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MAPPING THE POLITICAL WORLD OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1871-1883

by

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ABSTRACT

The history of British Columbia politics prior to the introduction of party lines in 1903 has been described as a virtual *terra incognita*. In place of any formal analysis, past historians simply labelled the era "Island vs. Mainland" as a convenient explanation for political division, thus portraying the years 1871-1903 as a mere continuation of the parochial battles formerly waged between the competing colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. Modern historians have accepted this assertion without question. This thesis, therefore, explored a portion of the non-party period, 1871-1883, in order to test the widely-held assertion that "Island vs. Mainland" politics represented the dominant legislative alignment in the B.C. legislature before 1903.

In addition to standard forms of primary source material which any historical work must necessarily examine, this thesis-study utilized the recorded votes of B.C. politicians as contained in *The Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia*. By using the voting records of all members of the legislative assembly in conjunction with the computer-based methods of multidimensional analysis, the "Island vs. Mainland" hypothesis was proven false. In its place, this thesis suggests that the major cause of legislative alignment was issue-oriented politics as determined by the Terms of Union contract of Confederation with Canada. Issue-oriented cleavage was a manifestation of the politics of region and local interest as opposed to "Island vs. Mainland" polarization.

Two issues, in particular, provided the dominant focus for B.C. politics at this time: the introduction of the Canadian System of Tariffs to B.C. and the promise of a transcontinental rail connection with Canada. Between the years 1871 to 1874, quantitative analysis depicts a legislature divided on the question of tariff protectionism. The B.C. tariff had provided greater protection for farming and certain industrial interests while the Canadian tariff provided less. The issue of tariffs effectively divided the B.C. house of assembly into two camps that remained largely opposed across all legislative issues. Between the years 1875 to 1883, computer analysis confirms that Canada's failure to fulfill railway obligations to B.C. was the predominant focus of political attention. More particularly, the battle that ensued between competing regions of the province aligned with alternate CPR routes caused the legislature to divide between those who favoured the Bute Inlet-Esquimalt Route, and the possible course of secession from Canada, versus those who favoured the Fraser River-Burrard Inlet alternative.

Generally, the thesis takes exception to Margaret Ormsby's portrayal of B.C. as the "Spoilt Child of Confederation" and instead insists that the entrance of the United Colony of British Columbia into the Canadian Confederation was ultimately seen by many as having certain economic, social and political disadvantages. Politicians of this view represented a considerable contingent in the B.C. legislature, their political views clearly recorded amongst the division lists, yet until now, these views have been largely ignored by scholars whose research has employed a kind of "documentary determinism."

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To my parents, Thomas and Joyce Marshall, without whose enduring and unselfish support this work could never have been undertaken. And to my parents' families, the Barr Colonists of Saskatchewan and British Columbia gold-seekers of 1858, who had the good sense to make Vancouver Island their home.

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Why talk of ever annexing it to Canada? . . . Let a provisional government be formed, and sent out, if necessary, to administer the affairs of the colony until such time as a fitting legislature might be provided, but by all means let it remain independent, and tributary alone to the mother country. . . To make it a mere undignified parasite of Canada would be the greatest blunder in statesmanship ever committed; the probable consequences of such a course I shall not presume to mention; suffice it to say, that the representatives of the elder colony would be as little respected by the heedless population who are now swarming from Puget's Sound to Thompson's River, as the laws they might be instructed to enforce. It is therefore to be sincerely hoped that the result of present and future deliberations. . . will be such as to obviate the hazardous evils which would inevitably arise from a union at any time of Canada and British Columbia. . .

-- Kinahan Cornwallis

The New El Dorado; or British Columbia (1858)

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CHAPTER I

LEGISLATIVE ROLL CALL ANALYSIS AS A METHOD OF HISTORICAL EXPLORATION

. . . there exists a source . . . which is not only readily available but is also fuller and more reliable than most sources which historians have at their disposal. This is the division lists in Hansard. The peculiar value of these lists is that they contain expressions of opinion upon important subjects from men who are no longer available for questioning. It does not strain terms too much to say that, imaginatively used, they can constitute a kind of questionnaire which we may submit to the dead and on which they will give us their replies. Further, the information about the votes of members of Parliament is perhaps more complete and more certain than anything else that is known about them. Their social background, their economic interests and their relations with their constituents can be studied with profit, but on such matters the information is and always will be fragmentary and there are nuances which it is now difficult to recapture. By contrast, the stands which these men publicly adopted on the major issues of the day are documented by the division lists with a wealth of detail, repeated corroboration and, I have reason to believe, a relatively high degree of accuracy.

-- WILLIAM AYDELOTTE¹

¹William O. Aydelotte, "Voting Patterns in the British House of Commons in the Late 1840s," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5 (1962-63), pp. 134-135.

It is often assumed that legislative roll-call analysis began among social scientists in the United States after the Second World War. Indeed, further refinement of statistical technique variously employed in roll-call analyses has often been a major preoccupation of the social scientist. Nevertheless, the pioneering spirit behind the original use of roll-call votes remains the exclusive distinction of the historical profession. In 1896, historian Orin G. Libby presented "A Plea for the Study of Votes in Congress" to the American Historical Association that effectively initiated the use of roll-call data in historical analysis.² Libby, under the tutelage of Frederick Jackson Turner, worked with other students of political behavior examining both election returns and legislative roll-calls. Although their original work was well received, "early interest in quantification and political ecology among historians subsided, perhaps because of the inadequate statistical methods of the pioneers."³ Other than A. Lawrence Lowell's seminal work, "The Influence of Party Upon Legislation in England and America," published in 1901, historical legislative roll-call analysis, for the most part, fell from view until its re-emergence in the early 1950s -- and then only as a predominantly American concern.⁴

The impetus for the return to the study of votes was, in part, effected by a seeming "distortion" of political history: "over concentration on the careers of prominent statesmen and the classic controversies over great national issues, rather

²Orin G. Libby, "A Plea for the Study of Votes in Congress," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1896* I, (Washington, D.C.: 1897): 323-324 as noted in Joel H. Silbey, *The Shrine of Party: Congressional Voting Behavior, 1841-1852*, (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967), pp. 279-280.

³Allan G. Bogue, "United States: The 'New' Political History," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3:1 (January 1968): 6-8.

⁴A. Lawrence Lowell, "The Influence of Party Upon Legislation in England and America," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1901* I, (Washington, D.C.: 1902), pp. 319-542.

than on mass political behaviour."⁵ Some historians began to argue that the "real" or average people and groups of societies required study in addition to the historical discipline's usual preoccupation with exceptional persons or elites. Quantitative history offered a way of researching neglected groups rather than prominent individuals.⁶ Likewise, proponents of legislative roll-call analysis sought description and understanding of legislative political behaviour beyond that of "great" political players to include all representatives of a legislative universe under study.⁷ Although many of the new statistical techniques used by historians were often considered "unsophisticated in social-science terms," the general breadth of usage of statistical methods during the post-1950 period was, and continues to be, impressive.⁸ Generally, the most widely used of systematic, quantitative techniques by historians are those such as "cluster blocs, indices of cohesion, agreement and disagreement, factor analysis, and, most particularly, Guttman scaling."⁹ It took, of course, about sixty years for Orin Libby's challenge to be met with any appreciable "systematic

⁵According to Silbey, the distortion of political history resulted from "the over dependence on certain types of evidence. The almost exclusive use of newspapers and manuscript collections as primary sources has led . . . to a 'kind of documentary determinism' -- conclusions have been inevitable given the nature and scope of surviving documents . . .". See Silbey, *The Shrine of Party*, p. vii-viii.

⁶Michael Drake, "Words and Numbers, Sources and Theories," *The Quantitative Analysis of Historical Data*, (Open University Press, 1974), p. 11.

⁷This form of analysis is akin to a "collective biography" of the legislature considered for study. In essence, "the accumulation of biographical information about as many as possible of those men and women who took part in some political or economic activity. This method may be contrasted to the more traditional approach of considering only a few men or women who played a leading role." See Roderick Floud, *An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians*, 2d ed., (London: Methuen & Co., 1983), p. 166.

⁸Bogue, "The 'New' Political History," p. 10.

⁹Joel H. Silbey, "Congressional and State Legislative Roll-Call Studies By U.S. Historians," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* VI:4, (November 1981): 597. Silbey's article includes a complete listing of American legislative roll call studies to 1981.

response," yet today the extent of sophisticated historical analyses of legislatures has firmly established legislative roll-call analysis as a distinct, sub discipline of the historical profession.¹⁰ Although the volume of research has been great, the field is still primarily devoted to American studies with other nations lagging behind in comparable enthusiasm.¹¹ With the general trend and necessity toward greater sophistication in historical technique, political history as such, has divided into nine specialized sub fields of which the systematic study of legislatures is but one (see Figure 1).¹²

The aim of legislative roll-call analysis is, of course, "to understand why legislators vote as they do on roll-calls." All methodologies range in technical complexity and degree of sophistication, yet they share similar research ends. Simply put:

- (1) They provide means for describing and measuring variations in the voting behavior of individual legislators.
- (2) They provide means for describing and measuring variations in the voting of groups of legislators.
- (3) They provide means for describing and measuring variations among roll-calls.¹³

¹⁰Margaret Susan Thompson and Joel H. Silbey, "Research on Nineteenth-Century Legislatures: Present Contours and Future Directions," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* IX:2 (May 1984): 322.

¹¹After the Americans, British studies are a very distant second and Canadian studies, so far as this author has been able to determine, are nonexistent.

¹²Figure 1 is redrawn from information contained in a diagram found in J. Morgan Kousser, "Toward 'Total Political History': A Rational-Choice Research Model," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XX:4 (Spring 1990): 523.

¹³Lee F. Anderson, Meredith W. Watts, Jr., and Allen R. Wilcox, *Legislative Roll-Call Analysis* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 6-7. For further description of social science methodologies used in roll-call analysis see Duncan McRae, Jr., *Issues and Parties in Legislative Voting: Methods in Statistical Analysis* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

Even the most basic of statistical technique has had at least one of these three ends as a goal. David Truman, in his book *The Congressional Party*, used roll-call votes extensively for one very good reason:

Roll-call votes [he stated] have the great advantage of being 'hard' data. Like statistics on elections, they represent discrete acts the fact whose occurrence is not subject to dispute. They do not depend for their validity as data upon verbal reports of action or upon impressions of fallible observers. Taken in quantity, therefore, they can be examined statistically with more confidence than can be granted to data whose reliability depends upon the objectivity of visual observation or verbal reporting.¹⁴

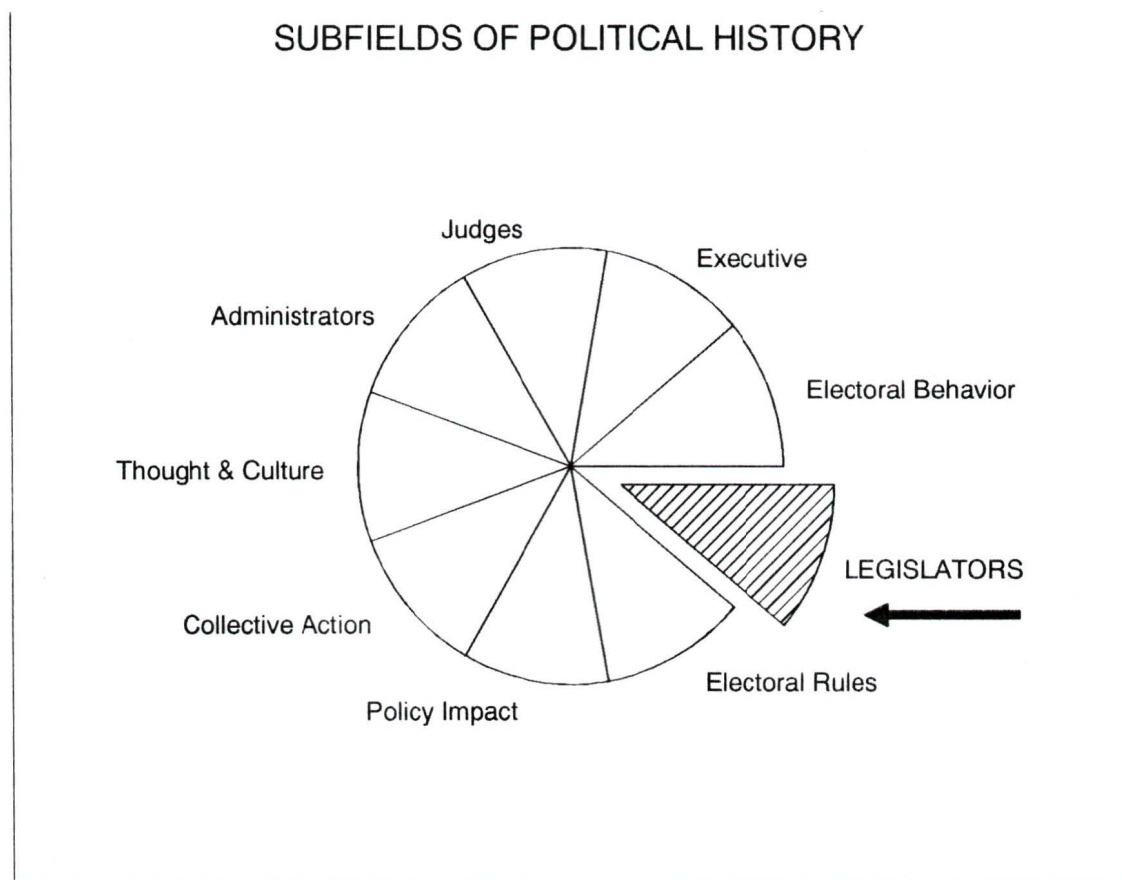


Figure 1.

¹⁴David B. Truman, *The Congressional Party: A Case Study* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1959), p. 12.

The primary criticism usually advanced with respect to quantitative data is in the actual "characteristics and limitations of historical source materials." Indeed, the very power of roll-call analysis lies directly in its use of recorded votes. Compared to other forms of quantitative data, the voluminous nature of roll-call votes means that historical legislative analysis has not been plagued with having to operate "below the data poverty line" like many historical quantitative studies.¹⁵ As Murray G. Murphy concluded of population data sets, "It is, in fact rare, that any record can be found which is complete -- i.e., where the possibility is one that the entire set of responses of a given sort were recorded."¹⁶ Missing data, therefore, is considered not as "formidable" a problem in legislative roll-call analysis.¹⁷ Missing data is not altogether unknown though, as absenteeism by legislative representatives during roll-call votes are often treated as such. Certain modern methodologies advocated by social science colleagues consider absences "generally few in number and without political significance."¹⁸ Indeed, most American legislative studies, such as Allan Bogue's *The Earnest Men*, believed that "although some legislators may absent themselves or make pairing agreements, such deviations from the mainstream are not

¹⁵Jerome M. Clubb, "New Quantitative History: Social Science or Old Wine in a New Bottle?" *American Behavioral Scientist* 21 (November-December 1977), reprinted in Jerome M. Clubb and Erwin K. Scheuch, eds., *Historical Social Research: The Use of Historical and Process-Produced Data* (Stuttgart, Germany: Klett-Cotta, 1980), pp. 19-20.

¹⁶Murray G. Murphy, *Our Knowledge of the Historical Past* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1973), p. 147 as quoted in William O. Aydelotte, ed. *The History of Parliamentary Behavior* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 7.

¹⁷Aydelotte, *History of Parliamentary Behavior*, Ibid.

¹⁸Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, "A Spatial Model for Legislative Roll-Call Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 29:2 (May 1985): 365.

unduly hampering when any appreciable number of roll-calls are examined."¹⁹ Yet in history this may not always be the case. Historian Valerie Cromwell's recent work on British House of Commons' voting suggested that the roll-call researcher should be sensitive to the problem of absenteeism. Cromwell saw low participation by members of Parliament as a possible limitation to voting analysis. This was brought to the reader's attention with Cromwell's view that:

The problem of abstention is an analytical minefield. Apart from the problem of identifying explanations such as illness or holidays, it is well known that abstention could have political uses, as with Disraeli in 1861 (56 votes in total of 187). There was often mileage in avoiding voting.²⁰

As a consequence, Cromwell treated abstention as missing data thereby using only "positive evidence" -- that of recorded votes -- in her treatment of the 1861 British House of Commons. It may be that researchers who employ sampling techniques, like Bogue, versus Cromwell's all-vote study, will be in a better position to off-set the problems associated with absent members. Quite simply, roll-calls with missing data are thrown out, although whether this necessarily solves the problem is one of the recurring data-related questions of legislative roll-call analyses.

A greater problem concerns the sampling of data sets in a subjective way. The recurring problematic theme that runs through all legislative roll-call studies is the question of limiting the historian's subjective input. There is still, perhaps, some

¹⁹Allan G. Bogue, *The Earnest Men: Republicans of the Civil War Senate* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 11.

²⁰Valerie Cromwell, "Mapping the Political World Of 1861: A Multidimensional Analysis of House of Commons' Division Lists," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, VII:2 (May 1982): 285-286.

amount of fundamental disagreement as to the pros and cons associated with each of two base-research possibilities: the inclusion of all roll-call votes as far as possible versus the selection of a few. Using all votes may eliminate the subjective intervention of the historian, but has the disadvantage that it gives equal weight to divisions of varying contemporary importance. Selecting specific divisions for analysis allows the historian to focus on issues involving high degrees of conflict, for instance, or issues related to the specific questions of the researcher.

Malcolm Jewell, in his study of eight U.S. legislatures, made use of Rice's Index of Cohesion to establish "party votes." Jewell maintained "that party voting should be concentrated on controversial issues that lead to some dispute."²¹ Consequently, Jewell eliminated all unanimous votes from study or all those where at least ninety percent each of both democrats and conservatives voted similarly.²² Yet other social scientists of the period claimed that it was exactly these kind of "unanimous" votes in which party cohesion was easily maintained.²³ Allan Bogue rightly lamented that "corruption lurks below the cellophane" when researchers have subjectively decided for themselves what roll-calls constitute a proper test of past legislative attitudes. Not only is roll-call selection often prone to modern subjective standards, but so too are the responses (e.g. radical versus conservative) that legislators have presumably adopted in the past.²⁴ The subjective quality of William Aydelotte's pioneering work,

²¹Malcolm E. Jewell, "Party Voting in American State Legislatures," *American Political Science Review* 49:3 (September 1955): 773-778.

²²Ibid., p. 774.

²³See Wilder Crane, Jr., "A Caveat on Roll Call Studies of Party Voting," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* IV:3 (August 1960): 237-249.

²⁴Bogue, *The Earnest Men*, pp. 344-345.

"Voting Patterns in the British House of Commons in the 1840s," was made quite clear when his stated selection process was simply to have "tried to get in at least one division on each of what seemed the most important questions."²⁵ Roderick Floud's critique of the Aydelotte study was quick to praise and at the same time openly wonder whether or not the actual politicians of 1840s Britain would have shared Aydelotte's view of what was considered either "of great or no importance."²⁶ Indeed, the current research direction in legislative roll-call analyses is towards the elimination of the subjectivity problem. O.S. Ireland in his most exhaustive work, "The Crux of Politics: Religion and Party in Pennsylvania, 1778-89," used all roll-call votes of the Pennsylvania Legislature in each of six different year long sessions. Ireland stated accordingly that:

Including all roll-call votes, instead of pre-selecting those that seem important, allows the participants rather than the historian to determine which votes and thus which issues went together.²⁷

Other contemporary historians have also respected the opinions of past politicians in this way. A similar development in this direction, but using the latest in computer-based techniques, led British historian Valerie Cromwell to apply "multidimensional analysis" to the study of votes. To use Cromwell's own words, this type of scaling procedure attempted to "do something rather different" by using all members of

²⁵Aydelotte, "Voting Patterns in the British House of Commons," p. 139.

²⁶See Roderick Floud's chapter VIII entitled "The Problem of Imperfect Data," *An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians*, pp. 190-192.

²⁷O.S. Ireland, "The Crux of Politics: Religion and Party in Pennsylvania, 1778-89," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XLII:4, (October 1985): 455v.

Parliament and all recorded roll-call votes for an entire British House of Commons session. Cromwell's recent study, "Mapping the Political World of 1861: A Multidimensional Analysis of House of Commons' Division Lists," prepared "Maps of Similarity" whereby individual members of Parliament were represented by points on a two-dimensional map. The technique required for such research is a form of multivariate analysis which is ideal for isolating "eccentric or unexpected behavior" of groups or individuals. When politicians are close together, as represented by distance between points, then they are considered to be in close agreement. Those politicians situated on the periphery of this spatial representation of group voting, are considered in disagreement and representative of "rogues" or perhaps political mavericks.²⁸ Unlike other forms of legislative roll-call analysis, the multidimensional technique does not require any prior definition of political groupings within a legislature, and is, therefore, particularly suited for the study of non-party politics. Cluster-bloc analysis is similar in not requiring prior definition, yet this method does not isolate those unique "independent" politicians, nor bring them to the attention of the researcher, in such a visible way. In a frontier legislature such as that found in nineteenth-century British Columbia -- where political party is absent, and political alliances in a state of flux -- multidimensional analysis is best able to capture and compare individual voting records for all political-actors concerned. Tremendous advances in statistical software also suggest a trend in modern legislative roll-call analysis toward the inclusion of all votes, especially with computer applications that

²⁸Valerie Cromwell, "Mapping the Political World of 1861: A Multidimensional Analysis of House of Commons' Division Lists," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* VII:2 (May 1982). For an update of Cromwell's work see Valerie Cromwell, "House of Commons' Voting, 1861-1926: A Computer-Eye View," *History and Computing* eds. Peter Denley and Deian Hopkin (Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 132-136.

can now cope with significantly larger data bases and the kind of sophistication required in a multidimensional approach.²⁹

The advent of bigger and better methods does not, of course, discount earlier legislative roll-call studies. Past imperfections considered, American legislative roll-call analysis has provided the historian with statistical tools to refine, or substantially alter, many "crude generalizations" and "impressionistic hunches" that were once common place in American political history. Perhaps one of the greatest achievements in U.S. studies was the establishment of political party as the dominant post-1820s political force in America in absolute contrast to earlier impressionistic works that had always promoted the myth of a non-party tradition.³⁰ Canada, by contrast, does not seem to have witnessed a comparable social science revolution, nor has the Canadian historical enterprise enjoyed many of the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach. This is especially true of legislative roll-call analysis when one realizes that there has not been a single historically-based study of a parliament or provincial legislature in Canada that has utilized such computer-based techniques.³¹

As a consequence, this thesis proposes to examine a portion of the non-party period of British Columbia politics, 1871-1883, using the computer-based methods of

²⁹Computer technology, both hardware and software, has advanced so far that there is now no real limitation to the amount of voting data that can be practically handled by the legislative historian. The only argument made previously against the use of large data-sets was "in the narrow, technological sense that most computer programs have limited capabilities." See Aage Clausen and Carl E. van Horne, "How to Analyze Too Many Roll Calls and Related Issues in Dimensional Analysis," *Political Methodology* IV (Autumn 1977): 313-331.

³⁰Thompson and Silbey, "Nineteenth-Century Legislatures," p.328.

³¹For a general survey of quantitative American political historiography see Allan G. Bogue, "The Quest for Numeracy: Data and Methods in American Political History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, XXI:I (Summer 1990), 89-116.

legislative roll-call analysis. All general histories of the province agree that full-fledged party politics, as based on federal labels, did not enter the provincial arena until 1903.³² In that year, Richard McBride organized prospective members to the legislature around the Conservative banner and ascended to the premiership with a small majority. The rationale for doing so was the hope that political stability might be achieved in a province that had seen fifteen successive premierships in the relatively short period of thirty-two years since Confederation -- particularly the precarious period before McBride's ascension to power where the last four consecutive ministries had barely constituted five years in length.

For historians though, the introduction of party accomplished more than political stability, as analysis of voting alignments in the British Columbia legislature -- at one time difficult to decipher -- were later more easily explained in accordance with neatly packaged partisanship. One suspects that there has been a large degree of reticence to delve into the often murky and uncharted waters of nineteenth-century provincial politics for this very reason. Patricia Roy is right to conclude that provincial politics before 1903 are "a virtual *terra incognita*."³³ Quite amazingly, with the exception of general histories and a very small number of theses covering the lives of notable premiers, there has never been a thorough examination of British

³²Historians such as Howay, Gosnell, Ormsby et al agree on this point. Edith Dobie emphasized the benchmark year further as indicated by the titles of her two seminal articles on early British Columbia politics. See Edith Dobie, "Some Aspects of Party History in British Columbia, 1871-1903," *Pacific Historical Review*, I (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark, 1932), pp. 235-251 and "Party History in British Columbia, 1903-1933," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, XXVII (1936), pp. 153-166, reprinted in *Historical Essays on British Columbia*, eds. J. Friesen and H.K. Ralston (Toronto: Gage Publishing, 1980), pp. 70-81.

³³See "The First Three Decades of Confederation" by Patricia Roy, "British Columbia" in *A Reader's Guide to Canadian History 2: Confederation to the Present*, eds., J.L. Granatstein and Paul Stevens (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), pp. 161-186.

Columbia's early provincial period. Allan Smith has stated that many B.C. historians have "maintained a peculiar blind spot" with regard to discussion of division and conflict in British Columbia. He further claimed of past historical scholarship that:

The result was to reinforce the tendency to eschew discussion of the structure of the province's society in favour of situating it spatially, celebrating its growth and development, and concentrating attention on the great individuals who contributed so much to its making. Captives of the obvious enmeshed in the surface of events . . .³⁴

Indeed, Margaret Ormsby, as perhaps one of the few exceptions, pointed to the effects of B.C.'s penchant for mere cursory examination of politics when she stated that:

We are ignorant of the mainsprings of our political development. We can name our premiers, describe their careers, and recount their legislative enactments; but, as yet, we have not probed deeply enough to explain the basis of our early non-party tradition or the basis of the schisms and the realignments which have occurred since parties were first established.³⁵

This thesis, therefore, proposes to look beneath the surface of political events, and beyond the premiers who helped to make them happen, during the age before organized party. In particular, this thesis proposes to test the validity of the commonly held premise that the province divided politically along "Island vs. Mainland" lines prior to 1903. All B.C. historians have accepted this explanation of voting alignment without question or without ever having offered any substantive evidence. In place of formal analysis, historians appear to have labelled the era

³⁴Allan Smith, "The Writing of British Columbia History," in *British Columbia: Historical Readings*, eds. W. Peter Ward and Robert A.J. MacDonald (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981), pp. 22-23.

³⁵Margaret A. Ormsby, "Neglected Aspects of British Columbia's History," *British Columbia Library Quarterly*, XXIII:4 (April 1960), p. 10.

"Island vs. Mainland" as a convenient explanation for political division, thus depicting the years 1871-1903 as a mere continuation of the parochial battles formerly waged between the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.

In probing beyond such a simplistic view, this thesis explores issue-oriented politics in an attempt to offer a more adequate explanation of political division between the years 1871-1883. Specifically, this thesis will attempt to prove that the major cause of legislative alignment in the British Columbia legislature was issue-oriented politics as determined by the Terms of Union "contract" of Confederation with Canada. Issue-oriented cleavage will be explained as rooted in the politics of region and local interest, as opposed to a "Island vs. Mainland" polarization. Two issues, in particular, will be offered as providing the dominant focus for B.C. politics and these will be re-examined through quantitative roll-call analysis and by the introduction of primary source material previously ignored by the historical profession. The two issues are the introduction of the Canadian System of Tariffs to B.C. and the promise of a transcontinental rail-link to Canada.

Quantitative analysis is employed to illustrate the central importance of tariff protectionism in any explanation of legislative alignments between 1871-1874. The old B.C. tariff had provided the colony with more protection than the Canadian tariff was able to offer. Consequently, politicians representing agriculturally-based ridings opposed urban-based politicians who advocated the immediate introduction of the Canadian tariff. Tariff protectionism was the dominant question of concern to British Columbians in the first years of Confederation and will be presented as the best answer for early political division. Between the years 1875-1883, roll-call analysis is further employed to demonstrate that the question of Canada's failure to meet railway

obligations to B.C. effectively divided the house of assembly into opposing camps. More particularly, B.C. politicians divided over their allegiance to one of two federally proposed railway routes. Railway development was actively sought by all regions of the province. This thesis examines in some depth the two competing lines of Bute Inlet No. 2 and Burrard Inlet No. 6 and maintains that such knowledge is essential background for understanding political division during the later 1870s and early 1880s.

In examining these Terms of Union issues at length, this thesis tends naturally toward a broader reconsideration of B.C. politics, in general, and beyond a simple testing of the "Island vs. Mainland" question. As a result, exception will be taken with Professor Ormsby's portrayal of B.C. as "The Spoilt Child of Confederation." This thesis will contend that the entrance of the United Colony of British Columbia into the Canadian Confederation was viewed by many nineteenth-century B.C. politicians as having certain economic, social and political disadvantages -- views that have not been adequately addressed to date. Politicians of this belief often represented a majority in the B.C. legislature, yet their beliefs have been largely ignored through research that has exercised a type of "documentary determinism" characteristic of most British Columbia history to date.

The source for a roll-call analysis of the B.C. Legislature is, of course, the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia* published by government printers for all years concerned.³⁶ In this study all recorded votes are

³⁶See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia*, Volumes I-XXXV, (Victoria, B.C.: Government Printer, 1872-1906).

used and all politicians considered. Voting data were collected and coded for one hundred and eighty-six different "Members of Provincial Parliament (M.P.P.)," who sat in the B.C. Legislature between 1871 to 1906. This data is examined via multidimensional analysis. Unfortunately, the constraints of time and space imposed on a masters thesis does not permit thorough discussion of the entire non-party period, although the larger research project generated multidimensional "maps of similarity" for every government administration from McCreight to McBride, up until 1906. A separate data file was created for each premier's administration. In all cases, each administration was given a special group number and individual politicians present under any given administration were identified with their own unique code. To this basic system of file organization was added the individual voting records for each M.P.P. Thus, a politician's "yeas" and "nays" were translated into numeric form easily read by computer. In addition, electoral districts were coded and larger geographical locations considered: for example, whether the member was an "Island" or "Mainland" representative, "Rural" or "Urban," or from one of eight distinct regions within the province. Finally, a politician's publicly adopted stance, for instance "Government" or "Opposition," was also appended to the individual voting record. By referring to the *Electoral History of British Columbia, 1871-1986*, twenty-five different political labels were found to have been in use between the years 1871-1903.³⁷ In all, approximately fifty thousand pieces of information were coded for this study, although results only for the years 1871-1883 will be presented here.³⁸

³⁷*Electoral History of British Columbia, 1871-1986*, (Victoria: Elections British Columbia, 1988).

³⁸Twenty-one separate data files, G1.dat to G21.dat, were created using SPSS-X from information contained in *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia*, Division Lists, I-XXXV, 1871-1906. All cases in all data files are, to the best of my knowledge, completely cleaned or 100 percent error free. This study has made tremendous use of a variety of software packages available at

It should be noted briefly, however, that multidimensional analysis used to examine the inaugural years of party government, 1903-1906, provided substantial evidence to support the thesis that the B.C. legislature was effectively stabilized by the introduction of party lines. Richard McBride had supported such a stance at the Conservative Party's convention held in Revelstoke, B.C., 13 September 1902. At this provincial gathering, a resolution was passed confirming that "the stability of government and beneficial legislation can best be secured by the introduction of party lines in local elections."³⁹ Accordingly, the newly installed Premier McBride had the legislature vote supply and then immediately dissolved the house in order to face an election conducted along such lines. In McBride's statement to the house, 2 June 1903, M.P.P.s were informed:

After most careful consideration, and in view of the anticipated dissolution of Parliament, I have fully decided that the interests of the country would be best served by a division on party lines. Personally, I have always favoured this course, and I feel sure the electorate, as a whole, is desirous that local affairs in the Province should be so administered. The Government to be formed will be Conservative in character. . . .⁴⁰

When the votes were counted and the winners declared, 2 November 1903, twenty-two Conservatives were returned along with seventeen Liberals. In addition, two Socialist

the University of Victoria. Software used in the preparation of this thesis-study, and for which UVic site licenses are in effect, are:(1) SPSS-X, Version 3.1, SPSS Inc., 444 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois, 60611. University of Victoria CMS. (2) SAS, Version 6.06, SAS Institute Inc., SAS Circle, Box 8000, Cary, North Carolina, 27512-8000. University of Victoria CMS. (3) Harvard Graphics, Version 2.12 PC, Software Publishing Corporation, Box 7210, 1901 Landings Drive, Mountain View, California, 94039-7210. In addition, the author has used a personal copy of *Word Perfect*, Version 5.1 for preparation of written text. License No. WP 518156740.

³⁹Brian Ray Douglas Smith, "Sir Richard McBride: A Study in the Conservative Party of British Columbia, 1903-1916." M.A. Thesis, Queen's University, 1959, pp. 16-18. The B.C. Liberal Party and the Provincial Progressive Party also supported the introduction of party lines.

⁴⁰*Journals of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly*, XXXII, 2 June 1903, p. 66.

Party of British Columbia candidates and one Labour candidate made up the balance. Premier McBride was still indeed premier of the province, but only by a slim majority of two.⁴¹ Many historians have claimed that McBride, due to his precarious majority, made something of a pact with Socialist M.P.P. James Hawthornthwaite to the effect that progressive, labour-oriented legislation was traded for support in the house against the Liberal opposition.⁴² Figure 2, a multidimensional analysis of all votes

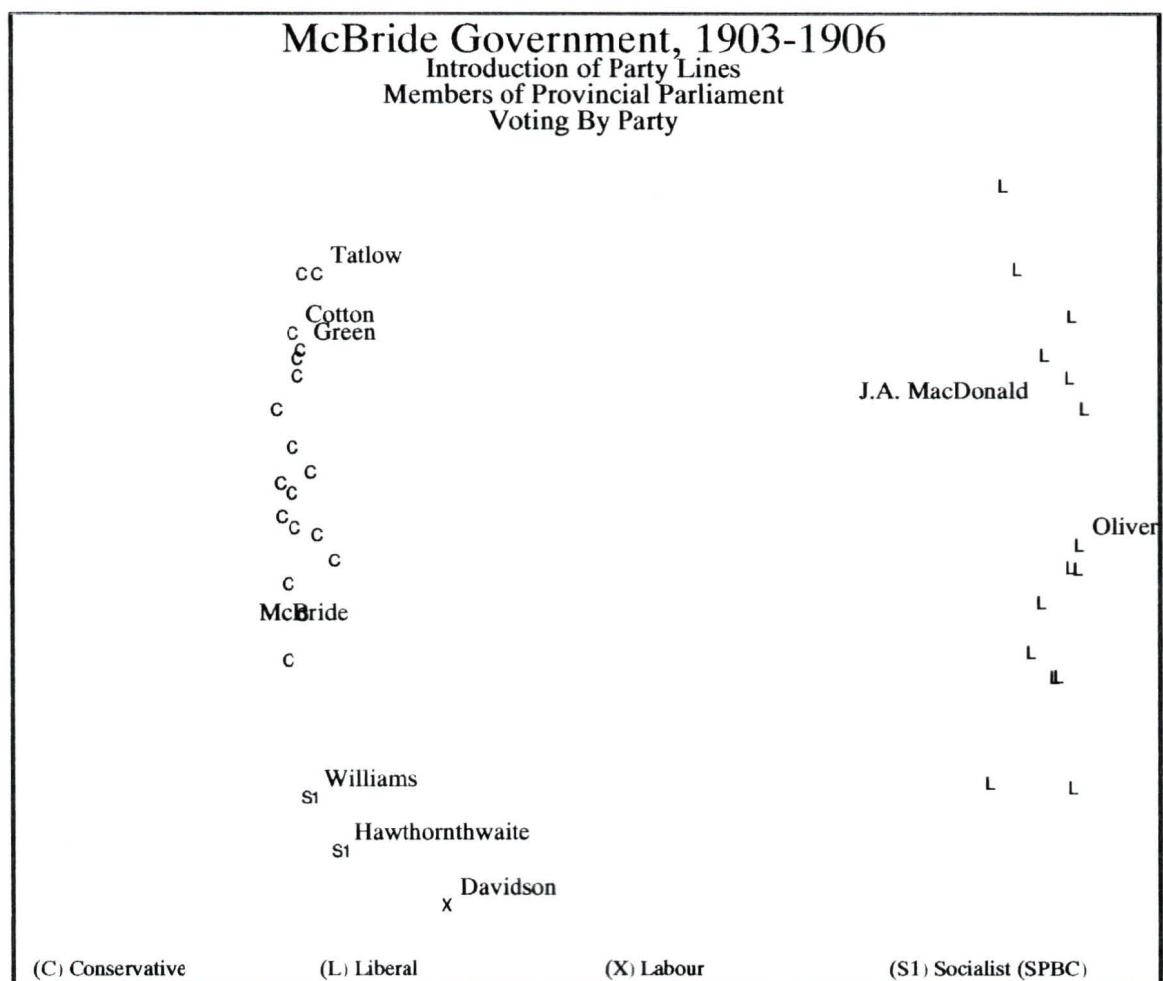


Figure 2.

⁴¹*Electoral History of British Columbia, 1871-1986, 10th General Election, p. 96.*

⁴²For instance, Martin Robin, *The Rush for Spoils*, p. 96.

recorded under the McBride years 1903-1906, confirms this assertion.⁴³ The Socialist Party of British Columbia, as represented by M.P.P.s Parker Williams and James Hawthornthwaite, are in tacit, yet full alignment with the Conservative Party of British Columbia (lower-left). Also, Labour Party candidate William Davidson (lower-left) opposed the Liberal Party of British Columbia (right-side) along with Conservative and Socialist members.

Did the introduction of party lines bring stability to the B.C. legislature? Figure 2 clearly establishes this fact. If this "map of similarity" is compared with non-party charts found in chapters II through V of the thesis, the extreme separation of Liberal and Conservative members is contrasted to the often loose arrangement of M.P.P.s of earlier times. Figure 2 also confirms that party played an extremely important role in defining the main legislative alignment in the years 1903 to 1906. Loose fish are no longer apparent as the intervening middle ground of the chart has been made vacant by the introduction of the party whip to the B.C. political scene. Figure 2, and the rigid factionalism it represents, should be consulted periodically while examining charts of the non-party period. In this way, one is reminded of the contrast found between the early years of loose non-party government and the later appearance of established party government after 1903.

