# Anti-American and Loyalty Arguments In Toronto During the Federal Election Campaigns of 1872, 1874, and 1878

by

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## Outline

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# Introduction

Anti-American and Loyalty arguments were an integral part of Toronto politics in the federal elections of the 1870's. In that decade the attitudes of many English Canadians in Ontario towards the United States was one of apprehension. They feared the possibility of American aggression or even annexation and they criticized American democratic institutions as well as maintained their neighbour's society was unstable because it was tainted by the immigration of non-Anglo-Saxons. They believed Canada could and should remain separate from the United States. They desired also the Dominion to remain within the British Empire; hence Loyalty sentiment was strong in the 1870's. Although they were dissatisfied with the colonial status of the Dominion within the Empire, most people from Ontario were still very much British and did not want Canada to separate from the Mother Country.

Anti-American and Loyalty arguments were used by federal politicians for their own ends in the federal elections of the 1870's. In the federal campaigns of that decade, Conservatives and Liberals debated the Washington Treaty, a reciprocity treaty with the United States, a protective tariff, and a transcontinental railroad. As we shall see, in appealing to the public both parties attempted to win support for their positions on these issues not only by arguing the merits of their case, but also by putting forward Anti-American and Loyalty arguments. The purpose of this thesis is

to present the positions of the parties on these issues and to show that although the Conservatives and Liberals differed in their positions on the issues; both appealed to the voters who wished to remain independent of the United States and loyal to Great Britain.

The most prominent federal political leaders in Ontario during the 1872, 1874, and 1878 federal elections were John Macdonald of the Conservative party and Alexander Mackenzie with George Brown and Edward Blake of the Liberal party. Their campaigns as conducted in Toronto in the newspaper editorials, election pamphlets, and published political speeches will be examined since it was in Toronto that party policies were formulated and circulated throughout the province in the daily newspapers.

In the nineteenth century newspapers were direct extensions of political parties. [1] Because of economic necessity these papers were compelled to rely on one party or the other for financial support. The newspapers were owned often by prominent people in either the Conservative or Liberal parties. Thus the news was often carefully controlled and on occasion distorted according to party advantage. The journalistic tactics of these papers were to enunciate their

1. For a thorough study on the role of the newspapers in Canadian politics in the 1870's see: David Hugh Russell, "The Ontario Press and the Pacific Scandal of 1873", M.A. Thesis, Queen's University, 1970, National Library of Canada, Microfilm TC5746.

party policies, attack those of the opposition, and suppress or leave out news that did not serve their side. There was no equal space for the opposition in these party papers.

Toronto newspapers not only had a wide circulation in Ontario but influenced many lesser newspapers as well. This was a tremendous aid in elections for the political parties. The five daily newspapers operated in Toronto in the 1870's were the Telegraph, the Telegram, the Leader, the Mail, and the Globe. John Ross Robertson was editor of the Conservative paper, the Telegraph, until it ceased publication on June 1, 1872. Later in April 18, 1876, he was again editor of a Conservative paper, this time the Telegram. [2] The Conservative party had two other newspapers at this time: the Leader owned and edited by James Beaty and the Mail edited by Thomas C. Patterson. These papers rivaled the newspaper giant of Canada, the Liberal paper, the Globe, owned and edited by George Brown. The campaigns conducted by these newspapers in Toronto were closely followed by other papers throughout the province.

What is proposed is to devote one chapter to each of the elections of 1872, 1874, and 1878. It so happened that in each campaign the most prominent issue lent itself as a vehicle of expression of anti-American and Loyalty arguments. In 1872 the most important

2. The Telegram professed to be an independent newspaper and was hyper-sensitive to charges by other papers that it was an organ of the Conservative party. As will be seen in Chapter 4, it supported Macdonald and the Conservative party in the 1878 election.

question was the Treaty of Washington; in 1874, the Pacific Railway; and in 1878, the protective tariff. Each chapter has more or less the same structure. The validity of the policies of the parties will not be discussed; however, their positions on these issues are presented, then their anti-American and Loyalty arguments are given to show that despite differences in positions on these important issues, both Liberals and Conservatives called on anti-American and pro-British opinion to win support.

# Chapter I: The United States of America, The Imperial Tie, and the Dominion: Attitudes of Canadian Politicians

In the seventies Canadian political leaders' basic attitude, as expressed in their rhetoric towards the United States, was one of fear of annexation to the Republic. This apprehension for the independence of Canada was reinforced by the public pronouncements of a few important American politicians and the actions of the American Government in the late sixties.

With the American Civil War over, the Republic was a powerful and truculent country with a foreign policy that up to 1871 was essentially anti-British and aggressive towards Canada. Leading American politicians, including President Ulysses Grant, Secretaries of State William Seward and Hamilton Fish, and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Charles Sumner, were expansionists for political and/or economic reasons. They supported the annexation of the Dominion to the Union because they saw it as the inevitable destiny of Canada to be united to the Republic. Also they desired the resources and markets of the Dominion. Typical of the threatening speeches made by these politicians was that of Seward in 1867:

> I know that nature designs that this whole continent, not merely these thirty-six states, shall be, sooner or later, within the magic circle of the American Union. [1]

1. John B. Brebner, Canada A Modern History, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970, page 279.

Certain political actions by the United States in the sixties seemed to increase the possibility of such a union. In 1867 a measure introduced in Congress provided for the admission of the British North American Colonies into the Union. That same year Congress abrogated the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 increasing the economic hardships of the Colonies. Then in 1867 the United States purchased Alaska from Russia, which, according to Sumner, was a "... visible step in the occupation of the whole North American continent." [2] Influenced by the anti-imperialist thought in Great Britain, Sumner proposed also that the Alabama Claims rising from the Civil War be liquidated by England ceding the Dominion to the Republic and he put "... on file a mortgage upon the British North American Provinces for the whole amount." [3] These actions were all designed to increase the pressure on the Dominion to separate from the Empire and join the Republic. In 1871 Albert Shaw, American Consul in Toronto, recommended to the Assistant Secretary of State, J.C.B. Davis, that this aggressive foreign policy towards Canada be continued:

2. James M. Callahan, American Foreign Policy in Canadian Relations, New York: MacMillan Press, 1970, page 308.

3. John B. Brebner, North Atlantic Triangle The Interplay Of Canada, The United States, and Great Britain, Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1945, page 171.

> I need scarcely add that a continuation of the Policy pursued by our Government during the past two years is highly desirable. It has taught Canadians that we believe, as a people, in the "Monroe Doctrine", and the sooner they accept the situation and cut loose from England the sooner will they reap all the advantages which the United States can extend them, whenever they see fit to stand alone, or join their destinies with those of our Republic. [4]

Still the Republic did not annex the Dominion. War weariness set in the United States after the Civil War and reconstruction dominated the interests of American politicians in the late sixties and early seventies. Also with British troops gone from North America, [5] they no longer considered the Dominion as a threat to American supremacy on the continent and with the Treaty of Washington in 1871 settling the outstanding differences between the Republic and the Empire, the hostile and aggressive foreign policy of the Radical Republicans was replaced by an apathetic indifference towards Canada. [6] Most American politicians now took the Dominion for granted, assuming that in the not too distant future it would fall like a ripe apple into the American basket. American talk and threats of annexation, however,

4. National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C., Microfilm T491, Roll 5, Albert D. Shaw, American Consular in Toronto, to J.C.B. Davis, Assistant Secretary of State, 26 May 1871.

5. The last of the British troops departed Canada in 1871; however, the Dominion was still under the protection of the British Navy.

6. John B. Brebner, op. cit., page 196.

kept alive in the consciousness of Canadian politicians the possibility of American hostility towards the Dominion.

Canadian politicians realized the Republic was potentially able to absorb Canada and were constantly on the defence against American encroachments. In 1870 Macdonald, speaking of the danger of the North-West being annexed by the Americans, claimed that the American Government was "... resolved to do all they can, short of war, to get possession of the western territory" [7] and insisted that Canadians must "counteract" this aggression. Brown shared this fear of American aggression towards the Dominion. Blake, on the other hand, dismissed the threat of annexation after the Treaty of Washington settled the conflicts of the Empire and the Republic. In his Aurora Speech in 1874 Blake said the huge size and the many problems within the Republic discouraged Americans from annexing the equally huge Dominion. [8] But Mackenzie was fearful of American pressure and he urged Canadians to be insistent in their territorial

7. Pierre Berton, The National Dream, The Great Railway 1871 - 1881, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970, page 9.

8. Edward Blake, A National Sentiment!, Speech at Aurora, 3 October 1874, With the Comments of Some of the Canadian Press Thereon, Ottawa: E.A. Perry, 1874, pages 10 and 11.

rights. [9]

Many Canadian politicians of both parties rejected annexation for they believed in the intrinsic political, social, and moral superiority of being British rather than American. They rejected the American political system because it did not accept the British ideal of better educated authority. For these Canadian politicians this meant that discipline, order, responsibility, and obedience ought to be enforced in its citizens. [10] They thought that the Americans believed that such qualities ought to be self imposed and therefore concluded that without a moral authority strong enough to guide them, the Americans countenanced extremes of permissiveness, violence, corruption, and license.

The American political system was criticized also by Canadian politicians for geing dominated by partyism with Congress and the President under the control of the political parties. They were convinced that the members of Congress were not serving the interests of the electors but were spending the greater part of their terms in office insuring their own reelection and the continuation of their

9. William Buckingham and George Ross, The Honourable Alexander Mackenzie, His Life and Times, Toronto: Rose Publishing Company Limited, 1892, page 285.

10. David Potter, "Canadian Views of the United States as a Reflex of Canadian Values: A Commentary", in R.C. Brown and S.F. Wise, Canada Views The United States, Nineteenth-Centure Political Attitudes, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967, page 129.

party in power. As for the President, they contended he was not the sovereign and head of state but at best the successful leader of his party and as a partisan executive, he could not be a moral force in American society as was the non-partisan British Monarch in the Empire.

Canadian politicians attacked American democratic principles as well. They were unwilling to accept the idea that all men had an equal right to share in the exercise of power. Political power was a privilege, not a right and they believed universal male sufferage resulted in political ruffianism because it prevented the emergence of the leadership of enlightened and educated men who would hold in check the extravagances and excesses of popular rule. Believing the British system to be a sounder and a more potent instrument for promoting the maximum of social progress without social instability. Conservatives and Liberal saw greater liberty for a British subject than for a citizen of a democracy born of revolution. George Brown spoke for many Canadian politicians when he said:

> ... republicanism boasted of liberty but practised slavery ... Then too, its devotion to the false ideal of universal sufferage democracy had merely led to the corrupt power of machine politicians and rule by the passions of the mob. [11]

11. J.M.S. Careless, "The Political Ideas of George Brown", The Canadian Forum, Volume 36, Number 433, February 1957, page 248.

The instability and the loosening of social cohesion in the United States under the impact of industrialism and urbanization reinforced the distaste of many Canadian politicians for the American Republic. When Canadian politicians pointed to the materialization of American life and the central problem of social violence, their charges had an immediary and a factual basis; lynching and assassinations were commonplace; for example, President Lincoln in 1865. [12] Many of the Canadian critics saw the immigration policy of the Republic as the chief cause of her ills. Charles Mair lamented that as a result of this unrestricted immigration the Anglo-American race was losing the reins of government to non-Anglo-Saxons:

> He who traces his lineage to the foremost and freest nation upon earth is already sandwiched between alien antipathetic and reproductive races, one of which, perhaps, in the distant future will write in blood the word "supremacy". [13]

Many Canadian politicians had similar prejudices against the non-Anglo-Saxon races. They were convinced also that American

12. Carl Berger, The Vision of Grandeur, Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867 - 1914, PhD. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1967, Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, page 262.

13. R. C. Brown, "Canadian Opinion After Confederation, 1867 - 1914" in R.C. Brown and S.F. Wise, op. cit., page 118.

society was being polluted by the immigration of these races into the United States until they now constituted a threat to the Anglo-Saxon race. They pictured the Americans as a materialistic people having a social system inferior to their own because of its open immigration policy and its egalitarian political system that lacked respect for moral authority.

The 1870's was also a time when Canadian politicians devoted a good deal of time discussing the Imperial tie. They derived many of their ideas from English politics and any change in the British attitude towards the Imperial connection would have a considerable effect on their views. In this English discussion on the value of the Empire, there were two schools of thought: the Manchester School or Little Englanders (anti-imperialists) and the Imperialist School.

Many British politicians, such as Russell, Gladstone, Bright, and Cobden, believed the colonies to be liabilities to England. These Little Englanders thought the Empire was morally, politically, and economically bankrupt and assumed that the colonies would separate from the Mother Country "... like ripe apples were destined inevitably to drop off the parent tree." [14] They were relieved rather than

14. Donald Creighton, "Victorians and Empire", Canadian Historical Review, Volume 19, Number 2, June 1938, page 144.

saddened that the colonies had come of age and were prepared to assume their own responsibilities of nationhood.

The other school of thought, Imperialism, had considerable support in England too. After 1870, Great Britain's power was confronted by new challenges from Prussia, Russia, and later France. No longer "deadweights", the colonies were in fact becoming extremely important to a politician like Disraeli who saw them as adding strength to Great Britain in an era of empire building.

In Canada, the politicians developed their ideas on the Imperial tie from these schools of thought. Macdonald and the Conservative party supported closer relations with the Mother Country and refused to loosen the legal connection for fear that the Dominion might be pushed out of the Empire. This apprehension always qualified Macdonald's pressing for more Canadian autonomy. The situation in the Liberal party was more complex. It is true that in the 1870's Alexander Galt and Lucius Seth Huntington advocated independence; but they had little influence on Liberal party policy. Brown tended to see the Imperial tie the way Macdonald did while Blake insisted on more autonomy and the weakening of the legal Imperial constraints on the Dominion. Mackenzie supported most of Blake's ideas but as leader of the party he attempted to conciliate both Brown and Blake. On the whole the Liberals advocated greater Canadian autonomy; however, their goal was not separation from the Mother Country but more freedom

of action within the Empire. The different positions of all these party leaders on the Imperial connection are illustrated in their views on local autonomy, defence, foreign affairs, and imperial federation.

In the late sixties and seventies Macdonald pressed cautiously for greater local autonomy. He hoped that Canada's era of subordination in the Empire had come to an end and that a new Imperial relationship was developing where the Dominion would be an ally of the Mother Country and the tie a "healthy and cordial alliance." [15] After Confederation his government took over the entire local defence of the country and the Militia Act of 1868 gave the power of controlling the militia to the new federal government. [16] Then in 1869 he introduced a Supreme Court Bill to establish Canada's judicial independence from the Mother Country. However, he did not propose that this Supreme Court have the right of final decision so as not to break the legal tie of the Dominion to England. Later in 1876 he opposed the Supreme Court Bill of the Liberals which he argued, by Clause 47, stopped all appeals to the

15. Donald Creighton, Dominion of the North, Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1969, page 304.

16. Richard A. Preston, "Canadian Defence Policy and the Development of the Canadian Nation 1867 - 1917", Canadian Historical Association Historical Booklet, Number 25, Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1970, page 4.

Mother Country - a step he maintained that would result in the severance of the Dominion from England. [17] He wanted greater local autonomy, but not at the expense of Imperial unity.

