

members insisted that the judgement as to when the conditions for restoration of responsible government could be deemed to exist should not be left to the British Government alone but should also be based on some expression of the will of the Newfoundlanders themselves. In the end the provision for a specific request from the people of Newfoundland was endorsed by the British Parliament when it passed the Newfoundland Act which explicitly accepted the recommendations of the Amulree Commission.

It is instructive, and perhaps ironic, to note that a provision which was ostensibly intended to give greater assurance with regard to prompt restoration of responsible government (and nothing else) became in fact a condition which postponed that step and ultimately prevented it. For this was the provision which (partly as a result of later well-meaning elaboration devised by a British Member of Parliament who ardently wished Newfoundland to remain independent) led to the setting up of the National Convention, to a referendum in which confederation with Canada was an option and to confederation's ultimate victory. Old governments have long memories. When it accepted the Amulree Commission's recommendations and as it went along, perhaps disingenuously, with the subsequent suggestions put forward by its critics, the British Government may have been remembering an earlier Newfoundland Government which allowed the merchant class to throttle the Legislature in 1865 and 1866, thus thwarting the Newfoundland people the only time, however naively, they had had the good sense to see Newfoundland's political future in the same terms as, in its wisdom, the British Government did itself.⁹

P. A. BRIDLE

⁹ Sources: R. A. MacKay, ed., *Newfoundland. Economic, Diplomatic and Strategic Studies*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946; S. J. R. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971; the Grey of Howick Papers, Public Archives of Canada, (MG 27 II B2). British sources: Public Records Office, References DO 35 412/413/414 and DO 114/58; *Report of the Royal Commission, 1933*. ("Amulree Report"), Command 4480, November 1933; *Papers Relating to the Report of the Royal Commission, 1933*. Command 4479, November 1933; House of Commons, *Debates*, December 1933; Public General Acts and Measures, 24 and 25, Geo. V, 1933-34.