened to resign from the Globe staff if he were not given a free hand regarding the slavery issue. The stand taken by Gordon Brown was widely recognized and after the Civil War, American residents in Toronto presented him with a gold watch, suitably inscribed: "Gordon Brown was the heart, soul, courage, inspirer and real maker of the Globe in so far as it was an honourable and insistent anti-slavery paper throughout the war."<sup>25</sup> Less in the public eye than George Brown, he is credited with exercising considerable influence in determining the Globe's attitude towards slavery and the North.

George Brown had, of course, been an abolitionist of long standing but he did become inclined to hedge as Canadian sympathies turned against the North. While a young man in New York, he had seen something of the domination exercised in the American Republic by the pro-slavery element, and upon moving to British America made the Globe the medium for pleading the cause of the slave. Brown told the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada in 1852 where he stood on slavery. He found it a question of humanity, Christianity, and even self-protection for Canada: "The leprosy of the atrocious system affects all around it. It is a barrier to the spread of liberal principles." He could plainly see that Canada could hardly escape contamination by such a system existing so near her borders:



"We are longside of this great evil; and every day enhances the evil. Our people must not be contaminated by its withering and debasing influences." George Brown saw another reason why British Americans should be interested in a solution to the question of American slavery:<sup>26</sup>

We are in the habit of calling the people of the United States, "the Americans"; but we too are Americans; on us, as well as on them, lies the duty of preserving the honour of the continent. On us, as on them rests the noble trust of shielding free institutions. Look at the American republic, proclaiming all men to be born free and equal, and keeping nearly four millions of slaves in the most cruel bondage.

In the opening months of the American crisis in 1861, the Globe ranged itself firmly on the side of the North and denounced the Confederacy. Its support was chiefly animated by the slavery issue but unlike many Canadian papers, it was also interested in the preservation of the American Union. As slavery had been formerly abolished in Canada West in 1793 and all slaves in British colonies had been emancipated by Imperial legislation in 1833, the Globe felt that the Canadas were in a position to provide strong moral support for the North.<sup>27</sup> In an editorial of early June, 1861, this newspaper noted:

Since the secessionist movement began, we have strenuously supported the North; we have pointed out that the right is on its side, and we flatter ourselves that we have had no small share in the creation of that sympathy for the cause for which it is struggling which pervades all classes of the people of Canada...but...we deny altogether that the policy of the government of the United States has been such as to enlist our affections.

The Globe's support was based upon the recognition of the salient features of the American struggle:<sup>28</sup>

That the Southern rebellion is a great and shameful sin...causes us to side with the North; true, we acknowledge that the example of the United States has been of infinite value to the cause of liberty the whole world over, and we would not have that example lessened in its effect by a civil war or the destruction of the Union.

It was not unusual for a liberal to regard himself as a "natural ally" of the North in the early months of the war. However, the moral issue involving the freedom of the coloured race became overshadowed in later months by other issues affecting Canadian-American relations and then, as Professor Morton states, "only the Globe and some liberals staunchly supported the North."<sup>29</sup> Perhaps some of the Globe's reform fever was encouraged by its circulation rivalry with the Conservative Leader, but its advocacy of the Northern cause was for the most part sincere. While the pro-Southern George Sheppard and Reformer William McDougall toiled for the Globe with Gordon Brown during the period 1858-1861, George Brown's stamp remained on the paper and his leading editorials were easily identified by their "big type and prodigality of exclamation points and capitals."<sup>30</sup> In non-domestic matters especially, the Globe continued to express faithfully its owner's thoughts and concepts, as Brown carefully supervised editorial policy even though that newspaper had grown beyond a one-man editorial enterprise in the early 1850's. While the Toronto newspaper attempted to tone down the anti-American sentiment rampant in certain sectors of the United Province, the Conservative press, as a reflection of the party in power in Canada, was often taken by American readers as indicating that Canadian opinion was anti-Northern from the early days of the American conflict.<sup>31</sup>

The columns of the Toronto Leader, the chief government newspaper in Canada West, evinced a marked pro-Southern sympathy early in the secession crisis of 1861. It had even been accused of defending the "peculiar institution" until the notorious George Sheppard left its staff as he had vacated that of the Globe.<sup>32</sup> A stern and thoughtful critic, the Leader competed energetically with its Reform rival for power in Canada West but, as the Halifax Morning Chronicle observed, it was "distanced greatly in the race."<sup>33</sup> It had never become the "paper of the people" in the manner of Brown's Globe. The latter accused the Conservatives, designated as the "Ministerialist and Corruptionist party of Canada," of being the very foundation stone of the pro-slavery group in Canada. Although many of the conservative papers did not come forward with a direct statement in support of slavery, most did reveal their Confederate sympathies and, in fact, the "ministerial" Ottawa Citizen, Montreal Gazette, and Toronto Leader were outspoken apologists for slavery until early in 1862.<sup>34</sup> The Mount Forest Express declared: "Canadian journalism has become largely recreant to the principles of human freedom. We are bound to say that the reproach attaches principally to Conservative journals, but this again with honourable exceptions, among which the Guelph Herald bears illustrious distinction."<sup>35</sup>

While party newspapers generally followed the rule of close party discipline in editorial policy, each paper was a separate venture and often owned by the editor or some other controlling individual who dictated policy. This adherence to creed in domestic politics was not often broken, but there were strong exceptions, including the London Free Press, the Independent Reform Ottawa Union and the Huron Signal. One reason for this was that local

newspapers reprinted a considerable amount of their material from the major papers of the Province, while only the Globe, Leader, and Montreal Gazette made a concerted attempt to emulate the diversity of news and comment available in the metropolitan press of Great Britain and the United States.<sup>36</sup> This journalism by pack would appear to have had a powerful effect on the moulding of constituent opinion in Canada on the question of the "War Between the States." Yet such a contention assumes that such an influence as party newspapers had in this period in domestic affairs carried over into the field of foreign relations. Certainly it did but not to the point of making the preponderating body of liberal-reformers in Canada West pro-Northern.

A pro-Northern advocacy required courage by the fall and winter of 1861, as the following chapters will indicate. In a somewhat partisan analysis of feeling in Canada, the King Street paper showed the division resulting from the Civil War:<sup>37</sup>

The keenness of discussion among Canadians is... sharpened by the fact that our fossils, our remnants of antiquity, our devotees of church and state alliances entertain the liveliest sentiments of regard for the slave aristocracy of the South, while Liberals are inclined to sympathize with the free North. This division of sentiment is not universal, though it is so near it as to be as accurate as such generalizations usually are.

There were some Conservatives who considered rebellion against constituted authority so great a crime that they could not approve of insurrection even against "Abe Lincoln's government," and there were some radical Reformers so wedded to the right of revolution that they could see no harm in the action of the Southern people:

But the Puritan by nature in Canada generally

takes the side of the Puritan in the States and the Cavalier by birth, education and ecclesiastical connections takes that of the man enslaver. Hence, has arisen considerable bitterness in the discussion of the Civil War, which however will disappear as it proceeds to a close.

While the issue of slavery today is well-defined, such was not the case in 1861 and many residents of Canada West felt that if the slavery question were omitted, the South had at least as good a case as the North.<sup>38</sup> Lincoln repeatedly insisted that the North was not fighting against slavery nor would he interfere with it where it already existed. There was no particular reason why anti-slavery Canadians should feel any interest in a struggle to preserve the status quo in the American Republic. Some saw the moral cause of the South, under these conditions, as somewhat stronger than that of the states north of the Mason-Dixon line. As evidenced in the sectional quarrels in Canada in the 1850's, self-determination for a minority group held more appeal than sectional domination for the maintenance of an unworkable Union. Canadians failed to see that the President's own hands were shackled on the slavery issue, and deemed his efforts to pin the American Union together with bristling bayonets immoral. Prepared to applaud emancipation, the colonists were not willing to support what they regarded as Northern imperialism. George Brown recognized that the American struggle was more than simply one of "independence versus empire." Lincoln's declarations won the crucial border states of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri for the North, but in the process he lost the moral support of the British Provinces.

The general restraint from using anti-Americanisms and the service rendered to the Northern cause by Brown has been recognized. Like D'Arcy

McGee, he advocated a strict Canadian neutrality during the war. Canadians could still cling to the principles of "monarchical and liberal institutions" while expressing sympathy for the "yeomanry of the North." Despite his dislike of Northern politics and financial imperialism, as an abolitionist he tried to "keep public opinion in the right" in Canada West.<sup>39</sup> Ignoring the stains on the Union record, as his rivals did in reference to the Rebel standard, the Globe editor was consistent in his service to the Northern cause in Canada, and this was recognized even by the trenchant Goldwin Smith. Said the former Oxford Historian of Brown:<sup>40</sup>

Of liberality of character and sentiment, of breadth of view or toleration of differences of opinion, no human being was ever more devoid.... Master of the Globe, which then, unhappily for the country, was the only powerful paper, he used it without scruple or mercy to crush everybody who would not bow to his will.... The best of Brown was his fidelity to the cause of the North during the American war of Secession.

Smith was in full agreement with the Toronto editor that it was only on account of slavery that one was bound to take the side of the North.<sup>41</sup>

Brown's position on this question was noted by a meeting of the "Coloured Citizens of Toronto" in 1880, upon the occasion of the death of the Globe owner:<sup>42</sup>

It has caused another vacancy in the ranks of the noble and disinterested champions of freedom which can never be filled, and we recognize that loss with the deepest and most heartfelt feelings of sorrow and regret, knowing that the Summer of Canada has passed away, whose voice and pen was always ready, able and willing to do battle for the cause of the down-trodden and oppressed of all peoples.

The pre-Northern stand taken by George Brown and the Toronto Globe was not

denied, even by their strongest critics. However, the Globe soon stood virtually alone in this matter, and such a stance did not in any way imply a desire for "Americanism" in Canadian life.

## II

"Our arms will never be used to strike the first blow in any attack," President John F. Kennedy declared in January, 1961. "It is our national tradition."<sup>43</sup> According to the democratic ideal, the people and leaders of the American nation were peaceably inclined, with the government presumably under popular control. While resenting insults and repelling dangers, the people would never take the initiative in starting a war and to some extent political realities have coincided with democratic assumptions. The tradition that the foe must strike first, and had always done so, coupled with the American myth of forever struggling with "God on our side" against a satanic enemy has, perhaps, had some validity. It is a diplomatic sophism that it is not so important what people do as what they think they are doing. For the Canadas in 1861 though, there could be little assurance that the American eagle could be kept in check.<sup>44</sup> And stirrings in the United States had more than once sent the British American provinces huddling together.

On January 18, 1861, the influential Toronto Globe made the comment that Canadians were taking a deep interest in the progress of the deadly pattern that was threatening the stability and even the national existence of the "Great Republic." The Canadian press watched the "Seceders'

Conventions," the "Progress of Secession," and the "Coming Struggle" unfolding week by week and month by month for over a year. The election of the "Black Republican," Lincoln, in November of 1860, in the face of implacable hostility among Southern slave interests, had by December of that year triggered the secession of slave-holding South Carolina. In January, 1861, four more states of the Cotton Kingdom parted company with the Union, four others teetered pending the outbreak of hostilities, and early February saw the creation of a southern Confederacy to which other slave states would soon adhere.

The Globe believed that the slavery issue would have a most important influence on the future of the United States, "with which our destinies are linked." News of the slow, inexorable movement of the Republic to apparent self-destruction was crammed into the columns of Canadian newspapers in the first few months of 1861. Abolitionist sympathies, close business connections, ties of family and friendship linked Canadians with the mounting tragedy in the United States. Tensely conscious of the storm so near, many Canadians saw little danger of the tide of war overflowing "its legitimate boundaries" to deluge British North America, but with awed fascination they pondered what questions might arise, what international difficulties might spring up during a long civil war among "thirty-two millions of people in the immediate vicinity." Said the Globe: "Looking southward, we see no streak of blue sky; all is gloomy, dark, and threatening. A fierce civil war, unlike anything ever experienced on this continent seems inevitable."<sup>45</sup>

The anti-slavery Globe and two other Independent Reform papers,



the Ottawa Union and the London Free Press, had already begun to call the oncoming struggle the "Second American Revolution!" The Reform comparison was far from flattering, the motives behind the 1861 eruption withering under the Globe's devastating attack. Brown noted that in 1776 the revolutionary movement had been one to secure freedom and to vindicate the rights of man, while in 1861 it was to secure the institution of slavery and to render it impossible for four million men to recover their rights. To Canadian liberals, the American Revolution had both reason and justice, and the sympathies of "freemen" everywhere, even in England. However, that of 1861 had "neither reason, nor justice, nor humanity, nor the sympathies of the free, nor the prayers of the good on its behalf," and according to George Brown, "it must fail."<sup>46</sup> Although the Free Press and the Globe, as well as other leading Reform newspapers in Canada West saw that the South had the "revolutionary right" to secede, there were the strongest reasons why the Stars and Bars Confederacy should not be permitted to form a nation of its own. The existence of a "professedly Christian and civilized nation of men-stealers" would be a disgrace to North America and the world. Whatever strong measures the North might be required to take for breaking it down, they would confer an inestimable benefit on the human race to do so.<sup>47</sup> Even the Tory Toronto Leader registered a rather unusual tone of sympathy, when it voiced its regret that a nation which was making "a great experiment in self-government should even seem to fail." Many Canadians were obviously taking time out from their own political battles to watch the war cloud in the American Republic growing denser and blacker.

The celebrated American author of The Rise of the Dutch Republic,

John Lothrop Motely, who had become an early advocate of the Union cause in the United States, was disturbed over what appeared to him a lack of understanding in England and the North American colonies regarding the true nature of the American conflict.<sup>48</sup> In a long letter to the London Times, he sought to combat the idea, as expounded in the press of Canada and the Mother Country, that the secession movement of 1861 bore any resemblance to that of 1776. The Confederate states had not claimed the inalienable right of revolution, but rather that of constitutional secession. The South had not revolted against the tyrannical acts of a government, nor had they raised a humanitarian standard in a declaration of independence and Motley could find no justification, either historical or constitutional, in American history to exonerate Southern action.<sup>49</sup> It had been rebellion against the constituted authority, pure and simple.

Although the Ottawa Union desired to place its readers in possession of the "earliest intelligence of passing events" with references to the Eclectic which contained "an excellent portrait of Motely, the Historian of the Netherlands," his views seem to have had little effect upon what Canadians already thought on the subject. A comparison of distinction to certain Englishmen and aping colonials suggested itself to the London Times. This gigantic newspaper reiterated the point that the contest was really for empire on the Northern side and independence on that of the South, which implied that many in Great Britain were pleased to see the American Union in a position similar to that of Britain in 1776. The "Thunderer" recognized the "exact analogy" between the North and South and the government of George III and the "Thirteen Revolted Provinces."<sup>50</sup> While

it admitted that its opinions might possibly be in error, the Times passed them off as "the general opinions of the English nation." No doubt there was more than a smattering of Conservatives in Canada West who felt akin to the Times' geo-political sagacity.

Whatever the constitutional issues inherent in secession, the impressively masted Eastern Townships Gazette and the Shefford County Advertiser felt that the American struggle should be reported "in the spirit of impartial historians." The anti-slavery Gazette, fairly stuffed with reports from the United States, might have agreed with the Globe that "the more immediate interests of Canada would be served by the success of the North." The Toronto paper counselled Canadians to ask themselves whether they were not deeply interested in the peace and tranquility of the North American continent, for Canada had prospered greatly because of internal peace and good relations between the North and South in the neighbouring country. The separation of North and South presupposed an immediate long war, as well as renewed conflict in later years: "Will a war on this continent every five years benefit Canada? We think not."<sup>51</sup>

Yale University historian, Robin Winks noted in his Maple Leaf and Eagle that most Canadian newspapers elected to support the South for a particular motive: a victory for the Confederacy would establish a North American balance of power.<sup>52</sup> It would greatly aid the problem of Canadian defence as the large and truculent Northern army would be required to police two frontiers at the same time rather than that of British America alone. One of the few Reform papers to openly advocate a Southern victory was Josiah Blackburn's anti-slavery Free Press, but like most of the papers

of the period it devoted more copy than editorial opinion to the foreign scene. Perhaps the running feud between Brown and Blackburn, and the fact that London had always been "a Tory hole" had something to do with the policy of the cocky Free Press in regard to international affairs.<sup>53</sup>

Blackburn, who was moving imperceptibly from the Reform to the Conservative camp during these years, took the lead offered by some British statesmen and called for a "guaranteed neutrality" for Canada underwritten by England, France, and the United States. What better time for "independence" and "national status" for Canada than when the powerful American Republic was preoccupied with internal strife? The idea that Canada hindered Britain's international role and that the Mother Country's quarrels might involve Canada in war, as enunciated by Blackburn's newspaper, was to become blatantly obvious before the great Civil War was over. However, in 1861, such a contention led to charges of annexationist leanings being laid against the Free Press as it sought to remove the arm of British protection.

Some in the United Province of Canada did not think kindly of the Yankees at the best of times. Despite general support for the anti-slavery cause, George Clerk's Irish-Catholic paper, the True Witness and Catholic Chronicle of Montreal, found occasion to refer to the "hideous moral phenomena" in the United States. Amid references to "Irish Intelligence" and "The Pope," Clerk went on to accuse the Americans, along with the Germans and the British, of living in nations that were "strongholds of infidelity, Panthesism, and what may be termed sceptical rowdyism." The fire-eating editor claimed that the predominant characteristics of the poor and uneducated classes of these countries were wrapped up in "a dull phlegmatic

and a revolting sensuality." In another corner of the Province, the young Conservative hopeful, Ralph Vansittart, was advised by his uncle that "this everlasting scramble for the almighty dollar is a most deplorable feature of our national life. We, in Canada, have begun to copy the Americans in this, and we bring everything to the touchstone of dollars. With most people there is no other measure of value."<sup>54</sup>

The case of John Anderson, fugitive slave, and the tale of his miserable predicament did not endear either the North or the South to Canadians. The South wanted Anderson and the North wanted the South. The Anderson case caused a great stir in the cities of Canada when it was made public. Briefly, it concerned the case of a Missouri slave who escaped to Canada in 1853 and remained there undisturbed until 1860. Anderson had apparently murdered his pursuer and Southern interests demanded his return to the United States under the extradition clause of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842. Although the laws of Canada did not recognize slavery, a Toronto court presided over by John Beverley Robinson, the Chief Justice of Upper Canada, decided that Anderson must be surrendered to the American authorities. Many Canadians thought otherwise.

On the evening of January 17, 1861, hundreds of Montrealers, including the Mayor of that city, A. A. Dorion, and the leading clergymen of all faiths gathered at the Mechanic's Hall on St. James Street to protest the judgement and spread the spirit of philanthropy. Though once tolerant of slavery, Montreal sentiment turned profoundly against it early in Victorian times. This feeling grew more and more bitter after the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act in the United States in 1850, as runaway slaves

reached the Canadas with harrowing stories to relate. Cases such as that of Lavina Bell destroyed any attempt in Canadian minds to represent slavery as a mild and justified institution, a nineteenth-century welfare state.<sup>55</sup>

The situation was similar in the leading towns of Canada West. There had been a long record of Negroes in Toronto and occasionally slave sales were advertised in local newspapers. The Upper Canada Gazette carried a number of such advertisements between the years 1793 and 1800 for the towns of York and Niagara.<sup>56</sup> And large numbers of slaves continued to escape into Canada daily from the United States, into an area which after the 1830's contained no slaves belonging to a British subject. The Negro community in Toronto reached its apex in terms of population and organizational activity in the 1850's, and though it began to decline after that, this area from Toronto to Windsor contained the largest number of Negroes in British America. In the case of Anderson, even the Conservative Leader and the Hamilton Spectator agreed with the Globe that the fugitive's situation called for sympathy.<sup>57</sup> The Tory press generally were in accord with the English press that Anderson be returned to the Americans to honour the international obligations under the Treaty of 1842.

Despite the fact that the John Anderson case threatened at one stage to develop into a constitutional wrangle between the colony and Great Britain, Anderson was finally released on a technicality by the Toronto Court of Common Pleas on a crisp February morning.<sup>58</sup> The Canadian press rejoiced that John Anderson had been delivered, while the Montreal Gazette and Quebec Mercury declared that nine-tenths of the Canadian people had not been disposed to his surrender on the demand of Missouri slave-owners.<sup>59</sup>

The case had shown the depth of anti-slavery feeling in the metropolitan centers of the United Canadas. British principles had triumphed over American practices. Yet even before the Canadian judges had reached their evasive decision, the newspapers carried the headlines: "The South Carolina Ultimatum, Threatened Attack on Fort Sumter." The whole question of slavery and North American politics was soon to be decided by a judgement far more profound and final than that in the case of the fugitive slave, John Anderson.