Like Macdonald, Brown did not insist on greater local autonomy for Canada if he believed it would weakened the Imperial tie. And yet, Blake did press strenuously within the Liberal party to obliterate the stigma of colonialism in Canada. He and Mackenzie, in the years they were in power, 1874-1878, strove to reduce the influence of the Imperial authorities over Dominion affairs. In 1876, for example, they supported the Supreme Court Act which established a Supreme Court in the Dominion to replace the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Westminister as final court of appeal for cases involving four thousand dollars or less. In fact, Blake had favoured the total abolition of the right to appeal to Westminister. They took another step towards greater Canadian autonomy in 1878 with important changes in the Commission and Instructions of the Governor General. The Governor General was executive head of the Government of Canada and agent-in-chief

17. Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald, The Old Chieftain, Volume 2, Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1965, page 196.

of the Colonial Office in the Dominion. The changes brought about by the Liberals resulted in the restriction of the sphere of independent action open to the Governor General. No longer was he allowed to reserve various types of bills. Also abandoned were the clauses permitting him to preside at Council meetings and to exercise a personal discretionary power. Executive acts by the Governor General such as powers to disallow provincial legislation, exercise the prerogative of mercy, grant or refuse dissolution, and dismiss a Lieutenant Governor were now the responsibilities of the Cabinet. [18] By these acts Blake and Mackenzie had increased Dominion authority over local affairs.

In the seventies, Macdonald worked also to improve Canada's defence capacities. He concentrated on laying the foundation of military strength by building up the land forces "... closely connected with the imperial army, and worked up to the same standard of training and discipline. Without this, "he added," Canada will never add to the strength of the Empire and must remain a source of anxiety and weakness." [19] If Canada ever became involved in a war,

18. David M.L. Farr, The Colonial Office and Canada, 1867-1887, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955, page 54.

19. Richard A. Preston, Canada and Imperial Defence, A Study of the Origins of the British Commonwealth's Defense Organization, 1867-1919, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967, page 130. John Macdonald to Sir Staffort Northcote, May 1878.

Macdonald was convinced it would be with the United States - hence his emphasis on the development of land forces - and that it would be the result of "... causes entirely unconnected with Canada" [20] - that is, British foreign policy. Therefore he held the Mother Country responsible for defending Canada as well. As for Canadians participating in an Imperial war not involving the Dominion, he stated that Canadians would undoubtedly serve once the war began; but at the same time he cautioned the Imperial Defence Commission of 1789 that it was unwise "... in time of peace, when there is no immediate danger of war, to attempt negotiations for a contingent of military or naval force to be furnished by the Dominion in aid of such a war ..." as he knew the Canadian people would oppose it. [21] Canada, to Macdonald, clearly played a secondary role in Imperial defence.

Like Macdonald, Brown saw the Republic as the only possible threat to Canada and even from that source he discounted any possibility of an attack. If war ever did occur, he also maintained that it would be caused by British foreign policy and he insisted the burden of Imperial defence -- and of Imperial policies -- lay with the Mother Country. [22] On the other hand, Blake and Mackenzie saw Canada playing

20. Ibid., page 136.

21. Ibid., page 136.

22. J.M.S. Careless, Brown of the Globe, Volume 2, Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1959, page 61.

a greater role in her defence than did Macdonald and Brown. In his Aurora Speech on October 3, 1874, Blake maintained that the responsibilities of defence were the natural extension of responsible government and that Canadians must accept them. [23] Mackenzie agreed that by taking a greater part in her own defence, Canada would develop a character of "manly independence." [24] While in power, Mackenzie established in 1874 the Royal Military College in Kingston to train Canadians as officers in the Militia. He stressed also the defence of Canada's coast and ports to assist the Imperial Navy. In 1878 during the English-Russian crisis over Turkey when a fear of an attack on Canadian ports was prominent, Mackenzie wrote Lord Dufferin:

> We will not ask the Imperial Government for anything as we think Canada should have, and does have, pride enough to be above shirking her duty in providing for the defence of her own coasts. We are part of the Empire and will bear our share of its burdens as well as we share in its glories. [25]

Macdonald, Brown, Blake, and Mackenzie agreed that Canada in protecting herself was contributing to Imperial defence; but they differed on how this was to be done.

23. Edward Blake, op. cit., page 9.

24. Dale Thomson, Alexander Mackenzie Clear Grit, Toronto: MacMillan, 1960, page 330. Alexander Mackenzie to Lord Dufferin, 14 June 1878.

25. Richard A. Preston, op. cit., page 122. Alexander Mackenzie to Lord Dufferin, 11 June 1878.

Since Canada and England had common interests in foreign affairs, Macdonald wanted the two parties to act as a unit in the international scene. Separate treaties with foreign countries he saw as a wedge dividing the Dominion and the Mother Country by acknowledging separate interests. And yet Macdonald was not happy with the inferior role in foreign affairs Canada had played during the Washington Commission in 1871. Somehow he felt a more satisfactory arrangement was necessary. This came about when in 1878 a Canadian representative negotiated the details of a new commercial treaty with France and Spain with the British representative confined to the formalities. [26] Later he pressed for a permanent officer in London to act in the interests of the Canadian Government. The Conservative leader envisioned a new role for the Dominion in her foreign affairs as the Imperial tie moved from an inferior-superior relationship towards a partnership.

Brown agreed with Macdonald that the Mother Country should consult with the Dominion on commercial treaties that involved Canada. Blake went further. He maintained that in "... no distant period the people of Canada would desire that they should have greater share of control than they now have in the management of foreign affairs ..." [27] He complained that, as things stood, Canadians had no control over affairs

26. F. R. Scott, "Political Nationalism and Confederation", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Volume 8, Number 3, August 1942, page 413.

27. Edward Blake, op. cit., page 9.

that affected their lives, notably wars. Canadians would undoubtedly fight in any Imperial war; but he believed they should have some influence on Imperial policy. The Treaty of Washington convinced Mackenzie that the British Authorities never understood Canada's interests and that they subordinated her economic concerns to the British strategic necessities. [28] Long before Macdonald, he was insisting that the Dominion should have the right to negotiate her own treaties then call on the British Government to express its approval or disapproval. The Mother Country, he said, must not interfere in matters concerning the Dominion only as "Canada had passed the bounds of an ordinary Colony of Great Britain ... (and has) assumed the proportions of a nation." [29] However in his pursuit for greater influence in foreign affairs, Mackenzie was not prepared to press to the point of breaking the bonds of Empire. [30]

All the party leaders wanted more power for the Dominion in foreign affairs within the Empire. Where they differed was in the sphere of influence with Macdonald, Brown, and Mackenzie limiting Canada's role to Dominion affairs and Blake pressing for a role in Imperial policy.

28. Dale Thomson, op. cit., page 115.

29. Ibid., page 249.

30. Ibid., page 209.

Macdonald opposed the idea of Imperial Federation. He did not believe that the unity between the Mother Country and the Colonies would be promoted by establishing a new federal legislature for the whole Empire. [31] Besides the people of Canada would not consent to being taxed by a Parliament outside the Dominion. Brown considered the idea as impossible too and dismissed it as "harmless speculation". [32] In his Aurora Speech, Blake proposed some form of Imperial Federation but Mackenzie rejected it as "chimera" and just another of Blake's annoyances. [33]

Macdonald saw the Imperial connection as a political and militarial "alliance" vitally important to Canada. In the 1870's, he pursued a policy of enhancing Canada's position within the Empire - more autonomy as well as a greater say in foreign policy concerning the Dominion - but he refused to adopt any course that would endanger the tie. He believed in a close and harmonious connection with England as the best policy for the young Dominion in North America.

31. Sir Joseph Pope, The Day of Sir John Macdonald, Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Company, 1915, page 177.

32. Edward Blake, op. cit., page 22. Globe, 7 October 1874.

33. Dale Thomson, op. cit., page 248.

Within the Liberal party there was no agreement on the nature of the tie. Brown stressed the importance of the Imperial connection to the Dominion arguing that the newness of Confederation made the seventies an inappropriate time either to question the tie or accept greater powers in defence and foreign affairs. He believed Canada should settle and develop its North-West first before it could acquire any new responsibilities. [34] His greatest fear was that the acquisition of these new powers in the seventies would lead to independence from the Mother Country which he saw as just a step towards the annexation of the Dominion by the United States. [35]

Blake wished for greater Canadian autonomy but his impact on the Canadian electors was limited in the seventies. He did little if any campaigning in the three federal elections because of bad health or ill temper and his ideas were too radical for many as illustrated by the lack of support for his proposal of Imperial Federation in his Aurora Speech. [36]

34. J.M.S. Careless, op. cit., page 327.

35. Ibid., page 72.

36. Carl Berger, The Sense of Power, Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970, page 75. Lord Dufferin wrote Lord Carnavan saying that Blake's Aurora speech seemed "... to have fallen flat".

In an effort to keep his party united Mackenzie travelled the middle of the road on Imperial issues. He pressed for more autonomy for the Dominion, greater responsibilities in defence and foreign affairs but not as strenuously as Blake did so as not to alienate the Brown section of the party.

In the seventies Canadian politicians also debated vigorously the economic future of the Dominion. Spurred on by Confederation in 1867 and the acquisition of the North-West in 1870 they embarked on a program of building a transcontinental economy to rival that of the United States. The economic issues that rose were the negotiations for a reciprocity treaty with the Republic, the construction of a transcontinental railway, and the imposition of a tariff to protect Canadian industries from their American competition.

The question of a reciprocity treaty with the Republic was the result of the American Government's abrogation in 1866 of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854. While this agreement of reciprocal free trade in coal and fish, farm and forest products was in effect, Canada prospered. Unfortunately hostility towards the British and the prevalent protectionist opinion in the Union led to the abrogation of the Treaty. All attempts by Canadian politicians in the sixties and the seventies to renew this Treaty failed but a lively debate ensued in Canada on how to achieve success in these negotiations.

The railroads were paramount issues as well in the seventies. To complete the union of Confederation the government undertook the rapid construction of two railroads: the Intercolonial Railway to connect Halifax to Quebec and the Pacific Railroad to link British Columbia to eastern Canada. Macdonald hoped that these railroads would consolidate Confederation by uniting the scattered provinces together and by encouraging trade along an east-west route. The routes chosen by his government and the cost of their construction was hotly debated by Canadian politicians in the seventies.

Under the impact of the world depression the Canadian economy failed to expand and create a diversified, integrated, and strong economic base for the new Dominion. When the American protective tariff further aggravated the economy, Canadian politicians were forced to decide whether or not to adopt a similar tariff policy to assist the depressed industries of the country.

In the three federal election campaigns of the seventies in Toronto, both political parties expounded their anti-American and Loyalty arguments to buttress their policies towards these fundamental issues facing Canada.

# Chapter II: Election of 1872

There were many issues in the election of 1872 as the Liberals criticized every major decision made by the Macdonald Government since Confederation. They claimed that Macdonald's "better terms" agreement of 1869 with Nova Scotia was a breach of the constitution and a gross injustice to the other provinces; they denounced the creation of the province of Manitoba in 1870 as a premature act; and they opposed the terms of British Columbia's entry into Confederation in 1871 as an undue economic burden on the Dominion. Other election topics were Louis Riel's amnesty, corruption in the Conservative Government, the Treaty of Washington, both the routes and the costs of the proposed railways, and the need for a protective tariff. Intermingled with these last three issues were the anit-American and Loyalty arguments of the politicians of both parties.

The Treaty of Washington was the dominant issue in this election. The United States and Great Britain established a Joint Commission which met in Washington from February 27 to May 8 in 1871 to resolve the outstanding differences between the two countries. Present were Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State; Lord de Grey, Head of the British delegation; and John Macdonald as a British commissioner. The result was the Treaty of Washington which settled the disputes over the Canadian fisheries, the navigation of the St. Lawrence River and the

canal systems, the Alabama Claims, and the San Juan Boundary conflict.[1] This Treaty was signed on May 8, 1871, ratified by the Canadian Parliament in the spring of 1872, and debated by both parties in the election campaign that followed. Included in the debate were Canadian demands for a reciprocity treaty and compensation for the Fenian raids ignored by the Joint High Commission.

The Treaty of Washington issue provided an opportunity for both parties to expound anti-American and Loyalty arguments during the campaign. On the one hand, Conservatives pictured the United States as an aggressive power hostile towards the Empire and maintained the need for Imperial unity to protect Canada's territorial rights from American encroachments. Canada alone, they argued, could not defend her interests against the Americans. Moreover, they called upon the voters to strengthen Imperial unity by supporting the Treaty. On the other hand, the Liberals claimed Canada's territorial rights would best be protected by the Dominion taking a firmer stand than Macdonald had against American encroachments. They professed their Loyalty to the Empire, but condemned the Treaty as needlessly sacrificing Canada's interests and called upon the voters to do their patriotic duty for the Dominion and reject the Treaty. We now turn to a detailed examination of the arguments of both parties towards the Treaty.

1. The San Juan boundary dispute was referred to the arbitration of the German Emperor and was not a significant issue in the election. Therefore it will not be discussed in this thesis.

One of the disputes the Treaty of Washington settled was that of the Canadian fisheries. American fishermen wanted the Canadian inshore fisheries opened to them. Between 1854 and 1866, American fishermen were permitted by the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 to "... fish the inshore waters, land to buy bait, ice, supplies, and whatever (they) needed, recruit members for (their) crew, (and) ship fish in bond from a Canadian port ..." [2] Under this Treaty the Americans had the same fishing rights and privileges as the Canadian fishermen except for the mouths of the rivers. However, after the abrogation of the Treaty in 1866, the Canadian Government established a license which permitted the American fishermen, on payment of a nominal fee of two dollars per measured ton of vessel, to continue to enjoy their privileges they had enjoyed under the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854. In 1869 Canadian fishermen complained that the majority of the American fishermen failed to buy the licenses while fishing in Canadian waters and they pressed their government to protect them from this American encroachment. Consequently the Canadian Government in 1870 enacted a new law which prohibited American fishermen from using inshore fisheries in Canadian waters. [3]

2. Lester Shippee, Canadian - American Relations 1849-1874, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939, page 263.

3. Ibid., pages 272-273.

In turn American fishermen protested to their government and at the Washington Conference this dispute was settled.

The Washington Treaty opened up the Canadian inshore fisheries to American fishermen for ten years (Article 18) and granted the same privileges to Canadian fishermen in American waters. Fish, oil, and fish products were admitted into each country duty free (Article 21) and because the Canadian fishing areas were much richer than the American, compensation, determined by arbitration, was to be paid to Canada.

In the election campaign the Conservatives defended the fisheries articles saying they were a step towards improving Anglo-American relations. Macdonald maintained that the restrictions on American fishermen in Canadian waters had embittered relations between the Empire and the Republic; but that now as a result of the Treaty "... a feeling of friendship has grown up between the nations, and it can be no other desire than to foster and encourage that feeling which dictates the agreeing to these particular articles". [4] The

4. John Macdonald, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, Parliamentary Debates, Dominion of Canada, 1872, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1872, page 320. This speech was in the Conservative election pamphlet, The Washington Treaty Debate!, Toronto: Mail Publishing Company, 1872.

