

# The Liberal Platform.

## Full Text of Resolutions Adopted by the National Liberal Convention held at Ottawa, Aug. 5, 6, 7, 1919

In view of the fact that the several resolutions adopted by the National Liberal Convention at Ottawa, and which constitute the platform of principles and policy of the Liberal Party of Canada, were in some cases necessarily condensed for telegraphic transmission to the West, and also because the publication of them was spread over several days, we reprint from the Regina "Leader" the whole platform in detail and in convenient form to be kept for future reference by Saskatchewan readers.

### The King and the Army.

This convention desires to place on record its devotion to the person and office of His Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth and its appreciation of his untiring efforts during the war in promoting harmony throughout his Dominions and also its unalterable attachment to the British Empire and to our own beloved Canada.

And this convention further desires to place on record its gratitude to the valiant Canadian army for its splendid share in the great victory, which has brought the blessings of peace to the world. In the desperate struggle between the forces of autocracy and democracy our gallant soldiers have covered themselves with glory by their courage and devotion to duty and have earned the undying gratitude of all Canadians and made the name of Canada an inspiration for future generations.

### The Canadian Constitution.

Resolved we are strongly opposed to centralized Imperial control and that no organic change in the Canadian constitution in regard to the relation of Canada to the Empire ought to come into effect until, after being passed by parliament, it has been ratified by vote of the Canadian people on a referendum.

### National Unity.

Recognizing that the crown of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life work and the dearest wish of his heart was the establishment of racial concord and national unity throughout the Dominion, the Liberal Party of Canada in national convention assembled emphatically condemns all attempts to create racial discord and national disunion and would hold up as a lasting example to the Canadian people the inspiring ideal of that great Canadian—a united Canada in which all Canadians shall be on equal footing, all working together in harmony and concord for the upbuilding and aggrandizement of their common country.

### The Tariff.

That the best interests of Canada demand that substantial reductions of the burdens of customs taxation be made with a view to the accomplishing of two purposes of the highest importance: First—Diminishing the very high cost of living which presses so severely on the masses of the people; Second—Reducing the cost of the instruments of production in the industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion, the vigorous development of which is essential to the progress and prosperity of our country.

That, to these ends, wheat, wheat flour and all products of wheat; the principal articles of food; farm implements and machinery; farm tractors, mining, flour and saw-mill machinery and repair parts thereof; rough and partly dressed lumber; gasoline, illuminating, lubricating and fuel oils; nets, net twines and fishermen's equipments; cements and fertilizers, should be free from customs duties, as well as the raw materials entering into the same.

That a revision downwards of the tariff should be made whereby substantial reductions should be effected in the duties on wearing

apparel and footwear, and on other articles of general consumption (other than luxuries) as well as on the raw material entering into the manufacture of the same.

That the British preference be increased to 50% of the general tariff.

And the Liberal Party hereby pledges itself to implement by legislation the provisions of this resolution when returned to power.

### Reciprocity with the United States.

That the Reciprocity Agreement negotiated with the United States by the Liberal Government of Canada in 1911 was a measure which realized the hopes that had been entertained and efforts made for better trade relations between Canada and the neighboring republic by the statesmen of both political parties in the Dominion from the beginning of the Dominion's history.

That the agreement was fair and just to both countries and well calculated to promote the good relations so desirable.

That the action of the Conservative Party under the leadership of Mr. now Sir, Robert Borden, in opposing and defeating the agreement was a sacrifice of the best interests of Canada for distinctly partisan ends.

That the insincerity of the movement of the Conservative leaders on that question has been abundantly evidenced by the fact that after coming into office they proceeded to make some of the very tariff changes, a denunciation of which was their chief ground in the elections of 1911.

That the action of the Conservative leaders in preventing the consummation of so excellent an arrangement between the two countries deserves and should still receive, whenever the opportunity occurs, the severe condemnation of the Canadian people.

That the reciprocity agreement was approved in 1911 by the Congress of the United States and the law giving such approval still remains on the American statute book.

That if the proposal lately made in the Congress to repeal the said law be carried out the people of Canada will have no cause to complain since the Americans have kept the law unimpaired for the long term of eight years during which Canada has made no move to avail herself of its provisions.

That, while, for these reasons, this convention can take no exception to the proposals so made at Washington, we, as Liberals, again place on record our appreciation of the object of the said agreement and our faith in the principles of friendly international relations underlying it, and we express our earnest hope that in both countries such principles will be upheld, and that a favorable moment may come when there will be a renewed manifestation by the two governments of a desire to make some similar arrangement.

