

Social Studies 8

Chapter 9: Moving Toward Confederation

Part II: Politics Goes Public

When the National Convention did not allow the Confederation option to appear on the referendum ballot, the pro-confederates took the issue to the people

- Smallwood and others encouraged people to send telegrams to the British government asking for the inclusion of the Confederation option on the ballot. Over 50,000 names were collected.

Surprisingly, the British government had already decided to put Confederation on the ballot, much to the outrage of the anti-confederates.

- The winner of the referendum would have to have over 50% of the votes. If no clear winner was decided, the least popular option would be dropped and a second referendum held.

Both sides began public campaigns to gain support.

- The Confederate Association (eventually became the Liberal Party), led by Smallwood, published a newspaper called *The Confederate*.
- The Responsible Government League (eventually became the Progressive Conservative Party), led by Peter Cashin, published their own paper called *The Independent*.
- The referendum issue dominated the media with both sides using radio broadcasts, public meetings, editorials, political cartoons, etc.

NATIONAL REFERENDUM June 3, 1948

1. Commission of Government for a period of five years

2. Responsible Government as it existed in 1933

3. Confederation with Canada

Look at the phrasing of each option. How might the description of responsible government sway the vote?