

# THE TWO POLICIES

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WHAT BORDEN PROPOSES -

- WHAT LAURIER PROPOSES  
TO WIN THE WAR

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Every person in Canada wishes to win the war. If the war is not won, freedom will be lost to the world for generations to come. For anyone to claim that his party alone, by whatever name it is called, is "the win-the-war party" is to dishonour the intelligence and patriotism of the Canadian people as a whole.

While all Canadians wish to win the war, the people differ in their opinions as to which method in Canada is best calculated to attain this end. Some favour Sir Robert Borden's policy of Conscription. Others believe that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's policy, which takes a comprehensive view of the necessities of the war, and of conditions as they exist in Canada, is the more statesmanlike, and the more likely to ensure the fullest measure of war effort from a United Canada.

Those who oppose Sir Robert Borden's policy do so because they believe that an attempt to carry it out will do more harm than good. They believe that, as it stands, it is a policy of coercion, and that as such it is creating unrest throughout the whole of Canada. They believe that its attempted general enforcement, without reference to the people, may lead to serious divisions and cleavages in our country, and that it will weaken Canada's power of service in the war by making for disunion rather than united effort. They fear that it may even provoke situations which will prove perilous, if not disastrous, to the British Empire and the Allies, at a time when, of all times in the world's history, it is necessary for the peoples who cherish freedom to present a united front to an enemy that menaces the liberties of mankind. They believe that the statesmanship of Canada is equal to finding the men neces-

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sary for overseas service by means less liable to provoke a grave situation.

**Those who oppose Sir Robert Borden's policy do not question the sincerity of others who support it; indeed, they believe that the zeal which characterizes many of Sir Robert Borden's supporters is bred of the most earnest devotion to country and to the cause of freedom which the triumph of German Militarism would destroy.** But those who oppose Sir Robert and believe that, under existing conditions, Sir Wilfrid's policy is a better one, are entitled to have their sincerity and patriotism equally respected.

**It is in the interests of Canada's part in the successful prosecution of the war that all views should be accorded thoughtful consideration by the electors,** at a time when the people are called upon to decide a great issue.

**It is the people who will suffer the consequences of a mistake in policy. The people, therefore, should be accorded the opportunity of free and full discussion, and a free expression of their convictions at the polls.**

The following quotations from the manifestos issued by Sir Robert Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier respectively will enable the electors, **irrespective of party,** to arrive at an intelligent understanding of the war policies of the two leaders.

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## BORDEN'S WAR POLICY

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Sir Robert's policy is set forth in a manifesto issued by him on October 19th, and is as follows :

**"(1) The vigorous prosecution of the war; the maintenance of Canada's effort by the provision of necessary reinforcements; the immediate enforcement of the Military Service Act; and the most thorough co-operation with the governments of the United Kingdom and of the other Dominions in all matters relating to the War."**

The **Military Service Act** is the Act which enacts **Conscription**. The enforcement of this Act, without any reference to its provisions to the people, is **the only point of difference** between Sir Robert Borden's war policy and that of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as respects the several items in this statement of Sir Robert's manifesto. **Sir Wilfrid pledges his government, just as strongly as Sir Robert Borden to the vigorous prosecution of the war; to the maintenance of Canada's effort by the provision of necessary reinforcements; and to the most thorough co-operation with the governments of the United Kingdom and of the other Dominions in all matters relating to the war.** As respects **Conscription**, Sir Wilfrid takes the position that he "will not proceed further" under the provisions of the **Military Service Act** without consulting the people upon it by means of an immediate referendum.

Since Sir Robert Borden's manifesto was issued, the policy of **Conscription** which it announces has been further emphasized by the **Hon. General Mewburn, Minister of Militia in Sir Robert's Government**, who in speaking of the **Military Service Act** in an address at a Convention of conscriptionists held at Hamilton on **November 2nd**, said :

"One thing I am opposed to in the new measure is the limitation to **100,000 men**. We are in this war, or should be, not with one, two or three hundred thousand, but to the very limit of our resources."

