

become the second premier of the province in December after having been re-elected to his House of Commons seat.

Dual representation had been permitted in Ontario and Quebec since 1867. It represented a contentious issue by the time of the 1872 parliamentary session, although by the end of the session it was well on the way towards abolition. The opposition to dual representation came from the Liberals who regarded the practice as an indefensible means through which the government of the day controlled the electoral process. In this attitude the Central Canada Liberals were joined by the members from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick whose legislatures had, in 1867, disqualified members of the House of Commons from sitting in local assemblies. Nova Scotia even banned candidates for a seat in the federal House from its legislature. Ontario and Quebec, with newly established legislatures in 1867, declined to enact such legislation. In each case, the government was in the hands of Conservative administrations which saw the advantage of having direct links with the federal House. Thus the topic became a partisan one, raised every session by the Reformers and defended vigorously by Macdonald and the Conservatives.

In 1871, a political change occurred which broke the stalemate on the issue. The Sandfield Macdonald government in Ontario was defeated and the Liberals under Edward Blake and Alexander Mackenzie replaced it. Both these men had been federal members since 1867, but earlier in 1871 they had been persuaded to stand for Ontario provincial seats. Although they were often on record as opposing dual representation, the goal of ousting the Sandfield Macdonald government came to be seen as a higher purpose. Blake was sworn in as the second premier of Ontario on 20 December 1871. Two days later, the Ontario Legislature met, with one of its first tasks the passing of an act abolishing dual representation in Toronto and Ottawa. The act provided that from the dissolution of the present Parliament of Canada, no member of the Ontario legislature could also hold a federal seat. Its provisions therefore took effect for Ontario members beginning with the 1873 session of Parliament. Blake and Mackenzie, their provincial task accomplished, resigned their Ontario offices and legislative seats after having won re-election in federal ridings in the second general election, July–October 1872. They had laid the basis for a strong Liberal dynasty in Ontario under Oliver Mowat and his successors, which lasted until 1905.

Emboldened by the Ontario move, the opponents of dual representation moved against it again in the Commons. This time they were successful. On 3 June 1872, the Commons gave final reading to a bill to compel members of local legislatures, in provinces where dual representation was not allowed, to resign their seats before becoming candidates for seats in the Dominion Parliament.<sup>15</sup> This was a conditional prohibition, dependent upon action by the provinces.

The following year, in the Second Parliament, the prohibition was made complete. No person who was a member of the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly of an existing province, or one created in the future, would be eligible to sit in the House of Commons. The Act applied to the election of new members of the House during the continuance of the present Parliament.<sup>16</sup> Sitting members could continue to hold their provincial seats until the dissolution of the Second Parliament. This event occurred sooner than anticipated with the fall of the Macdonald government on 2 January 1874. Thus, from the opening of the Third Parliament in March 1874, dual representation

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<sup>15</sup> *An Act to compel Members of the Local Legislature in any Province where dual representation is not allowed to resign their Seats before becoming Candidates for Seats in the Dominion Parliament* (35 Vict., Cap. 15).

<sup>16</sup> *An Act to render Members of the Legislative Councils and Legislative Assemblies of the Provinces now included, or which may hereafter be included within the Dominion of Canada, ineligible for sitting or voting in the House of Commons of Canada* (36 Vict., Cap. 2).