



# Atlantic Canada & Confederation

*David G. Alexander*

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## **Atlantic Canada & Confederation** David G. Alexander

The nine essays in this posthumous volume are linked by a recurring theme - an affirmation of the integrity and viability of the small society and culture in the economic blocs and political federations of the modern world.

Alexander maintained that there was an economic base for the provinces of Atlantic Canada in the resources of the region and the genius of its people. In these essays he launched an assault on the beliefs that hindered the development of that base while searching for policies necessary to sustain that society. He indicated Canadian trade policies. He stated that neither the date nor the fact of entry into Confederation offered an economic panacea for any of the Atlantic provinces - but that the question of political and economic accommodation within the larger federation was critical.

Alexander's study of the rise and decline of the shipping industry in Atlantic Canada in the nineteenth century revealed a regional industry with resources, capital and entrepreneurial talent to compete successfully in international trade. It also reinforced his belief that subsequent regional disadvantages grew as much from institutional and political factors as from the unimpeded operation of comparative advantage and market forces.

The volume pleads for a stronger federalism based on the belief that the survival of the Canadian Confederation depends upon the rebirth of pride and self-respect among Canada's diverse peoples. These essays are part of that heritage and that rebirth.

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