There were exceptionally few instances of insufficient data for treatment of non-party legislatures prior to 1883. This study, as such, will make only passing

⁴³Figure 2 is based on M.P.P. voting data contained in SPSS-X file G21.DAT and constitutes 89 separate divisions. The chart is reproduced from graphics file G21PAR.EPS. Of the 42 M.P.P.s elected, not including the speaker, 5 were deleted from G21.DAT due to high rates of absenteeism. These gentlemen were McInnes, C. Wilson, Ellison, Wells and Manson. (STRESS=0.069, RSQ=0.987).

reference to one: the government of Robert Beaven who, with only one recorded vote - a non-confidence motion -- resorted to running provincial affairs without further convening the legislature. There was also, at times, insufficient data for politicians with high rates of absenteeism. Before using the "Proximities" and "Alscal" functions contained in SPSS-X,⁴⁴ simple checks were conducted on voting records to determine an M.P.P.'s rate of attendance. If a politician was absent for more than 30 percent of recorded roll-calls, then he was deleted from the data file. Some researchers, in interpreting missing values as possible politically-motivated abstentions, have attempted to fill in such missing blanks. In some cases, absenteeism was given a neutral value between "yea" and "nay," but with devastating results. Heinrich Best illustrated quite clearly the problem in reference to the Frankfurt National Assembly where:

. . . representatives of the left or of the right who voted irregularly tend[ed] to be placed near the centre of the distribution, while their colleagues who were seldom absent on votes, were placed near the extreme left or the extreme right according to their party affiliations. The paradoxical effect of using this technique is particularly striking in the case of a hard line reactionary, von Auerswald, whose violent death . . . removed him from parliament. In this example the use of 'neutral' value in the roll-call analysis turns an arch conservative into a posthumous liberal. . . . these 'findings' are sheer nonsense and the artifact of an estimating procedure which assumes implicitly and erroneously that absences can be treated as abstentions.⁴⁵

This study's selection of a 30 percent cut-off for absenteeism is an attempt to limit the problem associated with missing data as much as possible. Fortunately, the B.C.

⁴⁴Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

⁴⁵Heinrich Best, "Computing the Unmeasurable: Estimating Missing Values in Legislative Roll-Call Analysis," in *Computing and History II*, eds. Peter Denley and Deian Hopkin (Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 111.

Legislature did not witness the kind of poor attendance that has plagued other houses of assembly. Nonetheless, certain M.P.P.s did fall below the imposed 30 percent limit and were, therefore, respectfully removed from the field of study.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, the size constraints imposed on the Master's thesis effectively curtails a detailed and comprehensive examination for each of the 186 politicians and fifteen administrations that comprise this study. For this reason, thesis chapters have adopted a chronological ordering first offered by Walter N. Sage as a convenient way in which to view a portion of the period before political party. In essence, Sage believed that the pre-party history of the province "fell into definitely marked divisions" which he carved into four manageable units as represented by the administrations of various premiers -- especially those premiers of a kindred spirit.

These are as follows:

- (1) 1871-1874: The period of beginnings; the administrations of McCreight and De Cosmos.
- (2) 1874-1883: 'Fight Ottawa'; British Columbia and secession; The Walkem, Elliot, and Beaven administrations.
- (3) 1883-1898: Political Calm; Smithe makes terms with Ottawa; group government firmly established.

⁴⁶It should be noted that the process by which 30 percent was selected as a cut-off figure was not entirely arbitrary. In fact, the McBride Administration, 1903-1906, was used as a test model where increasingly greater numbers of M.P.P.s with low attendance records were deleted, incrementally, and the final "maps of similarity" compared to ensure that the map's distribution had become as stable as possible while eliminating as few politicians as practical. Consequently, 70 percent or greater attendance seemed a suitable compromise, and one that seemed to be significantly higher than the standard employed in other roll-call studies. The following number of deletions were made in each of five legislatures as defined by the premiers who presided over them between 1871-1883. McCreight --1 (De Cosmos), De Cosmos --0, Walkem --3 (Mara, W. Robertson & Brown, in addition to the two vacancies created by De Cosmos and Bunster), Elliot --2 (A. Davie & Gordon), and Walkem --2 (E. Brown & Ferguson).

(4) 1898-1903: An era of confusion culminating in the introduction of party government by Richard McBride.⁴⁷

The results of roll-call analyses will be explored within the framework of the first two time periods offered by Sage: those of "the period of beginnings," 1871-1874, and the "Fight Ottawa" era, 1874-1883. Since quantitative studies of this sort can only benefit from additional primary and secondary source material, each roll-call analysis chapter of pertinence to the first two eras will be followed by an issue-oriented chapter that examines the most dramatic issue of the day.

⁴⁷Walter N. Sage, "Federal Parties and Provincial Groups in British Columbia," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* XII:1948, p.153.

CHAPTER II
MAPPING THE NEW POLITICAL WORLD:
THE McCREIGHT AND DE COSMOS ADMINISTRATIONS, 1871-1874.

All was in an inchoate condition. With confederation the whole past, was, as it were, blotted out. There were no parties and no party lines. It was impossible to forecast how the dividing line would be drawn, or what forces would be operative. The old 'Island vs. Mainland' cry had, however, sufficient vitality to survive. The mainland had thirteen members, the island twelve; the island had two salaried portfolios, the mainland one. Here was a spark which might be blown into a flame.

-- JUDGE FREDERICK HOWAY⁴⁸

... federal parties as such took no part in provincial politics until 1903. Political divisions in the provincial arena were local rather than national. Until the population of the Mainland had surpassed that of Vancouver Island the division was Mainland vs. Island.

-- WALTER N. SAGE⁴⁹

⁴⁸F.W. Howay, *British Columbia: From Earliest Times to Present*, II (Vancouver, B.C.: S.J. Clark Publishing Co., 1914), p. 331.

⁴⁹Walter N. Sage, "British Columbia Becomes Canadian, 1871-1901" *Queen's Quarterly*, LII, 2 (Kingston, 1945), 168-183. Reprinted in *Historical Essays on British Columbia*, eds. J. Friesen and H.K. Ralston (Toronto: Gage, 1980), p. 64.

There has always been the common assertion amongst B.C. historians that the legislature divided along "Island vs. Mainland" lines prior to the introduction of political party. Most often, the parochial battles fought between the rival colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia are offered as the rationale for such continued "in-fighting" during the early years of provincehood. For instance, Margaret Ormsby noted, in one of her many works that utilized newspaper coverage, that in 1870, the farmers of Langley, B.C. were nervous with regard to demands for responsible government included in the Confederation terms. Ormsby faithfully transcribed from her historical source that:

Responsible Government at present would only enable the unscrupulous politicians of Victoria to plunder more effectively the interests of the Mainland, and impede the progress of the country generally. . . . should any more of this foul treatment appear to be furthered, we shall do everything in our power in conjunction with the rest of the Mainland to rid ourselves of all connection with that part of the United Colony known as Vancouver Island.⁵⁰

Strong words indeed, and perhaps indicative of the kind of sentiment that led to the label "Island vs. Mainland" as a description of the political era. Yet Ormsby's source was Amor De Cosmos' newspaper the *Daily Standard*, published in Victoria and very much intended for a Victoria audience. If De Cosmos had reported the virulent opposition of Langley farmers to Island interests, one can safely assume it produced the desired political climate that a pro-Victoria, pro-Reform candidate like De Cosmos needed in order to win consistently in the electoral ridings of Victoria and Victoria District (perhaps a precursor to B.C.'s tendency towards Ottawa-bashing as a

⁵⁰Victoria *Daily Standard*, 1 December 1870, as quoted in Margaret A. Ormsby, "Canada and the New British Columbia," *The Canadian Historical Association Annual Report* (1948) reprinted in *Historical Essays on British Columbia*, eds., J. Friesen and H.K. Ralston (Toronto: Gage Publishing, 1980), p. 100.

successful political tool for mobilizing public support). British Columbia's first historians were content to accept such editorial rhetoric at face value. Likewise, B.C. historians of today readily accept -- without question -- these early histories and the portrayals of our early politics that have become so entrenched. Martin Robin is only one of several who has advanced the "Island vs. Mainland" theme without providing any supportive evidence for the existence of such a legislative alignment. He confidently asserted that:

A ready cause of debate was the 'Mainland versus Island split', a sectionalism which plagued Coast politics until the nineties. . . . The Mainland-Island cleavage coloured all aspects of public policy during the McCreight and subsequent administrations: railroads, public works, taxation, legislative and cabinet representation.⁵¹

Where did Professor Robin find the evidence to suggest that "the Mainland-Island cleavage coloured all aspects of public policy"? All our provincial historians have supported the Island-Mainland thesis, but none perhaps quite so fully as this. Unfortunately, there are exceedingly few biographies for M.P.P.s who participated in the First Parliament of British Columbia, and consequently, little light has been shed to either confirm or deny the assertion of an "Island vs. Mainland" voting alignment. For this reason, the use of division lists are all the more imperative in any study of B.C.'s early legislative history. By using multidimensional analysis, as conveniently

⁵¹Martin Robin, *The Rush for Spoils: The Company Province, 1871-1933* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972), p. 51. Other recent works that continue to promote the "Island vs. Mainland" thesis are Donald E. Blake, *Two Political Worlds: Parties and Voting in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), Michael Kluckner, *Victoria, The Way It Was* (Vancouver, Whitecap Books, 1986). More recent histories of B.C. are a little more cautious in advancing the Island-Mainland label, but nevertheless give credence to it in place of new alternatives. These are George Woodcock, *British Columbia: A History of the Province* (Vancouver & Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990), p. 145 and Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 103.

offered in the statistical software package SPSS-X, "maps of similarity" were developed for both the McCreight and De Cosmos administrations in order that the "Island vs. Mainland" thesis might be tested.⁵² Similarity scores were calculated using a simple matching formula that constructed 2 X 2 contingency tables for each pair of legislators.⁵³ Politicians who voted most often identically would have high similarity scores. These scores were then inserted into a larger data matrix so that the multidimensional scaling process was able to plot the amount of agreement or disagreement among M.P.P.s within a two-dimensional space. As a result, the "map of similarity" shows the unique position of each and every legislator in relation to all other members of provincial parliament, as based on individual voting records. Figure 3 is a map of the McCreight Administration, 1871-1872, where each M.P.P. is represented by a single point. In the absence of group affiliation labels, let alone designated political party, M.P.P. names have been appended to this chart to clearly show individual positions. The first government administration to come to power in B.C.'s "frontier" legislature showed somewhat loose political alignments. Premier McCreight's precarious hold on power is clearly illustrated in Figure 3 with M.P.P.s having been casted widely across the map with little evidence of strong group clustering.⁵⁴ If McCreight had been a strong personality with a devoted following in the legislature, then Figure 3 would likely have shown a tighter clustering of

⁵²For a detailed description of multidimensional techniques see Joseph B. Kruscal and Myron Wish, *Multidimensional Scaling*, (London & Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978). For methods employed in this particular study see chapters 38 and 39, entitled "Proximities" and "Alscal" respectively, in SPSS-X User's Guide, 3d Ed., (Chicago: SPSS Inc., 1988).

⁵³See Appendix A for further explanation of this technique.

⁵⁴Figure 3 is reproduced from graphics file G2PAR.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting records contained in SPSS-X data file G1.DAT. All maps of similarity produced for the McCreight term of office are two-dimensional representations of M.P.P. voting (Stress=0.185, RSQ=0.838).

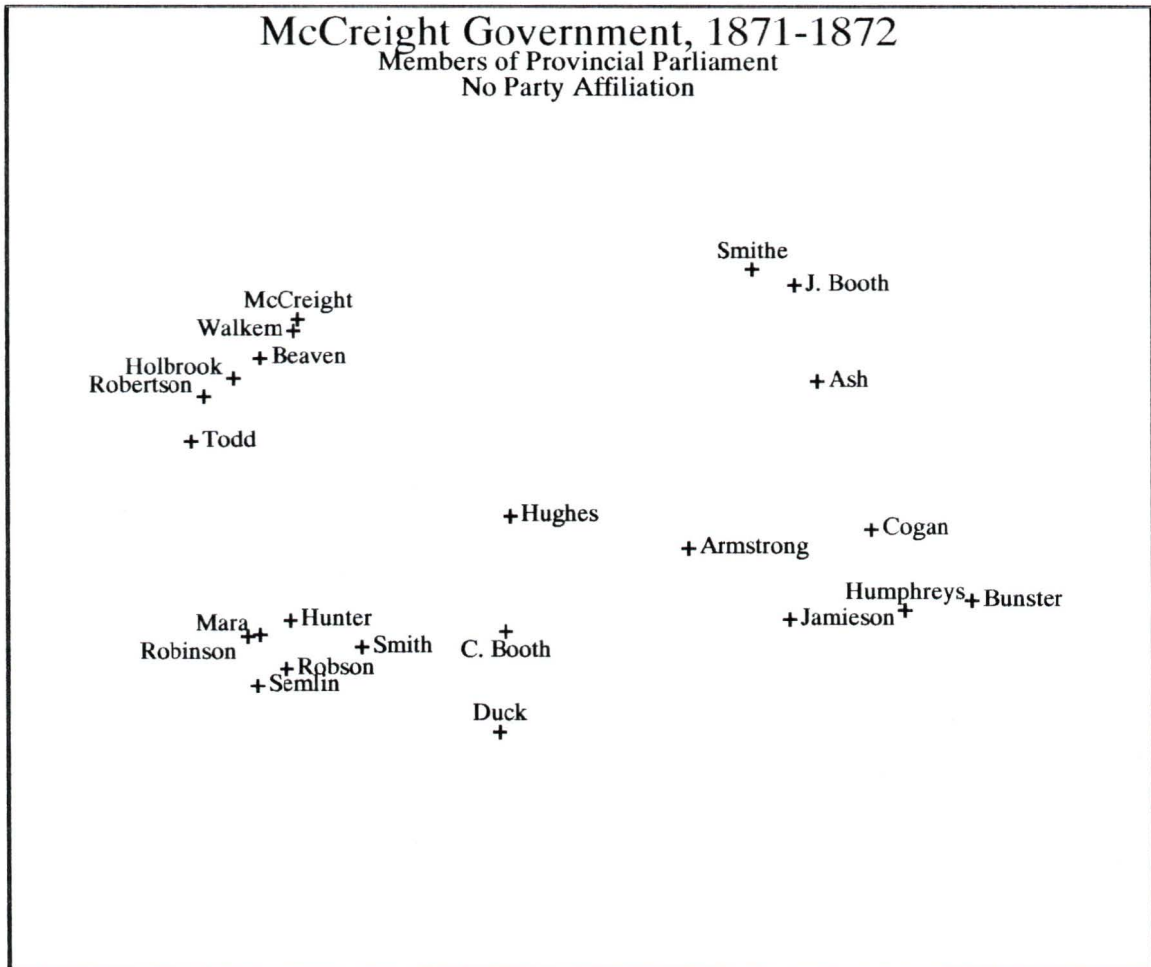


Figure 3.

individuals around the Premier (upper left corner), and therefore, evidence of voting similarity. Nonetheless, we find a legislature where McCreight's own cabinet members -- George Walkem, A. Rocke Robertson and President of the Council Henry Holbrook -- are voting with the Premier on the majority of legislation in which roll-call votes were recorded.⁵⁵ It is not surprising though, that the First Parliament assembled should represent such a state of flux. When one considers that there were

⁵⁵Nineteen roll-calls were recorded under the McCreight Administration, 1871-1872, as contained in SPSS-X file G1.dat. De Cosmos is not included in this map because of his low record of attendance while representing Victoria in the House of Commons, Ottawa.

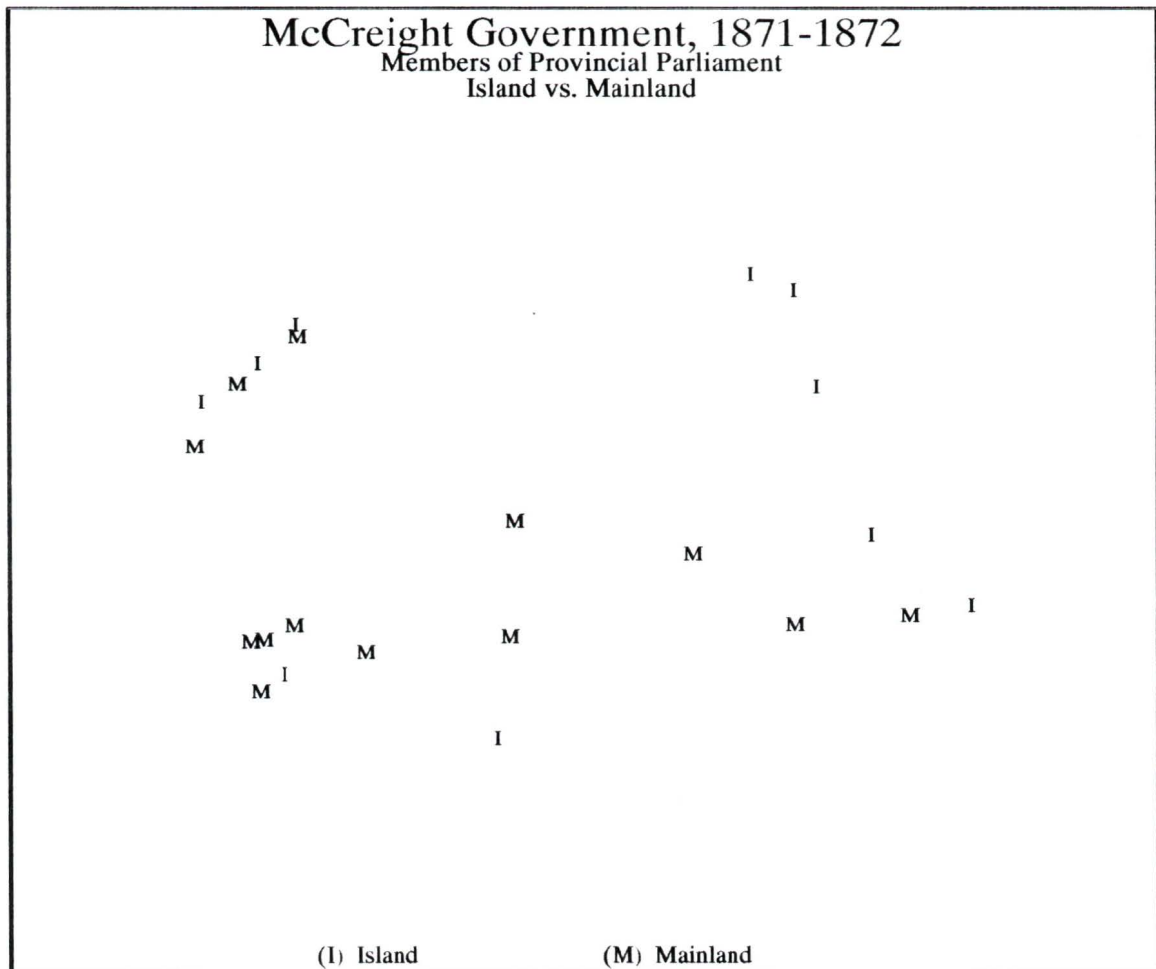


Figure 4.

six different M.P.P.s in this House who ultimately were chosen as premier, it is not difficult to imagine the kind of competing loyalties that worked against the formation of any firm, all-encompassing alignment.⁵⁶ Indeed, Joseph Trutch, in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor, predicted a "grand fight" for the future De Cosmos government as he viewed the McCreight legislature as being "divided into three nearly

⁵⁶The six M.P.P.s present in the 1st Session of the First Parliament who ascended to the premiership between 1871-1898 were John Foster McCreight, George A. Walkem, Robert Beaven, William Smithe, John Robson, and Charles A. Semlin.

equal sections, McCreight's, De Cosmos', and Robson's.⁵⁷ Figure 3 confirms Trutch's opinion. There are, in fact, three distinct groupings illustrated: McCreight supporters in the near upper left corner of the chart, Robson's falling directly below, and the loose coalition of De Cosmos-M.P.P.s as represented by T. Basil Humphreys and Arthur Bunster to the right.⁵⁸

The more pertinent question to be addressed though, is whether this loose collection of individuals represented an "Island vs. Mainland" cleavage. Figure 4 again uses the same similarity scores for M.P.P.s, but the individual points on the map have been re-labelled as either (I) or (M), representing Island or Mainland respectively, and therefore, will show whether M.P.P.s voted on this basis.⁵⁹ As Figure 4 clearly demonstrates, there is little indication of an "Island vs. Mainland" voting alignment during the McCreight government's reign. Instead, both Island and Mainland members are found in rough proportion across the map. In fact, the existence of an Island-Mainland balance is particularly noticeable among McCreight's closest supporters (Upper left, Figure 4).

The legislature under De Cosmos' control appears to have been almost as loosely defined as under McCreight. Figure 5 depicts the relative position of all M.P.P.s under De Cosmos' leadership, and effectively illustrates the absence of any

⁵⁷Trutch to Sir John A. Macdonald, 31 December 1872, *Macdonald Papers*, Vol. 278 as quoted in J.T. Saywell, "Sir Joseph Trutch," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIX, No. 1-2 (January-April, 1955), p. 83. Also cited in Ivan Earl Matthew Anak, "John Robson: British Columbian," M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 1972, p. 96.

⁵⁸Note: De Cosmos is not included in this chart due to his abysmal attendance record while serving in both provincial and federal houses of parliament. Nonetheless, the Humphreys-Bunster grouping, although widely dispersed in the map, represent many of De Cosmos' supporters.

⁵⁹Figure 4 is reproduced from graphics file G1IM.EPS and based on voting data contained in SPSS-X file G1.DAT.

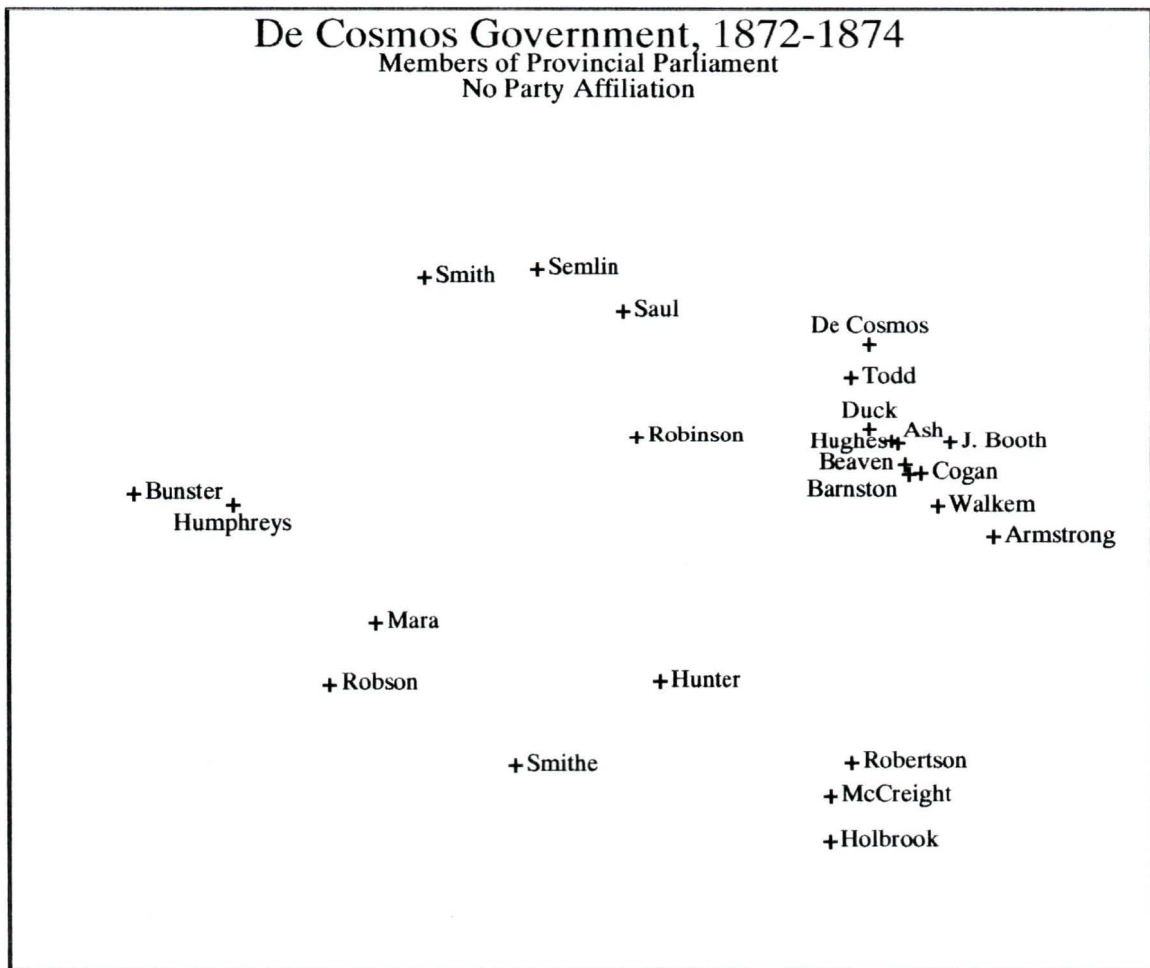


Figure 5.

rigid factionalism.⁶⁰ If clear government and opposition factionalism was present during De Cosmos' reign, then M.P.P.s would be found aligned at opposite sides of the chart. Yet there are strong apparent groupings. Cabinet members Walkem, Beaven, Ash and Armstrong are in close proximity to Premier De Cosmos (middle-right), and former government members McCreight, Robertson and Holbrook continued to vote

⁶⁰Figure 5 is reproduced from graphics file G2PAR.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting data contained in SPSS-X G2.DAT. All members are present in the above chart with the exception, of course, of Speaker of the House, Dr. James Trimble. The speaker normally only voted in order to break a stalemate within the House. Twenty-one divisions were recorded during De Cosmos' term of office. All "maps of similarity" produced for the De Cosmos years, 1872-1874, are two dimensional representations of M.P.P. voting. (Stress=0.177, RSQ=0.868).

the same way after their defeat (lower-right), but in occasional alignment with the De Cosmos program. This is, of course the same collection of politicians who were assembled under McCreight. Of the forty-one recorded votes that occurred under the administration of McCreight and De Cosmos, only two can be seen to have forced a dramatic "Island vs. Mainland" ordering of votes. The first such division, introduced 13 March 1872, requested that a bill be constructed to amend the "Road Act so as to include the Mainland of [the] Province in all the provisions of that Act."⁶¹ On the surface, the motion is rather puzzling, perhaps as it suggested that the Mainland had no comparable legislation, with respect to roads, to that of Vancouver Island. Yet it must be remembered that the forced merger of the old Colonies of Vancouver Island (1849-1866) and British Columbia (1858-1866) into the "United" Colony of British Columbia (1866-1871) had resulted just six years before and much of the independent legislation from each of the older colonies had probably not been "harmonized" at this time. Such was the case of B.C.'s two independent judicial systems that continued to exist for Island and Mainland after the formation of the United Colony.⁶² The subsequent vote that demanded that the Mainland be included under the provisions of the "Road Act" made particular sense if the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly* are consulted on the previous day, 12 March 1872, where it is noted that a Select Committee was formed to investigate charges of fraud with respect to waggon road

⁶¹Moved by William Smithe, seconded by John Paton Booth, both of Cowichan district. See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session I, First Parliament, 1872, p. 38.

⁶²The "Act of Union" in 1866 did not specify the structure of the courts following the merger. Consequently, Chief Justice Needham continued to preside over V.I. until retirement in 1870 at which point Justice Begbie of the Mainland assumed control of the Island jurisdiction. See David R. Williams, *The Man for a New Country: Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie*, (Sidney, B.C.: Grays Publishing, 1977), pp. 158-159.

work in the Upper Country (Cariboo District).⁶³ Clearly, Island members must have believed that their "Road Act" was superior to the Mainland's for the regulation of public works and so voted completely for a general application to the entire province. Only the Island member for Nanaimo, John Robson, voted against the proposal -- a former resident of New Westminster and one-time proprietor of the Mainland's chief newspaper, the *British Columbian*. Of the two Mainland members who voted with the Island, thereby effecting a majority vote, both, interestingly enough, were from New Westminster area -- Vancouver Island's "traditional" foe.⁶⁴

The other bill that proved to have an even more pronounced "Island vs. Mainland" schism occurred after Premier De Cosmos forfeited his provincial seat to devote his energies solely to the representation of Victoria federally.⁶⁵ During the remainder of the Third Session, George Anthony Walkem replaced De Cosmos as Premier and presided over second reading of a bill -- introduced by John Robson -- entitled "An Act to amend the 'Constitution Act, 1871.'"⁶⁶ In this division, all Island members present, with the exception of the Speaker, voted for second reading of the bill,⁶⁷ while all Mainland members, with the exception of one, voted against (9-12).⁶⁸

⁶³*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session I, First Parliament, 1872, pp. 36-37.

⁶⁴Speaker of the Legislature, James Trimble of Victoria, was called on to break the 11-11 tie vote that changed the result to 12-11 in favour of Vancouver Island.

⁶⁵The Dominion Parliament had passed the "Dual Representation Act, 1972" that forced prospective M.P.s to resign their provincial seats before running, if the provincial legislatures had passed a similar prohibition. In fact, the B.C. Assembly had passed such a motion during De Cosmos' term as Premier most probably in response to his abysmal attendance rate in the legislature while holding both provincial and federal seats. The division recorded was 13-9. See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, 1873, p. 30. Also see George Woodcock, *Amor De Cosmos: Journalist and Reformer* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 147.

⁶⁶*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session III, First Parliament, 1874, p. 48.

⁶⁷Both seats for Victoria District were vacant as Arthur Bunster and Amor De Cosmos had become federal M.P.s.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine exactly what caused this rift as the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly* are relatively unspecific on this question. Before the division, Lieutenant Governor Joseph Trutch, in his opening address to the Second Session of the First Parliament, perhaps alluded to the content of the bill when he stated that:

The clauses in the Constitution Act respecting the Indemnity of Members of your Honourable House having been repealed during the last Session, a Bill will be submitted to you for the purpose of providing an Indemnity and Mileage allowance.⁶⁹

Perhaps Island members felt this a needless expense on the public purse (considering that the majority lived at, or in close proximity to, the capital city), while distant Mainland members probably depended on a subsidy for the kind of arduous travel required in nineteenth-century British Columbia.⁷⁰

These divisions then, are the two best examples that exemplify the presence of an "Island vs. Mainland" parochialism. By far though, the majority of recorded votes found under both McCreight and De Cosmos are a strange mix of changing alignments, that on the surface, give the perception of a legislature in flux -- perhaps

⁶⁸Of the total thirteen members who represented the Mainland, only T. Basil Humphreys of Lillooet voted for second reading. It should perhaps be noted that Humphreys was to later represent Victoria District once Bunster and De Cosmos left for Ottawa.

⁶⁹*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, 1872, p. 2. For general discussion of the "Constitution Act, 1871" see Campbell Sharman, "The Strange Case of a Provincial Constitution: The British Columbia Constitution Act" in *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XVII:I (1984), pp. 96-108.

⁷⁰Previous to being repealed in the 1st Session, the sessional allowance for M.P.P.s was \$5 dollars a day to a maximum of \$250, as noted in Howay, *British Columbia: From Earliest Times to Present*, II, p. 327.

understandable in the age before party. Figure 6 proves once again the usefulness of multidimensional analysis by disproving the existence of "Island vs. Mainland" factionalism for the De Cosmos era as well.⁷¹ If there had been a strict "Island vs.

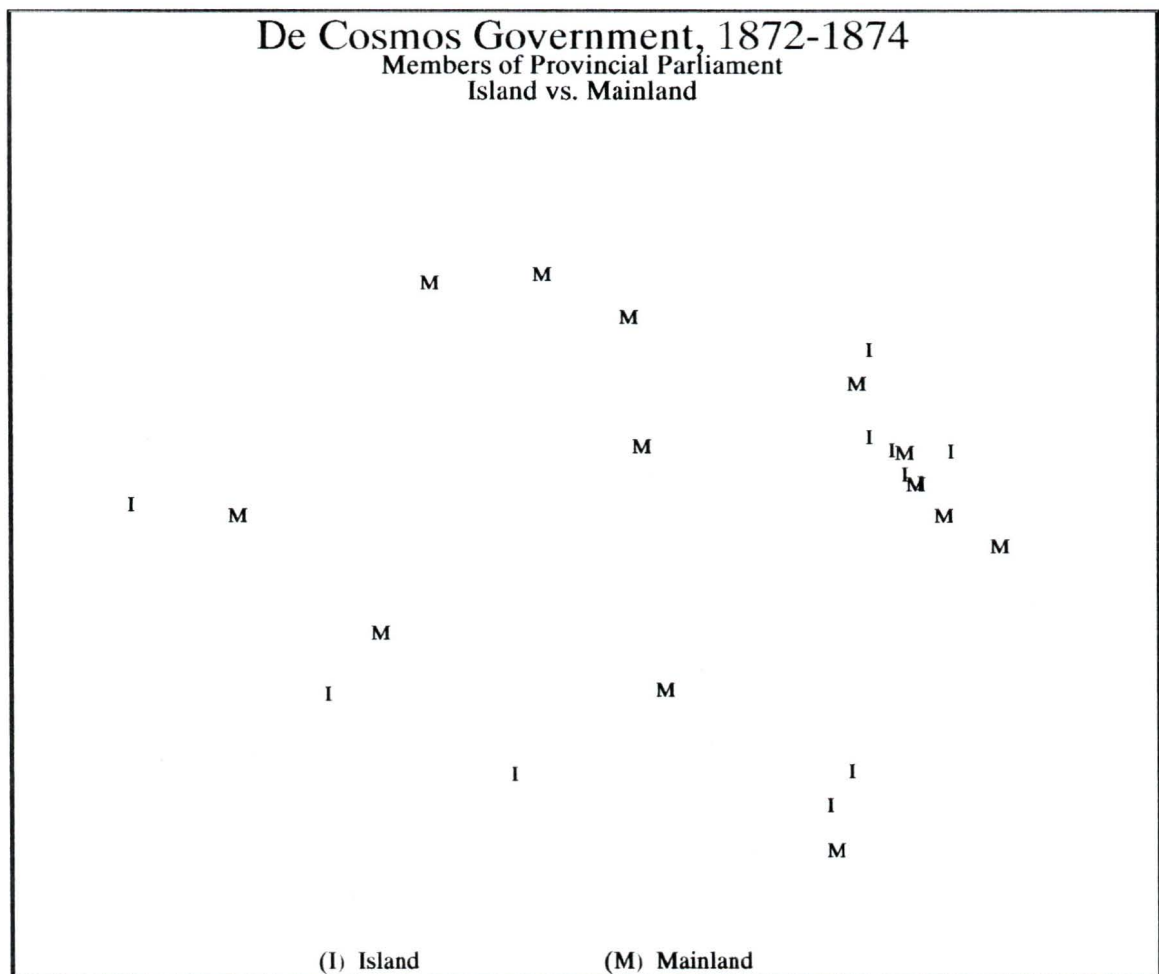


Figure 6.