Liberals, however, claimed that the fisheries concession meant that Canada had given up something of great value for "nothing in return." [5] Had Macdonald won a reciprocity treaty with the United States for the concession, they argued, they would not have objected to the fisheries articles. However he had not and they viewed the articles as an unwarranted concession of Canadian fishing areas to the Americans. Mackenzie warned the voters that the constant concession of Canadian territorial rights to the United States would only end in more extravagant demands being made "... by the Republic to gratify its insatiable and rapacious maw." [6]

The Conservatives retorted that there was no sacrifice of Canadian territorial rights since Canadian fishermen were given the same rights in American waters as the Americans had in Canadian waters. [7] Furthermore they stressed the material benefit to the Canadian fishermen of the opened American market and the compensation.

5. Globe, (Toronto), 19 July 1872.

6. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 16 May 1872, Parliamentary Debates, Dominion of Canada, 1872, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1872, page 635. This speech was in the Liberal election pamphlet Speeches of Hon. Alexander Mackenzie on the Treaty of Washington, Toronto: Globe Publishing Company, 1872.

7. Globe , 12 August 1872, John Crawford, speech at Toronto West Nomination Convention, 11 August 1872.

Urging the voters to accept the fisheries articles as Imperial policy, Robert A. Harrison, Conservative ex-Member of Parliament for Toronto West, warned that Canada would "... have no right to expect support from the Imperial power in protecting its Fisheries, if we were to fly in the face of Imperial policy and refuse to ratify what they consider expedient in the interests of the Empire." [8]

Edward Blake insisted, however, that Canadian fisheries should not be ceded to the Americans for a money compensation. [9] He maintained that there was a money compensation to Canadian fishermen because the Americans "... by their recklessness, had almost worn out their own fisheries ..." [10] and they would ruin the Canadian fisheries if they are permitted to fish in Canadian waters.

On this fisheries dispute, both parties saw the United States as an aggressor towards Canada but they differed on how to resist

8. Robert A. Harrison, speech in House of Commons, 14 May 1872, Parliamentary Debates, Dominion of Canada, 1872, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1872, page 546. This speech was in the Conservative election pamphlet The Washington Treaty Debate!, Toronto: Mail Publishing Company, 1872.

9. Edward Blake, speech in House of Commons, 8 May 1872, Parliamentary Debates, Dominion of Canada, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1872, page 351. This speech was in the Liberal election pamphlet Speeches of Hon. Edward Blake on the Treaty of Washington, Toronto: Globe Publishing Company, 1872.

10. Ibid., page 437.

the encroachment. The Conservatives stressed the point that the articles lessened hostilities between the Empire and the Republic and strengthened Imperial unity. The Liberals asserted, however, that the fisheries articles conceded valuable Canadian territorial rights to their aggressive neighbour. They were particularly disturbed by the fact Canada had not received a reciprocity treaty in return for the concession.

Another dispute settled by the Treaty of Washington that became an issue in the election was the granting to the Americans the use of the St. Lawrence River and the canal systems. The Americans always wanted the use of this waterway and Article 26 of the Washington Treaty opened the St. Lawrence River to them and, in return, three remote Alaskan rivers to Canadians for commercial navigation in perpetuity. Since the use of the river was of no value unless the canals were included, Article 27 secured to the Americans the use of the Welland, St. Lawrence, and other canals of the Dominion on equal terms with Canadians.

This granting of free navigation of the St. Lawrence River to the Americans raised again the question of Canadian territorial rights in the campaign. The Conservatives argued that the river was an international boundary, common to both countries, and therefore there had been no yielding of Canada's territory to the Americans. Macdonald referred to the articles as "... simply a permission to

navigate the river by American vessels, that the navigation shall ever remain free and open for the purpose of commerce - and only for the purpose of commerce - to citizens of the United States, subject to any laws and regulations of Great Britain, or of the Dominion of Canada, not inconsistent with the privileges of free navigation." [11] As a matter of sentiment, Macdonald said, he regretted granting these articles to the Americans but was convinced the Americans were determined to have the concession, and so it became a question of "... whether, as the American people had set their hearts upon it, and as it would not be well to set this question at rest with the others, and make the concession." [12]

The Liberals saw this "concession" by Macdonald as another example of Canadian territory rights being turned over to the Americans. In an editorial, "Patriotism Come to Perfection", the Globe blamed Macdonald for sacrificing the navigation of the St. Lawrence River:

> The St. Lawrence sovereignty was surely something as precious to Canadians as that of the Hudson or the Mississippi to the Americans, but this patriot could sacrifice it without a struggle, and throw the canals into the bargain. [13]

11. John Macdonald, op. cit., page 331.

12. Ibid., page 325.

13. Globe, 19 July 1872.

Blake accused Macdonald of "... cowardice, in not asserting his rights against the cupidity of the United States" [14] and Mackenzie berated all the British Commissioners for acting like frightened children in their negotiations with the Americans for "... having set their hearts on anything seemed to be ground enough for the British Commissioners to grant them anything they desire." [15] As in the fisheries articles, Mackenzie believed that Canada had lost a good chance to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with the Americans. Again he warned the voters that the continual concession of Canadian territorial rights to the Americans would not end until all was lost:

> The only reason Sir John gave for giving up the St. Lawrence was that the Americans had set their hearts upon it. It was well known their hearts were set upon Canada itself; and if we continued to make concession after concession we would find ourselves bereft of any territorial rights worth possessing. [16]

Again in the debate on this issue, both parties expounded anti-American argument while the Conservatives expressed Loyalty argument and the Liberals concern for the Dominion.

14. Edward Blake, op. cit., page 440.

15. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 351.

16. Globe, 17 July 1872, Alexander Mackenzie, speech at Glencoe, 9 July 1872.

Both parties expressed their disappointment that a reciprocity treaty was not negotiated at the Washington Conference. Reciprocity entailed the reciprocal reduction of customs duties charged on each other's products by Canada and the United States. Canadians had prospered under the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 and after its abrogation in 1866 the Canadian Government pressed the American Government for its renewal. Macdonald went to Washington in 1871 to discuss such a treaty but the American delegation dismissed any renewal of reciprocity claiming that if the Washington Treaty included it, the American Senate would refuse to ratify it. The British delegation, not wanting to jeopardize the negotiations, did not press the issue.

Both parties raised the question of reciprocity in the election. Having failed to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with the Americans, Macdonald turned the issue into a question of national pride saying it "... would be humiliating to Canada to make any further exertions at Washington or to do anything more in the way of pressing for the renewal of that instrument ..." [17] Robert A. Harrison told his electors the Americans refused to negotiate a treaty because they

17. John Macdonald, op. cit., page 298.

hoped that Canada would be forced to join the Republic. [18] The Dominion, he added, would not get reciprocity "by begging for it" and he urged them to forget it and show the Americans they could do without it. The Conservatives concluded their arguments on reciprocity by expressing optimism of Canada's future. As Macdonald put it:

> I knew that the country was too rich to be seriously injured by the stoppage of this trade. I knew that a body of four millions of men could not starve on their own soil. [19]

The Liberals argued that in accepting the Treaty Macdonald had seriously weakened Canada's ability to win reciprocity. The Globe emphasized this point throughout the campaign.

> On May 16, 1872, Mr. Ault voted for the Washington Capitulation, and thus contributed to render impossible any successful negotiations for a treaty of reciprocity between the United States and Canada. [20]

Both parties pictured the United States as an aggressor and argued that their position was in the best interest of Canada.

18. Robert A. Harrison, op. cit., page 536.

19. Mail, (Toronto), 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 June 1872.

20. Globe, 7 August 1872, - the name of the Conservative candidate changed each day.

No issue in the 1872 campaign ignited Canadians' emotions more than the Fenian Claims. Fenianism was a movement for Irish independence. Taking full advantage of the aftermath of the American Civil war - a surplus of war material and a period of political confusion - Irish Americans joined in a Fenian Brotherhood to subject Canadians to a period of continual harassment and occasional invasions in the hope of extracting Irish independence from Great Britain by threatening her with the removal of Canada from the Empire. [21] Their actions increased Canada's defense costs and kept Canadians in a state of agitation and fear. The American Government did little to stop the raids which continued into the seventies.

Macdonald sought compensation for these Fenian raids in Washington. However, the American delegation offered technical objections to prevent the claims being considered and the British delegation did not press the issue. [22] Instead the British agreed to guarantee an Imperial loan for a Canadian railway if the Canadian Parliament ratified the Treaty of Washington. This compensation, however, did not end the controversy over the Fenian Claims in Canada.

21. Lester Shippee, op. cit., page 214.

22. The American delegation suggested the terms of the official correspondence between Great Britain and the United States establishing the Commission did not include the Fenian Claims.

In the campaign, the Conservatives expressed shock that the American Government failed to stop the Fenian raids on Canada and disappointment that their claims were omitted from the Treaty. Macdonald accused the United States of failing to exercise "sufficient vigilance" or "due diligence" in stopping these raids for he believed the raids were "... accompanied by such evidence of connivance on the part of the United States that we had a right to say that if they could not or would not keep their people in order, they should be obliged to compensate us for any violation of their international obligations in that respect." [23] He also attacked the American Government for not considering the Fenian Claims when the Empire was prepared to negotiate their Alabama Claims. [24]

Macdonald was determined, however, that Canada received compensation for the raids:

> Canada was resolved that these outrages upon her frontier by citizens and inhabitants of a foreign country should not go unrevenged and uncompensated. [25]

He wanted compensation from the United States; however, because Washington refused to consider the claims and London did not press the issue, he received a guarantee from the British Government for a loan to construct a railroad.

23. Mail, 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 June 1872.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

During the campaign he defended this compensation as the only one obtainable and thus the best solution to the problem. [26] Canada, he said, gained material advantages from London which he maintained strengthened the Imperial tie for it "... put a finish at once to the hopes of all dreamers or speculators who desire or believe in the alienation and separation of the colonies from the Mother Country." [27] Macdonald was confident the Imperial compensation would lead to the stopping of the Fenian raids:

> We have this security that when the British Government and Parliament find that we insist upon the principle that we must get compensation from somewhere, and when they find that if the Fenians come and invade our land we shall expect full compensation, she will take steps to insist upon these Fenian outrages being checked and amply compensated for by the United States. [28]

Like the Conservatives, the Liberals attacked the American Government for failing to stop the raids. Edward Blake agreed with Macdonald that the United States should have considered the Fenian Claims at the Washington Conference [29] and that the Republic discharge their international obligations:

26. John Macdonald, op. cit., page 389.

27. Ibid., page 389.

28. Mail, 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 June 1872.

29. Globe, 2 July 1872, Edward Blake, speech at Kincardine, 26 June 1872.

> The point that was desired was an acknowledgment that there had been a disregard of the duty of a neighbouring state, and the settlement for the future of the question, whether it was right or wrong, in accordance with the principles of international law or not, that the Government of the United States should allow its citizens and subjects to drill and organize for the purpose of invading a friendly power. [30]

Since Macdonald failed to get this acknowledgment from the Americans, the Globe warned its readers if they supported the Treaty there would be no "... reason to hope that the United States Government will perform its duty as a friendly neighbour any better in the future than in the past." [31] The paper was convinced also the Americans would never consider the Fenian Claims, now that the Alabama Claims were settled and they would gain nothing by making such a concession. [32] For all this that Canada lost, the Globe told its readers they could thank Macdonald for not insisting on the Americans recognizing their duty to stop the raids:

> ... if at some future time, as is not improbable we have to turn out again to repel hordes of miscreants from our shores, while the United States Government repeats its mockery of sham proclamations with impunity, we may extract what comfort we can from the thought that we owe such a possibility to the action of our representative on the Joint High Commission, who refused to insist on such a recognition as we were entitled to. [33]

30. Edward Blake, speech in House of Commons, op. cit., page 442.

31. Globe, 20 June 1872.

32. Globe, 6 August 1872.

33. Globe, 16 August 1872.

As for Macdonald's Imperial compensation, the Liberals viewed it as a money payment for the damages of the raids and argued that more than money was involved, that Canada's honour and prestige were at stake. James McLellan, Liberal candidate in Toronto West, explained:

> And we were to be compensated for the loss of our sons, and for a probable, almost a certain repetition of the invasion of our soil, by a money payment, forsooth. Was there nothing higher or more sacred than gold? If individual honour were to be valued, national honour was not to be bought with a price; and when Sir Francis Hincks or any one else said that we had received a legitimate satisfaction for the invasion of our soil and the slaughter of our sons by a money payment, that man dishonoured his country. 34

Mackenzie summed up the Liberals' position on this issue saying "... that on no consideration ought we yield our honour at the shrine of mammon, on no consideration ought we to have bartered away our heritage for this questionable equivalent of money." 35

Both parties pictured the United States as a hostile and aggressive country refusing to perform its international duty of preventing raids on her peaceful neighbour. Both were disturbed by the omission of the Claims from the Treaty but they disagreed

34. Globe, 12 August 1872, James McLellan, speech at Toronto West Nomination Convention, 11 August 1872.

35. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 353.

whether the Imperial compensation improved Canada's relations with the Republic or whether it would stop the raids. While the Conservatives maintained that Canada gained material and moral support from the Imperial concessions, the Liberals argued that to accept the concessions was detrimental to Canada's honour and prestige.

Another reason Macdonald gave for defending the Treaty during the election campaign was that it settled the Alabama Claims and restored friendly relations between the Empire and the Republic. The Alabama Claims rose from the military action of the armed cruisers the Alabama and her sister ships during the American Civil War. These cruisers had been built under the direction of a Confederate agent in the Laird shipyards on the Mersey in Great Britain in 1862. [36] During the war, they caused considerable damage to the North. The United States blamed Great Britain for failing to enforce her neutrality laws and continued to press the Claims of damages after the war. These Claims were a point of friction that threatened war between the two powers. In 1871, due to the rise of potential rivals in Europe such as Russia and Prussia, England, to lessen the possibilities of war, agreed to submit the Claims to arbitration by an international tribunal of five at Geneva.

36. Lester Shippee, op. cit., pages 129-130.

To gain support for the Treaty in the subsequent election campaign, the Conservatives affirmed that it would guarantee peace; that the Empire was endangered by American hostility; and that if the Treaty was not accepted, Great Britain's influence and prestige would be seriously weakened. [37] Macdonald pictured the United States as an enemy that would attack the Empire whenever the Mother Country was engaged in conflict in Europe and he warned the voters if war between the Empire and the Republic occurred, Canada would be the battleground:

> We should be the sufferers, our country would be devasted, our people slaughtered, and our property destroyed ... [38]

Once the fear of war was embedded in the minds of the voters, the Conservative leader praised the Treaty for establishing the principle of arbitration as the mode of settling international differences and for guaranteeing peace between the two powers:

> If ever there was an arrangement by which continued peace - certain peace and certain property - is secured to the people of Canada it is the arrangement contained in that much abused Treaty. [39]

37. John Macdonald, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 301.

38. Ibid., page 301

39. Mail, 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 June 1872.

The Liberals disagreed. Mackenzie refused to believe the Empire was threatened by the United States and that it was necessary for Canada to make so many sacrifices:

> Had it come to this, that the Premier of Canada had to make an appeal to the forbearance of Canadians because of the necessities of that great empire of which we form a part? Were we to live as a portion of the British Empire - was Britain herself to live merely by the sufferance of the United States, Russia, and other nations? No other interpretation could be put on his language than this, that this was a sacrifice demanded of us because of a state of weakness into which the Mother Country had fallen. He denied this. He believed that England still held supremacy over the nations of the world. [40]

Mackenzie argued also that Canada defending her territorial rights would not produce a state of war and he accused Macdonald of allowing Americans to trample on Dominion rights on the assumption it would bring peace. If this continued, he warned, any national life in Canada would be destroyed:

> We believe, however, that there was a limit beyond which we ought not to go. He (Mackenzie) did not believe that national health, national glory and national pride were always to be produced by making sacrifices to what is joistly the peace-at any-price party. It was manifest that if we on this continent, hemmed in as we were by the people of United States, whose political policy has been singularly aggressive yielded up merely for the sake of so-called peace every advantage that we possessed within our territory, it would soon become a question how far it would be possible to pursue that policy and retain any trace of national life and public spirit. [41]

40. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 347. Hansard reports of Parliamentary Speeches used the third person singular "he" and not the first person singular "I".

