

THE UNION POLICY OUTLINED

Sir Robert Borden's Appeal to the Canadian Electors

To Win the War, to Strengthen and Purify Canada Internally, to Tax the Well-to-do and Lessen the Burdens of the Poor

The policies of the new Union Government, as laid down in two statements to the Canadian people issued by Sir Robert Borden, place the Union Administration in the front line of political progress. They are:

- The vigorous prosecution of the war by the immediate reinforcement of the Military Service Act. Adequate taxation of war profits and increased taxation of incomes. Effective arrangements for demobilization, care and vocational training of returned soldiers. Effective measures to prevent excessive profits, to prohibit hoarding and combinations for the increase of prices and thus to reduce the cost of living. Encouragement of co-operation amongst farmers to lower cost of production and marketing in the interests of both producer and consumer. Civil Service reform for the purpose of abolishing patronage and filling places on single standard of merit. Extension of franchise to women, with suitable provisions for improving woman's status under the law. Strong and progressive policy of immigration and colonization. Development of transportation facilities, with co-operative management of the various railway systems, to make the best use of available equipment. Co-operation with the provincial Governments for the improvement of highways. Reduction of public expenditure, avoidance of waste and encouragement of thrift. Development of all the resources of Canada with co-operation and assistance of the state where practicable to the best advantage of the people. Maintenance of good relations between employers and employed, care for industrial population and their right to suitable standards of living. Development of a national spirit in Canada by consistent work for a sympathetic understanding between the various communities. Creation of a new portfolio, Immigration and Colonization; also, a permanent cabinet committee to oversee prosecution of the war and a second committee for carrying out other lines of policy.

UNION FOR MILITARY SERVICE.

With regard to the Military Service Act, Sir Robert Borden's statement says:

When it became apparent that the voluntary system was not providing adequate reinforcements for the army, it became necessary to consider the provisions of the Military Service Act empowering the Government to force compulsory military service upon all male citizens of Canada between the ages of eighteen and sixty inclusive. The selection under that law is to be made by ballot, that is, by chance. Under present conditions the public interest cannot be served by a chance selection, but it demands instead an intelligent selection, based upon a wise and careful consideration of the grounds that his labor is needed at home. Accordingly, a new measure to authorize a selective draft of persons between the ages of twenty and forty-five was prepared and submitted to Parliament. Much care was taken to ensure that the measure would not be unfair or unjust in its provisions, that there would be no prejudicial interference with agriculture or industry, that there would be no preference for groups, classes, sections or interests. The Military Service Act is a democratic measure, calling the rich as well as the poor—indeed, bearing more heavily upon the rich in that it is more difficult for a young man of means to claim exemption on the ground that his labor is needed at home for the support of his relatives. It is eminently fair as between the provinces and as between those portions of our people who are of different racial origins, because it pays no attention whatsoever to provincial boundaries or racial groups, but calls up all young Canadians of the same circumstances wherever they may live. The measure is one of compulsion until compulsion became imperative. There was no hesitation to seek authority for enforcement by selection when the necessity for greater reinforcements were indubitably established. It was the enemy—not the Government—who issued the call to arms and the Government has responded for the resources of the Empire. The Government appeals to the people with confidence that the vigorous prosecution of the war is their immediate and supreme concern, and that the Military Service Act which authorized the selective draft is but a reflection of the temper and will of the nation.

THE UNION CONSTITUTION.

As to the constitution of the new Union Government, the Borden manifesto reads:

The administration in whose name this appeal is made is not the agent or organ of any group, section or party. There are those among its members who must assume responsibility for the conduct of the war thus far; and such members do not seek to evade that responsibility. There are those also among its members who have no such responsibility. For the Military Service Act all assume the fullest responsibility, for all for the future conduct of the war and for future measures of policy and acts of administration. It is not suggested that the Government which held office for six years is immune from criticism because a Union Government has been organized, but only that the war is the first emergency and that its energetic and united conduct is the first union among the people as necessary as the coalition of political leaders.

