

Colonial self-government ruining British Empire

By JOHN BALL

"Self-destructing" was the term used by W. L. Morton, a foremost Canadian historian, to account for the slow and inevitable decline of the British Empire, in an address to the Symposium of Loyalist Studies last Friday evening.

His thesis of self-destruction revolved around the idea that, "The Empire was self-liquidating because of the granting of self-government to the colonies of settlement."

Tracing the evolution of the Empire from the period before the American War of Independence, to the present, Morton developed the theme of the three Empires in one. He said that the only true Empire existed following the American War of Independence in 1783 to the late 1840's when responsible government was granted to the colonies of settlement.

This period of the so-called second Empire was the only one in which there was rule of a central authority. Prior to this, especially in the American colonies, local self-government was the rule.

"Indeed, some of the colonies even elected their own governor."

In the American states, he went on to say, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy did not rise in proper proportion. There was no blooded aristocracy and no established church. There was no trust that, "power of the King and Parliament asserted to be absolute would not be asserted absolutely."

He said that the American separation was not so much politically caused but "arose from the nature of the Empire." He called to mind Thomas Paine's statement, "It is ridiculous that an island should govern a continent."

After 1783, the British consolidated their colonial holdings in a more Imperial manner. However, there was a certain amount of local autonomy and he posed the question: to what were the Loyalists loyal? He said they abused British laws as much as was done in the American colonies; they were certainly not above graft and corruption in government affairs, and smuggling, contrary to British navigation laws, was not unknown.

At this point, Morton expanded on the "Loyalist myth." "And myth it was," he said, that the colonies were "British in aspirations as in fact."

The unrest of 1837 underscored the reality that the colonies

were not as loyal as some would believe. The adoption of the recommendations of the Durham Report and the granting of self-government in the late 1840's marked the beginning of the end of the true British Empire in North America.

British involvement in the Crimea in the 1850's and her reaction to the rise of the consolidated German state in the 1860's served to hasten the decline of true Imperial involvement in North America. The feeling in England was that "colonies of settlement should become self-governing and pay for their own defense."

Thus with the repeal of the Corn Laws, the thrust of self-government, and the improvement of local militia's, "the British Empire declared itself independent of British North America."

"The British Empire, as did British Canada, died mightily in two great wars." There are, he said, bits and pieces of it scattered around the globe, but the Empire was "self-liquidating because of the granting of self-government. The old loyalties and new nationalities are incompatible."

In reply to the question of whether he thought he monarchial form of government was still valid, he said, "Indeed I do. It is the oldest, humanist, and most enduring form of government that

humanity has ever formed. . . and I am loyal to the Queen."

Questioned on Quebec separatism, he said, legally speaking, "Quebec is an integral part of Canada. There is no provision in the constitution for separation of any part of Canada. I hope," he

continued, "that it is a greater advantage for Quebec to stay in Canada. Of course, that hope places some responsibility on the rest of us. Quebec is necessary to the integrity of Canada and the integrity of Canada is of first importance."

Loyalists topic of study

By JOHN BALL

The Loyalists, their problems and times, were the subject of a symposium at the university last week.

The gathering, sponsored by the program for Loyalist Studies and publications, heard papers on the Loyalists delivered by historians from the City University of New York, the University of New Brunswick, and the University of London.

The aim of the program is to gather, collate, disseminate, and store material about the Loyalists. As far as possible it is hoped that material from the three countries will be gathered in the university of that country. This material then would be micro-filmed and distributed to the other members of the program and to other universities on request.

The program was initiated in part by Dean Condon, of UNB when he was in the United States in 1968 at City University. A meeting was held in New York at that time, between parties of the three educational institutions involved and the present activities were undertaken.

These include the creation of a bibliography of all known Loyalist documents, publications and articles; eventual publication of the most significant source material; and the holding of symposiums and seminars at each of the three institutions from time to time.

The International Chairman of the program is Dean Condon. The secretary of the recent symposium was Prof. Wallace Brown of the

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10th Anniversary of the Intercollegiate Woodsmen Competition

(Sponsored by the U.N.B. Forestry Association)

Saturday 28th October 1972 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
at U.N.B. College Field (behind Rink)

Competition will be opened by Professor Emeritus Louis R. Seheult, the honorary President of U.N.B. Forestry Association, together with the Forestry Queen for 1972. The Queen will be chosen at the Bushman's Ball at McConnell Hall on Friday 27th.

Judges: Prof. W. H. Hilborn
Prof. T. C. Bjerkelund
Mr. Gene Matheson

Teams:-

U.N.B. A & B Teams
Maritime Forest Rangers School A & B Teams
Nova Scotia Agriculture College A & B Teams
University of Maine A & B Teams
McDonald College A & B Teams
Colby College of Maine A Team
State University College of Forests (Syracuse A Team)

Trophies:-

Tractors and Equipment Trophy - Champions)
Atlantic Mussels Trophy - (Cross cut & Swede
Son Competition)
H. A. Corey Trophy - Axe chopping
Mack Maritime - (Log checking Trophy)

Display:-

Logging Equipment Display

Others:-

U.N.B. Nursing Society - will set up first aid booth and refreshments stand, and also assist as official time keepers.

List of Events

1. Log Chopping
2. Log Decking
3. Power Saw Cutting
4. Axe Throwing
5. Felling and Twitching
6. Chain Throwing
7. Log Splitting
8. Cross Cutting
9. Swede Sawing
10. Master Boiling

This Intercollegiate Woodsmen Competition is part of the events of U.N.B. Forestry Association's "Forestry Week".

All students of the tri-campus and the General Public invited FREE! Free of charge.



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