The **Minister of Militia** is the member of the **Borden Union Government** through whom it was expected that a complete statement of the Government's war policy would be announced. In the absence of any contradiction by Sir Robert Borden of the Government's policy as outlined by the new **Minister of Militia**, the policy stands as thus expressed. **Sir Robert Borden's policy is, therefore, one of unlimited conscription of men, and should be so understood by the electorate.** **Sir Robert is opposed to allowing the people any further opportunity than that which the present elections afford to express their views with regard to **Conscription**.** The people should know this, and understand clearly what it involves.

In a second manifesto issued by Sir Robert Borden, on **Nov. 13th**, the following statement as to the numbers of Canadians already enlisted appears :

"By voluntary enlistment an army of over four hundred thousand has been enrolled."

An army in the United States of like proportion to its total population would number over five millions.

# LAURIER'S WAR POLICY

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Sir Wilfrid's policy is set forth in a manifesto issued by him to the people of Canada on November 5th.

**As to the war and Canada's duty to participate in it, Sir Wilfrid says :**

"It cannot be said too often that this war could not have been avoided by the Allies, and that it is a contest for the very existence of civilization. Of this the entrance of the United States into the conflict is further proof, if indeed further proof were needed. The American people long hoped that they would be spared that ordeal, but the ruthless violation by Germany of the most sacred canons of International Law left them no option; they had to join in the fight against a power which has become the common enemy of mankind."

**Sir Wilfrid Promises, if Returned :**

**1. To make the winning of the war the main object of his government.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Should I be called upon to form a Government I would hope to include in it representatives of business, of labour and of agriculture, of the men whose sole object in dealing with the affairs of the country will be to devote the whole resources, wealth and energy of the country to the winning of the war."

**2. To find the men, money and resources necessary to give the fullest support to our heroic soldiers at the front.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"My first duty will be to seek out the ablest men of the country, men of organizing capacity as well as men representative of all classes in the community, and invite them, irrespective of what it may involve in the way of sacrifice of their personal interests, to join with me in the formation of a cabinet whose first object will be to find the men, money and resources necessary to ensure the fullest measure of support to our heroic soldiers at the front, and to enable Canada to continue to the very end to do her splendid part to win the war."

**3. To give the soldier and those dependent on him first place in the concern of the State.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"The man who is prepared to volunteer his services and to risk his life in his country's defence is entitled to first consideration. Those dependent upon him, and who spare him from their midst are the next most deserving of the State's solicitude and care. A policy which will accord first place to the soldier and the sailor in the concern of the State will, I believe, bring forth all the men necessary to fight its battles, without the need of recourse to conscription. If returned to power, I should adopt such a policy."

**4. To make the entire resources and population of service in the war.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Each year has rendered increasingly apparent the necessity of organizing the nation, in order that, so far as may be possible, the resources and population of Canada, in its entirety may be made of service in the successful prosecution of the war."

**5. To so organize the nation that the armies of the Allied countries may receive the help most needed.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"To-day, under the exhaustion the war has caused in the world, Great Britain and her Allies are appealing as never before for more food, more ships and more coal. No country has vaster resources than Canada, to supply these imperative requirements. What is needed is vigorous efforts to further an unlimited production. To meet this existing need, I am prepared in addition to the measures already outlined to take what further steps may be necessary to increase, double, and quadruple the output of all that may be necessary for marching and fighting armies."

**6. To treat all alike, and not to conscript human life only.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"A fundamental objection to the Government's policy of Conscription is that it conscripts human life only, and that it does not attempt to conscript wealth, resources or the services of any persons other than those who come within the age limit prescribed by the Military Service Act. This is manifestly unjust."

**7. To consult and abide by the decision of the people as to further conscription.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"As to the present Military Service Act my policy will be not to proceed further under its provisions until the people have an opportunity to pronounce

upon it by way of a referendum. I pledge myself to submit forthwith the Act to the people and with my followers to carry out the wishes of the majority of the nation as thus expressed."

