

was abolished in Canada. The only exception was for Dominion senators, who were allowed to be members of the Legislative Council of Quebec.

Sir John A. Macdonald's first ministry consisted of 13 members, nine of whom were drawn from the House of Commons. It was largely the group which had taken office in 1867, somewhat transformed by a number of changes of portfolio, and new appointments which had been made in 1869. The most important of these changes was the replacement of John Rose, who resigned from Canadian politics, by Sir Francis Hincks as Minister of Finance. Joseph Howe also entered the Macdonald cabinet in 1869. Since 1869, it had enjoyed a stable membership. The only changes between 1869 and 1872 were the appointment of John Henry Pope as Minister of Agriculture in 1871, and Charles Tupper's transfer from the presidency of the Privy Council to Inland Revenue in July 1872. The Prime Minister was clearly the chief spokesman for the government, on the business of the House as well as on broader subjects such as the bill to implement the Treaty of Washington and the plan to change representation in the House of Commons.

Sir George-Étienne Cartier, although holding the minor portfolio of Militia and Defence, was the "workhorse" of the government. He seemed always to be at Macdonald's elbow in the House. He it was who piloted the all-important *Canadian Pacific Railway Act* through the Commons. Sir Francis Hincks dealt with financial and tariff questions, the latter subject regardless of the fact that Leonard Tilley, a Father of Confederation, was Minister of Customs. Dr. Charles Tupper, holding lesser portfolios, was a minor figure in 1872 but destined for great things. Joseph Howe, as Secretary of State for the Provinces, was a spent force and would leave the Cabinet in the next year. Hector-Louis Langevin was a dependable Minister of Public Works and John Henry Pope a recently appointed Agriculture Minister. Some members of the Cabinet, such as Alexander Morris, Minister of Inland Revenue during the 1872 session, spoke rarely in the House. Four members of Macdonald's Cabinet sat in the Senate. The most important figure in this group, often referred to in House debates, was the redoubtable Peter Mitchell, Minister of Marine and Fisheries.

The parliamentary session of 1872 was an important one for the new Dominion. It formed a vital phase in the process by which, as Macdonald put it, the gristle of Confederation would harden into bone. *An Act respecting the Canadian Pacific Railway* was the keystone of the government's legislative program for 1872. It was designed to make possible the great national purpose of settling the West. It laid down the principles upon which the Pacific railroad would be financed, supported by grants of public land, and constructed. Its companion, *An Act to incorporate the Canadian Pacific Railway Company*, chartered the instrument that would carry out the work. Cartier, backed by the government's solid majority, skilfully shepherded the railway legislation through the House. The Liberals did not rise to the challenge of the project as the government envisioned it. They questioned the wisdom of a young country embarking upon such an ambitious, even foolhardy, enterprise. The debate was long and acrimonious. Eventually the government accepted some amendments to its legislation in order to secure its passage without further delay. The shady connection between Sir Hugh Allan, his Pacific railway syndicate and the Conservative party in the 1872 election, a link that was to bring Macdonald down a year later, was still an event hidden in the future when Parliament was dissolved on 8 July 1872.

Measures to adopt the provisions of the Treaty of Washington were another important subject before the 1872 House. The treaty settled a number of the outstanding issues left undecided between the United States and Great Britain at the close of the American Civil War. Macdonald had been a member of the British negotiating team for the treaty, his task being to represent Canadian interests in the settlement. He had not been entirely pleased by the outcome of the negotiations, but now he had the duty of securing approval of the treaty in the Canadian Parliament.