Mainland" cleavage, Islanders and Mainlanders would have grouped in vigorous opposition to one another. Figure 6 would have depicted two such regional camps on the periphery of the chart, separated by a substantial and unrelenting distance. This

⁷¹Figure 6 is reproduced from graphics file G2IM.EPS and based on voting data contained in SPSS-X file G2.DAT.

obviously was not the case. Indeed, in one instance, there is even evidence to suggest that Mainland members were larger supporters of Island concerns than Islanders themselves. In this exceptional division, a majority of Mainland M.P.P.s voted in favour of an amendment to extend shipping services to the Saanich Peninsula. The motion requested that:

. . . the steam-boat carrying the Mails on the east Coast call at North Saanich, as a matter of convenience to the Settlers of the said District, for carrying their produce to market and also for the convenience of Passengers.⁷²

The anomaly of this motion was that the majority of Island M.P.P.s broke with their Mainland brethren and voted against an extension of steam-boat service to their own backyard. The division lists of the B.C. legislature -- during the McCreight and De Cosmos ministries -- indicates rather conclusively, that an "Island vs. Mainland" cleavage was non-existent in the years 1871-1874. *in the division of 20.6.74 - for what I know*

If the province is divided into a greater number of geographical regions beyond Island and Mainland, only slightly more sense is made of this inaugural period in responsible government. Figures 7 and 8 suggest that regionalism may have some limited bearing on voting considerations. In these two maps, the similarity data has again been re-labelled to show eight distinct geographical areas in which a member's district might fall. Under McCreight and De Cosmos, there is a noticeable coincidence between individuals with similar voting alignments who represent the same region. An example of this is found at the bottom of Figure 7 which depicts a loose clustering around Robson of members from the Interior (6) (lower-left), or the two seat-mates

⁷²*Journals of the Legislative Assembly, Session II, First Parliament, p. 21.*

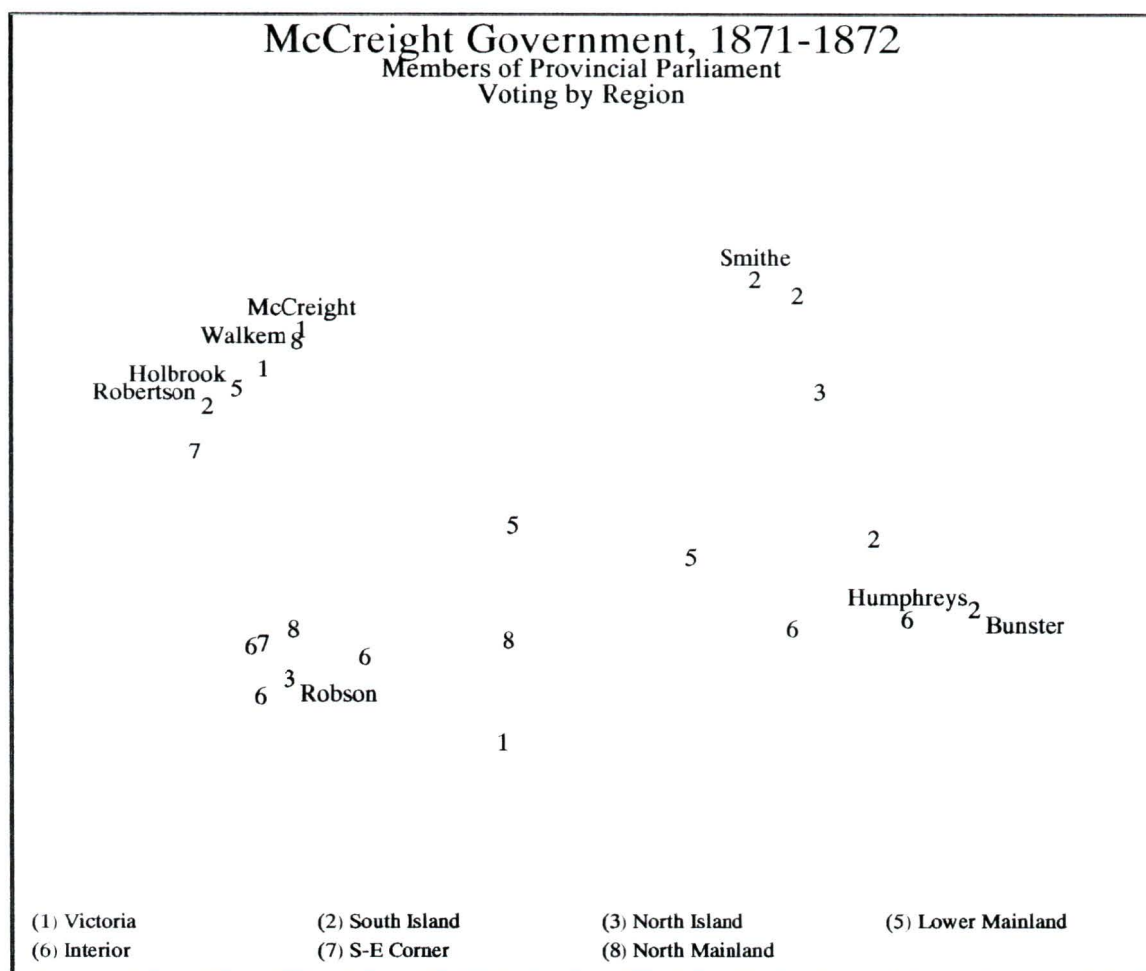


Figure 7.

from Cowichan District (2) near the top-right of the chart.⁷³ T. Basil Humphreys of Lillooet (6) is situated with Arthur Bunster of Saanich (2) at the lower-right of the chart, yet Humphreys later represented the Island riding of Victoria District once Bunster departed from the provincial scene to run federally. Localism undoubtedly

⁷³Figure 7 is reproduced from graphics file G1REG.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting data contained in SPSS-X file G1.DAT. Figure 8 is reproduced from graphics file G2REG.EPS and based on G2.DAT.

contributed significantly to the voting considerations of representatives, yet not in an all-determining way.⁷⁴

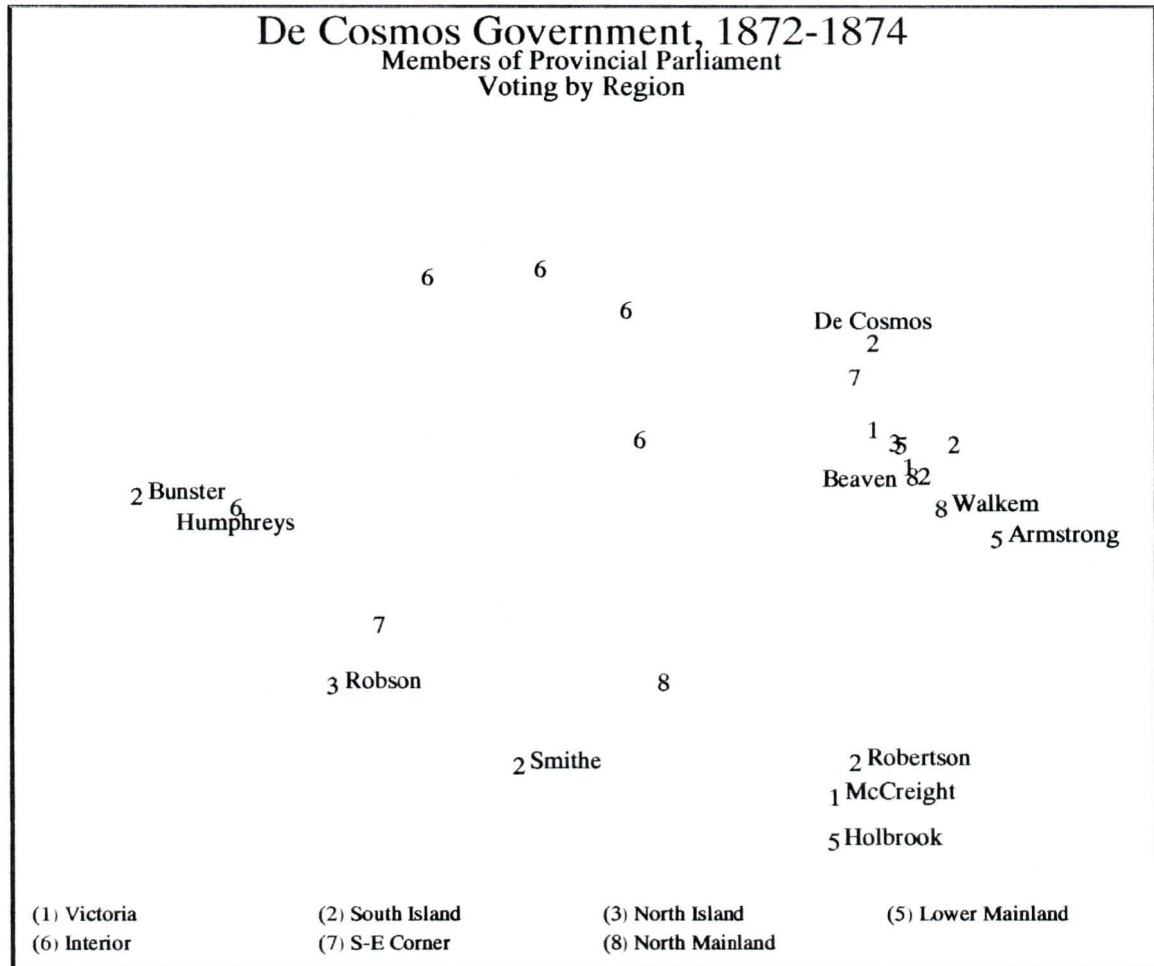


Figure 8.

What then, held certain politicians together, and yet caused others to divide before the introduction of party? Many relationships applied to political systems elsewhere in Canada have also been applied to British Columbia in an attempt to

⁷⁴The names of office holders have also been included on these maps to illustrate Cabinet solidarity at this time. Office holders are clustered around the "leader" as one might expect. Also, opposition to the McCreight Government (Figure 7) is found in the loose clustering around Robson (lower-left), and those around Bunster and Humphreys (upper-right).

shape this rather amorphous period of politics. The essential models variously offered by B.C. historians and political scientists are often the "Tories vs. Reformers," "The Ins vs. the Outs," and the "English vs. Canadian" cleavages.⁷⁵

The "Tories vs. Reformers" alignment had gained a certain amount of credence in discussions of the McCreight-De Cosmos era for the simple fact that McCreight had opposed the introduction of responsible government in B.C. while De Cosmos supported it.⁷⁶ This cleavage was further emphasized on the basis of McCreight's cabinet membership that included A. Rocke Robertson as Provincial Secretary and Henry Holbrook as President of the Council -- both of whom, like McCreight, had predicted the failure of responsible government.⁷⁷ More importantly, however, was the unprecedented domination of cabinet meetings under McCreight by the Lieutenant Governor, in this instance Joseph Trutch, whose magisterial presence, it was felt, thwarted the institutions of democracy. Yet when De Cosmos assumed the premiership, apparently not much changed. Legend has it that De Cosmos ejected the Queen's Representative from future cabinet meetings but, as Walter Sage noted, "The De Cosmos government, in spite of the new premier's protests while in opposition, in the main carried out its predecessor's programme."⁷⁸

⁷⁵For discussion of these approaches and others see Hugh G. Thorburn, "Interpretations of the Canadian Party System" in *Party Politics in Canada*, 5th ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1985), pp. 20-40.

⁷⁶Margaret Ross, "Amor De Cosmos, A British Columbia Reformer," Masters Thesis. University of British Columbia, 1931, p. 144.

⁷⁷Ivan E. M. Antak, "John Robson: British Columbian," Masters Thesis, University of Victoria, 1972, pp. 88-89. It should be noted though, that cabinet member George Walkem was an early promoter of Confederation.

⁷⁸Walter N. Sage, "Amor De Cosmos, Journalist and Politician" in *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VIII (1944), p. 207. For the story of De Cosmos' exclusion of Joseph Trutch from cabinet meetings see Sidney W. Jackman, *The Portraits of the Premiers: An Informal History of British Columbia* (Sidney, B.C.: Gray's Publishing, 1969), pp. 17-28.

For this reason, some have suggested that "The Ins vs. the Outs" relationship better described -- in opportunistic terms -- the base difference between the McCreight and De Cosmos administrations. In a private letter to Sir John A. Macdonald, Joseph Trutch claimed that "The outs had combined to take the place of the ins upon McCreight's resignation."⁷⁹ Yet Figure 5 shows the deposed McCreight cabinet in the lower right of the chart as being tentatively aligned with the De Cosmos Government, and therefore, this political interpretation fails to explain fully the pattern of voting. Trutch further surmised, however, that "whether De Cosmos' ministry will stand depends on McCreight as Robson's friends will oppose bitterly -- I fancy McCreight will in general help De Cosmos, although on some questions he must with his friends vote against him"⁸⁰ This opinion is supported by Figure 5. De Cosmos essentially formed his new cabinet without the real opposition that was present during McCreight's term of office. To believe that the "Outs" had secured the spoils of office is patently false. De Cosmos' new cabinet consisted of a former cabinet minister, George Anthony Walkem (Attorney-General) who had voted against the non-confidence motion on Premier McCreight. Also included was Robert Beaven of Victoria City (Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works), another non-supporter of non-confidence. In addition to these former members of the McCreight coalition were John Ash of Comox (Provincial Secretary) and William James Armstrong of New Westminster District (Minister of Finance and Agriculture) who, although they supported non-confidence, nonetheless were not leaders in the opposition that formed

⁷⁹Trutch to Macdonald, 31 December 1872, *O'Reilly Family*, Add. Mss. 412/Box 2/File 2. BCARS.

⁸⁰Ibid.

against the first government. Macdonald advised Trutch that, in the event there was no clear opposition leader to become premier, the mover of the non-confidence motion -- no matter how disagreeable -- should be elevated to the post.⁸¹ Instead, Trutch selected De Cosmos who had been absent from the legislative assembly for a majority of recorded votes. The true instigators of the non-confidence vote were, in fact, T. Basil Humphreys of Lillooet and Arthur Bunster of Victoria District, yet neither was included in cabinet.⁸² Instead, De Cosmos built a new coalition from existing government supporters, partial support from McCreight's old cabinet, and the addition of marginal supporters or "loose fish."

Lastly, the "English vs. Canadian" explanation for a B.C. legislative alignment needs discussion. Of the twenty-five M.P.P.s, the nationalities of twenty-one were discovered. Of these twenty-one, ten were born in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and eleven in Canada -- mainly the province of Ontario. This theory gains support only so far in that McCreight, Holbrook, and Walkem did have their origins in the U.K., and Robertson, although originally from Ontario, was a staunch Anglican transplant. If, however, the division lists are used to their fullest potential, little evidence is found of "English vs. Canadian" voting patterns. Further to this point is that both Walkem and Beaven were educated at McGill University and Upper Canada College respectively.⁸³ More significant to the McCreight cabinet, possibly, was the mutual affiliations that each held in common. Three of the four held the top executive

⁸¹Macdonald to Trutch, 18 December 1871, *O'Reilly Family*, Add. Mss. 412/Box 2/File 3. BCARS.

⁸²Humphreys moved, seconded by Bunster, the non-confidence motion on the McCreight Government. The recorded roll-calls show that these two M.P.P.s consistently voted against the McCreight administration.

⁸³See Henry J. Morgan, *Canadian Parliamentary Companion*, 9th ed. (Montreal: John Lovell, 1874).

positions in the Law Society of British Columbia: Walkem as President, McCreight as Treasurer, and Robertson as Secretary.⁸⁴ Also, all four were members of the Masonic Order and belonged to lodges that practiced the English Rite (E.R.) as compared to the Scottish Rite (S.R.) used by most Eastern Canadian Lodges.⁸⁵ On 21 January 1872, Amor De Cosmos complained to fellow lodge members that the *British Colonist* (Editor: John Robson, M.P.P.) had attributed a false political rumour to his good name. De Cosmos demanded that action be taken against proprietor and fellow Freemason D.W. Higgins and that a retraction be printed.⁸⁶ The newspaper had reported of De Cosmos that:

A bad Mason in bad Standing suggests as a damning feature of the new [McCreight] Cabinet that all its members are Freemasons. Even if true which it is not, the suggestion could not well be in worse taste. It is also untrue that all the city members are Masons.⁸⁷

In fact, the *Colonist* was partially correct; one of the city members, Speaker of the House James Trimble, was not a Mason.⁸⁸

⁸⁴For confirmation see Morgan's *Parliamentary Companion*.

⁸⁵McCreight and Holbrook were, at different times, Deputy Grand Masters under Robert Burnaby. Conversely, Simeon Duck, Member for Victoria City, practiced the Scottish Rite ritual and in time had become the Grand Master of B.C., 1874-1875. His low level of support for the McCreight government perhaps illustrated the schism that had developed between adherents of the two forms of Freemasonry in the province, or rather, it may be -- as Freemasons contend -- that their craft was above politics. For confirmation of McCreight, Walkem, and Holbrook membership see John T. Marshall, *History of Grand Lodge of British Columbia, 1871-1970* (Victoria: Colonist Printers, 1971), p. 619. For A. Rocke Robertson see "Porch Book", Vancouver's Island, Victoria Lodge No. 783, Add. Mss. 2, v. 198. BCARS. For Simeon Duck see "Statement of Intrants in the Lodge Vancouver, No. 421," Add. Mss. 2, Box 3, File: Vancouver Lodge 421. BCARS.

⁸⁶A. De Cosmos to Secretary of Victoria Lodge of F[ree] & A[ccepted] Masons, Victoria, 21 January 1872. Correspondance In, Add Mss. 2, Vol. 164, File 1. BCARS.

⁸⁷See "Bad Taste," *British Colonist*, 21 January 1872, p. 3.

⁸⁸However, McCreight, Beaven and Duck of Victoria City were Masons. See Marshall, *History of Grand Lodge of B.C.*, p. 619. In addition to McCreight, other Masonic Premiers of British Columbia were De Cosmos, Walkem, Beaven, A.E.B. Davie, Turner, Prior, and McBride.

Certainly further research is required in the area of group affiliations of politicians, especially in the age before party, yet to be true to the "collective biographical" approach of this thesis, a return to the division list is required in order that a more compelling answer might be found to explain B.C. legislative voting patterns. This naturally entailed an examination of all divisions recorded under each of the McCreight and De Cosmos ministries, with particular attention paid to the non-confidence motion of 19 December 1872, that not only forced M.P.P.s into rigid support or non-support of the McCreight programme, but also served as a register of M.P.P. discontent -- the single best indicator -- for comparison purposes to other specific divisions. Of the two ministries generally, nineteen divisions were recorded under Premier McCreight's term of office. Of the nineteen, six divisions were lost, especially in the last days before the non-confidence vote, with an additional three divisions won by margins of only one vote. In contrast, of the twenty-two divisions recorded under Premier De Cosmos' reign -- for which he was absent on five -- only three were lost; one on the question of dual representation in provincial and federal houses. Of the motions that succeeded, all were carried by significant majorities. Unless one accepts that the B.C. legislature was imbued with the egalitarian spirit of the "free vote," one can safely assume that Amor De Cosmos had constructed a more durable coalition than that of John Foster McCreight. What then cemented the De Cosmos coalition together? Certainly not an "Island vs. Mainland" alignment as suggested by previous scholars. As the "maps of similarity" convey quite clearly, individual voting records between the years 1871-1874 do not establish such a legislative alignment, nor can it be expected that the ordinary day-to-day legislation that any group of politicians must deal with would likely represent such a dramatic and convenient label.

Of the forty-one divisions recorded for Sessions I through III of the First Parliament, five were specifically concerned with the introduction of the Canadian system of tariffs into British Columbia. The introduction of the tariff instilled particular misgivings amongst the agricultural, and certain of the commercial interests, of the province -- the same interests that Amor De Cosmos represented in the rural farmlands of Victoria District versus McCreight's commercial-oriented Victoria City. It is on this important, but little understood question of tariffs that this thesis will now direct itself for a possible explanation of voting alignment for the McCreight and De Cosmos years.

Agr. suffering after the intro. of
Cdn tariffs. Economy stagnating. Home-stead
+ HWPA to aid since tariffs Don't. Jun 1870
a key tariff modification supporter.
+ boozers 44

CHAPTER III

"THE WAR OF THE TARIFFS:"

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CANADIAN SYSTEM OF TARIFFS TO B.C.

I feel perfectly sure, Sir, that if Confederation should come, bringing with it the Tariff of Canada, not only will the farmers be ruined, but our independence will be taken away; it will deprive our local industries of the protection now afforded them, and will inflict other burdens upon them; it will not free trade and commerce from the shackles which now bind them, and will deprive the Government of the power of regulating and encouraging those interests upon which the prosperity of the Colony depends. There can be no permanent or lasting union with Canada, unless terms be made to promote and foster the material and pecuniary interests of this Colony. . . I am opposed to Confederation, because it will not serve to promote the industrial interests of this Colony, but on the contrary, it will serve to ruin many, and thus be detrimental to the interest and progress of the country. I say that Confederation will be injurious to the Farmers, because protection is necessary to enable them to compete with farmers of the United States. The [Canadian] Tariff and Excise Laws do not supply that.

-- DR. JOHN SEBASTION HELMCKEN⁸⁹

⁸⁹J.S. Helmcken, "Debate on the Subject of Confederation with Canada," British Columbia Legislative Council, 9 March 1870 in *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1851-1871*, V., ed. James E. Hendrickson (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1980), p. 449.

The introduction of the Canadian tariff structure to British Columbia, shortly after Confederation in 1872, was perhaps one of the most politically significant, yet neglected topics of historical investigation of B.C.'s formative years. Extensive political debates before, during and after the Confederation talks divided legislators and public alike into separate camps of thought that continued to clash throughout the first three sessions of the B.C. Legislative Assembly. In much the same way as the Canadian Liberal party had once spoken for the "agrarian underdog" against business-dominated Conservatives in early electoral contests prior to the "Pacific Scandal,"⁹⁰ B.C. too, divided on the fundamental question of tariff protectionism. Nonetheless, the Canadian tariff debate has been ignored as a potentially exciting and useful explanation of political division in the province for part of the period before the age of party.⁹¹

Research consisted of a thorough examination of the province's two leading political newspapers for the period: The *British Colonist* and the *Victoria Daily Standard*.⁹² Political coverage from each was consulted on all days in which the B.C. legislature was sitting. It should be noted that there is little evidence of "Island vs.

⁹⁰Canadian Liberals had more often aligned themselves with the farmers of Western Ontario and rural Rouges south of the St. Lawrence. "Only when the Liberals abandoned their reformist posture as defenders of the agrarian underdog and spokesman for reform did they succeed." See Hugh G. Thorburn, "The Development of Political Parties in Canada" in *Party Politics in Canada* 5th ed., Hugh G. Thorburn, ed. (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1985), p. 4.

⁹¹A good example of an historical work that glosses over the Canadian tariff issue is Howay, *British Columbia: From Earliest Times to Present* II, pp. 296-297, p. 328.

⁹²This is not an attempt to derogate other newspapers in the province such as the *Mainland Guardian*, *New Westminster Herald* or the *Cariboo Sentinel* for instance. Yet the close proximity of Victoria's press to the Legislature, combined with the fact that editors Robson and De Cosmos were also opposing political players for the period of study suggests that Victoria's newsprint contained greater political coverage. Further research will, of course, require a proper canvass of other newspapers in the province.

Mainland" animosity in either the *Standard* or the *Colonist* for the period discussed.⁹³ These papers are of particular interest as they not only represented the political rethoric of M.P.P.-editors John Robson and Amor De Cosmos respectively, -- each a power-seeker and the professed enemy of the other -- but also differing editorial commentaries that were diametrically opposed on the issue of Canadian tariffs. The *Colonist* referred most aptly to the journalistic-jousting as "The War of the Tariffs" and it was little wonder that the issue had maintained so prominent a position, for so long, on Victoria's newsprint agenda.⁹⁴ Concern over the possible impact of the eastern trade scheme on the fledgling B.C. economy was exemplified in the minutes of the "Debate on the Subject of Confederation With Canada."⁹⁵ Extensive deliberation on this issue alone raised tariffs to equal, if not greater, status than the most commonly scrutinized Confederation-demands for responsible government and a transcontinental rail-link with Canada. Indeed, Robert W.W. Carrall, member for Cariboo, believed that "Among things brought up in the course of this [Confederation] debate, the questions of tariff and Responsible Government occupy prominent

⁹³Exceptions are "The Kootenay Seats," *Standard*, 19 February 1872, p. 3 where members are cautioned "not to create a sectional feeling between the Island and Mainland." Also, "The Seat of Government," *Standard*, 26 March 1872, p. 2 that identified John Robson with a rumoured attempt to relocate the B.C. capital to the Mainland. Also see the election advertisement entitled "Electors," *Colonist*, 26 February 1874, p. 3 that is an extreme, yet uncommon, illustration of "Island vs. Mainland" sentiment where voters are warned: "Remember! Vancouver Island has fewer members than the Mainland. If you elect Dalby you will give the Mainland one more member and then the Island voters can at anytime be out voted." This conflicts with Edith Dobie's assertion that an "Island vs. Mainland" alignment did exist. This is particularly curious as she based her piece primarily on Victoria newspapers of the period. Howay is cited frequently in the work, however, and this is probably the more likely, although erroneous, source. See Edith Dobie, "Some Aspects of Party History in British Columbia, 1871-1903," pp. 235-251. Of more particular interest is an article that claimed "Island vs. Mainland" sectionalism was being contrived. See "Manufacturing Public Opinion," *Colonist*, 8 March 1874, p. 3.

⁹⁴"History of the Tariffs," *British Colonist*, 6 March 1873, p. 2.

⁹⁵See *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures*, V, Appendix A.

positions."⁹⁶ The Honourable Thomas Wood, J.P., went one step further and gave discussion of tariffs top billing. He remarked in the Legislative Council that "In speaking to the motions [Terms of Union clauses] now before the House, it will hardly be necessary for me to say that I think that this question of Tariff the most important of all that have been introduced during the debate."⁹⁷

Most enlightening, however, are the positions that John Robson and Amor De Cosmos presented as colonial legislators. Their arguments, previous to Confederation, are comparable to the publicly-adopted stances they later maintained in the first provincial legislature, and therefore, essential background for the period of interest. The *Colonist* was a consistent supporter of the Canadian tariff and reflected John Robson's pre and early post-Confederation position. Although Robson acknowledged in 1870 that "the only real arguments against Confederation worthy of consideration, are against the present Canadian Tariff," he nonetheless considered any modification "a federal matter" and not within B.C.'s legislative jurisdiction.⁹⁸ Convinced that the

⁹⁶Robert W.W. Carrall, "Confederation Debates," British Columbia Legislative Council, 11 March 1870, *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures*, p. 478.

⁹⁷Hon. Thomas Wood, J.P., "Confederation Debates," 23 March 1870, *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures*, p. 551. Certain individuals abandoned farming by 1870 as food prices dropped and agricultural imports increased to \$225,193. See Margaret A. Ormsby, "Agricultural Development in British Columbia" in *British Columbia: Patterns in Economic, Political and Cultural Development*, ed. Dickson M. Falconer (Victoria, B.C.: Camosun College, 1982), p. 154. For Blue Book figures and related discussion to growth of agricultural production in B.C. from 1862 to 1870, see Paul A. Phillips, "Confederation and the Economy of British Columbia" in *British Columbia and Confederation*, ed. W. George Shelton (Victoria, B.C.: Morriss Printing, 1967), pp. 49-50. Also see George M. Dawson, "Note on Agricultural and Stock Raising, and the Extent of Cultivable Land in British Columbia," (Geological Survey of Canada) in Sanford Fleming, *Report on Survey and Preliminary Operations on the Canadian Pacific Railway* (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & Co., 1877), Appendix S, pp. 246-253.

⁹⁸John Robson, "Confederation Debates," 9 March 1870, p. 455. Joseph Trutch, Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, further explained that "the [federal] 'Organic Act' puts it virtually out of the power of the colony to prescribe what form of Tariff we should have under Confederation. The scheme . . . is based on the transfer of the control of customs to Canada. . .". Ibid., p. 553.

benefits of Confederation outweighed the negative aspect of Canadian tariffs, he further explained his position:

We are told that the tariff of the Dominion would crush our farming and industrial interests. Why, Sir, that tariff is a little more than a third lighter than ours, and would relieve us of that one-third of present taxation. . . . Although in its present form, the tariff would be ill-adapted to some of our local interests which we desire to protect, it should be remembered that the Canadian tariff is now under revision, as regards the free admission of American products; and under Confederation we shall in all probability have a treaty of reciprocity; or, if not, certainly a revised tariff which would meet American productions, which now find a free market in the Dominion, with a protective duty.⁹⁹

Conversely, Amor De Cosmos and his newspaper the *Victoria Daily Standard* were consistent advocates of a modified Canadian tariff that extended protection to farmers in particular. As a colonial representative for the farming interests of the Saanich Peninsula, De Cosmos pledged the strict ultimatum that:

If the terms between British Columbia and Canada do not protect the farming interests, the largest and only permanent interest in this Colony, Confederation will do no good. If it does not protect the farming interests, I vote against Confederation, first, last, and all the time.¹⁰⁰

These were strong words, indeed, from one who had advocated Confederation with Canada ever since the beginning of his political career.¹⁰¹ De Cosmos even pushed aside his beloved political hobby-horse of fundamental democratic rights that he had

⁹⁹John Robson, Member for New Westminster, 9 March 1870, *ibid.*, p. 454.

¹⁰⁰Amor De Cosmos, Member for Victoria District, 10 March 1870, *ibid.*, p. 470.

¹⁰¹See "The Struggle for Confederation" in George Woodcock, *Amor De Cosmos: Journalist and Reformer*, pp. 97-126.

so strenuously nurtured and warned other legislators that protection for the agricultural interests of the colony -- "the very keystone" of Confederation -- was "of more consequence than responsible government."¹⁰² This majority sentiment was heeded, in part, as a motion to test the desirability of protection was carried. It simply stated "That in the opinion of this Council it is highly desirable that the agricultural, horticultural and dairy interests of British Columbia be protected."¹⁰³ Where disagreement did occur among members was on the procedural method of affording agricultural protection. In brief, one side believed that British Columbia, as a separate colony, had the right to dictate what modifications it required in the Canadian system of tariffs. Others, however, were convinced that this responsibility was not within the purview of the colony; that Confederation with Canada necessarily meant relinquishment to the federal government of all such authority. This argument suggested that B.C. was within its right to recommend tariff preferences, but not to dictate federal customs and excise policy. Ultimately, rigid protectionist members acceded to the principle and deferred, in good faith, to the Canadian government in the hope that an honourable solution might break the impasse.¹⁰⁴ In negotiations with Canada, the final compromise as assented to by B.C. really did nothing to solve

¹⁰² Amor De Cosmos, "Confederation Debates," 22 March 1870, *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures* V, p. 549. In 1870, British Columbia employed 1,827 persons in agriculture, 403 in manufacturing, 1,303 in trading and 2,348 in mining as recorded in *British Columbia: Report of the Honourable H.L. Langevin, C.B.*, (Ottawa, 1872) in G.P.V. Akrigg and Helen Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle, 1847-1871: Gold & Colonists* (Vancouver: Discovery Press, 1977), p. 404. Victoria City was attributed with a iron factory, 2 sash factories, gas works, 4 breweries, 2 distilleries, 1 soap factory, 2 tanneries and 2 lumber yards. By comparison, New Westminster City including Burrard Inlet were eclipsed with only 3 saw mills, 1 grist mill and 1 distillery. *Ibid.*, pp. 403-405.

¹⁰³"Confederation Debates," *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures*, 23 March 1870, pp. 558-559.

¹⁰⁴See "Confederation Debates," 24 March 1870, *Ibid.*, pp. 565-566.

the problem. Article Seven of the Terms of Union stated that the old B.C. tariff should:

. . . continue in force in British Columbia until the railway from the Pacific Coast and the system of railways in Canada are connected **unless the Legislature of British Columbia should sooner decide to accept the Tariff and Excise Laws of Canada.**¹⁰⁵

Section Seven effectively postponed any decision on modified tariffs. Protectionist legislators undoubtedly believed they had won a temporary victory and a period of amnesty during which time proper representations could be made to Ottawa. Those less enthralled with B.C.'s higher rates of protection obviously achieved some measure of success too, as the additional proviso in Section Seven awarded British Columbia the right to accept the Canadian tariff in advance of a completed rail connection with the East. Future provincial legislators were henceforth given the opportunity of campaigning for the immediate introduction of the Canadian tariff and the further possibility of electing a legislative body more favourably inclined to free trade principles than the previous colonial legislative council.

All of this is background to the period of study and indicative of Article Seven's central role in setting the tone of the first provincial electoral contest: between those who desired an immediate reduction in commodity and other prices versus those who favoured adequate protection for fledgling agricultural and certain industrial pursuits. The tariff issue will not be offered as a substitute for political party, but rather as the leading question by which groupings of M.P.P.s united politically. The recurrence of debate on Canadian tariffs throughout the first three sessions of the B.C. legislature

¹⁰⁵As quoted in Margaret A. Ormsby, "The Relations Between British Columbia and the Dominion of Canada, 1871-1885." Ph.D. dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1938, p. 90. The emphasis is my own.

acted as a focal point for M.P.P.'s in the absence of formal party platform or ideology. It should be noted that there were occasional early references to the Liberal party provincially in 1872, whose popular measures were supposedly usurped by the McCreight government.¹⁰⁶ This quickly faded once B.C. adopted a non-aligned approach as the best method for obtaining a secure federal commitment to the Terms of Union. At the federal level especially, party had become equated with faction and a politician's "blind devotion" was roundly condemned.¹⁰⁷ "[T]he West could not afford the luxury of party politics" but instead played a "ministerialist" position in federal elections conveniently allowed by the separation of eastern and western voting-days by upwards of two weeks.¹⁰⁸ As a consequence, western regions like B.C. "were unanimous in their opposition to the opposition" by voting on the basis of eastern electoral results.¹⁰⁹ In the federal election of 1874, the *Colonist* advised its readership accordingly:

. . . we have no hesitation in saying that it will be the duty of British Columbia to select as her representatives men free to act in the interest of the country -- men untrammelled by old associations or party lines with which this Province cannot be expected as yet to concern herself very much.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶Perhaps more De Cosmos' imaginative attempts to construct the image of a vibrant party than any else. Nonetheless, see "To the Liberal Party of British Columbia," *Standard*, 21 November 1871, p. 2 and "The Governor's Speech," *Standard*, 17 February 1872, p. 2. Also see "The Road Tolls," *Standard*, 22 February 1872, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷"Country First -- Party Afterwards," *Standard*, 4 December 1873, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸I would like to thank Eamon Gaunt, Cowichan Bay, B.C., for this useful piece of information.

¹⁰⁹Escott M. Reid, "The Rise of National Parties in Canada" in Thorburn, *Party Politics in Canada*, p. 16.

¹¹⁰"The Duty of the Hour," *Colonist*, 15 January 1874, p. 2. Perhaps here is the basis of our early non-partisan tradition that Professor Ormsby has spoken of. Ormsby stated that "we have not probed deeply enough to explain the basis of our early non-party tradition. . .". See Margaret A. Ormsby, "Neglected Aspects of British Columbia's History" in *British Columbia Library Quarterly*, XXIII (4), April 1960, p.

British Columbia was determined to maintain influence with both Conservative and Liberal federal governments so that issues that emanated from the Terms of Union "contract" -- like the Canadian tariff -- were effectively addressed. In the first provincial election of 1871, the early-acceptance proviso of Article Seven caused quick action on the part of politicians who adopted a pro-Canadian versus modified-Canadian tariff position -- most often as the main plank in their political platform. In the election notices of the *Standard*, published 17 October 1871, most candidates addressed the question of tariffs solely or as the most prominent of a group of issues.¹¹¹ For instance, in the election advertisement of Charles B. Brown of Victoria District, the most conspicuous declaration was that:

It seems to me that previous candidates have endeavored to endorse one ticket on the Canadian Tariff, but I think that your interests would be much better served by a modification of our own to be presented to the Federal Government.¹¹²

Likewise, candidate Robert Williams of Victoria City -- a supporter of the Canadian tariff -- stated in his election address that:

. . . the chief question at present before the public is that of Tariff. Now, I am of the opinion that farmers and others are paying a great deal too dearly for protection, and feeling certain that the Dominion House of Commons will never grant a modified tariff, and that **in the interests of commerce** this great question ought to be settled at once

10.

¹¹¹For example, Robert Smith's successful bid in Yale District had used a political advertisement that expressed his support for the immediate adoption of the Canadian Tariff. Conversely, Junior Member for Esquimalt, Henry Cogan, like other M.P.P.s, listed his support for a modified tariff as the first in a group of issues. See "Election Notices," *Standard*, 17 October 1871, p. 1. For successful Victoria candidates Robert Beaven and James Trimble (pro-Canadian Tariff) see *Standard*, 13 October 1871, p. 1, and for John Robson of Nanaimo see *Colonist*, 13 October 1871, p. 4.

¹¹²Election notice of Chas. B. Brown, *Standard*, 17 October 1871, p. 1.

and forever, I shall, if elected, be prepared to vote for the immediate adoption of the Canadian Tariff System.¹¹³

Yet supporters of a modified tariff -- particularly Amor De Cosmos -- felt that amendments to the Canadian version were far from impossible, and as proof, they cited the "Report of the Privy Council" in addition to correspondence from the federal Finance Minister, Sir Francis Hincks that suggested that the Dominion Parliament would "be inclined to consider them favourably" if the first, duly convened, provincial parliament also expressed itself in favour.¹¹⁴ For this reason, De Cosmos hoped for a majority-return of the modified-tariff supporters.

The *Colonist*, however, was not convinced by De Cosmos' argument and hinted at the state of public opinion in rural constituencies -- or perhaps the success of De Cosmos' strategy -- when it insinuated that the farming districts were being completely "gulled" on the subject of the Canadian tariff.¹¹⁵ From the beginning of the campaign until its conclusion, the *Colonist* countered De Cosmos' central plank with editorial fervour.

It will be seen that Mr. De Cosmos is still persisting in his ignoble effort to mislead the farmers upon the subject of Customs Tariffs by endeavouring to induce them to expect that the Dominion Parliament will give British Columbia a special tariff. . . . he is evidently making

¹¹³Robert Williams, "Election Advertisement," *Colonist*, 24 September 1871, p. 4. The emphasis is my own.

¹¹⁴"The Tariff Question," *Standard*, 30 September 1871, p. 2. De Cosmos' use of Sir Francis Hincks' dispatch is also noted in "Victoria District Nomination," *Colonist*, 15 October 1871, p. 3. Hincks' favourable disposition towards a modified tariff may perhaps explain why Arthur Bunster (an anti-Canadian Tariff man) resigned his federal seat of Vancouver [Island] District in favour of Hincks who had lost his own personal riding in the federal election of 1872.

¹¹⁵"The Tariff Question and the Elections," *Colonist*, 25 October 1871, p. 2. Editor John Robson, in the same above article, trivally proclaimed: "what would a few cents protection on butter and eggs be to the people of Esquimalt compared with the construction of a Graving Dock, the presence of the Fleet, and the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway?"

an effort to get as many obedient tools elected to the new Legislature as possible, with the hope of further postponing the acceptance of the Canadian tariff. . . . Sensible people, and especially the working men, are determined that they are not going to submit any longer to such crushing taxation upon the necessities of life, and, consequently, there will be found few De Cosmosites in the new Legislature.¹¹⁶

The *Colonist's* prediction, although exaggerated, was partly correct. The pro-Canadian tariff forces appeared to have won the day -- or election day at least.¹¹⁷ Victoria City, as the main commercial centre of the province, returned a full slate of four M.P.P.s committed to the immediate introduction of the Canadian tariff. Conversely, the rural farming communities of Victoria District returned two M.P.P.s who were both pledged to the concept of a modified tariff.¹¹⁸ From a total of twenty-five M.P.P.s, the newly formed cabinet of John Foster McCreight was cemented together not so much by shared birthplace, political ideology, profession or other mutual affiliations, but quite simply by their shared commitment to the immediate

¹¹⁶Undoubtedly, less taxation on the "necessaries of life" -- like alcoholic beverages -- was a popular political theme especially for John Robson's mining-oriented district of Nanaimo. See "Tariff Deception," *Colonist*, 27 September 1871, p. 2.

¹¹⁷Editor-M.P.P. John Robson reported that "De Cosmos acknowledged defeat on the Tariff question" in "The Liberals Win a Victory," *Colonist*, 22 October 1871, p. 3. This was, of course, subsequently denied in the *Standard*. The allusion to the Liberal label is interesting in that Robson's paper claimed victory for the "Constitutional Reform" party. Individual candidates though, had not identified themselves under these labels in any election advertisements examined. These labels, therefore, appear to be more the creation of the press.

¹¹⁸In 1870, Victoria City employed 609 persons in the field of commerce as compared to 196 persons in agriculture. Those elected on a pro-Canadian tariff stance were J.F. McCreight, Simeon Duck, James Trimble and Robert Beaven. By comparison, Victoria District employed 101 persons in commerce versus 214 in agriculture. The two gentlemen elected on a modified-tariff position were Amor De Cosmos and Arthur Bunster. See *Langevin Report* as quoted in Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle*, p. 404.

introduction of the Canadian tariff: on this issue all four ministers were in full agreement.¹¹⁹

Although the proponents of a modified tariff were numerically weak at the start of the First Parliament, this did not prevent them from advancing the cause of protectionism in the House. The speech from the throne offered hope to protectionist M.P.P.s in that it left out any mention of the all-important tariff question. De Cosmos' post-election analysis was puzzled yet optimistic on the obvious exclusion:

The Tariff question [he stated] is omitted in the speech, for what reason is best known to the Government. We presume the intent is to leave it an open question -- a hopeful sign for those who favour a modified tariff; for if the Government felt itself safe in recommending the Canadian Tariff, it probably would have done so.¹²⁰

Alas, this state of bliss was but brief, as the battle lines were once again quickly drawn. No sooner had the Lieutenant Governor concluded his speech than John Robson, true to form, submitted notice of motion to have the "Customs Tariff and Excise Laws of Canada" applied to British Columbia. De Cosmos, also true to his previous actions in the colonial Legislature, gave notice for a motion that would request "that all correspondence between the Government of British Columbia and the Government of the Dominion of Canada, respecting a modification of the Tariff, be laid

¹¹⁹In this sense Ormsby was partially correct to state that "The issue of the contest was the tariff, and if De Cosmos had not resisted the adoption of the Canadian tariff, his chances of heading the poll in Victoria district and being named the first premier of the province would have been very good." De Cosmos did, in fact, top the poll in Victoria District and had he supported the Canadian tariff he undoubtedly would have lost the election as did William Dalby his pro-Canadian tariff opponent. At the same time, De Cosmos' support for a modification obviously precluded him from any premiers short list as it would have further stalled a final "unified" resolution to the question of Confederation. For Ormsby's passage see Margaret A. Ormsby, "Relations Between British Columbia and the Dominion of Canada," Ph.D. dissertation, p. 131.