The firing of the rebels of South Carolina on the United States merchant steamer, Star of the West, preventing her from reinforcing Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbour, was considered to be the opening act of the Civil War. The Globe, ever vigilant on American affairs, declared: "If we are to believe all that the telegraph brings us, the South must either take more decided measures soon or else back out ignominiously. There is no middle course for revolutionists!"<sup>60</sup> Although the North might talk lightly of "bringing the South to her senses" by force of arms, "a more awful responsibility could not be incurred by man." There was evil enough in the prospect of a foreign war but the horrors of such hostilities would sink into insignificance when compared with those of civil war, and it might be wiser to allow the South to go "on her foolish way undisturbed, until by the laws of nature which will assuredly visit her with the severest punishment, she discovers her errors, and returns to that union in which alone she can hope for freedom and prosperity." An editorial from the columns of the New York Times was read widely in the Province, and it was in complete agreement with early Canadian opinion of the prevailing situation in the

American Republic:<sup>61</sup>

This is the first government in the history of the world based upon slavery. This present year is the first time in the history of the world when a great community has overthrown a free Constitution, not because of its oppressions, but in order to perpetuate the abject slavery of four millions of its people.... The chief glory of the new nation...is slavery.... There is no power so utterly dead to all the impulses of humanity, and to all the influences of Christian civilization, as to look with anything but horror and detestation upon a nation commencing its career for such a motive and with such an aim.

The first rather general support in Canada West soon began to be tempered. It was one thing to combat an anachronistic institution, quite another to coerce reluctant people into a political association they apparently detested, which seemed to be the sum and substance of the Northern demands. The Catholic Telegraph stated that there could be no forcing a people to remain in the Union, unless by actual abandonment of the principles for which the North was pretending to fight.<sup>62</sup> The Montreal True Witness noted that what the ultimate results of the American conflict would be no one could tell, but only one conclusion could be drawn:<sup>63</sup>

The South is to be thoroughly subdued, we are told by some; but we are not told how the South is to be dealt with when subdued, or how it is to be kept in a state of subjection. Victory or defeat must be alike fatal to the Union, for even victory will impose upon the successful North the task of governing the subdued South as a conquered Province, and this is incompatible with the theory of a Federal Union of sovereign states.

For many in the Canadas, this was the logical meaning of "fighting for the Union."

Slavery could not have been the "real cause of difference" between



North and South the trenchant Leader declared, for the leading Northern politicians had stated their anxiety not to injure the South in any way. "But," said the Toronto paper, "men have reasoned themselves into the necessity of taking some desperate step and their pent-up anger cannot have vent unless in attacking the Union." The New York Times saw some consolation in the fact that "most people have now found out what we are fighting for--those who have not may settle down in the belief that it is to enable lawyers' clerks to draw the pay of Brigadier-Generals."<sup>64</sup> The widespread regret that the American Union was threatened gradually lost its focus in Canada, and the conflict assumed a new significance. As the Gazette simply stated: "Can we give our sympathy to a civil war having for its object to force half a continent into a union against the consent of the governed?"

Unaware of the value of a political confederation of vast size and possibilities, many Canadians thought the Southern Confederacy at Richmond should be permitted, in accordance with the principles of self-determination, to establish a nation. While the Montreal Herald and Montreal Witness remained in favour of the North, the Evening Telegraph and Commercial Advertiser of that city ably championed the Southern cause, contemplating the creation of a powerful Southern Confederacy. An extended examination of the columns of the Canadian press showed additional reasons for Canadian rejection of the North, which appeared more prevalent in Canada East than Canada West in the early months of 1861. The fact that the Northerners had complied often with the slave-holders' demands, refused to compensate for the liberty of the slaves, abused Britain, and blustered about the conquest

of Canada, offended Canadians. In addition, the fact that the unworthy motive of self-aggrandizement at the expense of the South had animated the North in its struggle, and not the nobler cause of human freedom, justified Canadian indifference.<sup>65</sup>

The New York World had proclaimed American governmental policy: "We are not fighting to extinguish slavery. Slavery is recognized under the Constitution and the North would not interfere with the rights which the Southern States enjoy by the Constitution in regard to slaves. Only their own persistence in rebellion can damage slavery." Such statements gave further rise to Canadian self-congratulation on the freedoms enjoyed by British colonials: "Of all the men on this continent, the people of Canada alone are truly freemen, a small community we yet make all men free and equal before the law, black and white and red, except that the red man is treated with greater tenderness than white or black." The Gazette asserted the loyalty of all Canadians for Britain and the Empire in opposition to the "slave-holding Americans":<sup>66</sup>

Canadians are Britons--the great masses of the people are British, heart and soul, and the man or people who insult the mother country become at once the enemies and insulters of Canada. Britain's cause is our cause; and any one who reckons on gaining popular support for plottings to transfer our allegiance mistakes us sadly.

A series of "Irrational Attacks upon Great Britain" by the American press for Britain's recognition of the belligerent rights of the Southern States was strongly castigated by Canadian newspapers. In the light of the oft-stated Northern ambition to seize Canada, there was no valid reason why the Mother Country should aid the North through a series of "overt acts";

neutrality was the best policy for the Empire. A correspondent for the Canadian News made the situation clear later in the year:<sup>67</sup>

The feeling throughout this province is strongly hostile to the Yankees, the reason evidently being that they have bullied and insulted the mother-country quite long enough and talked too much about overrunning Canada.

A number of Canadian newspapers had become quite alarmed at the prospect of hostilities in the United States. The Prototype of London, Canada West, thought it probable that an international quarrel lay ahead between the United States and England, and other conservative colleagues joined in the statements of caution: "...events by no means improbable may bring Britain within the range of the revolutionary maelstrom which has destroyed the foundations of the great Republic." The Quebec Morning Chronicle warned its readers after the war clouds in the Republic reached their apogee:<sup>68</sup>

War is like fire; when it once breaks out there is no telling where it may end, and it really does not seem altogether improbable that Great Britain may ere long be involved in the war now raging in the United States.

This latter paper was positive that the United States would be ultimately divided into two or three, perhaps four separate republics, but while the Republic "by which we were to be absorbed, seems determined to tear itself to pieces, we in Canada are meditating further union." The exigency was more than colonial as it extended over the concerns of Britain and her largest overseas provinces. Mrs. Susan Sibbald in her Memoirs discussed the current trepidation in a strong Tory accent during the summer of 1861:<sup>69</sup>

As to affairs in the United States, they

trouble us very little. I hope you see The Times--you will be amused with Russell's (the Correspondent of Notoriety) account of the "Bulls run" fight and flight of the Northerners on that occasion.... As in England, all men here are becoming Volunteers, although there is nothing to fear I should think, and England as the Duke of Wellington said, "to ensure Peace, is prepared for War."

The Globe saw the war scare as a "cheap party trick" by the Conservative Government to pass its defence plans, for any alternative would be regarded as an indication of "disloyalty." This newspaper spent most of 1861 discussing the threat of war, always arriving at the conclusion that an Anglo-American conflict was unlikely. Three different correspondents of the Canadian News, writing from Canada West during the spring and summer expressed the opinion that there was little cause for apprehension regarding trouble with the Republic. However, despite its prominence in the attempts to deprecate such a turn of events, the Globe warned that "in spite of all our efforts, in spite of the exertions of the wise and prudent of both countries, war may be forced upon us."<sup>70</sup> Brown agreed with the speech made by Luther Holton to his electors a few years later, when the latter affirmed that "the connection between Canada and the empire of which we form a part must be maintained at all hazards."<sup>71</sup>

Aside from the questions of defence and the imperial connection, there was a decided rise in anti-American sentiment in the Province as 1861 progressed. A Toronto correspondent wrote:<sup>72</sup>

The potency of the British sentiment is shown in other directions. Like other good things, it runs over some times a little awkwardly. The prejudice against "Yankees" is now so violent here and hereabouts as that against

Frenchmen ever was in England. The fact that the express and other business of a confidential character is monopolized by Americans affords a plausible basis for opposition; and some of the employees of American companies being themselves American, have been excluded from the drill of volunteers with whom they have hitherto associated. The feeling has effected an entrance into the political circles. Mr. Leonard, whom the Opposition nominated as candidate in the Legislative Council, is an American; and the "anti-Yankee" cry is used with such force against him that the London Free Press—one of his staunchest supporters—asserts that he cannot outlive the cry, and recommends him to make room for another candidate of British birth.

This letter to the Canadian News also indicated that Canada was largely in the position of a "branch plant economy" even by 1861.

While it was possible for Canadians to agree with Lincoln that the Civil War was to maintain democracy by preserving the Union, they did not desire the Americans to remain a nation in order to establish republican hegemony in North America. The Free Press viewed the American war as the collapse of a political system, "mobocracy" based upon excessive democracy. Long having noted the low level of politics in the United States, the Civil War had become a case in point for the London newspaper. The Free Press declared that the most effective government could be achieved in Canada by maintaining the British tie and the monarchical system.<sup>73</sup> It caused small wonder then that this paper recognized the outbreak of the civil conflict in the Republic with the observation that "at all events, the spectacle before us is a practical lesson upon the advantages of universal suffrage, extreme democracy, and the value of the federal principle based upon popular will." Like others in the Province, the editorial staff of the

Free Press associated the polity it despised in the United States with the North, while expressing admiration for the "aristocratic South." The bias against the North was reflected in a myriad of ways, including a continual deprecation of the improperly trained, improperly led Northern troops, which were certainly no match for the "consummate generalship of the South."<sup>74</sup>

On the other side of the ledger, D'Arcy McGee thought the South was little more than a "pagan oligarchy" and its leaders had organized "the worst system hitherto endured by mankind."<sup>75</sup> However, a fellow member from Canada East, George Cartier, concurred with the appraisal offered by the Free Press concerning the fact that universal suffrage had made the American government impotent:<sup>76</sup>

On s'est toujours mis en garde contre de représentation des individus seulement, et l'on a tenu compte des intérêts de la propriété et des classes de la société. La représentation une fois basée sur le nombre il n'y aurait plus qu'un pas à faire pour tomber dans le suffrage universel, et un gouvernement fondé sur ce dernier système ne peut durer longtemps.... Le président des Etats-Unis est un despot comparé à la reine d'Angleterre. Et ce despot ne représente pas toujours la majorité des suffrages.

While Cartier was campaigning against "l'esprit démocratique," Sir E. P. Taché was quoted by the Gazette on the question of French Canada and the monarchy:<sup>77</sup>

My countrymen republican? They are monarchical in everything; in their religion, laws, institutions, principles and even their prejudices, and I venture to predict that the last shot fired on this continent in defence of the monarchical principle will be fired by a French-Canadian.

Certain Canadians, such as S. E. Dawson in his pamphlet, The Northern Kingdom, continued the call for separation from the Mother Country in the hope that it would remove "international soreness and traditional jealousy" between England and the United States. With an independent Canada, the Republic would feel its northern frontier secure, and harmonious international relations would result. But Dawson made the point that Canada was to remain monarchical in governmental structure:<sup>78</sup>

Let us then...lay the foundations of a limited monarchy in the New World. This is the time of disintegration with our neighbours. The elements of the great republic are fast approaching dissolution. Have we not also a message-- a mission? It is a stable, limited Monarchy-- the hope of the Anglo-Norman race.

Despite such testaments of faith, there were some outspoken critics abroad who thought that the colonials protested slightly too much. Said Goodwin Smith in The Empire:<sup>79</sup>

It would seem that if Canadian monarchy differs from American democracy as painted by its worst enemies, it is only as the Irishman's ride in a sedan chair with the bottom out differed from common walking.

John Rose, a financier and important figure in the Conservative party was one of many Canadians in the 1860's who would have vehemently disagreed with Smith's appraisal. Rose disliked "Americanism" and "democracy" almost as much as Cartier, and both looked forward to a future consolidation of the British American colonies to provide a bulwark against their importation: "Whatever fate may be in store for us, that is a destiny to which no one looks with favour.... The germs and instincts of our people are monarchical and conservative--theirs is levelling and democratic."<sup>80</sup>

Undoubtedly most residents of the Canadas could reason for themselves on American affairs. For those who could not, the powerful London Times provided the lead:<sup>81</sup>

The Confederates are fighting in a cause which is at once plain and popular.... They are fighting for independence...from...a people...they now most cordially detest.... But with the Northerners all is different. They are not content with their own. They are fighting to coerce others, and to retain millions of people in political union with them against their will. This, too, they are doing in spite of the principles on which all American institutions have been notoriously based--principles inculcating the most extreme doctrines of freedom, and deriving all governments from the mere will and assent of the governed.... An appeal to the sword, was simply a proof that democracies...are influenced by the same passions as the most despotic monarchies.

Here, in fact, it was that republicanism broke down. The real collapse was not in the secession of the South, but in the resistance of the North. If the Northerners, on ascertaining the resolution of the South, had peaceably allowed the seceders to depart, the result might fairly have been quoted as illustrating the advantages of democracy. But when republicans put empire above liberty, and resorted to political oppression and war rather than suffer any abatement of national power, it was clear that nature at Washington was precisely the same as nature at St. Petersburg.... Democracy broke down, not when the Union ceased to be agreeable to all its constituent states, but when it was upheld, like any other empire, by force of arms.

These declarations hailing democracy's collapse by spokesmen in various sections of the British Empire, and the identification of that fall from grace with the North led the Southern Illustrated News to the conclusion that the majority of the British people sympathized with the Confederacy, that "they detest the Yankees, we do not doubt."<sup>82</sup> However, recent debates in the British House of Parliament had revealed "an extraordinary degree of



alarm on the subject of Canada," and a possible collision with the United States if Britain and her offspring did not observe the American conflict as simply a domestic quarrel.

The Tory Hamilton Spectator, among others, looked to any advantages that might accrue to Canada while her great neighbour was busily occupied with her own problems. While never possessing a doubt that Canada was preferable to the United States as a home for immigrants from the Old World, the Spectator felt it would be no discredit to the Province if they profited "by the present misfortune of our neighbours," and secured a larger proportion of the immigrants to North America than usual: "With another good harvest and a large influx by immigration we will have no cause to regret that we are still beneath the English sway. The United States have nothing to offer us in exchange for the privileges we now enjoy."<sup>83</sup> The Conservative Quebec Morning Chronicle, often assumed to be a spokesman for John A. Macdonald, optimistically looked to Canada's future:<sup>84</sup>

The American civil war will leave both the North and South weakened commercially, weakened financially, and lowered in the scale of the nations. Meantime, Canada is progressing in all these ways, and...we shall be a power among nations, and become, ere long, a rival to either of the confederacies which will be carved out of the debris of the once proud American Republic.

The Toronto Leader also regarded the crisis in the United States chiefly from the standpoint of how much Canada could reap from her neighbour's domestic troubles. While unable to anticipate any disastrous commercial result to Canada from the "revolutionary movement now going on in the Southern states," it could even see some distinct gains that Canada might make as a consequence of the impending war. It predicted, like the

anti-slavery, pro-Southern Spectator, that a large number of immigrants would be diverted from American to Canadian ports, though it feared that Canadian trade might suffer during the disruption among the American states. The commercial advantages which would come to Canada during a long civil war in the United States were often stressed by the Leader, but it was also aware that both sides in the struggle would seek recruits from Canada and it would be a wise policy on the part of Canadians if they maintained an armed neutrality, with a "respectable show of regular soldiery, sufficient at least to produce an impression of preparedness."<sup>85</sup>

Charles Clarke of Elora, Canada West, received several letters from his friend George Sheppard on the state of affairs in the American capital in the early months of 1861.<sup>86</sup> A former editorialist with the Toronto Colonist and Toronto Globe, and soon to see service with the Leader and the Hamilton Times, Sheppard was at that time on the staff of the Washington Constitution, the "secession journal" of that city. Like McGee, he felt that American disunion would tend to hasten a closer alliance between the Canadas and the Northern states, although Canadians were wrong to suppose that slavery was the sole cause of secession. Sheppard penned letters to the editors of the pro-Southern Leader and the Ottawa Citizen explaining the principles of "popular government" and how they would in no way suffer in a separation of North and South: "Two republics, side by side, can afford no more consolation to monarchists than one. The States are the true embodiments of democracy, and their individuality remains as before."<sup>87</sup> Sheppard assured abolitionist Clarke that the Confederacy, in asserting its freedom, would give impetus to democratic principles, although

the American system would have a terrible trial to pass through before the trouble was over. Everyone desired a peaceful solution, but nobody could assign a reason for the slightest hope towards this end.<sup>88</sup>

There would be no further "ifs concerning disunion" for the Union was dissolved beyond hope of repair or reconstruction: "The real South has seceded, and time will render the breach wider and wider." A former editor of the Globe who had played a major role at the Reform Convention of 1859, Sheppard pointed out that the very reputable London Times had discerned the fact of Southern independence and Southern power. The Times had noted that the Confederacy would have the "most magnificent domain in the world." Sheppard added that the "pharisaical North will wake up to find itself an inferior country." In fact, the latter would have no higher destiny than Canada said the Times. "Our Washington Correspondent" defended the Southern rationale regarding slavery while "it suits the northern, anti-slavery press, to hold up the Southern people to derision as a race of braggarts; and to this circumstance may much of the prevailing alienation be attributed." George Sheppard summed up his ideas and impressions in a final letter to Clarke declaring that the secession leaders desired to prevent any bloodshed, "under a belief that such a calamity would complicate negotiations hereafter to be entered between the new confederacy and the rag end of the Union.... They are ready, depend upon it; and when the trial comes, they will be fully equal to the best of Englishmen."<sup>89</sup>

The Globe had a clear conception of the necessity of acting the role of the good neighbour towards the North in her time of troubles. After Sheppard had returned to Canada, Brown reported that,

strange things happen in these days, but one of the strangest which has come within our ken for some time, is the presence in Canada of an active sympathizer with Mr. Jefferson Davis—a gentleman who did service to the Southern cause as a newspaper writer in Washington—seeking through the ministerial press of this country to stir up strife between the Northern States and Great Britain.

Evidently the ministerial press had had some success, but it appears that during the early months, the South felt the Canadian anti-slavery resentment to a greater degree. De Bow's Southern Review in an unpleasant mood referred to "the vile, sensuous, animal, infidel, superstitious Democracy of Canada and the Yankees."<sup>90</sup>

Several interesting, and even surprising editorials from American papers that must have caused some speculation among Canadian readers were reprinted in the newspapers of the Province. While the New York Nation discussed "this great and free republic, as its admirers are pleased to designate it," the Herald of the same metropolis took a "gloomy view of things":<sup>91</sup>

State after State secedes—a nation is leaped tranquilly off from the Union...the nation is fast earning the reputation of being effete. The glory of our flag and Union is fast passing away.... We shall go on in our downward career, and past redemption, unless the people rise up in their might and rid themselves of the huckstering politicians who had so long been permitted to govern and misgovern the country—forced to admit that our boasted republic is a failure, and that, notwithstanding our enormous resources, we are incompetent to carry on either government or commerce. We must then take our place on the role of nations by the side of Spain and Holland, and our country may perhaps revert, as distracted colonies, to the protectorate of the British empire.

Such a statement from the out-spoken Herald caused Canadians to consider how sad the state of affairs in the American Republic had become by 1861. The Leader sounded an ominous warning regarding the "rep. by pop." struggle in the Canadas, heightened by the American example of internecine quarrels:<sup>92</sup>

Probably neither party paused to think of the danger of the course it was pursuing; what if persistently persevered in, on both sides, the end must be. Let us appeal to the patriotism of both sections of the country to take warning from the frightened spectacle which sectional contests have produced on our southern frontier.

The prevalent expectation was that both North and South would suffer "unexampled injury," and settle down into two or more separate nation-states, much "wiser and sadder for their bitter experience." Quipsters noted that when the pontifical London Times elected to take snuff, the rest of the Empire sneezed in chorus, and in a sense it expressed the sentiment of many in the British provinces:<sup>93</sup>

Indeed, people are breathing more freely, and talking more lightly of the United States, than they have done any time these thirty years. We don't now hear once a twelvemonth that England has complied with some ridiculous demand, or endured some high-flying specimen of American impudence, or allowed them to draw their boundary lines (Maine, Oregon?) as they please. We are no longer stunned every quarter of the year with the tremendous totals of American territory, population, and wealth, computed to come due thirty, sixty, a hundred years hence; when, of course, the tallest empire of the Old World will easily walk between the legs of the American colossus.... Nevertheless, the riddance of a nightmare is purchased very dearly at the cost of present suffering.

While Britons were determined to avoid their Christian duty to interfere in the "humanitarian" cause of the North, and chose a more realistic total non-intervention in American affairs, Canadians feared that the coming struggle might overflow its legitimate boundaries. The Ottawa Union declared that the people of Canada had no desire for war as there was a decided sentiment for peace in the Province: "...although rupture with the States is obviously against their interests, yet, they will not be found to shirk the responsibilities of the contest should it come." Defence circulars issued by the Union government gave Canadians "fair warning" that it was their duty to provide for the defence of her own lake and river ports. And as a necessary measure, the organization of the Canadian militia on a "permanently efficient footing, should be an immediate step."<sup>94</sup>

Believing that the defence of Canada was a subject of vital importance, Friel and Perry's Union devoted a considerable portion of its attention to "place it in a proper light before the public." Thoroughly satisfied that there would be no flinching by the provincials from the obvious duty imposed on them by the course of events, the Ottawa paper demanded that proper training be given to the populace immediately. Amid columns discussing the militia question was a minor note that "Mason and "Slidell" had not sailed, although no one could be aware of its significance at that time.

William Russell, who travelled through Canada shortly before the American war opened as a correspondent for the Times, claimed that from the talk he had had with Canadians, he was sure that they were more than ready to defend their country, but would not consent to being taken away to distant

parts to fight for the homes of others:<sup>95</sup>

It seemed quite clear to them that the United States would only invade Canada to humiliate and weaken the mother country, and that the general defence of the province ought to devolve on the power whose policy had led to the war; whilst the inhabitants should be ready to give the Imperial troops every assistance in the localities where they are actually resident.

