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# RESOLUTIONS

## ON THE PROPOSED CONFEDERATION OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

Printed by Order of the House of Assembly.

(Moved by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, 24th March, 1865.)

1. *Resolved*, That the best interests, and present and future prosperity of British North America, would be promoted by a Federal Union, under the Crown of Great Britain, provided such Union could be effected on principles just to the several Provinces and Colonies.

2. *Resolved*, That the existence of immense Military and Naval forces in the neighboring Republic, renders it specially incumbent on the people of British North America to take the most efficient precautionary measures by which their independence against Foreign aggression may be secured.

3. *Resolved*, That a Union, such as in times of extraordinary danger would place the Militia, the Revenues, and the Resources of the several Provinces, at the disposal of a General Parliament, is necessary, in order to maintain the independence of British North America against foreign aggression, and to perpetuate our connection with the Mother Country.

4. *Resolved*, That a Federal Union of British North America, based upon the Resolutions adopted at the Conference of Delegates from the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and the Colonies of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, held at the City of Quebec, 10th October, 1864, as the basis of a proposed Confederation of those Provinces and Colonies, would, among other advantages, promote the developement of the Trade and Manufacturing capabilities of these Provinces and Colonies, and advance the General Prosperity, by inducing the substitution

of a Customs Tariff, uniform and common to the Confederation; in lieu of the various Tariffs now in force in the several Provinces and Colonies.

5. *Resolved*, That the Report of the Conference of Delegates from the British North American Provinces and Colonies held at Quebec in October last, taken as a whole, contains a declaration of principles—as the basis of a Federal Union—which this House considers just to the several Provinces and Colonies.

6. *Resolved*, That this House, believing it is only by mutual concessions and compromises the several British North American Provinces and Colonies can ever agree upon those principles which shall form the basis of a Union, orders that the report of the Conference of Delegates from these several Provinces and Colonies held at Quebec in October last, be published throughout this Colony for the deliberate consideration of the people, on whom will devolve the acceptance or rejection of the proposed Union.

7. *Resolved*, That until the larger Maritime Provinces and Canada shall have mutually agreed upon terms of Union, it is inexpedient that the People of Prince Edward Island should be called upon to decide on the question.

8. *Resolved*, That in case the Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Canada, should at any time mutually agree upon the basis of a Union, the question be then forthwith submitted to the decision of the People of this Island.

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# RESOLUTIONS

Moved by the Honorable James C. Pope, in amendment to the preceding Resolutions.

The House having had under consideration the Report of the Convention held at Quebec, respecting a Federal Union of the different Colonies of British America, and a Despatch of the Right Honorable Mr. Cardwell, Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonies respecting the same.

1. *Resolved*, That Prince Edward Island, being entirely dependent on its Agriculture and Fisheries, has nothing to export for which Canada can furnish a market. That while such is, and ever must be the relative commercial position of this Island and Canada, the products of our soil and Fisheries find in the extensive markets of our parent country, the United States and the West Indies, ready and profitable customers. The proposed Union, while admitting the produce and manufactures of Canada into this Island free, would by assimilation of taxes enormously increase the duty to which those of Great Britain and the United States are at present subject, thereby compelling this Island to take a large portion of its imports from Canada, making payment therefor in money instead of procuring them from countries which would receive our produce in exchange,—an arrangement so inconsistent with the fundamental principles of commerce must greatly curtail our commercial intercourse with the United States, and would, in the opinion of this House, materially diminish our Exports to that country, and prove most injurious to the agricultural and commercial interests of this Island.

2. That if the relative circumstances of Canada and this Island rendered a Union practicable, the evident injustice of the terms agreed to by the Quebec Convention would prevent their being ratified by the Legislature of this Island. Without alluding to all, it is proper to notice some of the objectionable features of the Report. Without admitting the principle of Representation according to Population, under all circumstances to be sound, it is, in the opinion of this House, particularly objectionable as applied to this Island in connexion with Canada, taking into consideration that the number of our inhabitants is, and must continue comparatively small, owing to the fact that we have no Crown Lands, mines, minerals, or other resources sufficient to induce immigrants to settle here, and that we never can expect to become to any extent a manufacturing people in consequence of our navigation being closed for nearly half the year, and all trade and communication with other countries stopped. Under this principle, the City of Montreal alone would, at the present time, have a representation greater than the whole Province of Prince Edward Island, and under the provisions of the Convention which regulates the mode of re-adjusting the relative representation of the various Provinces at each decennial census, looking at the rapid increase of the Population of Upper and

Lower Canada heretofore,—particularly the former,—and the certainty of a still greater increase therein in the future, over that of the population of this Island, it follows as a certain and inevitable consequence, if a Federation of the Provinces were consummated upon the basis of the said Convention, that the number of our Representatives would, in the course of a comparatively short number of years, be diminished to a still smaller number than that allotted at the outset to us.

3. That the old Imperial error in granting all the lands in large tracts to absentees, which deprives this Island of the Revenue drawn by the sister Colonies from these sources, our insular position and numerous harbors, furnishing cheap and convenient water communication which render expensive Public Works here unnecessary, the Revenue to be drawn by the proposed Federal Government from this Island, and expended among the people of Canada and the other Colonies in constructing Railways and other Public Works, thereby creating a trade which would build up cities and enhance the value of property in various localities there, advantages in which this Island could enjoy a very small participation. Our complete isolation during five months of the year, when ice interrupts our trade and communication with the Mainland, and during which period the Island could derive no possible benefit from the Railroads and other Public Works which they would be (equally with the people of those Colonies) taxed to construct, these and many other considerations, but which seem to have been entirely ignored, ought, in the opinion of this House, to have produced an offer of a financial arrangement for this Island very different in its terms from that contained in the Report of the Convention.

4. That while this House recognizes the duty of this Colony to use every means, to the extent of its limited resources, to defend its inhabitants from foreign invasion, it cannot recognize the necessity of uniting in a Confederation with Canada for the purpose of defence upon terms which, in other respects, are, in the opinion of this House, so unfair to the people of Prince Edward Island; thus sacrificing our commercial and financial interests for the sake of securing the co-operation of Canada in a military point of view, feeling assured that so long as we remain a loyal and attached Colony of Great Britain, the powerful aid of that great country will continue as heretofore to be extended to us, in common with the other North American Dependencies of the British Crown.

Lastly, *Resolved*, That this House disagrees to the recommendations of the Quebec Convention, and on the part of Prince Edward Island emphatically declines a Union which, after a serious and careful consideration, it believes would prove politically, commercially and financially disastrous to the rights and interests of its people.