¹²⁰"The Governor's Speech," *Standard*, 17 February 1872, p. 2.

before the House."¹²¹ The first issue of consequence in the new legislature therefore, was not with regard to the founding of responsible government; the expectation of railway construction or any other capital works of Imperial concern, but like the election itself, it was once again -- tariffs. Within a matter of days an amendment was offered to the "Governor's Speech" that regretted that the agricultural interests of the province had been "entirely ignored"; an amendment that premier McCreight considered a confidence-test of his days-old government.¹²² John Robson moved, seconded by Charles Semlin of Yale, an amendment to the amendment "that the address be adopted as read." This provoked a further counter amendment by Arthur Bunster of Saanich and Henry Cogan of Esquimalt, Vice President of the Horticultural and Agricultural Association of British Columbia, that spoke of the need for a modified tariff in no uncertain terms. In essence, the resolution firmly instructed:

That the Government of British Columbia intends to take the earliest opportunity of recommending to the Government of the Dominion of Canada, such changes in the Tariff now in force in this Province as will better meet the requirements of the people and the country.¹²³

The third amendment was "withdrawn by leave" as an obvious procedural incongruity, and Robson's amendment was carried, as was the original reply to the Lieutenant-

¹²¹"Provincial Assembly -- Lieutenant Governor's Speech, etc.," *Standard*, 17 February 1872, p. 3. The colonial secretary provided the House with provincial-federal correspondence on 26 February 1872. See "The Tariff," *Standard*, 27 February 1872, p. 3. Note: Robson, although respecting federal jurisdiction on tariff matters, was willing to impinge upon federal powers when it suited his particular view. He also proposed a chinese head tax of \$50 per year at this time as "Under the Canadian Tariff, which he thought the House would be sure to adopt, rice would come in free, and upon Opium there would be a very small duty. The Chinamen therefore, living on his rice and opium, would contribute very little to the general revenue." See "Heathen Chinees," *Ibid*.

¹²²The amendment was moved by J.P. Booth of Cowichan and seconded by Dr. John Ash of Comox. See "Provincial Assembly," *Standard*, 21 February 1872, p. 3.

¹²³*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session I, First Parliament, 20 February 1872, p. 11.

Governor's speech.¹²⁴ Shortly afterwards, on 1 March 1872, Robson's motion for the immediate introduction of the Canadian tariff was placed before the House and met with similar procedural wrangles by incipient opposition forces who were once again defeated.¹²⁵ During the debate, William Smithe, representative for the farm lands of the Cowichan Valley, believed that the case in favour of Canadian tariffs was very one sided. He stated that:

The arguments used by the majority of the honourable gentlemen who had supported the resolution were simply those that had been for many years in favour of free trade. Gentlemen he said come to this country from England imbued with free trade ideas, and the major portion of them failed to see that they are not applicable to the state of things in this or any other new place. . . He would ask that the honourable gentlemen how it was that the history of all British Colonies showed that in all new places there was first a period of prosperity and then a relapse into hard times and retrogression. It was simply that British capitalists were ready to launch out into something new, and the capital they invest makes things lively for a time, but being started on a false basis, viz; free trade, the invariable consequence had been utter failure.¹²⁶

Smithe's statement was ignored by the majority of members: the fourteen to nine vote in favour of the Canadian tariff was greeted by the *Colonist* as a "Victory" and the end of "the War of the Tariffs."¹²⁷ The *Standard*, by comparison, regretted that all other

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session I, First Parliament, pp. 20-22. For a detailed account of the debate see "First Provincial Legislative Assembly," *Colonist*, 2 March 1872, p. 3. Also see letter from "A Farmer" entitled "The Tariff Question," *Standard*, 1 March 1872, p. 3.

¹²⁶Space does not permit a detailed description of the myriad of arguments offered by M.P.P.s. See "The Debate on the Tariff," *Standard*, 2 March 1872, p. 3. Also see "The Tariff Debate," *Standard*, 2 March 1872, p. 2.

¹²⁷"The War of the Tariffs Ended!" *Colonist*, 3 March 1872, p. 2. Those in favour were Robertson, McCreight, Walkem, Holbrook, Todd, Beaven, Hunter, Robinson, Smith, Semlin, Mara, Robson, Booth (Cariboo) and Duck -- 14. Those against were Hughes, Armstrong, Humphreys, Bunster, Booth (Cowichan), Ash, Cogan, Smithe and Jamieson -- 9. See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, 2 March 1872, Session I, p. 21. Note: Amor De Cosmos, a Member of Parliament in both provincial and federal

interests in the province had become subservient to commerce, and ventured to predict that the proponents of the Canadian tariff would "see their mistake by-and-by, when too late to apply a remedy. . . . there will be no drawing back, no help for it, however much we hereafter may have occasion to regret the suicidal policy we have pursued."¹²⁸

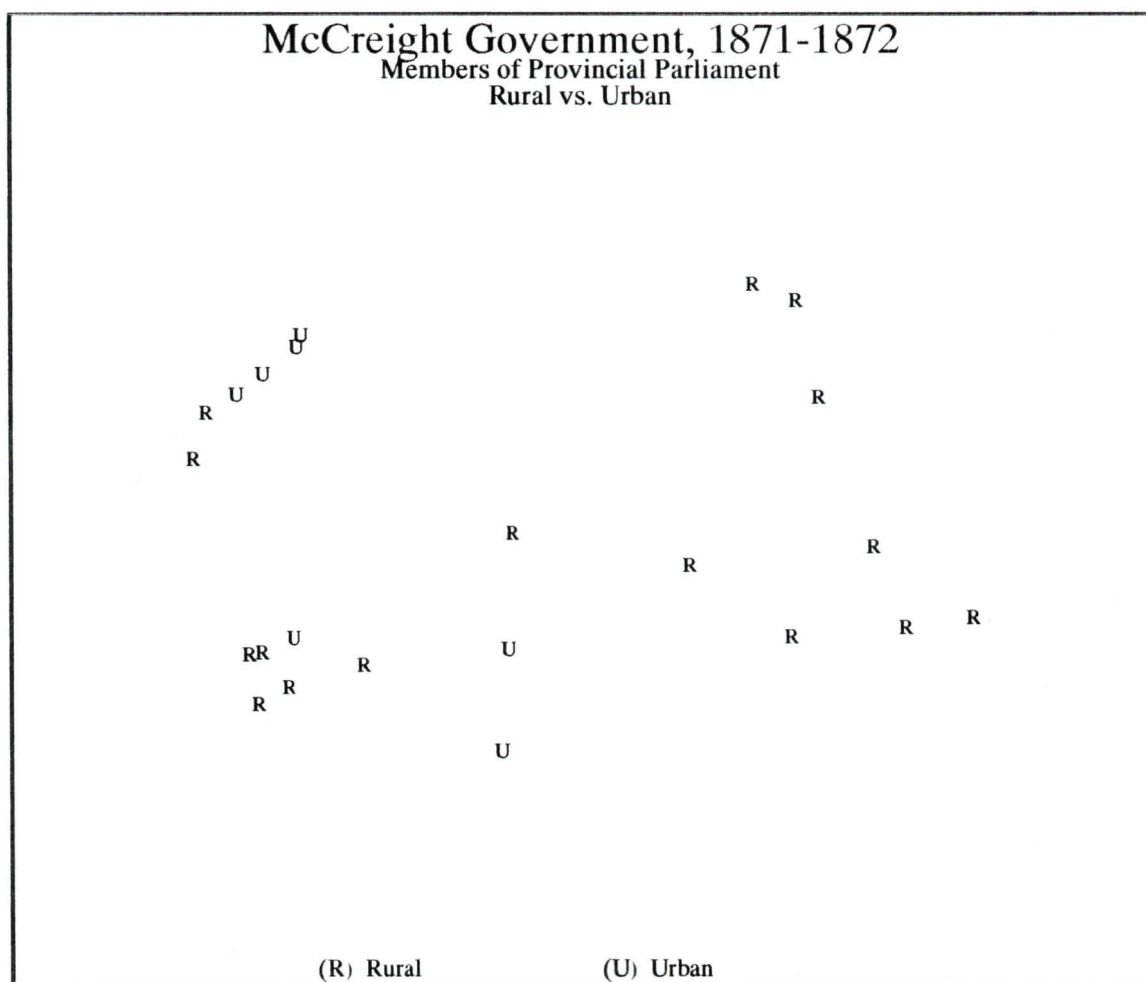


Figure 9.

houses was absent for the vote.

¹²⁸"The Question of the Tariff Settled," *Standard*, 4 March 1872, p. 2.

Interestingly, Figure 9 suggests that there was something of a emergent "Rural vs. Urban" cleavage in British Columbia's First Parliament.¹²⁹ Although urban centres, as such, were limited to the old colonial townsites of Victoria, New Westminster, and Barkerville, it should nevertheless be noted that these commercial hubs were aligned more closely to McCreight's pro-Canadian tariff government (middle-left), than to the loose collection of rural-farming M.P.P.s that represented the main opposition to the McCreight cabinet (middle-right).¹³⁰

The opposition lost the fight, but within a few days T. Basil Humphreys of Lillooet attempted to solicit support in the House for an address to the Canadian government that asked for specific duties to be imposed on wheat, flour, butter and eggs. This was promptly ruled out of order -- on the advice of George Walkem -- to the effect that "a question discussed in the House, could not be again considered during the [same] session."¹³¹ One week later, Premier McCreight, in his capacity as Attorney General, moved second reading of the tariff Bill and Arthur Bunster promptly countered that it should be postponed for six months. This objection was dispensed with swiftly. John Ash further appealed for a brief delay in the implementation of the tariff so that people might sell stocks of locally grown produce before B.C.'s ports were opened to the cheaper American imports. This also was given short-shrift by government members of the House.¹³² As a result, the Bill received

¹²⁹Figure 9 is reproduced from graphics file G1UR.EPS and based on voting information contained in G1.DAT.

¹³⁰Compare Figure 9 with Figure 3 to illustrate relative position of McCreight cabinet members, and M.P.P.s clustered around John Robson. Note that the seven urban (U) M.P.P.s are located on middle to left side of chart.

¹³¹"Tariff! Tariff!!" *Standard*, 8 March 1872, p. 3.

¹³²"The Tariff Bill," *Standard*, 13 March 1872, p. 3.

a speedy second reading and on the following day, 14 March 1872 -- despite further pleas by opposition members for a brief delay -- a third and final reading was executed so that only Royal Assent remained before the Canadian tariff system had full force in the pacific province.¹³³ Prime Minister Macdonald, as if anticipating *a fait accompli*, instructed Lieutenant Governor Trutch, "The moment that your act passes adopting the Canadian Tariff, you should send a copy duly certified."¹³⁴

Yet the official consolidation of B.C. into the Canadian tariff structure did not end opposition debate. The *Colonist* assumed that the "battallions of ignorance, prejudice and knavery" had retreated forever, and further piously claimed that:

. . . those hitherto most bitterly opposed to its adoption are already reconciled -- in many instances pleased with the change. Under the influence of the tariff the loaf grows larger, the glass of grog grows purer, if not cheaper, and commerce is looking healthy and vigorous; and we hesitate not to predict that agriculture, in common with every other industry, will feel the invigorating effects of the change. . .¹³⁵

Robson was a little too cock-sure of himself. The proponents of modified tariffs were, indeed, quiet for the remainder of the First Session, but then the parliamentary edict that prevented questions from being considered more than once in a single session probably represented the real reason for their silence.¹³⁶ In addition, De Cosmos' return from Ottawa was certainly anticipated, including perhaps news on tariffs; the imminent downfall of the McCreight Administration was also close at hand; and

¹³³"The Tariff," *Standard*, 14 March 1872, p. 3.

¹³⁴Macdonald to Trutch, 16 March 1872, *O'Reilly Family*, Add. Mss. 412/ Box 2/ File 3. BCARS.

¹³⁵"Under the Canadian Tariff," *Colonist*, 3 April 1872, p. 2.

¹³⁶As previously cited in *Standard*, 8 March 1872, p. 3.

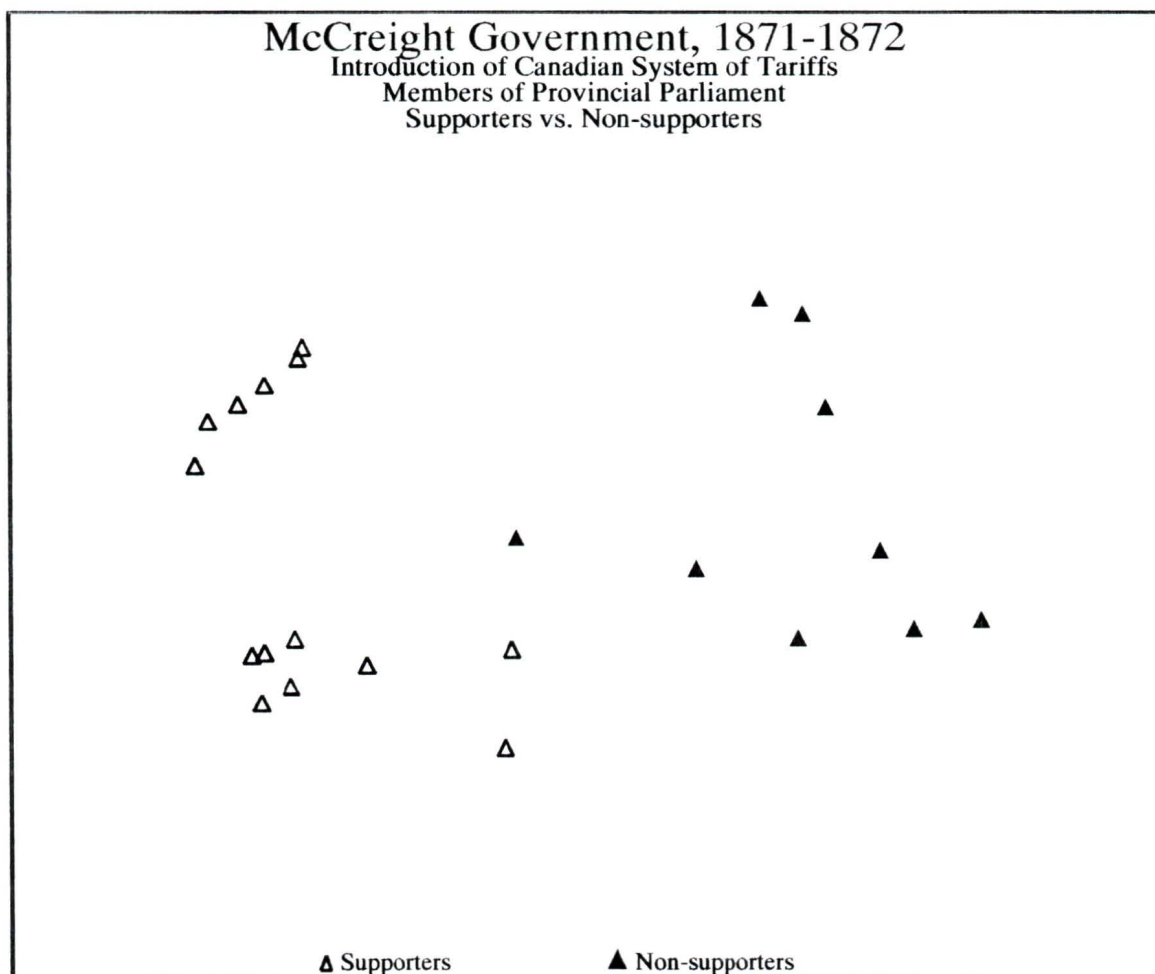


Figure 10.

presumably this was a time for building new political "friendships," and where possible, preserving old bonds of legislative support in preparation for a change in power and -- hopefully for modified-tariff supporters -- a change in policy direction as well.¹³⁷

In Figure 10, all divisions for the McCreight term of office have been used once again, but individual M.P.P.s have been relabelled according to their support or non-

¹³⁷Of the McCreight Ministry shortly before its demise the *Colonist* asked the following rhetorical question: "What is it like? Anything like beer, for instance? No. It's more like the consistency of whey -- the vapid output of a weak and expiring ministry." See "The Opening Speech," *Colonist*, 18 December 1872, p. 2.

support for the introduction of the Canadian system of tariffs to British Columbia.¹³⁸

When the "map of similarity" is recoded in this manner, it becomes quite apparent that the question of tariff protection vs. free trade was the underlying alignment found during McCreight's tenure of office. The tariff issue aided in giving McCreight the premier's post, but it also led to a rather tenuous hold on power, and ultimately defeat.

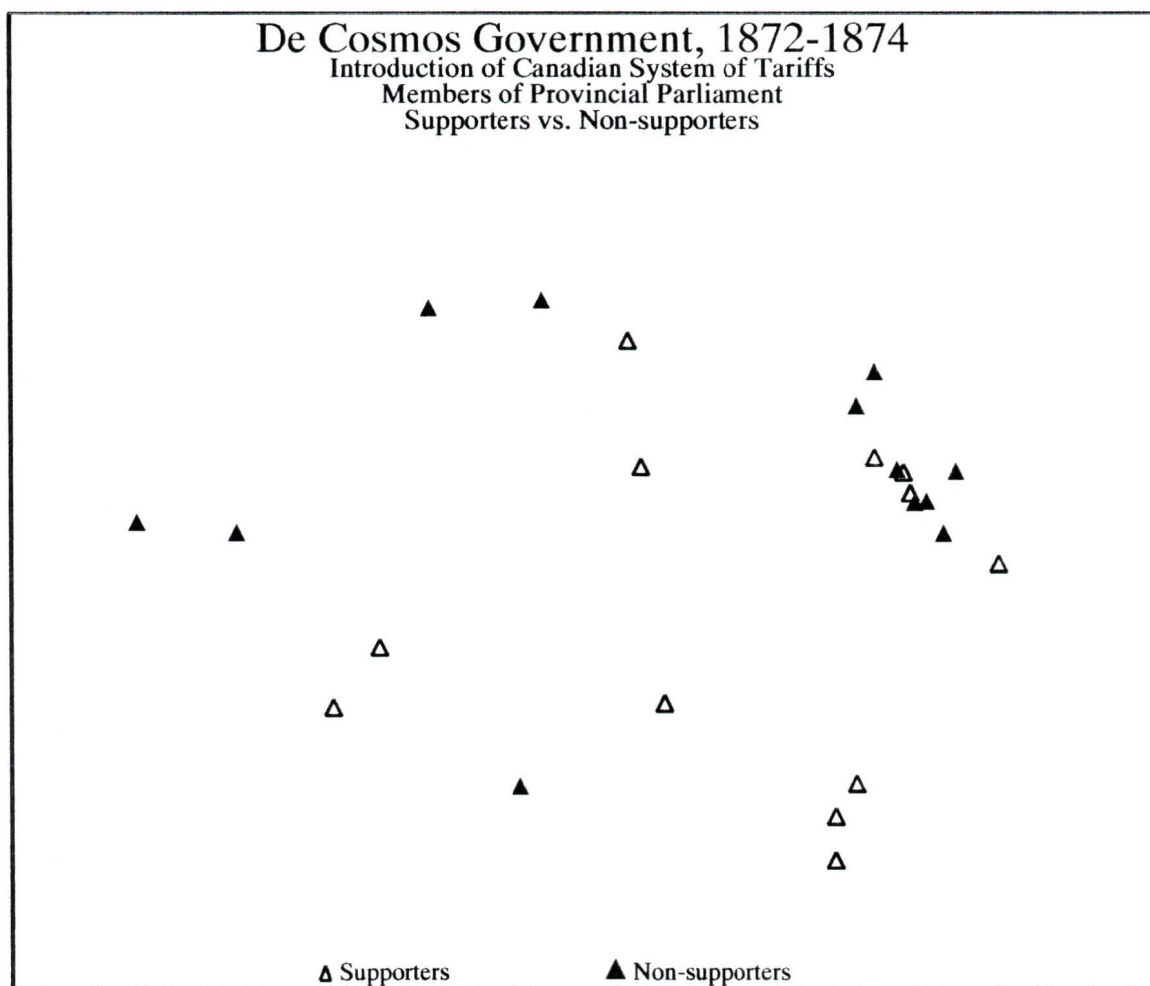


Figure 11.

¹³⁸Figure 10 is reproduced from graphics file G1TAR.EPS and based on data contained in SPSS-X file G1.DAT.

The McCreight Government fell, 19 December 1872, on an amendment to the throne speech which asserted that the administration of public affairs had "not been satisfactory to the people in general."¹³⁹ The issue used to denounce the McCreight Ministry was not the introduction of the Canadian tariff, but responsible government instead. This political brush was perhaps seen to be the best for tarring the Ministry -- a Ministry composed of gentlemen who had confided to the public their doubts about the feasibility of full-fledged democracy on the Pacific coast.¹⁴⁰ This old bugbear was a popular "issue" that any M.P.P. could realistically adopt without serious electoral repercussions. More importantly, it was an issue, unlike tariffs, that allowed the new premier-designate, Amor De Cosmos, the opportunity of building a more secure coalition in the House. A modified-tariff oriented non-confidence motion would not have provided De Cosmos with the additional support he needed to oust McCreight: the House had already divided in favour of the Canadian tariff. It was, nevertheless, his true base of political support. Of the nine M.P.P.s who voted against the immediate introduction of the Canadian tariff, eight also voted for non-confidence -- the single exception being Andrew Jamieson of the Cariboo who had died. With De Cosmos' return from Ottawa, his vote brought the non confidence forces to a total of nine. The subsequent anti-McCreight vote divided the legislature with eleven members for non-confidence and ten members against. It can be seen, therefore, that De Cosmos only required two converts -- in this case John Robson and Robert Smith -

¹³⁹*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, 19 December 1872, p. 8.

¹⁴⁰The newspapers linked George Walkem to this somewhat nefarious claim, having disregarded his earlier, adamant support for the principle of responsible government during the Confederation debates. See "The Ministry," *Standard*, 16 December 1872, p. 2; "Second Session of the Provincial Legislature," *Colonist*, 17 December 1872, p. 2; "Opening of the Legislature," *Standard*, 18 December 1872, p. 2; and "A Weak Government and a Empty Treasury," *Colonist*, 20 December 1872, p. 2.

- in order to secure a slim, but effective, majority of one. If non-confidence had centred on the Canadian tariff, neither Robson nor Smith could have possibly sided with the opposition in light of their past commitments to Nanaimo and Yale respectively.¹⁴¹

De Cosmos' rise to the premiership was not, of course, based on the results of a new election since the legislative session was never dissolved by the Lieutenant-Governor upon McCreight's resignation. De Cosmos was selected by the Queen's representative as the M.P.P. who could best command a majority in the House, and consequently, the new premier had to work with the same group of M.P.P.s that had already largely committed themselves to the Canadian tariff. This realization was perhaps reflected in the composition of the second Ministry in that two anti-Canadian tariff and two pro-Canadian tariff M.P.P.s were offered cabinet positions.¹⁴² It also happened that the extreme voices of the earlier debate on tariffs were effectively shut-out from this new cabinet coalition. Figure 11, when compared with Figure 5, depicts the De Cosmos coalition, generally, as an alliance of moderates.¹⁴³ Brazen free trader John Robson attacked De Cosmos immediately for breach of faith and vociferous protectionists Arthur Bunster and T. Basil Humphreys voted against the

¹⁴¹See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, First Parliament, Session I, p. 21 for the original Canadian tariff motion and Session II, p. 8 for the subsequent non-confidence motion.

¹⁴²De Cosmos' cabinet membership attested to his appreciation of B.C.'s myriad of political rivalries: of the four ministers, not including the premier of course, historians have stressed, most often, that there were two Island and two Mainland M.P.P.s balanced against each other. Yet of more importance, possibly, was the fact that De Cosmos further balanced two non-confidence with two pro-confidence supporters who also represented both sides of the tariff debate -- evenly. Before later defections, the Pro-Canadian tariff men were Robert Beaven and George Walkem. Anti-Canadian tariff men were Dr. John Ash and William Armstrong.

¹⁴³Figure 11 is reproduced from graphics file G2TAR.EPS and based on voting data contained in SPSS-X file G2.DAT.

first order of business under the new government -- a kind of protest vote.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, the brief coalition that had formed to eject McCreight -- mainly anti-Canadian tariff M.P.P.s -- quickly fractured and the first counter-insurrection attempted against De Cosmos, like McCreight's term previously, was again the issue of tariffs. Arthur Bunster moved, seconded by T. Basil Humphreys, an amendment to the same throne speech that had brought down the McCreight Government. It read "That we regret that His Excellency has made no allusion to the subject of a Modified Customs Tariff and Excise for this Province." This time, however, the government was supported and the amendment received only four votes.¹⁴⁵ Yet this test of De Cosmos' government did not necessarily suggest that the Premier had abandoned the modified-tariff issue, but rather that he was working with existing M.P.P.s in an attempt to sway certain of those formerly opposed to the cause of protection and thus fashion a new more secure alignment. The *Standard* reiterated the Premier's previously held belief to the effect that:

. . . we always contended that if the legislature of British Columbia chose to take the necessary and proper steps there would be no difficulty in obtaining such modification of that tariff as would better promote the interests of the people of the Province. . . . our farmers would have been spared the unfair conditions they now have to bear up against of competing with farmers from the other side who come here to dispose of their surplus products at almost any price. . . . we have the assurance of the Premier (Mr. De Cosmos) that had a modified tariff been sought last year the Government of Ottawa would have favourably

¹⁴⁴Resumption of the reply to the speech from the throne, fifth paragraph with regard to loss of the San Juan Islands to the U.S.A., in *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, p. 11. For Robson's editorial attack see "A Menacious Organ," *Colonist*, 20 December 1872, p. 2.

¹⁴⁵Supporters of the modified tariff amendment were Bunster, Humphreys, Semlin, and Smith. *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, p. 11.

entertained the request, and he also gave it as his opinion that it is not even now too late in that way to obtain justice for our farmers.¹⁴⁶

One of the first members publicly to switch sides in the debate was the Honourable George Walkem who retained a cabinet portfolio in the De Cosmos government. As the new Attorney General, he advocated "a broader view" of the question than previously; one that afforded "a fair protection for farm produce." His conversion was aided, in part, by the offer of another cabinet portfolio; yet to be fair to the member for Cariboo District, economic conditions for the farmer had worsened under the Canadian tariff, and this probably also altered his view. Indeed, there were other M.P.P.s that had not directly benefited by the change of power, and yet followed the Attorney General's lead.¹⁴⁷ This partial migration in favour of the modified tariff resulted from the very real concern that had occurred over the eastern tariff's negative impact on the raw agronomics of British Columbia. These new political and economic factors combined, forced the House into intimate discussion of the tariff and its deleterious effects. Arthur Bunster confirmed that the "Canadian tariff had proved a curse to the country, inasmuch as its tendency was to drive people out of it."¹⁴⁸ He further highlighted to the House some of the particularly disadvantageous effects of the tariff, and generally what had become of the province during the short time since its inception. He lamented to fellow members that:

¹⁴⁶"Modification of the Tariff," *Standard*, 22 January 1873, p. 2. Also see "First Provincial Assembly," *Colonist*, 15 January 1873, p. 3.

¹⁴⁷"Customs and Excise," *Standard*, 22 January 1873, p. 3.

¹⁴⁸"Customs and Excise," *Colonist*, 22 January 1873, p. 3. Also see "Customs and Tariffs," *Standard*, 21 January 1873, p. 3.

Our farmers could never compete with the California produce dealer who gave Victoria dealers 60 to 90 days credit. The general verdict after a year's trial of the Canadian Tariff was, that they (the farmers) would gladly sell at cost and leave the Province. . . In California and Oregon grain was raised by the ship load and sent here to flood the market. Look at the thousands of dollars that were sent out of this Province annually. The grain exports at San Francisco during 1872 were valued at \$12,000,000 and ships could not be had to carry away the surplus. . . . Was it not a shame and a disgrace to see Chicago bacon sent away into our mines and under selling Provincial bacon? Was it not a shame to see California flour sold less in this market than Provincial flour was sold?¹⁴⁹

Evidently, many felt it was a disgrace that home production was being severely undercut. M.P.P.s resolved in Committee of the Whole, 27 January 1873, to adopt as a course of action the preparation of a petition that outlined specific changes to federal customs duties.¹⁵⁰ This report was confirmed by a majority of one vote (12 - 11) and represented a complete change in philosophy and direction for the House -- something that never would have happened under the McCreight Ministry. Yet before the opponents of the "invisible-hand" approach to province-building could applaud their victory, Committee Chairman Joseph Hunter, added his vote against the report for tariff modifications at the House level thus effecting a tie (12 - 12). With full membership in attendance, the legislature was now more evenly divided than on any issue previously addressed. Parliamentary procedure required that the legislative impasse be broken at the House level, to which the Honourable Speaker, Dr. James

¹⁴⁹"Excise and Customs," *Colonist*, 21 January 1873, p. 3. Saanich farmers petitioned the government for protection at this time, in "The Tariff Question Again," *Standard*, 20 January 1873, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰Specifically, the petition requested that the federal government raise the tariff on "Barley, Oats, bacon, Hams, Lard, Hops, Butter, and Cheese, to the rate levied on them respectively under the British Columbia tariff at the date of union; that the tariff on wheat be 10 cents per bushel, and flour be 50 cents per barrel: That no Excise be enforced on brewers and Maltsters; and that the Stamp duty not be extended to this Province." See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, First Parliament, 21 January 1873, p. 42.

Trimble of Victoria City, readily agreed. In casting his deciding vote, Trimble attempted to end any future doubt that the province lacked legal jurisdiction on tariffs within the federal Dominion of Canada. By his vote alone the report was not accepted as free trader Trimble "had promised to support the Canadian tariff" in the provincial general election of 1871.¹⁵¹

The proponents of a modified tariff had dramatically failed once more, but the new coalition of M.P.P.s -- twelve in all -- represented four defections from those districts previously associated with a pro-Canadian position, and this quite probably was due to a combination of De Cosmos' political skill and the generally dismal conditions that plagued agriculture in the province.¹⁵² At the same time, the defeat of the committee report was due to two defections to the pro-Canadian tariff side -- both from New Westminster District.¹⁵³

The tariff issue never really disappeared during the first three sessions of the legislature, nor did worsening agricultural conditions. By November 1873, the *Standard* wondered if the mistake could ever be remedied, and believed that the issue was now definitely out of the legislature's control: "If anything can be effected, it must be by our representatives in the House of Commons," it stated, perhaps because of De Cosmos' departure from the provincial scene to make federal politics his sole occupation.¹⁵⁴ Agricultural conditions must have approached crisis proportions by

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²The four defections were C.A. Semlin, R. Smith, G.A.B. Walkem and C. Todd.

¹⁵³These two M.P.P.s were J.C. Hughes and W.J. Armstrong.

¹⁵⁴"The Tariff Question," *Standard*, 18 November 1873, p. 2. De Cosmos' departure was required by the "Costigan Act" of 1872 that prohibited politicians from holding concurrent seats both provincially and federally.

January of 1874 as even John Robson recanted much of his earlier prose in the *Colonist* and stated that:

Since the present tariff was formed great changes have taken place in the trade and circumstance of the country, and many things wise and good when the tariff was made have long since ceased to be either the one or the other. . . . Oregon and Washington Territory are being inundated with cattle driven over from Texas where they can be got for a mere song.

The *Colonist* then claimed in a very bald-faced manner to its readership that:

We have shown in former articles that British Columbia has the capacity for self-supply, and that she would supply her own markets did she but enjoy reasonable protection and facile means of communication; and it has been shown that to supply her own markets would be to retain about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year now going out of the country to pay for a foreign supply.¹⁵⁵

The latter might easily have been written by Amor De Cosmos himself. The *Standard* described Robson's propensity for changing policy directions in mid-stream as "weather-cock trickery," and of Robson in particular -- a political "chameleon."¹⁵⁶ Yet Robson's conversion probably represented more faithfully his new alliance with protectionist die-hards Arthur Bunster and T. Basil Humphreys; all three of which De Cosmos refused to include in cabinet. In addition, Robson had previously assured

¹⁵⁵"The Customs Tariff," *Colonist*, 11 January 1874, p. 2. How the *Colonist* could square this about-face in editorial policy must have been anybody's guess. Previously, Robson, who had "led the victorious battallions contending for free bread and low taxation," countered accusations that he had "destroyed the country" by stating that the province had saved double the amount anticipated in duties under the Canadian Tariff. He said, "And this is the 'ruin' inflicted upon the country by the adoption of the Canadian Tariff! We only wish the Province could get a dose of this kind of ruin every year." See "The Practical Results," *Colonist*, 19 January 1873, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶"Whom the gods would destroy' we are told, 'they first make mad.' If that be so, we may confidently assume that the member for Nanaimo is doomed to political annihilation, and that he has already commenced to work out his own destruction." See "The Member for Nanaimo," *Standard*, 17 January 1874, p. 2. Also see "Honest John's Consistency," *Standard*, 19 January 1874, p. 2.

members that the Canadian tariff was in the process of being changed so that concerns would be further alleviated. The Canadian tariff remained as it was, however, as no reciprocal agreement was concluded between the United States and Canada, and the "Washington Treaty" -- or "humiliation treaty" as the federal Liberals called it -- did not even include the Pacific Coast fishery.¹⁵⁷

While De Cosmos now resigned himself to working within the federal realm for changes to the Canadian tariff, Arthur Bunster continued to promote the concept of a made-in-B.C. tariff scheme. Under Bunster's instigation, the B.C. House was again prepared to re-examine the question of a modified tariff in committee of the whole, but no report was forthcoming during the remainder of the De Cosmos government's time in office.¹⁵⁸ The fact that Bunster was able to secure support for another debate on tariffs illustrated a further weakening in pro-Canadian tariff support by members like free trade stalwart Henry Holbrook of New Westminster City who believed that the B.C. legislature had been "deceived" by the federal government over the exclusive nature of the "Washington Treaty."¹⁵⁹ With the collapse of the Conservative government in Ottawa over the "Pacific Scandal," Liberals prepared themselves to take power in the next election, and the tariff debate soon entered the field of federal politics. At public meetings in Saanich all contenders for the federal riding of

¹⁵⁷See W.L. Morton, *The Critical Years: The Union of British North America, 1857-1873* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), pp. 269-270. Also see Donald Creighton, *John A. Macdonald: The Old Chieftan* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1955), p. 119.

¹⁵⁸*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session III, 29 January 1874, p. 31. Also see "First Provincial Legislative Assembly. Third Session," *Colonist*, 30 January 1874, p. 3 and *Standard*, 30 January 1874, p. 3. Note: The feasibility of changes to the Canadian Tariff was still an issue by 1877. See William Fraser Tolmie's question to Premier A.C. Elliot in *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, Session II, Second Parliament, 4 April 1877, p. 43.

¹⁵⁹See *Colonist*, 30 January 1874, p. 2.

Vancouver [Island] District pledged their support for a modified tariff.¹⁶⁰ In the provincial byelections in Victoria District -- created by the departure of Arthur Bunster and Amor De Cosmos who sought federal office -- farmers convened at the Prairie Inn and unanimously endorsed a pledge that demanded of each candidate their support for modified tariffs. The declaration read that:

I sincerely declare that I will not support or accept office from the present or any government until they shall have first introduced some policy or measure calculated to insure such a modification of the Tariff as will afford real and substantial protection to farmers.¹⁶¹

It is almost needless to say that all candidates endorsed this resolution. Provincially, the Canadian tariff was still the main issue of contention by 1874. Federally, new Member of Parliament, Arthur Bunster, also continued the fight for modifications. In response to Liberal Edward Blake's insensitive, indeed acid, assertion that British Columbia was "an inhospitable country, a sea of sterile mountains," Bunster, before assembled M.P.s, hauled a sack of home-grown Saanich wheat from under his Commons desk, "took a handful out of it and indignantly tossed it toward the member for South Bruce [Ontario] as the best answer to his statement."¹⁶² For Bunster though, such efforts were pursued in vain. After having warned the province and the dominion for so many years that inadequate protection would drive people out of

¹⁶⁰"The Saanich Public Meetings," *Colonist*, 20 January 1874, p. 3. This is not to suggest that enthusiasm waned at the provincial level -- even with the apparent jurisdictional incapacity of the De Cosmos-Walkem government -- as vacancies created by Arthur Bunster and Amor De Cosmos in Victoria District, due to the "Costigan Act," created competitive byelections where all candidates supported the modified tariff as the preeminent issue of the campaign. See "Political Meeting at Cedar Hill," *Colonist*, 1 February 1874, p. 3.

¹⁶¹"Pledging Candidates," *Colonist*, 28 February 1874, p. 3.

¹⁶²See James Morton's account of this colourful debate in James Morton, *In the Sea of Sterile Mountains: The Chinese in British Columbia* (Vancouver, B.C.: J.J. Douglas, 1974), p. 50.

