

The Military Service Act

It is proposed by means of the Military Service Act to raise men by selective drafts to reinforce the Canadians who now represent Canada in the war.

Those who oppose the Military Service Act have no alternative method by which they undertake to raise the necessary forces. The plain truth is, as everyone knows, that the real issue before the country is as to whether reinforcements shall be raised by means of the Military Service Act or not raised at all.

That being the issue. The Star supports the Military Service Act and supports those who support it and opposes those who oppose it, regarding this the first and foremost matter now before the country—notwithstanding the incompetence, and what we even consider the stupidity, of the Government in related and other matters.

As Britain, Canada, the United States are, we believe, rightly in this war, and could not possibly have kept out of it, the armies of Canada are at the front—our men over there are doing what the brave men of such a country as this ought to be doing in this world-crisis, and, as they are doing the right thing, they ought to be supported and reinforced in what they are doing. We see in the Military Service Act, not a measure to round up unwilling men and put them in uniform, but a national and organized plan by which we make the enlarged army that a long-drawn war calls for—a war so much greater than was expected that casual methods of army-making were unequal to the needs of the case. So an organized system by which men will be selected as they are needed is introduced. They are not conscripts. They are men drafted for a national army that is being voluntarily raised on an organized system by a democratic people.

Politics have played the mischief with things here at home. The attempt to portray Sir Robert Borden as a soulful Lincoln will not do. For three years the thought did not enter his mind of setting up a non-partizan Ministry. The motto of his Administration was "Politics as usual." He stuck to that plan until that plan became a fatal thing to stick to. As long as there was anything in that plan he got for his party all that was in it. A little less Pharisaism would be fitting on the part of Ministerial organs that scoffed at all proposals for coalition or non-partizan government until it became an eleventh-hour party necessity.

But out of the mess has emerged the Military Service Act, and if it will produce the army that is needed, all whose hearts are in the cause for which mankind is enduring so much will put all other matters aside and support the measure.