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St. Boniface, in the Red River Settlement, circa 1860.

ROWBOAT DIPLOMACY: THE DOMINION OF CANADA'S WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO THE RED RIVER REBELLION

by David W. Grebstad

Sir,

The National Committee of the Red River Metis orders Mr. William McDougall not to enter the North-West Territory without the special authorization of this Committee.

*By order of the President, John Bruce
Louis Riel, Secretary
Dated at St. Norbert, Red River,
this 21st Day of October, 1869.¹*

Introduction

With the presentation of this note to the Honourable William McDougall, Lieutenant-Governor designate of the Territory of Rupert's Land, the acquisition of what is now Western Canada by the young Dominion came to an abrupt halt. In the preceding years the embryonic nation had decided upon a national policy of acquiring the vast tracts of land occupied by the Hudson's

Bay Company, and had secured an agreement with the Company and the Imperial Government in London to do so. Upon his arrival in the Red River Settlement, Canada's plans were stymied by a small group of Métis intent upon self-governance and protecting their culture, their traditions, and their way of life. The intent of this article is to demonstrate how, over the eleven months that followed, the young Dominion Government under John A. Macdonald employed a comprehensive Whole of Government approach to successfully achieve its political goal.

Background

The events that led to this juncture are too broad to fully investigate here. Nonetheless, to fully understand the issue this article intends to address, it is important to conduct

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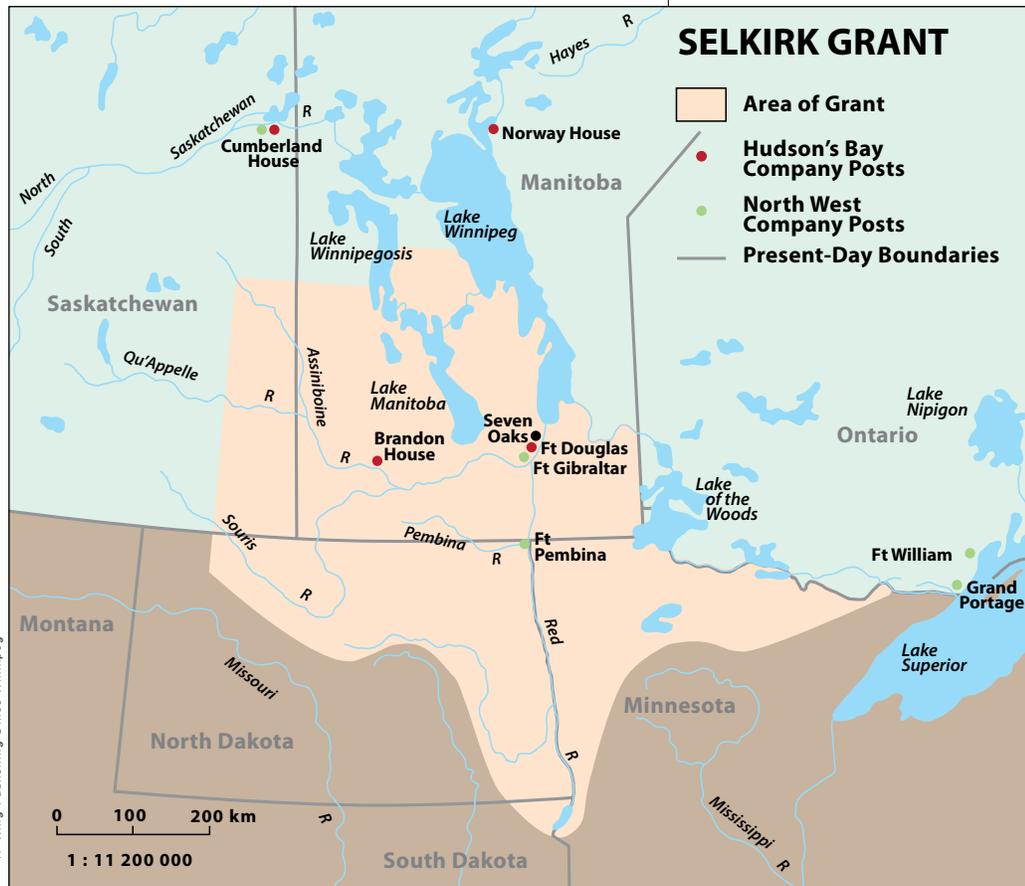
a brief summary of the events that led to McDougall's rebuff at Pembina.^{1*}

enlightened and *laissez-aller* economic zeitgeist of the UK; and interest in Canada for westward expansion increased.

These conditions, coupled with the fear of American annexation, combined to push the Dominion of Canada and the Hudson's Bay Company to reach an agreement in April 1869 for the transferral of Rupert's Land to the Dominion, with the Honourable William MacDougall being nominated as its first lieutenant-governor.