41. Ibid., page 346.

As for the Treaty guaranteeing peace, the Globe dismissed this argument of Macdonald's as "sheer sophistry" for no peace was seen possible until Canada's local interests were considered. [42]

Macdonald too came under Liberal fire for his role on the British delegation at Washington. Reluctantly Macdonald had agreed to be a member of the delegation to protect Canada's interests. His position was a difficult one. Once there, he realized he could not jeopardize the Treaty by refusing to sign it and yet at the same time he knew Canada could not escape being sacrificed to Anglo-American understanding. Hence his reluctant acceptance of the fisheries and St. Lawrence River articles. However, he saw that Anglo-American friendship was imperative to Canada for if war ever occurred between the two powers, Canada would stand to lose the most.

At the Conference, Macdonald was unhappy with his British colleagues:

> I must say I am greatly disappointed at the course taken by the British Commissioners. They seem to have only one thing on their minds, that is, to go home to England with a Treaty in their pockets settling everything no matter at what cost to Canada. [43]

42. Globe, 16 August 1872.

43. Public Archives of Canada, Macdonald Papers, Volume 167, Macdonald to Charles Tupper, 1 April 1871.

During the negotiations, he found it necessary to attempt to convince his "squeezable" colleagues of "the unreasonableness of the Yankees." [44] He believed the Americans demanded too much and the British too readily ceded everything to them. He maintained that if the way "... in which Canada has been treated by England were fully known to the people (of Canada), ... it would raise an Annexation storm that could not easily be allayed." [45]

Nevertheless, Macdonald explained that he signed the Treaty out of a sense of Imperial duty. He believed Great Britain's position in the world was threatened by the lack of understanding with the United States [46] and it was the duty of Canada to make sacrifices to bring about such reconciliation. He feared that if he did not sign, blame for the Treaty's failure would be on Canada and this he knew would "... strengthened the hands of the party in England who consider Canada a burden to be got rid of and an obstacle to friendly relations with the United States." [47]

44. Ibid., Volume 167, Macdonald to Charles Tupper, 21 March 1871.
45. Ibid., Volume 167, Macdonald to George Cartier, 6 May 1871.
46. Ibid., Volume 15, Macdonald to Charles Tupper, 29 April 1871.
47. Ibid., Volume 167, Macdonald to Charles Tupper, 29 March 1871.

In the election campaign, Macdonald defended his position on the Commission saying he was an Imperial commissioner representing not only the Dominion but also the Empire. He constantly lamented his difficult position on the Commission:

> I could not ignore the fact that I was selected a member of that Commission from my acquaintance with Canadian politics. I had continually before me, not only the Imperial question, but the interests of the Dominion of Canada ... [48]

He concluded, however, that "... interests far greater than the mere pecuniary interests of Canada were involved ..." [49] in the Treaty and that the Empire must come first. Charles Tupper supported him saying if he had not done this "... the finger of scorn would have been pointed at him as a traitor, not only to the highest and holiest interests of the Empire, but a traitor to the people of Canada as well." [50] What was good for the Empire, was good for the Dominion; consequently, Conservatives maintained as an Imperial delegate Macdonald's patriotic duty was to strengthen the Imperial tie by considering Imperial interests first at Washington.

48. John Macdonald, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 306.

49. Mail, 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 June 1872.

50. Charles Tupper, speech in House of Commons, 14 May 1872, Parliamentary Debates, Dominion of Canada, 1872, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1972, page 563. This speech was in the election pamphlet: The Washington Treaty Debate! Toronto: Mail Publishing Company, 1872.

The Liberals did not accept this Conservative argument. Mackenzie said Macdonald's first loyalty ought to have been to the Dominion:

> ... there was a patriotism that could not be characterized by that sentimental name of loyalty; there was a patriotism every man must feel who has a country to legislate for, ..., and he considered that his (Macdonald) position as a Canadian representative demanded of him that he should give his first and best regards to the country he was most deeply interested in. [51]

Macdonald's failure to do so, Mackenzie added, was a backward step:

> He (Mackenzie) had listened with feelings of a painful conviction that he (Macdonald) has taken a step that would produce political consequences of a disastrous kind in the future, that it was a step in that retrogression which marked the decline of a people - a decline in that national spirit that is as essential to the well-being of the country as food is to the life and vitality of man. [52]

Mackenzie argued also that England had not asked Canada to make any sacrifices and that it was left to the Canadian Parliament to accept or reject the Canadian articles of the Treaty. [53] If the Dominion was not to be allowed to do so, he for one would have refused to continue to support the Imperial tie:

51. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 16 May 1872, op. cit., page 634.

52. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 3 May 1872, op. cit., page 347.

53. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 16 May 1872, op. cit., page 633.

> If we were to be compelled to humiliate ourselves in order to satisfy the claims of the neighbouring Republic, he for one would prefer that we should pass out of our present state of existence and take some other political form, some form under which we would have at least the right of exhibiting an independent spirit, and not be subject to such control as the hon. gentleman has asked the House to believe was imposed upon us. [54]

Liberals believed Imperial unity was possible only through the maintenance of local autonomy within the Empire and Imperial respect for Canada's distinct and local interests.

The difference in the Loyalty of the Conservative and Liberals towards the Imperial tie was demonstrated in the issue of Macdonald's role on the British Commission in Washington. Both were loyal to the British connection but the Conservatives were prepared to sacrifice local Canadian concerns to Imperial interests while the Liberals said it was not necessary to make such sacrifices in the name of Loyalty.

A similar disagreement between the Conservatives and the Liberals rose in their campaign arguments against the United States. Both expressed anti-American arguments; but they differed on how to protect Canadian territorial rights from American aggression. The Conservatives argued that the best way was to accept the Washington Treaty as Imperial policy and by so doing, strengthen Imperial unity. For this reason the Mail called upon the voters to support the Treaty:

54. Ibid., page 636.

> Electors! By your action in adopting the Treaty you have won the sympathy even of the Gladstone administration. You have silenced the carpings of the Manchester School. .... You have impressed on the British people your earnest desire to remain in the Empire, and have shown them that when they make sacrifices for your sake, you are ready to do likewise for them. You have knit Mother and Daughter in reciprocal bonds. You have received a pledge, that will not be broken, that the uttermost shilling and the last soldier of Great Britain will be spent in your defence should that dire necessity arise; but above all, you have made for this country a future in which she can go on increasing without fear of danger from the United States, and with the hearty co-operation and material aid of the British people. [55]

Canada alone, Conservatives argued, could not defend her territorial rights from American aggression; therefore it was in the best interest of the Dominion to strengthen Imperial unity by supporting the Treaty.

The Liberals did not believe Canada was protecting her territorial rights by supporting the Treaty. They believed Canada must take a firm stand against American aggression and encroachments on the Dominion by rejecting the Treaty. The Globe warned:

> If Canadian autonomy is to be maintained, a manly and independent yet peaceable and friendly tone must be maintained towards the United States. There must be no offence and yet there must be no undue concession. [56]

55. Mail, 24 July 1872.

56. Globe, 13 June 1872.

Clearly the Liberals thought Canadian territorial rights would be protected if the Dominion took a firm stand at the negotiation table. Since they believed Macdonald had not done so, they rejected the Treaty and accused him of disloyalty.

During the election campaign, the Conservatives continuously accused the Liberals of being disloyal in opposing the Treaty. They charged the opposition with being "disunionists", "independentists", and "annexationists" wanting to destroy Confederation, break up the Empire, and force Canada into the Republic. Remarked the Leader:

> There are arrayed against the government a party of factionists without principle, without policy, without character and without experience, whose sole objects are Independence or separation from the British Empire and the dismemberment of the Dominion. This means, ... , no more nor no less, than annexation to the neighbouring Republic. [57]

Therefore it saw the "true issue" of the election as one of Loyalty:

> At the next elections, therefore, the question for every Ontario elector to decide will be: shall I support a Government which is loyal to British connection, and whose policy has been attended with most beneficial results to Canada and the Union cause; or shall I vote in favour of those whose allies seek by every means in their power to bring about annexation? This is the ture issue. [58]

57. Leader, (Toronto), 17 July 1872.

58. Ibid., 13 June 1872.

By making Loyalty the issue the Conservatives hoped that the voters would begin to wonder about the motives of the Opposition in criticizing the Treaty. The Liberals, realizing they would gain nothing by conducting a similar campaign, accused the Conservatives of slandering the Opposition. Said Mackenzie:

> These gentlemen had laboured to create the impression among the people that the leaders of the Liberal party were a very bad set of men, that they were the associates of annexationists and disunionists, and had been guilty of all the political crimes in the calendar. It was well that the country should understand that the policy of these men was a policy of slander; that they could not defend their own political conduct, and so sought to escape censure by maligning their opponents. [59]

Liberals refused to adopt a similar campaign because they believed it would divert the attention of the voters from the real issue of the election: Macdonald's unwarranted sacrifices of Canadian interests at Washington.

In their effort to gain support for their positions on the Treaty, both political parties pictured the United States as a hostile and aggressive power. Referring to the aggressiveness of American diplomacy, Robert A. Harrison said the Americans "... took all they

59. Globe, 27 July 1872, Alexander Mackenzie, speech at St. Thomas, 24 July 1872.

could get, and were anxious to get a great deal more, all the while of gaining every point, and apparently conceding none." [60] Mackenzie agreed saying that "... experience of American diplomacy has been extremely disadvantageous, and it behooves us not to put any trust or confidence on the diplomacy that was constantly exacting and never yielding." [61] The Conservatives took their anti-American campaign a step further than the Liberals. Throughout the election they castigated American political institutions and society to raise the prejudices of the voters against their neighbour. The Liberals, while agreeing with what was said by the Conservatives, did not pursue an intense anti-American campaign because they believed it would only divert the attention of the electors from what they considered would make the most political capital - Macdonald's conduct at Washington.

Some Canadians were highly critical of American political institutions and society. In their campaign, the Conservatives appealed to these prejudices. In a letter to the editor of the Mail, one Conservative correspondent wrote that American democracy was deplorable and that it would continue to be such "... so long as its

60. Globe, 12 August 1872, James McLellan, speech at Toronto West Nomination Convention, 11 August 1872.

61. Alexander Mackenzie, speech in House of Commons, 16 May 1872, op. cit., page 636.

national offices, from the President down to the meanest village post mistress; and from the Treasurer of the Republic down to the lowest landing-waiter are avowedly filled, not with respect to intellectual or moral fitness, but from recommendations of the most unscrupulous electioneering." [62] Macdonald said American democracy was "... public men depraved, officials purchased, (and) whole communities sold like sheep in the shambles...." [63] In an editorial, "Shall Traitors Rule the State", the Mail pictured the American republican system of government as corrupt, oppressive, and inferior to the British system of government:

> Rather strengthen the hands of the champions of British connection, for you know that Independence means Annexation, and Annexation the loss of our individuality, the imposition of grinding taxes, and the inflication on ourselves of a system of Government which was inferior at its very inception to that under which we live, and which has since become honeycombed with robbery and rottenness and converted into absolutism and tyranny. [64]

Conservatives insisted that the American Civil War was threatening to start once more as well as "... religious differences are looming up with fearful aspect, fermented by Atheism, superstition and bigotry; so that men are standing in continual dread of an universal hand to hand religious fight." [65] According to Conservatives, American society was on the eve of destruction.

62. A.T., letter to the editor, "Common Sense Thoughts on our Political Position", Mail, 19 July 1872.
63. Mail, 20 July 1872, John Macdonald, speech at Clinton, 17 July 1872.
64. Mail, 15 July 1872.
65. A.T., op. cit.

Having pictured the United States as a country with corrupt democratic institutions and social anarchy, the Conservatives then expressed confidence that Canadians would refuse to support the Liberals whom they accused of working to annex the Dominion to the Republic. As the Mail put it:

> Why Canadians should long for annexation via Independence in these prosperous times is a matter beyond our comprehension. If we were shoeless and hungry we might be excused for asking charity from Uncle Sam. If we were on the verge of national bankruptcy we might be justified in abanding Great Britain and forgetting all that she has done for us besides giving us existence. Being, however, prosperous to an unexampled degree, more prosperous than our Republican neighbours; purer, publicly and privately, than they; with a more stable form of Government; being infinitely less affected with official roguery; having brighter prospects, a clearer look ahead, with no skelton to haunt us as the South haunts them, no colossal debt weighing us down like a millistone; and possessing in the Mother Country a bulwark impregnable to outside assaults - this, in the name of common sense, is not the time to be pining for admission into the Union.[66]

In general when discussing the Treaty of Washington, the Conservatives pictured the United States as a hostile and aggressive neighbour and the Dominion as too weak alone to defend herself against American encroachments and urged the voters to support the Treaty to strengthen the Imperial tie and thus the Dominion's position on the

66. Mail, 20 June 1872.

continent. They maintained that the Treaty was Imperial policy and accused the Opposition of disloyalty in opposing it. The Liberals also pictured the United States as hostile and aggressive but they argued that the Dominion should take a firmer stand against American encroachments than Macdonald had done at Washington. They too professed their Loyalty and desire to strengthened the Imperial tie; but they insisted to accomplish this the Treaty must be rejected and the local interests of the Dominion given greater consideration than they received in the Treaty. They accused the Government of disloyalty for supporting the Treaty and called upon the voters to throw them out of office.

Although the dominant issue in the election, the Treaty of Washington was not the only issue in which the political parties utilized their anti-American and Loyalty arguments to win the voters' approval. The other issues were the railroads and protection. To gain support for their railroad policies, the Conservatives played upon the voters' fears of American aggression. The route of the Intercolonial Railway through New Brunswick had come under Liberal fire. Two routes were proposed: the North Shore route running along the eastern coast up to the Baie des Chaleurs into Quebec and the southern through Fredericton along the Canadian-American border to Quebec. The difference in the two routes was that the former was over a hundred miles from the border and ran through a less populated

area than the latter. Also it was more expensive and longer; but, Sanford Fleming chose it as a military route since it was along the coast and easily reached by British ships in case of a war with the Republic.

