

The Liberal Party and the Navy

Do-Nothing-for-the-Empire their policy both in power and in opposition

What They Did When In Power

Here are some of the positions taken by the Liberal party under Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the question of Naval Aid:—

1

They promised, at the Imperial Conference of 1902 "to consider the naval side of defence". The promise was broken.

2

They refused to either contribute money or provide for the establishment of local naval defence when the question was before the Imperial Conference of 1907.

3

They refused to build a fleet unit for service on the Pacific when asked by the Admiralty in 1909.

4

In the House of Commons in 1909 they refused to agree to the Foster resolution affirming the principle which had been rejected by Sir Wilfrid Laurier at the Imperial Conference. An amendment withholding any real aid from Great Britain was proposed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Under pressure from Sir Robert Borden the Liberal leader agreed to important alterations in his amendment and the House adopted it. The responsibility of Canada in regard to Imperial naval defence was affirmed and speedy action was promised. Canada was to have a naval service along the lines suggested by the Admiralty in 1907, to co-operate with the Imperial navy and to be under one command with the Imperial navy in time of war.

5

On March 9, 1910, they voted down a resolution to submit a permanent naval policy to the people.

6

On the same day they voted down a proposal to submit a permanent policy to a plebiscite.

7

On December 1, 1910, they again refused to consult the people on a permanent policy.

8

They passed the Naval Service Act in 1910, providing for the building of a few small ships, which would not be placed at the disposal of the Admiralty in time of war unless the Government said so.

9

They voted in the Senate, in 1910, for a permanent policy without consulting the electors.

10

**The Laurier Government went out of office
without letting the contract for a single ship.**

(OVER)



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