

the fact that everything was quiet now does not necessarily mean that once the actual decision to go ahead has been taken, the die-hards might not try to stir up some sort of trouble.

At the same time, it was strongly felt by all the members of the Newfoundland Government present that virtually all the Newfoundland people accept the verdict of the electorate as decisive, even if it is not the verdict they hoped would eventuate. If it should turn out that the majority is considered inadequate by Canada and that Confederation will therefore not be proceeded with the people will be very much taken aback.

The Responsible Government leaders are shaken up by the Confederate victory and almost in a state of collapse. They definitely feel that they have suffered a shattering defeat. At the same time it would be very surprising if any of them were to come out and say publicly that they thought the decision of the electorate ought to prevail and that everyone should now co-operate to make Confederation work. That would be expecting rather too much. In this connection the Governor mentioned that he was planning to invite two of the Responsible Government leaders to serve on any delegation which goes to Ottawa and he said that he is not sure that the men he wants will necessarily be willing to serve. He hopes, however, that he will be able to secure the co-operation of two of them to this extent.

There was some discussion of the effect of uncertainty on business and Government revenue and of the possible date for effecting union. It was generally agreed that the main thing is to pick a definite date and stick to it more or less. On this basis it appeared that March 31st next might be the earliest feasible date. The Governor emphasized that the Newfoundland Government for its part desires to be quit of its task as caretaker Government as soon as possible and also that for reasons he had mentioned in London it is desirable that the provincial Government be organized early in 1949. He said at the same time that he appreciates that there may be reasons on the Canadian side why a date as early as he might wish would not be feasible. Mr. MacKay spoke to this point, saying that a fall session of Parliament was very unlikely and he did not think any timetable with respect to Newfoundland could be based on a fall session.

The Governor emphasized that not to proceed with Confederation at the present time is not only to decline to accept the decision of the majority of the Newfoundland people but also broadly speaking to support the Responsible Government people on the Avalon Peninsula against those favouring Confederation outside of it.

The Governor said that so far as the phrase in the Prime Minister's letter which reads "clearly and beyond all possibility of misunderstanding" is concerned, he has always felt that this phrase was written at a time when the Canadian Government had no way of knowing how many forms of Government might be on the ballot paper. In the present case where there were only two forms, the phrase may perhaps be considered to have lost its validity, since it was originally intended simply as a safeguard against the Canadian Government possibly being deemed to be obliged to carry out Confederation on the basis of a mere plurality.