Negotiations between the Imperial Government, the Dominion Government, and the Company had been ongoing for some time, as early as 1865. They were pre-empted by the work surrounding Confederation, but were never wholly abandoned. Negotiations involved a continuous 'to-and-fro' among the three principals, but never included consultation with the people who actually lived in the territory. As a result,

when rumours of the negotiations were circulated in the Red River Settlement, the local inhabitants became understandably concerned. This disquiet was exacerbated by the arrival of Dominion surveyors in October 1869, who had begun staking out lots with a disregard for established farms and land titles. A group of Métis confronted the surveyors and 'sent them packing.' Shortly thereafter, on 19 October, the Comité National des Métis was formed, and on 3 November, its members seized control of Fort Garry and deposed the Council of Assiniboia. It was this committee that forbade McDougall entrance to the territory, and which would evolve into the Provisional Government in February of 1870 and the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia on 9 March.^{2*} It would remain under this name until it ratified the Manitoba Act on 24 June 1870.



Map of the Red River Settlement, the approximate boundaries being determined by the Selkirk Grant of 1811. Fort Gibraltar was renamed Fort Garry in 1822.

Since 2 May 1670, the vast terrain known as Rupert's Land had been administered by the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been granted a royal charter and trading monopoly within the territory by King Charles II. The Red River Settlement, situated in Rupert's Land at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, was a conglomeration of Métis buffalo hunters, French Canadian fur traders, Scottish colonists, American traders, First Nations people, and Canadian expansionists. Its hub and capital was the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Garry where sat the representation of civil authority, the Council of Assiniboia.

By the mid-19th Century, a change of world view within Canada and the United Kingdom contributed to the slow decline of the Hudson's Bay Company's fortunes in Western Canada. The taste for imperial expansion in Britain had waned; the concept of a commercial monopoly governing a territory became anathema to the

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^{1*} For a more in-depth review of the whole story, the author strongly recommends George F.C. Stanley's *Toil and Trouble: Military Expeditions to Red River* and *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions*. Additionally, Captain George L Huyshe's *The Red River Expedition* is an excellent first-hand account of the Wolseley Expedition by an officer of the 60th Regiment who participated in it.

Between 19 October 1869 and 24 June 1870, this body formed the *de facto* government of the Red River Settlement. It was established primarily to protect the rights of the land holders in the settlement while also providing some degree of law and order among the competing and volatile interests in

^{2**} For clarity, the term Provisional Government will be used throughout this article. It should be understood to represent both the Provisional Government and the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia.



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Louis Riel and his Council 1869-1870.

the settlement. The population was divided into a variety of camps, with a pro-Canadian faction openly fomenting violence to ensure the establishment of Canadian authority in Rupert's Land. The conflict between this element and the Provisional Government eventually subsided, but not before an attempted rebellion, the mass arrest of pro-Canadian revolutionaries, and the execution of Orangeman and Ontarian Thomas Scott, a singular act that would change the nature of the conflict. This violence aside, the relations between Canada, the Company and the Provisional Government were generally good, and they involved a great amount of diplomacy. In the end, the Bill of Rights that was drawn up by the Riel government and presented to the Dominion Government was accepted, and it formed the basis of the Manitoba Act of 12 May 1870, which brought the Province of Manitoba into Confederation. Upon its ratification on 24 June 1870 by the Provisional Government, the insurgents essentially became the legitimate government representing the authority of the Crown in Manitoba. While negotiations were ongoing, a joint Anglo-Canadian military force under Colonel Garnet Wolseley trekked from Toronto to Fort Garry via rail, steamship, and rowboat. When the leadership of the Riel government fled at the arrival of the military expedition on 24 August 1870, it was due to a perceived lack of fidelity in the Government of Canada's promise to extend a general amnesty to the members of the Provisional Government, as well as a fear that the pro-Canada faction would seek violent retribution. On 2 September, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, Nova Scotia native William Archibald, assumed his duties in Fort Garry, and completed the assumption of authority over Rupert's Land by the federal government.^{3**}

The '3 Ds' of Whole of Government

Much has been written concerning Whole of Government approaches to operations in recent years. This discourse

^{3**} Feeling that William MacDougall was too identifiable with the original fiasco, Prime Minister Macdonald replaced him with Archibald to avoid further antagonism in the province.

has been fuelled, no doubt, by Canada's participation in operations in Afghanistan and the surge in discussion since 2001 may lead some to erroneously conclude that a Whole of Government approach to operations is something new. This article will demonstrate that Canada has been pursuing its national policies with a Whole of Government approach since its inception.

