

of them descendants of the United Empire Loyalists or supporters of the Orange Order; moderate Reformers from Canada West who had once followed Robert Baldwin; a majority of the French-speaking inhabitants of Quebec, at this time strongly influenced in their political views by the Roman Catholic Church; and Montreal commercial interests whose spokesman in 1872 was Sir Alexander T. Galt.

Macdonald's grand coalition was carried to the provincial level in Quebec and Ontario. Quebec's first administration after 1867 was led by a Conservative, Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau. The practice of dual representation allowed Chauveau and three of this cabinet to sit in the federal House where they were able to co-operate with Macdonald. In Ontario, Macdonald had secured the appointment of an independent Reformer, John Sandfield Macdonald of Cornwall, as Ontario's first premier. Sandfield Macdonald's original cabinet was another coalition comprising himself, two Conservatives and two Reformers. The Premier sat in the Commons, as did two of his ministers, John Carling and Edmund Burke (E.B.) Wood. It was not surprising that the leading opposition newspaper in Ontario, the *Toronto Globe*, declared that the Sandfield Macdonald administration would be "run" by the other Macdonald government in Ottawa.

From the Maritime provinces the Macdonald coalition gained some support, not for its leader nor its ambitions as a political party but for the fact that it carried forward the project of Confederation. Most of the candidates from New Brunswick in the 1867 election were in favour of union; in the following years some of them committed themselves more closely to Macdonald and his coalition. But in 1872 they constituted ministerialist rather than loyal Macdonald Conservatives. From Nova Scotia, the 1867 election had returned 18 anti-unionists and one supporter of Confederation, Charles Tupper. Macdonald attracted Joseph Howe into his government in 1869 and Howe's followers became a sectional bloc inside the larger grouping. Yet even in the 1872 election, members from the Maritime provinces showed a marked detachment from the party ties that were forming in Central Canada.

The opposition to Macdonald and his allies was represented by another, weaker coalition. It had two wings: the Clear Grit or Reform party of Canada West, and the *Parti Rouge* or Radical group from Quebec. The Reformers spoke for the democratic attitudes of the agrarian frontier and for the belief that representative institutions should be based on population. They were suspicious of large economic interests such as the railways and sceptical of the intervening hand of government. Their partners from Quebec, the Rouge group, tended to be anti-clerical, a position that weakened their standing with the Quebec electorate at this time. Uniting the opposition forces in Ontario and Quebec was a strongly held belief that Macdonald's coalition government was simply a device to hold on to power. It weakened the ability of regions to control their local affairs and undermined the federal principle, the basis of the new union. Thus the opposition elements placed a strong emphasis on provincial rights. The resulting tension between the evolving authority of the central government and the rights of the provinces became an underlying theme in the First Parliament.

Leadership among those opposed to Macdonald constituted a serious problem after 1867. George Brown, the editor of the powerful *Globe*, had stormed out of Macdonald's Confederation coalition in 1865. Although he had rallied the Reformers of Ontario against Macdonald in the first Dominion election, he had been personally defeated in his attempt to enter Parliament. Thus the leadership of the Reform-Radical coalition passed to a small group of sitting members from Ontario and Quebec. The Quebec members of this group believed that the opposition leader should come from Ontario, the source of the largest bloc of members opposing Macdonald. There were two possibilities for the post: Edward Blake and Alexander Mackenzie. The question of the opposition leadership could not be immediately settled, for Blake and Mackenzie undertook a brief foray into Ontario politics in