

that there is no danger of a serious divergence of outlook along class lines. The religious factor is a little more difficult to assess but, as I have already reported, I can as yet see no evidence that anything like a religious cleavage has [occurred] or is likely to occur. The one obvious division in the country is, of course, the division between the Avalon Peninsula and the rest of the Island, the former being to a large extent in favour of Responsible Government, the latter being predominantly Confederate.

21. In this despatch I have not attempted to appraise the issue which is at present before you. I hope, however, that it may help to throw some light on the circumstances out of which that issue has arisen.

I have etc.

PAUL A. BRIDLE

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PCO-CRF

*Le secrétaire, la Ligue pour le gouvernement responsable
de Terre-Neuve, au Premier ministre*

*Secretary, Responsible Government League
of Newfoundland, to Prime Minister*

TELEGRAM

St. John's, July 25, 1948

PERSONAL. Responsible Government League speaking with force and backing of more than seventy thousand voters representing 48 per cent of those voting in July 22nd referendum vigorously protest any procedure other than negotiation conducted through properly elected government for inclusion Newfoundland in Canadian Federation. This protest justified on following grounds. One, voters for confederation represent only fifty-two per cent of votes cast and number only seventy-seven thousand out of total electorate of approximately one hundred eighty thousand. Two, confederation would mean irrevocable alteration national status and citizenship of Newfoundlanders and league will protest this drastic change on a bare majority of votes actually cast. Three, we dispute constitutional right commission government to determine what is satisfactory majority because commission was totally repudiated in first referendum and has subsequently prejudiced its position as impartial arbiter this vital matter through intervention by two of its members as spokesmen for confederate cause. Four, consummation of confederation before negotiation of terms or understanding of financial and economic impact on Newfoundland people and industry is neither sound nor just and creates source of bitter controversy in future. This position certain be gravely aggravated if expectations of present supporters of Confederation unfulfilled and Confederation in fact proves seriously detrimental to Newfoundland's vital interest. Five, confederate majority was unquestionably obtained through use by confederate association of tactics deliberately designed to divide people on class regional and sectarian grounds with result that divisions and conflicts created that would gravely prejudice success of confederation from very beginning.