Prime Minister Paul Martin's Liberal Party referred to the '3 Ds' – Diplomacy, Development, and Defence in its 2005 International Policy Statement. The Conservative Government of Stephen Harper replaced the 3Ds with the term 'Whole of Government' in its "Canada First"

defence strategy of 2006.² Regardless of the term employed, both reflect a philosophy of means whereby all the resources of the government are employed to achieve its strategic goal. While this article will use both interchangeably, the ease with which the 3D model can be used to demonstrate John A. Macdonald's Whole of Government approach to the Red River Rebellion makes it an excellent analytical tool.

Manifest Destiny, eh? Canada's Strategic Goal in the Ecosystem of Conflict

Before one can analyse how the Macdonald government utilised a Whole of Government approach to achieving its strategic goal, one must understand the nature of that strategic goal. The specific end state that the young Dominion was pursuing was the annexation of Rupert's Land into the Dominion. While up until the mid-19th Century, pre-Confederation Canadians expressed little interest in the west, after Confederation the fertile lands west of Lake Superior started to look appealing. George F.G. Stanley observed: "Canadian people began to regard the vast unpeopled territories to the west as the natural outlet for their surplus population and as the necessary complement for the full development of their commerce and nationality."³ Unfortunately, Canadian eyes were not the only ones looking west. Manifest Destiny had gripped the American consciousness. Stanley wrote: "... the purchase of Alaska from the Russians by the United States [in 1867] was a sharp reminder of the covetous interest Americans had always displayed in the northern regions of the continent."⁴ The fear of American annexation was reinforced when the US offered to purchase Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company for ten million dollars in 1866.⁵ American interest in Western Canada prompted Macdonald to rise in the House of Commons and state:

It is imperative to find a broad country from the expansion of our adventurous youth, who are not satisfied to look here and there for an isolated tract fit for settlement. It has consequently always been a



Fort Garry and its environs – 1869.

political cry in Western Canada that this country must be obtained; no sentimental cry either, but one eminently practical – a cry expressive of both principle and interest. If this country is to remain British, it is only by being included in the British North America scheme.⁶

Thus, for want of an outlet for commerce and a growing population, and in response to the threat of American expansion into Western Canada did the young Dominion adopt its own, uniquely Canadian version of Manifest Destiny and enter



Sir John A. Macdonald.

into the ecosystem of conflict that was centered upon Fort Garry and the Red River Settlement.

Theorist David Killcullen writes that the ecosystem of conflict is one in which multiple, independent but interlinked actors, each seeking to maximize their own survivability and advantage, collaborate or compete in pursuit of their interests.⁷ At the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, the interests of American annexationists, Canadian expansionists, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the people of the Red River Settlement collided. In pursuit of their interests, the Government of Canada used a 3D approach to secure its national goal.

Old Macdonald had 3Ds

The Whole of Government approach used by Macdonald's government is often overshadowed by the predominance of the Wolseley Expedition. This is understandable, since the military expedition was by far the most manifest of the government's attempts to bring the recalcitrant colony to heel. Also, the lengthy, torturous route and sheer force of will required to complete the expedition ensured that the Wolseley Expedition would attain a certain legendary status that all but eclipsed other tools of the Macdonald government. To be sure, the Wolseley Expedition was a valuable, perhaps the *most* valuable, weapon in the Whole of Government arsenal, but the "defence" part of the formula, to use the modern day term,^{4*} was not the sole tool employed by the Macdonald government.

Diplomacy

While Canada did not acquire *de jure* control over all of its diplomatic efforts until the passing of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, it nonetheless conducted diplomatic

^{4*} While at present the Canadian Government focuses its military power in the Department of National Defence under a Minister of Defence, at the time the minister responsible was the Minister of Militia who administered the Canadian Militia while a regular British officer, the Commander-in-Chief, Canada, administered all British Army units in Canada.

efforts in pursuit of its national interests, albeit within the limitations inherent in being a colonial dominion. As there were many actors involved, Canada's diplomatic actions covered a wide spectrum.

When it was determined that a military force would need to be deployed to the Red River, the Macdonald government fully understood that any such military force would have to be a joint Anglo-Canadian adventure. Having no permanent military of its own, and only a Militia to call upon, Canada lacked the military muscle to unilaterally launch such an audacious expedition. An additional motivating factor was fear of American expansionism, and it was believed that only the inclusion of British regulars would deter American action.⁸ As a result, Ottawa entered into a series of negotiations with London to secure British participation in the expedition.