### Financial Condition and Taxation.

Whereas, the national safety demands that the serious financial position of the country should be

known and appreciated in order that steps may be taken to cope with the same, and:

Whereas, on March 31 last, according to the statement of the minister of finance, the net public debt was \$1,584,000,000, or roughly, \$220 for every man, woman and child in the Dominion, involving an annual interest charge of about \$115,000,000, and thus imposing an annual burden for interest on debt alone of \$15 per head of the population, and:

Whereas, the estimated expenditure of the Dominion government for the present fiscal year is over \$800,000,000, or roughly, \$100 per head of the population, and:

Whereas, the estimated revenue is only \$280,000,000, thus creating an estimated deficit of over \$500,000,000—a sum equivalent to \$62.50 per head of the population—which sum the finance minister proposes to obtain by borrowing, and:

Whereas, national disaster will overtake this country should the present method of financing the country's affairs be continued, and:

Whereas, both Great Britain and the United States—at present raise more than 80 per cent. of their revenue by direct taxation, while Canada raises not more than 20%:

Be, and it is hereby resolved:

(1) That the serious nature of the country's financial situation calls for the profoundest consideration of all patriotic citizens, and the exercise of the severest economy by the government;

(2) That increase of revenue must be sought from an equitable and effective imposition and collection of graduated taxes on business profits and income applicable to all incomes above reasonable exemptions;

(3) Taxes on luxuries.

### Enforcement of Income Tax Law.

This convention condemns the government because it has not enforced the Income Tax Law in such a manner as to make it produce the revenue which such a tax should produce if properly collected.

### Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment.

(1) Whereas it is considered that the guiding principle for a permanent settlement of the problem of civil re-establishment should be equitable treatment to soldiers in all avocations, having regard to the length and nature of service.

Resolved that this convention declares that the adoption of a system of cash grants to the soldiers and dependents of those who have fallen is the most satisfactory and effective means of civil re-establishment—such grants to be in addition to the present gratuity and to any pension for disability resulting from service.

Further resolved that this convention further considers:

(2) That the whole matter of the education of the returned soldier be placed in the hands of competent educational authorities to provide for the co-ordination, improvement and extension of a system of educational training, both vocational and general.

(3) Insurance—That provision should be made whereby any increased cost of insurance in favor of the dependents of the soldier should be borne by the state, where such increase arises from disability incurred during the war.

(4) Pensions—(a) That such pensions and allowances be granted as shall enable soldiers or their dependents, as the case may be, to maintain a liberal standard of living sufficient to guarantee health, education, and all the necessities, comforts and amenities which go to make a standard of living worthy of Canadian citizenship.

(b) That soldiers permanently disabled should be trained for some useful occupation selected by themselves, and for which they are fit-

ted, or can be fitted, for such length of time as shall render them efficient in same, and after being so trained should be assisted by the government in obtaining employment adequate to the services rendered in such employment.

(c) That from the moment of discharge and until said training is completed and such employment is found, the soldiers permanently, partially disabled, as aforesaid, and their dependents, should receive pensions or allowances amply sufficient to enable them to maintain the liberal standard of living as aforesaid, and when employment has been found for said soldiers upon the completion of their training, if the remuneration received in such employment is not sufficient to maintain such standard of living the government should provide the deficiency.

(d) That soldiers who have returned, or shall hereafter return, partially or totally temporarily disabled and their dependents should receive during the period of such disability, pensions or allowances amply sufficient to enable them to maintain a liberal standard of living as aforesaid.

(5) Medical examination—That steps should be taken to secure uniformity in medical decisions as to disabilities by established permanent travelling medical appeal boards.

(6) That more effective employment agencies should be created, and the divergent efforts of the various organizations now in existence should be co-ordinated in a central authority.

(7) That reference to soldiers in this resolution is intended to include as well sailors, aviators and nurses whenever applicable, and Canadian soldiers serving with any of the Imperial or allied armies so far as the benefits hereunder have not been provided for by the Imperial or the allied governments.

### Labor and Industry.

Resolved that the committee recommends that the National Liberal convention accept in their entirety as a part of the Liberal platform, in the spirit they have been framed and insofar as the special circumstances of the country will permit, the terms of the labor convention and general principles associated with the League of Nations and incorporated in the conditions of peace.

These methods and principles for regulating labor conditions so set forth in the treaty are as follows:

First—The guiding principle that labor should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

Second—The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

Third—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth—The adoption of an 8-hour day or a 48-hour week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

Fifth—The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.

Sixth—The abolition of child labor and the imposition of such limitations on the labor of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.

Seventh—The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Eighth—The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labor should have due regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.

Ninth—Each state should make provision for a system of inspection in which women should take part in order to insure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

And further resolved:

(1) That the introduction into the government of industry or principles of representation whereby labor and the community, as well as capital, may be represented in industrial control, and their interests safeguarded and promoted in the shaping of industrial policies.