PROGRESSIVE POLICIES.

After explaining the need for union in time of war, the manifesto proceeds:

But there are other reasons why the Union Government should be entrusted with power. It has pledged itself to the extirpation of old abuses and to a wise and bold policy of constructive reform. The system of patronage in the distribution of contracts and offices which has prevailed in Canada for generations has been the root of many political evils. It has fostered local and sectional interests incompatible with the national welfare and injurious to the efficiency of the national services. It has troubled representatives of the people, permitted the ascendancy of organized minorities in the constituencies, and affected the independence of Parliament itself. It may be that these evils should have been overcome long ago. Censure may lie upon successive Governments which have tolerated the system. But inveterate diseases succumb only to heroic treatment—and heroism has not distinguished Canadian parties in dealings with patronage. Generally Governments have lived long in Canada and when for many years distribution of patronage has been confined to the party in power there is a natural disposition to adjust the balance when at length the other party succeeds to office. Once committed to the system, influences are recognized and interests created that are not easily resisted or dislodged. It is believed that a Government derived from both political parties and strengthened by special representation of agriculture and organized labor, can act with greater freedom and independence than a Government which held office under the old conditions. Hence the resolution to abolish trading in patronage, to fill public offices by merit and not by favoritism, and to establish honest and open competition in awarding contracts and buying supplies.

THE RAILWAY PROBLEM.

On the railway problem, the Union policy is outlined as follows: For many years in Canada railway policy was determined not so much by the needs of transportation as by the demands of rival groups of railway builders. As a result we have a great railway mileage, constructed at heavy cost, with long stretches of single lines where a single system could have handled all the traffic and at lower charges upon a smaller investment of capital. It is believed, however, that Canada will yet develop traffic in excess of present rail facilities; and in the meantime the Government will endeavor to co-ordinate existing services and improve and protect the national railways without injustice to private companies.

THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

The sum of the Union Government pledges is contained in the closing words of the second Borden manifesto:

The Government thoroughly realizes that in this National emergency there is imperative necessity for fulfillment of its policies with the least possible delay. It pledges itself to prosecute the war with ceaseless vigor, to strive for national unity, to administer the public departments with economy and efficiency, to devise measures of taxation which will regard the social justice, and to neglect nothing that may be required to sustain the soldier on service or to comfort those of their households whom they have left behind.

PRESIDENT WILSON ON COMPULSORY SERVICE



SIR ROBERT BORDEN.

PRESIDENT WILSON.

When the United States went into this war its first act was to establish the Selective Draft for Military Service.

This was not done because it was necessary to get recruits. With its hundred million population America could have raised an army of ten millions by the voluntary system, on Canada's proportion of enlistment. But President Wilson insisted on the Compulsory Service plan because it is the only fair and logical and democratic as well as the only efficient plan for a nation at war. Here is his masterly justification for it, in his official proclamation issued May 18th last, ordering the Selective Draft into force:

EACH MUST DO HIS PART.

The Power against which we are arrayed has sought to impose its will upon the world by force. To this end it has increased armament until it has changed the face of war. In the sense in which we have been wont to think of armies, there are no armies in this struggle there are entire nations armed. Thus, the men who remain to till the soil and man the factories are no less a part of the army that is France than the men beneath the battle flags. It must be so with us. It is not an army that we must shape and train for war; it is a nation.

To this end our people must draw close in one compact front against a common foe. But this cannot be if each man pursues a private purpose. All must pursue one purpose. The nation needs all men; but it needs each man, not in the field that will most please him, but in the endeavor that will best serve the common good. Thus, though a sharp-shooter pleases to operate a trip-hammer for the forging of great guns and an expert machinist desires to march with the flag, the nation is being served only when the sharp-shooter marches and the machinist remains at his levers.

The whole nation must be a team, in which each man shall play the part for which he is best fitted. To this end, Congress has provided that the nation shall be organized for war by selection; that each man shall be classified for service in the place to which it shall best serve the general good to call him.