During the campaign, Conservatives defended the North Shore route as an Imperial military route. Macdonald claimed it was safe from American attack:

> The route that we have chosen is along the coast far away from the United States, and unassailable by United States arms. [67]

The Liberals did not agree. The Globe thought "... the idea of Canada deriving any security from the North Shore Route, in a military sense, is preposterous." [68] While not denying the hostility of the Republic, the paper argued that the difference of a hundred miles would not make the railroad unassailable if the Americans wished to attack Canada and it stressed the need to choose the cheaper route through the populated area for "... money and time are too valuable to be thrown away daily in mere sentimental patriotism." [69]

The other railway issue was that of the Conservatives' Pacific Railway. British Columbia entered Confederation in 1871 on the understanding that the construction of a railroad linking the province

67. Mail, 11 June 1872, John Macdonald, Peterborough Address, 10 May 1872.

68. Globe, 9 July 1872.

69. Ibid., 9 June 1872.

to eastern Canada would commence within two years and be completed in ten years. Conservatives justified this agreement during the campaign contending, among other things, that if the railroad were not completed, the United States would absorb British Columbia and the North-West into the Union. The Leader warned its readers that the Canadian West "... might be taken from us by the countless predatory hordes constantly streaming into the almost scorched up barren states and territories of the west, belonging to the Republic of the United States." [70] The Liberals, who were against the terms of the agreement to construct the railroad, Conservatives saw as "... a faction which has opposed the terms for the admission of British Columbia and done its utmost to throw that young and struggling colony into the arms of the American Republic." [71]

The Liberals were stunned at the cost of constructing the railroad and argued that it was necessary to move slowly and carefully. They agreed the railroad was a necessity for the maintenance of the independence of the Dominion in the West from the United States; but they objected to "... the indecent haste with which the whole scheme has been gone into, without a full survey, without any sober or adequate idea formed of what is practicable and what the reverse, of

70. Leader, 6 August 1872.

71. Mail, 19 June 1872.

what can be carried through at a reasonable outlay and what ought not to be attempted." [72]

Conservatives used the anti-American argument in the campaign in the discussion of protection as well. [73] The refusal of the United States to renegotiate the reciprocity treaty prompted Macdonald to take a retaliatory step to force the Republic to reconsider. The Prime Minister also believed he could win votes by such a move. In the spring of 1872 he wrote "I am sure to be able to make considerable capital out of this (protection) next summer." [74]

Therefore in the ensuing campaign Macdonald made a direct appeal to the workers of Canada by advocating a tariff with incidental protection to home industry when he announced his "National Policy" in Hamilton, the most specialized manufacturing city in the Dominion. He argued that it was necessary to protect Canadian industries from their American counterparts who had a home market protected by such a policy and who were ruining the Canadian industries by dumping their surplus products into the Dominion market. His campaign slogan was:

72. Globe, 8 July 1872.

73. A background on protection will be presented in Chapter 4.

74. Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald The Old Chieftain, Volume 2, Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1965 page 120. John Macdonald to George Stephen, 20 February 1872.

> Canada for Canadians: and if the Americans put a duty upon our productions, we should put duty upon theirs. [75]

Finance Minister Sir Francis Hincks repeated the Conservative warning that if Canadians allowed Americans "... to impose that duty without adopting a measure similar to theirs, we should have placed the Canadian merchant at the mercy of the merchants of the United States." [76] This was the Conservative position and they told the voters not to count on the Liberal party to protect their industries.

The Globe reacted to the protection cry of the Conservatives saying "... to the shame and disgrace of the whole industrious manhood of the country they have exhumed protection again." [77] As free traders, Liberals opposed an increase in the tariff to provide protection for industries. Such a move, they argued, would close the American market completely to Canadian producers and they suggested a policy of wait and see if the Republic benefited from a protective tariff. [78] They also appealed to the loyalty sentiment of the voters on this issue saying:

75. Mail, 18 July 1872, John Macdonald, speech at Chatham, 17 July 1872.

76. Mail, 15 July 1872, Sir Francis Hincks, Address to Trade's Assembly, Hamilton, 13 July 1872.

77. Globe, 17 July 1872.

78. Ibid., 13 July 1872.

> ... the duties already imposed on British manufactured goods are a source of much of the unfriendliness of a portion of the people of England to the Dominion of Canada. [79]

However, the Globe concluded that "the question of free trade and protection is not a living political issue in Canada, and the Government have no settled policy on the matter." [80] The Liberals were convinced the Conservatives raised the protection issue only in the hope to "make a little cheap capital" [81] in the election.

Protection was a minor issue in this election, but it showed once again how the parties used anti-American and Loyalty arguments to win support of the voters when Macdonald argued that protection was necessary to protect Canadian industries from their American counterparts. He may have had a genuine point here; but the Liberals were not going to say so. In any case, the Liberals dismissed protection as a minor issue and accused Macdonald of raising the issue only to win votes - a charge that has validity since Macdonald discussed this issue only in Hamilton, Chatham, and a few other industrial centers where its appeal to the voters would be the greatest.

79. Ibid., 16 July 1872.

80. Ibid., 16 July 1872.

81. Ibid., 13 June 1872.

# Chapter III: Election of 1874

In less than sixteen months the Ontario voter returned to the polls in an election which the "Pacific Scandal", Mackenzie's railroad policy, and the question of a protective tariff were the dominant issues.[1] In this 1874 campaign both parties appealed again to the electors with anti-American and Loyalty arguments in their positions on these issues. However, as will be seen, the American bogey played an insignificant role in the Liberal strategy for political reasons.

The paramount issue of the 1874 campaign was the "Pacific Scandal". This "Scandal" broke over the granting of the charter to construct the Pacific Railroad. Two railway companies competed for the Charter: the Canada Pacific Railroad Company in Montreal and the Interoceanic Railroad Company in Toronto. The Canada Pacific Railroad Company was founded by the Montreal shipowner Sir Hugh Allan with a group of American promoters part of the company by a secret agreement.

1. The Liberals raised other issues in the campaign such as proposals for new election laws, simultaneous voting, the secret ballot, the extension of the franchise and the revision of the militia system. They also advocated the creation of a Canadian Supreme Court - similar to Macdonald's proposal in 1869 - but this issue was not discussed at all or at least received minimal coverage in the Toronto newspapers. Although it involved Canada's relations with Great Britain, it was too insignificant of an issue to consider in this thesis.

Though ostensibly Canadian, this company would be almost entirely controlled and financed by the Northern Pacific Railroad Company for it was planned by Allan and George McMullen, W. B. Ogden, General Cass, and Jay Cooke of Northern Pacific and the Canadian line would rely on this American railroad for a connection around the Great Lakes to eastern Canada. This agreement between Allan and the American promoters was kept secret for they believed popular opinion in the Dominion would demand the exclusion of the Americans from the Pacific Railroad. [2] Allan's rival for the Pacific Charter was a Toronto railroad builder, Senator David L. MacPherson who established the Interoceanic Railroad Company. MacPherson challenged Allan on grounds that Sir Hugh's control of the Pacific Railroad would mean the by-passing of Toronto and that Montreal would receive all the benefits of the railroad. In addition the Torontonian argued that the Northern Pacific promoters, with whom Sir Hugh was associated, were conspiring to gain control of the Canadian railway only to delay a rival to their own. [3]

When Prime Minister Macdonald received the two bids for the Charter from these companies in March 1872, he decided not to give it to either

2. Pierre Berton, The National Dream The Great Railway 1871-1881, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1970, page 68.

3. Oscar Skelton, The Railway Builders, A Chronicle of Overland Highways, Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Company, 1922, page 123.

Allan or MacPherson. Instead he attempted to bring about the amalgamation of the two companies. This was politically essential for if only one company received the Charter it would undoubtedly alienate public opinion in the province of the other and this he especially wished to avoid in an election year. However all his attempts at amalgamation failed because Allan insisted on being president of the company and MacPherson would have no part of it as he feared the Americans would control the railroad if Allan was the head of the company. [4] Therefore on 8 February 1873 Macdonald granted the Pacific Charter to a new company, the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company with thirteen directors on a board which elected Allan as president. Macdonald promised Sir Hugh the presidency after Allan assured the Prime Minister his association with the Americans was broken.

Macdonald made two fatal errors in his granting of the Charter. First, he borrowed money, $350,000, from Allan during the election campaign of 1872, after he promised Sir Hugh the presidency of the railroad company. At the moment when he was negotiating a contract with Allan of the highest national importance, the Prime Minister had become deeply indebted to him for purely party purposes. Macdonald's second error was believing Allan when Sir Hugh told

4. Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald The Old Chieftain, Volume 2, Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1965, page 134.

him that he ended his association with the Americans. Sir Hugh gave the impression to Macdonald that he dropped his American partners in March 1972 [5] while in fact it was not until 24 October 1872 that they were disassociated.

Allan's American associates were angry at being expelled from the new railway company. On 1 January 1873, McMullen attempted to blackmail Macdonald by producing Allan's letters in which Macdonald promised Sir Hugh the presidency and Allan's contributions to the Conservative party in the election campaign of 1872 were cited. The Prime Minister refused to submit and McMullen turned this information over to the Liberals. [6] At the same time, the office of Allan's solicitor, John J. C. Abbott, was broken into and telegrams to Sir Hugh from Macdonald asking for more campaign funds were taken and given to the Liberals. On 2 April 1873, Lucuis Seth Huntington, Liberal Member of Parliament for Shefford, Quebec, charged in the House of Commons that the Canadian Pacific Railroad was in fact an American company and that Allan had given funds to the Conservatives during the campaign of 1872 in return for the Charter. [7]

5. Ibid, page 122. To mislead everyone, Allan pretended to draw up an all Canadian Board of Directors for his company.

6. Ibid., page 155.

7. National Library of Canada, Canada Parliamentary Debates, 1873-1874, Microfilm G5, Ottawa: Canadian Library Association.

Between April and November of 1873, Macdonald and the Conservative Government fell into public disgrace as discriminating evidence against them became public through a Parliamentary Committee and a Royal Commission investigating the granting of the Charter and the publication of McMullen's version of the Charter and Macdonald's letters to Allan for money during the election of 1872 in the Liberal newspapers: Toronto Globe, Montreal Herald, and Quebec Evénement. By November 5, Macdonald lost the confidence of a number of his supporters and he resigned. Mackenzie and the Liberals formed a government and in less than two months in power called an election to take advantage of the public indignation against the Conservatives. Although the writs for the election were not handed down until 7 January 1874, the campaign, in fact, was underway on the day Macdonald stepped down.

Liberal campaign strategy in 1874 was to concentrate on their account of the behaviour of Macdonald in granting the Pacific Railway Charter. They accused the Conservative leader of accepting money during the election of 1872 from Allan while knowing that the latter was acting on behalf of the American Railroad - the Northern Pacific. Although the Globe did not blame the Americans for trying to make money by getting into the Canadian railroad project, it did insist that the American businessmen be excluded and reproached Macdonald for not doing so. [8] The Conservative leader was vulnerable on this charge

8. Globe, 14 January 1874.

for it appeared from the exposé in the Globe of Allan's correspondence that the Americans had still been in the company at the time Macdonald had accepted campaign funds from Sir Hugh. However, Liberals did not overly-emphasize the role of the American capitalists in the "Scandal" probably because, as will be seen, they advocated the temporary use of the Northern Pacific in their own railroad policy and did not want public resentment against the Americans to mount as it would only weaken their policy.

The Liberals' second line of attack on the Conservatives was Macdonald's "immoral" and "corrupt" conduct in granting the Pacific Charter. Repeatedly throughout the campaign the Globe gave Liberal accounts of the "charter-sellers" during the election of 1872 and called upon the voters to "... decide whether the Government of this country is to be pure, honest, high principled, or corrupt, mercenary, and base." [9] The paper continued saying the electors' choice was the Conservative party - a party of "Slander and Corruption" or the Liberal party - a party of "Purity and Honesty" and urged them to do their moral duty and return the Liberals to power.

The Government used the Imperial agreement also in this question of "moral" conduct. The Liberals insisted that Macdonald's "immoral" conduct in public affairs threatened the tie with the Empire. In an election pamphlet on the "Scandal", Blake said the Imperial connection

9. Ibid., 27 January 1874.

was based on mutual affection between the Mother Country and the Dominion and that it was threatened by the "immoral" conduct of the Conservative leader. "If we become objects of contempt, we shall deserve to be cast away ..." [10] by England and he added if Canadians were to receive greater responsibilities of "nationhood" a standard of morality as high as that of the Mother Country must be maintained. Said Blake:

> ... if we lose our self-respect and the respect of England, how can we hope to attain that to which the hon. gentlemen opposite do not seek to aspire, but to which I confess I do aspire - the possession of the full measure of a Briton's rights? How can we claim those rights if we endorse the action of the gentlemen opposite? [11]

In reply to these Liberal arguments the Conservatives labelled the "Pacific Scandal" as the "Pacific Slander" designed by the Government to destroy Macdonald and the Pacific Railroad. The Conservative leader defended his granting of the Charter to Allan since he had insisted that it exclude the American capitalists. [12]

10. Public Archives of Canada, Three Speeches on the Pacific Scandal, Toronto: Globe Publishing Company, 1874 page 64. Edward Blake, speech in House of Commons, 4 November 1873.

11. Ibid.

12. Leader, 22 November 1873, John Macdonald, speech at Ottawa Banquet, 13 November 1873.

Indeed, he insisted precisely because they had been excluded, the Americans were determined to destroy the railroad by defeating him and his government:

> The real fact was that the charge was made because I refused to allow Americans to have anything to do with it. .... ... the Americans were so annoyed at being cut off from the Pacific Railway that they sent McMullen to me to try blackmail. I refused to be treated with, and wanted Canadian capital and British and no foreign element. Then came the selling of private correspondence and the conspiring on the part of the disappointed Americans in order to destroy the scheme for the construction of the railway. [13]

The Mail praised Macdonald for being "... extremely watchful of Canadian interests ..." and maintained that:

> ... when the Government set to work to provide for the building of the road, they made it the first and most essential feature of their policy that the Canadian road should be built entirely independent both of the Northern Pacific and of American capitalists, whether railway men or others. [14]

For this reason the Conservatives argued the charges of corruption against their leader were manufactured.

13. Mail, 12 January 1874, John Macdonald, speech at Kingston, 10 January 1874.

14. Mail, 2 December 1873.

Throughout the campaign the Mail accused the Liberals of aligning themselves with the interests of the Americans and warned the voters that this was a serious threat to Canadian independence. Therefore the paper declared that:

> The battle is between loyalty and treason .... Conceal their object as they may the Party in power are co-operating with the advocates of the " Monroe Doctrine ". 15

The Conservative press kept hammering away at the theme that as long as the Liberals remained in power, there would continue to be a danger of annexation. The Leader continously accused the Government of leading the Dominion "... to independence, republicanism, annexation, to the annihilation, in short, of Canadian nationality, and the absorption of our country by a State whose political institutions are so objectionable in themselves, so unsuited to our best interests, and so distasteful to the more intelligent of our people." 16 The Mail pictured Canada within the British Empire as "... a beacon light in her (British) constitutional government with the greatest freedom to the subject ..." and looked "... in vain over any other portion of the continent for that protection to life and prosperity with that

15. Ibid., 3 January 1874.

16. Leader, 17 November 1873

ample personal liberty which, as British subjects, we have been accustomed to enjoy." [17] To the voters worried by or about "... being swallowed up by the United States ...", [18] the Leader proposed the return of the Conservatives to power to preserve "... this Canada of ours from that flood-gate of democracy and radicalism which is threatening it on every side." [19]

The Conservatives reacted to the Liberal charges of disloyalty to the Empire by returning the compliments. The Leader labelled Brown a "disloyal, dissatisfied, revolutionary demagogue" [20] and, commenting on Blake's speech in Parliament on November 4, accused him of supporting separation without giving any logical explanation:

> ... the whole tenor of Mr. Blake's so called "great speech" tastes strongly of Communism, certainly it is a signal gun of the objects and aims of the Faction in bringing about the much talked of Independence of Canada, and the consequent separation from good old mother England. [21]

The Mail warned the voters to remember when they are voting that the Liberal leaders were not moved "... by a love for Canada and British

17. Mail, 23 January 1874.

18. Leader, 22 November 1873.

19. Ibid., 17 November 1873.

20. Ibid., 26 November 1873.

21. Ibid., 6 November 1873.

institutions and British associations ..." [22] This intense attack on the Loyalty of the Liberals was an attempt by the Conservatives to raise doubts in the electors' minds about the Liberals motives.