British Columbia, Arthur Bunster ultimately vacated to Oakland, California in 1883, where he continued to brew ales, as he had done in Victoria, but presumably under more economically hospitable conditions.¹⁶³

The issue of the electoral contest was, without a doubt, tariffs. Why is it then that the introduction of the Canadian tariff to British Columbia has received so little attention from historians? Perhaps it is in part due to an over-reliance on certain specific historical sources that are often-times inaccurate. For instance, Judge Frederick Howay, easily one of the most cited B.C. historians, stated, without elucidation, that the acceptance of the Canadian tariff was "in accordance with the general feeling [of the province] and served to make the Government quite popular."¹⁶⁴ Yet, it has been shown here that this was not the general sentiment of the province at all -- particularly those of the farming interests. Large portions of early B.C. society were clearly dissatisfied, and this feeling manifested itself in the Legislative Assembly. It was also expressed significantly in newspapers of the period, yet here again, these sources were originally directed to a specific audience -- for a specific purpose. The single greatest *faux pas* committed that entrenched this erroneous view of B.C.'s history was, without qualification, the selective use of nineteenth-century editorial newsprint. In most instances, editors were either aligned with a government or opposing faction, and at times, even the political players themselves. In the study of the tariff debate between the years 1871-1874, it is absolutely imperative that the *Victoria Daily Standard* and the *British Colonist* be treated as political propaganda machines that were used to effect, both in electing and

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁶⁴Howay, *British Columbia: From Earliest Times to Present*, II, p. 333.

sustaining their editor-politicians to office.¹⁶⁵ Middle-ground is often difficult to locate between these two opposing papers -- perhaps an explanation in itself for the kind of cursory examination that has been the hallmark ^{of} our political history -- yet a proper comparison is essential. For the years 1871-1874, the *Standard* has not been examined nearly enough, and yet it was both one of the main opposition newspapers under McCreight, and even more importantly, the government newspaper of both De Cosmos and Walkem.¹⁶⁶ It clearly enunciated opinions distinctly different from the *Colonist*, yet certain writings on British Columbia history have virtually ignored it in favour of a one-sided *Colonist* point of view.¹⁶⁷ In the case of the early tariff debate, the protests of the farming communities and their demands for greater tariff protection were either clearly condemned, glossed over -- or entirely ignored -- in the

¹⁶⁵John Foster McCreight apparently complained, as did fellow cabinet members, that the predominant reason for his Ministry's downfall was quite simply that it lacked the support of any newspaper in B.C. -- a sure bet for political failure! See "Without an Organ," *Colonist*, 21 December 1872, p. 2. There is perhaps some truth to this accusation as Lieutenant Governor Joseph Trutch claimed that John Robson was offered a future cabinet position if he supported the McCreight government both in the House and in the *British Colonist*. According to Trutch, the offer was accepted but Robson:

. . . failed to give such support to the Government either in his place in the house or in his capacity as Editor -- but on the contrary his course has been such that Mr. McCreight and his colleagues now regard him as having been during the past year their most subtle and dangerous enemy and have become so convinced of his political dishonesty that they have lately declared their determination not to connect themselves with him in any way or under any circumstance.

See Trutch to Macdonald, 24 October 1872, Private letter, Sir John A. *Macdonald Papers*, Add. Mss. 1433/Vol. 254-255. BCARS.

¹⁶⁶The *Standard* was a "family" operation run at various times by Charles Smith, the brother of Premier Amor De Cosmos, and Dr. William Wymond Walkem (later M.P.P.), the brother of Premier George A. Walkem. I would like to thank Alan Grove, Victoria, B.C., for having brought the Walkem connection to my attention.

¹⁶⁷For instance, the only M.A. thesis on John Robson almost canonized the editor-M.P.P. by referring, in the main, only to *Colonist* coverage of political events. Although the bibliography of of this 226 page thesis purports to have consulted the *Standard* for its entire existence from 1870-1888, this is somewhat doubtful. By way of example, Chapter IV entitled "The First Provincial Legislature," pp. 86-114, cited Robson's *Colonist* fifty-one (51) times. The *Standard*, conversely, was quoted only two (2) times and mentioned in the actual text twice. See Ivan Earl Matthew Antak, "John Robson: British Columbia." Masters Thesis, Department of History, University of Victoria, 1972.

pages of the *Colonist* until later political and economic exigencies forced their acknowledgement.

The *Colonist* exists even unto today; the *Standard*, however, died in 1888 and quickly faded into obscurity.¹⁶⁸ Just as historians have sought to focus on "great events" and "great personalities," they have also chosen to use "great" historical sources: sources that by virtue of their unique longevity and easy availability, obtained a preeminent position in the historian's mind as the standard guide for locating the past. This, most regrettably, has been at the expense of other legitimate political, social, and economic points of view. Indeed, we remember the name of De Cosmos -- undoubtedly, still one of the most celebrated of B.C. politicians -- yet we have denied any historical expression of the larger, often rural constituency that he represented. The Canadian tariff was the main issue that separated McCreight and De Cosmos, but the "weather-cock trickery" of nineteenth-century press succeeded in blinding B.C. historians once more.

¹⁶⁸The *British Colonist* does still exist, but under the different appellation of *Times-Colonist*. As for the *Victoria Daily Standard*, access is severely limited as compared to the *Colonist*. Within British Columbia, it appears to exist on microfilm only for the years 1870-1873. For years 1873-1888, hardcopy is available, but only at the British Columbia Archives and Records Services (BCARS), Victoria, B.C. Outside B.C., microfilm for much of the entire period, 1870-1888, is stored at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. See Hana Komorous, *Union Catalogue of British Columbia Newspapers*, (Microfiche Edition) (Vancouver: British Columbia Library Association, 1987).

CHAPTER IV

CHARTING THE COURSE OF SEPARATION: WALKEM, ELLIOT, BEAVEN AND THE CARNARVON CLUB, 1875-1883

Never before has there been such an interest taken in a political organization in this city as is now being taken in the organization of the Carnarvon Club. Meetings are held nearly every night of the week. Hundreds of members are being enrolled, and the greatest enthusiasm prevails. If an invasion were expected, there could not be a more determined effort made to enroll a force to resist the enemy, than there is to oppose all attempts to surrender the Carnarvon Terms. The people in this instance are taking the matter into their own hands irrespective of any party line; and are keeping a strict watch upon the traitors in our midst, who they believe are willing to surrender our rights. Some of these suspected people threaten all sorts of ambuscades. But it is useless. Let the people be true to the cause they have espoused, and the Carnarvon Club will put down all such folk and secure the great object, the faithful carrying out of the Carnarvon settlement.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹"The Carnarvon Club," *Victoria Daily Standard*, 7 August, 1876, p. 3.

On 20 July 1871, British Columbia's long held dreams of a convenient transportation link to eastern North American markets seemed assured, when the transcontinental railway became enshrined in the Terms of Union contract by which B.C. joined the Canadian Confederation. Among British Columbia's main concerns at the time were the colony's burgeoning debt and the absence of responsible government, which Confederation, it was felt, would cure.¹⁷⁰ Yet, the necessity of a fixed link was deemed of equal if not greater importance if the "tyranny of distance" was to be genuinely conquered. Indeed, for some such as Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken, The Pacific Railway was a *sine qua non* and without it there could be no Confederation with Canada.¹⁷¹ The Canadian government agreed and gave the additional guarantee that railway construction would begin in the province within two years of the date of Confederation, and be completed in ten.

Speculation immediately arose as to the federal government's faithful adherence to the railway clause of the agreement. It seemed that British Columbia's enthusiasm for the literal fulfilment of the Terms of Union was not shared by successive federal governments. The obligation for the commencement of railway construction within the two year limit, for instance, would be carried out only in symbolic form just one day before the expiry date of 20 July 1873.¹⁷² In keeping with his Order in Council, which established Esquimalt as the western terminus, Sir John A. Macdonald ordered, 19 July 1873, a survey party to run a location line for a

¹⁷⁰Dorothy Blakey Smith, *The Reminiscences of Doctor John Sebastian Helmcken* (University of British Columbia Press, 1975), p. 256.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 261.

¹⁷²Margaret Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (Vancouver: MacMillan, 1958), p. 256.

portion of the proposed Island Railway. Once this was done, the federal government, having kept its promise, if only minimally, returned to its languid state and the absence of railway construction became apparent once more. British Columbia attempted to remain patient, but with the election of Alexander Mackenzie's government in 1873, the province's fears were further exacerbated by a Prime Minister who had previously pledged that the railway terms were "a bargain made to be broken."¹⁷³ Consequently, a deadlock ensued between the provincial and dominion governments over the question of 'relaxing' the ten year limit for the completion of the railway. This impasse was not effectively broken, however, until both parties agreed to accept the mediation of Lord Carnarvon, Secretary of State of Imperial government, who insisted that his decision, "whatever it may be, shall be accepted without any question or demur."¹⁷⁴

Vancouver Island, and especially Victoria, had the most to lose at this juncture. Macdonald's Order in Council of 1873, naming Esquimalt the terminus had been rescinded, and the Island Line, as offered in compensation for delay, would not be

¹⁷³Mackenzie's Speech at Sarnia, 25 November 1873, as quoted in Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, p. 261. It has been suggested that, prior to Lord Carnarvon's offer to mediate between the Canadian and B.C. Governments, Premier Walkem's refusal to recognize Prime Minister Mackenzie's emissary to B.C. was something of a political ruse. Yet Walkem's objection to the "Edgar Terms" surely must stem from the federal government's great propensity for procrastination. Walkem did not want any such repeat performance of the Canadian Government's abysmal track record. He demanded strict guarantees and deadlines which Edgar as a "semi-official" emissary was unwilling to offer. This was made quite apparent in Walkem's communication to Lord Carnarvon re. his refusal: "Canada will commence on the Island, immediate construction of the railway at Esquimalt and finish about sixty miles of it (time of completion indefinite). On the mainland she will prosecute the surveys for the remainder of the line, and finish these surveys (time also indefinite). She will thereafter 'locate' the line falling within the Province (time also indefinite). . . ." Surprisingly, Ormsby transcribed, but nevertheless glossed over Walkem's very serious objection to the Edgar Terms, instead preferring to see the event as a political charade. See Walkem to Carnarvon, 31 October 1874, *Message*, 49-50, as quoted in Margaret A. Ormsby, *The Relations Between British Columbia and the Dominion of Canada, 1871-1885* unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Byrn Mawr College, 1937, p. 213.

¹⁷⁴Carnarvon to Dufferin, 18 June 1874, *Message* 12, as quoted in Ormsby, "The Relations Between B.C. and the Dominion of Canada," p. 201.

built as a government work, if at all.¹⁷⁵ Lord Carnarvon's decision, as it turned out, guaranteed the building of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, and as long as the Bute Inlet route was still seen as a viable option for the transcontinental line, Victoria's hopes of being part of the nation-wide railway system were still very prevalent. Yet, even after the Carnarvon decision had been made, the practise of procrastination continued under the Mackenzie Government and became a concomitant to the rallying cry of "Carnarvon Terms or Separation." The nonfulfilment of the Terms of Union acted as a catalyst for political opposition -- particularly in Victoria as one might expect -- and was waged against not only the Canadian government, but also the British Columbia government if it did not keep a strict adherence to the Carnarvon settlement. As opposition grew, so did the need for formal organization, both as a forum for discussion and political action. This naturally led to the establishment of the Carnarvon Club, which, before the introduction of the "old" line parties of Canada, played an important and influential role in the politics of the province and can be seen as one of the best examples of a political pressure group in the immediate post-confederation period, if not in the whole political history of British Columbia.

Even before the formation of the Carnarvon Club, Sir Joseph Trutch, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, noted the "extra-ordinary wave of

¹⁷⁵The British media were apparently sympathetic to British Columbia's constitutional complaints. The London *Daily Post* wrote "the British Columbia Government contends that it was not within the power of the Dominion to cancel the first Order [in Council], as that Order made them parties to a specific agreement which was completed and rendered binding and permanent by the fulfilment by the other parties of the conditions demanded of them. British Columbia maintains, and with apparent reason, that the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway became part of the great Canadian Pacific line. . . ". see "In the House of Commons," *Daily Post*, 6 July 1876, as reprinted in *Daily British Colonist*, 13 August 1876, p. 2. See Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, IX-X, for a general overview of the railway question.

radicalism" that had overtaken the province which was very conducive to the formation of opposition politics.¹⁷⁶ In writing to Sir John A. Macdonald, then leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, he described the political mood of the province as such:

The temper of our community is greatly excited and set against Canada and the Canadians by the nonfulfilment of the Railway Clause of the Terms of Union and especially by the tone and manner regarding it taken by those who have expressed a desire for some readjustment of the obligations of Canada w[ith] this respect.¹⁷⁷

Indeed, Premier George Anthony Walkem near the end of his term as Premier, proposed a petition to Queen Victoria that listed all of B.C.'s railway grievances and the threat of secession if the Dominion Government did not fulfill its contractual obligations to the province. This memorial was passed by the B.C. legislature without a dissenting vote.¹⁷⁸ Unlike the McCreight-De Cosmos years, the question of the Canadian tariff was no longer the preeminent issue of the day. Although the Walkem administration continued to enjoy support from most anti-Canadian tariff M.P.P.s, the new legislative cleavage slowly taking shape was on the question of railway terms. Figure 12 shows the relative positions of supporters and non-supporters of the Canadian system of tariffs between the years 1874 to 1875. This map is based on all recorded divisions under Walkem's term of office and effectively illustrates the

¹⁷⁶Trutch to Macdonald, 25 May 1874, private, in Sir John A. *Macdonald Papers*, BCARS. Add. Mss. 1433/ vol. 278, p. 127853.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., Trutch to Macdonald, p. 127853.

¹⁷⁸See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, V, 10 January 1876.

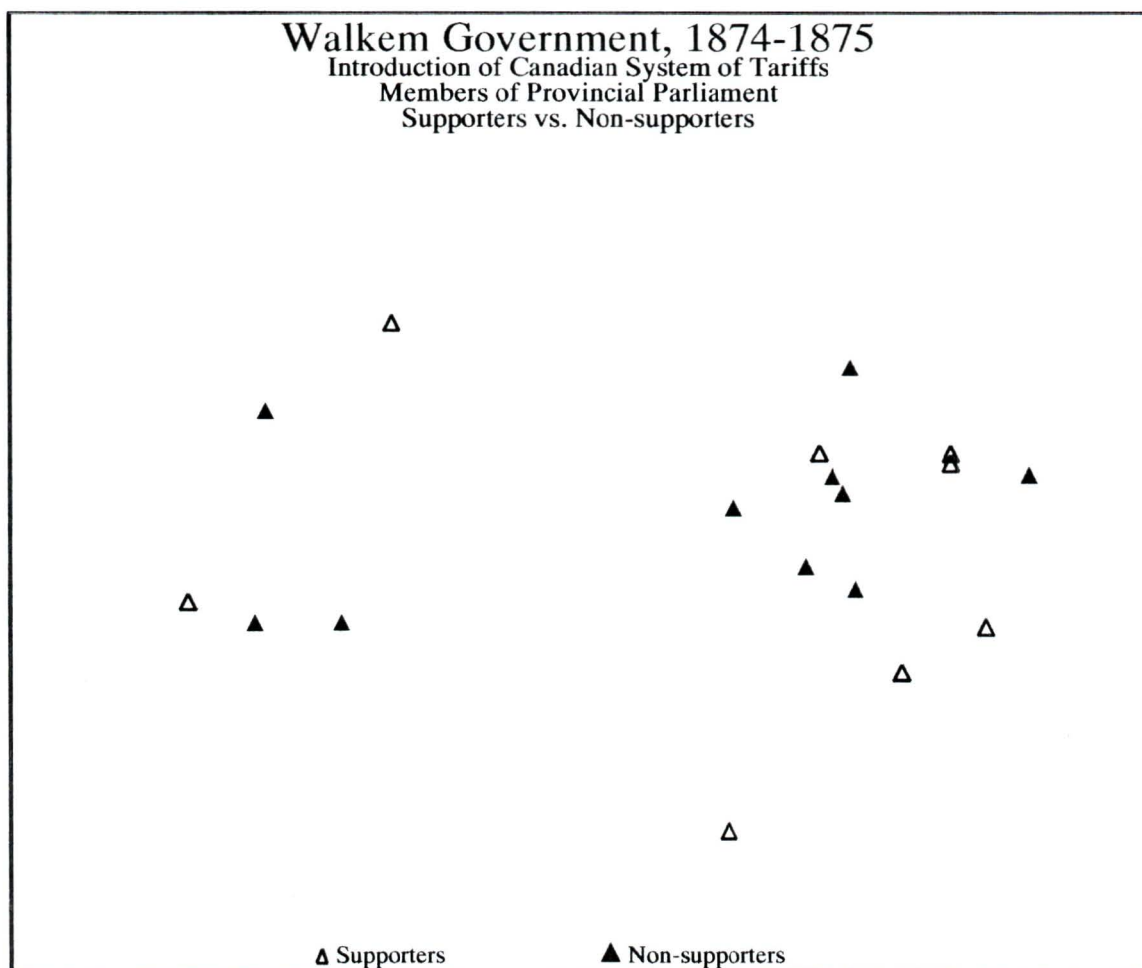


Figure 12.

changing dynamics of B.C. politics.¹⁷⁹ With the departure of Amor De Cosmos provincially, and the heated issue of tariff protectionism no longer occupying center stage, new M.P.P. alliances were formed. If Figure 13 is consulted, the individual M.P.P. positions found in Figure 12 are relabelled according to the politician's name,

¹⁷⁹Figure 12 is reproduced from graphics file G3TAR.EPS and based on voting data recorded in SPSS-X file G3.DAT. (Stress=0.177, RSQ=0.868). A total of 18 divisions were recorded under Walkem's first time as Premier. Neither Amor De Cosmos, nor Arthur Bunster, both of Victoria District, are represented on the Walkem charts, 1874-1875. These two gentlemen vacated their seats in favour of representing Victoria City in the Canadian House of Commons. There are also three other M.P.P.s not included due to low attendance in the House. With the following approximate rates of attendance noted, these M.P.P.s were John A. Mara (56%), William Robertson (67%), and William Brown (56%). The required 70% minimum rate of attendance set by this study excluded them from analysis. Rates of attendance were calculated and recorded in SPSS-X file G3.PERCENT.

and as a result, political groupings become more clear.¹⁸⁰ Of immediate interest are the three M.P.P.s, Smithe, Robson, and Humphreys, located at the lower left hand corner of Figures 12 and 13. Robson was, of course, an adamant free trade supporter in the earlier tariff debate, and heaped daily editorial scorn on anti-Canadian tariff M.P.P.s with the utmost vigour. And yet, having been shut out of power, he joined forces with William Smithe and T. Basil Humphreys in opposing the Walkem Government, both of whom were leaders in the anti-Canadian tariff fight. Humphreys too, had been denied any role in the Walkem Government even though he had helped to bring down the former McCreight Government on a vote of non-confidence. Figure 13 suggests that politics does indeed make strange bedfellows, but it also confirms that the Walkem government (right-centre), until its demise, enjoyed majority House support for most of the legislation introduced during its tenure of office.

Professor Ormsby has stated that the Walkem government had a tenuous hold on the legislature, yet this does not appear to be the case. She further suggested that Premier Walkem aligned himself with Island interests, but as we have seen previously, such blanket statements have usually neglected the complex subtleties of B.C. politics.¹⁸¹ Figure 14 confirms that Premier Walkem had a majority of Island M.P.P.s drawn to the mutual cause of Terms of Union fulfilment, but not all Island

¹⁸⁰Figure 13 is reproduced from graphics file G3PAR.EPS and based on Voting records contained in SPSS-X file G3.DAT.

¹⁸¹Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, p. 264.

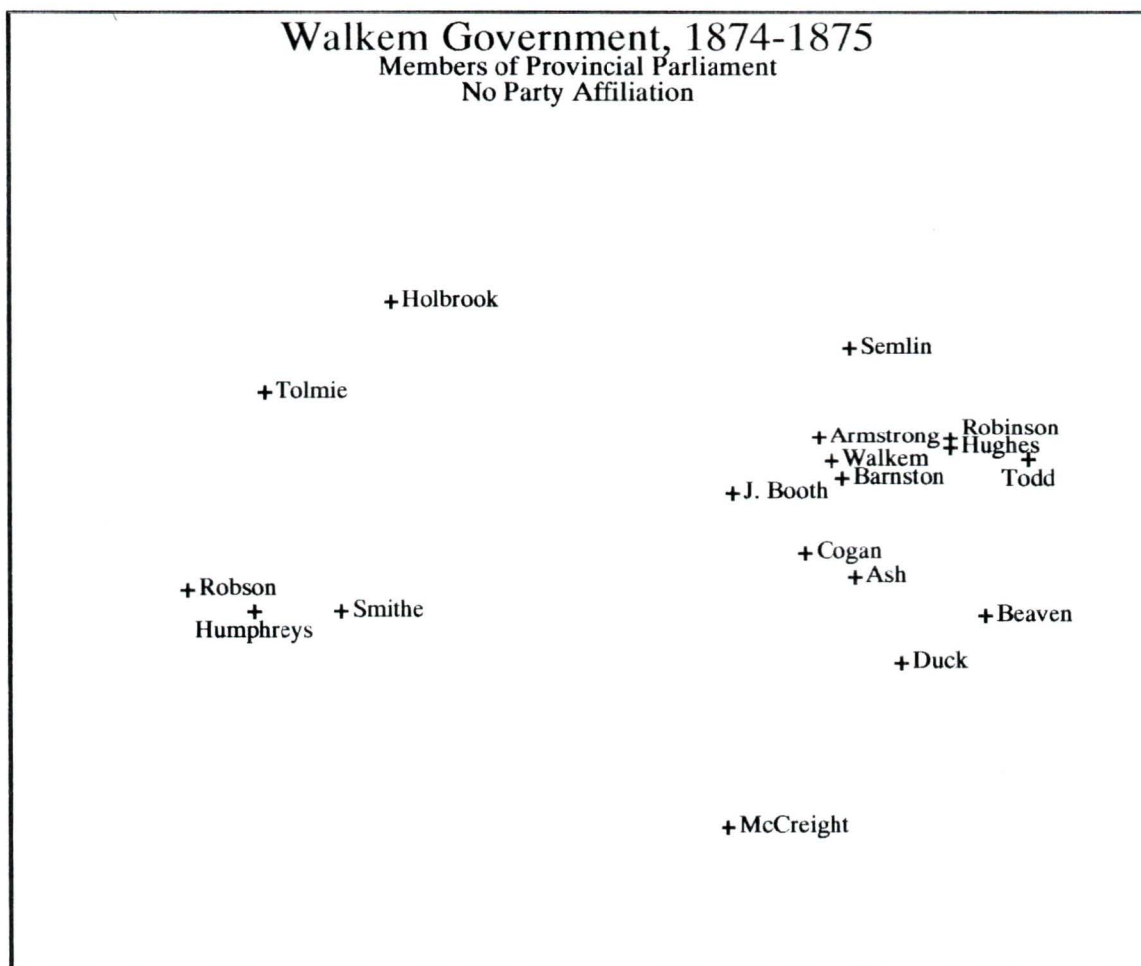


Figure 13.

M.P.P.s.¹⁸² This map, and the recorded divisions on which it is based, also clearly show that there was no strict Island vs. Mainland cleavage during the years 1874-1875. What past and present political historians of our province have tended to forget is that William Smithe, representative of Cowichan Riding and namesake to the "Smithe Dynasty," was opposition leader to the Walkem administration between 1874-1876. Although Smithe -- and John Robson who carpet-bagged his way into Nanaimo

¹⁸²Figure 14 reproduced from graphics file G3IM.EPS and based on voting data contained in SPSS-X file G3.DAT.

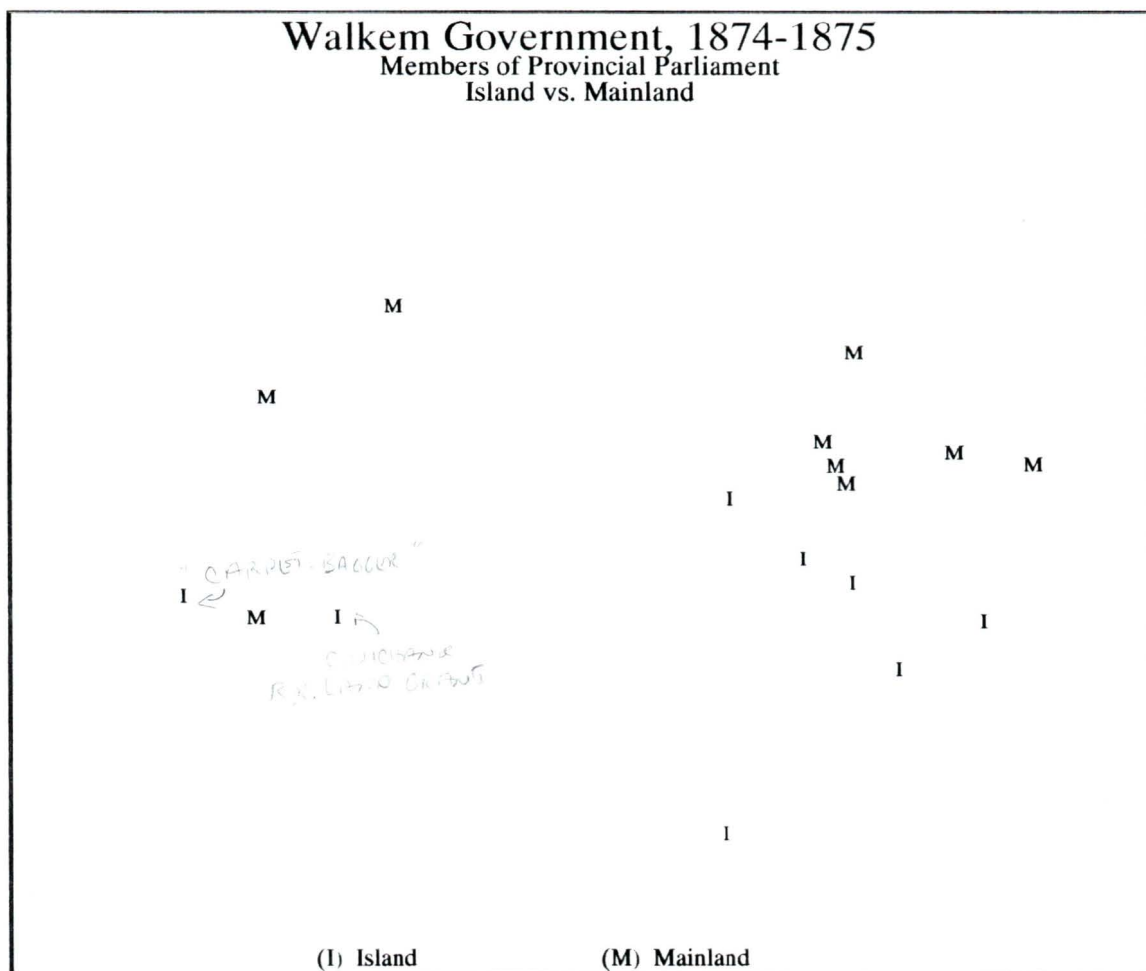


Figure 14.

-- both represented the Island, they were nonetheless most often aligned with CPR interests associated with the Fraser River route. On this political peculiarity alone, strict Island vs. Mainland alignments fail each time.

In 1875, British Columbia conducted its second general election as a new province, but this time M.P.P.s adopted political stances denoted by the connotations of "Government," "Opposition," "Reform," and other variations on this theme. Although Premier Walkem was returned to power by a slim majority, with the aid of self-proclaimed "Reformers" and other "Independents," the government soon lost favour over its attempts to borrow sums of money from the federal government

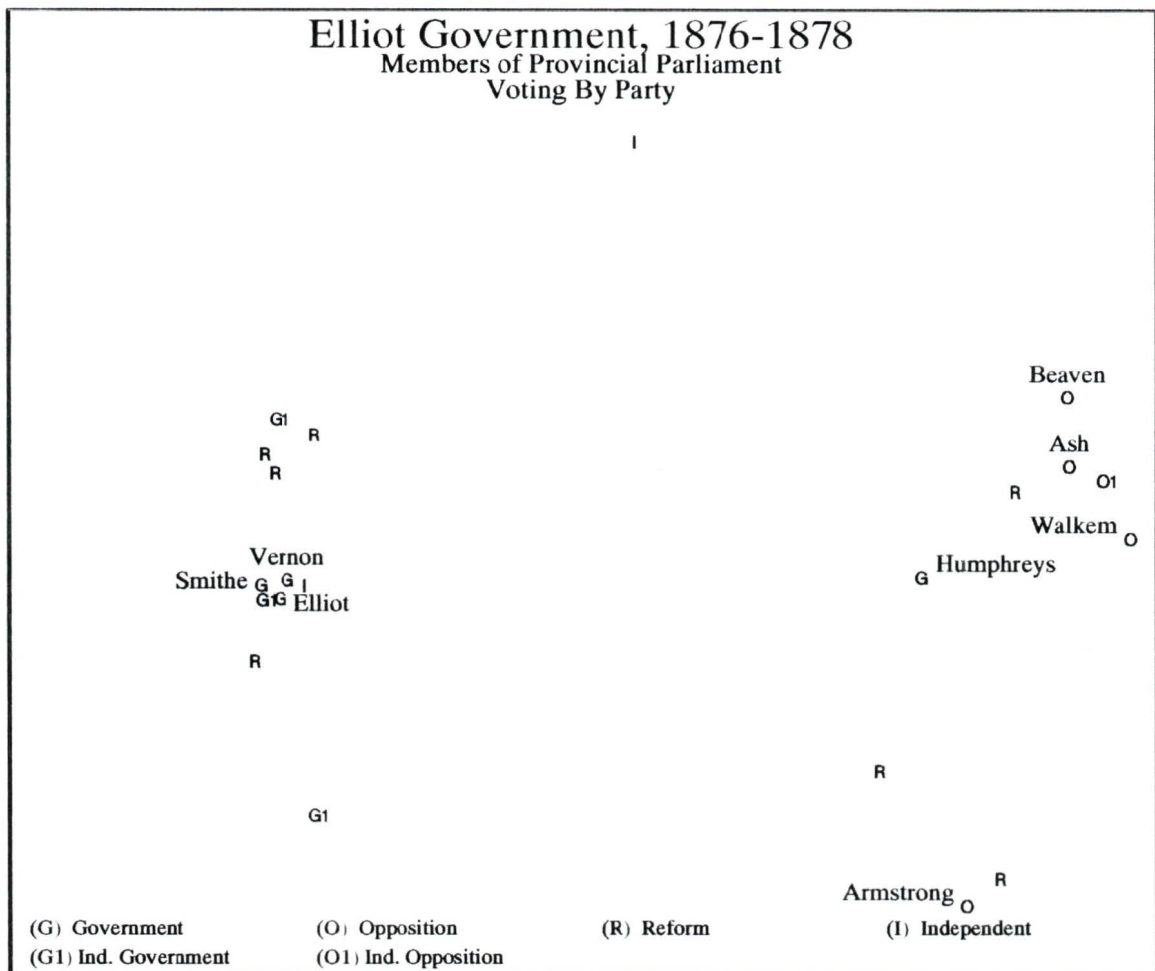


Figure 15.

while at the same time demanding that railway obligations be fulfilled.¹⁸³ As a result, Andrew Charles Elliot, representative for Victoria City, was sworn in as Premier on 1 February 1876, as William Smithe vacated his role as opposition leader in favour of the former gold commissioner.¹⁸⁴ Undoubtedly, Elliot presented less of a red flag to opposition leader Walkem, than did Smithe, who had advocated opening

¹⁸³For a general overview of this period see "The Spoilt Child of Confederation" in Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, pp. 259-292.

¹⁸⁴Elliot then proceeded to negotiate a loan at a higher rate of interest than that arranged by the De Cosmos-Walkem governments even though they had denounced the strategy. See Harold Percival Johns, "British Columbia's Campaign For Better Terms, 1871-1907," M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1935, p. 25.

up the twenty-mile wide railway land reserve from Esquimalt to Seymour Narrows along the east coast of Vancouver Island. Although "Islanders," both Smithe, and Robson his seconder, believed that the Island railway belt had prevented further settlement of this agriculturally rich region. It was for this reason that the Walkem government demanded federal compensation for having kept the requested reserve intact to the detriment of the province.¹⁸⁵ William Smithe's inclusion in the cabinet of the new Elliot administration was suspect, but it was the further addition of Ebenezer Brown and Forbes George Vernon, of New Westminster and Yale respectively, that caused real consternation among Victorians, and especially Carnarvon Club members. Premier Elliot's intentions toward the Carnarvon settlement were hotly debated as these gentlemen were considered to be "two avowed and openly pledged enemies of the Island Railway and consequently the Carnarvon Terms."¹⁸⁶

As Figure 15 indicates, the Elliot government (left side) appears to have had very tight cabinet solidarity among the Premier and cabinet colleagues Smithe and Vernon.¹⁸⁷ Elliot's inclusion of Thomas Basil Humphreys did not meet with the same success. Humphreys, often labelled the "destroyer of governments," quickly resigned from the Elliot team, most probably over railway considerations now that he

¹⁸⁵For the Smithe/Robson motion see *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, 13 January 1874, 1st Parliament. Vol. III, pp. 19-21.

¹⁸⁶"Mr. Brown's Position," *Standard*, 14 September 1876, p. 2. Mr. Brown was a cabinet member without portfolio. Perhaps Elliot was attempting to balance the Island and Mainland representation by adding a fourth position to what had previously been a cabinet of three. For confirmation see "Why Is It?" *Standard*, 8 September 1876, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷Figure 15 is reproduced from graphics file G5PAR.EPS and based on voting data contained in SPSS-X file G5.DAT. Forty divisions were recorded during Elliot's term of office. A.E.B. Davie, resigned before the end of Elliot's term and is not, therefore, included on this chart due to low participation (55%). David W. Gordon's death also precluded him from being represented on any of the Elliot charts due to a low participation rate of 67.5%. (Stress=0.090, RSQ=0.975).

represented Amor De Cosmos' old Island riding of Victoria District, rather than his former home of Lillooet. Humphreys' defection to opposition ranks is clearly shown in Figure 15 where, although originally an Elliot supporter, he is nonetheless placed firmly within the orbit of the deposed Walkem cabinet (right-side). Figure 15 also illustrates a legislature much more decided in its views with the Elliot and Walkem groupings clearly divided to either side of the map, the intervening space no longer occupied by "loose fish."¹⁸⁸

With Humphrey's defection, the cabinet that Elliot was left with tended to make talk of secession even more frequent among opposition politicians and electorate alike, so much so that the Canadian government planned a vice regal visit by the Earl of Dufferin, Governor General of Canada, and his wife Princess Louisa, hoping that this might quell the impending storm and improve relations between the two levels of government. Consequently, in August of 1876, British Columbia made special preparations for a royal celebration, while in Victoria, a private audience was anticipated with the queen's representative to detail the city's many grievances with the Dominion. At a large public meeting held at Philharmonic Hall in Victoria, an address was prepared and approved for presentation to the Governor General. In part, it stated that:

The action of the Dominion Government in ignoring the Carnarvon settlement, has produced a wide feeling of dissatisfaction towards Confederation. . . . [and if the] Government fails to take practical steps to carry into effect the terms solemnly accepted by them, we must respectfully inform your Excellency that, in the opinion of a large

¹⁸⁸The one "cross bench" exception is James Douglas Jr., son of the Island patriot Governor James Douglas. The younger Douglas is located at the middle top of the chart and appropriately labelled "Independent" (I). His middle position is perhaps found in the fact that he was both Premier Elliot's son-in-law and a Carnarvon Club member.

number of people of this Province the withdrawal of this Province from Confederation will be the inevitable result. . . . This growing desire for separation is not held out as a threat, but is simply the expression of a feeling which is growing in strength every day.¹⁸⁹

This fact was made known to Lord Dufferin immediately upon arriving in Victoria. The grand procession that ushered both he and his wife to Government House, went by way of the streets of Victoria where magnificent celebratory arches had been erected to commemorate the visit.¹⁹⁰ One such arch, however, had been raised by the "Fort Street Shopkeepers" which proclaimed "The Carnarvon Terms or Separation," but the Governor General refused to lend any official recognition to the slogan when he bypassed the offending arch altogether which "had a very unfavourable effect on the public."¹⁹¹ In addition, Lord Dufferin later declined the address prepared for him by the Philharmonic Hall meeting which had outlined Victoria's grievances. He instead spoke privately with the meeting's deputation and informed them that the Island Railway would be abandoned -- at the very least as a government work.¹⁹² It was further reported by the *Colonist* that:

¹⁸⁹"The Address to the Governor General," *Colonist*, 13 August 1876, p. 3. Note: A private meeting was held at the Victoria Council Chambers with Mayor Drummond presiding. Draft resolutions were prepared for the public meeting to endorse. Among those in attendance were M.P.P.s Robert Beaven, John Ash, James Douglas, Jr., and also Amor De Cosmos, Simeon Duck, James Fell and Thomas Chadwick. See "Preliminary Meeting," *Standard*, 11 August 1876, p. 3.

¹⁹⁰For a full description of the Vice Regal tour see Molyneux St. John, *The Sea of Mountains: An Account of Lord Dufferin's Tour Through British Columbia in 1876* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1877), Vol.s I-II. Also see "The Governor General's Reception," *Colonist*, 18 August 1876, p. 3.

¹⁹¹Remarks made by the Honourable Robert Beaven, M.P.P., as quoted in "Great Railway Meeting Last Night," *Colonist*, 20 September 1876, p. 3. Also see "The Arch Enemy," *Colonist*, 19 August 1876, p. 2; "Fort Street Arch," *Colonist*, 25 August 1876, p. 3; and "The reception of the Governor General," *Standard*, 18 August 1876, p. 3. For an illustration of the Fort Street Separation Arch, located between Broad and Government Streets in Victoria, see Chuen-Yan David Lai, *Arches in British Columbia* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1982), p. 54.

¹⁹²"The Railway Imbrolio: A Deputation Waits Upon Earl Dufferin," *Colonist*, 22 August 1876, p. 3.

As to Separation he thinks that the Crown would allow the Island to go; but he plainly intimates that the Mainland will be held to the Dominion by inducements of self-interest which the building of the main line would furnish. . . . He [further] sketches the wretched position of the Island [if] created into a separate Crown Colony and stripped of Constitutional Government. . . there is enough contained in the proposition to govern us as Jamaica, Malta, Gibraltar or Heligoland is governed to make the people pause and reflect. . . .¹⁹³

This then, was the political climate which the Governor General's visit was supposed to have alleviated, but instead intensified as a result of Lord Dufferin's consistent refusal to publicly recognize the legitimate constitutional complaints of Victoria.

As a direct result, on 9 September 1876, the Carnarvon Club was formally established with an approved constitution entrenching the Society's main objective to the effect that:

Whereas doubts have arisen in the public mind as to the intentions of the Dominion Government to carry out the Terms of Union in the manner determined by Lord Carnarvon it has been deemed advisable to organize a society for the purpose of using all constitutional means to compel Canada to carry out her railway obligations with this Province; failing which, to secure the withdrawal of British Columbia from Confederation.¹⁹⁴

The Club's constitution also provided for executive positions to which the following gentlemen were elected for six-month terms: Charles Hayward, President; James Fell, Vice President; Dr. William Wymond Walkem, Secretary; and Thomas Chadwick as

¹⁹³Earl Dufferin's Address," *Colonist*, 23 September 1876, p. 2. "Some dissatisfaction is felt at the course adopted in the distribution of invitations to the ball at Government House on Monday Night. Those who assisted in any way in the erection of the Fort street arch, or who displayed the motto "Carnarvon Terms of Separation" were ostracized by the officials entrusted with the task of selecting the names of those eligible for invitations." See "The Ball at Government House," *Standard*, 20 September 1876, p. 3.

¹⁹⁴*Constitution of the Carnarvon Club*, organized 9 September 1876. BCARS. NW/971.51/C288. Also see "The Carnarvon Club," *Colonist*, 10 September 1876, p. 3.