However, the British were not particularly interested. The expense of maintaining a global colonial garrison, and the waning interest in empire, spurred Britain to begin withdrawing her troops back home.⁹ That said, after much correspondence between the Dominion and Imperial Governments, Canada was able to secure British participation in the expedition. However, they were on a very short leash. The Commander-in-Chief Canada, Lieutenant-General the Honourable James Lindsay, made clear to the Canadian Government that all British forces, including those participating in the Red River expedition, would leave Canada for Britain by the winter of 1870.¹⁰ Further, the Governor-General informed Macdonald that it was not the wish of the Imperial Government that British forces were to be used to compel the Red River settlers to unite with Canada, and that other means should also be employed.¹¹ Despite these constraints, the Dominion Government was able to diplomatically ensure British participation, which added veracity to the expedition.

Diplomacy was also employed to secure a peaceful settlement with the Red River settlers. From the outset, Macdonald was not adverse to negotiations with Louis Riel.¹² In late-December, he dispatched a delegation to Fort Garry in an attempt to peaceably resolve the situation. Macdonald sent federal representatives in the personages of Grand-Vicar Jean-Baptiste Thibault, Colonel Charles-René-Léonidas d'Irumberry de Salaberry (son of Charles de Salaberry, hero of the Battle of Châteauguay in 1813), and Donald A. Smith (a senior officer of the Hudson's Bay Company) to explain the Canadian position. In addition, he managed to secure the assistance of Bishop Alexandre Tache of St. Boniface, who was in Rome for an Ecumenical Conference, in the hope that his close association with the Red River population might lead to a peaceful solution.¹³ The federal delegation arrived, and during 19-20 January 1870, Donald Smith gave two speeches in which he "... communicated his understanding of Canada's intention with respect to the settlement and to settlers and their existing privileges and rights."¹⁴ The speeches were well-received, and they contributed to continued peaceful negotiations. It should be noted, however, that Macdonald was a deft and opportunistic politician, and Smith had been despatched to Red River

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with secret orders to foment a counter-revolution amongst those agreeable to the Canadian position. In fact, he found no such appetite among the populace, save for a small number of pro-Canada extremists, so instead, he pursued the goal of his 'cover story.'¹⁵

The government in Red River dispatched delegates to Ottawa as well. On 22 March, the Reverend J.J. Ritchot, John Black, and American saloon owner Alfred H. Scott departed Fort Garry for Ottawa with the Bill of Rights drafted by the Provisional Government for presentation to the Dominion Government.¹⁶ It is important to note that this delegation departed after the execution of Thomas Scott, when martial fervour was at a fever pitch in Ontario. As a result, upon their arrival in Ontario, the delegation was arrested for complicity in the murder of Thomas Scott. The federal government wisely intervened to secure their release, after which the Dominion Government and the Red River delegates entered into discussions with respect to the future of the Red River Settlement.¹⁷ All this indicates that the Macdonald government was clearly willing to use the diplomatic tool to achieve their national goal, engaging both the United Kingdom and the Provisional Government in a manner to best pursue their own interests. In particular, it should be noted that the negotiations that were entered into by the delegates of the Provisional Government and the Government of Canada eventually produced the Manitoba Act that created the Province of Manitoba, and, legally speaking, achieved the political goal of bringing Rupert's Land into Confederation.



Colonel (later General) Garnet J. Wolseley.

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Development

The actual development of Manitoba was slow to occur. The technology of the era, coupled with the isolation of the province, meant that infrastructure development would take years, if not decades to attain. That notwithstanding, the first step in ensuring a prosperous province was the establishment of a safe and secure environment. When Archibald assumed his post as the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba on 2 September, "... rather than pursue former members of the Provisional Government with warrants and threats, [he] devoted much of his time and most of his efforts to organizing the civil administration."¹⁸ The first order of business was to establish some form of law and order. Manitoba's first year was one of high tension, as former enemies continued to live side-by-side. In order to address this situation, Archibald first attempted to recruit a police force from the local population. Unfortunately, very few volunteers came forward, so, as a result, the offer was extended to members of the Ontario and Quebec Rifles – the two Militia battalions that had participated in the Wolseley Expedition and remained behind when the British regulars departed – who provided the nucleus for the first Manitoba Constabulary.¹⁹ This was followed closely by the construction of the province's first jail.²⁰

Further development of the province continued with the release of Militia soldiers, a large number of whom were given grants of land in the province. Others took up employment on the Dawson Road – a federal initiative to build a road from the North West Angle of Lake of the Woods to Fort Garry, thus facilitating the further development of the area.²¹ An ulterior motive for convincing these soldiers to settle in the area was to provide for a readily accessible corps of troops that could be called upon for service in the event of hostilities with First Nations, Americans, or Fenians.²² The developmental approach of the Macdonald government centered upon setting the conditions for a safe environment that would facilitate economic expansion and entice émigrés from the east. The foundation of that security was found in the military force that was sent to Red River.