**8. To organize a government campaign for voluntary recruiting.** (Thus far recruiting for overseas service has been left wholly to private enterprise. Sir Robert Borden's efforts were confined to a campaign for voluntary National Service, under a department of the Government created and conducted at great cost and which has since been abandoned. National service was apart altogether from overseas service. Neither Sir Robert nor his government has conducted a recruiting campaign. Nothing, for example, has been attempted by the Government in the way of recruiting similar to the campaign for the Victory Loan.) Sir Wilfrid says :

"I would at the same time organize and carry out a strong appeal for voluntary recruiting."

**9. To raise troops in Quebec and avoid internal dissensions in Canada** at a time when the preservation of Canadian unity is all important to the strength of the Allies. Sir Wilfrid says :

"It is a fact that cannot be denied that the voluntary system, especially in Quebec, did not get a fair trial, and a fair trial would receive from a generous people a ready response which would bring men to the ranks, with good will and enthusiasm, and which would eliminate from our political life one of its most harrowing problems, as no loyal Canadian can view without the gravest apprehension a disunited Canada at this critical hour of our history."

**10. To give the returned soldiers first claim on the country's assistance and support.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"The greatest service that can be rendered the brave men who have first claim upon our gratitude and sympathy is to replace them in civil life. How to do that in the way best calculated to enable each man to become, if possible, self-sustaining is a task that will call for the display of all that is noblest and best in the Canadian people."

**11. To be generous and patient in the treatment of returned soldiers.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"In a vast number of cases re-education and technical training will be necessary. In these cases patience and generosity on the part of the State, combined with sympathetic understanding, practical experience, and scientific knowledge on the part of those whom the State will call in to aid its efforts will go a long way towards helping the returned soldier to

overcome the handicaps of war. If we but set ourselves resolutely to this task, its accomplishment will be hastened by the hearty co-operation of every man who has been on service overseas."

**12. To make more adequate provision for the soldiers' dependents and families.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"The measures now in force for the maintenance, care and comfort of the soldiers' dependents and families are not adequate or equitable. . . . The nation's obligations to the soldiers and their dependents must be discharged by the nation, and not through the medium of public benevolence or charity."

**13. To take prompt action to put the soldiers and their dependents beyond any possibility of want.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Prompt action must be taken to put the soldiers and their dependents beyond any possibility of want after public subscriptions have ceased and the glamour and excitement of the war have worn away."

**14. To put a stop to Profiteering.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"One of the most important contributions toward winning the war is to put a stop to profiteering on war supplies. The Government has deliberately encouraged profiteering for the benefit of its partisan followers. A first duty of my administration would be to secure to the country which pays for war supplies, the excess of exorbitant profits being realized by profiteers."

**15. To have the State take control of the factories making munitions of war.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Should it be necessary, I would not hesitate, in order to immediately stop profiteering, to take control of the factories which are engaged in the supply of war materials, as has been done in Great Britain, and run them on the principle of reasonable, legitimate profit."

**16. To use the Government shops to make war materials, build ships, etc.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"I believe that one of the best methods of providing war supplies, and of saving the country from being exploited by profiteers would be to turn the government shops which are suitable for such purposes to the production of war materials, ships, etc., for the benefit of the country at cost price."

**17. To prevent organized wealth and privileged interests from controlling the government.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"I would hope to have a Government representative of the masses of the people, the common people whose guiding principle should be to defend them against organized privilege which has heretofore had far too much control over the Government of the country."

**18. To control food supplies and fix prices by the Government.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"In connection with the high cost of living, I would take drastic steps to bring under government control all food producing factories so that food may be sold at a fixed price under the control of the government, as has been done in Great Britain. To this end, arrangements should be made with the management of the food producing factories allowing for a fair interest on investment and fair and reasonable net profits, so that food may be obtainable by the ordinary consumer at the best possible prices."