Both parties in the Province agreed defence was an Imperial responsibility, that Canada was not wealthy enough to pay for British glory in America. The Globe and the Leader felt that Britain should supply the bulk of defence finances and the core of troops. The Canadian position was stated clearly by the Morning Chronicle: "Of course this is not exactly our quarrel--the difficulty being caused by the fact that the necessities of England and the policy of the United States differ."<sup>96</sup>

A prominent New York lawyer, George T. Strong, declared some time later that the United States was drifting fast towards war with England, although he did not think it would reach that crisis point. The defence issue, raised largely by the advent of the civil war, would lead to additional difficulties for Canada. A conservative in Canada West wrote a rather poignant review of the matter for the Canadian News:<sup>97</sup>

We are threatened not only from this quarter, however, but by a power from which we never expected it--England. The threatening does not assume the form of attack, but is the foreshadowing of a system which must completely change our state of existence.

Young Ralph Vansittart, who would run under Macdonald's banner in the 1861 general election, was counselled by his uncle that even if the disputing sections of the American Union did not seize Canada at once, there could be

little doubt that as soon as the Civil War was over "and half a million northern soldiers have nothing else to do, some excuse will...be found, or some grounds discovered for picking a quarrel, so that Canada may be the unfortunate lamb which the wolf shall claim has fouled the water he wished to drink."<sup>98</sup> As if to offer sound advice for the upcoming election against the Grits, the old Colonel added:

We are living in troublous times. Times when Canadians who are loyal to England, and loyal to their own country, are required in the legislative halls. We want gentlemen to whom the sordid greed for wealth and office has no attractions, but who will be actuated only by a desire for the good of their country, and the welfare of the British Crown.

It was not particularly comforting to Canadians at the time that one of the foremost Northern expansionists was William H. Seward, the Secretary of State. His blustering attitude in regard to foreign policy was seen by some as one of the most threatening features of the international situation. Colonel Vansittart told his nephew that it was the duty and right of Canadians to maintain that which their American neighbours had considered important enough to embed in the Declaration of Independence; the right to the pursuit of happiness. Although the cannon that had lately roared at Fort Sumter did not indicate that the Americans had taken the most direct course to their goal, the "unholy conflict upon which they are entered across the line" told Canadians that the desire to pursue their own kind of "happiness" might be severely restricted in the future. Seward had always had his eyes on Canada "as a mouthful which might satisfy the ravenous jaws of those who are urging on the war," and the Secretary of



State evidently thought if he could induce the South to unite with the North in a raid on Canada, he might divert the storm clouds settling over his own land.<sup>99</sup>

Being subject to persistent fears that the United States at some time might attempt to make good threats enunciated by irresponsible sectors in the Republic did much to alter Canadian sympathy for the North, and the politics and way of life it necessarily involved. Old, dusty memories of General Montgomery's assault on Quebec, Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys, Queenston Heights, and Lundy's Lane were revived, showing that although Canada might be far removed from the alleged causes of the war, she would be made a battleground. It was, therefore, not unnatural that the provincials should react adversely to Yankee belligerence. In addition, the profound skepticism about the democratic spirit rampant in the Republic, with its egalitarianism, bad manners, corruption in public life, "long hair and Bowie knives," continued to haunt the thoughts of sophisticated Canadians. American practices, associated with "demon democracy" and "democratic degeneracy," were deprecated, and cited in contrast to the more urban institutions found in the settled societies of Britain and Canada.<sup>100</sup> When a choice was to be made between the Blue and the Grey, many would chose to associate their sentiments with the "chivalrous gentlement of the South," in opposition to the "plebian counter-heppers of the North." Such sentiments caused some colonials to feel akin to the views of the most respectable and influential circles in the Mother Country. Many would held to the Conservative Platform enunciated by Benjamin Disraeli in the year following the outburst at Sumter, as indicating the proper course of action,

although it was not to deny that Canadians may have well felt the same way anyhow, without Imperial prompting. The idea was "to resist both Democracy and oligarchy and favour that principle of free aristocracy which is the only basis and security for constitutional government...(and) to be as jealous of the rights of the working man as the prerogatives of the Crown and the privileges of the senate."<sup>101</sup>

George Cartier, the leader of the French Canadian Bleus, spoke for more than his own people when he expressed his monarchical sentiments during the debates on Canadian Confederation several years after the commencement of the Civil War. The lessons the disruption of the American Republic provided were obvious to all:<sup>102</sup>

The people, as well as the clergy and aristocracy understood that it was better for them to remain under the English and Protestant Crown of England, rather than to become republicans.... The leaders of our people...saw that it was not in their interest to cast their lot with the democratic element--they knew the hollowness of democracy. (Hear, hear). We found ourselves at the present day discussing the question of the Federation of the British North American Provinces, while the great Federation of the United States of America was broken up and divided against itself. There was, however, this important difference to be observed in considering the action of the two peoples. They had founded Federation for the purpose of carrying out and perpetuating democracy on this continent; but we, who had the benefit of being able to contemplate republicanism in action during a period of eighty years, saw its effects, and felt convinced that purely democratic institutions could not be conducive to the peace and prosperity of nations.

Canadians had not gathered together at that time to discuss the future of the Province in order to propagate democratic principles, but for the

purpose of forming a Confederation with the view of perpetuating the monarchical element. The distinction between Canada and her neighbour to the south was clear:

In our Federation the monarchical principle would form the leading feature, while on the other side of the line, judging by the past history and present condition of the country, the ruling power was the will of the mob, the rule of the populace. Every person who had conversed with most intelligent American statesmen and writers must have learned that they all admitted that the governmental powers had become too extended, owing to the introduction of universal suffrage, and mob rule had consequently supplanted legitimate authority; and we now saw war, and brethren fighting against brethren. The question for us to ask ourselves was this: Shall we be content to remain separate--shall we be content to maintain a mere provincial existence, when, by combining together, we could become a great nation?

The long years of the Civil War would give Canadians the requisite interval in which to build a national edifice, and a working example of the evils to avoid.

Indeed, a scattered few, such as T. P. Thompson in his pamphlet, The Future Government of Canada, argued for a British, independent republic in Canada, and particularly opposed McGee's early suggestion for a Canadian monarchy.<sup>103</sup> But the overwhelming number of editorials and pamphlets of the period show that Canadians preferred a government that would insure British supremacy. John Rose grasped McGee's concept of a "new nationality," even though it was widely recognized that it would be "sub-British" in fact. Cartier, Rose, Alexander Campbell, and others, generally believed that such measures would save Canada from republicanism

and eventually show in North America the superiority of the British constitution over Yankee democracy. Said the Montreal financier, John Rose:<sup>104</sup>

It is offered to us freely and openly in the face of that world, and we hope to convince the world here--after that of the three systems of government now in existence on this continent, ours is the best. We have the despotic throne of the Montezumas filled by a foreign prince, and propped up by foreign bayonets; we have the republican government of the United States, based on the principle that all men are free and equal, and that the will of the majority must govern and be right; and we have the responsible government provided by the British Constitution, under which the English nation has existed so long, and beneath the protection of which her colonies have spread out, until upon their wide expanse the sun never goes down. (Cheers.) This latter form of government we believe to be the best we can adopt for present purposes, and for the purpose of transmission to our descendants upon this continent.

While the American struggle would do much to confirm Canadian opinion in the value of their own institutions, it would produce a sharp cleavage of opinion in the Mother Country. The social elite, the establishment in Britain, violently espoused the cause of the Cotton Republic, and were led to the fray by the London Times. This paper did considerable damage to Anglo-American relations during 1861. The Ottawa Union concurred that the "American Republic (Is) a Thing of the Past," while the London Times went further, noting that the "crash of a new political world is an awful phenomenon":<sup>105</sup>

War has dashed like a comet upon the great American Republic and all the institutions and destinies of that mighty Union seem

scattered in fragments around. It is impossible to predict the formations which may survive after the convulsion has passed away, but all that we now see tends irresistibly to convince us that we shall never again behold the specimen of political organization which so amazed us with its growth, and impressed us with its apparent vigor. The United States of North America have ceased to be. The two great divisions of the States formerly united will form, we hope two prosperous communities, but we do not expect that either of them will bear much resemblance to the lost American Republic.

The Union added that Canadians had been jarred by the "unavoidable incidents of war," such as the passport system and the enormously increased power of the American president, and these incidents conflicted with the concepts exported by republicans to mid-Victorian Britons about the land of "political liberty and freedom."<sup>106</sup>

On the other side of the fence in England stood the university dons, the intellectuals including John Stuart Mill, Cobden and Bright, and the industrial masses of northern England. However, these groups, including the Manchester liberals, were a very small minority in the society in which they moved.<sup>107</sup> Generally the Southerners were regarded more as "gentlemen" than were the "noisy, beastful and vulgar" Yankees. William Russell was happy to report his impression of Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy: "Wonderful to relate, he does not chew (tobacco), and is neat and clean looking, with hair trimmed, and boots brushed."<sup>108</sup> While Russell's letters were never pre-slavery or pre-Southern, the smug complacency evident was intensely galling to the North, and in the earlier stages of the war failed to give English readers, unacquainted with American conditions, an accurate

picture of the situation. Yet Russell's despatches provided food for those Canadians who were also complacent and aped the English upper strata, those who cherished a desire for a Southern victory and hoped that the American democratic experiment would prove a failure. But as the Leader observed: "Determined as Mr. Russell may be to write in all fairness of the progress of the Revolution, he will be apt to see more or less through Southern spectacles when penning his thoughts in the latitude of Charleston or Richmond."<sup>109</sup>

The liberals in Canada West, as abolitionists, were not satisfied with Lincoln's Inaugural Address of March 4, 1861. They had envisioned a strong pronouncement on the slavery question, but they had been disappointed. The President declared secession illegal and the moral issue was not raised. In the Province there was a general uncertainty as to the course of action which might be expected from the Washington government and this was a keen disappointment to the anti-slavery men of Canada West. Shortly before the Address, the Globe had prophetically expressed great confidence in the Illinois rail-splitter: "We believe that he has a purpose and is determined to carry it out." The rival Leader felt a little less strongly about the "Black Republican" President and his designs: "Everybody, excepting the Republicans, wonders what the world is coming to, when an unhewn, Western merriman is lifted by the people's votes into the Presidency of the United States." Although denying on one occasion that it was the spokesman for the Conservative government in the Canadas, and thus being taken by many observers as either an embarrassment to, or the mouthpiece of Ottawa, Lindsey's Leader continued its bitter attack on the North. At one time, it

characterized the Lincoln administration as "a standing monument of incompetence and wickedness." The True Witness was sure that the Toronto paper was not voicing official government views when the latter declared that it also found Mr. Lincoln's humour "intensely vulgar."<sup>110</sup>

S. E. Dawson in The Northern Kingdom also gave an unfavourable report on both the presidency and Lincoln:<sup>111</sup>

(We are) strong in (the) conviction our neighbours have given their president greater powers than are claimed by any but the most despotic kings.... And if we take the man who now fills that position as a specimen of what the best educated people in the world do in choosing a chief magistrate, we are not impressed favourably with the result.

The London Free Press commented on the President's Address, noting that he was "either a coward, afraid of the character and intentions of his own free citizens and afraid too of the risks every man must run in the performance of his proper duty," or he was "a yielding man, prone to act upon the advice of others, a tool in the hands of his advisers." Two months later, the same paper observed that "the utter imbecility" of the President and his Cabinet was becoming more evident daily. Yet like the Leader, the London newspaper commended the moderate tone of the Inaugural Address, the implied recognition of the gravity of the situation, and the abstinence from all threats of coercion. Said the True Witness: "All in short is confusion...and poor Mr. Lincoln does not seem to be the right man in the right place in the present emergency."<sup>112</sup>

As might be expected, the Toronto Globe offered a more discriminating appraisal of prevailing conditions in the American Republic. The North was determined to resist Southern demands, and the Border States might find

some merit in postponing their own secession in the event that the recalcitrant states might retrace their steps. In the face of any Southern aggression, the President could look for the support of a united North and the people would spring to arms "with an alacrity worthy of their cause."<sup>113</sup> The Reform paper felt that the North had as noble a cause to fight for as any for which blood had ever been shed: "Every motive which impels men to do well and bravely is theirs. If they stand as nobly by their cause as their cause is noble, they cannot fail of success."

The Leader, on domestic issues at least, was generally regarded as the official organ of the Conservative party in Canada West. In 1861 it was under competent management and was the Globe's most formidable competitor. George Sheppard had joined the staff of the Leader when the Washington Constitution had relocated in Richmond, Virginia, and his presence accentuated "the natural disposition of a Conservative paper to back the South." The editorial columns of this paper evinced such a strong support for the "aristocratic society" of the Confederacy that the New York Times suggested that editor Sheppard was in the pay of the South. The Leader maintained its sympathy for the "righteous" determination of the Confederacy to national independence throughout the war years, but its pro-slavery impulse lasted only as long as Sheppard remained on the staff. According to a survey conducted by Professor Winks, only the Ottawa Gazette, Montreal Gazette, and the Toronto Leader openly defended slavery as an institution, and the latter dropped the cudgel when Sheppard was dismissed in 1862.<sup>114</sup> There is little doubt, however, that Sheppard's pronounced outbursts on Southern rights created an embarrassing time for many Canadians.



"John Bull" wrote a letter to the editors of the Union severely condemning the attitude of certain Canadian newspapers in regard to the South:<sup>115</sup>

Gentlemen: The strong position taken by the Ottawa Gazette on the Slavery question has given rise to a strong suspicion that something is wrong. The Globe has been taunted with its advocacy of the Northern anti-slavery interests, and it is more than hinted that it has been subsidized by the Federal Government. Bad as this is admitted to be, the Globe's opposition to human slavery lessens its crime in the eyes of the countrymen of Wilberforce and Brougham. Let me tell you in a whisper that other journals are said to be the Canadian organs of Jeff Davis and the conquerors of Bull Run, and that they are advocates of slavery and human degradation. Is this not monstrous? Spero meliora?

While this writer did not advocate a policy of coercion in connection with the Southern States, both the Leader and the Toronto Patriot denounced any suggestions of this kind. The Leader feared, however, that if a more conciliatory attitude were not adopted by opposing factions in the Republic, war would be the result and that would cause great injury to the commerce of not only the United States but also that of Canada and Great Britain. In the eyes of this Tory paper, the economic issues had greater validity than the moral ones, but it was already too late for constitutional remedies: "The time for compromise is past and then any attempt to hold the South as a conquered state would necessarily change the whole character of the federal government."<sup>116</sup>

Whatever the myriad of justifications indulged in by both the Reform and Conservative press in Canada regarding support for the North or South, Canadians were not prone to trust any section of their American

neighbours or to admire all that was being done north or south of the Mason-Dixon line. The "sentinels of public opinion" in the Province retained their far from flattering opinions of the rowdyism and spread-eagle oratory which was part and parcel of the American national character. The largely subjective Canadian opinion of the period continued to contrast the evils of democratic-republicanism with the great merits of the monarchical system which Canada had inherited from Great Britain. It was easy for colonials to recall the periods in American history when the corruptive, baser elements in that society had caused the American polity to take an aggressive stance over the contested acres of Maine and Oregon, and had blatantly sought to force the British provinces into the American system in 1776 and 1812 as well as issuing a lengthy series of annexationist threats and invitations throughout the nineteenth century.

While Canadians continued their strong belief in the benefits of their own political ways and forms, and "anti-American" cultural hostility pervaded British territory in America, jeremiads of the present state of American affairs continued to appear in the columns of the press. The True Witness, ever-watchful of events far to the south, brought the "News of the Week":<sup>117</sup>

From the United States we learn that "War is just about going to begin." As yet the civil contest has been one of the most grotesque farces ever enacted upon any stage. With the exception of some more heroic meetings, heroic speeches and heroic hoisting of the flags, there is nothing new to report. General Scott has taken the oath of allegiance to the Constitution for the third time, so we suppose that the Union is saved.

III

At 4:30 a.m., April 12, 1861, a fiery red mortar shell arched across Charleston harbour toward Fort Sumter. The "irrespressible conflict" as Seward had called the sectional struggle between Northern free states and Southern slave states, which the anxious care of some American statesmen had postponed for generations, burst at last into open war. Although the guns had not sounded until the Confederate assault, nothing for several months had made their explosion less inevitable. For many in the Canadas, convinced since early January that war would come, this was a noisy interlude which altered little. Canadian newspapers had, for weeks on end, quoted articles and notices from American papers discussing the preparations for war in the Northern cities. They were sure that there was to be a prolonged and brutal conflict when the adversaries were ready.<sup>118</sup>

Three days after Beauregard's bombardment, President Lincoln called for volunteers to defend the Union. Sumter had answered a fundamental question: the Confederate States of America would either live or die by the sword, and for four long years there would be no peace in North America. The people of the United States became embattled on a scale beyond their wildest imaginings and the Confederate batteries which opened fire upon the Federal fort in the South Carolina harbour commenced a conflict which was to have an indirect and decisive influence upon the fortunes of Canada. With an almost dramatic abruptness, the American Civil War was to bring about the second great political and economic reorganization of the English-speaking world.<sup>119</sup> It opened the road for a new and unified, industrialized

nationality in the United States through the overwhelming defeat of the South, and allowed the precious time for the formation of a blueprint for a "new nationality" in British North America.

Edward Clerk's True Witness spent a great part of the month of April discussing "revolutionary storms" in the United States and Italy. Although North and South had actually clashed in arms, and Major Anderson had been required to surrender Fort Sumter, "fortunately for the interests of humanity the conflict hitherto has been perfectly bloodless; no one has been hurt by the terrific bombardment, no one even seriously frightened." While the effects of this event had been "most innocent," this paper expressed fear that this state of affairs would not last long, as the "blacks themselves may be aroused into a servile insurrection which will prove fatal alike to North and South."<sup>120</sup> President Lincoln had at last determined to take "active measures" to coerce the seceding States, but it was strongly doubted that a Union victory could possibly restore the American Union: "Upon what theory (are) the conquered rebellious States... thenceforth to be governed?"

A correspondent of the New York Times, writing from Charlesburg, Pennsylvania, gave some currency to the "Rumoured Slave Insurrection."

Evidence seemed to indicate Canadian collaboration:<sup>121</sup>

In a letter from Harrisburg I stated that I had obtained information to the effect that a movement was on foot to organize a regiment of free coloured men for the purpose of turning the attention of Eastern Virginia to her domestic enemies. I have just conversed with a gentleman from Canada who has made statements which go to confirm the information I had previously received and with further particulars. At

Chatham, C. W., there was intense excitement among the coloured population, growing out of the present hostile attitude of the South towards the Federal Union and measures were being taken to organize a force there, fully armed and equipped, to come to the States, and securing recruits among the coloured men of the Free States, to complete their organization here, and at once move to their scene of offensive operations. John Brown Jr., had consented to take command of the regiment, and other white men of influence among the coloured population were co-operating in the movement. Recruiting has already commenced in Ohio and Pennsylvania, to be ready to join the Canadians, when they shall arrive.... The attempt will be made upon their own responsibility, they taking all the risks. The purpose as announced is to await a hostile demonstration on the part of Eastern Virginia against the Union, and immediately to proceed to the mountains to commence an insurrectionary movement among the slaves, and carry on a system of guerrilla warfare against the villages and farms of those known to favour secession. Anderson, a mulatto, who was with John Brown at Harper's Ferry, but who escaped was the active recruiting agent in Canada.

The True Witness recognized that such a plan would not have the confidence of, or be sanctioned by, the state authorities of the North. Canadian sentiment would be in general agreement with the Montreal editor: "We have no desire to see the sanguinary and horrible scenes of Santo Domingo renewed, and trust the Canadian Government will endeavour to stay the rumoured movement, if it should appear that there is any reason to believe in its existence."

George Brown recommended the same neutral policy for Canada that Great Britain had declared in response to the American situation: "The English Government have determined to take up a neutral position, and that determination they will maintain--American diatribes to the contrary, notwithstanding." International law was vague at the best of times and the

Americans were not a people to be bound "by any authority whatever, right or wrong, if it should not be in accordance with their interests and prejudices." Both Great Britain and Canada would have to move with extreme caution to be sure that they did not infringe upon the rights of the American people, or set precedents that might be used against them in the future:

"The past must be remembered, the future must be as far as possible anticipated." According to the Globe, the duty of Canada was to avoid irritating collisions with her neighbours, who were "very good customers in our markets. The task is not difficult, if men will forget party and seek the good of the country."<sup>122</sup>

Several newspapers in Canada foresaw that the troubles in the United States were likely to be beneficial to the Province in an unexpected manner. The Toronto Leader, Chicago Tribune, and Le Courier de St. Hyacinthe all noted the effect of American unrest among Canadians living in the Republic. Over three hundred coloured citizens and the same number of French Canadians showed their assurance that the peace and quiet of the "old soil" offered greater prospects for peace, and that they did not wish to share in the disturbances which then distracted the "land of the stars and stripes."<sup>123</sup> While the coloured folk gathered in the Chatham-Windsor-Toronto area, the cars of the Champlain and St. Lawrence Railway were "daily crowded with the exodists," as both British and French Canadians were leaving the United States and "seeking asylum" in the Province they had left.