Defence

The term 'defence' is somewhat anachronistic in this context, as it was not used in the later 19th Century, but has today become synonymous with the military. However, because the term 'defence' in contemporary usage specifically connotes the military element, it does fit the 3D model employed by Macdonald. The Wolseley Expedition – so named after its commander, Colonel Garnet Wolseley – was a 'force ahead of its time,' reflecting the modern characteristics of a 'JIMP capable force,' and, by virtue of its very existence, it was a valuable political tool.

A JIMP-Capable Force

While the term JIMP is a recent creation, the concept of JIMP has existed for some time. The Wolseley

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Expedition embodied the concept of JIMP in spirit, even if it was not specifically labelled as such. Regardless, the concept of what JIMP is provides an excellent tool for analyzing the cohesive and coherent force assembled by the Macdonald government. A JIMP (Joint, Interagency, Multinational, and Public) capable force is defined as follows:

... a descriptor that identifies the various categories of players (i.e. organizations) which inhabit the broad environment in which military operations take place. To be 'JIMP-capable' entails the adoption of an approach to operations, both domestic and international, that allows such players to effectively interact. Most importantly, it involves a belief in the requirement to adopt a comprehensive approach to problem solving that involves the holistic consideration and, ideally the coordination of all relevant players.²³

The key component, therefore, is not necessarily the structure of the force itself, but its ability to comprehensively interact with all necessary elements. A critical part of the Canadian strategy was the assembly of a JIMP-capable force personified by the Wolseley Expedition.

Joint

The 'joint' element of the concept is defined as "... involving other national military elements and support organizations."²⁴ The force dispatched to the Red River was not particularly joint in the way the term is understood today. As the area of operations concerned is found in the centre of the continent, there was not much requirement for naval support, once the inland route was chosen over the option to sail to York Factory and approach from the north. However, during its transit of the Great Lakes from Collingwood to Port Arthur (modern-day Thunder Bay) at least one Canadian gunboat was known to be patrolling Lake Huron to defend against Fenian attacks on the expedition.²⁵ Additionally, while not strictly naval elements (the Royal Canadian Navy would not come into being until 1910) the steamships chartered for the transit of the Great Lakes were certainly a maritime component of the force.

Interagency

The 'interagency' element is defined as "... involving other government departments and agencies, both domestic and foreign (these will include, host nation government departments including security forces; government departments and agencies from support nations; and international government bodies, such as UN agencies)."²⁶ The Wolseley Expedition truly reflected the Whole of Government philosophy of the Macdonald government, in particular, concerning the cooperation demonstrated between different agencies of the federal government. The logistical and administrative arrangements were the responsibility of the Control Department, who were tasked with "looking after the foodstuffs, forage, fuel, stores,

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hospital supplies, postal, pay” and other necessities.²⁷ In addition, Mr. S.J. Dawson of Canadian Public Works was employed to improve the road from Port Arthur, as well as the purchase of the wagons to traverse the road, the hiring of the teamsters, road workmen, and voyageurs, and the chartering of the steamships that would transport the expedition from Collingwood to Fort William.²⁸

Multinational

The ‘multinational’ element is defined as “... involving one or more allies or international coalition partners.”²⁹ As mentioned previously, the Macdonald government felt that British involvement was critical to ensuring

that the political message delivered by the expedition had some substance. From a practical standpoint, the time it would take to assemble and train a force of volunteers, and the concern with respect to the effectiveness of a wholly Militia force if hostilities erupted, meant that a regular army component was necessary. Canada did not establish its own permanent force until October 1871, so the only recourse for the Macdonald government was to ensure British military participation. However, since the intent of the expedition was to secure Rupert’s Land for Canada, there had to be some Canadian participation. In the end, the Wolseley Expedition consisted of one battalion of British regulars (the 60th Regiment – a British unit stationed in Canada) and two battalions of volunteers from Canadian Militia units who formed the 1st Ontario Rifles and 1st Quebec Rifles.³⁰ Additionally, this force was augmented with a detachment of Royal Artillery, a detachment of Royal Engineers, and a detachment of the Army Hospital Corps and Army Service Corps. The latter two elements fell under command of Assistant Controller Irvine of the Control Department.

Public

The ‘public’ element is defined as “... involving a variety of elements including: domestic and international publics, host nation populations, media agencies, non-governmental organizations, public volunteer organizations, international organizations and commercial interests involved in reconstruction and/or development programs, and private security firms recruited to support the government.”³¹ Wolseley engaged the public early in his approach to Red River. Upon his arrival at Port Arthur, he dispatched a letter to the people of the Red River Settlement which was duly published in the local newspapers, including Riel’s *New Nation*. Riel helped set the type himself!³² Wolseley’s proclamation is an excellent example of early Public Affairs work to shape the opinion of the target

population to facilitate a military force achieving its mission. As such, excerpts of it are worthy of inclusion here:



The Red River (Wolseley) Expedition at Kakabeka Falls, 1870.