Hence in this issue of the granting of the Pacific Charter, the Liberals did not and the Conservatives did use an anti-American argument. However the Loyalty argument was part of both parties campaign strategy.

The "Pacific Scandal" was just one part of the railroad issue in the election of 1872. The whole question of the construction of the Pacific Railroad was vigorously debated by both parties. A Pacific Railroad had been implicit in the program of western expansion of the Fathers of Confederation and explicit in 1871 as part of the terms admitting British Columbia into Confederation. Its construction thus became the official policy of the Conservative party: the rapid completion of a transcontinental railroad linking the Pacific Province to eastern Canada within ten years at an estimate cost of one hundred million dollars. To avoid becoming dependent on the Northern Pacific for a link of the Pacific Railroad to the eastern Canada railroads and thus losing absolute control over the railroad, the Conservatives committed themselves to an all Canadian route, which meant construction north of Lake Superior. Macdonald justified this proposal by insisting that the railroad was necessary to link the

22. Mail, 29 January 1874.

Canadian provinces together as well as to colonize the North-West and thus forestall American expansion northward into the Dominion. [23]

In its editorial of 3 February 1871, the Globe agreed with the Conservatives that a Pacific railway through Canadian territory was imperative and that the American lines should not be utilized if the Dominion was to develop "... its mighty and varied resources ..." of the West and "... if British authority (was) to be maintained on this continent ..." [24] However, the Liberals rejected the ten year time limit in the agreement with British Columbia. Mackenzie referred to it as "an act of insane recklessness" [25] and urged the Conservative Government to proceed with the construction at the rate the country could afford. Liberals feared that Canada would ruin her future by overstraining her present financial capacities by constructing the railway in such a short time.

As an alternative to the Conservatives' railroad policy, the Liberals proposed a rate of construction that would meet the needs

23. Pierre Berton, op. cit., pages 7, 8, and 9.

24. Globe, 3 February 1871. As will be seen, the paper modified its position on the use of American railroads in the 1874 campaign.

25. Canada Parliamentary Debates, 1871, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing and Publishing Company, 1871, page 745. Alexander Mackenzie, 31 March 1871.

of settlement in the West but would not tax the country's finances. Mackenzie announced Liberals' policy in May 1872. Only the indispensable sections of the railroad would be constructed immediately. American railroads in the Winter and the navigable waters wherever possible in the Summer would be utilized. There would also be a waggon trail from Fort Garry to the Rockies and there would be no agreement about a time limit on the construction of the railroad with British Columbia. [26] In the Liberal program, the indispensable sections were an eastern link, a subsidized extension of the Canada Central from Pembroke to Lake Nipissing and two western links: first, a line from Lake Superior to the Red River and second, a branch line from Selkirk to Pembina on the United States border. [27] In the Winter, from Lake Nipissing south of Lake Superior to Pembina, the American line, Northern Pacific, would be utilized until the Prairies were more settled and a Canadian railroad north of the lake was economically feasible. Then as the above sections were completed and as funds became available, the remaining portions of the line would be built.

26. Canada Parliamentary Debates, 1872, Ottawa: Ottawa Times Printing And Publishing Company, 1872, page 416. Alexander Mackenzie, 7 May 1872.

27. Pierre Berton, op. cit., page 190.

In the election campaign, the Globe once again gave the Liberals' reasons for rejecting the Conservatives' "reckless and lavish agreement" [28] with British Columbia to construct a transcontinental railroad within ten years. In a speech at Sarnia, Ontario on 25 November 1873, Mackenzie reiterated the Liberal railroad policy; a slower rate of construction with the negotiation of a greater time period with British Columbia, the building of the indispensable sections immediately and the remainder as the funds became available, construction of a waggon road between Fort Garry and the Rockies, the use of the navigable waters between the Lakehead and Fort Garry in the Summer, and the American railroad in the Winter. [29] Mackenzie justified the use of an American railroad saying "... communication would be afforded in conjunction with the American lines, until we (Canadians) have means sufficient to accomplish the work." [30] The Globe agreed, thus modifying its 1871 position that the Northern Pacific should not be depended upon by Canada. The paper told the voters they "... should tolerate the use of American railroads in Winter pending the completion of our own." [31] Liberals insisted that this

28. Globe, 7 January 1874.

29. Ibid., 26 November 1873, Alexander Mackenzie, speech at Sarnia, 25 November 1873.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., 4 December 1873.

policy was in the best interests of the Dominion as they considered Canada too weak economically to engage in such a gigantic enterprise in such a short time.

The Conservatives attacked the Liberal railroad policy with full force. The Leader countered Liberal charges of corruption and immorality by accusing Brown and Mackenzie of the same crime in their Liberal railroad policy. In its pamphlet, "The History of the Lake Superior Ring", and in numerous editorials the Leader said that the Liberal railroad (when it was to be constructed north of Lake Superior) was to pass through an area which would bring personal benefit to the Liberal leaders by increasing the value of their property held there. This was "Tammany" all over again the paper lamented and as such a serious blow to Canadian politics for "Canadians have always prided themselves upon the superior morality which their public men have exhibited as compared with that of those in the United States". [32]

More importantly the Conservatives had two major points against the Liberal railroad policy. First, Macdonald accused the Liberals of breaching public faith and of breaking the solemn contract entered into by British Columbia, Canada, and the Imperial Government. He

32. Leader, "The History of the Lake Superior Ring", election pamphlet, page 1.

defended the Conservative contract with British Columbia saying that without the railroad the province was in danger of being annexed to the Republic:

> But still, with all that great gain of territory (The North-West), we were still imperfect until we had our Dominion extending from sea to sea. Until we had British Columbia we had our left arm cut off. British Columbia could not remain as she was. She must either become a portion of Canada or be absorbed by the United States. She could not remain alone with all Alaska on the north and the United States on the south. She was helpless, powerless, and must have dropped into the web that was being stretched around her by the great American spider. 33

Second, the Conservatives stated the Liberal policy was "... an American more than a Canadian railway policy that our present unpatriotic Government of conspiracy and treason against the interest of the Dominion is now committed to". 34 Quoting the Globe editorial of 3 February 1871 which said that American railroads should not be utilized if British authority in the west was to be maintained; the Mail asked why their policy now was to use these American railways. 35 The paper accused the Liberals

33. Ibid., 22 November 1873, John Macdonald, speech at Ottawa Banquet, 20 November 1873.

34. Mail, 16 January 1874.

35. Ibid., 17 January 1874.

of working for the Northern Pacific in opposing the Conservative railroad policy and warned the voters that Mackenzie's policy would place the Pacific Railroad under the control of the American railroad, a situation which they said would lead to annexation:

> The project foreshadowed by Mr. Mackenzie,..., throws us body and bones into the arms of the Northern Pacific Railway, where if we once get we shall remain for many a long year, if not for all times. No better scheme could be devised to promote the welfare of a rival route to the Pacific, to denationalize Canadian sentiment, and to throw us finally into the capacious maw of our grasping and ambitious neighbours. [36]

The Leader accused Mackenzie of being "... obstinately bent on selling Canada to the Americans, and of destroying every vestige of nationality which Canadians, as loyal subjects of the British Empire, look forward to as the destiny of the Dominion ..." [37] and called upon the voters to express their concern for Canada by voting against the Government:

> Electors! You prove today by your Votes, your Loyalty to our Queen and our Flag. The object sought by the present Ministry, when in opposition, was to destroy the Pacific Charter. Why? Because they were working in the interests of the Northern Pacific Railway, a Yankee Line. With Gold sent by that Company, the present authorities will try to bribe you this day to prostitute your Votes. Spurn that Gold, and show that no Yankee Ring shall prevent the great consummation of our Country's Prosperity in the construction of our Railway. [38]

36. Ibid., 9 December 1873.

37. Leader, 12 January 1874.

38. Ibid., 29 January 1874.

To all these charges the Liberals' answer was that their policy was economically the wisest and therefore the one in the best interests of the Dominion.

Of less significance as an issue as the railroad question, but still an important issue in the election of 1874, as in 1872, was the question of a protective tariff [39] for Canadian industries. The Liberals supported a revenue tariff [40] but opposed the principle of protection of industries from foreign competition. They said protection was futile and retrograde to the Canadian economy as well as anti-British since it would "... protect the Canadian manufacturer against, not the American, but the 'home' or British producer." [41] The Globe summerized Liberal views on protection this way:

> This kind of protectionist talk is either atrocious nonsense, transparently and consciously dishonest, or it falls back on all the pig-headedness of an agricultural protectionism which has been dead in Britain for more than a quarter of a century. [42]

39. The background on the tariff issue will be presented in Chapter 4.

40. The only funds the government had to function on came from the revenue tariff - hence its importance.

41. Globe, 13 January 1874.

42. Ibid., 13 January 1874.

The paper continued by suggesting that if the Conservatives had really wanted a protectionist tariff, they should have introduced one after their return to power in 1872. The Liberals placed little emphasis on the protection issue as they considered it as a desperate election ploy by the opposition to divert the electors from the true issue - Macdonald's conduct in the "Pacific Scandal". [43]

The Conservatives admitted that in principle free trade was the best policy for the Dominion; but they insisted a protectionist duty on incoming American goods was necessary for Canadian producers as long as the United States taxed Canadian exports to the Republic. [44] Canadian industries were put at a disadvantage by the "unpatriotic trade policy" of the Government as the Mail accused Mackenzie of being committed to a policy which "... is shaped to injure Canada and to benefit the United States ..." [45] The paper continued saying that if Canadians accepted the Liberal tariff policy, it would:

43. Ibid., 19 January 1874.

44. Mail, 12 January 1874, John Macdonald, speech at Kingston, 10 January 1874.

45. Ibid., 26 January 1874.

> ... destroy the infant manufacturers of Canada; drive away capital and skilled labour; force our young men and our young women into the American Republic for the employment which manufacturers would give here; ... leave our people mere hewers of wood and drawers of water to Yankee workshops ... [46]

Conservatives sincerely supported a protective tariff policy for Canada; but they probably raised the question of protection in 1874 to win votes. By so doing they hoped to turn the attention of the voters to the present administration of Mackenzie rather than to the past government of Macdonald.

46. Ibid., 29 January 1874.

# Chapter IV: Election of 1878

Despite the efforts of the Liberals, the Pacific Railroad, which was so important in 1874, did not play a significant role in the election of 1878. The "burning question" of the day - the protectionist tariff - dominated the 1878 federal election in Ontario and in their campaigns both the Liberals and the Conservatives used anti-American and Loyalty arguments to win support for their positions.

The protectionist tariff was vigorously debated in the seventies in Canada because of three developments in the Dominion economy between 1866 and 1876: the refusal of the United States to grant a reciprocity treaty to the Dominion, the protectionist duty excluding Canadian exports from the American market, and the world depression.

In 1866 the United States Senate abrogated the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 under which Canada prospered immensely. In vain British North Americans attempted to renew this treaty in 1866 and in the following decade Macdonald failed in 1871 to barter the Canadian fisheries for a new treaty and Brown's efforts in 1874 for the Liberals to win reciprocity were also fruitless. All attempts were failures and so in the election campaign of 1878 both parties presented a different policy on how to win a reciprocity treaty from the Americans.

In their campaign, the Liberals expressed their desire for a reciprocity treaty with the United States. The Globe wrote that the

Canadian Government was "... willing to make a fair Reciprocity Treaty which will benefit both countries", [1] but at the same time, Richard Cartwright, Minister of Finance, spoke confidently of the Dominion prospering if such a treaty was once again refused by the Republic. [2] However the Liberals believed the majority of Canadians wanted reciprocity; therefore they advocated the continuation of their revenue tariff policy until the Americans realized the folly of their protection policy and begin serious negotiations with Canada. Throughout the campaign, the Liberals maintained that the Dominion's bargaining position for reciprocity would be seriously weakened by the adoption of a protective tariff policy because they saw such a move leading to a tariff war between the two countries. [3]

Like the Liberals, the Conservatives were interested in a reciprocity treaty with the United States. However they disagreed with the Government on how to achieve it. Conservatives stated that it would be extremely difficult to get reciprocity from the Americans. The Leader wrote that "... knowing the rapacity of that people,

1. Globe, 9 September 1878.
2. Ibid., 19 August 1878. Richard Cartwright, speech at Halifax, 16 August 1878.
3. Ibid., 5 August 1878.

Canadians ought to know that any reciprocity will be wrung from our neighbours with difficulty". [4] Conservatives argued that the Americans would only negotiate a treaty if they had something to gain and therefore they called upon the voters to support Macdonald who would increase the bargaining powers of Canada by raising the tariff and closing the Dominion market to the Americans. If the Americans closed their market to Canadians, then Canada should do the same to them. Their slogan was "reciprocity of trade or reciprocity of tariffs" and they placed the blame on the Americans for the necessity of increasing the tariff:

> There are probably not a thousand men in Canada who would call for protection if the United States would consent to free trade. [5]

The Canadian economy was also adversely affected by the American decision to adopt a protectionist trade policy which established high duties on Canadian exports to the United States. The seventies was a period of fierce economic competition. States of the world began searching for markets and protecting their economies. Consequently the United States erected tariff barriers to protect their economy. As a result Canadian industries, such as farming, fishing, forest, and mining which exported some of their produce to

4. Leader, 29 August 1878.

5. Mail, 13 September 1878.

the Republic, were adversely affected. With these high duties (flour for example had a 20% import duty), Canadian industries found it difficult to compete with the Americans in the United States' market.

Canadian industries also had serious problems in coping with American imports in their own home market. Because of the low revenue tariff policy of the Mackenzie Administration, the American industries were able to use the Canadian market as a dumping ground. Hardest hit were manufacturing industries, such as textile, furniture, boot and shoe, and paper industries deprived of a home market. While the Canadian tariff on these products was 17.5%, the American duties on Canadian goods were approximately double the Canadian tariff.[6] This effectively closed the market in the United States to Dominion competition but American industries freely disposed their excess produce in the Canadian market.

In the campaign, Liberals regretted the protectionist tariff policy of the United States but praised the Liberal revenue tariff policy as economically the wisest for Canadians and warned the voters that the Conservatives protectionist tariff policy would bring a retaliation from the Republic with even a higher tariff on Canadian exports to its market. The Globe:

6. O. J. McDiarmid, Commercial Policy in the Canadian Economy, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946, page 157.