Reports of Northern recruiting officers and their attempts to secure volunteers were widely reported in the Canadian press, as well as requests from various American states for the loan of rifles and other war material.

Many called for a complete neutrality for the Province, which would include the exportation of anything which might be construed as contraband to either side. The Morning Chronicle of Quebec, and the Commercial Advertiser, Pilot, and True Witness, all of Montreal, were quoted in the press of Canada West showing the extent of American attempts to acquire men and arms in the United Province.<sup>124</sup> When the question of selling arms to the belligerents was brought up in the House of Assembly in late April, 1861, the government made no explicit policy statement. Canadians were, for the most part, not clear in their understanding of the constitutional issues involved in secession or the justice of a war for union, and when the bond of abolitionism was removed for all intents and purposes, the people of Canada would review their position with respect to the North, including men and arms, more analytically.

Up to 1861, the South had maintained a balance of politico-economic strength in the American Union. Although it did so with increasing difficulty during the 1850's, it had defended interests with which Canadians were identified: autonomy, agriculture, commerce, and international trade. In

1854, the South had been driven to include British America in its defence against Northern imperialism. A threat to the integrity of the Southland was a threat to the balance of power in North America, but it seems that only a few saw the intellectual twist involved. Only the pre-Northern, anti-slavery men, Brown and McGee, saw a great new future for Canada, in a British American Confederation which would include the expansive Hudson Bay territory in the Northwest.

Both the London Free Press and the Brampton Times held the unusual position of opposing both slavery and the North, discovering that the slave

would be better off after the Union were dissolved as he could find freedom without travelling all the way to Canada. The Free Press never acknowledged that the suppression of slavery was an issue in the war, but only a cause, and reaffirmed the right of the South to form an independent Confederacy. This would at least set some territorial limits on slavery.<sup>125</sup> It would also, should the North acquiesce, prevent civil war, and world opinion would be utilized to pressure the South to free her slaves. Yet the Globe, for its part, saw an independent South as a nation whose entire way of life was a vindication of slavery; emancipation would be a by-product of a Northern victory in the struggle for "Union."

The outspoken Toronto Globe observed that the feeling in Canada West was in unison with that in any other portion of the British Empire. It would rejoice "in the triumph of the right," with the rebellion subdued and "the traitors who have generated it, dealt with as they deserve. That is a genuine feeling the Americans may well believe." Canadians owed the Yankees no gratitude "and they know it," but the former would extend their best wishes for their prosperity. This was the tone of the press throughout the Empire, assured the Globe, although Canadians were not altogether displeased at finding the Americans "in a fix which will compel them to abate their pretensions, and (we) trust that the lesson they are receiving will prove salutary in its effects. But we would not, neither could we if we would, conceal from ourselves the fact that the cause of which Mr. Lincoln is the representative is a noble one."<sup>126</sup>

There is no doubt that the spectacle of fratricidal strife erupting in the United States deeply moved Canadians. The Provincials had very close



ties, by necessity, with the Republic. Yet after Lincoln asserted in his proclamation that his paramount object was to save the Union and not to save or destroy slavery, it became quite uncertain that the cause of black slavery must prevail, and the newspapers of the Province manifested somewhat less enthusiasm for the North. Canada's chief task would be to avoid immersion in the conflict. D'Arcy McGee noted that the "shot fired at Fort Sumter was the signal gun for a new epoch for North America, which told the people of Canada, more plainly than human speech can ever express it, to sleep no more, except on their arms, unless in their sleep they desire to be overtaken and subjugated."<sup>127</sup> Unlike Brown, McGee feared that a victorious North could become intoxicated with the lust of conquest; he warned Canadians to guard well their particular heritage.

Having lived for a number of years in the United States, McGee had gained a real insight into the problems facing the Republic. During 1861, he delivered a number of speeches in which he set before the Canadian people the real issues and how Canada might be touched by the struggle. The best statement of his views was contained in a speech given at London, Canada West: "The interests of Canada in the American civil war are, in general, the interests of all free government, and in particular the interests of a next neighbour, having a thousand miles of frontier and many social enterprises in common with the Republic." British Americans were both geographically and commercially Americans, and their politics "in the largest and best sense...continental." The former editor of the New Era told his fellow colonials that "as a free people, with absolute, domestic self-government, with local liberties, bound up in an Imperial Union, governed by

our own majority constitutionally ascertained, we are as deeply interested in the issue of the present unhappy contest as any of the States of the United States...."<sup>128</sup> As a North American people, Canadians were more immediately and intimately concerned than any other population. Preaching good-will not only in Canada, McGee told a gathering in Popham, Maine, that he spoke for the "general settled sentiment of my countrymen of Canada when I say that in the extraordinary circumstances which have arisen for you, and for us also, in North America, there is no other feeling in Canada than a feeling of deep and sincere sympathy and friendliness towards the United States."

In London, Canada West, he had traced the growth of the ultra-slavery doctrine, feeling sure that the seceding states would set up a "pagan republic, and oligarchy founded upon caste, the caste upon colour." Slavery would soon occupy a larger expanse on the continent than freedom said McGee. With two republics, where there had formerly been one, an era of military rivalry would inevitably follow. The member for Montreal West asked: "Are we prepared to welcome a state of permanent and still-increasing armaments for North America; are we prepared by word, or deed, or sign, or secret sympathy, to hasten the advent of such times, for our posterity, if not ourselves?" With all sincerity, McGee trusted that "a wiser and nobler sense of our position and duties will direct and instruct us to a wiser and nobler use of whatever influence we may possess with the mother country in this present exigency." A Conservative contemporary agreed with the former Irish rebel that the American constitution "in no place admits the right of any State to withdraw," that secession therefore was merely a question "of

force and revolution."

The specious influences being used to turn the sympathy of Canadians from the North as well as the commercial damage to Canada that might result from the Civil War, were widely discussed by McGee. He placed the blame for the alteration of opinion after the opening days of the war largely on the journalistic imperialism of the New York press, but he himself remained steadfast in his beliefs:<sup>129</sup>

As between the North and the South in this deplorable contest I rest firmly in the belief that all that is most liberal, most intelligent, and most magnanimous in Canada and the Empire, are for continental peace, for constitutional arbitrament, for universal, if gradual emancipation, for free intercourse, for justice, mercy, civilization and the North.

In the course of the next few years, the poet-politician kept faith in the anti-slavery cause. Unlike McGee, George Brown did not, however, have any immediate fear that it was Canada's destiny to be engulfed "into a Republican union, renovated and inflamed with the wine of victory." Brown added, "It seems to me we have theatre enough under our feet to act another and worthier part; we can hardly join the Americans on our terms, and we never ought to join them on theirs."

The American question added new meaning to the troublesome problem of Canadian defence. As soon as news of the fall of Fort Sumter reached England it was decided to reinforce the dangerously reduced British American garrisons. In late May, the True Witness reported that "the British news is of little importance—Great importance was attached to the outbreak of hostilities in the United States, and an increased naval force is about to be

dispatched to the North American Station for the protection of British commerce." This was largely a precautionary measure, but before the year 1861 was out, a real threat of war would appear. As early as July, 1861, before the Civil War could be considered a strong influence, a British parliamentary committee had felt that it was desirable to concentrate the troops required for the defence of the United Kingdom as much as possible, and to trust "mainly to naval supremacy for securing against foreign aggression in the distant dependencies of the Empire." While a pleasing measure for those in the Mother Country who supported "Little Englandism," it was a revelation that was quite unacceptable to many colonials who feared for their safety in regard to the aggressive and expansionistic, even unstable, American Republic. But, as the Ottawa Union noted in an editorial entitled "Canadian Loyalty," the recent British move to supply reinforcements for Canada supplied "a motive, of which we were previously ignorant, and the Americans will see one also, which will relieve us from the imputation of distrusting them."<sup>130</sup>

Lieutenant-Colonel George T. Denison, in his Soldiering in Canada, related that when war broke out in the United States it was "naturally watched with great interest by Canadians."<sup>131</sup> As he felt it "very likely" that the Province would be drawn into the great contest, he published a pamphlet in the spring of 1861 under the title, Canada--Is She Prepared for War? or A Few Remarks on the State of Her Defences, published under the pseudonym of "A Native Canadian." It precipitated a violent attack by the Globe on the author, pamphlet, and the Active Force. Cried the Globe: "At various periods in the history of Canada her youth have been visited

with a military fever. In this year of grace, 1861, the ravages of the disease appear to be confined to one isolated individual, and he is suffering badly, so badly that he has broken out in print."<sup>132</sup>

Some months later, Denison found occasion to author another pamphlet on The National Defences, giving a number of reasons why Canada should support a strong defensive force. He argued that Canada, as a colony of Great Britain, would always be liable to participation in the wars of Downing Street, but with the proximity of the American war, there were a great many reasons why Canada should quickly and radically alter its defensive stature. The Colonel observed that when two national powers were at war, it was always desirable that neutral nations bordering on the belligerents, should have a powerful armed force to support and enforce their neutrality. In a lengthy war along a neutral's borders it was difficult for her to remain on the sidelines for a long period. More importantly, when a peace was proclaimed between North and South, a large body of "armed and drilled men will be thrown out of employment, and may in some instances be induced to make filibustering expeditions into our territory for the sake of plunder."<sup>133</sup> These very shrewd observations were undoubtedly mulled over in many a Canadian mind in the latter months of 1861.

Counselling moderation, George Brown's newspaper declared that the Canadian people did not dread a war with the United States, "if it comes in the way of duty. Backed by the army of Great Britain, with two millions and a half of population, loyal and devoted, they are ready for a contest in a good cause." However, there was not an issue standing in the way of peaceful relations between Canadians and Americans, and likewise no casus belli between

England and the Republic, nor was one likely to arise: "The cry there is is for neutrality, and it ought to be ours also. The Americans will gladly leave us alone if we are equally forbearing, and only the foolish or designing can seek to excite feelings of animosity between the two countries." Summed up the Globe: "We cannot imagine any true friend of the interest of Canada seeking to embroil her with her neighbours, or making the world believe that such a thing is imminent."<sup>134</sup> On this occasion, the Grit paper did not live up to Ralph Vansittart's old-fashioned view of a Reformer. He had been firmly of the opinion that a Reformer "might be a loyal subject of Her Majesty, and a good citizen, yet the chances were strongly against it, and the safer course was to assume he was not until the contrary had been proven."

There was evidently great preoccupation in the Canadas with the events in the troubled republic to the south. The action at Harper's Ferry, Sumter, and on the Potomac were covered in detail, and the reaction of Canadians was given considerable space. British residents of New York were forming a regiment of Light Infantry to fight on the side of the North, while some of the young men of Galt, Canada West, had gone off to fight "Jefferson Davis and his Friends." The Leader's Hamilton correspondent reported that eight or ten youths had left that city for Detroit to join Colonel Rankin's Lancers: "There is a party here who pays their fare by the Great Western Railroad, and gives each recruit ten dollars bounty money. The bounty is paid before they leave the city, and is a transaction which if not a breach of the neutrality laws, is atleast a transparent invasion." Three days later, the Union related that Rankin, a member of the Canadian

Assembly, had been charged with an infraction of the Foreign Enlistments Act. The Colonel had apparently a commission in the Northern army and had been enlisting men in the Province for that service. The Mayor of Toronto acted as one of Rankin's sureties on bail.<sup>135</sup>

Previous to his arrest, Colonel Rankin had addressed a letter to the pro-Southern Leader, in which he made some remarks reflecting on the integrity of the managers of that newspaper. The Union was sure that the comments were not well received by George Sheppard, but it was surprised that a member of the Canadian Legislature, a Colonel in the Militia, and a Magistrate of the Province, should "embark in such a Quixote enterprise." Editors Friel and Perry admitted that "of the difficulties generally which have beset our neighbours, the press of this country has laboured most assiduously to fan the flame of contention." The Canadian press had been guilty of "gross breaches of the non-intervention law, laid down in Her Majesty's proclamation." It was found "extraordinary" to hear it announced "boldly" and "proof offered," that two of the leading Canadian newspapers had taken sides, one with the Southern States and one with the North. The Leader did not hesitate to declare that Brown of the Globe was the paid advocate of the North and the agent for the enlistment of officers for the Northern army. The Globe, on the other hand, as boldly asserted that Sheppard of the Leader was in the pay of Southern interests, and an agent of the Confederacy in advancing its cause and in preventing Canadians from enlisting under the banners of the North. Said the Union: "Verily, if all this be true, the Canadian press is obnoxious to the charge of outraging Her Majesty's proclamation, and their leading members of it should be

subjected to the process they force others into." This paper called for a calm, observant attitude: "Steering clear of all complications in our neighbour's affairs, standing prepared to uphold the honour of our own country and the glorious flag under which we live, will best become Canadians, in view of the extraordinary events now transpiring on this continent."<sup>136</sup> .

It might be argued in extenuation of the offence in "The Rankin Case," that it was impossible to be silent upon a subject of such deep interest to the "whole civilized world, and the shade of bitterness thrown in may be placed to the account of the American press, which during the Crimean war trod upon our corns." Canadians remembered the "cowardly conduct" of their American neighbours when Great Britain was taunted by the United States during Britain's war with Russia. But it was still objectionable that Canadians should "sneer at neighbours whose proximity and friendship is of value, when a fratricidal war is raging in their midst, with which international reasoning had nothing to do." As a final word on Rankin, the Union noted that one of the first duties of the new Governor, Lord Monck, after his arrival in Canada aboard the North Briton, was to dispense with the commander of the Ninth Military District in Upper Canada, as well as the services of Lieutenant Alister Clark of the Second Troop Volunteer Cavalry of the county of York.<sup>137</sup> This military order from the Commander-in-Chief at his Headquarters at Quebec, made clear the speculation that neither Canadian nor Imperial authorities would risk any breach of British neutrality and thus a possible war with the Americans, most likely on Canadian soil. Colonel Arthur Rankin's case would provide a suitable example to others on both sides of the border who might be inclined to test the neutrality of the



authorities.

It was impossible to conceal the fact that in case of a collision with the United States, the main part of the fighting would be borne by the British army, at British expense, although the Globe was sure that the more "intelligent readers" would discover the chance of war with the Americans breaking out "of a most distant kind." Brown thought that this was the time to seek the good will of the American people:<sup>138</sup>

It is a prize worth striving for. A true, sincere, firm alliance of the people of Great Britain and the United States, would present no anomaly such as that presented by the alliance of England with France. And now it may be gained, if the Imperial Government pursues a course of conduct indicative of the good will of the Republic.

Editor Brown believed that the cause of liberty would be greatly promoted by the success of Northern arms, and was positive in the view that if Canada's neighbours were freed from "the demoralizing thralldom of the slavocracy, they would give a more genuine testimony for freedom than they have heretofore done; and therefore we have heartily longed for and do yet heartily desire the complete establishment of Northern sentiment in the government of the United States." The Reform paper observed that the North was now paying the penalty for their past subserviency to slavery. In spite of the fearful war beginning to rage south of the Potomac, a victorious North would settle the question of slavery in North America for all time, and if not, would lose the sympathy "of every lover of freedom." The Toronto Globe assured many of its Grit readers that no one could deny the "theoretic excellence of the United States Constitution, and the demoralization of sentiment slavery has produced and the lying tone it has fostered in the Press,

Pulpit and Senate of that country--form a standing reproach against popular institutions, and have done very much to strengthen the cause of despotism throughout the world."

Who could tell what might have been the influence of the American Republic on the nations of Europe had it, instead of being the subject of mockery, presented "the spectacle of a people in truth 'free and equal'!" Because Brown believed that the American constitution had never had a fair chance, and because he felt the success of the North would change the whole policy of the Republic, and because he would not have the despots of Europe in a position to say in truth that popular government was a failure in America, he "devoutly" desired a triumph for the North. The Globe saw the American declaration of independence of 1776 as the beginning of a great new epoch in the history of the world:<sup>139</sup>

Millions of the poor and oppressed of Europe have found happy homes and overflowing prosperity in the land it threw open to them. We may regret the moral attitude of the Republic has fallen short of the hopes and anticipations of its founders--but the overthrow of such a Government and the full triumph of slavery or anarchy would be a spectacle at which the Angels well might weep.

This apparent pro-American view put forth by the powerful and influential Toronto Globe, main mouthpiece of the Toronto and area Grits, was to cause some embarrassment in the upcoming Canadian general election. Yet it was a domestic issue, albeit a side issue, of which the Conservative government in power in the United Canadas made extensive use in the election of 1861. It arose out of the notorious "Look to Washington" statement by an editor of the Globe and Grit member of the Assembly, William McDougall, on

April 17 of that awesome year of American sectional confrontation.

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  91. N.Y. Nation and N.Y. Herald, quoted in True Witness, March 29, 1861.
  92. Leader, November 28, 1861, February 26, 1863. For similar comments in the press of Canada East, see Le Canadien, August 23, 1861, August 3, 1863, quoting Franco-Canadien; Montreal La Minerve, August 6, 1863; Montreal Transcript, April 27, 1861; Morning Chronicle, August 20, 1861.
  93. London Times, August 15, 1862.
  94. Union, October 22, 1861.
  95. William H. Russell, Canada, its defences, conditions and resources (Boston, 1865), p. 61.
  96. Globe, September 21, 1861; Leader, May 7, April 30, 1861; Morning Chronicle, July 2, 1861.
  97. Allan Nevins, and M. H. Thomas eds., The Diary of George Templeton Strong, III (New York, 1952), p. 311, entry of April 14, 1863; Canadian News, October 16, 1862, p. 252.
  98. Cameron, Vansittart, pp. 5-6. For a discussion of Seward's enthusiasms, see Walter G. Sharrow, "William Henry Seward and the Basis for American Empire, 1850-60," Pacific Historical Review, XXXVI (August, 1967), 325-42.
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  100. Shippee, Canadian-American Relations, 1849-1874 (New Haven, 1939), p. 176.
  101. R. J. White ed., The Conservative Tradition (London, 1950), pp. 226-27.
  102. Confederation Debates, pp. 57, 59-60; see also, Edward Whelan, Union of the British Provinces (Charlottetown, 1865), p. 125, speech of September 29, 1864.
  103. T. P. Thompson, The Future Government of Canada (St. Catharines, 1864).
  104. Confederation Debates, pp. 968-69, 23-4. For some comments on the views of additional personages in Canada East, see Bruce W. Hodgins, "Attitudes towards Democracy During the Pre-Confederation Decade," unpubl. M.A. thesis (Queen's, 1955), Chapter XI.
  105. London Times, September 4, 1861.
  106. Union, October 5, 1861.
  107. Frank H. Underhill, In Search of Canadian Liberalism (Toronto, 1961), p. 87.
  108. William H. Russell, My Diary North and South (London, 1862), p. 250, letter of May 9, 1861.
  109. Leader, May 14, 1861.
  110. Globe, March 5, 1861; Leader, January 4, 1862; Leader, quoted in True Witness, March 15, 1861.
  111. S. E. Dawson, The Northern Kingdom, p. 15.
  112. Free Press, March 5, April 29, 1861; True Witness, April 19, 1861.
  113. Globe, April 16, 1861.
  114. Landon, Western Ontario, p. 220; Macdonald, Canadian Public Opinion,

- p. 82; Angus, Canada and Her Great Neighbour, p. 65; N.Y. Times, January 6, 1862. Sheppard later joined the staff of the N.Y. Times. See also, Leader, April 11, 13, 1865.
115. Union, October 3, 1861, letter from Buckingham, Canada East, September 27, 1861; Globe, September 12, 1861.
  116. Leader, January 19, 1861.
  117. True Witness, May 10, 1861.
  118. N.Y. Tribune, quoted in True Witness, March 22, April 19, 1861; Globe, January 8, February 21, 1861.
  119. Donald G. Creighton, Dominion of the North: A History of Canada, New Edition (Toronto, 1962), p. 286.
  120. True Witness, April 19, 1861.
  121. N.Y. Times, quoted in True Witness, May 10, 1861.
  122. Globe, May 27, August 16, 1861.
  123. Leader, May 1, 1861; Chicago Tribune, and Le Courier de St. Hyacinthe, quoted in True Witness, April 19, May 3, 1861, respectively.
  124. Morning Chronicle, quoted in True Witness, May 24, 1861; Montreal Pilot, quoted in Leader, May 2, 1861; Montreal Commercial Advertiser, April 24, 1861.
  125. Free Press, May 11, 1861; Brampton Times, quoted in Globe, October 15, 1861; Canadian Free Press, February 20, March 2, 5, 1861; Globe, October 15, 1861; Winks, p. 18; Elwood Jones, "Politics of the London Free Press," p. 102.
  126. Globe, April 22, 1861.
  127. Landon, Western Ontario, p. 216.
  128. McGee, Speeches and Addresses, pp. 12-32, at London, C.W., September 26, 1861; see also, speech at Fort Popham, Maine, September 29, 1862.
  129. See Cameron, Vansittart, p. 48.
  130. True Witness, May 24, 1861; Creighton, Dominion of the North, p. 290; Union, October 1, 1861.
  131. Lt.-Colonel George T. Denison, Soldiering in Canada (Toronto, 1900), p. 49.
  132. Denison, Canada—Is She Prepared for War? (Toronto, 1861); Globe, March 30, 1861. See also, Denison's comments in Globe, April 4, 1861.
  133. Denison, The National Defences (Toronto, 1861). For a further statement on the defence question, see An Upper Canadian (anonymous), The Military Defences of Canada (Quebec, 1862), p. 33, pamphlet reprint of a letter published in the Morning Chronicle, March 6, 1862.
  134. Globe, April 19, 1861; Vansittart, p. 3.
  135. Globe, May 15, 31, 1861; True Witness, April 26, 1861; Union, October 10, 1861; Leader, quoted in Union, October 8, 1861.
  136. Union, October 15, 1861.
  137. Union, October 24, 1861.
  138. Globe, April 22, August 19, 1861.
  139. Globe, August 7, 1861.

