

the telegram from the Responsible Government League does not represent the views of all those who voted for Responsible Government.

I am also enclosing a telegram from the Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland,⁸³ which indicates that the majority who voted for confederation may reach 7,000 in a total vote representing 85% of the electorate. This proportion is particularly high because of the inclement weather on the day of the plebiscite, and because of the special conditions created by the prosecution of the fishery at this time.

Mr. Bridle confirms that confederation received the majority of the votes in 18 of the 25 electoral districts, including two districts in the Avalon Peninsula where Responsible Government was strongest. It is interesting to note that in the St. John's area where the anti-confederation feeling was strongest, confederation received nearly 40% of the votes cast, an increase of more than 28% over the figure on the June 3rd plebiscite.

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*Le haut commissaire par intérim à Terre-Neuve au
secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Acting High Commissioner in Newfoundland to
Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 144

Ottawa, July 27, 1948

IMPORTANT. SECRET. Following for Pearson from MacKay, Begins: My telegram No. 142 of the July 26th, paragraph four regarding Responsible Government League telegram.

1. In my opinion the views set forth in the telegram cannot be said to represent the present attitude of most of the 70,000 people who voted for Responsible Government. Not many of these are disposed to dispute the July 22nd verdict and the telegram is as much an effort to arouse a disposition on their part to protest as it is to enlist the sympathy of public men abroad. I have talked today with several well informed people who are all agreed that the only real significance of the telegram is that it would seem to indicate that there is an element in the Responsible Government movement which is determined to use every means at its disposal to oppose Confederation in spite of the verdict of the people. They are also agreed that at the present time these people have no popular following that is of significance. It may be that there are Water Street businessmen for example who privately wish them well but it is also true that some of these same businessmen who supported Responsible Government have decided to accept the decision of the people.

2. So far as the substance of the telegram is concerned I need not remark on paragraphs one, two and three. The assertion in paragraph four about the terms being unnegotiable ignores the fact that the proposed terms have been public

⁸³Non reproduit. Ce télégramme résumait les renseignements donnés dans le document 639.

⁸³Not printed. This telegram summarized the information given in Document 639.