The significance of this cannot be overstated. It is a new thing in our history and a landmark in our progress. It is a new manner of accepting and vitalizing our duty to give ourselves with thoughtful devotion to the common purpose of us all. It is in no sense a conscription of the unwilling; it is, rather, selection from a nation which has volunteered in mass. It is no more a choosing of those who shall march with the colors than it is a selection of those who shall serve an equally necessary and devoted purpose in the industries that lie behind the battle line.

A CONSPICUOUS MOMENT.

The day here named is the time upon which all shall present themselves for assignment to their tasks. It is for that reason destined to be remembered as one of the most conspicuous moments in our history. It is nothing less than the day upon which the manhood of the country shall step forward in one solid rank in defence of the ideals to which this nation is consecrated. It is important to those ideals no less than to the pride of this generation in manifesting its devotion to them, that there be no gaps in the ranks.

LAURIER AND THE WAR.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier says that though he is opposed to conscription, he would, if elected, endeavour to stimulate voluntary recruiting. What has he ever done to stimulate voluntary recruiting? Look at this! Last February a letter was sent to him by the recruiting committee of the Canadian Club of Hamilton, asking him to give a written endorsement of their effort to arouse new interest and activity in recruiting.

A similar appeal was made to Sir Robert Borden and Mr. Rowell, both of whom gave authoritative encouragement to the idea. Here is Sir Wilfrid Laurier's answer:—

"OTTAWA, Ont., Feb. 26, 1917.

"Dear Sir,—

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 20th inst. I am sorry that I cannot send you at once an affirmative answer. I will look into the matter, but will keep it under advisement.

"Believe me, Yours sincerely, "WILFRID LAURIER."

The matter is still under advisement. This took place in the third year of the greatest war that humanity has ever experienced, a war which involves the future of civilization and human liberty. The urgent need for reinforcements at the front was known to all Canada. He declined on that occasion to say one word which would aid the national purpose or give support to the men who are holding Canada's battle line. He had to look into the matter, and he has been looking into it ever since.

(Continued from page two.)

MAJOR-GENERAL L. J. LIPSETT.

"On the battered ramparts of Ypres, on the rolling hills which border the Somme, on the historic battlefield of Vimy, are scattered hundreds of wooden crosses which mark the resting places of Canadians who only three years ago were peaceful civilians. When war was forced upon us these men came forward, for they felt their manhood demanded it as a duty that they should pass on the honor of our nation unsullied and her liberties secure. There is no grander monument erected by man than these simple crosses, for they show that Canada has the greatest asset any nation can possess, namely, sons ready to lay down their lives for what they think is right. But these simple crosses also remind Canada of the trust bequeathed by those whose resting place they mark, namely, the cause for which they died."

THE POPE'S PEACE PROPOSAL

President Wilson's Strong Statement of Allied Cause

We Must Fight and Vote to Win the Victory and Smash Forever the Prussian War Menace

There has been no better statement of the Allied Cause in this great war than President Wilson's noble reply to the peace overtures made last August by the Pope.

To deal with such a power as the present rulers of Germany upon Pope Benedict's plan, declared the President, would involve a recuperation of the strength and renewal of the world domination of that power, now balked, but not defeated, after sweeping a continent with the blood of innocent women and children and the helpless poor as well as of soldiers.

Permanent peace must be based, he declares, upon the faith of all the peoples and upon justice and fairness and the common rights of mankind.

This is the cause which the electors of Canada are asked to back with their ballots in the coming elections.

The text of the note follows:

"To His Holiness, Benedictus XV., Pope:

"In acknowledgment of the communications of Your Holiness to the belligerent peoples, dated August 1, 1917, the President of the United States requests me to transmit the following reply:

"Every heart that has not been blinded and hardened by this terrible war must be touched by this moving appeal of His Holiness, the Pope must feel the dignity and force of the humane and generous motives which prompted it, and must fervently wish that we might take the path of peace he so persuasively points out. But it would be folly to take it if it does not in fact lead to the goal he proposes. Our response must be based upon the stern facts and upon nothing else. It is not a mere cessation of arms he desires; it is a stable and enduring peace. This agony must not be gone through with again, and it must be a matter of very sober judgment what will ensure us against it.

