

APPEAL TO METHODISTS TO SUPPORT UNION GOV'T

Declaration By Executive of General Board of Social Service and Evangelism

The present duty and paramount responsibility of Canada is to render every possible assistance, make the very highest sacrifice, and unite in the most determined purpose to contribute its full share to win the war and thus protect the smaller nations against the menace of an aggressive militarism, save democracy from German autocracy and despotism, and establish the dominance of the principles of Christ in international relationships.

Methodism has always been an outstanding influence in behalf of national righteousness, democratic institutions, and equal justice to all the people. The attitude of Canadian Methodism towards this war has been intensely outspoken. Our last general conference, in an address to His Majesty George V., declared: "We beg leave as a church humbly to express our deepest conviction of the righteousness of the call which His Majesty has sent forth to all his subjects to sustain the honor of the British crown, to defend the weak against ruthless oppression, and to secure the foundations of human freedom and brotherhood. . . . Thousands of our sons and daughters are among the contingents who have gone from Canada at the call of His Majesty to maintain the integrity of British honor. Some have already sealed their loyalty in their life blood, as they have fallen upon land and sea. Thousands more are ready and waiting at their Sovereign's call to follow their noble example."

The passing years have fulfilled this promise. Returns from circuits indicate that upwards of 75,000 Methodists voluntarily enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. More than 400 of our ministers and probationers, and almost 500 sons and daughters of Methodist parsonages promptly responded to the call to the colors. Methodism has an inestimable investment in this war. While many of her sons and daughters have made the supreme sacrifice, and multitudes have been wounded, shell shocked, gassed, nerve-wrecked and disabled, we have many thousands of our brave and beloved heroes in the midst of the holocaust of horrors on the front of battle in France and Flanders. The very blood of our martyred sons, the sufferings of our boys in the casualty lists, with the increasing needs of our men in the trenches, clamantly insist that we should continue to render them our supreme support, even to suffering and sacrifice.

All our annual conferences in 1917 were imbued with this spirit and purpose. Each adopted strong declarations in favor of selective conscription and union government.

At the polls on December 17, 1917, every Methodist elector, the women as well as the men, should conscientiously meet personal responsibility and both vote and work for the election of the candidates who stand with the union government—not for political advantage, but to enable Canada to do her full duty to the empire, to herself, and to our noble soldiers in the trenches and in training, as well as those who have given their lives, or are suffering today through the awful casualties of the war. Duty and a sense of the value of our own freedom compel us to promptly and unhesitatingly stand shoulder to shoulder with the other democracies of the world.

Outstanding among the reasons for this urgent appeal that our Methodist electors shall vote for the union government candidates are the following:

1.—In the supreme hour of their country's need, the union government has declared that the duty to send adequate reinforcements of men, food and clothing are superior to party. In consequence party politics are laid aside, and every resource and utility enlisted in behalf of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, the Dominion of Canada, the British Empire, and the winning of the war.

2.—Canada must not be divided at this time. British ideals and traditions must receive the unquestioned support of all our citizens. It would be fatal to Canada's place in the empire, won so gloriously on the great battle fields of this war, if we were to permit party differences and local prejudices to affect the solidarity of our support of the union government, which exists only to safeguard our immeasurably valuable asset in our Canadian Expeditionary Force.

3.—The union government can be safely entrusted with the fair administration of the Military Service Act, protecting the agricultural and industrial interests, while securing the needed reinforcements for the military and naval forces; and the government of the country for the benefit of all her people.

4.—The liberty of mankind is at stake, and until that is assured, peace with Germany is impossible. Do we realize that if the war were to end today, Germany would have good reason to regard herself as victorious. True, she has lost her overseas colonies, and the oceans are closed to her commerce. But on the continent of Europe she holds the richest industrial region of France, and the most highly developed portions of Russia, Roumania, and Belgium. All this must be changed. We must struggle on, because we are waging war against war.

The great predatory power that has terrorized Europe ever since 1864 must be cured of militarism by a crushing defeat. In no other way can mankind be brought nearer to that glorious tomorrow, when wars shall cease over the earth, and disputes between nations, as between individuals, shall be settled in court according to recognized principles of equity. We must support that government which will render the most efficient aid to the motherland and her allies to achieve this end.

5.—Canada's sons in France and Flanders are fighting for our defence. They have seen war, and know what it is. To these heroic lads who stand between us and the savagery of a war-mad people—a people whose hands are stained with the blood of innocent little children slain on land and sea—shall we say that Canada had done enough, and that the reinforcements they need so urgently cannot be sent because a section of our people, imbued with a selfish spirit, and narrowed by partisan ill-will, refuse? No, we surely must assure our brave soldiers of our confidence and support by electing the Union government on Monday, 17th December, 1917.

With enthusiastic unanimity, believing the present duty of every Canadian citizen is to support union government at the forthcoming election, this executive committee of the Board of Social Service

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ice and Evangelism of the Methodist Church requests that this statement be read from our pulpits and published in the daily and weekly press. We also urge that every Methodist having the right to vote will support the candidates who are supporting the union government of Canada.

Signed in direction of the executive, T. ALBERT MOORE, General Secretary. Toronto, December 7, 1917.

Was it ignorance, by design, or the irony of fate that caused the great Union Jack above the heads of the speakers at the Laurier Liberal meeting at the Imperial Theatre to be flown upside down? To a good boy scout that is a signal of distress. If purposely flown thus by the enemy it is an insult to the empire. Certainly no one heard anything calculated to strengthen the empire in time of stress. All appeals were made to party prejudice and nothing was said of the real issues of the day.



Christmas Cheer

YEARS AGO, at this season, our great-grand-fathers went to the forest and by dint of much labor and inconvenience chopped down and dragged home

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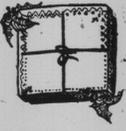


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