Our mission is one of peace and the sole object of the expedition is to secure Her Majesty’s sovereign authority - Courts of Law such as are common to every portion of Her Majesty’s Empire will be duly established and Justice will be impartially administered to all races and to all classes. The Loyal Indians or Half Breeds being as dear to our Queen as any other of her Loyal Subjects.

The force I have the honour of commanding will enter your Province representing no party either in Religion or Politics, and will offer equal protection to the lives and property of all races and of all creeds.

The strictest order and discipline will be maintained and private property will be carefully respected. All supplies furnished to the troops will be duly paid for - should any one consider himself injured by any individual attached to the force his grievances shall be promptly enquired into.

All loyal people are earnestly invited to aid me in carrying out the above mentioned subjects.³³

Additionally, the Macdonald government was astute enough to understand that one of the best ways to ensure a peaceful transition to Confederation in Manitoba was to leave local administration in place as long as possible, and to gradually transition to federal authority. Macdonald was wary of allowing the military commander to assume the duties of a civilian authority over the province of Manitoba. When the delegation representing the Provisional Government left Ottawa with the Manitoba Act, they enquired as to whom should administer the Province until the arrival of the new lieutenant-governor. George Etienne-Cartier, Macdonald’s ‘right-hand man’ and a member of the federal delegation

responded, "... let Mr. Riel continue to maintain order and govern the country as he has done up to the present moment."³⁴ Riel did, in fact, remain in authority after the Provisional Government ratified the Manitoba Act on 24 June. Unfortunately, upon the arrival of the Wolseley Expedition in Fort Garry on 24 August, Riel and many of his lieutenants fled. The federal government prevaricated on the subject of a promised amnesty to the members of the Provisional Government, and there was a legitimate concern that with the arrival of the military force, pro-Canada extremists who had been incarcerated under Riel, would seek retribution. The departure of Riel, and the collapse of the Provisional Government, coupled with the delayed arrival of the lieutenant-governor, resulted in a lack of civil authority in the province. Wolseley approached the Hudson's Bay Company to fill the authority-void, as it represented the last legitimate civil authority in Red River prior to Riel's Provisional Government. Thus, "... the Hudson's Bay Company, although for only a brief period between 24 August and 2 September, became the *de facto*, if not the *de jure* civil authority in the new province."³⁵

The Wolseley Expedition was a force ahead of its time. It was a JIMP-capable expeditionary force that was able to employ a comprehensive approach that welded together interacting elements to achieve the Dominion's strategic goal. However, it was more than just a formed body of troops. The Wolseley Expedition was a well organized political tool that represented one of Canada's first uses of military forces utilized for broad political purposes.

Rowboat Diplomacy

In his 1981 work, *Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919-1979*, strategic theorist James Cable defined gunboat diplomacy as "the use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage, or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nations within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state."³⁶ While at first blush this term may not seem appropriate for consideration here, if Cable's definition is looked at from a broader perspective, and not limited to naval elements, one can see that any military force can achieve the effects he ascribes to gun boat diplomacy. In particular, Cable argues that naval forces can embody several different types of force: a *definitive* force – that force that is used to remove the cause of a dispute; a *purposeful* force – that force that is used to change the policies of the target government; and an *expressive* force – that force that is employed as outlets for emotion. The Wolseley Expedition, in one way or another, embodied each of these types of forces.

"The Macdonald government had entered into good faith negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company and secured the purchase of Rupert's Land in what it saw as a perfectly legal and legitimate transaction."



Colonel James Farquharson Macleod and Captain Edmund Dalrymple Clark of the Royal North-west Mounted Police in the late-1870s.

Glenbow Archives NA-2206-1

A Definitive Force

The existence of the Provisional Government was the dispute that faced the Canadian Government. The Macdonald government had entered into good faith negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company and secured the purchase of Rupert's Land in what it saw as a perfectly legal and legitimate transaction. The ethical dilemma of non-consultation with the local inhabitants did not seem to factor into the negotiations whatsoever. Thus, when the Métis band stopped the recognized representative of the federal government from assuming his (perceived) rightful duties as governor, a political dispute arose. The Dominion Government used a number of its strategic tools to resolve the issue, which came to a peaceful conclusion with the ratification of the Manitoba Act by Riel's Provisional Government. The peaceful end to the dispute was not always a foregone conclusion, however. There remained the threat