Treasurer.¹⁹⁵ These were undoubtedly some of the same individuals who raised the Fort Street arch which bore the identical inscription later used by the Club as its motto: "Carnarvon Terms or Separation." Although no record of the participants exists, the arch, nonetheless, symbolizes the early origins of the society, and can be seen as a turning point in the creation of formal political opposition under the Carnarvon Club banner.¹⁹⁶ Political opposition took the form of a two-pronged attack, as the lower Mainland -- New Westminster and Yale in particular -- believed that the Island Railway, if built, would secure the more northern Bute Inlet route over their preference for the Fraser River route. As a consequence, the Carnarvon Club was working not only against the federal government, but also the proponents of the

¹⁹⁵Charles Hayward was "a Justice of the Peace, an ex-councillor of the British Columbia Board of Trade and Chairman for several years of the local school board." See J.B. Kerr, *Biographical Dictionary of Well-Known British Columbians* (Vancouver: Kerr & Begg, 1890), pp. 284-286. In later years, he was "elected and served three years as councilman of his city, and on the progressive ticket was elected to the office of mayor (three years). . . . He affiliates with the Pioneers, the Masonic fraternity, the Odd Fellows, Sons of England and Forrestors. . . ." See R.E. Gosnell, *A History of British Columbia* (Victoria: Hill Binding Co., 1906), pp. 434-436.

James Fell opened a successful spice and coffee business with John Finlayson. In 1882, he stood for the House of Commons but was defeated, and in 1886-1887 he was mayor of Victoria. Fell was also a trustee of the Jubilee Hospital, a member of the Pioneer Society and President of the British Columbia Benevolent Society. See Kerr, pp. 164-165. In addition, Fell was listed as a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in Gosnell, p. 590.

Dr. William Wymond Walkem was brother to Premier George Anthony Walkem, a former Victoria councilman and later M.P.P. for Nanaimo, and an author. See W. Wymond Walkem, *Stories of Early British Columbia* (Vancouver: News-Advertiser, 1914) BCARS. This book unfortunately contains no accounts of the Carnarvon Club, perhaps due to Walkem's resignation as secretary one month later. See "Carnarvon Club," *Colonist*, 12 September 1876, p. 3.

¹⁹⁶A case for Carnarvon Club involvement can be made as follows: (1) "The Arch Enemy," *Colonist*, 28 October 1876, p. 3, noted that "the seceders were chiefly Oddfellows in regalia, who never as Oddfellows make any political demonstration."

(2) Hayward, Fell, Walkem and Chadwick were elected officers of the club; "Carnarvon Club," *Colonist*, 12 September 1876, p. 3,

(3) In "Proceedings of the 2nd Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of B.C. of I.O.O.F.," 14 February 1876, BCARS. Reel 105A, Hayward is listed as W. Grand Marshal (p. 39) and Fell as a member (p. 40). In addition, Walkem is listed as a member in *Constitution and Bylaws of Victoria Lodge No. 1, I.O.O.F.* (Victoria: Standard Printing House, 1878), p. 70,

(4) "Orders to Marshals," *Colonist*, 15 August 1876, p. 2, Odd Fellows are one of the largest participants in the Governor General's procession and in "Reception of the Governor General," *Colonist*, 15 August 1876, p. 3, Captain T. Chadwick, first Treasurer of the Carnarvon Club, is listed as in charge of No. 3 Company of Lady Dufferin's Guard of the procession. Also see "Mr. Sproat on the Fort Street Incident," *Colonist*, 20 August 1876, p. 3.

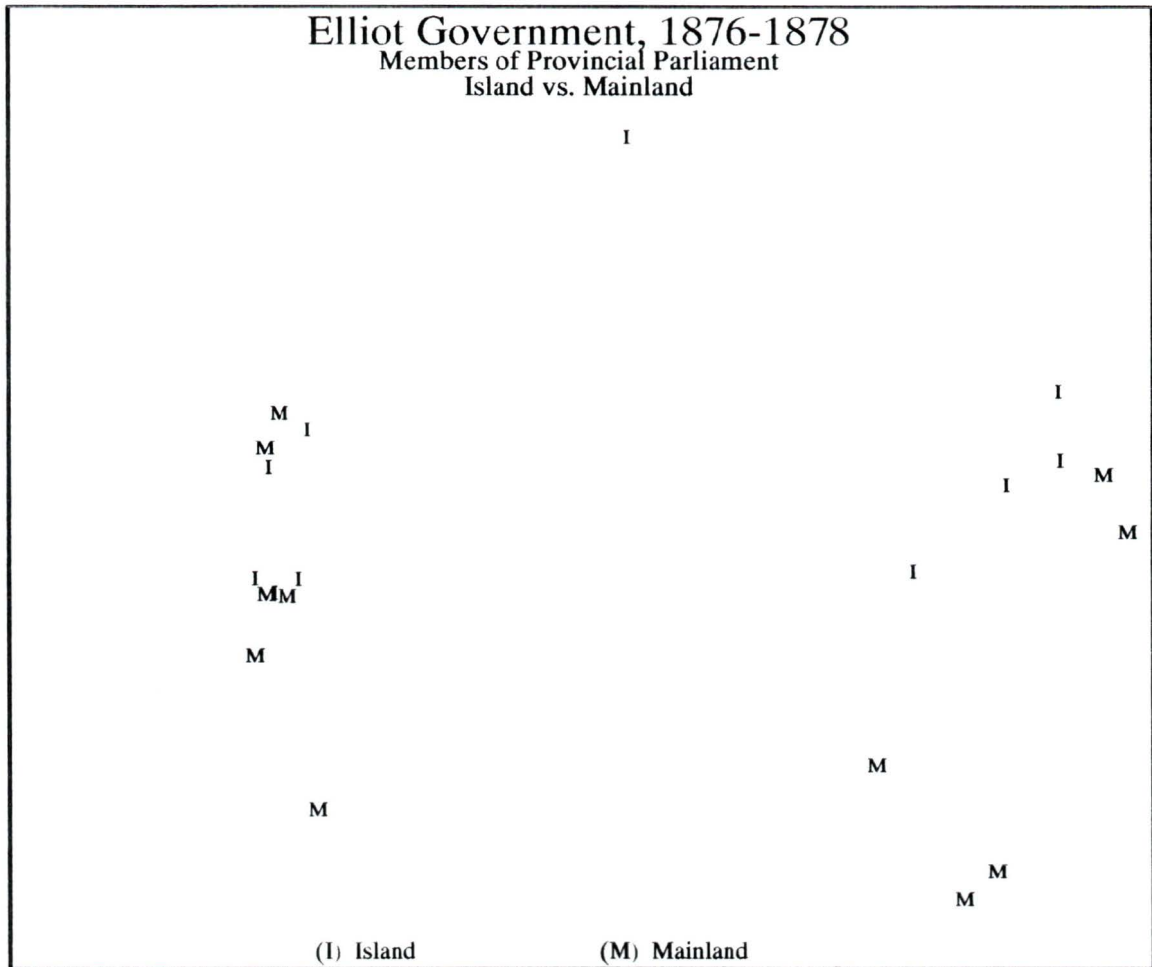


Figure 16.

Fraser River alternative, which was "destined to keep the sections assunder and preclude the possibility of united action."¹⁹⁷ If an "Island vs. Mainland" division were to occur in the legislature, one would surely expect its manifestation during Premier Elliot's tenure of office. As far as the *Standard* was concerned, the Elliot administration was "preparing to surrender the Carnarvon Terms."¹⁹⁸ In consequence, the Carnarvon Club's mandate swung from the federal theatre to include

¹⁹⁷"Counting Unhatched Broods," *Colonist*, 1 September 1876, p. 2.

¹⁹⁸"Two-Faced," *Standard*, 11 September 1876, p. 3.

the realm of provincial politics and the close scrutiny of the Elliot cabinet. Yet Figure 16, a multidimensional analysis of all divisions recorded under Elliot, shows no illustration of an "Island vs. Mainland" cleavage whatsoever.¹⁹⁹ In fact, what we do find in this map of similarity is a somewhat even balance between Island and Mainland members, either siding with Elliot or the deposed Walkem regime.

Elliot must have been aware of the favourable public opinion that the Carnarvon Club was successfully courting. On 11 September 1876, two days after the Carnarvon Club was officially formed, Elliot asked for the resignation of the President of the Council, Ebenezer Brown, who had publicly pronounced his support for reopening the Carnarvon Terms.²⁰⁰ Evidently it was felt that Brown's resignation would keep the Carnarvon Club in check, for the time being, and prevent any further opposition-secessionist sentiment from being directed towards the provincial government. Indeed, the *Colonist* thought the action more than "sufficient to silence the clamorous knaves who are attempting to mix Local with Federal politics in the hope that they may seize the reins of Government."²⁰¹ The *Colonist* had become increasingly aware of what it perceived as an attempt to inject "party" politics into the whole debate over the fulfilment of the Terms of Union, which it believed was not only "unwise" but would further "weaken the movement" in favour of the Carnarvon

¹⁹⁹Figure 16 is reproduced from graphics file G5IM.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting records contained in G5.DAT. Note: Nor do individual votes recorded under Elliot represent an Island vs. Mainland division.

²⁰⁰"The Conspirators at Work," *Standard*, 31 August 1876, p. 3. Also see "The Elliot Conspirators are at Work," *Standard*, 1 September 1876, p. 2, and "Hon. Mr. Brown's Resignation," *Standard*, 14 September 1876, p. 3 which quoted Brown as saying: "My constituents will judge from this, of my entire disapproval of the agitation on the Carnarvon Terms in Victoria which I consider inimical in the welfare of the whole mainland and the Province in general."

²⁰¹"The Resignation of the President of the Executive Council," *Colonist*, 14 September 1876, p. 2.

settlement. The newspaper also claimed that the ultimate aim of the attempt to link the Elliot administration to a conspiracy to "sell out" the Carnarvon Terms, was that of destroying public confidence in the government.²⁰²

A certain distaste for party politics had always been prevalent in British Columbia, and it can be safely assumed that the political leaders of the day appreciated the electorate's preference for a non partisan approach. Edgar Dewdney, federal member for Yale, advocated such a stance when he asserted, "It is not our policy to take part or hand in the struggles going on in old Canada, we have nothing to do with Liberals or Conservatives, with Grits or Tories, our representatives should support any government that agrees to carry out the Terms (for without it this Confederation is a humbug) caring not what their political creeds are. . .".²⁰³ Indeed, from a federal Conservative point of view, the benefits of a non-party province proved to be one of their greatest assets. Sir Joseph Trutch described the merits of such a political position when writing to Sir John A. Macdonald:

But it is a great mistake to introduce -- as is being done here of late by the 'Standard' of which Mr. Walkem now has control -- the Party politics of Old Canada into this province. For as there are here as everywhere else at least two parties in politics the more one adopts Conservatism the more tendency with the other naturally in the other direction -- and of this introduction of Canadian party politics here [if it] has any effect at all it must be [to]. . . divide up the community. . .

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²⁰²"The Cloven Foot," *Colonist*, 5 September 1876, p. 2.

²⁰³I am grateful to John Belshaw of Cariboo College for this telling quotation found in an advance copy of his paper entitled "Politics in British Columbia, 1871-1914" which will shortly be published by Simon Fraser University as part of a British Columbia history text. The original source is from "Broadside to the Electors of Yale-Kootenay District," 20 January 1874, *Edgar Dewdney Papers, 1861-1926, Glenbow Archives, M320, f16*.

which would otherwise continue united [to]. . . that party which is thoroughly acknowledged as truly friendly to B.C.²⁰⁴

Yet, neither the *Standard*, nor former Premier Walkem necessarily attempted to introduce party politics into the province, as presumably they were astute enough to realize that such a course would be unpopular with a "non partisan" public. The approach taken was more subtle, in that the introduction of old party labels merely consisted of a perception -- not necessarily contrived -- that the Elliot government was an ally of Mackenzie's Liberal government, and therefore Liberals working in concert against the Carnarvon settlement.

The strategy, in fact, was similar to the Carnarvon Club's which became decidedly preoccupied with provincial politics within one month of having been established, once the Elliot-Mackenzie link-up had been made. The *Standard*, in keeping with its support for the Carnarvon Club, ventured to forecast that "Without a doubt the Carnarvon Club will sweep all before it at the approaching provincial election."²⁰⁵ Clearly, if any party had been introduced into the political milieu of British Columbia at this time, it was unquestionably the Carnarvon Club *incognito*.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴Trutch to Macdonald, 3 March 1876, Confidential, *Macdonald Papers*, vol. 278, pp. 12781-2. Note: Macdonald confirmed his party's commitment to B.C. in Macdonald to Trutch, 29 April 1876, Confidential, p. 1, when he stated that: "We consider ourselves as a Party pledged to carry out the terms of Union in spirit and substance and the people of B.C. may depend on our taking that course. . . ". *O'Reilly Family Papers*, vol. 2, file 3, Add. Mss. 412, BCARS.

²⁰⁵"The Carnarvon Club," *Standard*, 29 September 1876, p. 3. The article further stated that "Already more than three-fourths of the Electors of this City have pledged themselves to the Carnarvon terms or separation. The Branch Societies are making excellent progress both on the Island and the Mainland."

²⁰⁶Leon D. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (New York: Praeger, 1967), pp. 9-10 defines political parties as "any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental office holders under a given label." This applies to the Carnarvon Club, with the exception that members would not normally run on a Carnarvon Club ticket but rather pledge themselves to adhere to the Carnarvon Terms.

In order to establish the Club's influential involvement in the political process, a closer examination must be made of some of the leading political events in Victoria at this time.²⁰⁷ Of particular note, were three mass public meetings held at Philharmonic Hall, after the Club's inception in September 1876, which were convened for the express purpose of deciding on "Carnarvon Terms or Separation," and which acted as the main political impetus for further provincial legislative action on the question of secession. The first such meeting, 19 September 1877, recorded not only an attendance of "Seven Hundred Citizens in Council" but also a "unanimous vote in favour of separation."²⁰⁸ Likewise on 4 March 1877, separation was again endorsed by a similar mass public meeting as the alternative should the Carnarvon Terms not be carried out, with the additional demand made for Forbes George Vernon's resignation from cabinet for having publicly opposed construction of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway.²⁰⁹ A deputation was formed to wait upon the Premier to determine whether he planned to retain Vernon in his Administration.²¹⁰ Elliot refused to meet with the Committee, which then led to a third mass meeting shortly

²⁰⁷Unfortunately, most available information is based on newspaper accounts since the Club's oath of secrecy seems to have prevented other accounts from being recorded.

²⁰⁸"Great Railway Meeting Last Night," *Colonist*, 20 September 1876, p. 3. The platform speakers were "Messr. **C. Hayward**, W. Wilson, M.W.T. Drake, S. Duck [past M.P.P.], R. Beaven [M.P.P.], A. MacLean, **C. Gowen**, **J. Fell**, **C. Chadwick**, Bunster [M.P.P.], Humphreys [M.P.P.], Douglas [M.P.P.], W. Ky Bull, McB. Smith, and C. Morton. Eli Harrison was elected Secretary of the meeting." The emphasis in this and subsequent footnotes has been added in order to draw attention to known Carnarvon Club members.

²⁰⁹"Mass Meeting!," *Standard*, 5 March 1877, p. 3 which quoted the following as present at the mass meeting: Carnarvon Club members **C. Hayward**, **J. Fell**, **A. Wilson**, and Members of Provincial Parliament F. Williams, C. Gallagher, J. Douglas, J. Ash, R. Beaven, R. Smith, and J. Evans. Also see "Public Meeting at Philharmonic Hall," *Colonist*, 4 March 1877, p. 3 for additional list of those present such as former Premier G.A. Walkem, S. Duck, J.P. Davies, and J.H. Todd. Also see "Elliot's Treachery! Mass Meeting of Citizens," *Standard*, 27 February 1877, p. 2 and "More Treachery in Elliot's Government," *Standard*, 1 March 1877, p. 3.

²¹⁰The deputation consisted of **Charles Hayward**, **James Fell** and W. Wilson.

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after, on 12 March 1877, which called for Elliot's resignation for not having met with his own electors of Victoria City.²¹¹ The interesting link between the public meetings and the Carnarvon Club is best found in the participants who were active in both groups which, as noted, shared the same common goal.²¹² Carnarvon Club executive members, such as Charles Hayward and others, were always prominent at the Philharmonic Hall meetings (and subsequent deputations to the provincial government), as were opposition M.P.P.s such as Robert Beaven, T. Basil Humphreys and James Douglas, Jr.²¹³ Perhaps Club members were a little too prominent as the first warning shot fired of their provincial political involvement was made in the *Colonist* by former Victoria M.P.P., William A. Robertson, who stated:

I deem it in the interest of the public, and the people particularly of Victoria, to let it be known that there is in our midst a political Star Chamber (wrongly called the Carnarvon Club) which, while professing to be working in the interest of the Province, is, in reality, wholly and solely run in the interests of a political faction -- a faction which is nothing more nor less than the rump of the late Government; and I have no hesitation in denouncing the devil's dozen that lead and control that Club as the most bigotted, narrow-minded, fanatical political parasites that ever cursed a community.²¹⁴

²¹¹"Mass Meeting Last Night! Elliot's Resignation Demanded! The Electors Unanimous," *Standard*, 13 March 1877, p. 3. Also see "Oh! A.C.E. Resign," *Colonist*, 13 March 1877, p. 3 for list of participants: **C. Hayward, W. Dalby, C. Gowen, Noah Shakespeare**, J.P. Davies, W. Wilson, and M.P.P.s Robert Beaven, T.B. Humphreys, & John Evans.

²¹²Carnarvon Club members have been highlighted in the preceding lists of public meeting participants.

²¹³In "The Triumph of Common Sense," *Colonist*, 6 March 1877, p. 2 both Beaven and Douglas are noted as members of the Carnarvon Club.

²¹⁴"The Carnarvon Club -- Its Object to Oust the Ministry," *Colonist*, 3 March 1877, p. 3. Also see "The Carnarvon Club -- an ex-M.P.P. Proves himself a Traitor," *Standard*, 6 March 1877, p. 3 which noted that "at every meeting of this Club Mr. Robertson has acted against the best interests of the Province. . . . he who has no respect for his word of honor is unworthy the name of a man. -- Trutch."

Robertson further cautioned to beware of all calls for mass public meetings, which he believed to be the work of the former Walkem Government. Other Elliot supporters also pointed an accusing finger at the "secret political organization called the Carnarvon Club" as responsible for the agitation being meted out to the government.²¹⁵ Of the two later public meetings held at Philharmonic Hall, the *Colonist* reported that:

They were initiated, regulated and controlled generally by decisions arrived at in a secret society meeting previously held, and which the late Cabinet of the dethroned Walkem Ministry were head and centre, backed by a few individuals who are so notorious in this connection as to make public mention of their names unnecessary. . . . The public safety requires its immediate -- its utter extirpation.²¹⁶

To take the *Colonist's* word at face value would perhaps be putting a little too much faith in the editorial integrity of the newspaper's political coverage. It is, indeed, often difficult to discern what might be considered reliable reporting of Carnarvon Club activities. On 17 March 1877, the *Colonist* reported that members of the Club were "Like rats leaving a sinking ship," -- the executive having resigned presumably in response to Robertson's scathing accusations.²¹⁷ If we are to believe

²¹⁵"Oh! A.C.E. Resign," *Colonist*, 13 March 1877, p. 3.

²¹⁶"The Impending Danger," *Colonist*, 15 March 1877, p. 2. Also see "The Public Meeting," *Standard*, 7 March 1877, p. 3 which notes that David W. Higgins, editor of the *Colonist*, had "twisted" the facts. An example of decidedly biased writing can be found in "Preparing for the Fray," *Colonist*, 16 March 1877, p. 3; "The Government are prepared to issue tenders for several thousand second-hand coffins for encasement of the dead; and have offered a good price for additional cemetery accommodation at Ross Bay [Victoria]. No surgeons will be necessary -- every Clubite not killed outright on being wounded is forced, by the laws of the Club, to commit the hari kari. Carnarvonites neither give nor except quarter. They die as the Spartans died -- with their boots on!"

²¹⁷James Fell replaced Charles Hayward as President of the Club. Of the new leader the *Colonist* stated: "We feel sorry that Fort Street should lose so prominent a denizen, but cannot but think that the Carnarvon Club in their death throes made a wise selection in choosing Mr. Fell as their leader. He will make a beautiful corpse." See "Carnarvon Club," *Colonist*, 17 March 1877, p. 3.

Colonist reports, one would naturally assume the Carnarvon Club, as a political force was no more, and that James Fell, as the new President, was leading a lost cause.²¹⁸ Yet the *Standard* reported, conversely, that the Club was merely holding its semi-annual meeting, when elections were held for new executive officers, as stipulated in its constitution.²¹⁹ Far from being dead, the Carnarvon Club appears to have been very much alive, with new members taking their turn on the executive. Former president Hayward was still involved and appeared in the deputation that would wait upon the Premier.²²⁰ In such circumstances, therefore, where newspapers have waged a partisan war of words, the only real test of the validity of their claims is to determine whether the issue of adherence to the Carnarvon Terms was still an influential factor contributing to the outcome of the 1878 provincial general election. The *Standard*, in endorsing opposition candidates in 1878 was still true to form. Electors were warned of the Elliot-Mackenzie conspiracy and to vote for the opposition ticket straight if the Island portion of the transcontinental railway was to be secured.²²¹ The newspaper's position was quite clear when it stated that:

There is no doubt that if Elliot is returned it is intended not to call the Legislature together until next February, so that in the meantime

²¹⁸The paper resorted to personal attacks in its denigration of the Club. See "The Pickwicks," *Colonist*, 29 March 1877, p. 3 where it states: ". . . the Carnarvon Club will meet tonight, it is supposed to take into consideration the reply to the Carnarvon dispatch and decide upon Elliot's mode of extinction. We should pity the Reply of the Premier if the Fat President of the Club were to sit upon either for any length of time."

²¹⁹"Carnarvon Club," *Standard*, 9 March 1877, p. 3. The new executive were: James Fell, President; Noah Shakespeare, Vice President; Thomas Alsopp, Treasurer; and G.H. Wilson Brown, Secretary.

²²⁰Carnarvon Club activity at this time noted in "Political High Jinks at Parson's Bridge," *Colonist*, 20 March 1877, p. 3. Also see "Political High Jinks," *Standard*, 28 March 1877, p. 3.

²²¹"The Island Railway," *Standard*, 22 May 1878, p. 3. The opposition ticket in Victoria was Robert Beaven, James S. Drummond, John W. Williams, and William Wilson.

should the Dominion elections result in a majority for Mackenzie, the sale of the Island Railway can be consummated.²²²

Consequently, on the day of the general election, 23 May 1878, Victoria returned all four opposition candidates and deprived Premier A.C. Elliot of his own seat.²²³ Overall, ten opposition members out of twelve were returned for Vancouver Island, and the Mainland yielded similar results which led the *Standard*, in an early post election article, to write that:

It is noticeable that seventeen of the new members whose election is known are pledged to support the Carnarvon Settlement. . . both Messrs. Pimbury and Smithe [of Cowichan], although declared supporters of Mr. Elliot's policy, having given such pledges. It may therefore be reasonably expected that any opposition that may be offered to the new [Walkem] Gov't on any of the great questions of the day will be unimportant and inconsiderable.²²⁴

Indeed, the greatest question of the day was "Carnarvon Terms or Separation," which Premier Walkem, restored to power by the results of the election, was determined to act on promptly. Accordingly, on 30 August 1878, a vote was taken in which the ultimatum of secession was endorsed (14-9) in the event of railway construction not commencing by May of 1879, reflecting the new composition of the House.²²⁵ Moved by Premier George Anthony Walkem and seconded by Finance Minister Robert Beaven, the memorial *To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty* read in part that:

²²²Ibid.

²²³"Glorious Victory," *Standard*, 23 May 1878, p. 3.

²²⁴"The Election: Right Side Up at Last," *Standard*, 27 May 1878, p. 2. See Ormsby dissertation, p. 275 for other election issues in 1878 such as taxation, debt and redistribution.

²²⁵See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, VII, 30 August 1878, pp. 109-110.

Under the circumstances, and with a view to prevent, if possible, the repetition in the future of the disasters of the past, Your Petitioners, with great regret, feel compelled, in defence of the interests of the people of the Province at large, to resort to the unavoidable alternative forced upon them by the conduct of the Dominion Government in this matter, and to therefore humbly pray that, in the event of the Dominion Government failing to carry into effect the terms of the Settlement of 1874, on or before the first day of May next, Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to see fit to order and direct--

That British Columbia shall thereafter have the right to exclusively collect and retain her Customs and Excise duties and to withdraw from the Union; and shall also, in any event, be entitled to be compensated by the Dominion for losses sustained by reason of past delays and the failure of the Dominion Government to carry out their Railway and other obligations to the Province.²²⁶

The work of the Carnarvon Club, in mobilizing support to raise and hold the issue on the public agenda, seemed to have brought very good results for opposition candidates and those who were determined to have a strict observance of the Carnarvon settlement. So favourable were the results, in fact, that Premier Walkem, who had previously "denounced the separation cry,"²²⁷ declared with considerable foresight that "it would be better to be alone than have a partner we could not trust. . . ."²²⁸ For Premier Walkem, the Carnarvon Club had become the next best thing to a political party; as a pressure group, it certainly was the most successful the province has ever seen, having secured major Government losses at the polls, and the return of a sympathetic administration. In its role as a political party *incognito*, the

²²⁶*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, 29-30 August 1878, Session I, 3rd Parliament, Vol. VII, pp. 105-110.

²²⁷"In the House," *Colonist*, 27 February 1877, p. 2.

²²⁸"Public Meeting at Philharmonic Hall," *Colonist*, 4 March 1877, p. 3.

Carnarvon Club was the only group in the history of British Columbia ever to have succeeded in returning a premier to power after his political defeat.²²⁹

Figure 17 suggests that the restored Walkem "party" (right side) enjoyed a comfortable majority, with a cabinet closely aligned with one another.²³⁰ As this map of similarity shows, T. B. Humphrey's early defection from the Elliot government to the opposition benches was greatly rewarded by an appreciative Walkem who appointed the "destroyer of governments" to the twin posts of Provincial Secretary and Minister of Mines. Humphreys, who had been instrumental in bringing down the former McCreight, Walkem and Elliot Governments, must have been well-satisfied with his new position and Walkem's new brand of secessionist politics. Of his appointment, *Colonist* Editor David W. Higgins, recalled:

Mr. Walkem had the wisdom to take Mr. Humphreys into his cabinet and, strange to relate, that gentleman sat through four sessions and scarcely uttered a word, nor did he introduce a single measure. From a hard hitting, forcible debater he became as silent as an oyster and sat at his desk twirling his thumbs, or lounged through the lobby smoking Havanas.²³¹

If Humphreys appeared quiet, undoubtedly this was because he had finally become part of a government that was willing to do battle with Canada. As a severe critic

²²⁹It should be also noted that the Carnarvon Club is recorded as having run candidates for the later 1878 federal election which saw Sir John A. Macdonald returned to power. See Edgar Dewdney to Macdonald, 8 June 1878, *Macdonald Papers*, vol. 210, pp. 89263-89264.

²³⁰Figure 17 is reproduced from graphics file G6PAR.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting data contained in SPSS-X file G6.DAT (Stress=0.076, RSQ=.988). Twenty-seven divisions were recorded under Walkem's term of office, 1878-1882. Of a legislature of twenty-five members, only two were deleted on account of low attendance. These two M.P.P.s were Ebenezer Brown (67%) and George Ferguson (67%).

²³¹Political reminiscences of David W. Higgins, owner-editor of the British *Colonist* and later M.P.P. and Speaker of the Legislature. See Chapter VII, "A Political Outline," in R.E. Gosnell, *History of British Columbia* (Victoria: Hill Binding Co., 1906), p. 135.

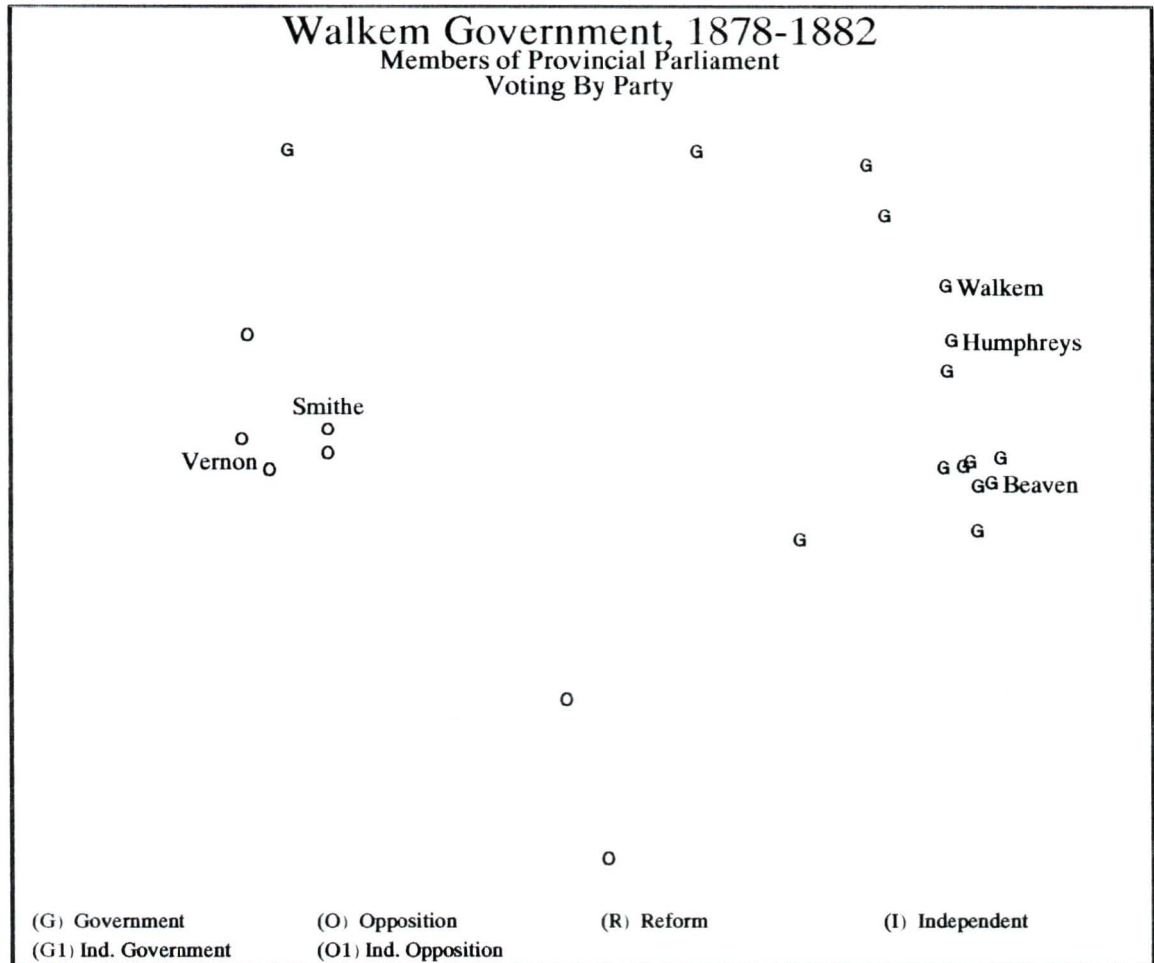


Figure 17.

of Canada's system of tariffs and its ill effects on the British Columbian economy, Humphreys was no stranger to arguing for better terms for the province. His strong "fight Ottawa" stance developed and hardened throughout the tariff debate was essentially the same political method found on the railway debate within the province. Humphreys demanded the strict fulfillment of the Terms of Union contract, and this view was ultimately shared by a majority of members who won office on this issue alone. The fact that the petition passed by the new Walkem government not only advanced B.C.'s separation from Canada but also the exclusive right to collect and retain customs and excise duties must have seemed the perfect solution to

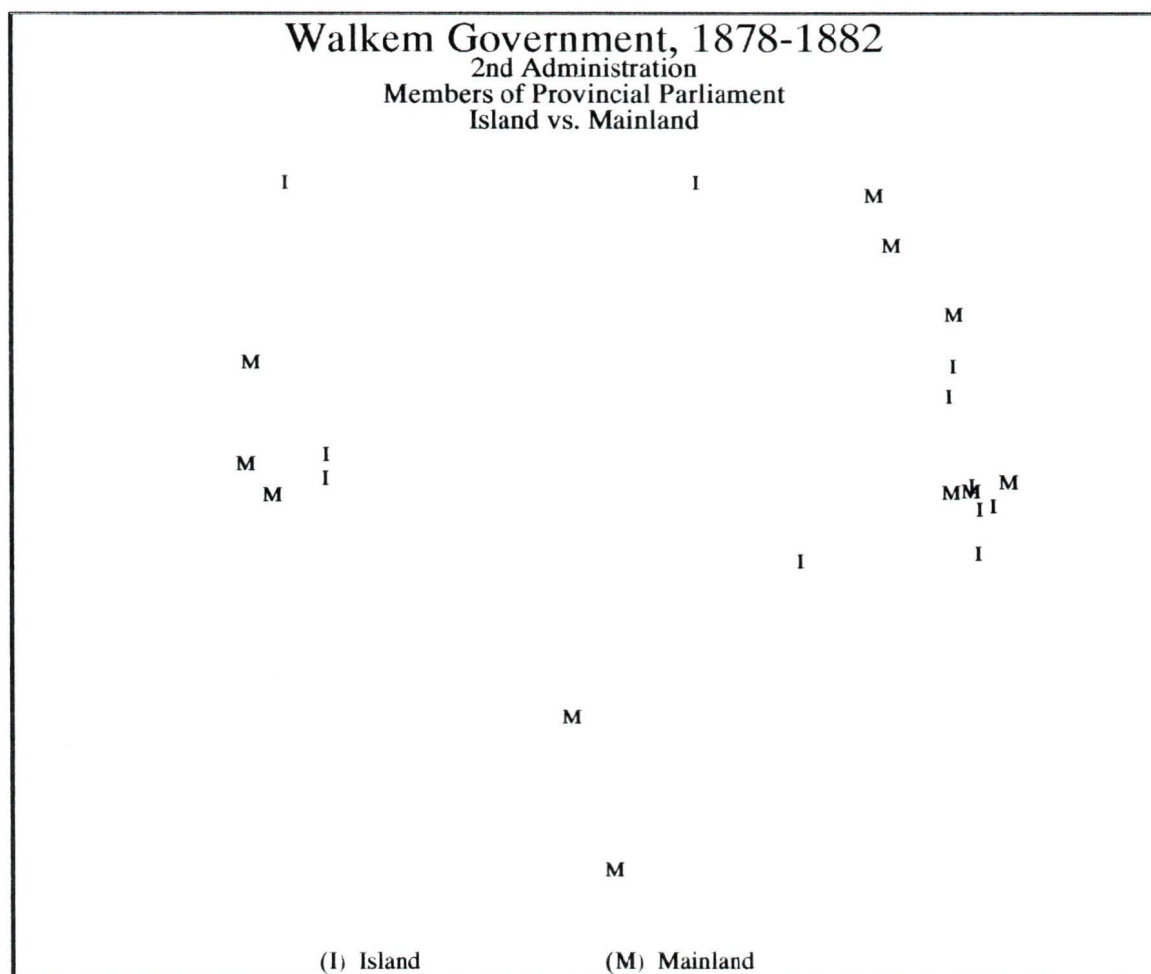


Figure 18.

Humphreys.²³² Yet Humphreys "defection" to a Vancouver Island riding from Lillooet, and his support for a seemingly Island-oriented cause, in no way complemented an existing "Island vs. Mainland" voting alignment. As with previous legislative sessions examined, no "Island vs. Mainland" pattern exists on the basis of data obtained from the division lists recorded for the Walkem Government, 1878-1882.

²³²*Journals of the Legislative Assembly, 29-30 August 1878, Session I, 3rd Parliament, Vol. VII, pp. 105-110.*

Figure 18 depicts a legislature where the majority of both Island and Mainland M.P.P.s are aligned with Walkem.²³³

It is understandable why previous historians advanced the "Island vs. Mainland" thesis for the later Walkem years. The competition between opposing railway routes through the Pacific province did aggravate regional animosities between the old centres of Victoria and New Westminster, but this political conflict did not extend itself in such a way that Victoria held complete sway over all Vancouver Island, nor did New Westminster enjoy political supremacy over the outer regions of the Mainland. What is noticeable in Figure 18 are the three Island M.P.P.s opposed to the Walkem government found on the upper left portion of the "Island vs. Mainland" chart. Historians such as Howay, Ormsby, and others have rightly noted George Anthony Walkem's alignment with "Island" interests, with respect to the Bute Inlet route, realizing that such a rail corridor would have crossed through Walkem's frontier riding of Cariboo. What these historians have failed to understand is that not all Island M.P.P.s supported the projected Bute Inlet-Island rail scheme, but a few, in fact, aligned themselves with the opposing Fraser Canyon route, and therefore, with New Westminster or "Mainland" interests. Figure 19 confirms the hypothesis that those regions that expected to benefit from a particular rail plan banded together in loose solidarity for local gain.²³⁴ In the case of the two Cowichan M.P.P.s, William Smithe and Edwin Pimbury (middle-left) who are each represented by the numeral two (2), the Fraser Canyon route appeared to offer more immediate prospects

²³³Figure 18 is reproduced from graphics file G6IM.EPS and based in M.P.P. voting data contained in SPSS-X file G6.DAT.