## CHAPTER V

### POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE "LOYALTY" CRY

"The people of Upper Canada will never submit to such injustice as they now suffer, and...(are) threatened with for ten years longer. If their own efforts fail—if the Imperial Parliament declines to interfere, then, Sir, they will look across the border for relief."<sup>1</sup> In this manner the pungent Toronto Reform newspaper, the Globe, quoted William McDougall's indiscreet remarks in the Canadian Legislature of May 17, 1861. McDougall had in fact said that if the Grit demands for representation by population should fail as a measure of relief for Canada West from Canada East's dominance, then "the Anglo-Saxon race will not rest quiet; they will resort to some other plan. There are relations of an intimate kind with the people on the other side of line, and it is natural to suppose that they will look in that direction for the remedy which they are unable to obtain elsewhere." Apparently unaware of the possible effect of his injudicious frothings on the coming provincial election, the former editor of the Toronto North American continued in a surprisingly candid manner: "Suppose that in addition to our political grievances and present commercial difficulties there were a bad harvest and consequent distress, then the people having been denied justice would have no alternative but to look to Washington."<sup>2</sup>

Two days after having made this statement, "Mr. Washington McDougall" attempted to clarify it. He was quoted by the Quebec Morning

Chronicle: "My argument was that if this course of policy was pursued, the people of Upper Canada might be driven to look to Washington."<sup>3</sup> At a later date, during the election campaign of 1861, he again felt constrained to interpret his remarks, and the Stratford Beacon defended him with the statement that McDougall had not spoken of it "as a good to be desired but as an evil to be avoided."<sup>4</sup> The people of Canada West had been denied justice in the Canadian Union Act of 1840, and they had no alternative but to "look to Washington," or such was the Montreal Gazette's reading of the lesson.<sup>5</sup> Both the Ottawa Tribune, and its Catholic contemporary in Montreal, the True Witness, agreed on the necessity of the Canadian Union: "Union is Strength." The Ottawa paper felt sure that the unprejudiced people "of all nationalities" would soon unite and endeavour to return men to the House of Assembly who were willing to work to achieve an even larger union of British American provinces: "The Time is not far distant when the opportunity will be afforded them, they should be prepared to take advantage of it."<sup>6</sup> If the existing union between the Canadas was unsatisfactory, then another must be formed, but under the British Crown.

William McDougall's explanations would do nothing to prevent the Conservatives from using the "disloyalty" cry in the campaign of 1861, a bogey which was certainly not being raised for the first time. To the ministerialists, McDougall's utterings were close to treason. Americans were well enough disliked for their "peculiar institution", annexationist threats, political mobocracy, and a wide variety of other political and social reasons. The mere suggestion of an ultimate union with the American Republic, especially with the great civil conflict slicing through the

national psyche south of the frontier was, to most Canadians, an idea that was "positively scandalous."

In many ways the political situation of 1861 had its beginnings in the previous decade. In the 1850's, the ultra-Reformers, the Clear Grits led by George Brown, demanded the restriction of ministerial powers, an elective Legislative Council and judiciary, similar to the system prevalent in the government of the United States. Some of the Grits or Brownites were radically republican in their views.<sup>7</sup> In 1857 a Convention of these two factions had resulted in the organization of the Reform Alliance embracing almost all the opposition members of Canada West.<sup>8</sup> Although there seems to be some doubt as to whether these Reformers were "mid-Victorian Liberals" or "North American pioneer democrats," there can be little dispute that they were consciously influenced by American precedents and "excessively devoted to the elective principle."<sup>9</sup> On the other side of the political spectrum in Canada West were the Conservatives, more attached to the British tradition and more conciliatory towards Canada East. They were not prepared to jeopardize the United Province of Canada by entrusting the country to the Grits with their radical views, with the "calumnies of George Brown," their "outrageously intemperate leader," and their supposed talk of amalgamation with the United States. There were enough internal issues that prodded deeply and rankled constantly, that would not allow Canadians to change their party loyalty to any great degree, especially for the electoral will-'o-the-wisp of "disloyalty."

The strongest press ally the Conservative party had in Canada West was the Toronto Leader, and as the newspapers moved into the rabid

electioneering of the period, the Leader took great pleasure in the opportunity to deal with the "disloyalty" charge against the Reformers.<sup>10</sup> The attitude of the Leader affords many interesting contrasts to its arch rival, the Toronto Globe, both of which thrived on politics. Residents of the United States, according to the Utica Morning Herald, were well aware that the Leader was "a violent conservative, anti-reform, anti-democratic, anti-American journal."<sup>11</sup> Yet even the Reform London Free Press could find occasion to agree with the Leader, recognizing with D'Arcy McGee that the only three courses open to Canada were annexation, a stronger British connection, or a "guaranteed neutrality."<sup>12</sup> Josiah Blackburn's paper, which the Ottawa Union praised as "one of the few independent and well-conducted journals in Upper Canada," had complete confidence in the ability of Canadians to rely upon their own resources and industry, as much as their population and finances would permit. Annexation was to be opposed in no uncertain terms.<sup>13</sup>

While on a speaking tour of East Middlesex riding, the Attorney-General West, John A. Macdonald, told Ralph Vansittart that it was useless to ignore the fact that the opposition had a "most popular cry" in Canada West in the issue of representation by population. This riding appeared safe enough for Vansittart to run as an "out and out supporter of the Government," making the election a simple one of "Union or Dissolution of the Union," as the Grits had committed themselves "irrevocably to dissolution, both in their organs and in their convention." Macdonald further advised the candidate that the Conservative government would claim the support of all "patriotic citizens" and ask them to rally around a government "which

stands for loyalty to Canadian institutions and to the Empire."<sup>14</sup>

A few days after this meeting between Macdonald and Vansittart, the recognized mouthpiece of the Tory party in Canada West elaborated on this line of action in an editorial. "In this contest," said the Leader, "the principles at issue between the two parties are broad and well defined. Both parties are so distinctly committed to their respective sides on certain great questions, that they cannot withdraw or recede. There is, first and foremost, the question of Union or Dissolution. This is the question of questions."<sup>15</sup> This paper was positive in the belief that a "cruder or more absurd scheme" had never been propounded by the "wildest theorist" for the government of a country than that of the dissolution of a viable political union. Although no political system could claim absolute perfection, the Union had produced immense benefits for the whole of Canada, and George Brown was blamed for the "insane threat" to destroy the Canadian Union. "We have traced the treason to its source," howled the Leader.<sup>16</sup> As the Grits had encouraged dissolution of the Union of 1840, and the Conservatives were aware that the concept of a federal union was not in vogue at the time due to the recent disruption of the American federation, the "Ministerialists" had little choice but to use the issue raised by the "look to Washington" outburst.<sup>17</sup>

The Leader had listed the greater issues of the election of 1861 in the Canadas as the need to maintain the Canadian Union, the question of federation and the principle of representation by population. This newspaper proceeded to argue that the outcome of the election would indicate whether Canada would enjoy the British form of representative government or

the American system.<sup>18</sup> Such charges made it necessary for the Opposition to continue the defence against accusations that they were "Americanized." In June, Brown explained that McDougall had alluded to Washington "not as the ministerialists have distorted it, as a desirable place to look to, but exactly the contrary," and he was supported by the Oshawa Vindicator.<sup>19</sup> Later Brown "distinctly denied" that William McDougall, a fellow editor of the Globe, had ever used the words attributed to him about "looking to Washington." The Ottawa Union added that a denial of the charge was somewhat better than the "foul-mouthed slanders in which the Globe habitually delights."<sup>20</sup>

The Hamilton Times, Toronto Globe, and Montreal Transcript, among other Opposition papers, continued to offer a defence for McDougall and the party.<sup>21</sup> The anti-Brown, London Free Press observed that when William McDougall first gave utterance to the sentiment "which had been so warmly canvassed," Michael Foley and other Reformers had opposed it: "Now Mr. Foley is the acknowledged pro tem mouthpiece of the opposition and his prompt and decided negative should be regarded as decisive as to the position of the main body of the Opposition."<sup>22</sup> The Sarnia Observer indicated that McDougall had only suggested a tie with the United States as a last resort after all other measures to settle domestic grievances had failed.<sup>23</sup>

Looking with humour upon "la menace" of Canada West taking the hand of the neighbouring Republic, Jean-Charles Chapais affirmed that "si M. McDougall se rend à Washington nous l'y suivons pas.... J'ajouterai même que, s'il prenait fantaisie aux Américains, à l'instigation de député



d'Oxford, de venir ici nous faire des offres réelles et personnelles, nous les recevrons aujourd'hui comme nous l'avons fait jadis, en d'autres circonstances, à coups de fusils!" Chapais then added: "D'ailleurs l'honorable député a mal choisi son temps, à mon avis pour faire sa promenade à Washington!"<sup>24</sup> While the Carleton Place Herald demanded the assimilation of French laws and the elimination of the French language like the American government had done when it purchased Louisiana from France, as the only way to affect something more than a "parchment" Canadian union, M. Chapais related how much he had regretted the enunciation of certain sentiments and ideas in the House during the course of the 1861 debates.<sup>25</sup> Sure that these sinister concepts would find no currency in the United Province, he states his own position in regard to the future of the Canadas: "Pour moi, je ne tiens pas à être Français, je ne désire pas être Anglais, moins encore Américain-Yankee. Je veux avant tout être Canadien!"<sup>26</sup>

Despite such testaments of fidelity, the disloyalty cry continued unabated. Even the Reform Free Press, which had disassociated itself and the Reform party from any responsibility, would not absolve McDougall of any blame. The utterance had been more than indiscreet this editor claimed: "When a man is in a passion, he often allows his secret desires and prejudices to escape him."<sup>27</sup> The Conservative Leader denounced both the author of the remark and the political party to which he belonged, as the statement had revealed "the under-current of the Clear Grit party." This paper conceded that it was more than willing that the coming general election be made to hinge on "the new Opposition preference," as disclosed

by the representative of North Oxford. The object lesson taught by the fate of the "Great Republic," then in the midst of secession, was not to be lightly discarded by Canadian politicians, as it was observed that the latter should appreciate more warmly than ever the excellence of British institutions.<sup>28</sup> For its part, the Free Press was sure that some force more potent than the eloquence of the Opposition would be needed to persuade Canadians to share the misfortunes of a country whose government had "tumbled down to pieces like a castle of cards, whose future is hidden behind anarchy and ruin."<sup>29</sup> A similar sentiment was put forth with considerable oratorical skill by John Crawford in his campaign against George Brown: "Are we, warm and loyal British subjects to look and see the glorious standard of our country—are we, I say, to see the flag substituted for the shattered stripes of the neighbouring Republic?"<sup>30</sup>

The civil conflict erupting in the United States had reinforced a long-held Canadian feeling of the superiority of their institutions. With smug conviction, they considered any change which resembled political practices in the American Union on a scale which ranged from undesirable to positively dangerous. It was not difficult for the Conservatives to make the preservation of the Canadian Union one of their chief planks, and to condemn the Grits for their stand at the Convention of 1859 when the latter asked for a division of Canada into two sections. Had not the schism south of the border made clear the follies of political separation?

The Reform Convention, held at the St. Lawrence Hall in Toronto in November of 1859, had resolved that "the Union in its present form can no longer be continued with advantage to the people," and constitutional

changes were demanded.<sup>31</sup> To many Canadians, Grit requests smacked of the American system that was obviously responsible for the war clouds gathering in the United States. The Yankee system of government had been characterized all too often by violent oscillations between tyranny of the mob and the despotism of the President. The erratic course of the Republic had ended now in the hideous carnage of a civil war, and to a great number of British Americans the war seemed the final breakdown of both American federalism and American democracy, the latter being less than cordially disliked by the Conservatives of Canada West.<sup>32</sup>

George Cartier was among those members of the Canadian Assembly who recognized that the cause of the American failure lay not in slavery alone, but in the spirit of Yankee democracy. Democracy was the basis of ruin for all legitimate authority as well as the reason for the moral and political corruption of the American people: "...peuple roi, peuple dieu, souveraineté de la multitude, infaillibilité de la démocratie." The fate of the vaunted Republic taught a lesson to those misguided by the influence of "Americanism."<sup>33</sup> Cartier clearly saw only chaos in the American system. His animosity towards democracy was deeply embedded, and he fully believed that it was universal suffrage that had made the government of the United States impotent. However, many failed to realize in the middle of the nineteenth century that the Reformers were not strong in their admiration of some American political practices. The leading aspects of the Reform press, and in particular the Globe's, were not of Jacksonian or Jeffersonian democracy. As Maurice Careless has pointed out, the Globe might ally itself with agrarian radicalism or give the appearance of

the agrarian democrat, but its real viewpoint was that of the mid-Victorian urban liberal. The Globe's tradition of thought, largely followed by the Reform press in the Canadas, was the doctrine of urban middle-class British liberalism of the mid-nineteenth century. And it spoke not in the words of the American frontier but in the language of Cobden and Gladstone, as applied to the North American scene.<sup>34</sup>

By the spring of 1861, even the Grit clamour for political separation from Canada West had subsided in the face of the American example. "I think," McDougall wrote to Brown in April, "that there is complete abandonment of the secession movement--its failure is foreseen by all."<sup>35</sup> It was closely observed by the government press that during the campaign the Liberals tended to ignore their pronouncement of 1859. "As a general thing, the Grits are fully occupied in trying to bury their unfortunate platform. They find the people devoted to the Union that has given them so much of importance, and they wish it to be forgotten that they adopted a Disunion policy." A few days later, the Leader resurrected the charge and noted that not a single candidate adhered to the platform of the Toronto Convention of 1859, during the election contest of 1861.<sup>36</sup>

As expected, the Reform press launched a strong counter-offensive almost as soon as the disloyalty charge had been laid. The Globe accused John A. Macdonald of endeavouring, by invective and innuendo, to raise the cry of disloyalty against the Opposition. It advised him to pause and reflect that his political ally, George Cartier, had shouldered a musket against the Crown at St. Denis in 1837. The Commissioner of Public Works and the Finance Minister in the Conservative administration of 1861 had

acted as the chief advocates of annexation in the Canadas during the crisis of 1849, while John Rose and Sydney Smith had frequently advocated connection with the United States in their private conversations.<sup>37</sup> Brown was fully aware that the corporate elite had never been, and would never be, the last to sell the flag for the dollar. The Toronto editor continued to lecture and observed that "compared with these gentlemen, Mr. Wilson and Mr. McDougall are miracles of loyalty and devotion, and did no more than their duty in pointing out to the Imperial Government the danger of drawing Upper Canada into a position, the sole outlet from which would be union with the States."

The True Witness seemed to draw all the loose ends of North American politics together in an editorial of late May, 1861. Editor Edward Clerk had finally discovered that political honesty was a virtue unknown in Canada, not because Canadians were "Americanized," but because the prevalent form of government on the continent was essentially "Government by Corruption." The Montreal paper found that the situation was identical in the United States, whose social circumstances were identical to those of Canada, resulting in the "grossest corruption" in all departments of state. It was impossible to mitigate the evil under the existing circumstances according to the True Witness: "Corruption is the original sin, the inherent, iradicable vice of all democracies; and the tendency of the age, and more especially is defined as the 'aristocracy of blackguardism'." This situation was only prevented in England through the admixture of the aristocratic element, "which is the salt of the Constitution and prevents it from stinking."

Editor Clerk complained that the monarchical element in the Canadian constitution had become a mere shadow. Loyalty and honour, if they interrupted commercial pursuits and the flow of profits, or disturbed speculation in "Pork or Ashes" were sneered at by the irreverent as "old-fashioned, illiberal, and denounced as Lese-majeste, and as treason against the spirit of the age."<sup>38</sup> The Irish-Catholic newspaper saw no political or secular remedy to combat the downward progress of North American political life, but if there were any agencies which would allow Canada to avoid the headlong plunge into democratic forms, it had to be done through "the influence of religion, and the instrumentality of the Catholic Church." Both in the New World and the Old, the True Witness observed, "men and nations seem to be marching with ever accelerating velocity towards the abyss of democracy, which leads directly down to Imperialism or Caesarism, which is the Devil." It was evident that the views of the Grits and their desire for "Americanisms" would not be at all approved of by this conservative newspaper during the election year of 1861.

Despite the pessimism evident in the columns of the True Witness, the issue of disloyalty held too much potential for the Ministerialists to allow it to die just because the Opposition desired that it should be so. The Toronto Leader was determined to keep it alive and wrote long editorials about the "Grit conspiracy" to destroy the Canadian Union, and the dire effects of the break-up of the American Union.<sup>39</sup> The assault continued into July: "The Union must be maintained and every man affected by an inclination to 'look to Washington' for relief must be driven from the polls. Let the 'Union of the Canadas', and the 'Union with Great Britain'

be the issue on which the battle is fought." The quarrelsome Leader was not alone in the attack on the Grit platform of 1859 and 1861 calling for dissolution of the United Province of Canada. The Barrie Northern Advance enunciated the principles of the Conservative party in an issue of mid-June. They were written in such large print that no reader could mistake them: "British Connection, the British Constitution, Canada United." This paper advanced the point that these dicta were in danger, for William McDougall, one of the ablest of the Reform party, had told Canadians that under certain circumstances he was prepared to look to the United States for aid.<sup>40</sup> The Conservative Northern Advance called upon the Reformers to present a united front against any such proposals.

In an area long the haven for fugitive slaves from the American States, the Chatham Planet also violently opposed Grit plans for constitutional change. "The Clear Grit party (is) in favour of a revolution," screamed the headlines in one of its late June issues. This journal reprinted an old Globe editorial which had applauded the system prevalent in the Republic of sub-division of territory for local legislation, and had offered its assurance that this had secured political stability for the United States. Sarcastically applying the quotation to the present, the Planet suggested that if all the territory in Canada was divided and some "joint authority" established for local purposes as the Grits desired, then "this fine country would undoubtedly secure stability which the United States at present enjoy. If Canadians really desire that stability—which is no other than civil war, rebellion, bloodshed, assassination, anarchy—they can obtain their end by adopting the Globe's

advice—sub-divide the territory."<sup>41</sup>

Conservative candidates contesting the election took all possible advantage of the issue so created and magnified. Both John Beverely Robinson in Toronto West and John Crawford in the sister riding of Toronto East announced their opposition to dissolution of the union. Robinson considered the great issue before Canadians was whether the existing union between Canada East and Canada West would remain in existence, or whether Canada would be annexed to the United States.<sup>42</sup> During the spring and summer of 1861 the speech of a government candidate was incomplete if it did not include some expression of loyalty to the Union of 1840 and the British connection. The Chatham Planet showed that it was the leader of the Canada West Conservatives who used the issue of "disloyalty" with the greatest oratorical effect. Macdonald pleaded in Hamilton that "whatever you do adhere to the Union. We are a great country, and shall become one of the greatest if we preserve it; we shall sink into insignificance and adversity if we suffer it to be broken."<sup>43</sup>

In a campaign speech in London, Canada West, in June, 1861, Macdonald forcefully told his audience that the time had arrived to throw away petty differences and tell those who were "looking to Washington" that Canadians would have nothing to do with such a proposal. If some wanted to gaze at the Yankee Capitol they should not do so from Canada, but should proceed directly to Washington: "Our watchwords should be union with England under Her Majesty, and the Union of the Canadas. Let these people not look to Washington, but let them go thither."<sup>44</sup>

Ralph Vansittart recounted the activity in his riding during the



election of 1861. At one meeting with his opponent, Vansittart was supported by a number of speakers and active Tories from London, St. Thomas and Port Stanley, who interrupted any attempts by his Grit rival to hold conversation, with "a storm of cat-calls and hoots, and cries of chartist, traitor, yankee, etc."<sup>45</sup> The Conservative novice told the noisy, bustling crowd that they could show through their votes that whatever temporary disadvantages the citizens of Canada West might suffer, their patriotism and their loyalty to the English connection was strong enough to outweigh any of the existing minor evils.<sup>46</sup> Although the Grits anxiously awaited the arrival of "a detachment of Yankees and foreigners from the far corner of the township," young Vansittart won the riding.