(2) That insofar as may be practicable, having regard for Canada's financial position, an adequate system of insurance against unemployment, sickness, dependence in old age, and other disability, which would include old age pensions, widows' pensions, and maternity benefits, should be instituted by the federal government in conjunction with the governments of the several provinces; and that on matters pertaining to industrial and social legislation an effort should be made to overcome any question of jurisdiction between the Dominion and the provinces by effective co-operation between the several governments.

(3) The representation of labor on federal commissions pertaining to labor matters.

(4) Effective legislation for the conservation of human life and health.

(5) The representation of labor on the board of directors of the Canadian national railways.

(6) That the system of re-training soldiers, unfitted for their past work because of physical injuries be extended to disabled workers in industry.

(7) More effective restriction of Chinese immigration.

(8) The federal incorporation of co-operative associations.

(9) The acceptance of the principle of proportional representation.

(10) Immediate and drastic action by the government with respect to the high cost of living and profiteering.

(11) Restoration of the control of the executive by parliament, and of parliament, by the people through a discontinuance of government by order-in-council and a just franchise and its exercise under free conditions.

### Railways.

Whereas, the construction of the National Transcontinental Railway wholly upon Canadian soil including terminal facilities, and in the completion of the projected steamship connection with Europe and the Far East, thus affording the best possible transportation between the Orient and the Mother Country and opening up a large portion of Canada not before developed, and providing for lowering of the freight rates was undertaken by the Liberal government and parliament of Canada, and:

Whereas, the accomplishment of the purpose for which this transportation system was designed has been thwarted by the studied hostility of the Borden administration, this convention expresses its opinion that only by the defeat of the present government can the beneficial results which should accrue from the construction of this great national transcontinental route be secured, and:

Whereas, the government by its policy in dealing with the Canadian Northern Railway system, which, in addition to granting of subsidies and guaranteeing of bonds, also made large loans of the public moneys, and thus involved the Dominion of Canada in financial obligations which resulted in the government assuming the ownership of the said system, and:

Whereas, in addition to assuming the enormous liabilities incurred by the purchase of the Canadian Northern Railway system the Bor-

den government forced through parliament in contravention of legislation already on the statute book, an act under which \$10,000,000 was paid to C. N. R. interests, the identity of whom has never been disclosed, this convention condemns with all possible vigor this entire unbusiness-like transaction, and demands full investigation into the conditions surrounding the purchase of the C. N. R., and the destination of the moneys paid. The government now owns and operates some 16,000 miles of railway; we believe that the present system of management by a board, the majority of the members of which devote but a small portion of their time to this work, is unwieldy, insufficient, and extravagant, and that under it and the present administration, public ownership and operation will not receive a fair trial.

Adequate facilities and tonnage for ocean traffic are a vital concern to the commerce of Canada, and the utter lack of foresight on the part of the government in neglecting to see that such facilities and tonnage were provided for the immediate after-the-war period is not only humiliating to the Canadian people, but is materially impairing our export trade.

At this time, when the country should be in a position to take full advantage of the opportunities to secure its proper share of the export business, on which the financial, industrial and agricultural future of Canada depends, we are confronted with the lamentable situation that no adequate provision has been made for the transportation of the products of the farm, the factory and the forest, to the markets of the world. With the knowledge of enormous destruction of tonnage by the havoc of war in its possession, the failure of the government to protect the trade of Canada against the condition that now confronts it shows an absence of business ability which merits the severest condemnation of the people of Canada.

This convention declares its fullest confidence in the future of Canada, believing that a wise and economical development of our national resources and a judicious and vigorous immigration and colonization policy, coupled with strict economy and efficient management in every department of government, will solve the transportation and other difficult problems now confronting the country.

### Encouragement to Agriculture.

In the interest of agricultural production and development it is expedient to encourage co-operation and induce greater investment in farming; therefore, it is deemed expedient to utilize the national credit to assist co-operative agricultural credit associations to provide capital for agriculture at the lowest possible rates.

With the object of reducing the high cost of living by eliminating as far as possible the waste and expense in handling food products between the producer and consumer, it is expedient to extend the principle and system of Canadian government elevators and to provide interior and terminal cold storage warehouses equipped for the assembling, assorting, preparing, storing and grading of food products in order that co-operative organizations and others may have available reliable, modern equipment for the distribution of farm products in superior condition and at lessened cost either for domestic consumption or for export. And that cold storage transportation facilities should be provided at the cost of operation, for the shipment of food products throughout Canada and for the carrying to the markets of the world the surplus farm products of this country and

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