**19. To commandeer all food factories if necessary.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Should such arrangements not be possible, I would not hesitate to commandeer all food factories."

**20. To reduce prices of commodities, where excessive, to reasonable rates."** Sir Wilfrid says :

"The government is invested with powers which they could and should have used to reduce the price of all commodities. These powers they have already exercised in the case of newsprint-paper."

"If they could thus reduce the price of paper to consumers of paper, why did they stop there ? Why should the Government not also have reduced to hundreds of thousands of anxious housewives and breadwinners the prices of all those commodities that make the ever-increasing cost of living one of the most insistent and dangerous of all the problems that now confront us."

**21. To put a stop to practices that rob the consumer and make the cost of living unbearable.**

"The prices of all commodities have been steadily rising since the beginning of the war. The daily provisioning of the family table is from day to day becoming a more and more alarming problem for all classes of wage-earners and for all people of small

and of even moderate income. It is no answer to say that this is the natural consequence of the war. When it is considered that the price of bread and bacon—to speak only of these two commodities—is higher here in Canada than in the United Kingdom, this of itself is proof sufficient that the prices here are inflated by methods which are in no way connected with the war, unless the war is taken advantage of for the very purpose of inflation. Indeed, the principal causes of these ever-soaring prices are none other than those described in the Government manifesto as "excessive profits," "hoardings," and "combinations for the increase of prices." Since the Government knows where the evil is, what prevents the Government from striking the evil, and striking hard? The remedies are at hand, and I at once set down the policy."

**22. To destroy trusts and combines where there are excessive profits, hoardings and combinations.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"No measure to reduce the cost of living can be effective unless and until the tariff is reformed and its pressure removed from those commodities in which there are 'excessive profits,' 'hoardings', and 'combinations for the increase of prices.'"

**23. To save the country millions by having the new Parliament pass upon the transactions of the Borden Government in their dealings with Mackenzie and Mann.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"One feature of the Act of last session is that the Government becomes the owner of the stock of the Company, of the nominal value of sixty million dollars. There never was a dollar paid in that stock. The experts employed by the Government to appraise the value of the whole enterprise, men of acknowledged ability and experience, themselves have reported that the stock of the Company has no value whatever.

"Yet the Government have taken authority to appoint a board of arbitrators to give a value to that property, which their experts have declared absolutely without value.

"The Opposition asked that the report of the arbitrators, whatever it might be, should be laid before Parliament for approval. Though this motion was rejected, it is the right of the people to declare that the case should not have been finally closed by the action of a moribund Parliament, but that the whole matter should be reported to, and adjudicated upon by the new Parliament."

## Laurier's Attitude on Conscription

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has not said that he will not have Conscription under any conditions. All he has said is that he is opposed to further Conscription without the people being given a chance to pronounce upon it, and this for the following reasons :

**1. Because it will hinder rather than help to win the war.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"This year the Government introduced a bill to make military service compulsory. With this policy I found it impossible to agree. If it be asked how this view is consistent with my oft expressed determination to assist in winning the war, I answer without any hesitation that this sudden departure from the voluntary system was bound more to hinder than to help the war."

**2. Because it will disunite Canada.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"It will create and intensify division where unity of purpose is essential."

**3. Because it will destroy the united purpose and enthusiasm necessary to winning the war.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"It may bring men to the ranks, but it will not infuse into the whole body of the nation that spirit of enthusiasm and determination which is more than half the battle."

**4. Because coercion is not sound policy.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"I hold that to coerce when persuasion has not been attempted, is not sound policy, and in this I appeal to the impartial judgment of all Canadians."

**5. Because the manner of its introduction was neither wise, prudent nor effective.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"To force such a drastic measure upon a people thus unprepared and against repeated assurances to the contrary, was neither wise nor prudent, nor effective."

