

W.L.M.K. TO SIR WILFRED LAURIER, OCT. 28, 1917.

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The Government having refused a referendum, and enacted a conscription measure despite all endeavours to have the question referred to the people, the present general election became inevitable unless parliament were to constitute itself a body to do obeisance to the dictates of an autocratic executive denying the people the rights secured them under the constitution.

The elections are now on, and it is for the people to decide the issue. A new House of Commons will be returned with a fresh mandate from the people. The new parliament will have the determining of policy on all public matters for the next five years. Conscription is but one of the many questions which will require consideration. It narrows itself down as to what attitude the new parliament shall assume towards the Military Service Act passed at the last session. As to what may have been done under the Act in the interval I cannot perhaps express my own views better than to repeat here what I said in parliament when despite strenuous opposition the measure was finally enacted. [Having regard for the Government's action and what it might occasion of reasonable expectation on the part of the military authorities, that seemed to me at the time and has since seemed the only patriotic course to take pending the opportunity of the people to speak through their representatives for themselves.]

Insert par.

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