

Dependent Territories In Commonwealth terminology, the phrase "dependent territories" includes some 30 remaining colonies, protectorates, protected states and trust territories. Most of these are dependencies of Britain; a few are dependent on Australia and New Zealand. Australia also administers Papua New Guinea as a United Nations trust territory.(3)

Evolution of the Commonwealth The Commonwealth evolved from the British Empire by a gradual process that began in the nineteenth century. Many important developments first occurred in relation to what is now Canada. While there are many possible starting-points, a convenient one is *Lord Durham's Report*, published in 1839 following an inquiry into the causes of the rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada in 1836-37. One of Durham's key recommendations was that full self-government should be granted to the governments in the colonies in all matters of concern to them. Under the recommendations of the *Report*, authority was reserved to the Imperial Government only in those fields deemed necessary to maintain imperial unity; such functions included control of foreign relations, the regulation of commerce, the determination of the constitution and the disposal of public lands. All other powers and functions, including the expenditure of public funds, were to be transferred to the colonial governments to be administered by an executive council responsible to the elected legislative assembly and exercised only so long as they retained the support of a majority in the assembly. Following the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840, this recommendation was implemented by stages during the next decade, the testing-point being the acceptance of the Rebellion Losses Bill of 1849 by Lord Elgin and by the British Government, which effectively established the practice of full responsible self-government over the very wide range of matters within the control of the governments in the colonies. Subsequently, the conception of responsible government with a wide area of local autonomy was widely applied throughout the British Empire; the changes flowing from general application of this conception have been immense.

A second major development occurred over the period 1867-1939 as Canada came gradually to assume more and more responsibility for its relations with other countries and for its own defence. Out of the pressures, strains, persuasion and dialogue with Britain up to the Versailles Peace Conference at the end of the First World War and subsequently in the Twenties and Thirties, Canada, supported on occasion by Australia and the other Dominions, succeeded in asserting its independence from the Imperial power by a series of agreements and precedents that in turn became the basis for further political developments. Following the First World War, Canada and the other Dominions successfully asserted the claim to independent representation at conferences, beginning with Versailles,

- (3) A list of the more important remaining dependencies, showing their relations to a metropolitan power, area and population, appears as Appendix B.