"His Holiness in substance proposes that we return to the status quo ante-bellum and that then there be a general condemnation, disarmament and a concert of nations, based upon an acceptance of the principle of arbitration; that by a similar concert freedom of the seas be established; and that the territorial claims of France and Italy, the perplexing problems of the Balkan States, and the restitution of Poland be left to such conciliatory adjustments as may be possible in the new temper of such a peace, due regard being paid to the aspirations of the peoples whose political fortunes and affiliations will be involved."

OBJECT OF WAR DEFINED.

"It is manifest that no part of this program can be successfully carried out unless the restitution of the status quo ante furnishes a firm and satisfactory basis for it. The object of this war is to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible government which, having secretly planned to dominate the world, proceeded to carry the plan out without regard either to the sacred obligations of treaty or the long-established practices and long-cherished principles of international action and honor; which chose its own time for the war; delivered its blow fiercely and suddenly; stopped at no barrier, either of law or mercy; swept a whole continent with the tide of blood—not the blood of soldiers only, but the blood of innocent women and children also and of the helpless poor; and now stands balked but not defeated, the enemy of four-fifths of the world.

"This power is not the German people. It is the ruthless master of the German people. It is no business of ours how that great people came under its control or submitted with temporary zest to the domination of its purpose; but it is our business to see to it that the history of the rest of the world is no longer left to its handling.

"To deal with such a Power by way of peace upon the plan proposed by His Holiness the Pope would, so far as we can see, involve a recuperation of its strength and a renewal of its policy; would make it necessary to create a permanent hostile combination of nations against the German people, who are its instruments; and would result in abandoning the new-born Russia to the intrigue, the manifold subtle interference, and the certain counter-revolution which would be attempted by all the malign influences to which the German Government has of late accustomed the world.

NO SECURE PEACE BASIS.

"Can peace be based upon a restitution of its power or upon any word of honor it could pledge in a treaty of settlement and accommodation? Responsible statesmen must now everywhere see, if they never saw before, that no peace can rest securely upon political or economic restrictions meant to benefit some nations and cripple or embarrass others, upon vindictive action of any sort, or any kind of revenge or deliberate injury.

"The American people have suffered intolerable wrongs at the hands of the Imperial German Government, but they desire no reprisal upon the German people, who have themselves suffered all things in this war, which they did not choose.

They believe that peace should rest upon the rights of governments, the rights of peoples great or small, weak or powerful—their equal right to freedom and security and self-government and to a participation on fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world—the German people, of course, included, if they will accept equality and not seek domination.

"The test, therefore, of every plan of peace is this: Is it based upon the faith of all the peoples involved, or merely upon the word of an ambitious and intriguing government, on the one hand, and of a group of free peoples on the other? This is a test which goes to the root of the matter; and it is the test which must be applied.

SEEK NO MATERIAL GAIN.

"The purposes of the United States in this war are known to the whole world—to every people to-whom the truth has been permitted to come. They do not need to be stated again. We seek no material advantage of any kind. We believe that the intolerable wrongs done in this war by the furious and brutal power of the Imperial German Government ought to be repaired, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of any people—rather a vindication of the sovereignty, both of those that are weak and those that are strong. Punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues, we deem inexpedient and in the end worse than futile, no proper basis for a peace of any kind, least of all for an enduring peace. That must be based upon justice and fairness and the common rights of mankind.

"We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure, unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves, as the other people of the world would be justified in accepting—without such guarantees, treaties of settlement, agreements for disarmaments, covenants to set up arbitration in the place of force, territorial adjustments, reconstitutions of small nations, if made with the German Government, no man, no nation could now depend on. We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the great peoples of the Central Powers. God grant it may be given soon and in a way to restore the confidence of all peoples everywhere in the faith of nations and the possibility of a covenanted peace."

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