> ... no one can fail to see the folly of driving them to this course of shutting up a market which affords an outlet for a large portion of our products, from which also we derive many articles at a less price than we can obtain them elsewhere. .... Yet Sir John Macdonald had more than once said that in the absence of reciprocity we must impose a retaliatory tariff against our neighbours. [7]

Canada, the paper added, would gain nothing by a tariff war for with a "... national - reciprocal - retaliatory - bring - the - Americans - to - their - knees - policy, down would come the 'home market' and the foreign market together." [8] Liberals stressed their belief that a foreign market was a necessity for Canadian prosperity. James Young, Liberal Member of Parliament for South Waterloo, stated:

> No people could become rich by hemming themselves into a narrow circle so that they could only trade by themselves. [9]

The Liberals insisted a low tariff policy would economically strengthen the Dominion by opening the American market and the world market to Canadian exports which would invigorate Canada to "... be independent of the United States, and not be subject to their whims." [10]

7. Globe, 8 July 1878.

8. Ibid., 18 July 1878.

9. Ibid., 8 July 1878. James Young, speech at Galt, 4 July 1878.

10. Ibid., 11 July 1878.

As for the question of American dumping practices, the Liberals ignored the issue as if it was not happening.

Conservatives' tariff policy was that if the Americans had a protectionist tariff, so must Canada. Referring to the Liberal fear of American retaliation if the Dominion adopted a protective tariff, the Conservatives urged the electors to reject this argument saying it was humiliating position for the Government to take. Asked the Mail:

> Shall Canada be a nation, or shall it be a handful of isolated settlements, ruled by Brother Jonathan's tariff, and ready to be gobbled up by him at pleasure? .... The party in power has declared, in plain language, that so long as they are the masters of Canadian destinies, there shall be no industries, but such as Brother Jonathan chooses to leave free from destruction. [11]

The Conservatives urged such a protective tariff was necessary to protect the Canadian manufacturing industries from their American counterparts in their home market. They argued that Canadian industries must be strong and secure in their native market first before competing in the world market and William MacDougall, Conservative Member of Parliament for Halton, said:

> No true Canadian could hesitate in giving his support and influence to the men who were prepared to place this country in a proper position among the nations of the world in respect to trade and industry. [12]

11. Mail, 9 July 1878.
12. Ibid., 30 August 1878. William MacDougall, speech at Victoria Park Picnic, 27 August 1878.

The conservative theme was that self-preservation was a fundamental law of human nature and that as the economically weaker country on the continent, the Dominion must take steps to protect industries so that they would have a home base and strength to compete with the other nations of the world. Macdonald urged Canadians to do this by supporting his "National Policy":

> Let us protect ourselves. Let us, the weaker nation, put on a tariff armour against the strong neighbour that threatens to destroy us. In that way, by building up our native industries, we shall restore to our people the essential home market, afford them a chance of competing with the Americans, give employment to our mechanics, and hope to our farmers, and by thus helping along a return of general prosperity ... [13]

Conservatives accused the United States of "commercial Thuggism", [14] of dumping their excess products on Canada and excluding Dominion exports from their market. Therefore Macdonald argued "... what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander ..." [15] and he warned Canadians that if the free trade policy of the Liberals continued,

13. Public Archives of Canada, The Election Campaign, Toronto: Mail Publishing Company, 1878, election pamphlet, page 70.

14. Mail, 21 August 1878.

15. Ibid., 28 August 1878. John Macdonald, speech at Victoria Park Picnic, 27 August 1878.

they "... will be hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Americans." [16] It was time to decide, he continued, "... whether we are going to have Canada for the Canadians or Canada for foreigners; whether we are to allow this country to be a slaughter market, as it has been, or whether we are to keep our markets for ourselves." [17] The Liberals, charged the Mail, stood "... idly by while the rapacious Yankee kills both Canadian and British trade, and makes us part and parcel of his nation" [18] and therefore should be thrown out of office on polling day.

In the seventies, the economic hardships of Canada were further aggravated by a world depression. A financial crash in New York in the late Autumn of 1873, followed by industrial failures, slackening trade, and falling prices throughout the world, gave birth to a depression that continued throughout the decade. In Canada exports dropped from a high of $90,000,000 in 1873 to a low of $71,491,000 in 1878. [19] Unemployment was high as production, trade, finance,

16. Ibid., 31 July 1878. John Macdonald, speech at the Amphitheatre, Toronto, 30 July 1878.

17. Ibid.,

18. Ibid., 23 August 1878.

19. Donald F. Warner, The Idea of Continental Union: Agitation For The Annexation of Canada to The United States, 1849-1893, Louisville: University of Kentucky Press, 1960, page 153.

exports, and imports all dropped to a dead level in the years of stagnation. This situation was further aggravated by continuous crop failures in the mid-seventies. [20] It was in this depressed state of the Canadian economy that the election of 1878 was held.

In the campaign, the Liberal position on the depression was that the government had no power over it and that it was world wide as well as temporary. [21] The Liberals attempted to minimize its impact on the Dominion. The Globe praised the revenue tariff policy of the Government saying its effect "... has been that during a period of depression all over the world the condition of Canada has been better than that of any other portion of this continent - better even than that of the Mother Country itself." [22] Throughout the campaign the Liberals warned the voters not to be tricked by the Conservatives into believing a protective tariff would alleviate the depressed state of the economy. Instead they implored the electors to support their present low tariff policy and wait for a "natural" revival of the economy.

Conservatives accused the Liberals of failing to do anything to alleviate the distress of the depression. The Telegram urged the

20. O. J. McDiarmid, op. cit., page 153.

21. Globe, 5 September 1878.

22. Ibid., 8 July 1878.

workingman of the Dominion to vote Conservative to "... redeem his country from the do-nothingism and stagnation which has characterized the government and the commerce of the country for the last five years." [23] Conservatives insisted that if prosperity was to return, protection must be given to the Canadian manufacturers so that they could grow and stimulate the Canadian economy. Said Macdonald:

> ... if a Conservative Government went into power and brought the fly-on-the-wheel policy to an end, confidence in the country would be restored, enterprise would be encouraged; we should see the country blossom like the rose; and we should have a return of the times he had depicted in 1872 - "prosperity". [24]

Both parties raised other points to show their tariff policy was the best for Canada. The Liberals cursed the protective tariff as a move that would establish "artificial" industries in Canada at

23. Telegram, 16 September 1878. Most of the workingmen in Ontario had the vote. A Franchise bill did not exist and no bill to establish Dominion qualifications for elections to the Dominion Parliament. The right to vote was determined by each province and in Ontario the franchise qualifications were: ownership of real property worth $400 in cities, $300 in towns, or $200 elsewhere and farmers' sons could be assessed for their share of a farm and thus be entitled to vote. Most citizens of Ontario met these requirements. (Peter Waite, Canada 1874-1896 Arduous Destiny, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971, page 140.)

24. Mail, 5 July 1878. John Macdonald, speech at the Parkhill Picnic, North Middlesex, 3 July 1878.

the expense of the "true" industries of the Dominion. They saw industries requiring protection as unnatural, nonpermanent, unprofitable, and foreign to the climate, position, and circumstances of Canada. The "true" industries were lumbering, fishing, farming, and mining which depended on a foreign market - a world market which a protective tariff would close by instigating a tariff war between trading nations. The Globe wrote that this must not happen and warned the voters that if they supported the protective tariff policy of the Conservative party the "natural" industries of Canada would be abandoned "... in order to build up sickly manufacturers throughly exotic to our soil and climate." [25]

The Liberals also viewed the protective tariff as a policy that was unjust and harmful to the smaller provinces which relied so heavily on foreign markets to sell their produce and buy their manufactured goods. They argued that a high tariff would sow the seeds of disunity in Confederation. Finance Minister Cartwright told the voters that economic policies on the basis of justice and equity to every section of Canada must be supported so as not to "press unduly" on the smaller provinces; otherwise "... the wedge that would split up this people of diverse interests ..." [26] will

25. Globe, 8 July 1878.

26. Ibid., 28 August 1878. Richard Cartwright, speech at Richmond, 26 August 1878.

be introduced. The Globe agreed:

> ... there can be no question that the introduction of a protective tariff would produce deep and widespread discontent among our intelligent and upright fellow citizens of the Eastern Provinces, and would cause them to come to the conclusion that in joining their fortunes to the Provinces of Old Canada they had thrown away the opportunity of securing the highest development of their material resources. [27]

Therefore the paper called upon the electors to vote for the Liberals and "... a revenue tariff and equal justice to all classes and all Provinces as the true National Policy ..." [28]

Conservatives also argued that their tariff policy was the best for Canada. They insisted their "National Policy" was encouraging interprovincial trade and thus unity within the country. The Mail wrote that the tariff policy of the Conservatives was "... designed to promote the interests of our own people and keep Canada, as far as it can be kept, for Canadians ..." [29] The paper added:

> It is our contention that Canada cannot aspire to the rank of a great nationality, unless it possesses a variety of productive industries; that the country has every facility for carrying into successful operation many branches of manufacture ... [30]

27. Ibid., 8 July 1878.

28. Ibid., 14 September 1878.

29. Mail, 14 September 1878.

30. Ibid., 7 September 1878.

This, the Mail remarked, was possible only if the Americans were excluded and it praised the protective tariff policy of the Conservatives as the instrument to promote the Canadian state. The Liberals with their free trade policy could not promote Canadian unity warned Senator David MacPherson for:

> If our Confederacy is to take the place it ought to take in the hearts of its children, its widely separated Provinces and diverse peoples must be bound together by something purer, stronger, more unselfish, more patriotic, more national than "the cohesive power of public plunder". [31]

Inter-provincial trade encouraged by the Conservatives tariff was going to be that unifying force.

In their campaigns both parties contended that the policy of the other on the tariff increased the possibility of annexation of the Dominion by the Republic.

The Liberals insisted that if the Conservatives were prepared to adopt the American tariff as their policy, they were ready to adopt the United States political system as well. In an article, "The Disloyalty of the National Policy", the Globe wrote:

31. Public Archives of Canada, Speeches on the Public Expenditure and National Policy, Toronto: Williams Sleeth and MacMillan Printers, 1878. Honourable David L. MacPherson, speeches in County of Bruce, June 1878, published as an election pamphlet by the Liberal - Conservative Association of Bruce.

> No party in Canada has hitherto systematically taken up the role of praising the Commercial policy of the United States at the expense of that Britain and Canada. .... If it is continued the result must necessarily be to teach the young members of the Conservative party that the path of prosperity lies in the direction of annexation. If free trade has no rewards, if indeed a Chinese wall against British goods is the only means by which Canada can be made prosperous, and if the Americans are willing to afford by annexation a market of forty millions of people, the argument certainly is very strong in favour of that course. .... Britain will be indignant at the exclusion of her goods; our manufacturers will build more mills and factories, and make more goods than our people can consume; the markets of the world will be closed against them, the Republic will open her arms, and Canada will fall into them under the same pressure which now threatens to drive us from the safe path of a revenue tariff. [32]

Again and again the Liberal politicians repeated their argument that the adoption of the American tariff by Canada would be a step towards annexation. Thomas Hodgins, Liberal Member of Parliament for Toronto West, told the electors:

> If we adopted the American tariff, might we not also find ourselves a short step from absorption or annexation, because if there was to be a reciprocity of tariff might we not say that such was so burdensome that we would remove the line. [33]

If the fact that Canada could be annexed to the United States if the Dominion adopted a protectionist tariff did not scare the voters,

32. Globe, 19 August 1878.

33. Ibid., 6 September 1878. Thomas Hodgins, speech at Shaftesbury, 5 September 1878.

the Liberals went on to describe the evils of American society caused by their tariff policy. The Globe wrote that the protectionist tariff policy of the Republic nurtured the growth of lawlessness, communism, and terror in society by increasing unemployment:

> The wall of the vast army of the unemployed rises from every State in the Union. The irrepressible tramp, who has made the rural districts more insecure than the slums and alleys of cities; the restless and dissatisfied Communist, who openly avows his determination to square his account with society just as soon as he can and on his own terms; and most pitiable of all, the thousands of strong, skillful, and willing artisans, who ask for nothing but a chance to work for a pittance sufficient to keep soul and body together - these are to (be) found everywhere from Maine to California, and unless a change soon takes place for the better through a return to a more rational fiscal system or otherwise, it is difficult to say what the end will be. [34]

To the editor of the Globe, a correspondent reiterated this Liberal position - that protection in the United States contributed to establishing "... a country that has proved the greatest success in the world for raising a race of tramps, human parasites, that like vermin may creep into their neighbours' houses ..." [35] The Globe

34. Ibid., 16 July 1878.

35. Ibid, 17 September 1878. The Canadian Bastiat,"Letter to the Editor".

continued their attack on the protectionist tariff saying American politicians were corrupted by tariff lobbyists and that "if" the Canadian provinces were "... to drop one by one like overripe pears into the ever-open maw of Uncle Sam ...", Canada would adopt the "... worst of American institutions, the protectionist tariff, with its inevitable attendant machinery for the corruption of legislators." [36] Cartwright denounced the Conservatives for disgracing "... the name of (Canadian) statesman to the level of the worst and most unscrupulous of the politicians of the United States" [37] by advocating the protective tariff for Canada.

Liberals were associating the evils in the United States with American fiscal policy in order to appeal to the electors and win their votes against the tariff policy of the Conservatives. Having done this, the Liberals then called for the support of the voters to assure the independence of the Dominion from the Republic and to continue good Canadian government under superior British institutions. Mackenzie put it this way:

36. Ibid., 17 September 1878.

37. Public Archives of Canada, Reform Government in the Dominion, Toronto: Globe Publishing Company, 1878. Election pamphlet. Richard Cartwright, speech at the Demonstration at Aylmer, 22 September 1877.

> Few countries have a more magnificent destiny before them than have the people of Canada. We have to vindicate the rights of the people of British origin, owing allegiance to Britain's Queen, and believing our system of responsible government is more democratical, more like true liberty, than the boasted Republicanism of the United States. [38]

The Conservatives saw the situation the exact opposite. They argued that the possibility of annexation stemmed from the Government's policy of free trade. They maintained that Canada was not on equal economic terms with the Republic and that the result of the one-sided free trade policy of the Liberals was that "... the rapacious Yankee kills both Canadian and British trade and makes us part and parcel of his nation." [39] The Mail claimed the Governments' fiscal policy was leaving Canada a "prey" to the Americans and warned that annexation was inevitable if the program continued for Canadians "... cannot become tributary to the States in matters of trade and at the same time maintain our political independence of them." [40] Conservatives called on the voters to elect Macdonald and the "National Policy" for the Canadian Government "... must either protect our own people and their industries or fall prey to the Americans ..." [41]

38. Ibid., Alexander Mackenzie, speech at the Demonstration at Colburne, 9 July 1877.

39. Mail, 23 August 1878.

40. Ibid., 20 August 1878.

41. Public Archives of Canada, The Election Campaign, Toronto: Mail Publishing Company, 1878. Election pamphlet, page 76.

Like the Liberals, the Conservatives pictured American society as evil and decayed. The Telegram wrote:

> ... there are ominous signs that Communism is at work all over the country; on the railroads, at the mines, in the largest manufacturing establishments ... (and) it will need all the vigilance the States can bestow to meet so well organized and silent a body as the Communists are proving themselves to be. [42]

However, unlike the Liberals, the Conservatives did not see the tariff policy of the United States as the cause of communism. The Leader claimed rather that the Republic embodied communism in a certain form [43] and the Mail said the root of the problem was the immigration policy of the United States:

> America has, indeed, overproduced; but she still absorbs a vast stream of emigration, and its reflex eddy, muddy with communism and every European slime, surges perilously against the pillars of the American fabric, and may even endanger our own. [44]

Therefore incidental protection was not only safe, but the proper policy to prevent communism from spreading into the Dominion via annexation.