²³⁴Figure 19 is reproduced from graphics file G6REG.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting records contained in SPSS-X G6.DAT.

for local advantage. If the railway followed the Thompson and Fraser rivers to New Westminster or some other point on Burrard Inlet, it was expected that a railway ferry would connect with Vancouver Island at Nanaimo, and thence to the Esquimalt terminus. With the federal Liberal government favouring this course, the Elliot-Smithe government saw the possibility of quick action after years of procrastination, and an end to the Island Railway reserve which had impeded agricultural settlement along the east coast of Vancouver Island. Likewise, Dr. John Ash, represented by the numeral three (3, top left corner), also favoured opening the Island Rail belt, which

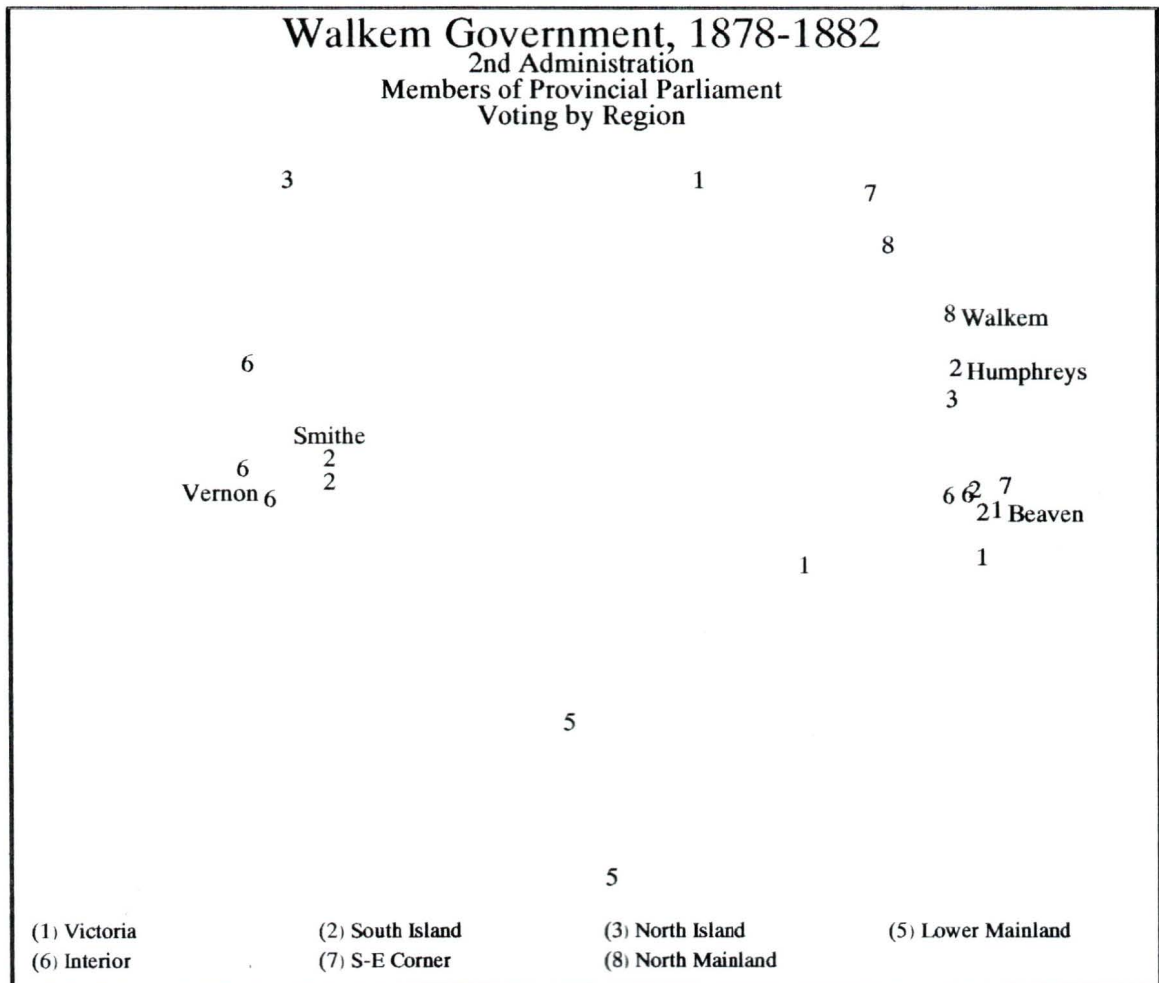


Figure 19.

extended all the way to Seymour Narrows in his riding of Comox. Ash had been a supporter of Walkem and the Bute Inlet route, but once it became clear that the Canadian government planned to switch to the Fraser Canyon alternative, and thus forfeit the northern portion of the Island rail belt, Ash quickly sided with Smithe and lower Mainland (5) and Interior (6) interests. In effect, the small loosely defined group of opposition M.P.P.s (upper left and lower center of the chart) that formed against the Walkem government were held together simply by their desire for a different railway policy. The opposition included members of Elliot's former cabinet such as Smithe, and Vernon a declared enemy of the Island rail option. Vernon's two seat mates from Yale, John Mara (6) and Preston Bennett (6), were also understandably opposed to a northern Bute Inlet route that would have effectively ended the old gold district's already abysmal existence since the heady days of 1858. Also in this group, as one might expect, were the New Westminster M.P.P.s, John Wellington Harris (5) and Donald McGillivray (5), whose dreams of the Royal City becoming the western entrepot for Canada could only be realized by a southern Fraser Canyon route. The Walkem Government, conversely, enjoyed the support of M.P.P.s from southern Vancouver Island or those areas that would be in close proximity to a western terminus located at Esquimalt. In addition, the Cariboo and Lillooet ridings supported Walkem and the northern rail route. Perhaps the only anomaly in Premier Walkem's support were the Kootenays, yet not one of the projected southern routes would have benefitted the south east corner of the province.

In the end, federal authorities chose the Fraser River corridor over the Bute Inlet route favoured by Walkem, Beaven and the Carnarvon Club, and not even Sir John A. Macdonald's return to power fundamentally changed the railway policy of the

previous Liberal government. Walkem, having failed, was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia undoubtedly as a return favour for having secured Macdonald's election to Victoria City after his defeat in Kingston, Ontario. Both Walkem and Macdonald were, of course, natives of the old "limestone city." Robert Beaven did not fare quite so well. Although Beaven gained the premiership once Walkem departed for the bench, he nonetheless had to work within the aftermath of a secessionist strategy that attempted to force the Canadian government to action -- but which dramatically failed. Beaven carried the flag into the general election of 1882 and won office as premier, but only one vote was recorded under the new administration -- that of non-confidence -- which passed 16 to 8.²³⁵ Prior to the vote, at a public dinner held in Victoria to honour Governor General Lord Lorne, Beaven harkened back to the glory days of the "fight Ottawa" strategy.²³⁶ Legend has it that Beaven, still mourning the loss of the railway contest, questioned whether Lorne's wife, Princess Louisa, might become the Queen of a separate Kingdom of Vancouver Island.²³⁷ Although Beaven might have favoured "going it alone" without the British Columbia Mainland or Canada, other M.P.P.s were not prepared to follow his lead. After losing the premiership, Beaven remained an opposition M.P.P. until 1894, thus serving as member for Victoria City for twenty-three years. Victorians had continued to place their trust with Robert Beaven, but future majorities in the British

²³⁵*Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, 26 January 1883, XII, p. 6.

²³⁶For a copy of the Marquis of Lorne's speech while in Victoria, see Duke of Argyll, *Memories of Canada and Scotland By the Right Hon. the Marquis of Lorne*, (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1884), p. 311-323.

²³⁷Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, p. 289.

Columbia legislature were never again commanded by Beaven or any of the strategists of the original "fight Ottawa" policy.

In packaging the politics of this period as "Island vs. Mainland," historians have assumed that the old colonial animosity between Victoria and New Westminster extended itself to the rest of the province, whereas in reality, each region supported a government program on the basis of local interest. In this case, local interest would be best satisfied by tremendous capital works expenditure, which the transcontinental railway promised to deliver. If the major legislative alignment is to be discovered for the post-tariff period, it is to railway politics, and competing rail corridors that one must turn for further answers.

CHAPTER V

"THE BATTLE OF THE ROUTES:" CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY SURVEYS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1871-1883

. . . it cannot be doubtful that, although the Yellow Head has advantages in an engineering point of view, superior to Howse [Pass]; there were other reasons which led the government to come to that conclusion -- the chief of which was, their great anxiety to be in a position to proclaim a line, and commence work according to the Terms of Union, and as their information about this province, outside of the surveys of that year [1871], was limited to what had been represented to them by the late Mr. Waddington, who turned mountai[n]s into mole hills, gravelly benches that grow nothing but what you know as timber or sour grass, into plains of unsurpassed fertility, you will not be surprised to learn [t]hat the instructions to District Engineers in the spring of 1872, were to put their whole force on the line, connecting Yellow Head Pass with Bute Inlet, to reach this later point by Howse being almost impracticable -- and, what, gentlemen, was the result of that season's work -- why the more the Engineers saw of it, the clearer it became that the government has been misled by Mr. Waddington's representations, and not only was the line a very long one, but the engineering work was of such a character that they knew it would be madness to commit to it.

-- EDGAR DEWDNEY, M.P.²³⁸

²³⁸Edgar Dewdney, M.P., *Speech on the Subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway*, (New Westminster, B.C.: Mainland Guardian Print, 1875), p. 7. BCARS.

Unlike the Canadian tariff issue, railway politics in British Columbia have received substantially more attention from historians who noted the political division found between provincial and federal governments during the so-called "Fight Ottawa" years, 1874-1883. Yet these same historians have neglected to examine fully the political division that occurred within the province amongst M.P.P.s who associated themselves with either of two competing railway routes. It has been generally accepted that the present-day Fraser Canyon Route of the transcontinental railway was the only practicable line in which to connect British Columbia with Canada. In accepting this premise, historians have ignored the fact that there was a technically superior route via Bute Inlet that -- although supported by a majority of M.P.P.s -- was dropped by the Canadian government in favour of the Fraser Canyon Route. Ever since, the Bute Inlet Route has been relegated by academics to an inferior position and Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's original support for Bute Inlet and the Esquimalt Terminus is seen today as a mere political ruse. Yet Bute Inlet No. 6 and Burrard Inlet No. 2 were once viewed as the "great rival routes" and the support or non-support given to each effectively divided the legislature into two competing camps that best explain the fundamental legislative alignment in the province between the years 1874 to 1883.

Under the Terms of Union by which British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation, 20 July 1871, the federal government committed itself to the construction of a transcontinental rail link to the Pacific province. The railway clause, Article Eleven, read in part:

The Government of the Dominion undertake to secure the commencement simultaneously, within two years from the date of Union, of the construction of a Railway from the Pacific towards the

Rocky Mountains, and from such point as may be selected, east of the Rocky Mountains, towards the Pacific to connect the seaboard of British Columbia with the Railway system of Canada; and further, to secure the completion of such Railway within ten years from the date of Union.²³⁹

In the same way that Article Seven had left the introduction of Canadian tariffs an open question, Article Eleven did not specify the route of the Pacific railway through the province, nor the location of the western terminus. The tariff issue caused political division amongst provincial legislators who were forced to decide either to accept the Canadian tariff immediately, or wait until the transcontinental railway had been constructed. Likewise, the railway issue caused political division to occur amongst provincial legislators who aligned themselves according to whether or not a proposed Pacific rail line passed through their riding.

The Terms of Union contract was written in such a way that final decisions on divisive issues -- like tariffs and railways -- were effectively postponed for consideration by later provincial assemblies. Perhaps this kind of negotiation was typical of the "old tomorrow" tactics of John A. Macdonald. If the Canadian government had negotiated the Terms of Union with demands that B.C. accept the Canadian tariff immediately or an exact location for a western terminus, it is unlikely that B.C.'s decision to join Canada might have been made quite so easily. In the case of railways, Article Eleven allowed all regions of British Columbia to secretly believe that they were destined for commercial greatness as the spoils of railway development were quietly assured to all regions of the province by shrewd Canadian agents. Consequently, M.P.P.s and public alike divided into separate camps once the

²³⁹As quoted from Margaret A. Ormsby, "The Relations Between British Columbia and the Dominion of Canada, 1871-1885," Ph. D. Dissertation, Byrn Mawr College, 1938, p. 92.

Canadian government began plotting rail corridors throughout all districts of British Columbia.

Survey crews were dispatched to B.C. immediately. In total, twenty-one parties that numbered eight hundred men were deployed from Ottawa to the Pacific coast for the purpose of finding a practicable transcontinental railway line.²⁴⁰ A practicable line that descended the Thompson and Fraser Rivers was indeed discovered in 1871 -- through somewhat "imperfect exploration" -- yet "The difficulties, in fact, appeared so great that a recommendation to adopt the route discovered, could not be justified until every effort had been exhausted to obtain a line sufficiently favourable at less cost."²⁴¹ Consequently, survey operations were reorganized in 1872 to look beyond the immediate choice of the Thompson and Fraser Rivers.

The federal government surveys of 1871, which focussed primarily on rail corridors to Burrard Inlet, caused considerable consternation among Vancouver Island residents, especially those at Victoria and Esquimalt. Many believed that their favoured route by Bute Inlet, across Johnston Straits and the treacherous "Ripple Rock" of Seymour Narrows, had been entirely ignored.²⁴² Prior to Confederation, citizens of Victoria had petitioned Governor Anthony Musgrave that Vancouver Island should not be left out of any future plans for a cross-country rail line. The message

²⁴⁰Howard Palmer, "Early Explorations in British Columbia for the Canadian Pacific Railway" in *The Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Philadelphia*, XVI:3, 1918, p. 75.

²⁴¹Sanford Fleming, Engineer in Chief, *Report On Surveys And Preliminary Operations On The Canadian Pacific Railway* (Ottawa: MacLean, Roger & Co., 1877), p. 14. BCARS. NW 971B/F598/1877. The 1877 *Report* is the most comprehensive of all the Fleming annual reports. It covers the period from 1871 to 1876 with considerable detail for survey operations and additional letters of testimony from Naval authorities and other experts in the field.

²⁴²"Railway Coast Survey," *Victoria Daily Standard*, 6 November 1871, p. 2.

stated quite clearly, the presumed, preeminent position of the capital city in the province:

That Vancouver Island, possessing as she does a most advantageous and an envied geographical position upon the North Pacific, the most convenient and suitable harbours, the chief commercial city, the larger population, the seat of Government, the station of Her Majesty's Fleet and proposed Dry Dock at Esquimalt, extensive deposits of coal and iron, as well as other invaluable natural resources, must be considered as the most desirable, as it is, perhaps, the intended, route for the proposed Railway to the Pacific.²⁴³

In an eight-to-two vote of the colonial Legislative Council, 10 February 1871, the desire for some kind of Island connection with Canada was reaffirmed in a motion proposed by Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken.²⁴⁴ The Dominion government obviously appreciated Victoria's concerns. In 1872, three survey parties were sent to Bute Inlet and the Valdez Group of islands that represented the only possible site for a fixed rail connection between Vancouver Island and the Continent.²⁴⁵

The extremely able engineer Marcus Smith, formerly with the Intercolonial Railway, was sent out to directly supervise all survey parties in the province. As the Deputy Engineer-in-Chief to Sanford Fleming and Resident Engineer for British Columbia, Smith seemed to take a particular interest in the Bute Inlet route.²⁴⁶ The

²⁴³"Inhabitants of Victoria and V.I. to Governor Anthony Musgrave," Vancouver Island Petition on CPR Western Terminus, Undated, University of Victoria Special Collections. HE 2810/C2C6 (sc).

²⁴⁴As found in *Journals of the Colonial Legislatures of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1851-1871*, James E. Hendrickson, ed. (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1980), V:441.

²⁴⁵The Valdez Group are more particularly known as Stuart, Sonora and Quadra Islands.

²⁴⁶Marcus Smith was a second cousin of the famous Scottish economist Adam Smith (*The Wealth of Nations*). Before his acceptance of the CPR post, Smith had been involved with the Intercolonial Railway in eastern Canada. He participated in the visit of Robert Stephenson to Canada and was undoubtedly acquainted with the English engineer's bridging technology. Smith's ability as an engineer was perhaps best illustrated by his "well proven friend" George Lowe Reid, Engineer-in-Chief of the Great Western Railway Company who had guaranteed Smith's appointment as his replacement if he chose not to accept the junior post under Sanford Fleming. See family register and diary, p. 249, *Marcus Smith Papers*,

Canadian government had, in fact, purchased for two thousand pounds sterling, plans from former road builder Alfred Waddington that outlined a route from the head of Bute Inlet -- the undeveloped townsite of Waddington -- up the Homathco River and ultimately across the Cascade Mountain range to the Cariboo region.²⁴⁷ Waddington's earlier attempt to construct a bridal trail along the steep banks of the Homathco Canyon was roundly condemned by most lower Mainland authorities who realized that any such success would have usurped the wealth of the Cariboo to Victoria and away from the Fraser Canyon and New Westminster.²⁴⁸ Nonetheless, even though criticism from New Westminster and Yale led to a further dismissal of the feasibility of a railway in this locale, the Canadian government was not deterred from supplying Marcus Smith with copies of Waddington's reports for 1862.²⁴⁹

Add. Mss. 1496 (Reel A-856), BCARS.

²⁴⁷A former San Francisco merchant and member of the legislative assembly of V.I., Waddington had been an active lobbyist in Ottawa for a transcontinental "all-red route" to the Pacific ocean. He is today commonly considered by many to have been the originator of the trans-Canada railway. Waddington was an avid promoter of British Columbia. Not only did he publish the first map of the B.C. gold fields in 1858, but also defended the Crown colony's potential mineral wealth in the "first non-government book printed in the colony of Vancouver Island." See *The Fraser mines vindicated; or, The history of four months*, 2 ed. (Victoria: P. de Garro, 1858), BCARS. The purchase of the Bute Inlet plans by the federal government for 2000 pounds sterling was considered "a trifling sum" by the *Victoria Colonist*, yet Waddington was apparently quite "elated." See Neville Shanks, *Waddington: A Biography of Alfred Pendrill Waddington*, (Port Hardy, B.C.: North Island Gazette, 1975), p. 72.

²⁴⁸Governor Frederick Seymour noted the Mainland antipathy toward the Bute Inlet route when he wrote that "The project has not met with much support in this Colony, inasmuch as the road, if successful, would direct traffic from New Westminster, and cause a falling off of the tolls on the great rival routes. . . ." in Seymour to Newcastle, No. 7, 20 May 1864. Joseph Trutch, in his capacity as Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, advised the Colonial Secretary that the Fraser River Route was "well established" and that there was no reason for a competing trail, despite his obvious conflict of interest as owner of Alexandra Bridge and a half interest in Spence's Bridge. The Bute Inlet route, he claimed, required too much blasting, and therefore, was too expensive. A copy of his remarks is recorded in *Smith Papers*, "Copies of Miscellaneous Documents, 1872," pp. 24-25. Add. Mss. 1496 (Reel A-857), BCARS.

²⁴⁹*Smith Papers*, "Copies of Miscellaneous Documents, 1872," pp. 7-11. H.O. Teidmann, who supervised the original surveys for Waddington, was rehired under Smith to resurvey the western section of the route. Waddington's activities in Ottawa -- including his attempt to introduce a railway bill into Parliament in 1871 -- are described in "Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council," 16 October 1872, in Sanford Fleming, *Progress Report on the Canadian Pacific Railway Exploratory Survey*, (Ottawa: Maclean, Rogers & Co., 1872), pp. 38-40.

Smith fairly stated -- unlike the previous disparagement wielded by lower Mainland interests -- that "Mr. Waddington may have under-rated the difficulties of constructing a road or railway through so rough a country, but his plans . . . appear to have been honestly prepared as no attempt was made to show by them the route to be less difficult than it really is."²⁵⁰ In fact, a practicable route was located by CPR survey crews as early as 1872. In addition, a further survey continued from the northern side of Bute Inlet to the Valdez Group of islands and crossed a selection of sea channels, including Seymour Narrows, to a point on Vancouver Island.²⁵¹

The line was not an easy one, but in the early days of CPR surveys the Bute Inlet Route was, nonetheless, one of the first to be established as a possible western section of the "all-red route." In contrast, Marcus Smith jotted down in his field diary a rather cursory, yet seemingly condemnatory, opinion of the Fraser and Thompson river canyons as possible rail corridors. In a kind of stacatto-like hand, he wrote:

Started at 3 p.m. in Barnard's [express] stage. [D]rove through the Canon. [M]iles to Boston Bar very rough and wild and unfavourable for a railway. . . . up the Fraser still very rough road. [A]t summit Jack ass mountain said to be 1200 feet above water and nearly perpendicular. [On the Thompson River] the banks being gravel, sand or loam and subject to slides -- very unfavourable for a railway -- more so even than the rocky Canon of the Fraser.²⁵²

Most curious was that these negative references to proposed railway construction in the Fraser Canyon and on the banks of the Thompson River were not included by

²⁵⁰Sanford Fleming, *Report of Progress on the Explorations and Surveys up to January, 1874*, (Ottawa: 1874), Appendix H, pp. 174-198. As quoted in Adrian Kershaw and John Spittle, *The Bute Inlet Route: Alfred Waddington's Wagon Road, 1862-1864*, (Kelowna, B.C.: Okanagan College, 1978), p. 11.

²⁵¹Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, p. 15.

²⁵²*Smith Diaries*, Sunday, 21 July 1872, Add. Mss. 748, BCARS.

Smith in an otherwise faithful transcription of his earlier thoughts into a diary that presumably was intended for public consumption. One can assume that such remarks would only have served to disquiet certain Mainland interests -- particularly those of New Westminster and Yale -- so discretion was perhaps advisable.²⁵³

At the end of 1873 there were seven projected routes all of which were still at the exploratory stage of development. Yet of these seven, only two were given real attention by an anxiously awaiting public: No. 2 Burrard Inlet and No. 6 Bute Inlet. No. 2 was considered the main route through the Fraser Canyon and one of the most likely contenders for the transcontinental line. Yet in 1873, Sanford Fleming viewed the proposed course as "far from favourable" due to the "formidable difficulties" that would had to have been tackled on the Fraser and Thompson Canyons.²⁵⁴ The Bute Inlet Route also had obstacles to overcome, yet these were known, calculated difficulties since No. 6 had been surveyed instrumentally. Notwithstanding the problems posed, Sanford Fleming, and undoubtedly Marcus Smith, thought "that a practicable line, and even a favourable line, may be regarded as probable."²⁵⁵ As a result, Bute Inlet No. 6 presented the only favourable course in 1873. The extension by this route to Vancouver Island, however, was much more formidable. In particular, the elaborate plan called for bridging the Mainland, Valdez Group of islands, and Vancouver Island itself together as part of a 30 mile long fixed link that required

²⁵³See diary, 21 & 22 July 1872, pp. 270-271, *Smith Papers*, Add. Mss. 1496 (Reel A-856), BCARS. While at Clinton and 21 Mile House district, Marcus Smith once again scrutinized the banks of the Fraser and confessed to his field diary that a railway projected in this area would be "very costly to construct."

²⁵⁴Ibid.

²⁵⁵Ibid. For this route and those from No. 1 to No. 6 see Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, pp. 17-20.

seven clear span bridges over water channels in the Johnston Straits.²⁵⁶ Sanford Fleming believed that the magnitude of such construction was "not only formidable, but without precedent."²⁵⁷ Nevertheless, this route was not ruled out of the question in 1873, especially once Sir John A. Macdonald confirmed Esquimalt as the western terminus by Order in Council.²⁵⁸ Contrary to mainstream opinion, railway suspension bridge technology was well established by 1873. This is not to discount the obvious engineering difficulty of such a massive project, but merely to affirm that the preeminent factor raised against bridging the straits was on the question of cost, and not technical feasibility.²⁵⁹ Indeed, the reason that CPR surveys were extended

²⁵⁶Specifically, on the basis of surveys from 1872 and 1873, the following bridge sites were prescribed: clear span bridges of 1,100 feet at Arran Rapids; 1,350 feet at the first opening of Cardero Channel; 1,140 feet at the second opening of Cardero Channel; 640 feet at the third opening of Cardero Channel; 1,110 feet at the Middle Channel; 1,200 feet at the first opening of Seymour narrows; and lastly, 1,350 feet at the second opening of Seymour Narrows, the last two crossings would have utilized the infamous "Ripple Rock" as a base of support between the two spans. Cardero Channel does not appear on current government charts. It is supposedly derived from the draughtsman Josef Cordero of the Galiano expedition of 1792. See John T. Walbran, *British Columbia Coast Names* (Ottawa: Government Printer, 1909) reprinted (Vancouver: The Library Press, 1971), pp. 111-112. The passages that correspond to Fleming's description are Barber Passage, Gillard Passage, and Innes Passage that represent the first, second, and third openings respectively. The Middle Channel is undoubtedly Okisollo Channel that separates Sonora and Quadra Islands. See Quadra Island Maps 92K/3 and 92K/6 (Edition 2), Surveys and Mapping Branch, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Province of British Columbia, 1976.

²⁵⁷Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, p. 20. See "Letter from Mr. Waddington Re. Feasibility of Bridging the Railway to the Island," *British Colonist*, 27 January 1872, p. 3 and "Bridging the Narrows," *Colonist*, 10 February 1872, p. 3.

²⁵⁸Margaret A. Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, (Vancouver: MacMillan, 1971), p. 256.

²⁵⁹The famous engineer John Roebling built Niagara Suspension Bridge with a span of 821 feet in 1855. By 1867, Roebling planned to bridge the East River of New York with a span of almost 1600 feet. This idea was seen as both visionary and unpracticable, yet before Roebling's largest technological feat could be taken from the drawing board stage of development, and proved correct, he died. A board of consulting engineers later examined and confirmed the feasibility of such a project and subsequently the Brooklyn Bridge, at 1,595 feet, was built by 1883. See "The Roeblings and the Brooklyn Bridge" in David B. Steinman and Sara Ruth Watson, *Bridges and Their Builders*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), pp. 205-247. George Woodcock refers to the Bute Inlet route and the "audaciously designed bridge" to Vancouver Island in George Woodcock, *British Columbia: A History of the Province* (Vancouver & Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990), p. 154.

after 1871 to areas such as Bute Inlet, was quite simply due to the enormous expenditure required for rail construction in the Fraser Canyon.

Public opinion on the lower Mainland was quick to bolster its own particular interests by supporting any route that happened to end at Burrard Inlet. In June 1874, Marcus Smith noted to Sanford Fleming the state of popular opinion on the lower Mainland when he commented that "Mr. Cambie and John Trutch have been exploring some passes across the cascade mountains from the points between this & N. Westminster. These have been reported by the people of N. Westminster to be practicable but all of them turned out to the contrary. . . ." ²⁶⁰ In fact, Bute Inlet was almost chosen after the progress made in 1873; progress that undoubtedly contributed to Prime Minister Macdonald's decision to name Esquimalt the terminus and the subsequent application for a railway belt reserve -- from the southern portion of Vancouver Island to Seymour Narrows -- to be ceded to the federal government. ²⁶¹ Edgar Dewdney later claimed that the federal government request for the establishment of an Island railway belt to Seymour Narrows had not necessarily meant that Route No. 6 was the obvious final selection. In a speech to his electors of Cache Creek he suggested that:

It was thought by many that the action of the Dominion government, passing an order in council recommending that Esquimalt be made the

²⁶⁰Diary, 29 June 1874, *Smith Papers*, BCARS.

²⁶¹"I have the honor to enclose, for the information of your government, a copy of the Order of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, fixing Esquimalt, in Vancouver island, as the Terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and further deciding that **a line of railway be located between the Harbour of Esquimalt and Seymour Narrows on the said Island. . . .**" Secretary of State to Lieutenant Governor, 10 June 1873, No. 58, in B.C. Legislative Assembly, "Report on the Subject of the Mission of the Honourable Mr. Walkem. . . . to England with regard to the Non-fulfillment by Canada of the Railway Clause of the Terms of Union," (Victoria: Richard Wolfenden, Government Printer, 1875), Appendix E. NWP 971B/B 862re. BCARS. The emphasis is my own.

Terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, indicated pretty clearly that the Bute Inlet Route would be adopted. I felt it did not necessarily do so, for an application to Sir John Macdonald, a short time previously, he stated that the line from Victoria to Nanaimo, if built, would be common either to Bute Inlet or Fraser River Route. If the later was adopted, it could be connected by Ferry to Burrard Inlet.²⁶²

Dewdney was surely wrong though, and Sir John A. Macdonald perhaps conveniently forgetful. An approved Privy Council Report, 7 June 1873, stated clearly that the appropriation of the land "along the Eastern Coast of Vancouver Island, between Seymour Narrows and the Harbour of Esquimalt. . . . [was] in furtherance of **the construction of the said railway.**"²⁶³ The later attempt to construct the railway only to Nanaimo was the product of Liberal Leader Alexander MacKenzie's rise to power. From the Liberal Party's point of view, Macdonald's policy had quite obviously committed itself to Bute Inlet, the Island railway to Esquimalt, and ultimately the Seymour Narrows bridging scheme. A Privy Council Report, 13 March 1876, enunciated succinctly the former Conservative Party position:

By this policy, had it remained unreserved, the [Liberal] Government would have been obliged to provide for the construction of over 160 miles of railway on Vancouver Island, at a probable cost of over seven million five hundred thousand dollars; besides the building of a railway from the head of Bute Inlet and the bridging of the Narrows, a work supposed to be the most gigantic of its kind ever suggested, and estimated to cost over twenty-seven million and a half dollars.²⁶⁴

²⁶²Edgar Dewdney, M.P., "Speech on the Subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway," 1875, p. 8.

²⁶³The emphasis on construction is my own. See "Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council," 7 June 1873, in B.C. Legislative Assembly, "Mission of the Honourable Mr. Walkem," Appendix F.

²⁶⁴"Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council of Canada," 13 March 1876, in British Columbia Provincial Secretary, "Papers Relating to Certain Proposed Alterations by the Dominion Government in Existing Railway Agreements," (Victoria: Richard Wolfenden, Government Printer, 1877), p. 640. BCARS. NWp 971B/B 862po. Construction costs for the entire CPR line ultimately chosen can be found in Peter James George, *Government Subsidies and the Construction of*

Unquestionably, Macdonald's promises amounted to politics in balancing the sectional interests of the Island and lower Mainland, yet an overly cynical view in this regard is not necessarily in order. Others, like Amor De Cosmos, perhaps predictably, believed that the transcontinental line should have been treated as a thoroughly imperial concern with, presumably, a certain amount of imperial financing to allow for a much larger work. As federal member for Victoria City "he took it that this Government would make a very great mistake indeed if, for the paltry consideration of a few millions of dollars to-day, it should select the wrong route."²⁶⁵ This is perhaps the context in which Macdonald took the decision to make Esquimalt the terminus. It was announced in a government report, 17 September 1874, that "the Bute Inlet route seemed on the whole to be the best, but it is not unassociated with serious difficulties."²⁶⁶ The report further maintained that had an even more practicable route been located, as engineers had supposed it would in 1873, "it is probable that the Government might have been prepared at the end of this year to proceed with the exact location of the line."²⁶⁷ As a result work continued unabated on both competing lines and the interests associated with each remained vigilant. In

the Canadian Pacific Railway, (New York: Arno Press, 1981), Table II, p. 31.

²⁶⁵"Speech of Mr. De Cosmos on Selecting the Best Harbour in British Columbia for a Terminus of the Pacific Railway," Hansard Report, 28 February 1878, p. 7. BCARS. NWp 971B/D 296ss. De Cosmos' support in 1870 for Esquimalt as the Terminus was "much to the disgust of Robson, who regretted the sectionalism of the policy" in Margaret Ross, "Amor De Cosmos, A British Columbia Reformer," Masters Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1931, p. 136.

²⁶⁶"Report of the Privy Council," 17 September 1874, No. 111, in British Columbia, *Papers in Connection With the Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Between the Dominion, Imperial, and Provincial Governments*, (Victoria: Richard Wolfenden, Government Printer, 1880), p. 197.

²⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 198. "An opinion seems to be prevalent that the question of spanning the Seymour Narrows, is simply one of expense: Its feasibility no longer remaining in doubt. The plans of the [survey] party will in all probability be completed at Ottawa." See "Arrival of Gamsby's Coast Survey Party from Bute Inlet," *Standard*, 1 January 1873, p. 3.

June 1874, Marcus Smith embarked upon a pleasure trip to Seymour Narrows and adjacent islands in the company of James Douglas, Jr., and other such notables as Chief Justice Begbie. As far as Smith was concerned, he stated that on the basis of "what we saw yesterday I have no expectation that a line any better than that by Bute Inlet can be had. . . ." ²⁶⁸ James Douglas, Jr., later M.P.P. -- who was intimately connected with the interests of Victoria -- obviously agreed. ²⁶⁹ He judged the Fraser River Route to be a "tortuous" and "narrow rocky defile." After having perused Fleming's Report for 1874, the former Governor's son remarked that "We may consider this opinion as sealing not only the fate of the [southern] routes, but the doom of New Westminster and Burrard Inlet as the Pacific terminus." ²⁷⁰

Indeed, by 1876 the trial location survey was finished the entire distance from Yellow Head Pass to Waddington Harbour. Route No. 6 -- not the Fraser River line -- became the first fully staked-out course for a railway in British Columbia. In doing so, it elevated the Bute Inlet Route to a more formal status above all other routes in British Columbia that were still at the exploratory or instrumental stage.

Yet, five years had passed since Confederation with Canada and there were still no signs of actual railway construction. The province had become increasingly irritated by the federal government's slow progress in fulfilling Article Eleven of the Terms of Union. Secessionist pressure demanded that a decision be made soon. As a consequence, further exploration and surveys were halted in favour of evaluating

²⁶⁸ *Smith Papers*, diary, 3 June 1874.

²⁶⁹ Son of the former Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor and Governor of Vancouver Island (1851-1864) and British Columbia (1858-1864).

²⁷⁰ James Douglas, Jr., "Present Condition of the Survey of the Canadian Pacific Railway" in *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, XXXIII, (Toronto: Stevenson & Co., 1874), p. 243. BCARS. NWp 971B/D 734.

existing products of exploration. Eleven individual lines were assessed as to their unique engineering features and the commercial traffic they would have to sustain if chosen.²⁷¹ Federal authorities, however, in comparing the advantages and disadvantages of all eleven routes, were charged with a very difficult, if not impossible, task. Sufficient data was available for only one route -- that of Bute Inlet No. 6 -- so that in most instances this line served as the only real basis for comparison to all other routes. Perhaps this, in itself, illustrated the faith that many administrators had in the Bute Inlet line at this juncture in CPR operations.²⁷²

Yet Fleming, without any comparable data for other competing routes, confidently asserted that "there can scarcely be a doubt as to Route No. 2, terminating at Burrard Inlet, being the best." By contrast, Bute Inlet No. 6 was set as the fourth best route, yet with no additional elucidation. This seems odd considering that so little evidence had been established for Route No. 2. It is even more curious when one considers that all the time and expense of completing a formal location survey on Bute No. 6 could have been postponed and a simple examination of the route conducted in the same way that Fleming re-examined Burrard No. 2. Fleming, in the absence of hard facts, undoubtedly based his assumption on the single fact that No. 2 was shorter. If this was the case, then No. 6 certainly did not require an expensive location line to determine that it was some 53 miles longer.²⁷³

²⁷¹Ibid., p. 58.

²⁷²In addition, a large fire in Ottawa had destroyed the CPR Chief Engineer's Office in 1874, and all plans and profiles were also destroyed with the exception of Marcus Smith's Reports for the years 1872 and 1873. These, fortunately, had been placed in a fireproof safe. This information was not replaced by 1876, but estimates were, nevertheless, offered by Sanford Fleming on the basis of what little data remained. See diary, 26 January 1874, pp. 281-282, *Smith Papers*.

²⁷³The routes were given the following order of priority: No. 2 -- 1st, then in descending order No.s 8, 9, 6, 4, 1, and 3. Ibid. 63.

Evidence of the Bute Inlet scheme having fallen into disfavour is also suggested by the Canadian government's application to the Admiralty for particular information on B.C.'s coastal waters. The "principal naval officers" who had some familiarity with the province's harbours were invited to comment on the suitability of nine terminal points selected on the Mainland. Esquimalt, on Vancouver Island, was noticeably excluded from this survey. Of essential importance was that the terminus was desired to be as close as possible to Asiatic trade. The distances from Yokohama, Japan to each individual port-site in B.C. were compared. Waddington Harbour, being so centrally located from either Queen Charlotte or Juan De Fuca Straits, placed last.²⁷⁴ The real strategy behind the Bute Inlet Route, of course, was the ultimate plan of bridging the Valdez Group of islands so that Esquimalt could be made the terminus. Esquimalt, since it was located off the Strait of Juan De Fuca, was obviously positioned more favourably than Burrard Inlet for the reception of Asian trade. The importance seen in establishing a terminus on Juan De Fuca at this time was not based on Victoria's desire to compete with New Westminster so much as it was the need for the Canadian transcontinental line to be able to successfully challenge the commercial supremacy of its American counterpart that ended at the waters of Puget Sound.²⁷⁵ This commercial goal was fully delineated as early as

²⁷⁴The terminal points were ranked as follows: Port Essington -- 3,868 miles; Triumph Bay, Gardner Inlet -- approximately 3,983; Kamsquot, Dean Inlet -- 4,079; Bella Coola -- 4,080; North Bentinck Arm -- 4,086; English Bay, Burrard Inlet -- 4,336; Port Moody, Burrard Inlet -- 4,356; Howe Sound -- 4,372; and Waddington Harbour, Bute Inlet -- 4,470. See *Ibid.*, p. 66.

²⁷⁵For a general description of the building of the Northern Pacific Railroad see "Profile: Henry Villard and the Last Spike," in Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 139-147. For some of the railroad's effects on Washington State see Robert E. Ficken and Charles P. Le Warne, *Washington: A Centennial History*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1989), Ch. IV, pp. 49-67.

1872 by the Honourable Hector L. Langevin, member of the Conservative government at Ottawa. In a reply to a question posed by Amor De Cosmos in Parliament, on the future of railway lands, the federal minister acknowledged:

. . . that the Northern Pacific Railway ended at Puget Sound, and the competition which that line will make with the Canadian Pacific Railway renders it desirable to select a terminus that will put us in the best possible position for competition with American railways. If it should be decided that we can cross Seymour Narrows or Johnston's Straits with a railway train, there can be no doubt that the interests of British Columbia and the Dominion as a whole will be better served by adopting that route.²⁷⁷

Of major concern was that American business interests had also contemplated a possible rail extension of their railroad to a point on the Straits of Juan De Fuca at either Port Angeles or Holmes Harbour on the eastern shore of Whidbey Island.²⁷⁸ If the United States of America were eventually to extend their rail system to Juan De Fuca, then Canada would also have to follow suit. This option, of course, necessitated the adoption of Bute Inlet No. 6 -- the only route that could have possibly allowed for a future Island-Mainland rail connection.

Of the five opinions received from the Admiralty with respect to harbours, four favoured Burrard Inlet and only one declared for Waddington Harbour. Commander Pender was quite direct in his support for Burrard Inlet and discounted the head of Bute Inlet as an "indifferent anchorage." Others, such as Admiral Farquhar, qualified

²⁷⁷"Extracts from the Canadian Parliamentary Debates," 28 May 1872, Session V, in Amor De Cosmos, *Island Railway Papers*, p. 1. BCARS. NW 971B/D 296/c. 5. Also see "Harbours of B.C.," *Standard*, 1 January 1873, p. 3 that noted Langevin's advisement of the bridging of Seymour Narrows.