On occasion, the Liberal group lent credence to the disloyalty charge by the very utterances of its members. Oliver Mowat complained to Brown that Michael Hamilton Foley had made him "wrathy" by his emphatic endorsement of "Rebellion."<sup>47</sup> The Huron Signal was quoted as stating that if nothing less than "revolution" could rid Canada West of the existing system, then it could be seriously debated whether revolution would not be justified.<sup>48</sup> At about the same time the Toronto British Whig quoted McDougall as having said that the people of Canada had risen once before and would surely rise again if the Ministry were not ousted at the polls.<sup>49</sup> All this led the Leader to condemn Gritism as "a monster which appears as a Disunionist; which assails Responsible Government; in a threat, tells us it will look to Washington for assistance."<sup>50</sup>

The Conservatives had a strong candidate in Toronto West in the person of J. B. Robinson Jr., who stressed the need to support the union

of the Canadas and to resist movements towards annexation to the United States. "He felt sure," wrote the Leader, "that the electors of Toronto had no intention of looking to Washington for aid."<sup>51</sup> His Liberal opponent, Adam Wilson, who had already successfully contested North York, showed some vision in his observation that the next Parliament would probably have considerable effect on Canada's future. Federation, a division of the Province, and even the suggestion of annexation to New York State were being spoken of, and would have to be discussed in a most serious manner in the near future. Wilson added that whatever course Canada adopted, he hoped that it would never join New York: "Upper Canada is not to be confined within her present limits--her limits must extend to the Pacific Ocean--that is her natural frontier."<sup>52</sup> Like the Globe, Wilson was aware that Canada's own manifest destiny lay in the possession of the great British territory to the west. A solid candidate, Wilson had been tainted by association with Brown and that was sufficient to cost him enough votes, including that of the ultra-loyalists, giving John Robinson the victory.<sup>53</sup>

In an effort to aid Angus Morrison, the Northern Advance interspersed its contents with short slogans: "Morrison and British Connection, McConkey and Revolution, Boulton and Annexation."<sup>54</sup> The Barrie paper was the chief ally of the Conservative candidate Morrison in the riding of Simcoe North, and it appeared to label all Liberals who promoted dissolution of the Canadian Union for purely domestic reasons, as annexationists in the continental sense. So odious had the Grit platform of "Disunion and Anti-Responsible Government" become in Canada West that anyone associated with

these "disunionists in disguise" had sufficiently destroyed his chances of election.<sup>55</sup> However, this appraisal by the Leader was not always correct. For example, J. White championed the Liberal cause in the Lake Ontario riding of Holton, and defeated his opponent by over three hundred votes.

In Hamilton city riding, Issac Buchanan stood for re-election. Despite the solid Conservative nature of this riding, both the Leader and the Hamilton Times thought it necessary to urge Hamiltonians to continue supporting Issac Buchanan. He addressed the voters in a patriotic tone: "We live...in a momentous period, and looking to the revolutionary changes which twelve months have witnessed in America I now see clearly that my agreeing to come forward again is a duty from which I have no right to flinch."<sup>56</sup> Another government candidate in the Hamilton area was the aging Methodist, Egerton Ryerson. He warned, in a Brantford speech, that there were influences in Canada West that if not properly and promptly checked, would result in consequences as dangerous as "those insane and fatal influences that actuated the participators of the troubles of 1837." Canada was indeed in grave danger when one could hear men in the Canadian Legislature, carried away by the "false idea of reform," stating that they would seek aid from the United States to heal the disease of the Canadian Union.<sup>57</sup> Ryerson asserted his own loyalty, claiming that he was the oldest reformer of the Robert Baldwin school. But he was not ashamed of the Tories for he could not dispel from his mind the fact that if there was a body of men "whose hearts are purely loyal," it was the Conservatives. His sentiments were warmly applauded by the Northern Advance.

Probably the most maligned and embarrassed candidate of the whole

campaign in 1861 was the author of the "look to Washington" statement. Contesting North Oxford, William McDougall attempted to clarify his outburst. He said that there was a danger that the Canadian people, especially in Canada West, might turn to the Americans as a last resort, for justice in the matter of representation by population. As the Stratford Beacon explained, he had not spoken of it as something good to be desired, but as an evil to be avoided.<sup>58</sup> Yet McDougall's defence did not prevent accusations of disloyalty being hurled at him by Issac Buchanan. The latter, who had recently won so easily in Hamilton City, had no personal platform to espouse but, according to the Free Press, did have some advice for the undecided voter: "The question for each of you is—am I for or against annexation."<sup>59</sup>

Buchanan had a week to campaign in the Oxford riding after his election in Hamilton. The Embryo Review was determined to do all in its editorial power for him before the mid-July polling day. It predicted that East Zorra would give a good account of itself on the side of "Order and Loyalty to the British Crown. No looking to Washington under any circumstances." This newspaper bluntly pointed out that Buchanan promoted "Order, Progress and Loyalty" while McDougall was on the side of "theoretical changes and an ill-disguised disposition to look to Washington." With the ministerial press flooding the riding with "handbooks, batteries, pamphlets and blue-books" all vilifying McDougall and extolling the qualities of Issac Buchanan, the Review was positive that North Oxford would show that the electors had no sympathy for McDougall's "revolutionary sentiments."<sup>60</sup> However, the Newmarket Era was pleased to announce that,

like the ridings of East and West Zorra, North Oxford had proved unfaithful at the poles. Instead of "Order, Progress and Loyalty" the electorate had given the Grit candidate a majority of over seven hundred votes, more than his employer George Brown had received when he won the seat in 1858.<sup>61</sup> William McDougall's majority, one of the largest in the Province, seemed to indicate that the "disloyalty" and "look to Washington" charges had little effect in this area.

Anti-Grit sentiment was greatly encouraged by the Tories who had published a campaign sheet entitled The Voter's Guide. To turn the British immigrant, and pockets of Loyalist remnants, from the Liberals, the sheet made profuse references to the speech by McDougall and accused the Reform party of condemning the British connection as the "worst Feature" of the Canadian system.<sup>62</sup> The Conservatives did not need the aid of such devices to win the Methodists away from the Grits, as there had been an understanding between Macdonald and Egerton Ryerson, the leader of that cult, which dated back to at least March of 1861. A month before McDougall's intemperate oratory, the Attorney-General West had written Ryerson advising him of the impending election, "which may determine the future of Canada, and whether it will be a limited Constitutional Monarchy or a Yankee Democracy."<sup>63</sup>

It is doubtful that the capital made by Macdonald and his party of the "look to Washington" utterance harmed the Liberal cause greatly. For example, McDougall and Michael Foley reaped huge majorities and, in fact, only George Brown was defeated. Brown's failure can be attributed to his alienation of various socio-religious groups rather than the "look

to Washington" statement, as he was the least guilty of connection with the remark, not having attended the session in which it was made. It did little harm to McDougall's later career, for the next year he was elevated to the Executive Council, and six years after the cagey fellow who had made such an issue of the notorious statement, appointed its author to the post of Queen's representative in Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territory, upon its transfer to the Canadian government.

The Liberals had not defeated the government, but they had lost only one seat. The Globe certainly spoke for the Reform party when it said that the verdict of the electors had been somewhat different than expected.<sup>64</sup> There were many reasons for the electoral performance of the Liberal party, including the "indiscretions" of the Globe, and the Northern Advance accused the former and its main contributors, past and present, of adopting a system of political warfare unprecedented in the annals of journalism. Sheppard, Brown, and McDougall had all, at one time or another, vilified and traduced the bench of the judiciary, insulted the Governor, and directed a vast array of additional slights towards most of the interest groups in the United Province.<sup>65</sup> After the repulse of Brown in the East Toronto riding, the Tory Hamilton Spectator, wild with joy, sang the swan song of the Grit party, and rejoiced in the knowledge that "the incubus...the instrument of faction and the most unscrupulous of time servers has been removed."<sup>66</sup> The Ottawa Union reported that the Norfolk Reformer, the London Free Press, and John Sandfield Macdonald's Cornwall Freeholder, all advocated a return to the liberal views of the past.<sup>67</sup> The "disloyalty" charge did not seem to play a vital role in the defeat of the

Reform party in the general election of 1861.

With the great Civil War between Blue and Grey hosts yet to rage in the south, the disloyalty accusations against the Reformers harmed them in an indirect way. It did not allow them to use a scheme for federal union which was part of the platform of 1859. And while there was not any overt expression of anti-Americanism as such during the campaign, in the sense of invectives being hurled at the United States, it seemed that Canadians carted out the annexationist threat as electioneering material any time it appeared like a profitable political venture. Very few Canadians really considered it a serious proposal.

Although there was a very substantial press warfare going on between Canada and the United States at the time of the election, anti-Americanism was frequently expressed in the Canadian papers by a smug disdain and contempt for American political institutions. To advocate a change away from British practices towards those of the Republic was tantamount to "looking to Washington" and being a "disloyal annexationist," in other words, all the things that the Conservatives had accused the Liberals of being. To advocate for Canada a federal union suggestive of the one in the "Great Split Republic" to the south was nothing short of inadvisable and tragic. Liberals, therefore did not press the federal scheme during the campaign and this was a large plank taken out of their platform.

Although, as Conservative Ralph Vansittart related in his Memoirs, his party did not push for any type of federal scheme in the 1861 general election, neither did it have to shy away from it. Federation was one of

the policies announced in the electoral manifesto which Macdonald addressed to the electors in Kingston.<sup>68</sup> The Kingston News reported that he advocated it again in his first important speech of the campaign in the turbulent Kingston City Hall.<sup>69</sup> However, the Quebec Morning Chronicle, a ministerial paper which had campaigned hard for federal union during the preceding months had become disillusioned over the government's failure to initiate any positive action. "What has been done? Sooner or later a confederation must come, if British power and British interests are to be maintained on this portion of the North American continent. We should like to know what has been done, that we may shape our future course accordingly."<sup>70</sup> The issue was not really dead but it had become impolitic in 1861. A new combination of circumstances would be required to bring federal union to the forefront of Canadian politics again.

A federal union of British North American colonies, larger in geographical vision than Dorion's modest scheme of 1858, was upheld as the sole means of ending the hostility between the races in Canada, and of forming a strong and powerful northern nationality which might in some measure control the great and increasing influence of the United States on the American continent. Le Canadien declared that a simple repeal of the Canadian Union advocated by the Reformers of Canada West would endanger Canada's future and also bring about annexation to the United States. For its part, the English-language True Witness saw Confederation as an answer to Canada's problems, but it had to involve strong guarantees for Canada East. In the neighbouring Republic which had a homogeneous population "in language, blood and religion," the contest between "States'



Rights" and "Federal Rights" had never ceased to rage. According to editor Clerk, the former had been triumphant for the most part, because no single state stood in the same position of national and religious antagonism towards all the other members of a confederation as Catholic Canada East would, in the case of a British North American federation.<sup>71</sup>

By early May of 1861 it was obvious to all that the circumstances which had been so particularly favourable to the permanence and prosperity of the American Republic, and so different from the composition of the British colonies, had already crumbled away because of the impossibility of determining the respective limits of state and federal authority. In the Yankee Republic, the states had generally worked against the federal government and for the recalcitrant state, from a well-grounded fear that their own privileges would some day be attacked. Yet "French and Romish" Canada East would be the object of jealousy and aversion, her sister provinces gladly siding with the central authority in oppressing her, and crushing her distinctive nationality and religion, the latter being "the life's breath of her nationality." The civil conflict in the United States was providing an object lesson for politicians and journalists in both sections of the United Province of Canada.

Aside from domestic considerations, a measure like repeal of the Union without confederation accompanying it would greatly weaken the defence of the Province against the United States. Added Le Canadien: "Menacés à la fois par les Etats-Unis et par le Haut-Canada, il nous faut un moyen de conjurer ce double danger." This Quebec newspaper also believed that the colonies should take the initiative towards union as the

Imperial Parliament would not raise any objections if it was thought that such a British American union would provide a means of checking any American advances upon Canada.<sup>72</sup> The member for St. Denis in the Canadian Assembly, Jean Charles Chapais, had some interesting comments to make for the edification of his fellow members, especially those representing Canada West. "Le drapeau qui flotte sur nos monuments peut ombrager les différentes nationalités qui habitent ces provinces. Il doit toutes les couvrir de ses plis glorieux et les protéger avec une égale et commune justice. Certes! Nous aurions mauvaise grâce, aujourd'hui surtout, de songer à changer nos couleurs pour le drapeau sanglant et déchiré de la république voisine!"<sup>73</sup> Chapais also made references to the poor hospitality which Canada West had shown the Prince of Wales during his recent visit to North America, in contrast to the good taste evident in Canada East: "Aucune ville du Bas-Canada n'a eu l'humiliation du lui voir décliner une hospitalité malséante. Nulle part, chez-nous, l'émeute ne lui a fait escorte! Je ne sais si le Haut-Canada, avec sa prétendue loyauté, pourrait en dire autant?" It was obvious that most aspects of North American politics could not be considered in isolation.

The election of 1861 had not settled the basic politico-cultural problems of the Canadian Union. It had left provincial politics in a state of uncertain equilibrium, at the very time when the entire continent seemed rocked by the shocks of the American Civil War. The petty irritations of Canadian party politics continued, as well as certain huge preoccupations such as the problem of Anglo-American and Canadian-American relations. The political future of the North American continent had become an enigma,

raised by the Civil War and far beyond the healing powers of a Canadian general election. Large and sinister uncertainties were expected to remain, especially in a continent rapidly falling into dissolution.

## II

On April 12, the Confederate guns had opened fire upon Fort Sumter in Charleston harbour. The beginning of the Civil War in the United States was to mark an important stage in Canadian political philosophy on such topics as representation by population, political reform, and federal union. The session of 1861 had been remarkable chiefly for the long and wearisome discussions on the well-worn questions of double majority and representation by population. The latter having been rejected by the Assembly on more than one occasion, ceased to be a party question as the Cabinet had been divided on it. John A. Macdonald, the leader of the Canada West Conservatives, had more than once declared opposition to the principle of "Rep. by Pop.," as some of Brown's more irreverent followers called it. The member for Kingston declared that it was a violation of the Union compact of 1840, and because it was a recognition of the principles of universal suffrage, Macdonald asserted that it was one of the greatest evils that could befall a political state. It was one of the worst of "Americanisms." Macdonald declared that unless property were protected and made one of the principles upon which representation was based, "we might perhaps have a people altogether equal, but we should cease to be a people altogether free."<sup>74</sup>

Both Macdonald and the leader of the Bleus of Canada East saw eye to eye on the evils inherent in universal suffrage. They shared the widely spread belief that the Civil War was, in part, the inevitable bloody outcome of mob rule and presidential despotism.<sup>75</sup> The Union agreed with the London Times that universal suffrage was simply another name for "universal humbug," while Richard Cartwright related that Canadians in 1861 looked upon the military power of the United States as little more than bands of armed mobs.<sup>76</sup> Experience had shown that universal suffrage left a nation weak and led it towards "anarchy and despotism." The Perth Standard, Toronto British Colonist, and Simcoe British Canadian all came out against the doctrine of representation by population: "The arguments against mere numbers being the basis of representation, we think unanswerable. Let the Grits try."<sup>77</sup>

The main newspaper spokesman for the Grit party, George Brown's Toronto Globe, had maintained its position in the general election of 1861. because there had been a stable and unyielding fifty percent of the electorate in Canada West who had remained unswervingly Liberal. They discounted the disloyalty charge against the Grits and voted as they always did, for such concepts as representation by population. This platform had awakened a "slight shudder of apprehension" among the French population of Canada East. This formidable doctrine had a popular appeal in Canada West that gave it some of the character of a crusade. In the contemptuous phraseology of the Montreal Gazette, it was the particular "lobby" of George Brown and an increasingly larger number of the members of the Legislature from Canada West.<sup>78</sup>

The vigorous Globe did not have the same fear of the "Americanism" involved in representation by population as was the case in Canada East. It repeatedly reminded Canadians that the basis of North American democracy was not the city mob of Europe but an intelligent, independent, agricultural class. The well-read, rural population of the United States controlled the country, and "no military dictator could conquer them." Brown's paper was convinced that the greatest standing army ever raised could not keep a nation of twenty million "reading men" and thousands of miles in area, under tutelage. However, D'Arcy McGee raised the point that "if stability be essential to good government, they have not stability, and therefore, their description of government cannot be good either for themselves or for others."<sup>79</sup> Most Canadians were inclined to agree with McGee in this appraisal of American political practices and policies.

Among those in Canada who had a strong antipathy to the popular forms of government in the United States was the Attorney-General East. Cartier placed great emphasis upon the monarchy, and as a property-holder, he believed that property as well as popular rights should be represented in government.<sup>80</sup> He placed most of the blame for the dissension in the Canadas on the Grit cry for representation by population: "Nous qui ont habitons au nouveau monde, nous ne devons plutot tourner les yeux vers nos voisins qui ont le bonheur de posseder une constitution tout entiere soumise au principe de la representation basse sur la population." The system was unjust as the doctrine was not founded upon English principles.<sup>81</sup> Despite the propaganda emanating from the Americans about the merits of their "republican democracy," Cartier told the House of Assembly: "Je

n'aime pas le système américain. J'aime le régime de responsabilité pratique en Angleterre, et, si aujourd'hui les Américains sont à la veille de conflits déplorables, cela est dû entièrement à l'irresponsabilité des chefs de l'administration." Added the Bleu leader: "Ce serait faire un assez maigre éloge des institutions sous lesquelles nous vivons que de prétendre qu'elles sont préférables de peu à celles des Etats-Unis."

With an executive power as weak as that of the United States, which under the dictates and pressure of the mob might be compelled to act against reason and international law, the Ottawa Union urged defensive preparations in the Canadas.<sup>82</sup> Many in Canada had regarded the coming of the civil strife in the American Republic as the result of an excess of "equality." They had a strong dislike of the American political democracy, and found the social democracy of an egalitarian society exhibited in the United States scarcely less amenable. The American Civil War had been the result of the social process in the United States. In the nineteenth century, the United States had been transformed with such rapidity that stability and security had become vanishing values. The abundance of the country had an adverse result on social values. A Southerner, Joseph G. Baldwin described "flush times" in Mississippi and Alabama in this manner: "The condition of society may be imagined:--vulgarity--ignorance--fussy and arrogant pretension--unmitigated rowdyism--bullying insolence."<sup>83</sup>

Canadians felt sure that in nineteenth-century America, all the recognized values of orderly civilization were gradually being eroded. Intimate domestic relations were drastically altered in the United States,

and the citizens of that nation were known abroad for their "uncurbed egotism." Rarely in human history had a people felt itself so completely unfettered by precedent, lacking all respect for the lessons of the past. Every aspect of American life witnessed the desire to throw off precedent and to rebel from authority, and nowhere was this rejection more complete than in the political sphere. At the same time, the declining power of government was paralleled by increased popular participation in it. Democracy as measured by the franchise came to Canada quite differently. It arrived almost by stealth, without battle flags and banners. The fact that the extension of the suffrage had become almost universal for white males in the United States by 1861 was another cause for the general democratic rejection of authority in the Republic. The universal democracy evident in the "States" lacked the subtleness and delicacy required to control "mob rule."<sup>84</sup>

It is well to remember that during the mid-nineteenth century in Canada, "democracy" was still suspect, and for many it held Jacobin or Jacksonian overtones. Denying any subservience to "Americanism," the Conservative press would have none of it. In fact, both the Leader and the Reform Globe pointed to the evils of rule by the masses. "Our form of government is not a democracy," snarled the Leader, "unbridled and uncontrolled, completely in the hands of the mob."<sup>85</sup> When the two leading newspapers escaped the noose of sectional politics, they joined together to attack the "tyranny and slavery of the republican Americans."

Both the Leader and the Globe, among most other Canadian papers, expressed the central position of mid-Victorian liberalism in their view

of democracy. Although they manifested a desire for a wide, popular electorate they also wished to maintain a qualified franchise which recognized property and intelligence. A proper and equitable suffrage would only prevent the rule of ignorance and mere numbers. The Union opposed the "creeping democracy" prevalent in the municipal governments and volunteer militia of the Province.<sup>86</sup> Brown's Toronto newspaper denied that the doctrine of representation by population implied universal suffrage, as claimed by the opposition press.<sup>87</sup> Thus there appeared to be little in the Canadian press during this period of the spirit of Jeffersonian or Jacksonian democracy, or much faith in the "natural worth of the common man."<sup>88</sup> The Ottawa Union, condemning any American deviation from the British norm, believed Canada should follow the authorities, doctrines and proper practices of Great Britain in political as well as economic matters. The guide-post was contemporary liberal Britain.<sup>89</sup>

One English commentator showed his appreciation of the changes that universal suffrage had brought to American life. Writing in October, 1861, Walter Bagehot shrewdly observed:<sup>90</sup>

The steadily augmenting power of the lower orders in America has naturally augmented the dangers of the Federal Union.... (A) dead level of universal suffrage runs, more or less, over the whole length of the United States...(and) it places the entire control over the political action of the whole State in the hands of common labourers, who are of all classes the least instructed--of all the most aggressive--of all the most likely to exaggerate every momentary sentiment--of all the least likely to be capable of a considerable toleration for the constant oppositions of opinion, the not infrequent unreasonableness of other States.... The



unpleasantness of mob government has never before been exemplified so conspicuously, for it never before has worked upon so large a scene.

It was obvious to Canadians of the Tory accent that the United States by the middle of the nineteenth century had begun to suffer from an excess of liberty. Americans were increasingly unable to arrive at reasoned, independent judgements upon the problems which faced their society. The attempts to curb the tyranny of the majority were unsuccessful, contradicting the democratic currents of the era. American society by 1861 had proven itself singularly ill-equipped to meet the shocks which led to Southern secession.

It was the excessive democracy found in the municipal government of Canadian cities and towns that led Friel and Perry of the Ottawa Union to launch a series of editorials condemning the importation of American political practices. In an opening statement this newspaper declared:<sup>91</sup>

If the civil war in the late United States was productive of no other good than what will be derived from exposing the fallacy of Republican institutions, and demonstrating the practical absurdity of democratic rule, it will answer a purpose eminently serviceable to politicians in this reasoning age, and point out unmistakably the errors of that system of which it was lauded as the ne plus ultra of perfection.