Both parties used Loyalty arguments as well during the campaign when they debated the protectionist tariff issue.

42. Telegram, 9 August 1878.

43. Leader, 10 July 1878.

44. Mail, 13 July 1878.

In their attack on the protective tariff, the Liberals charged that the Conservative position was anti-British and a threat to the imperial tie. The Globe wrote that the Dominion had close economic ties with England and therefore "... the most ordinary dictates of justice demand that we should consider the rights of the Mother Country in the compact which exists between her and her colonies." [45] The paper insisted that Canada must not adopt willfully a protective policy that would damage the commerce of free trade England. Such an action by the Dominion would be anti-British and disloyal:

> British trade is founded upon the free interchange of nations. She can support her population upon that basis alone. Confine her to her own market, which is the Macdonald idea, and her people must starve or leave the country. This is the proposition which our great Canadian loyalist ... presents to the British people. ... we say that the proposal to place the American tariff upon English goods in Canada is a disgraceful act on the part of every man who calls himself a British subject, and ought not even to be discussed by any assembly of Britons. [46]

The Globe went on to say that the imperial tie was threatened by the tariff policy of the Conservatives. Englishmen, particularly the mercantile class, it said, "... would see in the high Canadian

45. Globe, 11 July 1878.

46. Ibid., 11 July 1878.

protective tariff a reason for the separation of the Dominion from the Motherland." [47] The tie was threatened by them and by Macdonald who it claimed was telling "... the people at this moment that prosperity cannot be had in Canada with (the) British connection; that in order to secure good times we must adopt measures which renders (the) British connection impossible." [48] Therefore the Liberals called upon the voters to express their loyalty to the Empire by rejecting Macdonald's "miserable 'Yankee notion' of protection". [49]

The Conservatives also used the Loyalty argument in their campaign. They denounced the Liberal professions of Loyalty to the Empire as a front for their true sentiments. The Leader wrote of Brown:

> ... it does not become the Globe to deplore alienation from the Motherland. That paper has made it part of its business for years past to deprecate everything British and to elevate American interests. [50]

The Mail also assailed Brown for saying that the mercantile class in England would press for the separation of the Dominion from the Mother Country if Canada increased her tariff:

47. Ibid., 8 July 1878.

48. Ibid., 15 July 1878.

49. Ibid., 2 September 1878. G. R. Pattullo, Secretary of the Reform Association of Ontario, speech at Georgetown, 30 August 1878.

50. Leader, 12 July 1878.

> It is loyal to tell the whole population through the medium of a widely circulated newspaper that the Mother Country desires us all to remain in the condition of hewers of wood and drawers of water that she may make money out of us - most suspiciously loyal! [51]

Conservatives insisted that England would not be seriously injured by a Canadian protective tariff and that the Dominion was in a different situation from the Mother Country and therefore must have her own trade policy. They argued that Canada was free to choose the fiscal policy best suited "... to our climate, soil, habits, character, and idiosyncrasy, and, we must add, our position relatively to the United States ..." [52] Otherwise, the Mail concluded, the Imperial tie would not be worth preserving "... either from an English or Canadian point of view." [53]

However, the Conservatives were quick to point out that a protective tariff would strengthen, not weaken, the Imperial connection. Macdonald considered his "National Policy" necessary to build a strong economic base for the Dominion to increase its strength to make it a "nation" in fact and a strong ally of Great Britain. He was confident that Canadians desired to achieve this greater Loyalty and were prepared to support him and his tariff policy:

51. Mail, 13 July 1878.

52. Ibid., 26 July 1878.

53. Ibid., 13 September 1878.

> I believe that throughout the whole Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the people are rising in their might, and are determined to make this country a Dominion in realty, and not merely one in name, to make it an auxiliary Kingdom to England, with a desire for development equalling hers, and yet with a loyalty ever ready to stand by the old crown. [54]

The Mail added that the Conservative tariff policy would benefit both Canada and England:

> She is loyal to Britain; she thinks she can best show that loyalty by making her country rich, prosperous, and powerful, a strong ally to the Motherland instead of a weak Province, liable at any moment to be overrun by hostile forces, and to cost Britain in a year a war more than she could gain by a century of trade. [55]

Both parties saw political capital in using this Loyalty appeal and so throughout the campaign each argued that their tariff policy was the one more loyal to the Empire.

54. Ibid., 28 August 1878. John Macdonald, speech at Victoria Park Picnic, 27 August 1878.

55. Ibid., 18 July 1878.

# Conclusion

In Toronto during the three federal election campaigns of the 1870's, Canadian politicians debated Canada's relationships with the United States and Great Britain. In their campaign positions on three paramount election issues - the Treaty of Washington in 1872, the railroad in 1872 and 1874, and the protective tariff in 1872, 1874, and 1878, Conservatives and Liberals expounded anti-American and Loyalty arguments appealing to the Canadian voters who wished the Dominion to remain independent of the American Republic and closely tied to the Mother Country.

In the election of 1872, the Conservatives defended the Treaty of Washington as the best possible solution to the problems facing the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. On the questions of the Canadian fisheries, the navigation of the St. Lawrence River and canal systems, the Fenian raids into Canada, and the Alabama Claims, Conservatives expressed a distaste for United States political institutions and society as well as a fear of American aggression towards Canadian territories. At the same time, they insisted the possibility of an American attack on the Dominion was significantly lessened by the Treaty settling the disputes between the Republic and the Empire, mostly by giving the United States what it wanted.

The Conservatives argued too that the Treaty was Imperial policy. On the question of Macdonald's role on the British Commission and the question of peace, they maintained that it was the duty of the Canadian voters to be loyal to the Empire by supporting the Treaty despite the sacrifices of Canadian local interests, such as a reciprocity treaty, made for peace.

The Liberals saw the Treaty of Washington differently. On all of the questions, they attacked the Conservatives for betraying the interests of Canada. As the Conservatives did, the Liberals expressed a fear of American aggression towards Canada; but they maintained the sacrifices Macdonald and the British Commissioners made to the Americans at Washington seriously weakened the independent position of the Dominion on the continent by whetting the appetite of the Americans for more of Canada. They rejected also the Government's position that the Treaty was Imperial policy and must be supported by all loyal Canadians. Liberals argued that Great Britain gave Canada the right to accept or reject the Treaty and they insisted if the Treaty were supported, the Imperial tie would be weakened, if not destroyed, by disturbing Canadians who saw how easily the Mother Country sacrificed the interests of the Dominion to the Americans. Although Conservatives and Liberals adopted opposite positions on the Treaty issue, both political parties took a strong anti-American and pro-British stand.

The immediate construction of the Pacific Railroad was the paramount issue in the election of 1874. The whole question of a transcontinental Canadian railroad was first raised in the election of 1872 when the political parties clashed over the route of the Intercolonial Railway and the proposed construction of the Pacific Railroad. Conservatives expressed a fear of American aggression on Canada in their justification of their policies on both issues. They insisted the route of the Intercolonial must be the one that is away from the Canadian-American border so that it could be used as an Imperial military route and not be easily attacked by the Americans. They expressed fear of the Canadian West being lost to the Americans if a railroad were not constructed immediately to extend Dominion authority into the West.

The Liberals attacked both of these railroad policies. They said the route chosen for the Intercolonial railway was not the economically wisest and that the distance of the route from the American border - one hundred miles - did not give it any greater protection from an American attack if such an event ever occurred. They rejected the Conservative argument for immediate construction of the Pacific Railroad as uneconomical as well although they agreed some form of communication with the West was necessary.

Both parties' policies on the immediate construction of the Pacific Railroad crystalized in the election of 1874. The Conservatives campaigned an all Canadian railroad was necessary to establish the Dominion from sea to sea and to forestall American expansion northward into the Canadian West. They claimed the Liberal Government policy of temporary use of the American railways south of Lake Superior would weaken Canada's independence on the North American continent by making the Dominion dependent upon the Republic for transportation from eastern Canada to the Canadian West. This, they argued, would be disloyal to the Dominion and the British Empire and they accused the Liberals of being annexationists hoping to destroy the Imperial tie by supporting such a railroad policy.

The Liberals, of course, saw it differently. They expressed their fear of Canada ruining her economic future, thus enhancing the possibility of annexation to the United States, by going bankrupt in her effort to construct an all Canadian transcontinental railway within ten years. Hence, they argued that their railroad policy of a slower rate of construction and the temporary use of American railroads was the wisest policy to prevent annexation to the Republic. Canada, they said, would not ruin her economic future by pursuing such a policy. Liberals answered Conservative charges of disloyalty to the Empire by questioning Macdonald's Loyalty. Liberals said the same

high moral standard of conduct of the Canadian people and the English people bonded the peoples together in the Imperial tie. Then they asked the voters if Macdonald's conduct in granting the Pacific Charter enhance or detered the growth of such a tie between the two peoples. The Liberals answered no and called upon the voters to express their Loyalty to the Imperial tie by condemning Macdonald for his behaviour at the polls. As was seen in this campaign, both political parties expressed a desire for Canada to remain independent of the United States and united with Great Britain but differed on how best to achieve this.

The one issue that appeared in all three campaigns was the question of protection. Both parties' policies on this issue crystalized in the election of 1878. The Conservatives proposed protection for Canadian manufacturing industries in their "National Policy" to strengthened the economy of Canada. They argued the industries of the Dominion could not compete with the giant American industries and needed protection to survive. They accused the United States of various social and economic evils associated with the depression and expressed a desire to ensure Canada did not follow in the same path. They argued also that the Liberal free trade policy was destroying Canadian industries increasing the possibility of annexation to the United States and threatening the Imperial tie by making Canada a heavy economic burden on the Mother Country. They

insisted to support such a policy was disloyal to Canada and the Imperial tie and the Conservatives called on the voters to support their protective tariff policy to strengthen the economy of Canada to ensure her independence of the United States and to make the Dominion a strong ally of Great Britain.

Liberals argued Canadian industries did not need protection and that free trade was economically the wisest policy to follow. Canadian manufacturing industries, they said, depended upon a foreign market and this market would be lost if a protective tariff were adopted as a tariff war among the states would develop, destroying world trade. Liberals added "Communism", corruption in the government, and the depression in the United States were caused by a protective tariff policy and warned the same would occur in the Dominion if such a tariff were adopted by Canada. They insisted if industries were suited for Canada they would not require protection from their American counterparts for survival and they added that a protective tariff against the United States was also against the Mother Country. Consequently, they predicted anger over such a policy in the British business world would be forthcoming and would cause friction between Great Britain and Canada. Therefore, the Liberals called upon the voters to reject the Conservative appeal for support for their protective tariff policy.

As was seen in the three federal election campaigns of the seventies, both political parties expressed different positions on the three paramount issues but the same policy of a Canada independent of the United States and united to Great Britain. In these elections, the Conservatives retained power in 1872, failed to regain office in 1874, but succeeded to oust the Liberals in 1878. A number of changes in party standings in the House of Commons occurred although there were only small changes in the popular votes received by the parties in Ontario. [1] In the three federal elections the Conservatives and Liberals, in effect, split the popular vote in the province with the greatest difference being 6.2 percent in 1874 when the Liberals were riding the tide of public indignation over Macdonald's conduct in the "Pacific Scandal".

What impact did the anti-American and Loyalty arguments of the parties have on these results? This is a question that is not easily answered. There are a number of influencing factors in an election; i.e., the timing of the calling of the election, the personalities of the party leaders and the candidates, the finances of the parties, the party organization, the local issues, and the national issues. With so many factors and such small changes in the popular vote, the question cannot be answered with any degree of accuracy. However,

1. For all election statistics, see Appendix page 112.

the fact that the politicians of both parties used the arguments in their campaigns suggests that they believed the anti-American and pro-British positions were necessary to keep the party members faithful and more importantly, that there was a desire in most Canadians in the 1870's to remain independent of the United States and closely tied to Great Britain.

Some Canadian historians raise doubts in their writings about the Loyalty of the Liberal party in the 1870's. Arthur R. M. Lower writes in Colony to Nation, A History of Canada:

> ... the Conservative party has been the respository of tradition (pro-British), whereas the Liberal party has been more susceptible to the forces of continentalism (pro-American). [2]

Then Donald Creighton suggests that the Liberals did not change their pro-American policy until 1896:

> The Liberal party had ceased to be "continental" and had become national in character; it had endorsed the conception of a separate and integrated Canadian economy on the North American continent. 3

Both historians are correct the Liberals were pro-American if the writers are referring to the economy only for up to 1893 the Liberals supported a continent integrated economy. But they leave

2. Arthur R. M. Lower, Colony to Nation, A History of Canada, Don Mills: Longmans Canada Limited, 1964, page 394.

3. Donald Creighton, "Conservatism and National Unity", in Ralph Flenly, Editor, Essays in Canadian History, Toronto: MacMillan Company Limited, 1939, page 177.

an impression that the Liberals were continentalists politically as well and it was shown in this thesis that this was not the case. In the federal election campaigns of the 1870's in Toronto, the Liberals expressed a desire as intense as the Conservatives for a separate Dominion on the North American continent, independent of the United States and united to Great Britain.

# Appendix

## Election Statistics For Ontario

| | Election | 1867 | 1872 | 1874 | 1878 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Candidates | Conservatives | 74 | 78 | 75 | 88 |
| | Liberals | 73 | 82 | 86 | 88 |
| Seats Won | Conservatives | 52 | 40 | 22 | 62 |
| | Liberals | 30 | 48 | 66 | 26 |
| Popular Vote* | Conservatives | 71474<br>51.1% | 80896<br>49.8% | 83556<br>46.6% | 133633<br>51.4% |
| | Liberals | 67632<br>48.4% | 81146<br>49.9% | 94736<br>52.8% | 125316<br>48.2% |

* Missing percentages were votes received by other candidates than those running for the Conservative and Liberal parties.

Statistics from J. Murray Beck, Pendulum of Power Canada's Federal Elections, Scarborough : Prentice-Hall of Canada Limited, 1968, pages 12, 21, 29 and 37.

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This thesis is a study of anti-American and Loyalty arguments of the politcal parties in the federal election campaigns of the 1870's in Toronto. What is proposed is to devote one chapter to each of the elections of 1872, 1874 and 1878. It so happened that in each campaign the most prominent issue lent itself as a vehicle of expression of anti-American and Loyalty arguments. In 1872 the most important question was the Treaty of Washington; in 1874, the Pacific Railway; and in 1878, the protective tariff. Each chapter has more or less the same structure. The validity of the policies of the parties will not be discussed; however, their positions on these issues are presented, then their anti-American and Loyalty arguments are given to show that despite differences in positions on these important issues, both Liberals and Conservatives called on anti-American and pro-British opinion to win support.

This thesis will show that politicians of both politcal parties were convinced that there was a desire in most Ontario voters in the 1870's to remain independent of the United States and closely tied to Great Britain. It will show also that the Liberal party was as anti-American and pro-British as the Conservative party in these campaigns and not continentalists, in the political sense, as some Canadian historians would lead us to believe.

Evan W. H. Brewer