that an agreement would not be reached with Riel's Provisional Government, and the territory would have to be annexed by force, although this was by no means the preferred solution.³⁷ Certainly, in the minds of the members of the expedition, their role was to 'conquer' the territory. Despite the peaceful overtures expressed by Wolseley in his proclamation mentioned previously, upon arrival at Fort Garry on 24 August, he formed up the 60th Regiment in order of battle and marched on the fort, prepared for a fight. Upon their arrival, they found the fort empty, guns unmanned and flags struck from the poles.³⁸ Such a martial manner is odd, considering that two months earlier, to the day, the Provisional Government had ratified the Manitoba Act and essentially joined Confederation. Perhaps one can attribute this to the poor state of communications extant at the time that prevented Colonel Wolseley from learning that the Provisional Government was, by order of the federal government, the legitimate representation of the Crown in Manitoba. Had Wolseley not appeared to be so bent on a fight, perhaps Riel and his lieutenants would not have fled, and the province would not have been thrown into a temporary state of anarchy, due to the lack of civil authority that followed. Regardless, had negotiations not been as productive as they were, the military expedition was prepared (some might argue *too* prepared) to remove the cause of the dispute with force.

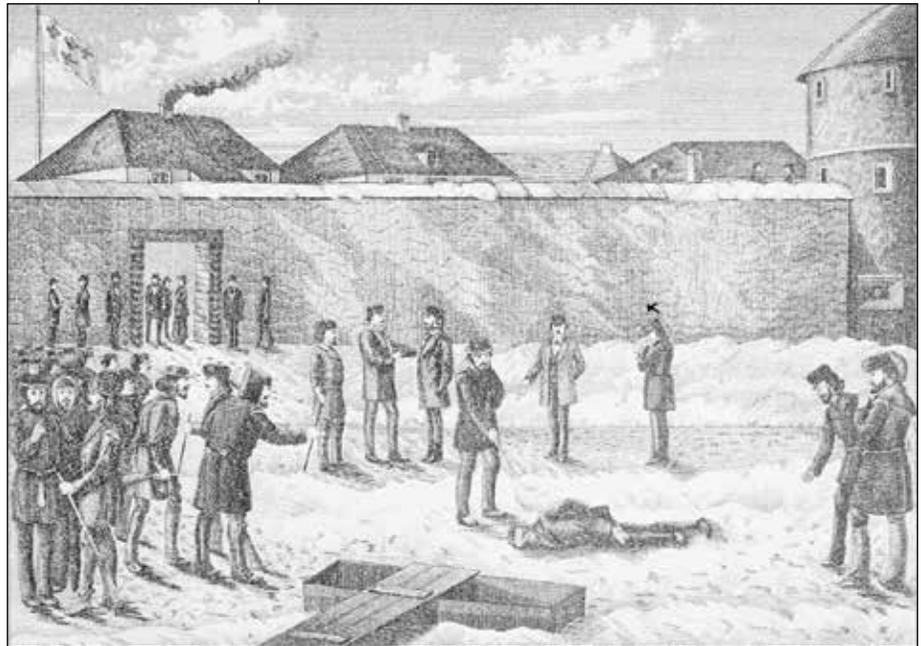
A Purposeful Force

As mentioned previously, the ecosystem of conflict is a mass of interlinked actors pursuing their own interests either through competition or collaboration. The Wolseley Expedition was dispatched in order to pre-empt the Manifest Destiny policy of the United States. As noted previously, American interest in annexing the Canadian West was on the rise, fuelled by the concept of Manifest Destiny, and by the lure of fertile arable land for settlement. Although Macdonald originally intended only to dispatch a police force to the area (this was the genesis of the North West Mounted Police, and, subsequently, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) the threat of American annexation caused him to conclude that any force sent to the Assiniboia would require "a little more muscle."³⁹ The establishment of Canadian authority in the province, coupled with the two battalions of Canadian volunteers that occupied the territory, sent a clear message to Washington that Manitoba was Canadian territory.

An Expressive Force

Perhaps the greatest role that the expedition played was that of an expressive force. As demonstrated previously, the Macdonald government, and the Imperial government in