²⁷⁸William Tolmie specifically outlined that this plan "proposed to bring the railway, by a long circuit, north to opposite Fidalgo Island, and on to Holme's Harbor, which was, by a short ship canal, to be connected to Admiralty Inlet, the straight, and comparatively safe, southern furcation of de Fuca Strait." See William Fraser Tolmie's lengthy comparison between routes No. 2 and No. 6 in "The Western Route and the Terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway," 1877. BCARS. NW 97B/T 652.

their support. Bute Inlet, he believed, to be "more difficult of access" than Burrard or Howe Sound, yet he concluded, "if it were practicable to bridge Seymour Narrows, the railway might be continued to a point on the south or west side of Vancouver [Island]." None of Vancouver Island's harbours were offered as options though, as previously noted. Admiral Richards was almost quizzical in his support for Burrard Inlet when he replied that "a practicable route, with an inferior water terminus might be preferable to an almost impracticable route attended with enormous expense and a good terminus, such as Burrard Inlet."²⁷⁹

The fate of Bute Inlet No. 6 was inextricably tied to the federal commitment for an Island Railway extension. The fact that Canadian authorities were still hesitant in 1877 to name Burrard Inlet No. 2 as the final route was extra proof that very valid considerations were taken into account before the Island extension was finally dismissed. Sanford Fleming admitted as much in his most complete Report of that year:

If it be important to carry an unbroken line of railway to one or more of the harbours on the western coast of Vancouver Island, **and there is a likelihood that this project will, regardless of cost, hereafter be seriously entertained**, then Route No. 6 becomes the only one open for selection.²⁸⁰

This point of view was further bolstered by the formidable reputation of Rear Admiral Algernon de Horsey, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Station of Her Majesty's fleet

²⁷⁹Captain Cator was the only naval authority solicited who supported Bute Inlet at this time and noted as part of his reason that Route No. 2 was too close to the U.S.A. in case of hostilities. For this and the above naval opinions see "Observations and queries by Mr. Sanford Fleming, Chief Engineer of the CPR, relating to the question of a site for the Terminus. . . ." Submitted to the Admiralty, London, December 1876. See Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, pp. 296-299.

²⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 69. The emphasis is my own.

based at Esquimalt. De Horsey was against the selection of Burrard Inlet. He believed that a southern line would be open to possible overland attack from the United States, and therefore, presented a security risk.²⁸¹ Why the Commander-in-Chief was not consulted earlier as part of Fleming's original enquiries to the Admiralty was, indeed, rather curious. DeHorsey's despatch to London naval authorities was not prepared until late in October of 1877 once the official CPR Report was undoubtedly completed, yet one would certainly have thought his opinion to be the most important of all. In a confidential letter of the same year, and approximately one month after the Rear Admiral's independent communication to London, J.S. Helmcken wrote to a colleague that:

. . . the Canadian Government for some reason or other, mean to ignore it, and to allow as little as possible of its advantages to be made public - - preferring to be governed by their own political or other bias in favour of the Fraser River route. . . rather than be guided by the results of scientific explorations of scientific men -- results which lead to the conclusion that Bute Inlet is by far the most advantageous point to touch salt water. . .".²⁸²

The "scientific men" to which Helmcken quite probably referred were those such as Marcus Smith and Rear Admiral de Horsey who supported the Bute Inlet Route, and, as officials in the most senior positions of authority -- in addition to being resident in the province -- were perhaps, well suited to form an opinion on the best route that a railway should take. Perhaps though, Marcus Smith had become too close to

²⁸¹Sanford Fleming, *Reports and Documents in Reference to the Location of the Line and a Western Terminal Harbour*, (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & Co., 1878), p. 10. De Horsey's opinion on the inferior security offered by the Burrard Inlet location is noted in Barry M. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914: A Study in Maritime Ascendancy*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), p. 221.

²⁸²John Sebastian Helmcken to A. Munroe, Private and Confidential, 28 December 1877. BCARS. Add. Mss. 505/Vol. 2, C.O.

Victoria's aspirations to take an objective view of the Pacific railway question. His closest friends in the province were those associated with Victoria and the Bute Inlet route: Of George Anthony Walkem, premier and representative of the Cariboo District, the resident engineer stated that "our friendship was enduring;" likewise, Dr. Helmcken's friendship "to this day, after twenty four years [he claimed], continues unabated;" and the friend who proved to be "the greatest of all" was the Island patriot Sir James Douglas.²⁸³ De Horsey, by comparison, claimed that the strength in his opinion was attributable to the disinterested stance of a naval officer "who from his position, must be totally disconnected from all local interests."²⁸⁴ De Horsey, like the majority of his naval colleagues, ruled against Bute Inlet proper.²⁸⁵ In fact, de Horsey was also against any immediate bridging of Seymour Narrows, and favoured instead the extension of Route No. 6 around the north side of Bute Inlet to Frederick Arm and then by ferry to Vancouver Island.²⁸⁶ This apparent compromise to the expensive nature of bridging the Valdez Group was later dismissed by Fleming himself, and in a lengthy summation to the "Battle of the Routes" he offered his somewhat contradictory, but nevertheless -- final word:

²⁸³*Smith Papers*, diary, 11 June 1872, p. 259.

²⁸⁴"Report of Admiral de Horsey respecting Canadian Pacific Railway Terminus," Esquimalt, B.C., 26 October 1877, in Fleming, *Location of the Line*, 1878, p. 68.

²⁸⁵"Report by Mr. Marcus Smith, Acting Engineer-in-Chief, on the Surveys and Explorations with Reference to the Location of the Western Section of the Line," 29 March 1878, Appendix D. p. 50 in *Ibid*. Also see Admiral de Horsey, 26 October 1877, pp. 66-67.

²⁸⁶This was in keeping with an alternative plan proposed in the 1877 Fleming Report that utilized the work of Marcus Smith's 1875 explorations. The deputy engineer-in-chief after personal inspection of these waters stated that "a steamboat properly constructed could take a railway train on board and pass safely at all seasons of the year from any convenient point on Bute Inlet to a good landing on Vancouver's Island near Seymour Narrows." See Report on the Surveys in British Columbia During the year 1875, By Marcus Smith" in Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, Appendix I, p. 162. Also see *Smith Papers*, diary, 29 October 1875, p. 289 where it is noted that Smith used a canoe to personally inspect Nodales Channel north of Quadra Island.

Burrard Inlet is not so eligible a terminal point as Esquimalt. It cannot be approached from the ocean, except by navigation more or less intricate. Nor can it be reached by large sea-going ships without passing at no great distance from a group of islands [San Juans] in the possession of a foreign power, which at any time may assume a hostile attitude. . . . It is evident that, even were the wide channels at the Valdez Islands bridged the Railway carried to Esquimalt would present no advantage in time or cost to an ordinary traveller. . . . even by leaving a gap near the Valdez Islands of 15 miles [Nodales Channel], and substituting a ferry for the enormously costly bridging at that locality, the excess would probably reach \$15,000,000 or \$20,000,000. The cost of maintenance would be great in proportion, and the annual losses on working the extra mileage would, under the peculiar circumstances, be serious. . . Upon carefully reviewing the engineering features of each route, and weighing every commercial consideration, I am forced to the conclusion that . . . the line to Vancouver Island should, for the present, be rejected, and that the Government should select the route by the Rivers Thompson and Fraser to Burrard Inlet.²⁸⁷

The conspicuous question to be asked here, is what happened in government circles between 1877 and 1878 that caused Fleming to dismiss the Island link altogether after having previously suggested in 1877 that there was "a likelihood that this project will, regardless of cost, hereafter be seriously entertained."²⁸⁸

This was, of course, the period in which British Columbia threatened to secede from the Canadian Confederation on no less than three separate occasions due to the federal government's contravention of the Terms of Union.²⁸⁹ In the early days of

²⁸⁷Fleming, *Location of the Line*, 1878, pp. 13-14. After eight years of searching, the federal government was obviously anxious to come to some decision. Consequently, the Northern routes and the rather exceptional Pine River Pass were precluded from any further examination. See Sanford Fleming, *Report in Reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway*, (Ottawa: Maclean, Roger & Co., 1879), p. 17.

²⁸⁸Fleming, *Report on Surveys*, 1877, p. 74.

²⁸⁹Although a piece of scholarship somewhat plagued by the "documentary determinism" of newspaper usage, Margaret Ormsby's "The Spoilt Child of Confederation" in *British Columbia: A History*, pp. 259-292, still provides the best overview of the period of secessionist-politics, although from a blatantly Anti-Bute Inlet perspective. Recent histories of the province, such as Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) and George Woodcock, *British Columbia: A History of the Province* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1990) have not provided anything new for those interested in the formative years of B.C.'s early provincial political period.

the secession debate both the Island and Mainland acted in concert for the demand of a proper fulfillment of Article XI. Once the debate devolved into a contest between sectional interests centred on the particular routes of No. 2 and No. 6, the united call for separation, as a bargaining tool, was effectively split. The MacKenzie government, according to Edgar Dewdney "was battling for the advantages for the Mainland, while Mr. Walkem was doing what he could to delay any works in that section of the Province."²⁹⁰ The lower Mainland, as a consequence, was ready to give-up the course of separation once it was assured that Burrard Inlet would become the terminus. Conversely, most of the Island and the Cariboo District, continued the secessionist threat, but it really no longer had the same degree of influence over the federal government without the other half of the province in league. John Robson had suggested to Prime Minister MacKenzie an effective tactic to quell the strength of the Carnarvon Club separatists on Vancouver Island. In a letter dated 27 September 1876, Robson offered that:

Should this turbulent spirit continue in Victoria, I think a quiet intimation that the Island might be permitted to drop out and resume the position of a Crown Colony, the Mainland of course, remaining to the Confederacy, would operate as a cure. On the mainland a very decided opinion against Victoria bluster about separation is growing up. . . . I have reason to believe that a proposition to let the Island out and establish the seat of Government on the Mainland, from where it should never have been removed, would be regarded very favourably in that section.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰Dewdney, *Speech on the Subject of the Canadian Pacific Railway*, 1875, p. 28.

²⁹¹John Robson to Alexander Mackenzie, 27 September 1876, *Alexander Mackenzie Papers*, PAC. MG 26/B 1, Reels M-198 & M-199 as quoted in Antak, "John Robson: British Columbian," M.A. Thesis, pp. 118-119. This tactic was reported by Robson in "*Earl Dufferin's Address*," *Colonist*, 23 September 1876, p. 2.

The Honourable Robert Beaven referred to the dominion government's reappraisal of the B.C. political climate when he stated that they had "discovered the weak points" of support in British Columbia and had worked on these "regional jealousies" to the province's disadvantage.²⁹² As a result, when Victoria, the Cariboo, and Carnarvon Club members in general, next cried secession on behalf of a divided province, the visiting federal representative, Governor General Lord Dufferin, simply employed Robson's advice that had been quite obviously communicated through Alexander Mackenzie.²⁹³ This is not what Victoria wanted to hear, but Canada had no intention of losing the Mainland portion of the province, whereas the Island, if it persisted in its temerarious ways, was perhaps expendable.

After having confirmed Bute Inlet as the chosen route -- while at the same time suggesting that the Island portion of the railway would be postponed indefinitely -- Dufferin alluded to the Canadian Government's strategy for killing the secessionist threat to Canada. As a veiled warning to the Carnarvon Club and opposition politicians, Dufferin predicted that:

. . . should hasty counsels and the exhibition of an impracticable spirit throw these arrangements into confusion, interrupt or change our present railway programme, and necessitate any re-arrangement of your political relations, I fear Victoria would be the chief sufferer. . . . a certain number of your fellow-citizens, gentlemen, . . . have sought to impress me with the belief that if the Legislature of Canada is not compelled by some means or other, which, however, they do not specify, to make forthwith these seventy miles of railway, they will be strong enough, in the face of Mr. Mackenzie's offer of a money equivalent, to take British Columbia out of Confederation. Well, they certainly won't

²⁹²"Great Railway Meeting Last Night," *Colonist*, 20 September 1876, p. 3.

²⁹³See Frederick W. Howay, *British Columbia: The Making of a Province* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1928), pp. 205-206.

be able to do that. . . When once the main line of the Pacific Railway is under way, the whole population of the Mainland would be perfectly contented with the present situation of affairs, and will never dream of detaching their fortunes from those of Her Majesty's great Dominion. Nay, I don't believe that these gentlemen would be able to persuade their fellow citizens even of the Island of Vancouver to so violent a course; but granting for the moment that their influence should prevail -- what would be the result? British Columbia would still be part and parcel of Canada. The great work of Confederation would not be perceptibly affected, **but the proposed line of the Pacific Railway might possibly be deflected south.** New Westminster would certainly become the capital of the Province, The Dominion would naturally use its best endeavours to build it up into a flourishing and prosperous city. It would be the seat of Government, and the home of justice, as well as the chief social centre on the Pacific coast. Burrard Inlet would become a great commercial port. . . . Nanaimo would become the principal town of the Island, and Victoria would lapse for many a long year into a condition of a village. . . ²⁹⁴

Bute Inlet No. 6 was the superior scheme, and the federal government was prepared to decide in its favour, but the "battle of the routes" contest had become so fever-pitched as to threaten Confederation itself. The Walkem-Beaven governments had become so adept at using Carnarvon Club demands for their own political gain, demands that were successfully presented to the Imperial authorities, that the Canadian government was prepared to fashion a new political alliance with the lower Mainland portion of British Columbia if secessionist sentiment continued to grow. And grow it did, as by the time of Lord Dufferin's vice regal visit to Victoria, the separation call dominated provincial politics completely through the persistent actions of the Carnarvon Club. Dufferin's mission was, of course, to lend a sympathetic ear to B.C. railway complaints, and in so doing, neutralize the extreme flavour of the province's secessionist demands. Yet upon arriving in Victoria, Dufferin declined an

²⁹⁴Molyneux St. John, *The Sea of Mountains: An Account of Lord Dufferin's Tour Through British Columbia In 1876*, Vol. II, pp. 215-217. The emphasis is my own.

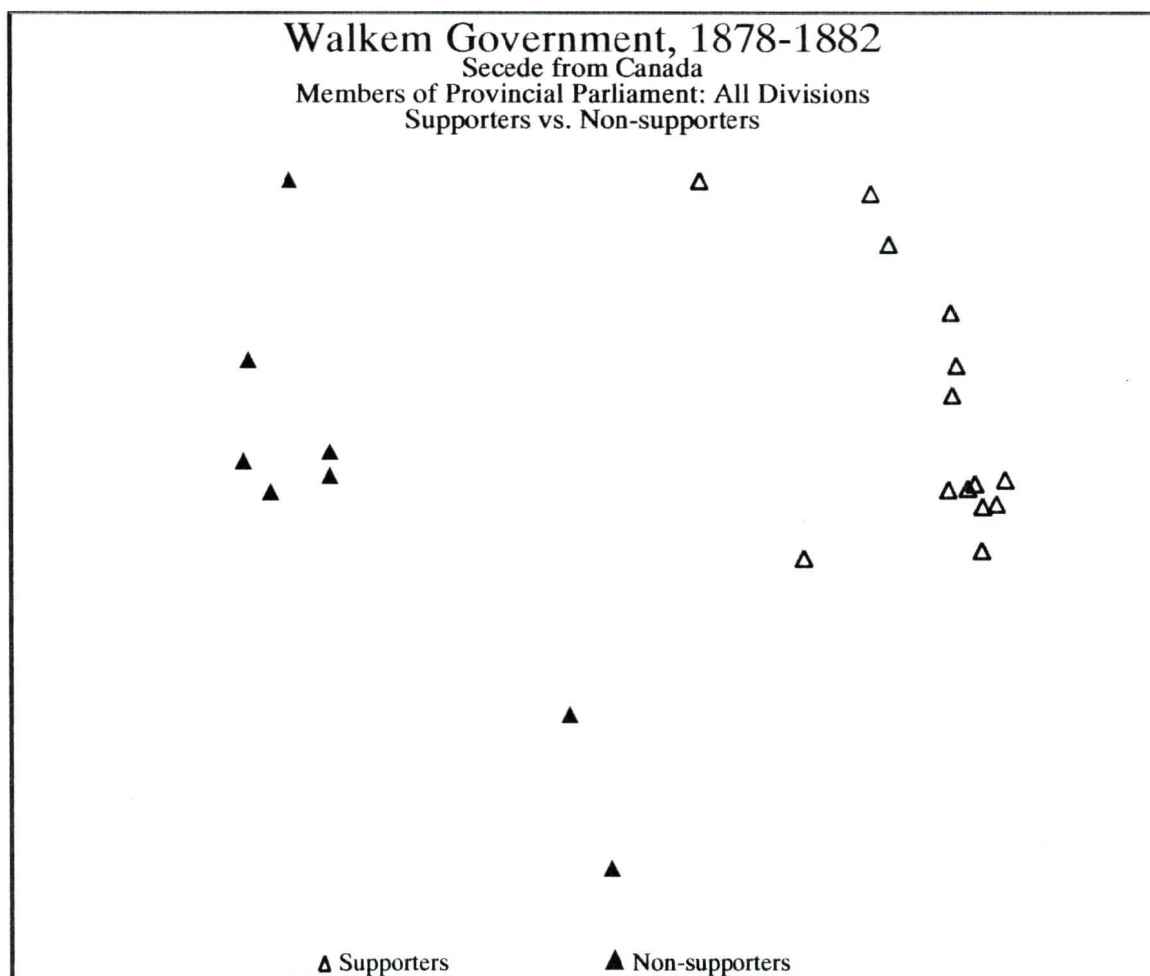


Figure 20.

address prepared by a large public meeting which outlined railway grievances, refused to recognize publicly the legitimate constitutional complaints of Victoria, and would only meet with a Carnarvon Club deputation privately in which the Robson-card was played that the Island could leave Canada, but would not take the Mainland with it. Not suprisingly, this threat was not heeded by the Carnarvon Club, nor opposition M.P.P.s.

Upon winning the third general election in 1878, Walkem and other pro-Carnarvon colleagues immediately passed the famous secession petition to Queen

Victoria which threatened to pull British Columbia out of the Canadian Confederation.²⁹⁵ Figure 20 illustrates most clearly that it was the secessionist politics born of "The Battle of the Routes" that divided the legislature into two distinct camps, the Walkem "party" (right-side) being the strongest until William Smithe's ascent to power in 1883.²⁹⁶ As with all other maps of similarity in this study, all recorded divisions have been used for this analysis, and in Figure 20, M.P.P.s have simply been recoded as either supporters or non-supporters of secession from Canada as recorded in the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, 30 August 1878.

The truly bizarre aspect of this political manouvering was the fact that the Governor General's original instructions were to have publicly proclaimed the federal government's support for the Bute Inlet Route, and thus end the "Carnarvon Terms or Separation" imbroglio. David W. Higgins, owner-editor of the *British Colonist* and a later speaker of the B.C. Legislature, recalled the political events of the day for historian R.E. Gosnell. Higgins claimed that:

When Lord Dufferin left Ottawa for Victoria it was semi-officially announced in the papers that he was the bearer of a proclamation that would decide the contest in favour of Bute Inlet and Esquimalt. This dispatch, according to Lieutenant Governor Trutch, was sent from Government House to the Provincial Secretary's office by an official messenger and was handed, so the messenger reported, to the Provincial Secretary. From that day to this the dispatch has not been seen. It never reached the public eye. Who destroyed it if it were destroyed, who secreted it if it were secreted, who lost it if it were lost, will never be known. The parties are all dead. Lord Dufferin always denied all knowledge of its fate, although it was admitted that His Excellency handed the dispatch to the Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor said he personally delivered it to the messenger.

²⁹⁵See *Journals of the Legislative Assembly*, VII, 30 August 1878, pp. 109-110.

²⁹⁶Figure 20 is reproduced from graphics file G6RAIL.EPS and based on M.P.P. voting records contained in SPSS-X file G6.DAT.

The Provincial Secretary and the Premier were equally emphatic in asserting that it never came into their hands. Nine years ago Sir Joseph Trutch told the writer that the proclamation adopting the Bute Inlet route was carefully read by him and that he gave it to the messenger himself. He added that its disappearance was as profound a mystery to him as it was to Lord Dufferin.²⁹⁷

One can only assume, that if the Higgin's story is true, then the Governor General must have been instructed to gage the strength of the separation movement and act accordingly. In this case, planned federal strategy called for a railway policy that divided the province, and in doing so, ultimately conquered the factional interests and secessionist sentiment of the "spoilt child of Confederation." By selecting the Fraser Canyon route, Canada was kept whole from sea to sea. Vancouver Island was not needed as a western entrepot, nor was the Island essential to the larger Canadian dream.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷David W. Higgins account of B.C. political history as found in R.E. Gosnell, *A History of British Columbia* (Victoria, B.C.: Hill Binding Co., 1906), pp. 130-131. In the 1960s, Mrs. Inez O'Reilly discovered a secret compartment in Sir Joseph Trutch's desk which was purchased by the O'Reilly Family and displayed at Point Ellice House. Apparently, a letter from John A. Macdonald to Trutch was found in which the Canadian Prime Minister advised the Lieutenant Governor on aspects of B.C. politics. One wonders what other documents this desk may have once contained.

²⁹⁸In the end, neither Smith's nor Fleming's work was utilized. In 1880, the government transferred all operations for the CPR to a private concern that employed the American Major Rogers as engineer in charge of finding a southern pass to replace the Yellow Head. In doing so, ten years of work, at a cost of millions of dollars, was thrown aside and a southern route with little exploration was projected through the Rocky Mountains -- a route which by Fleming's standards was totally "impracticable." See Dominion Statutes, 1882, chapter 53, as quoted in F.W. Howay, *British Columbia: From Earliest Times to Present*, III, (Montreal: S.J. Clarke, 1914), p. 423. See also Keith Morris, *The Story of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (London: William Stevens, 1916), p. 34.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: THE SPOILT CHILD OF CONFEDERATION

. . . Sir John A. Macdonald had proved himself no more willing than Mackenzie to champion the special claims of Vancouver Island. For a while he had tried to mollify Walkem and de Cosmos, but they had had too many whims, and he finally concluded that they were too introverted to advance his cause of an expanding Canadian nationality. No more than Mackenzie could he permit British Columbia, an integral part of Canada, to act as if it were dealing with a foreign government. The outlet on the Pacific he needed; but he was sure, particularly after 1882 when heavy immigration into the province began, that this would be secured for him by new settlers . . . the people who would liberate the Mainland from the political and economic domination of Vancouver Island.

-- MARGARET A. ORMSBY²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹Margaret Ormsby's conclusion to Chapter X, "The Spoilt Child of Confederation," in *British Columbia: A History*, p. 292.

What political domination did Vancouver Island wield over the Mainland? Having been essentially annexed to the Crown Colony of British Columbia, and then awarded only twelve of the twenty-five seats in the new provincial legislature, it is difficult to see how Islanders ever thwarted the aspirations of Mainland British Columbia. In fact, an Island M.P.P. more often than not was speaker of the house, thus effectively yielding the Mainland a majority of two. Indeed, the roll-call analysis provided by this thesis-study confirms -- in opposition to all previous authorities -- that an "Island vs. Mainland" legislative alignment did not exist between the years 1871-1883, nor do "maps of similarity" produced for the years 1883 to 1906 suggest any such alignment. Instead, prior to political parties and at least before 1883, the major cause of legislative alignment in B.C. was issue-oriented politics as determined by the terms of union contract of Confederation. More particularly, such issue-oriented cleavage was a manifestation of the politics of region and thus local interest, as opposed to alignments based on ideological polarization. Both the Tariff and railway issues emanated from the British Columbia-Canada union, a union entered into as two equal and independent partners. It may seem odd to us today to think that Walkem and De Cosmos had treated Canada as a foreign government, yet that is essentially how Canada was perceived at this time. Although Australia, New Zealand, India and other former colonies were also once part of the British Empire, it is easier for historians to view them as separate foreign countries today simply because they did in fact evolve into separate nation states. Yet they were once separate colonies on the stage of empire along with both British Columbia and Canada.

With the intervening land mass of the Northwest Territories having separated B.C. from Canada with a comparable distance to that of New Zealand and Australia, or Australia and India, it is not too difficult to imagine the kind of mind-set of nineteenth-century British Columbians which compelled them to view Canadians as uniquely different as New Zealanders, Australians, or Indians proper. The fact that four colonies on the eastern side of British North America banded together in 1867 and called themselves Canada could hardly have impressed British Columbians that this group somehow represented a senior and all powerful dominion. If Canada is viewed in this way, the "fight Ottawa" period of provincial politics makes a little more sense.

Why is it then, that Margaret Ormsby and most other historians of B.C. referred to British Columbia as the "spoilt child of Confederation"? Clearly, the forgoing thesis chapters conclusively demonstrate that the entrance of the United Colony of British Columbia into the Canadian Confederation was not without certain economic, social and political disadvantages. As we have seen, the introduction of the Canadian system of tariffs to the former British colony appeared to signal the demise of a fledgling agricultural industry. B.C., as a Canadian province, was no longer able to foster agricultural settlement once proper protection was eliminated. The west coast economies of Washington, Oregon and more particularly California, flooded the market with cheap agricultural exports that devastated local farmers. Canadian railway policy also had deleterious effects on British Columbian society, politics, and ultimately the economy too. By continually building up and pulling down hopes of regional prosperity through railway development, Ottawa excited Victoria, New Westminster and other local interests against each other far more dramatically than

was ever witnessed during the days of the two rival colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The lower Mainland may have won the "battle of the routes" at the expense of Vancouver Island, but as has been shown of late, the promised railway when finally completed offered British Columbia only a discriminatory freight rate that effectively prevented B.C. manufactures from penetrating the coveted markets of central Canada.³⁰⁰ As a consequence, local secondary industry met the same fate as agriculture; the Terms of Union contract and CPR effectively transformed a small colony of enterprising individuals and made them into the real "hewers of wood and drawers of water" essential to the Canadian dream.

The infant province of British Columbia was not the "spoilt child of Confederation", as Ormsby maintains, but a new country attempting to retain some amount of control over its destiny while often caught between Imperial and Canadian powers that forced the young province into an essentially resource-based economy. Many nineteenth-century British Columbians would have agreed with English lawyer and novelist Kinahan Cornwallis who proclaimed, thirteen years before Confederation, that British Columbia -- "the country of our El Dorado" -- had tremendous settlement potential and that "For Canada to exercise surveillance over it would be at once fettering and obnoxious."³⁰¹

Advocates of the "staples theory" generally agree that Confederation was a form of "Internal Colonization" or more particularly:

³⁰⁰See John Lutz, "Losing Steam: The Boiler and Engine Industry as an Index of British Columbia's Deindustrialization, 1880-1915" in *Historical Papers* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1988), pp. 168-208.

³⁰¹Kinahan Cornwallis, "The Future Government of British Columbia" in *The New El Dorado; Or, British Columbia* (London: Thomas Cautley Newby, 1858) reprinted New York: Arno Press, 1973, pp. 138-140.

. . . a series of regional policies that ensured that the West would become a captive of Central Canadian capital. It would be a frontier for Central Canadian investment, a market for eastern manufacturers, and a source of consumers for the commercial trades of the St. Lawrence merchants.³⁰²

Even the Imperial government had awarded B.C. the right to make certain local decisions such as setting its own tariff rates, whereas Ottawa's policy was restrictive and self-centred. If a comparison is made between British Columbia and the American Pacific Northwest, the effect of two different national policies on west coast settlement illustrates most aptly the effect of the Central Canadian scheme. The latest census for 1981 recorded approximately 2.7 million people residing in British Columbia while just south of the border, in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, 7.5 million people live in an area about 68 percent the size of our province.³⁰³ If British Columbia advanced a "fight Ottawa" strategy during the 1870s and 1880s it was not always in an attempt to extract local gain at the expense of Canada as a whole. To the contrary, the preoccupation of B.C. provincial politics with "The Terms, the Whole Terms, and nothing but the Terms" was the realization by many M.P.P.s that local adjustment to Canadian Confederation would also bring uncertain success for the future. Unfortunately, through a kind of "documentary determinism," historians have chosen either to neglect the importance of British Columbia's period of secessionist politics or at best mock the people and politicians who felt that Canada had dealt them a severe blow.

³⁰²Janine Brodie, "Internal Colonization" in *The Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), pp. 100-105.

³⁰³For statistics on British Columbia see "Table 5: British Columbia Population by Ethnic Origin, 1871-1981", Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*, p. 365. For similar figure for the Pacific Northwest region see "Table 4: State Populations, 1980" in Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretative History*, pp. 387-389.

If any label can be fixed to the entire political period of 1871-1883, it is not "Island vs. Mainland", or "Period of Beginnings" and "Fight Ottawa" together, but rather a label that takes into account B.C.'s struggle to adapt to the Canadian Terms of Union contract.

APPENDIX A

PROCEDURES USED IN ROLL CALL ANALYSIS

Those who endeavor to research the non-party history of British Columbia will encounter many difficulties associated with the lack of primary sources for M.P.P.s who participated in legislative assemblies prior to 1903. Of the fifteen premiers who governed the province between 1871-1903, the political lives of only four have been examined in detail. Of the one hundred and eighty-six politicians who represented British Columbians between these years, exceedingly few are described amongst the pages of the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. As with other biographical compendia, short sketches generally explain the careers of only a few special individuals, and usually little is offered with respect to the legislative stances held. Newspapers also offer limited coverage. While the speeches of certain politicians in British Columbia were faithfully reported, others were perhaps ignored. Certainly some M.P.P.s commanded greater attention within the house by monopolizing question period, whereas others were perhaps content to sit silently in anticipation of the recorded vote. Obviously, not all M.P.P.s were as forceful in their expression of ideas and defence of legislative positions. The newspapers of the period reflected this imbalance by according a greater number of column inches to those talkative supporters of the newsprint agenda. Likewise, manuscript collections survive for only a fraction of our early pioneer legislators. Recorded votes, however, are plentiful and available for all legislators concerned. Through the systematic collection of votes for all M.P.P.s on all issues of the day, an impressive body of data can be assembled in which to conduct a quantitative analysis that will provide a clearer understanding of

M.P.P. positions than is possible with standard historical source materials.

The statistical tools used to analyze such data can now be employed with relative ease. This particular study used the PROXIMITIES and ALSCAL functions contained in the software package *SPSS-X*. The command "MEASURE = SM(1,2)" instructed PROXIMITIES to compute simple matching coefficients from M.P.P. voting records contained in data files for each of fifteen premierships from 1871 to 1903.³⁰⁴ In creating the data files, a politician's response on a recorded division was translated into numeric form in the following way: 0 = Speaker of Legislature, 1 = Yea, 2 = Nay, 3 = Absent, 4 = Vacant seat, 5 = Death, and 6 = Non-member. Using the indicators for "Yea" and "Nay" within each case, PROXIMITIES then constructs a 2 X 2 contingency table for each possible pair of legislators in order to calculate measures of similarity amongst all M.P.P.s. A 2 X 2 contingency table for roll-call analysis is designed as follows:

		Legislator B	
		YEA	NAY
Legislator A	YEA	a	b
	NAY	c	d

³⁰⁴Important Note: In *SPSS-X*, the standard computer command "MEASURE=SM(1,2)" compares dissimilarities rather than similarities among M.P.P.s. This important difference is not fully described in the "Proximities" chapter of the *SPSS-X* manual. Consequently, long hours of trial and error finally confirmed that "similarity" data was not being plotted on the supposed "maps of similarity." To correct the above command, the following was added: MEASURE=SM(1,2) REVERSE RESCALE. This simply instructs *SPSS-X* to reverse the operation of dissimilarity comparison and instead match similarity among M.P.P.s.

Similarity measures are calculated for values a, b, c, and d when PROXIMITIES compares the voting responses of a pair of M.P.P.s over a series of issues in which divisions of the legislative assembly were recorded. When two politicians have both voted "Yea", then this matched response is tallied in the a-cell of the 2 X 2 table. When both have voted "Nay", then the match is recorded in d-cell. If legislators have voted against each other, either "Yea-Nay" or "Nay-Yea", then these non-matches are entered into b-cell or c-cell accordingly. For instance, if Premier Walkem voted Y,Y,N,N,Y, and opposition leader William Smithe voted N,N,Y,Y,N then the following values are derived:

		Legislator: WALKEM	
		YEA	NAY
Legislator: SMITHE	YEA	0	2
	NAY	3	0

These values are then used in conjunction with the *simple matching similarity formula* which is a kind of Jaccard's coefficient. The formula reads as follows:

$$SM(x,y) = (a + d)/(a + b + c + d)$$

This formula computes the ratio of the number of matches to the total number of paired responses. If the above matched data is applied to this formula then:

$$SM(x,y) = (0 + 0)/(0 + 3 + 0 + 2)$$

In this case a match of 0/5, shows that the two political players are completely dissimilar. Obviously, if two legislators always voted "Yea" or "Nay" together then a-cell and d-cell would record the results and the above formula would score a perfect 1, thus signifying complete similarity. In the case of the B.C. legislature, pairs of politicians range from 0 to 1 and all the subtle shading of differences in between.

Once similarity scores are calculated for all possible pairs of M.P.P.s, these scores are then entered into a larger symmetrical data matrix. This matrix is in turn read by the *SPSS-X* ALSCAL procedure which is essentially a form of multidimensional scaling. ALSCAL is capable of mapping out the individual differences among M.P.P.s by creating "stimulus coordinates" on the basis of paired-M.P.P. similarity scores. ALSCAL can provide coordinates for up to five dimensions, but two-dimensional "maps of similarity" were considered preferable for three main reasons: first, two-dimensional maps are more easily drawn within the medium of a masters thesis; second, 2-dimensional maps are more readily understood by a non-quantitative public; and third, STRESS values calculated for all five dimensions established a "goodness of fit" appropriate for 2-dimensional stimulus plots.³⁰⁵

"Maps of similarity", such as those found in this thesis, are drawn through ALSCAL's computing of unique X-Y coordinates for each and every legislator within a particular group. Although ALSCAL has five basic types of scaling and unfolding

³⁰⁵STRESS values for 2-dimensions have been recorded throughout the foregoing thesis for each of the legislatures examined between 1871-1883. For further discussion of "goodness of fit," and other multidimensional problems see Joseph B. Kruscal and Myron Wish, *Multidimensional Scaling* (Beverly Hills & London: Sage Publications, 1978), pp. 49-60.

models at its disposal, this study employed the Euclidean distance model (EUCLID) so that voting relationships between M.P.P.s were represented by distance. If two M.P.P.s were close together, as symbolized by points on the map, then their paired voting records were closely matched. Conversely, if two legislators are separated by great distance on the chart, for instance a premier and a opposition leader, then the paired voting records produced something more akin to a non-match. The unique aspect of two-dimensional scaling is that ALSCAL is capable of providing coordinates for all M.P.P.s and representing them spatially. This is accomplished in such a way that each individual M.P.P.'s position reflects his affinity or hostility to every other politician, or group of politicians, through a set of prescribed distances that radiate outwards in all directions towards the whole set of M.P.P.s under study.

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SAS. Mainframe Computer Software. Version 6.06, SAS Institute Inc., SAS Circle, Box 8000, Cary North Carolina, 27512-8000. UVic CMS.

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COMPUTER DATA FILES

<u>FILE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>RECORDED VOTES</u>
G1.DAT	(McCreight Divisions, 1871-1872)	19
G2.DAT	(De Cosmos Divisions, 1872-1874)	22
G3.DAT	(Walkem Divisions, 1874-1875)	18
G4.DAT	(Walkem Divisions, 1876)	2
G5.DAT	(Elliot Divisions, 1876-1878)	40
G6.DAT	(Walkem Divisions, 1878-1882)	27
G7.DAT	(Beaven Division, 1882-1883)	1
G8.DAT	(Smithe Divisions, 1883-1887)	51
G9.DAT	(Smithe Divisions, 1887)	22
G10.DAT	(A.E.B. Davie Divisions, 1887-1889)	51
G11.DAT	(Robson Divisions, 1890)	14
G12.DAT	(Robson Divisions, 1891-1892)	104
G13.DAT	(T. Davie Divisions, 1893-1894)	68
G14.DAT	(T. Davie Divisions, 1894-1895)	49
G15.DAT	(Turner Divisions, 1896-1898)	125
G16.DAT	(Semlin Divisions, 1898-1900)	54
G17.DAT	(Martin Division, 1900)	1

G18A.DAT	(Dunsmuir Divisions, 1900-1901, 1st Cabinet)	80
G18B.DAT	(Dunsmuir Divisions, 1901-1902, 2nd Cabinet)	70
G18C.DAT	(Dunsmuir Divisions, 1902, Premier Absent)	44
G19.DAT	(Prior Divisions, 1903)	15
G20.DAT	(McBride Division, 1903)	1
G21.DAT	(McBride Divisions, 1903-1906)	89

GRAPHICS FILES

<u>Island-Mainland</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Rural-Urban</u>
G1IM.EPS	G1PAR.EPS	G1REG.EPS	G1UR.EPS
G2IM.EPS	G2PAR.EPS	G2REG.EPS	G2UR.EPS
G3IM.EPS	G3PAR.EPS	G3REG.EPS	G3UR.EPS
G5IM.EPS	G5PAR.EPS	G5REG.EPS	G5UR.EPS
G6IM.EPS	G6PAR.EPS	G6REG.EPS	G6UR.EPS
G8IM.EPS	G8PAR.EPS	G8REG.EPS	G8UR.EPS
G9IM.EPS	G9PAR.EPS	G9REG.EPS	G9UR.EPS
G10IM.EPS	G10PAR.EPS	G10REG.EPS	G10UR.EPS
G11IM.EPS	G11PAR.EPS	G11REG.EPS	G11UR.EPS
G12IM.EPS	G12PAR.EPS	G12REG.EPS	G12UR.EPS
G13IM.EPS	G13PAR.EPS	G13REG.EPS	G13UR.EPS
G14IM.EPS	G14PAR.EPS	G14REG.EPS	G14UR.EPS
G15IM.EPS	G15PAR.EPS	G15REG.EPS	G15UR.EPS
G16IM.EPS	G16PAR.EPS	G16REG.EPS	G16UR.EPS
G18AIM.EPS	G18APAR.EPS	G18AREG.EPS	G18AUR.EPS
G18BIM.EPS	G18BPAR.EPS	G18BREG.EPS	G18BUR.EPS
G18CIM.EPS	G18CPAR.EPS	G18CREG.EPS	G18CUR.EPS
G19IM.EPS	G19PAR.EPS	G19REG.EPS	G19UR.EPS
G21IM.EPS	G21PAR.EPS	G21REG.EPS	G21UR.EPS

Tariff Issue

G1TAR.EPS
G2TAR.EPS
G3TAR.EPS

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OTHER

*Quadra Island Maps 92K/3 and 92K/6. Edition 2. Survey and Mapping Branch.
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Province of British Columbia, 1976.*

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