**6. Because its introduction at this juncture was a grave error.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"I appeal with great confidence to the fair judgment of the country that the introduction of conscription at this juncture and in the manner above described was a grave error, if it is remembered that

the supreme object should have been and still should be to bring all classes of the community to hearty co-operation in the task which we assumed."

**7. Because the people of Canada were unprepared for its introduction.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"It must be pointed out that in Great Britain for some years before the war, in view of the immensity of war preparations amongst all the nations of the continent, the question of conscription was seriously and increasingly discussed in Parliament and in the press, so that at last when a measure to that effect was introduced by the government, it came as no surprise. It found the people prepared, and yet even then strong protests were heard from many classes of the community.

"Very different was the introduction of Conscription in Canada. It came as a complete surprise. It never had been discussed in Parliament, and the voice of the press had been strong against it."

**8. Because the press of Canada, till Conscription was introduced, educated the people against the very idea of Conscription.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"In the month of July, 1916, such an important paper as the Toronto "GLOBE" deprecated the very idea of Conscription. Here is what it said in a carefully reasoned editorial :

"The 'GLOBE' in its editorial columns has consistently pointed out that in a country such as Canada conscription is an impossibility, and that no responsible statesman of either party capable of forming or leading a Canadian War Ministry would propose compulsory service."

"Even as late as December 27th, 1916, the 'Globe' repeated its warnings against any effort 'to force the Canadians into the ranks,' and summed up public opinion thus :

"Trades unionists are found opposing Conscription, and the leading opponents of every manifestation of democracy are favoring the system."

**9. Because the Government stated there would be no conscription.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"No less emphatic had been the language of the

government. At the beginning of the session of 1916, in answer to my inquiry whether the promise recently made by the Prime Minister of enlisting 500,000 men meant Conscription, he answered in these words :

" My Right Honourable friend has alluded to Conscription—to the idea in this country or elsewhere that there may be Conscription in Canada. In speaking in the first two or three months of this war, I made it clear to the people of Canada that we did not propose Conscription. I repeat that announcement to-day with emphasis."

**10. Because the Nationalist-Conservative Alliance has made it impossible, except on a referendum, for Sir Wilfrid to support conscription without deceiving the people.** Sir Wilfrid says :

"Throughout the whole campaign of 1910 and 1911, I may recall that the Nationalist-Conservative Alliance which opposed the naval policy of the Liberal Government of that time asserted that such a policy meant conscription. Meeting these assertions I gave the public frequent assurance that under no circumstances would conscription follow the adoption of our policy."

Sir Wilfrid adds :

"If enlisting in Quebec was not on a par with enlisting in the other provinces, on whom does the responsibility rest? On whom but the Borden Government, whose Quebec members openly, strenuously and persistently preached the Nationalist doctrine of 'no participation by Canada in Imperial wars outside her own territory'. Such doctrine taught on the hustings, circulated by the Nationalist press at the expense of the Conservative organization, had a powerful influence in educating the public against the participation by Canada in Imperial wars outside her territory. The first result was at the polls when the Liberals won 38 seats and the Conservative-Nationalist Alliance won 27, the popular vote being even more evenly divided, the Liberals polling 164,281 votes and the Conservative-Nationalists 159,299. The second result was when the war broke out and a call made by the government for volunteers. They reaped what they had sowed. There was one-half of the province which they had educated to reject such an appeal."

## Bourassa and the Nationalists

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Bourassa and the Nationalists of Quebec are asking that candidates pledge themselves not only to a repeal of the Military Service Act, but also to require that it "be considered as void and without effect from its very origin." **Bourassa demands that the Nationalists exact pledges of candidates that they put themselves on record as being "against any and all additional efforts to prosecute the war."**

Sir Wilfrid Laurier takes the position that the Military Service Act is law, and that its provisions must be obeyed until opportunity is afforded the people to say whether it shall be further proceeded with or repealed. **Sir Wilfrid in his manifesto says that he will "find the men, money and resources necessary to ensure the fullest measure of support to our heroic soldiers at the front," and that Canada should "continue to the very end to do her splendid part to win the war."**