London, preferred a peaceful settlement of the dispute that was amenable to both Ottawa and the Red River Settlement. The expedition was considered early, but its role was primarily one of a purposeful force to pre-empt American interest in the west, rather than a definitive force to remove Riel and his supporters by force. The situation changed drastically, however, upon the execution of Thomas Scott by the Provisional Government. Until that point, the Dominion government was still weighing the benefits of dispatching a force. However, "... the issue of sending a police force, or a military expedition to Red River was settled, not by Macdonald... but by an outburst of political indignation in Ontario when news broke of the execution of the Ontario surveyor and Orangeman, Thomas Scott."⁴⁰ The blood-lust was palpable in the editorials of the expansionist-minded newspapers, and an invigorated *Canada First* movement that became the primary political instrument for expansionists in Ontario.⁴¹ Neither Macdonald, nor any politician, could afford to ignore the political momentum that had arisen surrounding the execution of Thomas Scott. Riel's firing squad had settled the debate concerning the dispatch of the Wolseley Expedition. Macdonald knew that whether or not the force would ever bring Riel and his supporters to battle, the force would have to be sent in order to sate the appetite for revenge that permeated Ontario. This is instructive, since it indicates that not only are the actors in the ecosystem of conflict external to one another, each also contains internal actors for whom there must be an accounting. While geographically, an ecosystem of conflict may be limited to a theatre or area of operations, politically it is spatially boundless.



The execution of Thomas Scott.

Conclusion

This article is not an endorsement of the actions of either the Macdonald government, nor of the Provisional Government under Louis Riel. In both camps there is sufficient unethical behaviour to warrant a certain degree of condemnation. Regardless of the morality of the 'ends,' the

'means' employed by the young Dominion constituted a Whole of Government approach.

The Whole of Government approach used by the Macdonald government achieved its political goal by pursuing its strategic end state along a number of lines of operation. Diplomatically, it ensured British participation in the military force to lend veracity to its operations, and engaged the Provisional Government in diplomatic exchanges and negotiations which eventually produced a mutually-amenable political settlement to the dispute. The federal government set the conditions for a peaceful and prosperous Province of Manitoba by developing the civil administration and setting the conditions for law and order to facilitate economic prosperity. The Dominion cobbled together a robust military force that included all the elements of military power available to the government, as well as other federal departments, and local (Red River) public and government agencies. This provided a military component that was poised to remove the



A close-up of Fort Garry in 1869.

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obstacle to the political goal by force if necessary, deterred American incursions into the Canadian West, and sated the public desire for action in retribution for the execution of Thomas Scott.



NOTES

1. Note passed to the Honourable William McDougall, as quoted in George F.C. Stanley's *Toil and Trouble: Military Expeditions to Red River* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1989), p. 52.
2. Taylor Owen and Patrick Travers, "3D Vision," in *The Walrus*, July/August 2007, available at www.walrusmagazine.com/articles/2007.07.Afghanistan-and-Canada/ 1, accessed 20 July 2012, p. 1.
3. George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 25.
4. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 47.
5. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, p. 37.
6. John A. Macdonald speech in the House of Commons, quoted in Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 48.
7. David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency in Iraq: Theory and Practice 2007*, available at [www.usacac.army.mil/cac2/coin/repository/Dr_Kilcullen_COIN_Brief\(Sep07\).ppt#259,3](http://www.usacac.army.mil/cac2/coin/repository/Dr_Kilcullen_COIN_Brief(Sep07).ppt#259,3), Caveat: the logic of field observation in Iraq, accessed 20 July 2012.
8. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 73.
9. *Ibid*, p. 76.
10. *Ibid*, p. 81.
11. *Ibid*.
12. *Ibid*, p.76.
13. *Ibid*, p. 60.
14. Norma Hall, Clifford P. Hall, Erin Verrier, *A History of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia*, The Government of Manitoba, available at http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/pdf/mbmetispolicy/laa_en.pdf , accessed 20 July 2012, p. 4.
15. D.N. Sprague, *Canada and the Métis, 1869-1885* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988), pp. 46-47.
16. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 62.
17. *Ibid*, p. 65.
18. *Ibid*, p. 195.
19. *Ibid*.
20. *Ibid*.
21. *Ibid*, p. 201.
22. *Ibid*.
23. Peter Gizewski, Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Rostek, "Toward a JIMP-Capable Land Force" in *The Canadian Army Journal*, (Vol. 10.1, Spring 2007), pp. 55-72.
24. Gizewski and Rostek, p. 56.
25. Campbell, "Getting there was the Challenge! The Red River Expedition of 1870" in *The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin* (Vol 5, No. 1, Spring 2002), pp. 58-64.
26. Gizewski and Rostek. p. 56.
27. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 88.
28. Campbell.
29. Gizewski and Rostek, p. 57.
30. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 258.
31. Gizewski and Rostek, p. 57.
32. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 178.
33. Proclamation of Colonel Garnet Wolseley to the Loyal Inhabitants of Manitoba, *Manitoba Historical Society Website*, <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/pageant/13/proclamation.shtml>, accessed 20 July 2012.
34. George Etienne-Cartier quoted in Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 184.
35. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 185.
36. James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919-1979*, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1981), p. 39.
37. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 76.
38. *Ibid*, p. 170.
39. *Ibid*, p. 74.
40. *Ibid*, p. 77.
41. *Ibid*, p. 79.