Canada had had her share of constitution makers, each endeavouring to out-strip the other in his study of Washington and Sieyes in the manufacture of a perfect system of government, "red hot, at a moment's notice." The municipal institutions of the capital city bore evident marks of the "absurdities" of these theorists, as the community was rapidly falling into

debt due to the existence of the pure democratic principle in civic affairs. The Union, a business-oriented paper, observed that the truth of the principle that the people were the source of all power did not necessarily involve the theory of community of property, "nor the right of the servant to tax his master's industry for his own benefit."

The result of this American influence on municipal government was an evil which was increasing every year in the cities of Ottawa, London, Hamilton, Toronto, and the towns of Port Hope and Coburg. The Union editors accused the majority of those possessing low property qualifications of controlling the franchise and thus the minority of capitalists who made the most significant contributions to the public treasury lacked sufficient political power. One month later this newspaper added: "Our municipal system has been belauded by rabid liberals and sucking politicians of all shades of opinion, till the country has been persuaded into an infatuated idea of its superior excellence." Nothing short of actual experience regarding the attendant evils of a system which combined much of the "one-sided democratic tendencies of the age," could convince Canadians of the necessity for legislative interference "with those little nests of petty demagogism." It was no wonder that the "fearful results already shadowed forth" had led to the virtual bankruptcy of two or three cities in the western sector of Canada West, the consequence of the combination of the worst features of unlimited democracy with unrestricted powers of taxation.<sup>92</sup>

Such a state of affairs created a feeling of uneasiness with respect to the "ultimate end towards which we are drifting" not only in Canada, but also in the Mother Country. The Union pointed out that some

leading English newspapers had recently charged Canada with the "hateful terms engendered by American institutions, of repudiation of our just liabilities." Editors Friel and Perry noted that although the damage had been great from "our downward tendencies in the democratic line," it was still well known in Canada West that a reaction would unmistakably set in: "Conservative ideas and practices, if fairly directed, will go far to neutralize the destructive ingredients introduced by ignorant theorists into our constitutional system." According to the Ottawa paper, the foremost amongst the changes demanded by common sense was that of the safety of property which "social order" required.

The effect of imported practices on municipal government in Canada had illustrated the fallacy of democratic principles when it was followed to its "legitimate conclusion." The total abnegation of the rights of property had thrown the whole power of the affairs in Canada's corporate towns and cities into the hands of one class of people, the class "most ignorant and least reflective." The constant appeal to the masses in municipal elections without even the slightest check on the "wildest and most absurd speculation," had burdened the municipal system and disgraced the country, as well as injuring the country's financial credit. The Union demanded that the whole constitution of Canadian municipalities be altered, and that municipal officials such as aldermen, should not be the "creature of the mob—'mob elected officials'."<sup>93</sup> Never one to let an issue escape full coverage, the Ottawa newspaper observed that legislative interference was the great want of the day if the municipal situation was to be rectified.

In mid-December, 1861, Friel and Perry finished their discussion of the American influence on municipal government in the Province. Their newspaper reiterated the charge that every day made the necessity of reform more apparent. The constant appeal to the people, the interminable elections, and a popular system without check or balance had led the way to evils of increasing magnitude, for which there were only the alternatives of "repudiation or revolution as a permanent cure." When the Prescott Telegraph questioned the correctness of the Union on municipal reform, the latter remarked that it was the rural areas that were most anxious to defend the "humbug." The Ottawa journal accused the Telegraph of the following: "The ideas of that journal are exclusively American, requiring direct legislative interference in everything, whereas we were for the most liberal method of leaving those very virtuous masses, of which he appears to be so enamoured, the right to tax themselves, subject to the natural restriction that those who pay the most should have the greatest amount of votes in the matter."<sup>94</sup> The problem of this "creeping democracy" in municipal government in Canada, and the strong opposition of the Ottawa Union, provided a case study of Canadian reaction to imported "Americanisms."

This newspaper also spent a great deal of the year 1861 in a study of the danger likely to arise for the Province if the Canadian militia were not radically improved. In spite of the presence of a small but admirably appointed Royal army, provided by the "wisdom and care of the Home Government," it was evident that this respectable force, though "fully able to cope with anything our neighbours can at present produce, would be sorely pressed if the stalwart arms of our hardy yeomanry were withheld

from rendering that assistance...(for) which...they are so admirably fitted."<sup>95</sup> Canada had been fortunate in that generals January and February furnished them with the opportunity to acquire the strong discipline required to make a militia force effective: "The want of this qualification has been notoriously apparent in the miserable civil war now raging amongst our neighbours, and it is to be hoped our rulers will take warning from the example and avoid the errors which that struggle has made so plainly visible." The Union saw the results of the clash at Bull Run as due to the democratic manner in which the American forces were put together, lacking the discipline to form a crack fighting unit.

It would be the greatest folly said the Ottawa paper, to suppose that the same indomitable courage that won victories at Chateaugay and Lundy's Lane would suffice against the improvements of the modern military. If Canada were again put to the severe test in a contest for existence she would have to be prepared for it, by teaching those whose duty it was to defend Canadian soil the "proper and scientific mode of doing so."<sup>96</sup> In a continual assault on the problems of the militia and the need for reform, editors Friel and Perry advised that the whole complex system by which volunteers for the militia were raised was perhaps the least of those "blunders which has made the organization so totally inefficient." Indeed, "the boasted success of the American system seems to have been continually before the eyes of the originators of our organization, and the Canadian people cannot be too thankful that the humbug has exploded in the disgraceful manner of the Bull Run farce."<sup>97</sup> The "absolute failure" of the United States militia system should have made a serious reorganization

of the Canadian system a matter for some consideration to the rulers of the United Province long before 1861: "Procrastination is seldom attended with material benefits."

Henry Friel and George Perry showed that American affairs had great significance for reflective provincials, and they continued to provide articles and editorials on the militia system, usually to the detriment of the American example and its "democratic composition." There was the possibility that the Civil War could in some manner precipitate a war between England and the United States. England could not afford "a little war," and if a blow had to be delivered, Canadians must resolve that it would be "heavy and resolute." With a great deal of wisdom, the Ottawa newspaper pointed out that such a contingency might well change the political and geographical features of the continent. It was, thus, Canada's duty to be prepared: "Let us then prepare at once to meet an exigency which we cannot avert or prevent by the organization of a force sufficient to make ourselves feared and respected."<sup>98</sup>

The necessity of military reorganization had been "universally advocated by every respectable journal" in the Canadas, and the decisions of the provincial press had been in line with public opinion. Said the Union: "Common sense, aided by the experience acquired by the so-called American revolution established in the public mind that the militia is a very pretty and expensive toy, of little use whatever, except to help a given number of important gentlemen...handles for their highly respectable names." A recent regulation of the American service "abolished the sham altogether," and the United States government would in the future turn its

attention to a regular army, in which the volunteers would be incorporated: "Profiting from the dearly bought experience of that nation, it is to be hoped that our Militia authorities will not perpetuate (it) by their political influence." Added the Union: "The events of the American revolution has given a death-blow to the volunteer militia humbug." The argument that an armed force could be made efficient by "democratic" means had been proven false. The closer any local Canadian force approximated the uniform, discipline and organization of the Imperial army, the more efficient the Canadian defense force would be in the face of an attack.<sup>99</sup> Canada could only be attacked by one country: the United States, with its mob-rule, "spread-eagleism," democratic-republicanism, and a host of additional expressions which Canadians were inclined to mutter in reference to their southern neighbour.

There was considerable disagreement in Canada as to whether war might be precipitated by United States-Great Britain friction. The Globe saw no danger of war in Canada and claimed the Conservatives were simply trying to whip up a war-scare for political capital. The London Prototype and the Toronto Leader warned against Yankee designs. Said the Leader: "...events by no means improbably may bring Britain within the range of the revolutionary maelstrom which has destroyed the foundations of the great Republic."<sup>100</sup>

The Globe, in early May, had noted that Canadians were quite astonished to hear that they were "panting to be annexed" to the United States, and advised its readers that it was no use to argue with those possessing such views: "It is no use telling them we don't see the Republic

through their spectacles."<sup>101</sup> Many Canadian newspapers felt that the Civil War had greatly diminished any attractiveness that union with the United States might have held. A Toronto correspondent of the Canadian News noted the "tempting offers" and came to the conclusion that, "...we are as far off annexation now as we ever were. Indeed, so far from these foolish Yankee notions producing a favourable result, they have created a strong feeling of indignation among all classes of our people."<sup>102</sup> The Conservative Leader, in a humorous vein discussed the possibility of union with the United States:<sup>103</sup>

The current notion in Canada is, that if there is to be any union between the Northern States and British America, or between any portion of the Northern States and British America, the annexation will be in the other direction. The Republic is just now in a condition of dilapidation that compels sober-minded persons to look around for some harbour of refuge from the ruin with which they are threatened.

Several other journals stated their conviction that after secession many of the states of the American Republic would join a great British North American Confederacy.<sup>104</sup>

The Tory Hamilton Spectator admitted that there were a few among the people who earnestly desired to see the Province broken into fragments and annexed to the United States.<sup>105</sup> There had always been a certain acceptance of the idea of merging with the United States in the western districts of Canada West, but it had never been an overwhelming force. Le Canadien, while declaring that annexation had no appeal whatever for French Canadians, had observed that the people of the western peninsula of Canada West were disposed to adopt the American flag. The Quebec Daily News



later supported the view that many who were open annexationists resided in Canada West. In fact, "an organ of the Wesleyan Methodists of Canada West" had published an annexationist article, written by Reverend Thomas Hurlburt. The Quebec paper saw a good reason for the many adherents in Canada West of union with the Republic: "It is not unlikely that this insane desire for annexation has its source in the union of Upper and Lower Canada, and grows out of the disposition manifested by the latter...."<sup>106</sup>

For their part, many in Canada West recognized that there was also some annexationist sentiment in Canada East, which had been kept alive by the Rouges. The leader of that faction, J. E. B. Dorion, expressed the feeling that if Britain refused to defend Canada, the latter would most certainly be annexed to the United States in the very near future. He said: "Notre marche est aux Etats-Unis."<sup>107</sup> Following the theme of the London Free Press, Le Journal de Quebec added: "(A)nnexation to the United States has been spoken of with the most incredible levity."<sup>108</sup> However, the ideas of the Rouges were subject to the crushing political dominance of Cartier's Bleus and were constantly harassed by the clergy. They lacked real political power in comparison to that of the Grits in Canada West.<sup>109</sup>

A strong friend of George Brown, Luther Holton of Montreal had for years proclaimed his belief in the continuance of the Imperial tie and loyalty to the British sovereign, frequently denouncing annexation with considerable vehemence. Despite his annexationist proclivities of 1849 and his claim of association with the Rouges or advanced liberals, he addressed an electoral gathering in 1863 in a most "conservative" fashion: "The connection between Canada and the empire of which we form a great part must

be maintained at all hazards. Whatever sacrifices the maintenance of that connection involves, whether in the form of privation or even of actual war, we must meet them like men."<sup>110</sup> Many newspapers who appeared pro-annexationist did so out of fear of the Republic, not from a fervent desire to join in the American way of life. If the United States invaded Canada there would be a substantial destruction of property in Canada West, particularly in the western sector which felt it would be abandoned at the first sign of real hostilities. If Canada were absorbed into the Republic, there would be no invasion and thus "perpetual peace."<sup>111</sup> The Quebec Daily News, after studying the question, concluded that it was not a serious proposition for consideration. While the Leader was prophesying an American invasion of Canada after the Civil War, another Canadian journal reported that a correspondent of a Detroit newspaper found that the upper peninsula of Michigan was considering annexation to Canada.<sup>112</sup> It was a humorous twist when one recalled the 1861 press campaign of the New York Herald.

John A. Macdonald made no coherent statement in regard to fear of an American invasion in 1861. However, as noted during the study of the 1861 election campaign, he was not unwilling to charge his opponents with being pro-Yankee if it would keep the Conservative party in office.<sup>113</sup> In mid-June, his party had warned of the "Clear Grit treason," indicating that there was a powerful, subversive organization working to plant the republican institutions of the Yankees among Canadians. The "Revolutionary Designs of the Red Republicans" would be countered by a demonstration of loyalty to the true principles of monarchy.<sup>114</sup> Backed by the powerful railroad interests

in the Province, the Conservatives promulgated the "bogey of annexationism," by means of "voluminous literature" on patriotism, defence, and other matters.<sup>115</sup> The vicious electoral campaign of 1861 did much to bring resentment against the North during the hey-day of the journalistic warfare between the New York and Canadian presses.

The Globe's tendency to identify with the Northern cause was seen by the rival Leader as paving the way for future amalgamation. In fact, the Conservative paper said that if Canada should become involved in the American war, it would be part of the Reform programme to promote annexation. The partisan wrangling over who were loyal and who were annexationists gathered momentum after the opening hostilities in the United States. The stigma attached to the deputy leader of the Grits for having supposed annexationist plans was extended by one paper, which saw a sinister plot behind Liberal policies:<sup>116</sup>

(I)t is more than suspected that, at the very time Mr. McDougall broached his joint authority scheme in the Toronto Convention, parties who were connected with the political direction of the Globe, were in communication with Washington to test the feeling there in favour of the annexation of the Canadian Provinces.

The ministerial Quebec Morning Chronicle, long regarded as John A. Macdonald's mouthpiece, continued an active assault to discredit the loyalty of the Grits and the Rouges. In June of 1861 it wailed;<sup>117</sup>

We could present numberless other extracts, corroborative of these, but we have written enough to prove that both in Upper and Lower Canada the object of the Opposition is, first, to limit the prerogative of the Crown, then to destroy altogether the monarchical principle in our Government, lastly to annex this

country to the United States.

George Brown's Toronto Globe denied the Leader's charge that it was hired by Washington to espouse the Northern cause.<sup>118</sup> The Perth Courier took up the cause of the Globe and disparaged the "disgraceful" and unfounded charges of the Conservative press to discredit Brown's paper by attempting to prove that it was in the pay of Washington and that it looked forward to annexation.<sup>119</sup> And the Ottawa Union saw that there was never a better opportunity for maintaining "with unbroken ranks the national honour." This paper advised: "A contented and happy people, a country possessed of all the material from which greatness is built up, it is in our power, laying aside all the little vexations of local politics, to act a dignified part as the outpost of the great empire, of which we form an integral part."<sup>120</sup> The worst enemies of Canada were the politicians who, in such trying times, had raised a cry to divide the people. Yet the Union had little doubt that the press of the country would set things right, and that the "evil reports" received would not be permitted to "disturb the happy harmony that prevails regarding the question of our loyalty to the British connection, and our appreciation of the free institutions it is our privilege to enjoy." The Independent Ottawa paper showed more common sense than did most Canadian newspapers during this period.

The campaign heroics of the 1861 election played a heavy role. Editors Henry J. Friel and George H. Perry told Union subscribers that there "never was a period when the loyalty of Canadians of all classes was as evident as at the present. Even the foolish slip of Mr. Washington McDougall is cause of merriment to his Grit associates, and the unlucky

wight himself has laboured hard to remove the impression that he was at all in earnest." And Canada West was not alone in its loyal sentiments declared the Union: "As to the French Canadian population we believe that no class of the population excel them in a desire to perpetuate our institutions, and none value more the progressive, liberal and enlightened rule of Great Britain, than do they."<sup>121</sup> The matter of loyalty among the French-Canadian people was "a matter of history no less than is that of the descendants of the British Isles," who were predominant in Canada West.

When one of the editors of the Globe described with rhetorical flourish the desperate course which Canada West might be forced to follow because of accumulated wrongs, it was only natural that Macdonald and the Leader should pounce upon McDougall's fatal remark. The Kingston lawyer told a shocked audience that some might go to Washington, "but the loyal population will stay here, happier that the others are away, and if they try to return with an army at their back, why, in the name of the militia-men of Canada, let them come."<sup>122</sup> To illustrate that the political divisions of Canada West affected the entire Province, La Minerve joined the anti-Reform refrain of its contemporaries:<sup>123</sup>

Le suppléant de M. Brown nous a menacé, de  
l'annexion du Haut-Canada aux Etats-Unis:  
cette menace ne nous surprend guère, il y  
a longtemps que les goûts et les tendances  
de ces messieurs, nous font soupçonner  
leurs désirs, et nous pensons que le  
gouvernement anglais n'a jamais en sur ce  
point moins de clairvoyance que nous.

Throughout the years 1862 and 1863, the loyalty question continued to have political importance. One newspaper reported in early January, 1862 that:<sup>124</sup>

(W)hen we find a party advocating steadily the adoption of American innovations...and finally hear them proclaiming in Parliament their intention of looking to Washington for the redress of fancied political grievances, we cannot say that suspicions as to their motives are entirely out of place.

The defeat of the Militia Bill in 1862 raised again the spectre of disloyalty. Said the Conservative Montreal Gazette quite bluntly:<sup>125</sup>

The loyal men of this country, the friends of British connection, cannot hesitate as to which side they will choose; the enemies of British connection, equally those who are avowed annexationists as those who are secret traitors, will on the other hand, just as naturally fall in on the side of those who make objections. This is now the simple issue, the complexion to which the argument has come.

The elections of the spring and summer of 1863, like those of 1861, were used to demonstrate the utilization of "annexationism" and "disloyalty" as political weapons in Canada. There was the employment of recrimination, abuse, subversion, charge and counter-charge, the Conservatives calling the Liberals disloyal and "pernicious democrats looking to the American Republic." Declared the Montreal French-language paper, La Minerve: "Les plus grosses têtes de la secte démocratique profèrent, dans les occasions sobernelles des formules de loyauté d'attachement de l'Angleterre et à ses institutions." Despite the ferocity of the Conservative attacks during these election campaigns, the Globe continued to take its opponents to task for their ever-present abandon in shouting "disloyal" at the members of the Reform party.<sup>126</sup>

Fear of the "Americanization" of Canada had nearly always played a role in Canadian politics, and this was especially true during the years

of inter-national crisis during the 1860's. The Civil War in the United States had considerable influence on the electorate in Canada at this time, since the internecine conflict in the Republic had indicated that the American system was self-destructive, the result of an excess of democracy and lack of political stability. And as the Canadas were subject to the "infernal bluster" of the Yankee press and threats of annexationism to a larger degree than usual in 1861, Canadians were less inclined to be charitable towards the American example than may have otherwise been the case.

### III

Canadian leaders had only intermittently been in a position to consider the larger Canadian questions in isolation. The continental convulsions leading to the creation of a Confederacy at Richmond regurgitated the whole question of political unions in general, and federal unions in particular. It presented the still more fundamental problem of the validity of the democratic-republican form of government.

According to John A. Macdonald, federative union was still the only really acceptable solution for the difficulties of the Canadian Union of 1840. As he told a bustling Kingston audience in 1861, Canadians were not happy about the fratricidal strife raging across the border, but they must take advantage "of the faults and defects of their constitution." As reported by the Kingston News, Canadians had to have a stronger central government than that of the pre-secession United States, to avoid the risk

of following the same path as the Republic.<sup>127</sup> The lamentable conflict in the American Republic, he told the Assembly, had been the result of a fatal error: the lack of a powerful central government. If Canadians followed the true principles of federation, they could avoid this tragic mistake, and in the words of the Montreal Gazette, build "an immense confederation of free men, the greatest confederacy of civilized and intelligent men that had ever had an existence on the face of the globe."<sup>128</sup>

Most Canadian newspapers made a practice of asserting their loyalty to Great Britain and the monarchical system, in opposition to democracy and republicanism. According to the Conservatives, no paper which advocated any change in Canada's relations with Great Britain could look for popularity in Canada. There were few in Canada in the 1860's who did not have a strong affinity for British political tradition.<sup>129</sup> Macdonald, Cartier, and McGee held a similar view on the value and future of democracy and republicanism. By 1861 they all believed in the monarchy and responsible parliamentary government, as opposed to the divided powers and constitutional checks of republican institutions. In a speech to the Legislative Assembly in April of 1861, D'Arcy McGee declared that he opposed democratic constitutions, although he was not afraid of "the bugbear of universal suffrage." He was content with the standards of suffrage in Canada. In another address in Toronto several years later, McGee vowed that his views had not changed on the American polity. However, he preferred the British form of government not because it was British, but because it was the best and he rejected the republican system not because it was republican, but because he thought it was not the best.<sup>130</sup>



Macdonald had not regarded the break-up of the American Union with a great deal of satisfaction, and in fact regretted such a course of events. According to the Gazette, the Conservative leader was sure that the vigor of the Anglo-Saxon influence in North America would allow both Americans and Canadians to see through their difficulties, while this common ground made it easy for Macdonald to sympathize with the misfortunes of the Republic.<sup>131</sup> Like McGee, he sympathized with the Americans but this feeling did not weaken his resolve to avoid the lessons of war in the Canadas. Both the Leader and the Kingston News, showing their monarchical colours, saw the American controversy as being directly attributable to the evils inherent in a republican form of government. The secession movement had clearly indicated that republicanism had collapsed under the slightest pressure possible.<sup>132</sup>

Charles Lindsey, editor of the Leader, asked his readers, "Is Republicanism a failure?" His editorial was an affirmation of the superior quality of British forms, warning of the contagion of American constitutional ideas.<sup>133</sup> Lindsey did not recognize slavery as the root cause of disunion in the Republic: "Slavery cannot be the real cause of difference, otherwise the South and the North could in twenty-four hours compose their dissensions, for the leading Northern politicians all declare their anxiety in no way to injure the South. But men have reasoned themselves into the necessity of taking some desperate step, and their pent up anger cannot have vent unless in attacking the very Union." The Leader placed a great deal of the blame for the situation in the United States on the American executive for not knowing whether to advance or retreat in dealing with the conflicting

forces. It was the "vicious principle" in American politics that made the President both a party leader and a party prisoner, more instrument of a faction than head of a great nation.