Speaking in the city of Quebec on November 9th, at the opening meeting of his campaign, Sir Wilfrid said :

"The great and dominating question, the one question is the problem of the prosecution of the war. Every other issue is swallowed up in this. What will we French Canadians do? I come to speak to you frankly with the same honesty as ever. I never deceived you, and I have confidence in my compatriots. With pleasure or pain I always spoke the language of the truth. I shall do the same to-day. **I believe that our first and pressing duty is to share in the fight. I believe that it is our immediate duty to help our armies who have covered themselves with glory. We must support them with men. We must feed them. We must serve !"**

In his endeavour to further the best interests of Canada as a part of the British Empire, Sir Wilfrid is placed again in the position he was during the general elections of 1911.

In pursuance of the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of 1908, the Laurier Government, prior to the elections, had commenced the formation of a Canadian Naval Service, as a part of the British Navy. For this **Sir Wilfrid was denounced in Quebec by Bourassa and the Nationalists, who preached the doctrine of "no participation by Canada in Imperial wars, outside her own territory,"** and asserted that Sir Wilfrid's naval policy meant Conscription. Sir Wilfrid was called "too British, too Imperial." In Ontario the cry was that his policy was not British or Imperial

enough. **The events of the war have proven conclusively that Sir Wilfrid's naval policy was right.** Sir Robert and his Government have never repealed the Naval Service Act ; they are carrying out its provisions to-day. Had the Act been promptly proceeded with instead of being held in abeyance till the war started at the instance of the Nationalists in Sir Robert's cabinet, Canada would have had at the commencement of the war a navy like Australia's. She would have been able as Australia was to capture many enemy ships upon the high seas, to defend her own coasts, to aid effectively in the transportation of her own troops and munitions, and to render Great Britain and the Allies a service on the seas similar to what she has rendered on land.

**Out of the wisdom born of years of leadership, and an understanding of the problems of Government in Canada which no other leader save the Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald has had, Sir Wilfrid is seeking to-day once more to adopt the course which will avoid extremes in either direction and maintain Canadian unity, that Canada may do her utmost in the prosecution of the war.** He refuses Bourassa's demand for a repeal of the Conscription Act, and to set at naught what may be done under it. He will have no repeal without first giving to the people a chance to express their wishes. He agrees to abide by their decision, whatever it may be. He holds that Canada must participate in the war to the very end, and must do her utmost in men, money and resources to win the war. **Unless the loyal citizens of Ontario are prepared to stand by Sir Wilfrid in his patriotic effort to keep all parts of the country united in the prosecution of the war, Canada will become a second Ireland, the control of her affairs will pass into the hands of extreme men, and instead of being able to support her brave soldiers at the front, and to help the allied nations in this great crisis, our country will become a source of weakness rather than of strength to the British Empire and the Allies.**

Let the electors ponder carefully the possible consequences of rash action at the present time. Edmund Burke said, "**You cannot indict a nation.**" Neither can you indict a Province, or any great body of public opinion. **Much less can you coerce.**

# The Supreme Issue of the Election

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In concluding his manifesto, Sir Wilfrid says :

"In this election the supreme end is to assist in the tremendous struggle in which we are engaged, to maintain the unity of the nation, to avoid the divisions and discords which for many years kept in check, and are now unfortunately again looming up dangerous and threatening, to resolutely face the economic situation with the view of avoiding and lessening privations and sufferings, which should not exist in a country so richly endowed by nature as our country."

## **ELECTORS :**

Consider well which of the two policies is deserving of your support.

**The issue in the present contest is much broader and more far-reaching than that of Conscription or no Conscription. It is whether in the face of a powerful and brutal enemy, at a moment when internal dissension is weakening some of the allied nations, we shall have a united or a divided Canada.**

Remember Canada is at war, and remember "if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand."

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