

The Pacific Scandal was, and has remained, the most famous example of political misbehaviour in Canadian history. To many voters it appeared that Macdonald and his colleagues had betrayed the high hopes that had accompanied the achievement of Confederation. But to Sir John A. Macdonald, whom history has remembered as a nation-builder, the loss of office in 1873 was a check, not an irredeemable defeat. In just under five years he was back in power, resuming the task he had begun in 1867. In the election of 1872 Macdonald had prophesied: "Confederation is only yet in the gristle, and it will require five more years before it hardens into bone." He was to be given thirteen more years to continue with his life's task of consolidating his trans-continental Dominion

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