



Aerial view of down-town Toronto: Canada's second city.

colonies, the legislative union of Upper and Lower Canada, and the ultimate union of all British North America. The whole design of Canada's future political development was outlined in this report.

In 1840 the Act of Union partly implemented Durham's recommendations by joining Upper and Lower Canada. Although the new legislation did not specifically change the position of the appointed executive, the British Government soon did: the Governors of Canada were instructed to call to the Executive Council only those who had the confidence of the elected representatives of the people. Here lay the germ of responsible government.

Lord Elgin, the Governor in 1849, dealing with a highly controversial bill allowing reparations for property losses suffered during the rebellions, decided to endorse the policy of the elected majority and rejected the demands of the opposition that he refer the matter to the British Government. His decision was fully sustained by the Colonial Office in London. The principle of responsible government has never since been challenged in Canada. Nova Scotia, an older colony, had similarly gained responsible government in 1848.

## Confederation

The first real step toward a union of the British North American colonies was taken in 1864. The governments of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick called a meeting in Charlottetown to discuss the possibilities of a maritime federation. The two Canadas, united since the Act of Union, and inspired by the vision of a transcontinental Canada, asked and were granted permission to state their views before the conference.

The conference decided that, in the event of confederation, Canada's system of government would be patterned upon the British model with an elected House of Commons and an appointed Senate. At a second meeting of the colonies, at Quebec City later in the same year, final resolutions recommending a federal union were drafted. The design for a central federal government and provincial governments was outlined, and their respective powers and duties defined. The federal plan was then taken back to the colonies for discussion, and all except Prince Edward Island approved federation.

Canada, a federation of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec, came into being in 1867, with the adoption at London of the British North America Act based on the decisions taken by the provinces at these meetings. Canada, following the British concept of government, was to have a sovereign parliament and responsible Cabinet government, "with a constitution similar in

Portage Avenue, Winnipeg: "widest main street in the world".