In an issue of mid-November, 1861, the Leader observed that there were some Canadians who lauded "as the perfection of wisdom the most despotic acts of a republican government, and who condemn every act of their own. They are always assuming that every institution is good or bad in proportion as it approaches to extreme democracy or recedes from that infallible standard of perfection."<sup>134</sup> Anything that hinted at republicanism was hotly repudiated by the Conservative press by 1861. Macdonald saw the chaotic condition of the United States as the result of something "quite naturally inherent in that form of government."<sup>135</sup> And the newspapers of Canada West were not alone in their sentiments regarding American political institutions, nor in their comments upon "the dissolute and desperate mobs who fester in the large cities," and the resultant "political ruffianism."

The Fredericton Headquarters, a Conservative paper, printed an article that was both widely read and widely accepted in Canada West. According to this New Brunswick authority, the Civil War was simply another passing derangement of the "fevered brain" of American democracy:<sup>136</sup>

Already cool heads can see that all the noise, the racket, and the "tremendous excitement" will, like the froth of beer, or the bubbles of champagne, soon subside to flatness; and that all the troubles that affect the nation—the mob rule and tyranny, the spread eagles speeches, the star and stripe sentiments, the warlike sermons, the song singing in churches, the fighting parsons, the lying telegrams, the spouting, the cheering, the cursing, the

swearing, the tremendous excitement, all the sounding and fury of ten millions of voices speaking bunkum and breathing deathless devotion to country, and the thunder of two thousand "columbiads" rending the very heavens and displacing two or three stones, and wounding a man here and there—will soon cease.

In a more moderate sense, George Fenety's St. John Morning News told New Brunswickers that the American system did have some virtues, but "we prefer our own system of government, because in the Colonies we feel that we have all the privileges of a Republic, with immaterial exceptions, without any of the excesses."<sup>137</sup> A different formative experience led the vast bulk of British Americans to be quite unsusceptible to American institutions, despite the dictates of environmental criteria.

In Canada East, French-language newspapers indicated that the majority of the French-Canadian people were "essentially conservative and monarchical."<sup>138</sup> At an earlier date both Lord Durham and Lord Elgin had recognized the role of the French Canadians in the formation of a conservative and stabilizing element against the inroads of radicalism and republicanism.<sup>139</sup> With the all-powerful clergy of Canada East opposing "Americanisms" or any hint of the revolutionary ideas of France which had unleashed themselves in 1789, the Rouge party which admired the republican form of government lacked the strength which entitled them to serious consideration. Despite their lack of numerical strength they persisted "avec l'intention bien formelle, et bien prononcée d'annexer le Canada aux Etats-Unis."<sup>140</sup>

The opposition of the majority of French-speaking Canadians was to some extent "national," but it was also religious, for there was the

undefined fear that their religion might be endangered if annexation to the United States were consummated. Moreover, the commercial advantages that a union with the American Republic might have secured for the Canadas mattered little in French Canada during the 1860's. The leader of the Bleu party in Canada East, and the real leader of the French Canadians in the Assembly, George Cartier, who was an out-spoken "anti-democrat," had a strong respect for an ordered society and for the protection of private property. He had long expressed an antipathy for the American polity, ever since the Rebellion of 1837.<sup>141</sup> In the United States the most capable men were always excluded from the upper echelon of politics, particularly during the 1850's and 1860's. Why, he asked, had such eloquent defenders of the American democratic cause as Webster, Clay, or Calhoun never been elected to the highest office in the American system? The Bleu leader reflected sadly that the American constitution had lost the great prestige it had possessed during the colonial regime of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and the Adams clan.<sup>142</sup>

As in Canada West, the Civil War had done much to lessen American prestige in French Canada. To his intense dislike of the principle of universal suffrage, Cartier added his doubts about the highly-touted federal pattern of government in the United States:<sup>143</sup>

Pour revenir au gouvernement federal des Etats-Unis, et je parle de ce pays sans m'occuper du mouvement séparatiste qui, je regrette de le dire, pourrait bien le précipiter dans de graves conflits; car les gouvernements des Etats ne sont rien de plus que de grandes corporations de grandes municipalités n'ayant aucun des attributs nationaux.

In summation, Cartier noted that the proclamation of the Confederacy was a partial remedy for some of the vices in the American constitution: "Néanmoins, cette mesure des Etats-Confédérés prouve une chose, c'est qu'on y tend à se rapprocher du système anglais."

In the 1860's, Canada East had enjoyed a certain isolation, due in part to the French language. Yankee taunts and orations on Anglo-Saxon superiority were not destined to win many friends in French Canada. J. G. Kohl, who had travelled through Canada some time earlier had remarked that "the antiquated ways of our French peasants" would do nothing for progress. He added, with a certain degree of blandness, that if the Americans "got the country into their hands, they would soon improve the old-fashioned French off the face of the earth."<sup>144</sup> The strongly conservative people failed to find a common meeting ground with the "progressive and unsympathetic Yankee." If annexation took place, their republican neighbours would not show the respect for their traditions and customs that they had experienced under Great Britain. As Colonel Taché observed in July, 1861, the French Canadian had a strong attachment to the Crown, and possessed little affinity for republicanism.<sup>145</sup> John A. Macdonald added that "our French brethren will fight side by side with us against the foreign foe."<sup>146</sup>

In a similar vein, Le Journal de Quebec, enumerated the obligations placed upon all Canadians by Great Britain's proclamation of neutrality between the contending forces in the United States. This newspaper proudly proclaimed its support of the monarchical system and resented any implication that in the event of war, French Canadians would not support Britain even if the enemy involved were France:<sup>147</sup>

Nous n'avons pas parmi notre population d'individus qui ont vendu leurs services et leur plumes à la cause des Etats-Unis qui ont aidé à l'enrôlement des Canadiens pour l'armée du Nord, malgré la plus stricte neutralité gardée par l'Angleterre, et commandée par elle à tous ses sujets. Nous n'avons personne qui regarde avec complaisance vers Washington et qui voudrait voir une partie du Canada annexée à la république voisine..... Et, dans l'hypothèse où les sympathies des Canadiens-français seraient pour la France, advenant le cas d'une guerre avec l'Angleterre, elles n'auraient pas pour la mère patrie de conséquences funestes. Il n'en serait pas de même des tendances républicaines de certains meneurs haut-Canadiens dans le cas d'une guerre avec les Etats-Unis.

The lack of "responsible government" in American affairs, which had led to civil war, gave support to those who believed in British institutions and those who desired a stable British American union to provide the solidity which Canada needed and desired. The faults of the "congressional system" could be avoided if Canada survived. It was a condition about which the Civil War itself had written a large mark of interrogation.

Although several newspapers which were "thick and thin supporters of the Administration" had indulged in "puerile bombast" and "discreditable chiselling and chicanery," it was the Reform press that had contributed a great deal to the uneasy feeling in Canada in 1861. The Ottawa Union, devoted to "Agriculture, Commerce and Politics," and one of the truly well-edited tri-weeklies of the day, placed the blame directly on the Globe and its followers. "In servile imitation of its gigantic and bullying leader, the Hamilton Evening Times opens its pop-gun battery and gives us a volley, the noise of which is rendered almost inaudible by the figures of

its rhetoric and the farfetched syllogisms of deep and subtle meaning, in which the little fellow dresses his tiny shot. Looking to Washington is evidently a losing game these days."<sup>148</sup> Recognizing the power and responsibility of the newspaper press, the Union offered an opinion on future editorial policy:<sup>149</sup>

Journalism whether viewed in its commercial or intellectual character, to be valuable to a community, should be free from the shackles of individual favour. Mushroom journalism, which springs from the heated, stimulated soil of an election contest, is an intruder upon the field. Such journalism suffers from the miserable counterfeits who live upon the mere pleasure of political gamesters. The sooner these men who stain the character of journalism, the hired organist...the sooner they go down the better for the community.

"Mr. Washington McDougall" was understood to be among those indicted by the Ottawa paper.

Although some might deem it inadequate to assess Canada's views of the American Republic through the editorial columns of several newspapers, this is not the case when one realizes the "domino" theory in Canadian opinion-making. After all, it was the politician-editors who were among the few articulate spokesmen in the Canadas during this period and, in fact, there is little else with which to test the provincial mind. The thought and opinions dominant in the middle nineteenth-century as regards the American polity and social way of life, were vitally important in the formation of the future national character of Canada. At this time, the Canadian newspaper both reflected and shaped the mind of the community it served.

The leading papers, such as the London Free Press, Hamilton Spectator, and Ottawa Union, dominated their areas of influence, but even these newspapers could not come close to matching the subscription lists of the Toronto Leader, and more particularly, the Toronto Globe. The latter stood out in the United Province as journalistic giants, and compared favourably in circulation with important British and American newspapers.<sup>150</sup> During this "golden age" of the press, the chief city of Canada West, in politics, economics, and intellectual reflection, was the center in which the debate over the Americanized institutions was fought. The great political journalists of the day, the "lords of opinion," gained a wide constituency, especially in Toronto with its metropolitan character and the province-wide circulation of its newspapers. Neither English nor French papers in Canada East had a similar position of influence, and therefore an analysis of the chief theories of the Reform Globe and the Conservative Leader, and what influenced their attitude towards the Republic is important for an understanding of "anti-Americanism" during the period 1858-67.

During the Confederation-Civil War era, these two papers thus held the field in Canada West. Despite the fact that they represented opposing sides in the political arena, they shared the same general framework of ideas. Professor Maurice Careless of the University of Toronto has stated without hesitation that the phrase "mid-Victorian Liberalism," best describes their political ideology. This influential press was the spokesman for British thought in the heart of Canada, for the newspapers looked to British institutions, accepting the chief tenets of mid-Victorian Britain in political, social and economic practices. At this critical period in the



history of British America they generally rejected American examples. Those who peruse the columns of these newspapers today are aware of the great amount of time spent in discussion of the faults in American democratic-republicanism, and the merits of the British system. It produced an undisguised anti-American and anti-republican sentiment in opposition to the evident values which they placed on British institutions and ideas.

While a small and limited number of Clear Grits had declared that the "aristocratic...and monarchical" form of government was unsuitable for North America, and that they desired a political change in Canada which involved some parts of the democratic machinery of the American version, this faction had shrunk by 1861 to a considerably smaller size than it had been in the early 1850's. It was generally in the western sector of Canada West that the demands for "elective institutions" and full manhood suffrage had been raised. It was to be expected that this area, which contained a large body of American immigrants, who had come in search of better soil, would have an affinity for "Yankee ways and wild ideas." As well, it was natural that these people should recommend the state governments of New York or Ohio as the true models to follow in an effort to avoid the "too powerful, extravagant, and corrupt" government ministries. Frederick Jackson Turner's statement that American democracy was fundamentally the outcome of the experiences of the American people in dealing with the West, can certainly be applied to the largely frontier-emergent society in the western fringes of Canada West.<sup>151</sup> Indeed much of the platform of the Reform radicals alluded to former days when the Reform party was led by the firebrand, William Lyon Mackenzie. By 1861, these theoretical arguments

had lost much of their original lustre in Canadian political thinking. Only in the western ridings, farthest from British influences, did the frugal agriculturalists feel affinity for "extravagant" ideas.

The important point is that the Globe and the Leader did not stand alone in their fervent defense of British institutions, and this was not entirely due to the fact that the great body of Canadian journals followed the lead of one or other of the more important papers in matters of domestic concern. Mackenzie's Message, which ceased publication in 1860, was the last of the really "republican" papers in Canada West. It was evident in the general election of 1861 that Conservative editors were quite ready to indict the opposition with a most wicked charge: a leaning towards "Americanism." Common statements in this period included references to the "prosaic panderings" of a political opponent which were like the "ravings of ultra-republicanism." The United States could not hope to command even a particle of respect when the celebrated "republican equality" of that country had "certain black exceptions." And in a nation where all men were born "free and equal" the President was nothing but the "slave of the Rabble." Such declarations, and others providing evidence of the superiority of British liberty, competence, and uprightness, and the utter worthlessness of Yankee republicanism, were exceedingly common during the years 1858-61. One wonders how the originators and perpetuators of the Liberal interpretation of Canadian-American relations missed these "anti-American" and "anti-republican" statements.<sup>152</sup>

The Tory Toronto Patriot had expressed its faith in a conservative government for Canada, noting that Canadians must cling to "the British

Constitutional system of government as superior to all others, believing it to possess within itself those inherent principles of elasticity and vigor which adapt to the various circumstances of the people, and enable it to meet with becoming vigor and suitableness, the increased intellectual and progressive knowledge of the country."<sup>153</sup> The Hamilton Spectator also took a firm stand on behalf of British patterns of governmental procedure, and expressed its desire that Canada should continue to remain politically independent of the United States. As such, this paper played a part in the dominant tone of Canadian public opinion, clearly reflecting the preponderant sentiments of its day.<sup>154</sup> The truism penned by an Englishwoman, the doughty Sarah Mytton Maury, while visiting the United States in 1848, was as valid over a decade later as it had been when she wrote it. Miss Maury observed that: "As in a Republic, the fundamental and dominant party must be democratic, so in a Monarchy, the fundamental or dominant party must be conservative; when the reverse occurs, it is an experiment, and...(it) is not always a successful one."<sup>155</sup>

As pointed out by the Reform Huron Signal, the "loyalty" situation had reached the point where its Liberal contemporaries who supported the Northern cause by means of favourable editorial comment, were looked upon as being "disloyal" to Great Britain.<sup>156</sup> The Union, which had been founded "in a spirit of patriotism," thought that those who had a friendly attitude to the North should maintain it but the paper also defended the British connection against "foreign imports." Both the St. Catharines Constitutional and the Cornwall Freeholder were impressed with the temperate comments of the Union, finding it a "spirited and really valuable paper, a well-conducted

sheet."<sup>157</sup> Highly regarded by its contemporaries, the Ottawa paper's defence of Canada's political way of life was of some significance, adding to the chorus of the Toronto press against the influence of democracy in the United Province of Canada. The Union claimed that its tri-weekly and weekly editions had the largest circulation in "Central Canada" and was read "by all classes of the people."<sup>158</sup> It was another powerful influence on the side of British constitutional procedures in British America.

It was to be expected that the Conservative party in Canada West would show a dislike for things American. Yet John A. Macdonald showed little bitterness in regard to the United States and agreed with D'Arcy McGee concerning "the unhappy and lamentable state of things which we now witness in the States; for I remember that they are of the same blood as ourselves." Macdonald hoped that the Republic would soon resolve its internal differences and retained his belief in the vigour and vitality of "the Anglo-Saxon character, and the Anglo-Saxon institutions of the United States." Because of this background the Americans would struggle through the great civil convulsion, much the same as England had done in ages past.

The only profit the Conservative leader wished to make from the split in the American Union was the provision that any future British North American Union would "not split on the same rock on which they have split." Any union in British America must avoid the fatal error of the Americans, and give great powers to the central legislature to avoid the problems of "states' rights." Although the United States had not followed the true principles of confederation, he noted that if the country were severed then "two great, two noble, two free nations will exist in the place of one."

Summing up his ideas, the Attorney-General West realized that a confederation of all the provinces was the only feasible scheme which presented itself as a remedy for "the evils complained of," but he would not recommend "the one on the other side of the line, for that has not been successful."<sup>159</sup>

Thomas D'Arcy McGee, the junior member for Montreal West in the Legislative Assembly, saw some indications of the emergence of a "democratic" press in the Canadas which he feared because it contributed to demagoguery, disregard for private rights and decorum, and tended to be too levelling. But, he noted hopefully, every day "the cause of constitutional government was gaining ground." McGee, ever since he had been editor of the New Era, had called for the projected federation of the British provinces in North America and "the settlement among us, at no distant day, of a Royal Prince, as the highest representative of the Empire...."<sup>160</sup> In a most succinct manner, McGee made the position of Canada clear for all concerned, when he declared at Port Robinson, "Let us continue as Imperial people, but not... an Imperial puppet...."<sup>161</sup>

It was not surprising that the Conservatives should be against the importation of American practices into Canada, but it was unusual in the adherents of the Reform cause. While abolitionist George Brown had strong feelings for the North and the American experiment in democracy, he was beyond doubt a champion of the British connection. And despite the punishments of the New York press, he was less likely to be disturbed by this type of journalistic imperialism than his Conservative peers. The winds had shifted by the 1860's and the Grit campaign for "organic changes" involving executive checks and a written constitution was disavowed. Any

changes that smacked of "American parentage" were suspect and a new offensive on behalf of parliamentary institutions was chartered by those in the mainstream of Canadian political activity.

In the early 1850's the question of elective institutions had been widely canvassed in the Canadas, especially by the Globe in Canada West. Throughout the discussion, the Liberal newspaper was explicit in its defence of the British model. In 1859, in the gloom and frustration after the "double shuffle," the Globe did for a short time consider the idea of elected ministries and a written constitution which contained checks on the executive function. However, this was a temporary phase and it soon backed the concept of federal union combined with responsible government which would permit Canada to retain the virtues of the British system of government while meeting the continental problem of sectionalism in North America.<sup>162</sup>

Despite the differences of opinion in Canada West regarding support for the North and the South, exemplified by the Globe and the Leader, there was a great deal of tacit understanding between the two camps. Both underlined the British affiliations of liberalism, and had a strong distrust of American justice and liberty. Even among those most friendly to the Republic there was a deep suspicion that the American system of politics lacked the fiber to contend with severe strains, although it was widely recognized that the magnitude of the strain on the American polity was of a potent character. In addition, Canadians believed that there was a sinister force present in American politics that was largely unknown in the British system, and in a crisis atmosphere, the Yankees were unpredictable

in their actions. Needless to say, there was some satisfaction in the United Province during the opening months of the Civil War, that the "boastful, vulgar Yankee" had been humbled and was required to turn his "covetous" eyes inward instead of his usual practice of looking upon other people's land as an intricate part of his own "manifest destiny."<sup>163</sup>

One factor which made the Reform press more "un-American" in their sentiments in 1861 was the rise of an expansionist feeling, especially among the Toronto merchants. If the vast Hudson Bay territory between Canada West and British Columbia could be made an economic appendage of Toronto, that city would supplant Montreal as the financial capital of Canada, and the former would become the chief metropolis of a new trans-continental nation.<sup>164</sup> Although not entirely confined to the Reform party this sense of a Canadian "manifest destiny" found its foremost preachers in George Brown, William McDougall, and the Toronto Globe. With the United States being fully occupied with the Civil War, it was time for the counter-expansionism of Canada West. The success of these spatial designs would provide a guarantee for her future as a part of a great British America by consolidating her interests in the untapped British Northwest. All residents thus had some interest in the promotion of anti-American sentiment in Canada, the Conservatives from principle, and the Reformers from principle and expediency. The American Republic was a political and commercial threat of great consequence.

The extent of British immigration to Canada West was of considerable significance during the middle of the nineteenth-century. Brown and Macdonald in Canada West and McGee in Canada East, to name only the most important, had

been born in the British Isles. The Globe proudly noted that its entire editorial staff, except William McDougall, was from the "old country."<sup>164</sup> McDougall, former editor of the "democratic" Toronto North American was one of the few Canadian writers who was native-born, the rest by and large educated in Great Britain. Therefore, it is not surprising that the major circulation newspapers of the day, such as the Globe, Leader, Spectator, Free Press, and Union, expressed British ideas. The mortality rate of newspapers was high in this period and those which professed unpopular opinions did not survive. Canada West by 1861 was British, and ideologically chained to the chariot wheels of Downing Street.

Canadians felt a strong sense of belonging to the British Empire, which was illustrated by their constant reference to British examples and ideas. And as the United States was still largely a cultural satellite of Britain, the Canadian attitude was not entirely incompatible with their position in North America; British ideas transferred to Canada adopted the necessary alterations for the North American scene. This dependence on British views was probably heightened by the outbreak of war and the failure of the democratic experiment in the American Republic. The Imperial tie meant liberty and security against the often threatening, aggressive, expanding, and antagonistic United States, and offered the possibility of a future transcontinental nation in British America. As Professor Donald G. Creighton so aptly illustrated in his study of the Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, that portal to a continent was the basis of the fundamental reality of Canada and it channelled every impulse from the heart of the Empire deep into the United Province of Canada.<sup>165</sup>



Thus, the politico-socio-economic history of Canada during the era under examination has to be read as an interaction of the North American environment, with its Turnerian overtones, as well as imported cultures, and the transfer of British ideas.<sup>166</sup> Canada's existence was based upon the conveyence of British concepts and practices across the North Atlantic, and it made Canadians themselves so little "American." This point achieved greater validity when the giants of American journalism searched for a scapegoat for the internal dissension of the United States; they sought relief in an assault on the political reality of the United Province of Canada.

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